



# THE LINK

*A fortnightly Newsletter for the pupils, parents and staff of  
St Michael's Catholic College  
Issue 235 - January 2025*



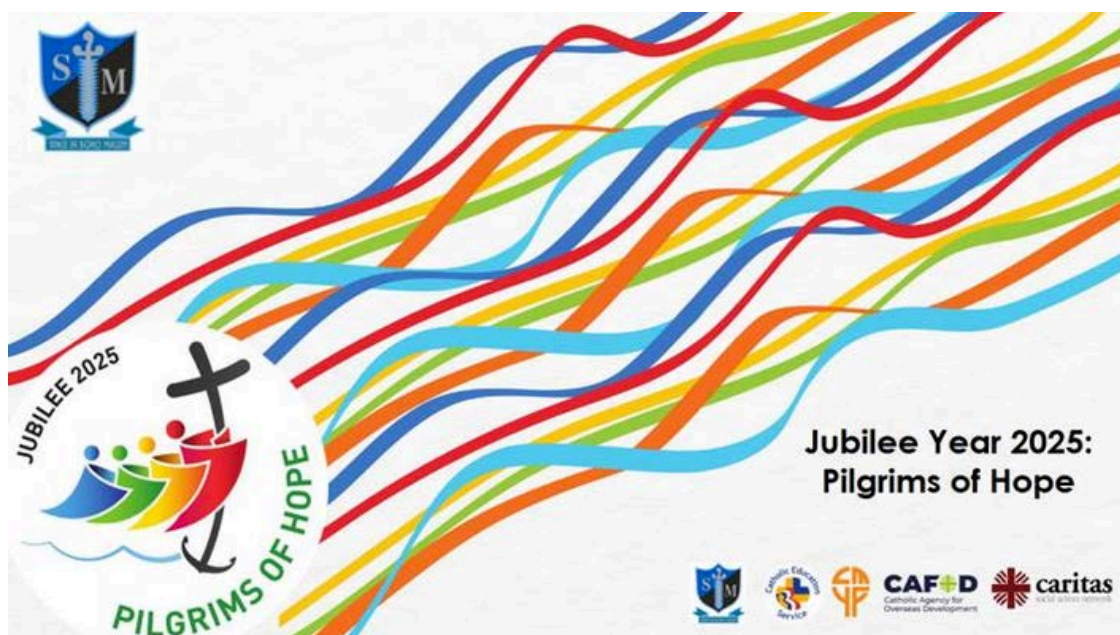
## A Word from The Principal

Following a well-deserved Christmas break, the St Michael's community has started back in January eager to build on the successes of last term. As the days begin to lengthen and the first signs of spring appear, we look forward to a productive and fulfilling term with an exciting focus on the Church's Jubilee Year 'Pilgrims of Hope'. In this very special year for all Catholics, Pope Francis invites us to journey together as pilgrims of hope, putting faith into action to build a better world for everyone. As a school community we will be responding to the Pope's call to celebrate this Jubilee Year with deep faith, lively hope and active charity, starting with our launch event on Friday 24th January. Students and staff will mark this special day by praying together and sharing scripture from Luke's Gospel, where Jesus makes it clear that his mission is to bring the justice and freedom of the Jubilee.

Inspired by Jesus' example, we will commit to share in His mission to create a world of justice, peace and love. During the launch day students will be invited to create their own pledge for the Jubilee year, explaining how they propose to be pilgrims of hope and to also write messages of hope for the year on our Jubilee bunting which will be displayed across the school. The Jubilee gives all in our school community further opportunities to serve others and demonstrate Salesian values by putting their faith in action, not just within the school but in the local community, with our partner schools in the St Benedict Catholic Academy Trust, across Southwark Diocese and also to join with our fellow Catholics around the world. I know we have so much to look forward to this term and I look forward to seeing the positive impact our Jubilee celebrations have.

With very best wishes

Ms F. Corcoran  
Principal



*'Hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us' (Rom 5:1-2.5)*

## St Michael's Students Support King Charles in 2024 King's Christmas Speech



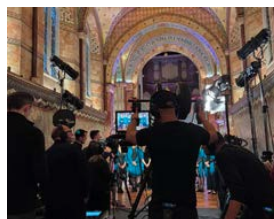
Congratulations to Julia M, Irati A-G and Paul G in Year 12 who performed on national television to an audience of 7 million people on Christmas Day. This was an extraordinary experience for them and the school. Staff and students involved had to sign legal contracts of secrecy about the event until the broadcast was aired!

Ms Corcoran commented "We are very proud of the students and are delighted they were given this opportunity, it was a beautiful performance." Mr Magnoff, who has a link to the choir, asked the Music Department to nominate students for Inner Voices and has been overseeing this programme since 2021. Julia, Irati and Paul have now been with the choir for several years and have performed at concerts at various prestigious venues in the UK and across Europe.

Please see below for Julia's reflections on the day.

This Christmas our Inner Voices choir was fortunate enough to sing the carol after the King's Speech on Christmas Day. It was an incredible experience of the highest honour and it was difficult to keep it a secret from everyone we knew until 3pm on 25th December. The event took place in a gorgeous and small church called Fitzrovia Chapel and immediately upon entering we were faced with an overwhelming amount of cameras and nervous excitement. The process itself was singing the carol 'Once in Royal David's City' over and over again until the recording team were satisfied with how we sounded. Then, after a quick lunch break, we matched our recorded voices to our filmed faces. It was a long day of filming, however, the end result sounded absolutely beautiful with all our harmonies between the parts and it was even more thrilling to watch ourselves sing on television right after King Charles on Christmas Day. Thank you to Mr Watkins and Mr Allwood, our two fantastic choir teachers, and to Ms Corcoran and Mr Magnoff who made this opportunity possible for us.

Julia M, 12RU



## Music Department News January 2025



A number of exciting things have been happening in the Music Department in recent months:

### Autumn Term Events

#### **National Youth Jazz Orchestra**

Pupils from Year 9 and 10 took part in an exciting project with workshop leaders from the National Youth Jazz Orchestra on the 26th of November. Instrumental players learnt how to improvise using the chord sequence from 'I Got Rhythm' more commonly known when used in the 'Flintstones' theme tune in a traditional big band style. Ruby H-S Year 10 trombonist and currently studying GCSE Music commented "I enjoyed doing the improvisation and playing with my friends, especially when we were doing the iconic jazz riff. I also enjoyed relearning how to play

the 12-bar blues with the song 'Sunny Moon For Two'. We first started with the warm ups with improvisation, such as the 'squiggles' (which is just playing notes on an instrument randomly and quickly) and then solos were performed by members of the workshop -on the saxophone, trumpet, trombone, tuba and the clarinet. We then used more structure and played specific notes from the blues scale that fitted with the chords-great fun!"

#### **Christmas Concert Video**

A variety of pieces of music were prepared and recorded by the College Band, Brass Band and Junior and Senior choirs as well as the Samba Band with a Christmas theme including songs like "Let It Snow" and "Santa Claus Is Coming To Town". The Senior choir sang "Oh Holy Night" and the Junior Choir sang "A Christmas Melody" Pupils had great fun preparing and filming the video and the video is still available to watch via the College website under "latest news".

Website address <https://www.stmichaelscollege.org.uk/school-news/music-department-christmas-video-2024/>



#### **Guest Appearance at Bonus Pastor Catholic College Christmas Concert**

On the 18th of December the College Band travelled to Bonus Pastor Catholic College to perform in their Christmas Concert. This cross school work with one of our St Benedict Catholic Academy Trust

partner schools showcased the musical talents of the St Michael's College Band students along with Bonus Pastor's musicians and gave our pupils the opportunity to hear the musical talents from students outside the college. It was a special evening and all involved felt they had made a fabulous musical contribution to the school's concert. The band were warmly received by the audience and complimented on the high standards of playing.



## Music Department News January 2025

(continued)

### **Royal Schools Of Music Instrumental Examinations**

A record number of woodwind, brass, percussion, strings and piano pupils took Royal Schools exams last term and all passed with many achieving merits and distinctions! Pupils worked very hard and had to record four pieces of music each for their exams. These results will enhance these pupils UCAS point credits which is an added incentive for taking the exams as the points support pupils to get into the university of their choice. A further 20 pupils will be taking their instrumental exams this term. Please congratulate the pupils below if you see them!

#### ABRSM Instrumental Exam Results Autumn Term 2024

Rubie-Rose R	Clarinet Gr 3	Merit
Ainhoa OR	Clarinet Gr 4	Merit
Khuyen V	Clarinet Gr 5	Merit
Jonathan A	Saxophone Gr 2	Merit
Mirabel M	Saxophone Gr 2	Pass
Maia J	Piano Gr 3	Distinction
Jui T	Flute Gr 1	Merit
Adham A	Saxophone Gr 2	Distinction
Filip S	Saxophone Gr 2	Pass
Maya B	Saxophone Gr 2	Distinction
Osayi I	Saxophone Gr 1	Merit
Elisabeth J	Piano Gr 1	Merit
Emily K	Trumpet Gr 3	Merit
Zakaria C	Trumpet Gr 3	Merit
Onyeka E	Ruba gr 3	Merit
Ruby H-S	Trombone Gr 1	Distinction
Maia J	Violin Gr 1	Distinction
Monika K	Violin Gr 2	Pass
Roger J	Violin Gr 3	Pass
Agnes W	Cello	Merit
Khuyen V	Violin	Pass

### **London Schools Symphony Orchestra Concert at the Barbican, 14th January 25**

Pupils from Year 10 and 11 attended a concert at the Barbican by the LSSO which included Caspar G (Year 13) playing principal horn in the “Young Person’s Guide To The Orchestra” by Benjamin Britten amongst other pieces. Caspar has been studying the French horn at the Centre For Young Musicians since Year 8 and has made amazing progress. It was a thrilling concert and the standard of the orchestra was extremely high. Also, in the programme was “The Planets Suite” by Gustav Holst, a piece that the GCSE Music students’ study for their exam, and it was fantastic for them to experience watching and listening to an orchestra playing live.



Mr D Laurence

## Year 12 Student Wins Nomination for SSLP Shackleton Award



Bryant U, 12VI, has been nominated for the Shackleton Award 2024 in recognition of his 'Shackleton Spirit.' Each year a student is celebrated for their proven commitment to service, leadership and triumph over adversity and in memory of South London's famous polar explorer, Ernest Shackleton. Bryant was presented with his award by Dr Joe Spence on behalf of The James Caird Society.

Please find the school's successful nomination for Bryant below:

Bryant has been an outstanding, generous, empathetic and truly impressive student since joining St Michael's in 2019. Bryant has taken on roles of responsibility throughout his life both formally and otherwise. He has an easy rapport with his teachers and peers alike, seeking out guidance where needed and offering support to students across age ranges. His selfless commitment to his peers has been reflected in his service as House Captain and Head Prefect as well as important roles in the Chaplaincy Team and as a Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador. In these roles he has mentored younger students in both an academic and pastoral capacity, as well as raising a considerable amount of money for various charities over the last 5 years and being integral to the cultivation of an inclusive and welcoming school community in which all students can feel a sense of belonging. Bryant also has a leadership role at his local church and played an important role, at an even younger age, in helping to support his neighbours during lockdown. Bryant's commitment to his school and local community is all the more remarkable given the challenges he still faces at home, where he acts as a full time carer to his mother and sister and a tutor to his two young nephews. Bryant would be too humble to apply for this award himself, but represents all that is best in our school community and reflects Salesian RUAH values in their most human and sincere form.



Mr D Magnoff

Please see the St Michael's Challenge webpages for more details: <https://sites.google.com/stmichaelscollege.org.uk/challengeandmoreable/competitions>

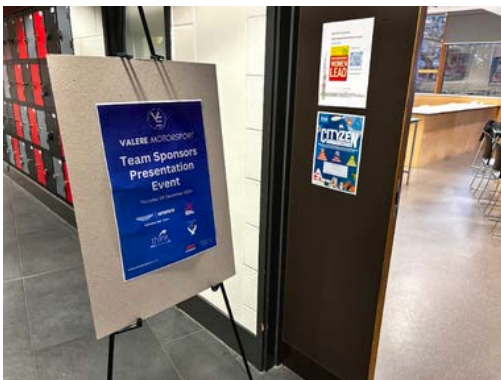
## Cambridge University Problem Solving Trip

Year 12 Maths students spent a day at Cambridge University attending workshops, a mini university-styled lecture on what 'Infinity' means in Maths, followed by lunch before more Maths problem solving in the afternoon. It was an inspirational day for all those involved, giving them an important glimpse into top level Maths skills.

Special mentions to Aron V who managed to attempt and solve all problems presented in one workshop!



## F1 in Schools Sponsors Presentation Event December 2024



On Thursday 19th December, the St Michael's F1 in Schools team, Valere Motorsport, hosted a sponsors' presentation event where they welcome their generous sponsors to present their work so far prior to the competition. Attendees of the event includes; representatives from Aramco-Aston Martin F1 team, DVC consulting company, representatives of Friends of St Michael's, and our very own Principal. Here's what their team leader, Torialee (10MA) has to say; "As the team Valere Motorsport, we represent the school in the F1 in schools competition, which is a competition to showcase our ability to create and present ourselves as a F1 team with our own designed car. But for this competition, we needed sponsors to help fund our car and other necessities to give us the best chance at winning. So to do this, we have to prepare our own presentation, flyers and our own speeches that would be impactful enough to convince our sponsors. We were able to not only create a presentation to display our team, but we were also able to provide model cars and had conversations with our sponsors to convince them to accept our deal. Overall, it was definitely a good learning experience performing individually but also as a group, and it helped us figure our strengths and weaknesses to ensure we were prepared to do even better and win at the competition." They will be competing in the regional finals on 13th February - wish them luck and keep them in your prayers!

Mr S Khari

## Her Future Self Unwrapped

Her past was unwrapped slowly, deliberately and carefully; as though to do it quickly would have destroyed the precious crinkled yellowed paper in which it was entombed. Once the wrapping was peeled back, what was revealed both surprised and embarrassed in equal measures.

She was both child and woman, naïve, educated yet ignorant, she knew a little about so many things, but not enough about anything yet.

Her desires were never spoken, she knew no future self, her present all-encompassing was her comfort, for to envision anything beyond the now was a prospect she could not face.

They said she should think about her future self, of the dreams yet to be fulfilled, of the journey she would take to arrive at that place where she would sit; smile on her face - comfortably in the seat of self-actualisation.

They knew she was capable, saw in her a flicker, not yet quite the 99.9 percent carbon that she was. They saw her better than she saw herself. They knew she was afraid – not of the journey, but of what she could become.

She knew her future self was better left where it had lain undisturbed and comfortable in its value.

Ms. P. Belvett

## Gallery: Christmas Enrichment Trips

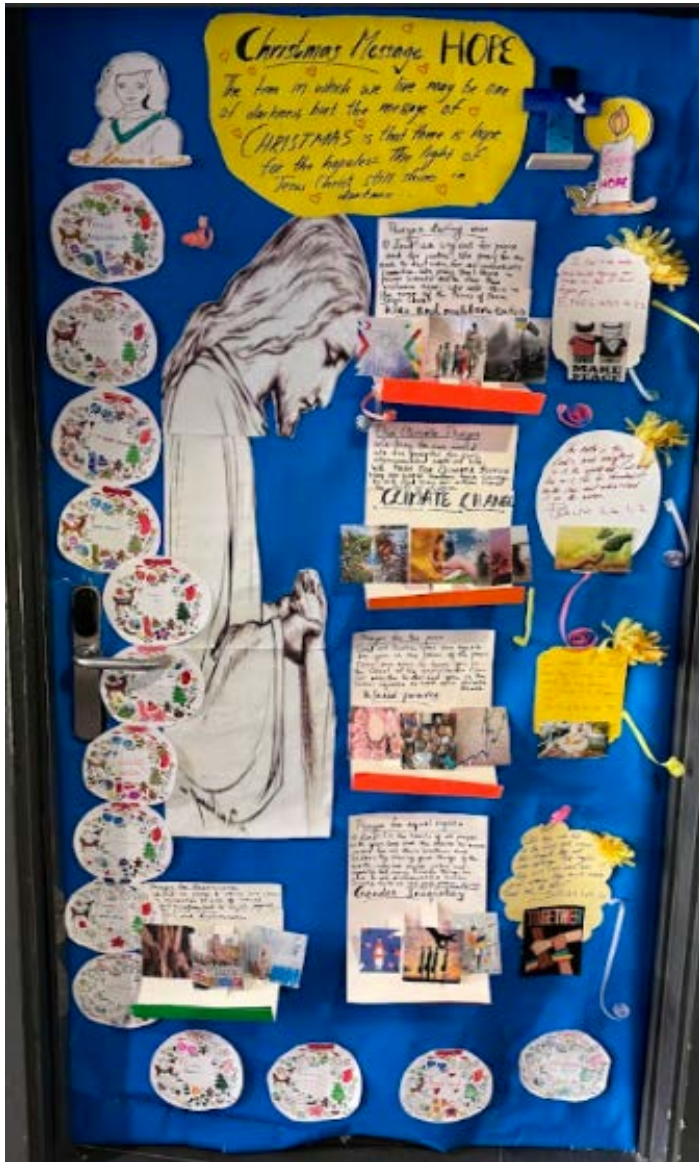
Thanks to all staff who supported with enrichment trips for all year groups in the last week of the autumn, providing students with opportunities for wider personal development.



## Gallery: Christmas Doors Competition Winners!

Another year of fantastic Christmas doors across St Michael's, well done to 11VI for their winning design.

1st - Year 11VI



2nd - Year 8



3rd - Year Yr7



Year 9



Year 10



Year 12



Year 13





## Chaplaincy Corner


### What's been happening in the faith life of the school?

- Staff and students returned to school on Monday the 6th January – the Feast of the Epiphany
- Ms Corcoran put together an assembly to announce the beginning of the Year of the Jubilee, sharing the Epiphany prayer encouraging us to journey together, following the light of Christ.
- Year 13 students took part in a retreat on 6th January to discuss how they could respond to the Pope's call to become Pilgrims of Hope, using stories from the Bible as a guide about how hope can be active and encouraged in all that we do
- Year 7 Rua had the best attended Friday morning Mass so far this year, it was a wonderful Mass, students helped with the decoration of the chapel and in the formation and celebration of the Mass
- Jubilee plans are well underway for the launch day on 24th January so that all members of the college community can be inspired to be Pilgrims of Hope


### The Word of the Lord

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has chosen me to bring  
good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim  
liberty to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to set free the oppressed  
and announce that the time has come  
when the Lord will save his people.”  
Luke 4: 18

### An Epiphany prayer: Pilgrims of Hope

God of all people,  
by the light of a star,   
you called seekers from afar,  
revealing your Son to all nations  
May the light of your love  
open our hearts to the whole human family.

God of compassion,  
we recall how the questions of the Magi,  
were met with Herod's violence,  
and Rachel's inconsolable grief.  
May the light of your peace  
illuminate our world so full of conflict.

God of grace,   
the wise ones found the child,  
the Light of the World,  
and travelled home by another way.  
May your guiding light lead us  
to Jesus and the new ways of your kingdom.

In this Holy Year,  
as we journey as pilgrims of hope,  
may we walk together in constant trust  
and faithful sharing of our gifts,  
seeking the wisdom of your word,  
and following the light of Christ.

Amen. 



## Chaplaincy Corner

(continued)



A reflection on this..

In this Gospel Jesus tells us what his mission on earth was: to bring hope, peace and love to people's hearts.

Let's work together as a school community to make this Jubilee Year 2025 a very special one where we can grow in hope, faith and love.

## Upcoming Events

### January

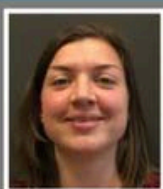
Fri 24th Jubilee Year Launch Day  
 Tue 28th Morning Mocks | Maths

### February

Tue 4th Morning Mocks | Maths  
 Mon 10th - Fri 14th Diversity & Inclusion Week  
 Tue 11th Morning Mocks | English  
 Thu 13th Year 7 Parents' Evening via SchoolCloud  
 Fri 14th End of Term  
 Mon 24th Back to College  
 Tue 25th Morning Mocks | Selected GCSE subjects

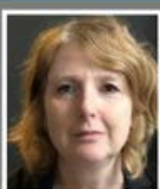


## Safeguarding Officers



**Designated Safeguarding Lead:**

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**Safeguarding officer & Deputy Designated Lead:**

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**Mr Allan Daly**  
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**Overall Responsibility:**

**Ms Felicity Corcoran - Principal**  
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