



# ST SIMON STOCK CATHOLIC SCHOOL

## July 2017 Newsletter

Dear Parents/Carers

What a fantastic day was enjoyed on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> July for our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations. The former Headteachers, Mr. Mulhearn and Mr. McParland, with former staff including the legendary "Sr. Mary" (Mrs Mulhearn), made the day for the many former students and staff. Our present Senior team and staff, with the great support of our P.T.A., were the foundation for ensuring all went well.

Our thanks to Bishop Paul Mason, Fathers Peter and Geoffrey and Deacon Ian, for making the Mass so meaningful to start the day. The attendance of the Mayor and Mayoress of Maidstone was important as symbolic of our Catholic presence in the Maidstone community.

Other events (which will be included in the September edition of the Newsletter) which have occurred at the end of term include:

- The Pride of Stocky awards – our annual celebration of staff and students' achievements;
- Sports Day – where the tug of war was won by the staff who defeated the 6<sup>th</sup> form;
- Sports Gala awards – where our sporting stars were feted. Awards were given by **Alessia Russo**, our Year 13 footballer who will play for England in the European Championships;
- La Sallian camp – Year 9 of De La Salle Schools meet for fun, prayer and worship at Kintbury. My two schools were represented this year, as well as my former school in Wiltshire.
- Proms – Years 11 and 13 were magnificent evenings for staff and students at Oakwood Park Hotel and Leeds Castle respectively;
- KCSP Sports Day – our team travelled to the Julie Rose athletics track in Ashford to compete in our Academy Sports Day for the first time.

All these activities could not occur without the support of our marvellous staff. Please appreciate their hard work, dedication and commitment to your son/daughter. I appreciate all that they do, at a time when a teacher's job has become "the impossible job" in many ways.

Some staff are leaving us and we wish them well for the future:

Therese Hammond – a teaching assistant who has served the school for the year;

James Regan – our Maths teacher who is Head of House and Numeracy Co-ordinator. James is moving to Invicta Grammar School.

Stuart Middleton – our A Level Chemistry teacher who has served the school for 30 years (part time and full time).

Ben Williams – our former Head of Maths, who is now Head of 6<sup>th</sup> form, and promoted to a Christian school in Sevenoaks. Ben trained at St Simon Stock Catholic School and has been with us seven years. A future Headteacher!

All will be sorely missed.

May I thank you for your continued support this year. May I thank Jon Malone and Louise Welcome who have led the school during my Executive Headship in St. Helens which has now concluded. I hope you enjoy a lovely summer break and I look forward to students returning safely in September (Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> – Years 7 & 12; Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> – other years).

**Brendan J. Wall**

## YEAR 10 GEOGRAPHY

Eighty-five Year 10 Geography students completed fieldwork at Reculver on two separate visits on 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> June. Students were accompanied by Mrs Ryan, Mrs Kenny, Mrs Rodell-Jones and Mr A. Williams.

We investigated the effectiveness of the sea defences to the East and West of Reculver towers and considered the Geology and History of this stretch of Kent coastline.



Students spent the day taking measurements of the waves, pebbles and beaches. The data generated will be analysed during lessons and examined in an exam called Geographical Applications. This paper replaces Controlled Assessment (coursework) of the previous specification. The new GCSE Geography specification states that students must complete "two occasions" of fieldwork beyond the school grounds. We intend to examine the environment around Oakwood Park in September and October of Year 11.

**Mr A. Williams, Subject Leader**

## SCHOOLS PHYSICISTS OF THE YEAR

Two students from our school attended the Schools Physicist of the Year Awards at The University of Kent on 30<sup>th</sup> June. Our winners were **Aiden**

**Huynh-Nguyen**, Year 12 and **Stephanie Jackson**, Year 10. These students were supported by their family and friends and follow a number of previous St Simon Stock students awarded this prize over the last few years.



The event was organised by the university and the Ogden Trust. The trust aims to increase the number of students taking physics at GCSE, A-level and at university and to support teachers of physics and encourage more physics graduates to become teachers, through its Schools Science Partnerships.

The event included a brief lecture about the formation of stars given by Dr Tim Kinnear. He used theoretical physics and computer modelling to demonstrate how gas clouds collide to form stars. Mind-blowing!

**Mr A. Williams**

## CHEMISTRY AT WORK 22<sup>ND</sup> JUNE

A group of eight Year 9 students attended an excellent day of workshops which was held at Canterbury Christ Church University and organised by the Royal Society of Chemistry.

We started with a fantastic presentation on the use of

elements including aluminium for overhead power cables (even though it is not a particularly good conductor it is much lighter than copper which is used for wiring in our houses), why street lights glow orange (they use sodium vapour) and that vanadium compounds can be used to store electricity.

We also learnt that some 2 pence coins are magnetic and some are not. This is because their design had to be changed to make them cheaper to manufacture and so they contain iron which is magnetic. We can all test our 2p coins using a fridge magnet to find out the year that iron was introduced into the coins.

We then went to a Forensics workshop where we discovered how difficult it is to remove blood traces from a murder scene. Even though the blood may not be visible to the naked eye the investigating officers use a product called Luminol that glows blue in the presence of blood. One of our students asked how it worked and the presenters were unable to give a detailed answer! They all agreed that it was an excellent question and sent an email the following day to tell us the answer.



We also attended a workshop on classifying and recycling

plastics where we used an infrared spectrometer to identify plastics. We found that the film used to cover the plastic containers that contain meat and other food products is made of two different plastics and so it cannot be recycled.



We learnt about how commercial tomato growers control the conditions in a greenhouse to make sure that then plants produce lots of tasty tomatoes. The tomato plants end up 14 metres tall by the end of their growing season! We had the chance to taste test the tomatoes and we can confirm that they were delicious.

We heard about some of the science that goes into designing and making medicines and how important it is to design something that is exactly the right shape. If it is the wrong shape the body may think it is something harmful and not helpful and that would trigger an immune response. We had to try to tie balloons into exactly the right shape to model the difficulty that scientists have!



We also learnt about surfactants which are important in the design of pesticides because the chemicals have to wet the leaf surface rather than sit on the top of the leaf in a ball. They are also important in designing bubble mixture to allow to make large, long-lasting bubbles.



In all the workshops, the presenters commented how interested, polite and engaged in the tasks our students were, so a massive well done to **Alex, Cameron, Finlay, Dominica, Lauren, Sabe, Uthara and Ross.**

Huge thanks to Deacon Ian who drove us there and back.

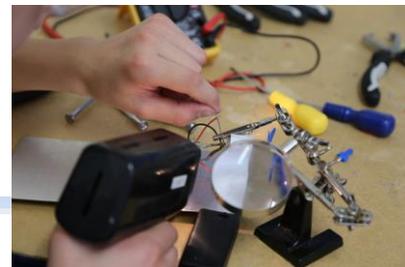
**Ms J. Whitehead, Science teacher and STEM co-ordinator**

### RISK-IT SCIENCE CHALLENGE

On Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> June, one of our top set year classes were given a day off timetable to complete a challenge to design an innovative prototype which will be useful to people at sea – from sailors to ship mechanics, from submariners to holiday makers.

The class had to work in 'company' groups of four, as the research and development department of a scientific equipment manufacturing company. The groups needed

to plan an idea, develop the idea, build a prototype, cost the finished product and then present the ideas in a "Dragon's Den" style competition.



Soldering

We were very impressed with the range of ideas, which included a car that would travel on land and sea, a specialist boat with a ramp and life-saving rings on the outside of the craft and a luxury submarine to allow people to explore the ocean bed.



Learning to use a drill

The winning team developed the idea of floating trees which would allow migrating birds a place to rest on their long journeys. The team of 4 particularly impressed the judges with their presentation which showed the distances and routes that some birds fly, the price they would charge for the item and the planning of the presentation. The winning team of Mia, Tegan, Eleanor and Evie will go forward to the County Final next week.

Many thanks go to Medway Education Business Partnership who designed the activity and to Mr Platt, Mr May and Mr Malone who attended for part of the day.

**Ms J. Whitehead, STEM Co-ordinator**

#### PTA

A big thank you to all members of the PTA for their support at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations on 8<sup>th</sup> July, a wonderful day, enjoyed by all.

#### Theatre Trip

In September, we will be looking to plan another theatre trip for family and friends.

#### Quality Second hand Uniform

During the last year, the sale of second hand uniform has again raised money for PTA funds which ultimately goes back into the school. Donations of second hand uniform can be left at the school reception. Anyone wishing to purchase items of uniform, can do so by contacting Mrs Pengelly on 01622 671422 or by email at: [mhrpengelly@btinternet.com](mailto:mhrpengelly@btinternet.com) or Mrs Share on 07817 938526 or by email at: [mshare64@hotmail.com](mailto:mshare64@hotmail.com).

Alternatively, second hand uniform is always on sale at Parents' Evening.

**Donations of quality second hand uniform from departing Year 11 students would be greatly appreciated – these can be left at the school reception.**

#### PTA Meetings for the next year

All Parents/Carers are invited to these meetings which all take place at the school on Monday evenings starting at 6.30pm:

- 11<sup>th</sup> September 2017
- 9<sup>th</sup> October 2017 – AGM and meeting
- 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017
- 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018
- 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018
- 10<sup>th</sup> September 2018
- 15<sup>th</sup> October 2018 – AGM and Meeting
- 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Please come and join us. We are planning several events for this special school year.

**Miss S M Worrton, PTA Secretary**

#### ENRICHMENT DAY

##### Buckmore Park

Mrs Akhetuamen, Mrs Rook and Mr Doig recently organised a Year 9 enrichment trip to Buckmore Park on behalf of the school. The trip was run in collaboration with KICC's Prayer City who have been in contact with the school over the last few months.

When the students arrived at the premises, they were given a tour of the church complex and shown places like the main sanctuary. After the tour, the students participated in various activities such as sports, dancing, cake decorating, singing and dancing competitions, media and editing, a discussion on

the Manchester attacks and many other activities.



At the end of the day, the winners of each competition were given prizes along with additional gifts given to all students. A CD containing the recordings will also be given to the students at a later date.



All students represented the school well and proved how talented our current Year 9s are.

**Mrs. V Akhetuamen**



Thank you so much for your donations of used postage stamps. Please keep saving them during the school holidays. Your donations are so important in supporting sight impaired people to live independent lives.

## STOCKY CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

Thank you to our past pupils, some of who are now staff members, who have sent in messages about inspirational teachers who have influenced them in their day-to-day lives.

"I have always remembered Mrs Harvey from Maths teaching me in both year 9 and 10 at St Simon Stock. Her calm manner and unflappable nature made the class simply a great learning environment where all the students appeared to enjoy the lessons and try their hardest.

Now a Mathematics teacher at St Simon Stock, there have been plenty of years since Mrs Harvey taught me and many other teachers and lecturers, but Mrs Harvey ensured I was on a strong path for Maths, in what are two crucial years of learning. I went into year 11 confident of what I had been taught over the previous years and able to just enjoy the subject as much as any teacher would want their students to be able to. I don't remember enjoying Mathematics previous to Mrs Harvey's class and it is certain that if I had had a different teacher, there is a strong chance I would not be a teacher today."

### **James Regan**

"No special memory, but just remember Mr Leaning, teacher of Modern Maths/P.E., being such a good teacher – friendly and on the same wave length as his

students. I did really well in his class and achieved a good pass in Modern Maths."

### **Mrs S Wise (formerly Turner)**

"Mrs Woods was my favourite teacher. She inspired my lifelong love of sport. Our school netball team continued to play as a team for a period after we had all left school. I also continued to play in a work team and took up korfbal which I played for many years, making lifelong friends. All this was down to Mrs Woods sparking my interest in sport."

### **Shelagh Beckett (formerly Brennan)**

It is 50 years since St Simon Stock opened its doors to students. For 25 of these, we have been supporting the Heart of Kent Hospice which is a local community charity that provides compassionate end-of-life care. In that time, we have raised £15801.00 which is incredible.

So, thank you for supporting HOKH.



Thank you also to those visitors who supported our Sunflower stall at the anniversary event on 8<sup>th</sup> July which raised £106.00.

Each ceramic sunflower was unique and was made by our own students and staff.

£30.05 pays for an hour of care in the community and £70.10 pays for two patients to attend a five hour outpatients' session, including contact time with doctors, nurses and therapists.

Your support is helping to improve the quality of life and making every day precious.



### **Mrs. M Tilby**

#### **TALISMAN-OF-FIRE**

Thank you to the Paine family for sharing their wonderful items of jewellery on their stall on 8<sup>th</sup> July.



Talisman-of-Fire is a jewellery-making business. It involves genuine gemstones, 925 sterling silver hand-crafted products. Each item is carefully crafted, then individually priced for the best quality. For more information, visit: [www.talisman-of-fire.co.uk](http://www.talisman-of-fire.co.uk).

## A FLAVOUR OF THE 50<sup>TH</sup> CELEBRATION EVENT – 8<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2017

Thanks to visitors, parents, students and staff, past and present, who bought raffle tickets, had a go on the lucky dip, had their face painted, had their nails decorated, bought a sunflower made in the Art Department, purchased a keyring made in the Technology Department, donated and bought a book, enjoyed a glass of Pimms at the PTA stand, toured our wonderful classroom displays and visited our memorial garden.

Your support has helped us raise over £1,100.00 for our two school charities, Heart of Kent Hospice and the Sacred Heart School in India. Your help will enable us to make a big difference to these two worthy charities.

