

St Peter's Catholic School Newsletter

October 2024



Our Faith



Faith
Attentive
Intentionally loving
Truthful
Hopeful

Last week our assembly theme was "Tricks and Truthfulness" which was inspired by the Sunday Gospel, one of several episodes where the 'Holy people', the Pharisees try to trick Jesus into causing offense. Jesus expertly navigates this by being simple and truthful. The trick question about divorce was the Pharisees attempt to trick Jesus into betraying Jewish law. Jesus follows the law but says that to enter the Kingdom of God, we must do so like children – a sign for us to be truthful and honest – not try to 'get the better of

our neighbour' or to believe we are better than anybody else. Jesus' message was to keep it simple – like a child – if a child needs warmth, or love, or food, or sleep – they'll tell you - not tricks just truthfulness – all parents will testify to this. And equally, we should be the same – to enter the Kingdom of God we all need to be like children – honest about what we need and give love to whoever gives it to us and that is the real trick to our faith... which of course is our foundation.

This week, our assemblies have continued with the Gospel themes from St Mark about the question of how to get into heaven. Many communities and religions have tried to give answers to this question, and often have deviated from what was simple, clear advice from Jesus: **take care of the poor and look after those in need**. The poor does not just mean those who are short of money, but those who are poor in so many ways: the lonely, the sick, the anxious, those lacking in confidence or those poor in spirit. There is no shortage of worthy causes. Be attentive to what God is calling you to do is a key virtue of our St Peter's Profile and if we are attentive we are sure to support our St Peter's Mission, to take care of the poor and remember we are one big family.

During October, at least one class each day has been praying the Holy Rosary in the chapel. Asking Our Lady's intercession for lots of causes, our children never cease to amaze us about how selfless they are in prayer - always thinking of others and living as Jesus taught us.

Dates for your diary

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 23rd October Year 7 Trip to see 'Aladdin' | 25th October Inset Day (school closed) | 18th November KS5 Science Live Event |
| 24th October Year 8&9 Trip to see 'Aladdin' | 28th-3rd November Half Term | 19th November KS5 Trip to see 'Othello' |
| 24th October Year 7 Form Tutor & Parents' Evening | 14th November Sixth Form Open Evening | 28th November Year 8 Parents' Evening |

Faith is Our Foundation

Parking outside of St Peter's

As we all know, mornings and afternoons around St Peter's Catholic School can be busy with traffic. However, we have recently received reports of some parents parking on grass verges or blocking residents' driveways when dropping off or collecting their children.

We understand that space can be limited, but it's vital that we all park legally and, most importantly, safely.

Parking inconsiderately can cause inconvenience to our neighbours and put the safety of our pupils and other pedestrians at risk. We kindly ask that all parents ensure they are parking in designated areas and are mindful of the impact on the local community.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE): Parent and Carer Survey



RSE Questionnaire

At St Peter's Catholic School, we value the input of our parents in shaping the education we provide. We are currently seeking your views on our Relationships, Sex, and Health (RSH) curriculum, and would greatly appreciate it if you could take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire sent to you.

Your feedback is important in helping us ensure that our curriculum is effective, relevant, and supportive of your child's development. By sharing your thoughts, you can help guide future improvements and make sure our approach reflects the needs and values of our school community. **Mrs Lakin, Deputy Director of Learning: PSHE**

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about INSTAGRAM

Instagram is a highly popular social media platform with over 2 billion active monthly users. The app is continuously updating and adding new features to meet the wishes of its audience, allowing them to upload images and videos to their Instagram feed, create interactive 'stories', go live, exchange private messages or explore and follow other accounts that catch their eye.

AGE RESTRICTIONS 13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

- ADDICTION**: Many social media platforms, including Instagram, are designed to keep us engaged as often as possible. They encourage scrolling often and scrolling more in case we miss something important. In essence, a fear of missing out. On Instagram, young people can lose track of time when endlessly scrolling and watching videos posted by friends, influencers, and possibly strangers.
- UNREALISTIC IDEALS**: Children sometimes compare themselves to what they see online. In their teens, they are often exposed to images of celebrities, models, and influencers. Most people only show the positive about their lives online and many use filters when taking pictures of themselves. A constant comparison with unrealistic ideals can lead to insecurity over one's own appearance and lifestyle.
- GOING LIVE**: Streaming on Instagram allows users to interact with friends and followers in real time. While this is a great feature, it also means that children can be seen by anyone who is watching. This can lead to unwanted attention and cyberbullying.
- ADVICE FOR PARENTS & EDUCATORS**:
 - AVOID GOING PUBLIC**: If a young user wants to share their clothing style, make-up, or other content, they should be encouraged to keep it private. This helps to reduce the risk of unwanted attention and cyberbullying.
 - USE MODERATORS**: Instagram has implemented a mechanic called 'Moderators', meaning that creators can assign a moderator and give them the power to delete comments, remove viewers and remove the ability for certain users to comment at all. Consider this if a child in your care wants to go live on the platform. It's also important to discuss the risks of being seen by anyone who is watching a live stream.
 - MEET OUR EXPERT**: Dr. Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant at BCYberbank. She has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety workshops and policies for schools in Australia and the UK. Claire has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviours of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about IN-GAME CHAT

Video games are continuing to grow in popularity – including, of course, among children and young people – and the emergence of gaming communities has been accelerated by the inclusion of chat functionality across many different titles. While in-game chat isn't inherently a bad thing, it can create some concerns about online safety and the people that children might be interacting with.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

- DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHAT**: There are a number of ways that games offer in-game chat. Some are text-based, some are voice-based, and some are a mix of both. As the name would suggest, in-game chat happens within the game itself. There's also party chat, which is a group voice conversation that remains open even when the player is not in the game. This type of chat tends to be more commonly used by players who are playing together. Party chat is usually only available on PC, but it can also be used on consoles. It's a particularly popular feature for young people to be seen in a wide kind of context.
- CONTACT WITH STRANGERS**: Whether it's text- or voice-based, in-game chat is frequently open to anyone who is playing the game. This means that it's possible for a child to meet and interact with people they don't know. While most players aren't necessarily aware of this, it's important to be aware of the potential for contact with strangers.
- DANGER OF GROOMING**: It's been reported that some young gamers have been groomed by strangers. Grooming is a process where someone builds a relationship with a child, often through online chat, with the aim of eventually leading to sexual abuse or exploitation.
- ADVICE FOR PARENTS & EDUCATORS**:
 - LOCK-DOWN IN-GAME CHAT**: In-game chat can often be disabled in the game's settings. This allows parents to control what their child can see and say. It's important to be aware of each individual game. Chat that appears in the corner of the screen is often a sign that it's a community game. In these games, chat is often a key feature. It's important to be aware of the risks of in-game chat, especially for children who are playing in multiplayer games, as they can be seen by anyone who is playing with them.
 - REPORT POTENTIAL OFFENDERS**: Most games offer a robust means of reporting other players, so you can flag up any behaviour that you think is inappropriate. It's important to be aware of the risks of in-game chat, especially for children who are playing in multiplayer games, as they can be seen by anyone who is playing with them.
 - MEET OUR EXPERT**: Lloyd Corbridge is the father of a child who has been working in the gaming industry for five years. He is also a parent and therefore understands the importance of online safety. He has written about text and voice chat, and his work has been published in sites including iD, TechRadar, and Family Zone.

Faith

Attendance Matters

| W/B | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 | Year 12 | Year 13 |
|-------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 30/09 | 95.8% | 93.7% | 93.3% | 93.9% | 91.6% | 94.2% | 96.1% |
| 07/10 | 95.8% | 94.2% | 92.2% | 93.4% | 92.7% | 96.1% | 94.9% |
| 11/10 | 97.1% | 95.3% | 94.4% | 94.6% | 93.8% | 96% | 94.5% |

Bonfire & Fireworks

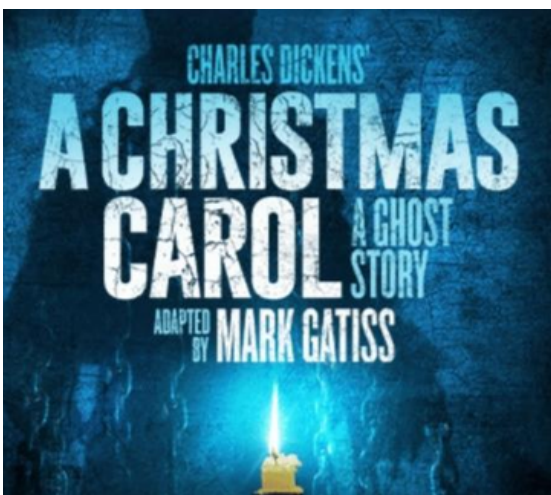
With Bonfire Night approaching, it's an exciting time for many, but also one where safety must come first. As our pupils grow older and gain more independence, it's crucial that they understand the importance of acting responsibly, especially around fireworks and bonfires.

While the temptation to handle fireworks or attend unsupervised events may grow, it's important to remember that fireworks are not only dangerous but illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to purchase or use. We encourage all our pupils to attend organised events with adult supervision and to keep a safe distance from fireworks and bonfires.

Here are a few key tips to keep in mind:

- Always attend a professional, supervised event.
- Keep a safe distance from fireworks and bonfires.
- Never handle or light fireworks, especially without adult supervision.
- Be mindful of your surroundings, especially in crowded areas.

Fireworks can be fun and spectacular, but safety should always come first. We hope you enjoy the festivities while staying safe and responsible.



Upcoming English Trips – Essential for Exam Preparation!

We are pleased to offer two exciting theatre trips that provide valuable opportunities for pupils to engage with key GCSE texts ahead of their English exams.

On 17th December 2024, pupils will attend 'A Christmas Carol' at The Rep Theatre, Birmingham. This production will bring Charles Dickens' classic novella to life, helping pupils deepen their understanding of the text's themes and characters whilst getting everyone in the Christmas spirit just before the holidays.

Additionally, on 12th March 2025, pupils can experience 'Revision on Tour: Macbeth' at the Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham. Seeing Shakespeare's tragedy performed live will enhance pupils' appreciation of its language, structure, and dramatic impact, offering a unique perspective on this core GCSE text.

Both trips are excellent revision opportunities, reinforcing classroom learning and preparing pupils for their exams. We strongly encourage all pupils to take part and make the most of these enriching experiences! If you are interested, speak with your son/daughter's English teacher or Miss Woodall directly.

Miss Woodall, Director of Learning: English

Attentive

School Communications

We are pleased to inform you that our recent move to using WhatsApp to communicate with parents has been well-received, and we hope those participating have found it useful. This platform allows us to share important updates and information more efficiently.

If you haven't yet joined the WhatsApp group, please refer to the letter sent out earlier this month for instructions on how to gain access. Alternatively, contact the school office who can provide you with the links to join.

Additionally, we have received reports that some of our communication may be ending up in parents' junk or spam folders. We kindly ask all parents to regularly check these folders to ensure you're receiving all our messages, as some important notices might be missed.

Thank you for staying connected, and we appreciate your cooperation in making sure information is shared smoothly. **Mr Mallon, Associate Assistant Headteacher**

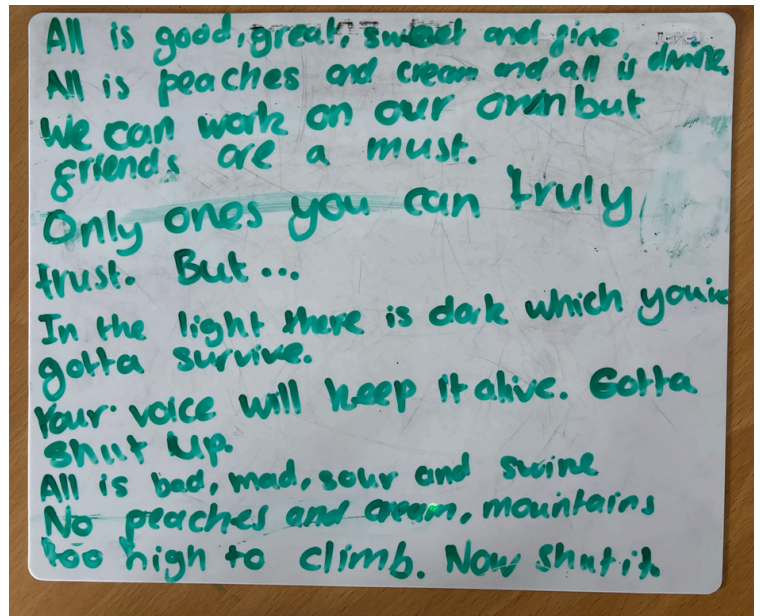
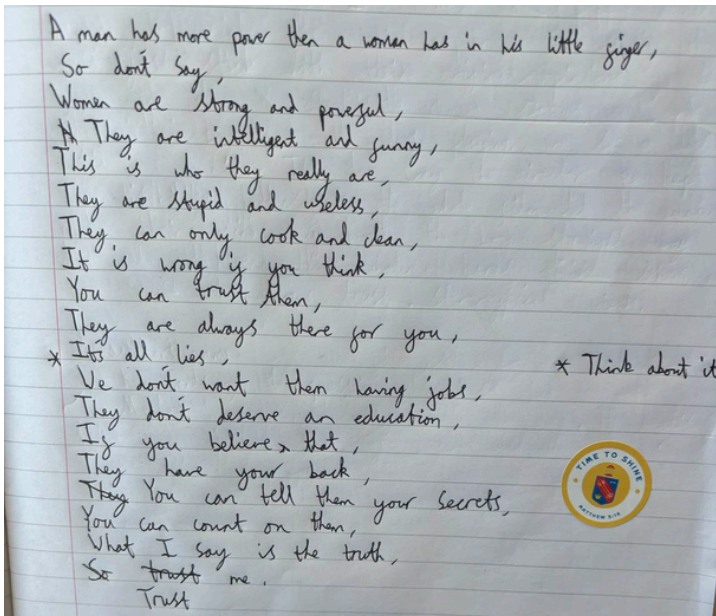


National Poetry Day - Thursday 3rd October

We were excited to celebrate National Poetry Day on Thursday, 3rd October. This year, all pupils took part in special form time activities, designed to spark creativity and encourage a love of poetry. Across all year groups, pupils had the opportunity to explore and discuss the power of words in a fun and engaging way.

In addition, all Key Stage 3 English lessons had a focus on the day by studying the inspiring poem 'Finding Your Voice' by Isabelle Walker. This poem beautifully explores themes of self-expression and confidence, perfect for encouraging pupils to discover their own unique voices. National Poetry Day is a fantastic opportunity for pupils to engage with literature in a new and exciting way.

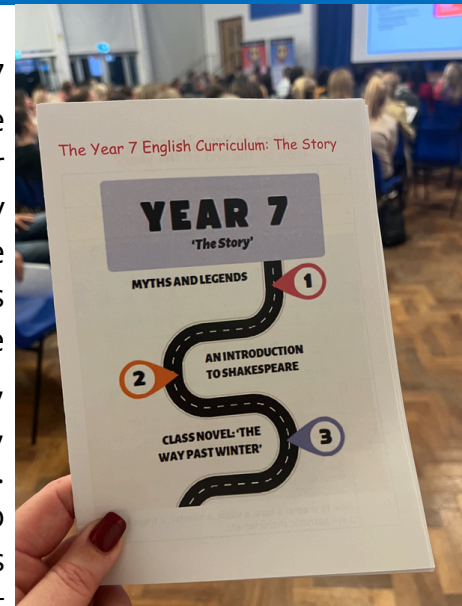
Miss Woodall, Director of Learning: English



Intentionally Loving

Year 7 Information Evening

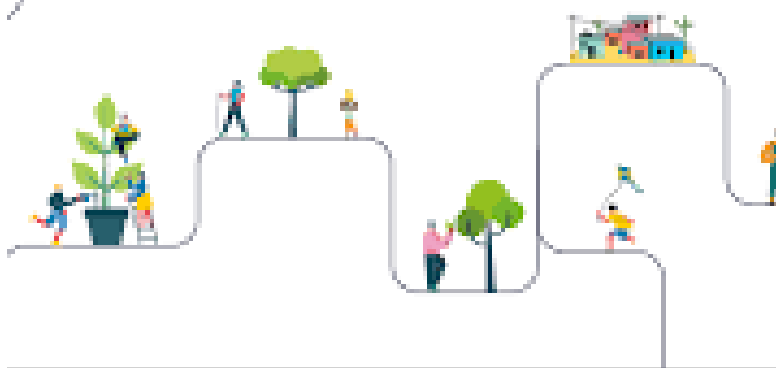
It was such a pleasure to welcome so many parents to our Year 7 information evening this week. The transition to secondary school can be overwhelming for both pupils and families. Knowing our curriculum, our expectations and the demands on pupils will allow parents to fully support pupils at home with their learning. We had informative presentations on the importance of literacy and reading and overviews of both our maths and English curriculums followed by interactive workshops. In addition to key information on provision and curriculum, Mrs McHale one of our Designated Safeguarding Leads shared tips, advice and vital information on how to keep young people safe online. It's important we limit young people's screen time and are vigilant to platforms and security on line. Presentations will be shared to all parents via email and should you want any further support or advice; don't hesitate to contact us. **Ms Keane, Deputy Headteacher**



Live Simply Update

It has been all systems go with our Live Simply Award. Our Department for Catholic Life did a great job organising resources for our International Day of Peace, where the whole school wrote peace pledges to promise to help build a better future. On 4th October we also celebrated St Francis of Assisi day and World Animal day by launching our nature photography competition, through assemblies and Year 7 were inspired by the life of St Francis in their RE lessons. In addition to this the Science department made sustainable fat ball feeders which some pupils distributed around the prayer garden to help feed the birds. Lots more exciting events planned at the end of the year. **Mrs Lakin, Deputy Director of Learning: PSHE**

LiveSimply



Truthful

The Mercians

The sounds were electric from Year 8 and year 9 when The Mercians band working with The Prime Agency, were in school on 26th September! The band shared their self care strategy of music as a tool to encourage talk about our St Peter's Profile Character trait of being Truthful with regard to our mental health and the causes of mental health problems. They talked about their own personal experiences of mental health and linked it to the need to being Attentive towards nurturing our self esteem and looking out for others. We really felt inspired by their honesty and talent! **Mrs Shelton, Director of Learning: PSHE**



Time to Shine

The return of the much anticipated Time to Shine event is back! We are going even shinier and brighter this term with our event launching on the 30th September for Years 7,8 and 9. We will be holding the big event on the 24th October across lunchtime. Watch out for the promotion in form times, X account and website for further information. We will be celebrating the attentiveness and the amazing work that has been produced this year by collecting stickers that are awarded by all teachers for outstanding pieces of work. **Mrs Cross**

MAC Mass

Pupils from across year groups came together to celebrate our start of term MAC mass at Olton Friary with Archbishop Bernard Longley.

The pupils were a credit to us, reading and participating in the mass with courage and confidence.

In terms of music, it was a pleasure to work with John Henry Newman for the first time -our combined choirs made a great sound, and we look forward to further opportunities to collaborate with them.

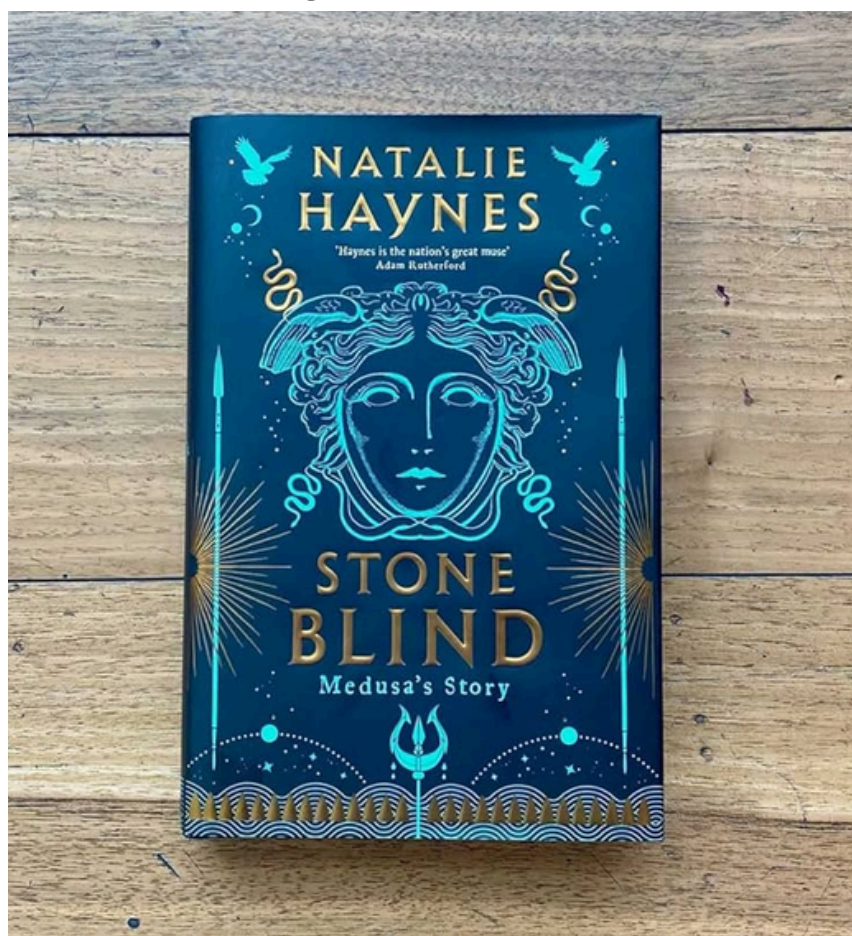
Thank you to all involved. **Mrs Carroll**



Hopeful

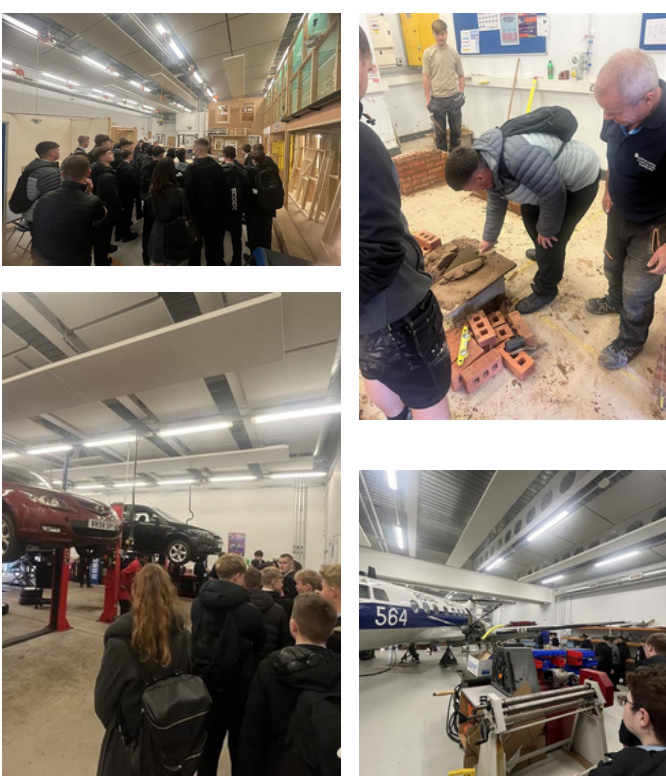
What I'm Reading

As someone who grew up loving Greek myths, I really enjoyed "Stone Blind" by Natalie Haynes. Medusa is known as a monster with snakes instead of hair, with the ability to turn any who look at her into stone. Haynes tells her side of the story, giving back her humanity. She was the victim of jealousy and lust and became caught up amongst the rivalry between the Gods. It has a strong feminist message, giving a voice to a female character in a genre where the stories are mostly about men fighting wars! A must for fans of myths and legends. **Dr Aslam, Director of Learning: Science**



History reading, listening and watching recommendations

| YEAR | Reading | Listening | Watching |
|------|---|--|---|
| 7 | Anglo-Saxon boy by Terry Bradman about a boy's journey to the battle of Hasting | BBC School Radio The Anglo-Saxons https://www.bbc.com/news/education-20180515 | Horrible Histories: BBC iPlayer Series 5 episode 2: Awesome Alfred the Great |
| 8 | The Seeker by S.G MacLean A spy thriller set in 17th Century London | Charles I reconsidered Dan Stow's History Hit | Horrible Histories: BBC iPlayer Series 10 episode 5: The Chaotic Civil War https://www.bbc.com/news/education-20180515 |
| 9 | Private Peaceful 24 hours at the front with Private Tommo Peaceful | THE REST IS HISTORY The Western Front The Rest is History | War Horse The film |
| 10 | Simon de Montfort and the rise of the English Nation by Darren Baker | THE HISTORY OF GENERAL ELECTIONS BBC Radio 4 - Simon De Montfort: The History of General Elections | Teterloo Film On Amazon Prime based on the Pretoria massacre of 1919 |
| 11 | The Great Gatsby By F Scott Fitzgerald | AMERICA'S "ROARING TWENTIES" History Extra | Selma Selma's first house in the Martin Luther King Jr. who began a campaign to secure equal voting rights also was targeted in 1965, from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama |
| 12 | Winter King By Thomas Penn Henry VII and his dark and turbulent reign | HENRY VII: LIFE OF THE WEEK HISTORY Extra podcast - Apple Podcasts | Historical drama chronicling the rise of Thomas Cromwell Wolf Hall - BBC iPlayer |
| 12 | The Weimar Years by Frank McDonough | THE NAZIS: THE BEER HALL PUTSCH The rest is History BBC Radio 4 - The Beer Hall Putsch - YouTube | The Rise of the Nazis Rise of the Nazis - BBC iPlayer |
| 13 | The Romanovs By Simon Sebag Montefiore | THE EMANCIPATION OF THE SERBS The rest is History BBC Radio 4 - In Our Time - The Emancipation of the Serbs | Russia 1917 Countdown to Revolution On Apple TV |



Solihull College Woodlands Campus Tour

Some of our Year 11 pupils had an exciting opportunity to visit Solihull College's Woodlands Campus, where they explored a variety of impressive facilities including Multi Skills workshops, a Motor Vehicle garage and even a small RAF plane. The trip provided valuable insights into potential career paths and educational options available after Year 11 specifically within the Construction and Engineering sectors. Pupils engaged with staff and current pupils from the college, gaining first-hand knowledge about the programs offered, which helped to inspire and guide their future decisions. **Mrs Beale**

Faith is Our Foundation

St Peter's Catholic School Hosts 'Book Buzz' for Year 7 Student

Today, every Year 7 pupil at St Peter's Catholic School received a book of their choice as part of our annual Book Buzz initiative. This exciting event is part of the school's ongoing commitment to promoting the joys of reading among pupils. We believe that encouraging reading not only fosters creativity and imagination but also contributes to improved academic performance and pupil wellbeing.

The power of reading extends beyond the classroom, offering pupils a chance to explore new worlds, develop empathy, and unwind. Studies have shown that regular reading helps improve concentration, language skills, and emotional intelligence. At St Peter's, we are dedicated to nurturing a lifelong love for reading, understanding the profound impact it can have on both personal and academic growth.

Through Book Buzz, our goal is to inspire pupils to make reading an integral part of their daily lives, paving the way for success both in and out of school. We are proud to support our Year 7 pupils in choosing books that resonate with them and look forward to seeing the positive outcomes this initiative will bring. **Mrs Ferry, Associate Assistant Headteacher**



European Day of Languages

On the 23rd of September we celebrated European Day of Languages, a special day dedicated to promoting language learning and cultural diversity across Europe. To mark the occasion, our pupils embarked on a fun and engaging treasure hunt that challenged them to get to know their teachers better and bond with them. The event was a resounding success, filled with laughter, teamwork, and a newfound appreciation for different languages and cultures. **Mrs Mateos, Director of Learning: MFL**

Teacher hunt
European day of languages 2024

1. Who is the teacher that lived in a city of a country that is inside a different country?
Mrs Mateos
2. Who is the teacher whose Granny was born in Metz, France?
Mrs Ferry
3. Who is the teacher that has 2 half-brothers in Mexico?
Mrs Clements
4. Who is the teacher that lived in Corfu for a couple of years when I was 17?
Mrs Edden
5. Who is the teacher that I drove over 1000 miles down the East Coast of Australia in 8 days?
Mr Stanton
6. Who is the teacher that was a primary school teacher when I was in Hong Kong?
Ms Lam
7. Who is the teacher that slept on an airport floor in Canada for 8 hours?
Mrs Morris-Walcott
8. Who is the teacher that I grew up in the Middle East, in Dubai?
Miss Griffin
9. Who is the teacher that won a holiday to a private island in Necker Island?
Mrs Patrick
10. Who is the teacher that Walked Great Wall of China?
Mrs Shelton
11. Who is the teacher that has a daughter half Spanish half Polish?
Mrs Pacheco
12. Who is the teacher that has travelled across the breadth of Russia on the Trans-Siberian railway?
Mr Williams
13. Who is the teacher that worked for 2 Italian, 2 Finnish, 2 German, 1 Japanese, 1 American and 1 French company?
Mr Hill
14. Who is the teacher that got engaged in New York under the Brooklyn bridge?
Mrs Grice
15. Who is the teacher that celebrated his Honeymoon in Kenya?
Mr Seickell
16. Who is the male teacher that can teach all German, Spanish and French?
Mr Turner
17. Who is the male teacher that lived in Qatar for five years?
Mr Shelton