

16th October 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Thank you for your generosity with the Harvest Festival Collection. We have amassed a large contribution for the Broxbourne Food Bank:



Fig One: Harvest Festival Donations

It has been a delight to see how quickly our Year 7 students have settled into life at St Mary's. They look fabulous in their new uniforms and are already demonstrating a dedicated work ethic and a pride in our school community. Having met their new teachers, numerous students from other primary schools and participated in some subjects quite new to many of them, they have shown amazing resilience following a very difficult and, no doubt, worrying summer break. They have adapted to the changes we have had to make to our school day very well and are generally very supportive of each other.

The Year Team continue to work with them to build upon the positive start they have had, creating an environment where every student has the support and opportunities to flourish and grow.



WE BELIEVE EVERYONE IS EQUAL: EVERYONE DESERVES THE BEST

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Headteacher: Mr Nicholas Simms B.Sc. (Hons), NPQH

'Students feel happy and safe at school' OFSTED 2019

'An exceptionally inclusive and caring community' SIAMS Inspection 2020



Fig two: Y7 students, and Y7 Student Councillors

During our morning tutorials, students have been completing a unit of work around their book titled *"You are Awesome"*, written by Matthew Syed. This work develops further the work many students completed over the summer.

Their enthusiasm for taking on new challenges is infectious. Some have embraced the challenging group philosophical discussions they have with Ms Sandiford in our Philosophy Club. Others attended the Book Club during their lunch break with Ms Norris and Mrs Freshwater, and there was an overwhelming response to take on different roles involving student leadership such as our Student Council, where students are selected to represent Year 7 views to the whole school. There are also applications for other student leadership roles that show how empathetic many of our students are, with a large number of students having applied to become Well-being Warriors looking to help support the mental health of their peers.

They have enjoyed their weekly acts of collective worship, listening respectfully and taking on board the important messages that underpin our Christian ethos. Many students have already received awards and certificates in these assemblies for their positive and encouraging attitudes, which has been wonderful to see.

A new initiative for Year 7 started only a few weeks ago with students taking part in activities and an Anti-Bullying Assembly run in conjunction with the Diana Award. This important initiative is being organised by Ms Kanuni and Ms Chambers. Again, they have received another enthusiastic response to become Anti-Bullying Ambassadors who will continue to raise awareness of the impact of bullying and to be there to support and guide their peers if needed.

Congratulations to all those students who have been selected for these important roles.

I know Mrs Ford, Mrs Brown and the Year 7 Team are proud to be a part of such an exceptional group of young people and they look forward to another busy half term as we countdown to Christmas.

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Through October, which is Black History Month, we have been celebrating multi-cultural diversity in collective worship, classwork, in form time activities and displays around school. The Art department have some excellent examples of student work that shows diversity in all its glory, and four examples are shown below.

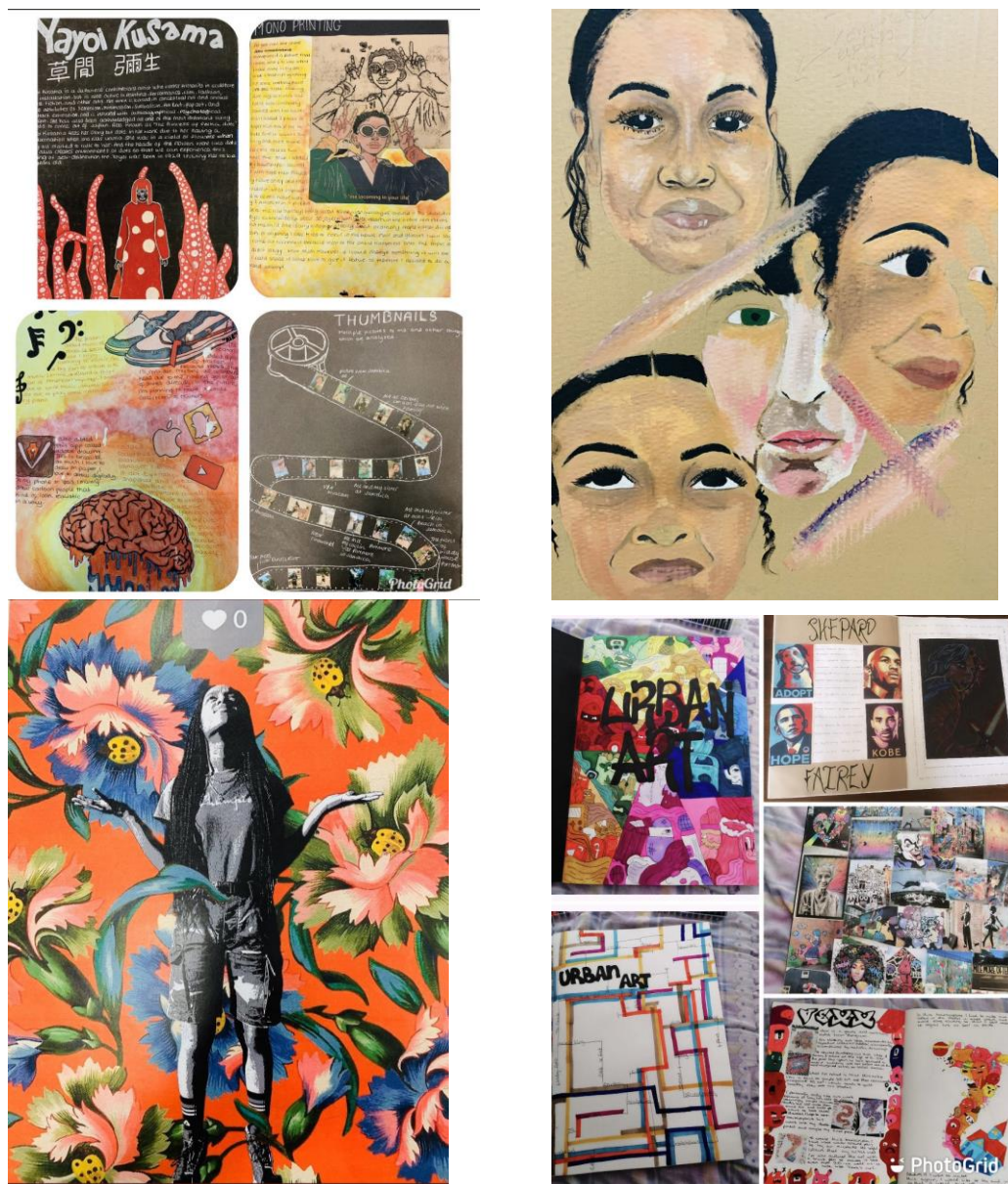


Fig Two: multicultural art

Finally, over the last few weeks we have had two Parent/Teacher Evenings (Year 7 “Meet the Tutor” and Year 11 “Subject Teacher Consultation”). This year we are running these as online video conference meetings and each parent/carer in these year groups has been able to book a five-minute slot with staff. Apart from a couple of staff/parents having teething problems that sometimes go with technology used for the first time, the overwhelming experience was really positive and feedback has been excellent on both sides.

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If your child is in Year 8, Year 9, Year 10 or 6th form, please keep an eye out for information about these as we approach the Teacher Consultation Evening, keep the emails we send you safely and run any pre-meeting checks you can to avoid any 'first time usage' issues.

These newsletters are sent out every fortnight during term time, meaning that by the time I write to you again on 6 November, Hallowe'en and Guy Fawkes/Bonfire Night will have passed – please talk to your son/daughter about acting safely if they get involved with any of these events and not to take any unnecessary risks.

I hope you have an excellent weekend.



Nicholas Simms
Headteacher

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