

14<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Recently the DfE published national results from Sixth Form Exams in 2019. I am delighted to say that St Mary's CE High School was second in the Borough for progress in the Sixth Form last year ('progress' means that, whatever their starting point, students get good results from an education in St Mary's Sixth Form). Our OFSTED report in September 2019 recognised the work we had done with the Sixth Form over previous years and graded our curriculum, teaching and results as 'Good'. The deadline has now passed for applying for the Sixth Form for September 2020, and we have a large group of students to interview for places. If your son/daughter hasn't yet applied, or you know of someone in Year 11 at another school who would be interested in the excellent provision at St Mary's, please email me directly at [head@st-maryshigh.herts.sch.uk](mailto:head@st-maryshigh.herts.sch.uk) and I will see if we can still add students to the interview process.

Earlier in February the Year 10 Hospitality and Catering students completed their practical mock exam. Within four hours each student has to create a two-course meal, and there was some excellent work created by all and a lot of promise shown. If this is the standard of the mocks, we are in for a treat come their real exams!



*Fig 1: Y10 Hospitality and Catering Coursework*

Some of our Year 7, 8 and 9 students had great fun selecting new library resources with a visit from 'The Book Bus'. It is a double-decker bus, fitted out with bookshelves, which tours the UK giving students the opportunity to pick their favourite reads from over 4,000 titles. Our students' selections covered a broad range and it was wonderful to see so much excitement and interest in reading. The new stock will be arriving soon, so be sure to encourage your child to pay a visit to the LRC to take out the books they have chosen for themselves.



*Fig 2: The Book bus in action*

To support this year's Children's Mental Health week students took part in Acts of Worship focused on the theme of 'Find Your Brave', and how students can help to overcome situations inside and outside school which may affect their mental health. Students were invited to come along to break time workshops, run by our Year 12 and 13 Student Council Team. These workshops included *Sing Your Brave*: a chance for students to participate in Karaoke; *Drink Your Brave*: students were allowed to make smoothies from a variety of healthy vegetables and fruits; whilst *Model Your Brave* gave students an opportunity to create a model of what bravery means to them. There were also board games, art, relaxation and colouring workshops. Students participated well in workshops and the most popular one seemed to be the smoothie making.

One of our Year 10 students wrote the following poem, that he read to students during collective worship, about his own mental health journey.

**Words cannot explain  
How happy I feel  
How my life has changed  
From feeling down, to  
As if I could conquer the world  
My anger has perished  
My anxiety too  
No longer do I feel  
Unachieved or in the blues  
My creativity thrives  
My life feels so blessed  
No longer do I sit and focus  
On the weight across my chest  
My eyes are open wide  
I see things I thought were false  
All I see  
Is the clouds of white go past**

This week was organised by Place2Be project manager Tracie Slade and our mental health lead Jane Gillett, but could not have been run without the support and hard work of the students.



*Fig 3: Events for Mental Health Week  
(These photographs were taken by Jack Rivers, our resident photographer, Year 12)*

News from the Sports Desk:

The Year 10 boys football team had their final match in the District group this week against Goffs School on 6 February. A very strong performance by all the boys involved saw them walk away with a 7-1 victory. Goals were scored by Ben (2), Kayton (2), Lewis (1), Billy (1) and Aiden (1). The squad will now wait to see if the win was enough to enable them to progress through the group stage.

The Year 7 boys football team returned to John Warner for a fixture following a friendly between the two teams during the last term. Storm Ciara made for some very challenging conditions, and the team were not able to adapt their playing style well enough to gain the win. They came away with a 5-2 loss. Player of the match went to Year 7 student Phillip, who had a fantastic game as goalkeeper and no doubt kept the score line lower than it could have been with some excellent saves.

The Year 7 girls football team became District 6-a-side champions on Thursday, fighting off strong opposition from six other local schools. The goals were share evenly between Amy M and Leah-May, both scoring 3 goals. They are now District Champions – well done to them!

Antonio in Year 11, has been studying karate for 7 years. He recently attended an open training session for the National England Karate Team. During the training, he participated in drills to test his technique and a sparring session. We are proud to announce that a few days after his training he was selected for the England Karate Team. Every month Antonio will be attending training sessions, which means he has the potential to compete internationally. We are delighted for with success and wish him all the very best for his future in karate.

I will take this opportunity to wish you all a lovely weekend



Nicholas Simms  
Headteacher