

St Christopher's CE High School

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2019 • Issue 59

We approach the end of what has been a particularly special year for St Christopher's. Sixty glorious years! – an event marked with a special service of Holy Communion which will take place in Blackburn Cathedral, led by the Bishop of Blackburn. It will be a joy to be present at a service in which the whole school community will worship together, to give thanks to God for our school and to remember those individuals who worked hard in the middle of the last century to secure a Church of England secondary school to serve the Church going families of East Lancashire.

This jubilee year has prompted much thought about our sense of mission, ethos and vision. We know who we are and what we stand for (ad gloriam Dei – to the glory of God) but it is still helpful, particularly at the point of an anniversary, to stop and think carefully about what this means for us all. We want a vision which is lived and not just laminated! Thank you to those who responded to my request in the last newsletter to share your thoughts on this issue. These have joined those of the governing body, our chaplaincy team, teachers and staff, and pupils and students. It has been humbling to see an emerging consensus which places our position as a Christian community as front and centre. First and foremost we want to be a community where all are offered the opportunity to grow in the Christian faith through knowledge, service and action. From this we seek a school where individuals can develop fully, live well together and enjoy academic success, in whatever form is most appropriate.

I am pleased to report that we will have a full complement of staff for September. The PE department, and thus the sporting profile of the whole school, will benefit from a new head of department. Mr Foy (Science) and Mr Pountain (RE) will gain from new assistant heads of department and mathematics from an established classroom practitioner. We welcome two new entrants to this great profession – one in science and the other in art/technology. Miss Smith has recently begun her maternity leave, and Mrs Stott will follow in October. We wish them both well as they prepare to leave the second most important job in the world to embark on the most.

We also pass on our best wishes and thanks to those who are leaving St Christopher's. Mrs Bancroft has devoted 22 years of her working life to the science department and whilst we will miss her expertise and experience, it is pleasing to see her secure the position of head of department in another Lancashire school. Mrs Lord (English) is now going to teach part-time in a secondary school nearer to her home and Miss Walmsley is also leaving us at the end of her first year in teaching.

Mrs Wiggin is retiring as the school's counsellor, a role that she has carved out for herself over a number of years. You will be aware of the stresses and strains faced by young people, sufficient for some to describe it as a mental health epidemic, and so the work Mrs Wiggin and the wider well-being team has proved to be invaluable. Literally hundreds of pupils, spanning the generations, have gained from Mrs Wiggin's empathetic and supportive approach.

Also leaving us is Father Lawrence as he prepares to retire from full-time ministry and as a school chaplain and governor. He has made such a marked impression on the life of St Christopher's for well over a decade and I will miss his considered and wise remarks and his determination to protect and work for the best interests of our school as a Church school in its lived out reality and not simply as a sign above the door.

The new school year will see a return to the naming of tutor groups in a manner first used many years ago. Rather than being known by the initials of the teacher in charge, each group will be designated one initial, standing for one of eight northern saints – Aidan, Bede, Cuthbert, Dunstan, Hild, Oswald, Paulinus and Wilfrid. We hope that this will add to a sense of form identity and allow for the development of a house system over time.

Another change for September will be the move to limiting the use of single use plastic, most notably in the form of water bottles. I am instinctively cautious about using the word BAN but it does seem that the time has come for some courageous advocacy to result in action and for the school community to join together for the good of human kind.

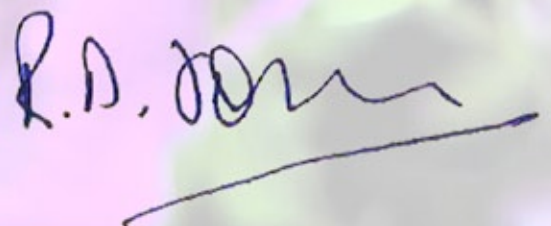
I offer thanks to all members of staff who have taken it upon themselves to organise a range of trips and visits during this summer term. Whether a residential visit to Prague or Barcelona, or a day enrichment visit to Skipton castle or a rewards trip to Blackpool Pleasure Beach, all opportunities offer pupils the chance to access aspects of the curriculum that go beyond the four walls of a classroom.

One final thought on the topic of ethos and vision. We have been thinking deeply about a quotation from the Bible that will best underpin our work and sense of endeavour. I am currently drawn to Psalm 1:3 with its emphasis on growth and prospering for all.

'That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither – whatever they do prospers.'

Perhaps you can offer something else.

With sincere thanks for your ongoing support evident throughout this academic year.





Prom

The Dunkenhalgh Hotel
03.07.19

Uniform

Skirts

Thank you for supporting the governors' decision to introduce the new checked skirt, to help mark St. Christopher's sixtieth anniversary. The girls have looked extremely smart so far. To ensure that this continues for September, please ensure that all skirts are sufficiently long and loose enough to be worn correctly at knee length. Note that skirts may not be turned up, or held at the waist with a hair bobble.

Trousers

These must be a classic fit, as slim or skinny fits will not be allowed. Boys in Years Ten and Eleven only may wear black trousers as an alternative to charcoal grey.

Senior ties

Year Ten pupils wear a senior tie, available from our uniform suppliers. This helps to mark the commencement of their GCSE courses, as senior pupils.

Hair and piercings

Only one stud in the each lower lobe of each ear (for girls) is allowed for school, with no other piercings permitted. Also, please remember that braided hair, unnatural colours, extreme hairstyles and less than a No.2 cut are not permitted.

St. Christopher's has an excellent reputation for uniform and we value the support and cooperation of pupils and parents in maintaining these high standards. If you are in any doubt regarding a uniform purchase, please contact Reception, or refer to the updated Parent Guide on the school website.



Forest School

A group of pupils from Yr 7 to Yr 9 participated in the forest school programme based at the Park Family Centre in Accrington. Forest school was an amazing experience for everybody who took part, with pupils learning many new skills, making new friends and working well as a team.

The pupils also helped to clean and tidy the forest so it was safe for the nursery children to use and play in. They made lots of things such as picture frames from sticks and flowers to print onto canvas for them, modelling clay to make forest animals as well as whittling wood ready to make bow and arrows!

Whilst at the forest school, the pupils have worked towards and achieved a BTEC Level 1 John Muir award - a nationally recognised qualification.

Forest school works on building confidence and self-esteem, whilst helping the pupils to feel calm and work together. Well done to everyone who took part.



School Equipment



Parents and pupils are reminded of the equipment required in order to have a successful school day, which is also outlined in the pupils' planner. We are very pleased to report that the overwhelming majority of our pupils do this on a daily basis.

Having the correct equipment is an item that has also been added to our Form Inspection checklist for pupils in years 8, 9 and 10. At the very least and in order to avoid attracting a CUE concern, pupils should always have the 'bare minimum' equipment with them at all times. In short, this includes several writing pens and pencils, rubber, ruler, a pencil sharpener and scientific calculator, all of which should be kept in a sensible sized pencil case for safe keeping.

Worship and Spirituality News

We would be most grateful if you, our valued parents, could speak to your children about the content of their worship experience at school. Please do give us any feedback, positive or negative, that may arise from these kinds of conversations: c.pountain@st-christophers.org We are constantly looking to improve and serve our pupils and therefore God better, as we look to strengthen the links between school, home and church:

High Quality assembly programme + form Communion for all

This year, as every year, every Y7 -13 pupil and student has taken part in an act of Eucharistic worship with their form which has been led by their year chaplain, at some point through the year. This is in addition to at least 2 year group Communion for all. In addition, our worship in assembly has been of the highest quality this year with thought-provoking themes throughout. These have ranged from a focus on the Year 7-9 Diocesan 'Illuminating Pathways' RE schemes of work, to an emphasis on miracles to reinforce the excellent Christmas service. As well as an emphasis on what we can learn from Jesus' apprentices, finishing with a systematic study of the last 6 decades as we look to mark 60 years of St. Christopher's in the run up to our Founders' Day service in the Cathedral this time. In addition, we consistently ensure we focus on the church calendar at key times, with themes of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter & Pentecost all appearing on our rota at the appropriate time.

Spirituality Week

Earlier this year we ran two highly successful Spirituality Days in the Autumn term, one for Year 11, themed around 'Destiny' and one for our 6th form, with some external special guests from 'God and the Big Bang.' The rest of the Spirituality Days were rolled into one 'Spirituality Week' which ran from Monday 8th July to Friday 12th July. This included contributions from: The Life charity; the Eden Bus; 'Stance' professional Christian dancers; Youth for Christ; The 'PAIS' Project; 'Vision' Christian youth charity; a Christian pro-wrestler; 'Enable' a Christian charity focussed on dismantling disability stereotypes; 'Respect Me' who focus on self-esteem related issues; Ambassadors in Sport – Christian football coaches who share their faith through football; Jude, one of our chaplains, and his 'With U Always' band, and 'Visible ministries,' with their ground-breaking work on the dangers of pornography – for Year 10 only. When pupils were not with one of our contributors, they attended their normal timetabled lessons, which all had a spiritual 'heaven on earth' themed twist. The week ended with a Eucharist celebrated by Fr. Chris (Year 9 chaplain) and with Graham Kissack (year 8 chaplain) preaching, in the Sports Hall, on Friday afternoon. Our aim was to saturate the school with the Christian faith, giving our pupils multiple opportunities to respond to the Gospel message, as well as memories to take with them into their adult life that following Jesus can be fun. We think we achieved our aim. Please let us know your thoughts on this.

Connect + CU

Our 'Connect' Wednesday after-school Christian group has continued to thrive this term, as has the Friday youth worship event which we connect to, alongside the CU on Friday lunchtimes. This provision has allowed some of our more committed Christian pupils to flourish in their faith.

Social Beingz

In May, we were delighted to host Christian Band, 'Social Beingz' to perform for most of our pupil population. We think that as many as a couple of hundred of our pupils attended the follow-up church events with the Band at the weekend in Blackburn and Burnley. These kinds of events do a lot to raise the profile of the Christian faith for our pupils.

TLG

It has been wonderful to see this holistic Christian mentoring programme get off the ground this year with support from Accrington Christians together. The idea is that entire families of vulnerable youngsters receive support from the local church, and there is plenty of room for this ministry to grow in the future in our school.

A new Chapel for the next 60 years

Next term, we look forward to reporting, with photographs, on the consecration of our newly refurbished Chapel, a central part of our 60-year celebrations this term. At the time of writing, this is just about to be completed, ready for the next 60 years. As ever, thank you for your continued partnership and prayer. We value you, our parents, more than we can say. Please let us know if there are any ways in which we can serve the worshipping needs of your children better:

c.pountain@st-christophers.org

During the week beginning Monday 1st July, I completed a week's work experience at BAE Systems in Salmesbury. BAE Systems is the UK's largest aerospace engineering company, with around 50 UK sites. They design ground-breaking technologies across land, air and marine domains, including combat aircraft, naval vessels and nuclear submarines.

Throughout the week, I was part of a team of four, who designed and manufactured a piece of equipment, which we could place in the cockpit of a Hawk aircraft. ("The Hawk" is one of BAE Systems' combat aircraft, and is also commonly known as being the jets used for the Red Arrows display.) We were able to use modern technology such as 3D printers and CAD programs. We also needed to take precise measurements for our design, so we were able to sit inside the cockpit of the Hawk to do so. Throughout the project, we had various talks and presentations to help inspire and assist us, however for the most part we worked independently.

I thoroughly enjoyed the week and I am now considering a career in aerospace. Not only does BAE Systems provide various opportunities throughout the profession but the atmosphere in the workplace is extremely friendly and welcoming.

Rhiannon Murphy

Head Girl of St Christopher's Main School



Library News



The CILIP Carnegie Medal is an annual book award where the winner is chosen by children's librarians. This year's winner was 'The Poet X' by Elizabeth Acevedo.

The St. Christopher's Summer Reading Challenge!

To encourage reading over the Summer holidays, there is a 'Summer Reading Challenge'! Pupils from all year groups were encouraged to collect a challenge sheet from Miss Holman. There are six reading tasks to complete. Each task is worth one Synergy Credit. Any pupil completing all six tasks will receive a certificate and be entered into a prize draw in September to win a shopping voucher. Happy reading!

Accelerated Reader News

Accelerated Reader is a reading scheme where a pupil reads a book at their reading level, then takes an online quiz and gets immediate feedback. Students respond to regular feedback and are motivated to make progress with their reading skills.

Of the sixteen classes participating this year the following pupils were in the top three for most words read and received prizes and certificates:

Abigail Edwards (7RK)
Matthew Prawucki (8HM)
Malachy Ratcliffe (8EM)



PARENTS & CARERS!

If required, please update your child's allergen status.

Contact Reception for assistance.

Thank you!



Arkwright
Engineering Scholarships



Congratulations to Isabel Hope Yr 11 for successfully achieving an Arkwright Engineering Scholarship. An Arkwright Engineering Scholarship is the most prestigious scholarship of its type in the UK to inspire and nurture school-age students to be the country's future leaders of the Engineering Profession. The Scholarships will support her through her A-levels through a sponsor company, work experience and a personal mentor. Isabel is the third student from St. Christopher's to have achieved this scholarship in the last four years.

Wishing the
best of luck

to all Year 11 pupils with
their GCSE results.

We're looking forward to
seeing many of you for
enrolment, straight after
you collect your results on
Thursday 22nd August.

St Christopher's
Sixth Form



Music News

Instrument Lessons 2019–2020

Any pupil who wishes to start instrument lessons for the new academic year can do so and forms can be collected in A2 or please email the Music Department on music@st-christophers.org

All current students need to fill in a new Standing Order form for next year if they wish to continue with lessons and these have been sent out. If you have not received one then please do email us.

Popular Music Singing

To add to the opportunities that we offer pupils we will be offering Popular Music singing to all students in years 10 upwards. This will build on the singing already offered in Years 7–9 but allows pupils to specialise, earlier, in popular Music Singing if they wish to.

We are absolutely delighted that a former student, Katie Ritson, will be joining the music staff. Katie has a first class degree from the Royal Northern College of Music and has just completed her Masters as well. Katie is regularly heard on Sunday Worship and the Daily service on Radio 4 and has a busy concert schedule. She is an outstanding musician and pupils will really benefit from these lessons. Grade 6 and above carry UCAS points and can be used for University Entry.

Lessons will be taught individually as this offers the students the best opportunity for progress and will cost:

£10 for an individual 20 minute lesson or
£12 for an individual 30 minute lesson

Forms are available in A2 or can be emailed out by emailing music@st-christophers.org

LAMDA Performing Arts

We are introducing London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts lessons and exam training in Performing Arts and these will work on a similar basis to the Music lessons and pupils can opt for performing arts and drama lessons in groups or individually.

Forms are available in A2 or can be emailed out to you.

Lessons will cost £6 for a group lesson, £10 for an individual 20 minute lesson and £12 for an individual half hour lesson. Lessons will train pupils towards the LAMDA exams and these carry UCAS points from Grade 6 onwards, which is always a useful boost for those coveted university places.

Please email music@st-christophers.org for any further information .

Instrument Purchase Scheme

If you are thinking of purchasing an instrument for your son / daughter then this scheme will save you a LOT of money! For any pupil who has instrument lessons in school or through Lancashire County you may purchase an instrument VAT FREE!! This is a great scheme and offers a fantastic saving of 20% on all instruments.

We have put together for parents, a list of instruments that may be suitable for all pupils, from guitars to drum-kits and from clarinets to keyboards. You can purchase any instrument of your own choosing as well as from any shop you choose. If you would like a copy of this list then please ask your son / daughter to collect one from the department, or e mail the music department on music@st-christophers.org

Here are a few examples of what is available: -

Guitars from £38
Clarinets from £147
Drum-kits from £150 / £200
Keyboards from £50
Violins from £80
Flutes from £100
Saxophones from £250



Music Tour

On the evening of Sunday 7th July, 43 excited musicians and 4 staff set off by coach to Manchester Airport for a flight to Prague, where they were to perform four concerts and enjoy seeing the city and surrounding area, as well as having fun in Aquapalace Water Park and Prague Zoo.

We kept a blog while away - we can promise you a really amusing read! The final entry is first so you need to scroll down a little to get to the first entry 'Czech-In!' Take a look at:

<https://stchristophersmusictour.wordpress.com/>

Having flown last year with British Airways we were worried how EasyJet would compare and indeed an IT fault on their system meant that we did not have boarding cards. Despite this the check-in was relatively easy if long and all the instruments made it on to the plane—although there were a few bemused faces amongst the baggage handlers. We then had a two hour delay—is Easy Jet always late?

We performed four concerts and started in Mozart Square right behind the Opera House, then St. Martin-in –the-Wall church and the most amazing Czech Museum of Music. We then left Prague behind as we headed out into the country and the beautiful Spa town of Podebrady. The audiences were large, appreciative and they loved our music. At the end of the concert in the Czech Museum of Music they demanded many encores, then gave the choirs and band a standing ovation.

We experienced travelling on the underground, taking the trams , visiting Prague Castle, Charles Bridge, The Astronomical Clock, shopping, and had a fun day at Prague Zoo. The trip to Aquapalace was great and much fun was had on all the water slides and river rapids.

All in all a really great concert tour and Lancashire was represented, musically, abroad. We hear so much on the news about how badly behaved and challenging teenagers are, but we had 43 absolutely delightful musicians with us who were a credit to their parents and the school.



Oxford Enrichment Trip

From the 1st to the 3rd July, seven high achieving students took a trip to Oxford University for a University + Open Day. The Yr 12 students stayed at Queens College, and received an intensive programme of lectures and mock-tutes from the College, tours of campus and time to ask current Oxford students questions. They also attended the open day for the different colleges and departments, and had a tour of Oxford where they sampled some of Oxford's finest ice cream! Georgia Pilkington of Yr 12 writes:

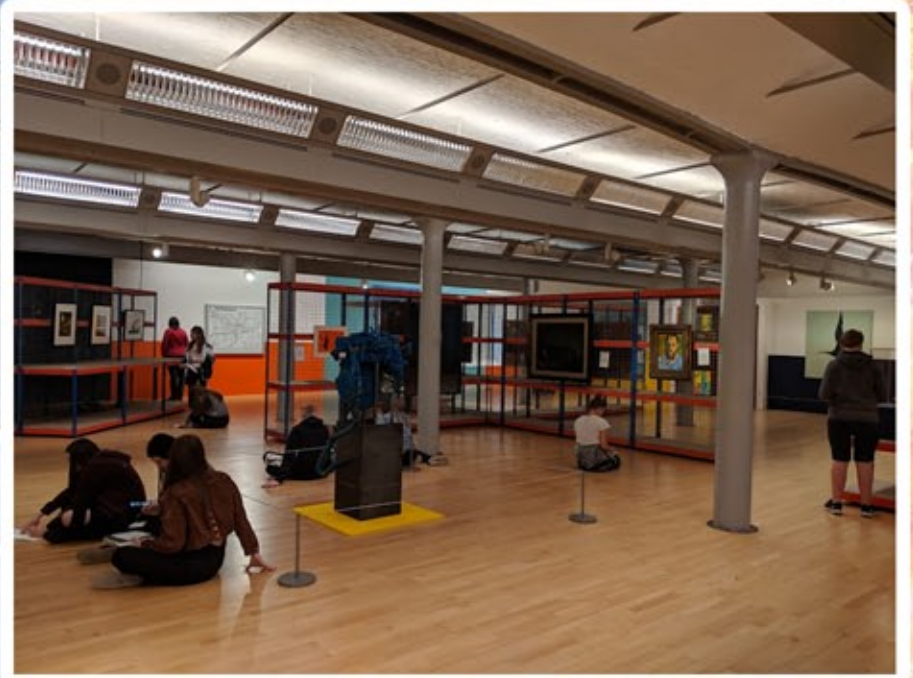
"The trip to the University of Oxford opened my eyes to the possibilities for the prospective future. The visit helped me to realise that a future at Oxford or Cambridge is realistic and not so far-fetched as it is perceived. Talking to many students and professors broke down the stereotypes and worries about studying at either of the universities and even in London. On the Tuesday before the official open day we were fortunate enough to speak to current students, who were very open to tell us how they achieved a place and gave brilliant concepts to think about when writing a personal statement. Also, having sessions discussing the interview process, and questions that may be asked, relaxed everyone and made it obvious that Oxford are looking for individuals with striking interest in their chosen subject. I enjoyed attending a class in my interested subject area, it gave a clear overview on the course and how they teach; I found this to be highly beneficial as you then understand if not only the course, but the University is for you. To say the least, I believe the trip certainly inspired everyone to focus and motivated us in our studies. Personally, it amplified my ambition to reach a once unthinkable start to my future."



ART



KS4 VISIT TO TATE LIVERPOOL



Community project, inspired by the local area. Created by Sixth Form students, for the lunch room at 'AgeUK' Altham.

PE ROUND-UP



Congratulations to 7DU (above), the year 7 winners of Sports Day last week.

Also congratulations to 8VB (below) who took the Year 8 title. Well done!



Well done to the Year 10 sports leaders who helped out with the running of the athletics during the Lancashire School Games.

Our talented Year 7 qualified to represent Hyndburn for the Super 8 Athletics competition. A particular mention to Ruth Harbord who won the Hurdles and the Javelin, and Elizabeth Briggs who won the 100 m.



We now have over 300 followers on Twitter! If you're not following us, then you're missing out on everything that's happening in the department. Follow us: [@StChrisMFL](https://twitter.com/StChrisMFL)



We've continued to introduce lots of new and exciting activities in the classroom, and the MFL team have been actively involved in the whole school 'Spirituality Week' delivering sessions on 'El día de los muertos'

(Day of the Dead), 'Mardi Gras' and 'Carnaval', and also translating the school's core values into all three languages.

We continue to ensure that every pupil is encouraged to reach their potential through stretch and challenge activities, such as our 'Challenge Wall', and in September, we will be introducing our 'Challenge Capsules'!



Unfortunately, we had to cancel the inter-schools Poetry and Creative Writing competition, due to a lack of schools who were able to attend the final. However, we decided to award our own prizes and certificates internally. The overall winners were Ella Ryan and Olivia Ogden, who each received a certificate and a trophy, and the runners up all received a certificate and pin badge. The entries now have pride of place on the MFL corridor opposite Room 4.



MFL NEWS



Our weekly film club has continued to be extremely popular, particularly amongst Year 7 and Year 8 pupils. Films we have watched this term have included 'Pesadillas' ('Goosebumps' in Spanish), and 'Alvin et les Chipmunks - à fond la caisse' ('Alvin and the Chipmunks - The Road Trip' in French).

Film club will resume in September, when we hope to welcome new members.

YEAR 13



VALEDICTORY

Mitton Hall • 04.07.19

ECO

Year 8 have used their science lessons to look at the problem of plastic, from where it ends up, in land fill, or the ocean and the Great Pacific Garbage Patch or why we should avoid purchasing it.

In conclusion, we have decided to limit the use of single-use plastic from September. Water bottles have already disappeared from the school canteen. Whilst many staff have glass bottles, we are encouraging the use of metal bottles for pupils as they are more robust. Water refill points are available throughout school.

9 REASONS TO REFUSE SINGLE-USE PLASTIC



1 Made from fossil fuels



2 Huge carbon footprint



3 Will still be here in hundreds of years



4 Only a tiny percentage is recycled



5 Leaches toxins into food & drink



6 Causes hormone disruption & cancers



7 Pollutes our oceans



8 Kills marine animals and birds



9 Enters our food chain

LESS PLASTIC.

WWW.LESSPLASTIC.CO.UK

Grey Roadway, Year 8 and Eco Group made a power point to be circulated around school, to encourage everyone to limit their plastic use. The 5 R's are a great way to start.

We are looking forward to working with Accrington Asda to help them to encourage their customers to think about their purchases.



July saw the Sixth Form Hub turned into the 'Big Uniform Swap Shop', overseen by Mrs Braithwaite and Miss Robinson. This was a great success, rehoming lost property and students benefiting from preloved uniform. Over 40kg has been recycled and we still have a stock of PE wear and a few blazers, should your children have growth spurts in autumn. This has only been possible thanks to the the kind donations of our pupils and their families. Please continue to wash and donate any pre loved uniform which your family can no longer use. Any batches of obsolete uniform have been sent to a blind school in Malawi.

