

March 2024



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Principal: M. Calen

Dear Parents/Carers

After the very long Autumn term, it seems strange to have had a 10 week term. Students have worked very hard during this time. Year 10, 11, 12 and 13 have sat their mock exams. We have held Parents Evenings for Year 11, 10, 8 and 7, it was a pleasure to see so many parents.

I would like to thank parents for their ongoing support. By working together we can ensure that students have the best opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Students have had the opportunity to take part in a number of visits Nottingham University, GCSE Science Live!, at Sheffield City Hall, Year 8 students took part in a Medicine calling Taster Day at Leicester University, Year 9 visited the Space Centre and took part in various workshops 'Maths in Space'. Year 13 visited the Holovis Centre for an Innovation Masterclass, Year 10 Geography students had a Field Trip to Leicester City Centre, 43 students from Year 9, 10 and 11, visited the Birmingham Hippodrome to watch 'Wicked'. A Music Soiree was held showcasing music soloists alongside performances from Schola Cantorum, Senior Choir and the Jazz Band.

During the last week of term, we held our wonderful Cultural Day. Students were dressed in clothes representing their heritage. What a wonderful sight to see so many different clothes and flags. At lunchtime students had a range of different cuisine to try while watching students performed a range of traditional dances. Thank you to the Sixth Form team for all their organisation and to staff for their contribution. A wonderful celebration of the school's diversity. On the day we raised £908 for a Migrant Charity.

Sixth Form students spoke at the Holocaust Memorial Event at De Montfort University Year 7 students also read at the event. Precious represented the school at the Catenian Regional finals for public speaking not only did she represent the school with confidence she also won triumphing over a number of entries from private schools.

There have been a number of sporting fixtures including football and cricket. Congratulations to Years 9, 10 and 11 Boys football teams who have been crowned as Leicester City Champions and as a result will be representing the whole of the City in this year's School Football County Cup.

### Praise and Rewards:

Since January

- 453 students have received a Head of Year praise letter
- Our first 27 students have reached their Bronze award milestone
- A **grand total of 30,498** praise points have been awarded, demonstrating how much our students are contributing to the life of the school and upholding the English Martyrs' Way, with the most points being awarded for being hardworking.
  - Hardworking - 19,815
  - Excellence - 4044
  - Spiritual life - 2435

- Outstanding contribution (in lessons and school community) - 1355
- Resilience - 1253
- Respect – 1040
- Welcoming - 556

### **Student of the Month – January**

72 students have received Student of the Month for their effort and achievement in January.

85 students have received Student of the Month for February.

### **Attendance**

We are delighted that attendance at English Martyrs' continues to be excellent. It was recently confirmed that we are in the top 10% of schools nationally for attendance.

In the last week of term we have rewarded many students for their positive attendance.

Over 150 students in years 7-11 are still on 100% attendance for the entire academic year so far.

Additionally, we rewarded well over 500 students for managing to achieve 100% attendance for the 6 week period from 29<sup>th</sup> January to 15<sup>th</sup> March.

The best tutor groups in each year group were also rewarded for their attendance during this period of time.

### **Attendance/absence email address**

From Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April we will be introducing a new email address to which you must email if your child is absent from school – please email [attendance@englishmartyrs.org](mailto:attendance@englishmartyrs.org) stating the reason why your child is absent.

### **English Martyrs Principal Pens and Certificates**

It has been my pleasure to meet a number of students from across the year groups to award them with an English Martyrs' Principals pen or certificate for their outstanding work and contribution to the school.

Year 7 - Nico A, Frayne F and Jakub O, Holocaust writing competition. Girls Football Team - Aine L, Ola S, Sophie D, Milena W, Alysia S, Martha V, Rose E, Makayla O, Jemima M, Khaya S. Shaniah S excellent work in RE. Joyce O excellent work in Modern languages. Our 'Reading Millionaires' Noah G, Gideon O and Emmauel D all received pens for reading more than a million words since September.

Year 8 – Girls Football Team - Kailyn Y, Jessica M, Vera M, Abigail M, Laura K, Michalina A, Dhana H. Year 8 Hospitality students – Debria A, Juliana C, Sara J, Jingle J, Nicol R, Carlotta C, Keziah T, Manna S. Ana I for her amazing Easter Card design.

Year 9 – Callum F, for displaying English Martyrs' community spirit.

Year 10 - James C, MusicFest Winner of the Composition Competition, Natasha S, outstanding work in Chemistry. Mimi I, for displaying English Martyrs' community spirit.

Year 13 – Jenisha J for being chosen out of 100's of young people to have her photography work displayed at the NEC.

### **School Highlights from Departments**

I have included just some of the amazing activities and opportunities students have been involved in.

#### **Drama**

Matilda: Rehearsals for this years production of Matilda are coming together now. The talent of the cast is outstanding; they have been working really hard to create an energetic and fun performance for the family. This cast have truly impressed Mrs Handley and me. We also have a creative group of students assisting Mr Allsop in the design and creation of props for the performance. Clips of the rehearsals have already been shown on the Music department Instagram page and we will shortly be releasing a video on the school website. Performance dates are Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June and Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June. Tickets can be purchased on the school shop. We hope to see you there.

Year 11 completed their final Drama performance in front of a visiting examiner. They commented on how nice it was to return to English Martyrs after not visiting for eight years; They also enjoyed the choice of performance texts and congratulated the students on their confidence when performing in such a large space.

Year 12 and 13 are utilising their artistic license in the creation and development of a scripted and a reimagined performance in preparation for their performance assessment at the end of term.

Our student stage crew have continued to attend sessions to receive training on all things production design. This term they have been experimenting with our lighting system and how to create and programme lights in our auditorium. Some of the stage crew team have already had the chance to put their new skills to use and programmed lights for exam performance and other school events.

## **English**

### **GCSE Workshops:**

The Department ran two two-hour workshops on Writing and Reading for the English Language papers. Students worked hard in the sessions and now understand where to focus their daily revision for this vital GCSE examination.

### **English Martyrs' Newsletter:**

Ms Bhakta has recruited new reporters and editors from Years 7, 9 and 12 for the Newsletter. They have brought a fresh new perspective, making the Easter edition the largest so far: it's full of amazing articles and activities.

### **Public Speaking:**

The semifinals of the Trust's Public Speaking Competition took place in February. Ms Bhakta coached six students from different year groups, enabling them to perform well. Best O in Year 11 has competed in the final at St Pauls achieving second place.

As preparation for a national competition organised by the Catenians, five Year 12 students delivered excellent speeches to the whole of the Sixth Form in February. We're delighted that Precious M, who was selected to represent the school in the Regional Final at English Martyrs on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March, was awarded first place amongst 11 competitors. She will now represent Province 15 in the National Final to be held in Manchester on 1<sup>st</sup> September.

### **Writing Competition:**

All Year 7 students were invited to participate in Leicester City Council's 'Holocaust Writing Competition': they wrote a story exploring the 'Fragility of Freedom', particularly for Jews in WW2. When researching this topic, they had to ensure their facts were true and their sources reliable.

All entries were judged externally. Nico A, Frayne F and Jakub O were awarded for their work and invited to the annual memorial event at De Montfort University on Saturday 27th January, where they read their stories to a live audience.

### **Reading Initiatives:**

#### **Year 7 Accelerated Reader**

Students are still competing in form groups to see which form can read the largest total of words! For their words to count, students need to complete an online quiz about their books. We are delighted to announce that three students are 'Reading Millionaires' - having each read more than one million words since September: Noah and Gideon, in Alban, and Emmanuel in Line.

## **History**

Year 7 had a visit from 'Up and at 'em History', where they got to experience and handle many Medieval artefacts relating to Medieval warfare, like various types of swords and other weapons, as well as getting the experience of trying on medieval suits of armour and clothing.

In the Sixth Form we had two students, Helen S and Anna J, both give speeches at the Leicester City Holocaust Memorial service on 27<sup>th</sup> Jan, speaking about the theme of 'fragility of freedom'.

Year 12 have been learning about the horrors of the Cultural Revolution in China in the late 1960s. The students are really enjoying the change of topic at A Level to Mao's China.

Year 13 will be holding a Tudor Tea Party before the Easter holidays, with each student playing the role of a key individual in the Tudor era. Some will even be in fancy dress, and there might even be Tudor style food provided.

## **IT**

Introduction of Minecraft Education and Micro:bit programmable devices.

Year 7 students have been learning to programme Python – a text based programming language, using Minecraft Education. They have solved puzzles that focus on the different techniques of both the programming language and elements within Minecraft e.g. displaying text, building using coordinates, use of variables, and testing and debugging Python code. Students have access to this platform within their Office365 accounts and can use it to help develop their programming skills further.

In addition, year 7 have also been using Micro:bit v2 programmable devices to display scrolling text, images, and games using the many sensors and buttons contained on the device. All students have had fun programming these and developed their skills further.

## **Mathematics**

Space Centre Trip

Before half term some of our Year 9 students visited the National Space Centre Museum in Leicester. Throughout the day, the students were able to explore interactive exhibits, learn about the history of space exploration. They were able to see first hand how concepts such as geometry, trigonometry, and calculus are used by scientists and engineers to solve complex problems and navigate through space. This helps them to pursue further studies and careers in STEM fields.

Maths Challenge Results

We are pleased to announce some fantastic results from the recent UK Intermediate Maths Challenge. 153 students in years 9, 10 and 11 were entered and they achieved 90 certificates.

Certificates are only awarded to the top 50% of entries from across the country.

They achieved the following results:

10 Gold (Gold certificates are only awarded to the top 8% of all entries from across the country)

30 Silver

50 Bronze

## **Media**

It has been a very busy term for Media students, all have been involved in challenging Film projects. Year 13 have been working on short films to be entered into a genre-based film festival, developing special effect techniques, narrative and appropriate camera and sound decisions. Year 12 have been working in groups redeveloping scenes from existing films often reinterpreting narrative and character while at the same time developing film techniques and practice. Year 11, 10 and 9 have been developing short films designed to encourage Teenagers to be more physically active!! As always projects draw not only on techniques and emotional development of character to connect with audience but require strong leadership, planning and communication skills to be able to successfully manage projects. Students have worked incredibly hard and continue to show good enthusiasm and engagement in their tasks.

## **PE**

Years 9, 10 and 11 Boys football teams have been crowned as Leicester City Champions and as a result will be representing the whole of the City in this year's School Football County Cup.

Year 13 students have been able to host Question and Answer sessions with Sports Industry working professionals, including a physiotherapist from the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB).

Students in years 7-10 have been involved in multiple indoor cricket matches this term, with our year 9 and 10 team progressing further in the competition after beating Castle Mead.

## **RE**

Students in Years 7-10 have been actively participating in Stations of the Cross liturgies with James in our school Chapel. These services have afforded our students with some vital time out for prayer and personal reflection.

In this season of Lent, Year 7 have been exploring traditional Christian practices and have been moving forwards to consider the deeper significance of events which unfold during Holy Week.

Our Year 8 students have been exploring the significance of the Mass in the context of salvation history. They have considered various Christian approaches to the Eucharist and are now pursuing the theme of 'journey' through pilgrimage.

Students in Year 9 continue to engage in critical thinking, discussion and debate as they have considered competing religious and secular narratives in relation to sexual ethics.

Students in Year 10 prepped well for their mock exams and are currently working through the theme of 'Redemption'. We had some very impressive architectural models before half term as many students took it upon themselves to design their own churches. Prizes have been awarded to several of our budding young architects!

Students in Year 11 have completed all GCSE units and are now engaging in the department's revision programme. Many students performed exceptionally well in their recent mock exams. It has been wonderful to see the level of drive and commitment in so many students, taking responsibility for their own progress and reading through the revision guide available from the school shop.

## **Science**

During this term over 100 students have received "Science star of the week". 45 A Level students took part in the Chemistry Olympiad after weeks of preparation. We eagerly await the results of this to see how the Chemists have done. All Year 12 Biology students took part in the Biology Olympiad with one student achieving the silver award and many getting commendations for their participation. 30 Year 10 students went to Sheffield to listen to a selection of inspiring scientists talk about their research and careers, as well as listening to a chief examiner, a really interesting day for all. Natasha S in Year 10 has been commended by her Chemistry teacher for excellent work, by completing some challenging questions that are part of the A Level course - well done and keep up the great work! The Society of Physics and Engineering have been enjoying getting stuck into some theoretical Physics. Science week activities have been taking place in Science lessons in March and Year 7 and 8 students have all had the opportunity to participate in a poster competition. The theme this year is "time". 30 Year 8 students went on a "Medicine Calling" event at the University of Leicester, a fantastic experience to hear from medical students and take part in workshops where they got to take their peers' blood pressure and use a stethoscope.

## **Lent**

Lent started this year with our services for Ash Wednesday. Our students took on various ministries, Sixth Formers gave ashes to students and our Spiritual Life Officers, along with Schola, led the liturgies for each year group. Students received prayer cards reflecting on the Gospels of Lent and we were helped to think about the need for distributive justice with the help of Cafod. Students in Year 7 to Year 10 have had time to pray and reflect in the Chapel with the Stations of the Cross, along with some form groups walking the way of the cross around the school. Students were introduced to the liturgies of the Sacred Triduum and had the opportunity to venerate our Lampedusa cross, uniting the suffering of Christ with refugees around the world. Year 7 and 8 have taken part in the Cafod Lent big walk during PE. As a community we celebrated Services of Reconciliation, led by 8 Ward.

Students were given the opportunity to go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and we are very grateful to Frs. Vitalis, David and John for being available to administer the sacrament, (and to the 75 students who took the opportunity to voluntarily attend). The Easter Egg raffle is underway, Drama will be leading us in our Passion Play liturgies this week and we will be ending Lent with the celebration of Palm Sunday.

## **Uniform – a reminder**

The following are not permitted:

- Hairstyles which are considered extreme including multi-coloured hair, shaved heads below grade 3, unnatural colours
- Coats/Jackets, must not be worn in lessons and hooded coats must not be worn up inside the school building
- Hoodies are not permitted on the school site
- Make up – Natural looking make up only, no false eyelashes or eyeliner
- Lipstick/gloss and eye mascara are not permitted
- Nails – should not be painted, no acrylics/fake/gel nails are permitted
- Jewellery, only one stud per ear. No tongue or facial piercings (including clear studs). Rings are not permitted. All necklaces or bracelets must be worn under uniform and out of sight

Please note that any student who arrives at school with incorrect uniform will be issued with a break time detention. Students wearing inappropriate make up/piercings will be asked to remove these immediately.

## **Pre-Loved Uniform Shop**

The Pre-Loved Uniform Shop has been open every week at parent events and it's regular monthly opening. If you are having a spring clean over Easter and would like to donate toward the Pre-Loved shop then please donate through our main reception.

## **60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

As you will be aware 2025 will be the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first students in the school. We will be celebrating this and we are keen to receive photographs from across this time from ex students and staff. If you have any that you wish to share with the school please scan and send them to [60years@englishmartyrs.org](mailto:60years@englishmartyrs.org). We will be holding events at the school throughout 2024 – 2025 school year. Please check the website for updates.

## **Communication**

The majority of communication is coming to you by email, please can you check you are receiving emails from us. If you need to update any contact details, please email [office@englishmaryrs.org](mailto:office@englishmaryrs.org)

I would like to thank all of our staff for their hard work over another busy term since the new year. I wish everyone the blessing of the Easter season and look forward to welcoming students at the start of the new term on **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 8.25am.**

Yours sincerely



M Calen  
Principal