ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

ST MICHAEL'S
Church of England High School

Date: 22 October 2020
Issue: 010

AUTUMN 1 NEWSLETTER

Dear Parent/Carer,

At St Michael's, we aim to show love, care and kindness to all in our community. We value what we have and share with others and we aim to enable everyone to achieve their full potential. Whilst Covid-19 has forced changes upon us, our children have adapted, continued to flourish and proven their resilience. As a welcoming, collaborative school community, we hope it will not be too long before restrictions are minimised and we can resume some kind of normality. Until then, stay safe and well and have a restful half-term holiday.

Kindest regards,

Mrs Gray, Headteacher

Upcoming News & Events:

Thurs 22nd October	Students break up for half-term
Fri 23rd October	Staff Training Day
Monday 2nd November	Students return to school
9th – 13th November	Year 11 mock exams
30th Nov – 11th Dec	Year 9 exams
Thurs 17th December	Christmas Service
	Students break up for Christmas
Friday 18th December	Staff Training Day
Monday 4th January	Students return to school
Friday 12th February	Staff Training Day
Friday 19th February	Students break up for half-term

OUR SCHOOL PRAYER

What does the *Lord* ask of you?

To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6vs.8

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MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

Whilst we were unable to go ahead with our usual Coffee Morning Bake Sale fundraiser this year because of the Covid-19 restrictions, St Michael's staff took part in a prize draw on Friday 25th September. Fifteen prizes were up for grabs, including the Star Prize (left), which was won by Mrs Worley.

A total of £427.01 was raised for Macmillan Cancer Support; this included a generous donation from staff at Manby Unit of Ryland View Care Home in Tipton, who wished to show their appreciation for the visors made and donated to them by St Michael's staff during lockdown.

Many thanks to Ms Walker, Mrs Giorgio and their helpers for organising this event.

SMILE TRAIN

On Friday 2nd October, we celebrated World Smile Day by raising money for Smile Train. Every day, 540 babies are born with a cleft palate and just £150 will cover the cost of a child's complete surgery, transforming a life.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to both our bucket collection and our Just Giving page, which resulted in a magnificent total of £428.28.

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LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE NEWS

Library Book Boxes

Due to current Covid-19 restrictions, the Learning Resource Centre has not been able to open as normal this term. Staff have therefore been busy putting together library book boxes so every student in Years 7, 8 and 9 can have access to a reading book during the school day. The aim is to encourage and support students' reading for pleasure, whilst improving literacy.

Each box is on loan for two weeks, after which it will be returned to the Library for a change of books; this two-week rotation will ensure that students should regularly have a fresh selection of books from which to choose.

Students have been issued with individual library cards that allow them to access the school's library management system, **Eclipse**, from school or home. This will enable them to reserve a library book of their choice, which will be delivered to class by library staff; they will also be able to renew a book through this system.

Introducing eBooks!
SORA

SORA is a fantastic resource for students.

There are thousands of popular eBooks and Audiobooks on SORA which can be read or listened to on tablets, phones and laptops. Unfortunately, Kindles are not currently supported in the UK. Students are able to access a huge range of fiction and non-fiction material at any time, free of charge.

Study guides are also available on SORA to support students in their learning, focus their attention on important topics and help them prepare for exams.

Please contact the Learning Resource Centre if you require more information.

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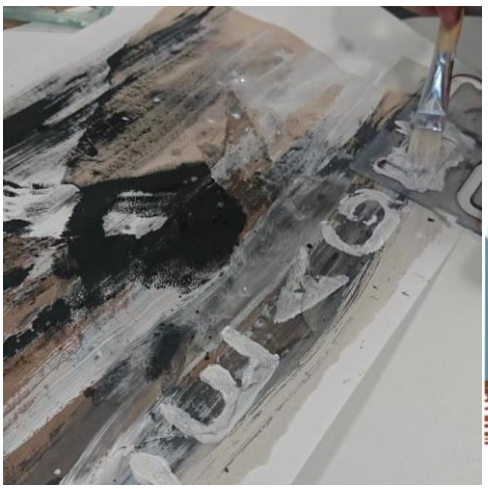
BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The Art Department and Student Voice came together for a Black History Month Art exhibition and competition. Budding artists were invited to join us for an after-school session on Wednesday 14th and Wednesday 21st October; work created will be used for display and the winners received a bundle of art supplies.



Well done to our two winners: Shannon Lovesey created Will Smith and Izzy Joesbury chose Barack Obama as inspirational black figures.

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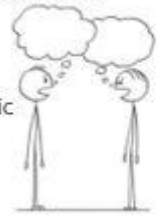
MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

Talking about our mental health has never been so important but it can be awkward or daunting if it is a topic that is not usually discussed at home. Below are some tips for parents/carers on how to broach the subject with your child.

1. **Make conversations about mental health a normal part of life:** Anywhere is a good place to talk: in the car, walking the dog or cooking together. Model everyday talk about feelings, for example by talking about a TV character's feelings.
2. **Give your full attention:** We all know it's horrible to be half listened to. Keep eye contact, focus on the child and ignore distractions.
3. **Check your body language:** Try to keep it open and relaxed and make sure you come down to the child's level.
4. **Take it seriously:** Don't downplay what the child is saying or tell them they're "just being silly". Resist the urge to reassure them that everything is fine.
5. **Ask open questions:** Such as "How did your day go today?" This will help to extend the conversation.
6. **Calmly stay with the feelings that arise:** It can be our automatic reaction to steer away from difficult emotions.



7. **Offer empathy rather than solutions:** Show that you accept what they are telling you but don't try to solve the problem.
8. **Remember we are all different:** Respect and value the child's feelings, even though they may be different to yours.
9. **Look for clues about feelings:** Listen to the child's words, tone of voice and body language.
10. **Some ways to start a conversation about feelings might be:**
    "How are you feeling at the moment?"
    "You don't seem your usual self. Do you want to talk about it?"
    "Do you fancy a chat?"
    "I'm happy to listen if you need a chat."

At St Michael's we believe that a three-way partnership between school, home and the student is paramount to your child's success and this includes their well-being and mental state. If you are concerned about your child, please inform the school and a member of the Pastoral Team will try to assist you. Alternatively, you can access useful resources and guidance from the following websites.

www.childline.org.uk
www.annafreud.org
www.mind.org.uk

(Source: Anna Freud website)

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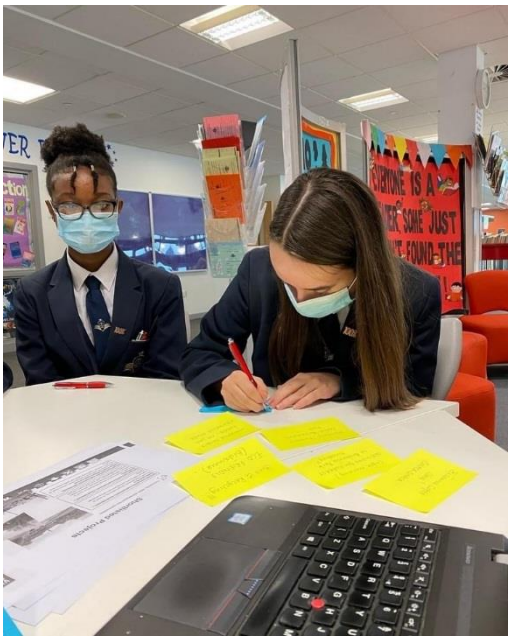
SANDWELL TOWNS FUND

On 23rd September, St Michael's students took part in a special consultation workshop with Sandwell Council to discuss town funding for Rowley Regis. This followed the announcement last month that West Bromwich, Smethwick and Rowley Regis had been identified by central government to benefit from the Towns Fund. This fund comprises £3.6 billion, with up to £25 million per town being available.

This is a really exciting opportunity to bring investment into Sandwell, to drive economic regeneration, to deliver long term economic and productive growth to ensure our towns are thriving and to create a better environment that is a great place to live and work.



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FUNDRAISING MILESTONE

We are thrilled to be able to officially share that we have now exceeded our fundraising target, raising more than £40,000 for Birmingham Children's Hospital (BCH) Charity.

We first started raising funds in 2012 and have since formed a very special partnership with BCH. Over the years we have organised some weird and wonderful activities to raise money, including raffles, bake sales, dance shows, sponsored events, supermarket bag packs and our annual Winter Fayre.

Miranda Williams, Head of Public Fundraising at BCH Charity, said: "We have been absolutely overwhelmed by the sheer amount of support and commitment St Michael's High School has shown for our charity. Just when we think they've peaked, they step up, raise the bar and smash their targets all over again! £40,000 is an absolutely phenomenal amount and we can't thank all of the students and staff enough for helping us do more for our sick children."

Thank you to all our wonderful students, staff and parents for their ongoing support. We simply could not do it without you!

WOODLAND HOUSE

…will be a brand-new, purpose-built centre away from the hustle and bustle of the Women's Hospital, Birmingham, where families who have lost a baby through miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal death can spend time together in safe, secure and serene surroundings before they feel ready to face the world again.

Our next fundraising appeal is for Woodland House and, in the absence of our annual winter fayre this year, we will be hosting a fundraising challenge with Year 7 students and details of further fundraising activities will be announced over forthcoming months.

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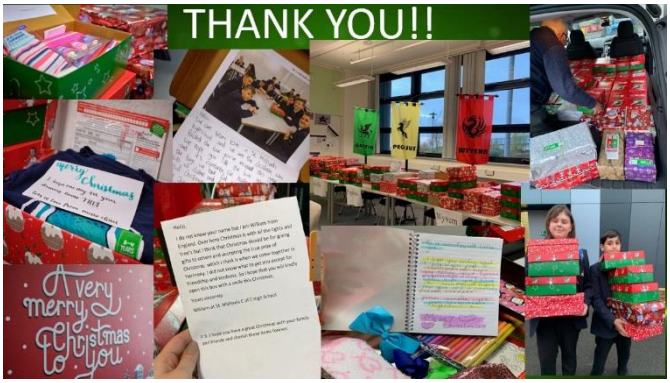
OUR HOUSE SYSTEM

I'm Mr. Howden and, together with Mrs Khan, Mrs Robinson and Miss Wilkinson, we lead the four houses at St. Michael's: Pegasus, Griffin, Wyvern and Kirin.

These house names are based on mythical winged creatures – linking to our school through St. Michael being a winged archangel. The house system was developed just under two years ago to encourage students and staff at St. Michael's to take part in healthy competition; raise money for local and national charities; celebrate important milestones throughout the year (Christmas, Easter and the end of year) and to link St Michael's more closely with the local community.

We have raised money for several worthwhile causes such as Samaritan's Purse, Race for Life and the Australian Bush Fire Appeal. Also, we have held regular events in the school calendar in our inter-house competition, for example sports day and the end of year celebration. Each house includes form groups from every year group from 7 to 11, helping to encourage students of all ages to mix and encourage each other to succeed. We will continue to build on the fantastic start we have made in the last two years to encourage a happy and healthy environment for learning and success.



With the challenges that have arisen from Covid-19 and the new ways in which we are required to work, it has been necessary to make changes to cope with 'the new normal' but we will ensure that the house system will continue to provide challenge and competition throughout this academic year and into the future.

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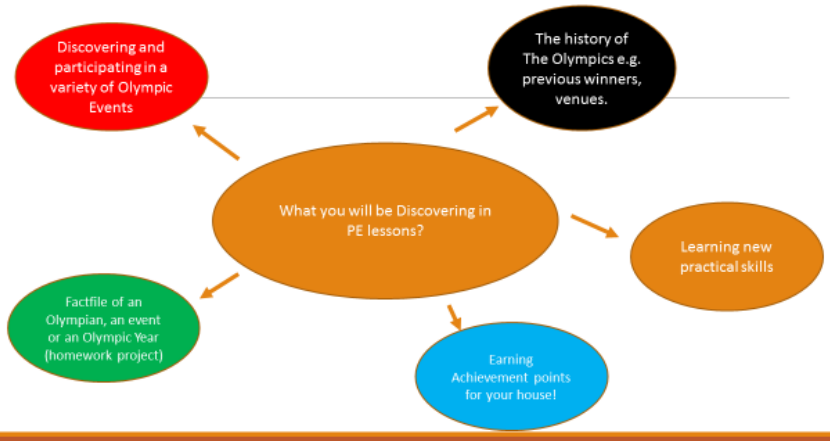
PE NEWS



Years 7 and 8 have been following the Olympics Discovery Curriculum this half-term.

Top performers in each Olympic event have been awarded house points, as well as students who have contributed well in lessons.

The top three students in each form have achieved Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards based on practical skills and overall engagement throughout the Olympics discovery:

	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
7M	Xander-Solomon Grosvenor	Luke Flavell	Kaitlin Hogan
7I	Kian Hodgetts	Leah Davy	Aiden Niblett
7C	Evie Bennett	Savanah Cresswell	Callum Nicholls
7H	Elliot Saba	Lily Marlow	Brodie Crump
7A	Jaiden Bassi	Stella Masiya	Liam Bunn
7E	Liam Bedford	Manpreet Singh	Sydney Pritchard
7L	Liberty Henderson	Kurtis Phipps	Lisa-Marie Postles
7S	Joseph Jackson	Trae Gareebine	Ruby Slater

	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
8M	Olivia Harrison	Leo Wells	Lilah Henderson
8I	Alexia Menegatos	Brandon Banner	Jessica Szlachta
8C	Grace Popoola	Abbie Louise Siverns	Omarion Richards
8H	Alex Martis	Lily Portman	Joseph Newey
8A	Amelie Carpenter	Jack Palmer	Ashir Ahmad
8E	Bliss Ward	Amelia Day	Ella Howles
8L	Josh Ongono	Leighton Woodruff	Lily Walker
8S	Oscar Bridge	Miah Beech	Jack Woodall
8ST	Caleb McBride	Kathen Evans	Myles Durham

PLEASE NOTE…

With effect from 1st September 2021, the St Michael's navy blue skort will be removed from our school uniform policy. Students can continue to wear the skort for the remainder of this academic year; however, any parents planning to buy additional PE kit during the course of the year are advised to purchase St Michael's navy blue shorts, as the skort will no longer be allowed as part of our PE kit with effect from the above date.

As you are aware, on days where Core PE is timetabled, it is a requirement that students come to school wearing their PE kit. Now the days are getting colder, students will be allowed to wear **plain navy fleece ('jogger' type) tracksuit bottoms** over the top of skorts and shorts; however, they should **NOT** be wearing leggings of any type.

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ADVICE FOR HALLOWEEN

… a message from our local authority

You will probably be aware that the government has announced new coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions, naming Sandwell and many other areas in our region as a 'High Alert' zone. Unfortunately, we are seeing a rapid rise in the numbers of people being taken to hospital and dying after becoming infected.

With COVID-19 infection rates high across Sandwell, we therefore need to give some advice about Halloween.

At this time of year, many families will be preparing for Halloween at the end of October. There is no reason why this annual event cannot be celebrated in your own home or garden with people you live with. However, in light of the government restrictions because of the high infection rates, we believe it is far better for your children not to call at other houses to trick or treat as this will increase the risk of infection, either to your children and family or to people answering the door.

While we know this may be disappointing for some children who enjoy 'trick or treating', please stay safe, protect yourselves and others and look at alternative, safe ways to celebrate Halloween this year.

Remember, the more cases there are, the greater the risk of passing on the virus, especially to older and vulnerable people in your family or neighbourhood who are at a much higher risk of serious illness or death from COVID-19.

Also, please be aware that the current government restrictions for Sandwell prevent people from different households mixing inside each other's homes and people from different households are not allowed to meet outdoors in groups of more than six. Visit **www.sandwell.gov.uk/localrestrictions** for more details about the government restrictions.

We would like to thank all parents and carers for their ongoing support to schools this term. Schools have detailed infection control measures in place and, while we are seeing cases among some children and staff, the risk of an outbreak is significantly reduced by everyone following the guidance issued by your school, public health and the government.

If your child has been sent home to self-isolate because of a confirmed case in their school, please keep your children at home and play your part in stopping the spread of the virus.

Thank you again for your assistance during these difficult times.