

Autumn 2022

the MARY IMMACULATE NEWSLETTER



MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Looking back to the newsletter piece I wrote this time last year, it almost seems we have put the days of COVID (mostly) behind us. We finished last year with the best results in the school's history

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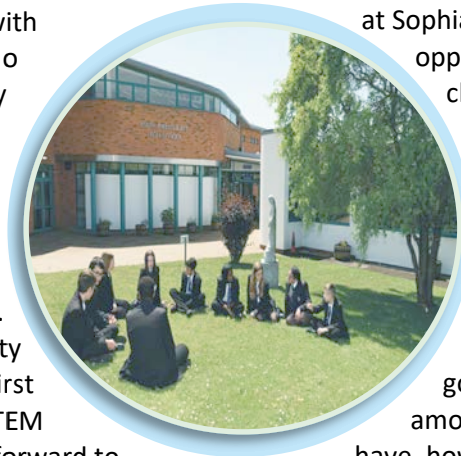


MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD TEACHER

with 66% of pupils gained 5 GCSEs including English and Maths and a points score of 388. These are incredible results – even more so with the backdrop of such a challenging few years. I want to pay tribute to our teachers and our pupils and to you our parents for your support. We expect even greater things this year as last year's Year 10 has some equally strong examination results.

Getting back fully to normal this year has meant having parents and visitors back on site. Our Open Evening this term was incredibly well attended with nearly 400 people on site – all of who were amazed by our facilities and by our pupils who led all our tours. We had our first in-person Parents Evening for year 7 and a number of Information Evenings and Option Evenings for those at different points of their educational journeys. We have also had a great opportunity to meet our Year 6 pupils with our first on site Sports Day. There is also a STEM day on December 2nd and we look forward to meeting our primary family when they support our Advent Liturgy on December 13th. Our current year 7 have also made an amazing start and it was wonderful to see them bond with each other and their teachers on their teambuilding event last month – there are pictures and quotes from those who went in this term's newsletter!

The deadline for applications to us for 2023 has now passed. We were at capacity before we had even begun our Open Evening and the numbers continued to grow. We will be aiming to take more than our usual 159 next year – this has meant extending our facilities so far with more planned changes next year. This term saw the opening of our new unisex toilet block for pupils along with a large extension to our canteen – pictures of both are included in our newsletter. This means there are more and better facilities for our current pupils and I know they appreciate all the hard work that has gone into these. That, however, is not the end. Next March (2023) they will begin building our new Pastoral Hub – containing a completely new Bridge support unit, a new pastoral base and pupil reception and new counselling



rooms. This will be on the side of the school adjoining the road and will enhance the already excellent offering of support we have for our pupils. Everyone is very excited by all these new changes and upgrades! We are very pleased to return this year to many trips and visits for pupils post COVID. We already have visits planned for Berlin, New York, London, Oxford and Harry Potter World along with a pupil leadership visit to the Senedd. As National Basketball Champions, we are also especially looking forward to the upcoming tournament at Sophia Gardens! All of these provide many opportunities for learning and fun outside the classroom and enhance young people's life experiences.

As we approach the end of term we have some staff leaving and we have had new staff joining us. We are sad to say goodbye to Mr Aldridge who has been our Head of RE for many years and we wish him well in his new role. We also say goodbye to Mr Curtis and Miss Thorne among our learning support assistants. We have, however have had a number of new staff join us. Mr Ibrahim joins us as the new Bridge assistant and we have new learning support assistants in Mr Jones, Ms Cahalan, Miss Johnson, Mrs Harrap and Mr Wilson with Miss Andrews to join us in January. In the canteen, we are also joined by Miss Jones. Finally, in January, we welcome Miss Ballantyne who will be our new Head of RE.

To conclude, can I wish you all a happy and holy Christmas. School will reopen Tuesday January 10th 2023.

Lord, we give thanks for this time when we can all be together. We give thanks for the food and the company we have. We give thanks for this joyful holiday when we can celebrate our Saviour and his love for us. With joy we pray, Amen

H.J. Powell
Headteacher



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD 2022

The students and teachers at Mary Immaculate High School have been busy this term supporting the Operation Christmas Child appeal. The project was run by Mrs Dyer, with help from Mrs Weare. The school has supported the charity for a number of years and Mrs Dyer was blown away by the generosity shown by staff, students and their families.

134 boxes were created in total and they will be going mainly to children and families in Ukraine.

Some boxes will also be distributed this year to children in the UK. Mrs Dyer would like to express her thanks to everyone who helped make this year such a success

These boxes will make such a difference to children during Christmas time.



Wellbeing & Spirituality Officer



Charity, Community and Christ

ANYONE CAN JOIN

PUPIL CHAPLAINCY CLUB

AFTER SCHOOL
EVERY TUESDAY
MEETING IN THE CHAPEL

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTION
PLEASE SPEAK TO ORE

Hi, my name is Ore and I am the new Wellbeing and Spiritual Officer. My role is to be someone that you can come and talk to about anything at any time. I am here to help everyone in our school community. So, don't be shy to come and talk to me.

I am so happy with the excitement that everyone has had about the chaplaincy team and I have a lot planned for everyone that would like to be a part of the Chaplaincy team.

We had a trip to the SVP Centre at Ely Bridge. St Vincent is an organisation that supports the local community with a large range of different services such as food banks, counselling, soup kitchen etc. The trip was very eye opening and the Chaplaincy team will be working very closely with the Charity to help our local community.

There is so much that our community can get involved in so if you are interested please come and join the Chaplaincy Club.

We are extremely fortunate that we are able to share Advent Celebrations together in school. This Advent we are looking forward to have our hold Christmas lunch for our senior citizens once again.

It has been an amazing term and I hope everyone has a peaceful and joyfully Christmas; May the joy of the birth of Jesus shine like the star in Bethlehem in your hearts this Christmas.

Poet's Corner

Why?

Year 8 have been studying race, with a focus on the positive impact of the Harlem Renaissance on the African American Movement. As a result, Carlotta felt inspired to create her own poem outlining her thoughts on this topic, and I asked her to share this with our school community.

Hopefully, this poem will inspire others to use poetry as a way to reflect their hopes for the future too. We invite all budding poets, writers and lyricists to send their work in, and we will create a poet's corner in every newsletter showcasing the amazing talent we have in MIHS.

Miss V Carey.

Why can't everyone be treated equally?
A world where no one is treated unfairly.
Somewhere where everyone is respected,
And people of colour aren't badly affected.
Where people aren't so quick to judge,
And everyone is equally loved.

Why do white people think they are superior?
And why are black people made to live in fear?
All people deserve rights,
Without having to put up a fight.
Race shouldn't determine what you get,
And it shouldn't be a topic that makes people upset.

Carlotta Melendez

Aero Challenge



In the summer term, twelve year 10 pupils took part in an engineering challenge at the International Centre for Aerospace Training at Cardiff Airport.

The day involved taking part in 5 engineering challenges which encouraged the group to use their mathematical and scientific skills to solve problems. The challenge was run by Cardiff and Vale College who run a full time course for year 11 school leavers

in Aircraft and Aeronautical Engineering.

In the flight simulator activity, pupils were trained by engineers to fly a plane into Cardiff airport. The egg drop challenge involved our teams dropping an egg from a 5 meter height without it cracking. Their task was to protect the egg during its descent by using a variety of materials.

Our team designs included making a parachute and surrounding the egg in water and confetti! In the 'jack challenge', the pupils had to lift up a plane from the ground in the same way engineers would do to carry out maintenance on a plane. The engineers spoke to the group about the need for good communication skills and team work and they delegated the roles of team leader, security manager and pilot.

The 'drone challenge' involved directing a 4 winged drone around the aircraft hanger by writing code to map its path. The pupils measured the course accurately to avoid the drone colliding with objects in the aircraft hanger.

The whole group made dog tags using their technology skills by using some of the college's specialist equipment.

A good day was had by all and the inspiring activities made us all think about engineering as a future path for employment. To find out more about the courses on offer for when you leave year 11 scan the QR code below:



Year 7 Team

As part of their ongoing transition from primary to secondary school, our Year 7 pupils spent a day developing their teamwork with their form classes and form tutors. Over 185 pupils attended Adventures Wales over 4 days, participating in fun and highly challenging activities such as Rock Climbing, Archery, High-Ropes, and a Muddy Assault Course.

An in-depth interview with 7 Badano highlighted the joy our pupils had, developing their resilience, communication, listening and problem-solving skills. Mr Camilleri sat down with his form to discuss their teambuilding retreat day, here's what they had to say:

Lena- *"We had a great experience; my favourite experience was the mud race. I developed confidence by meeting more people and I wasn't with my usual friends. It helped me learn about my peers and this was very nice."*

Callum B- *"My favourite part was the assault course. The skills I learned was teamwork and how to communicate better as a team with people having different roles so all of us could work together rather than one person leading."*

In addition to pupils spending time with their peers and form tutors, our new chaplain, Ore, attended all 4 days with our 7 form classes. This was a huge positive for our year 7 pupils as they began to build positive relationships with Ore, whilst developing the school's core values of respect, care, compassion and love. Mr Camilleri sat down with Ore to find out her thoughts on this amazing experience, here's what Ore had to say:

"The retreat was such an amazing experience for Year 7. They developed and gained many skills during the whole day including teamwork, resilience, trust, self-belief and confidence. Throughout the retreat days, the pupils were presented with multiple activities that pushed them in different ways where they had to face their fears, working together to push themselves harder than they ever imagined they could. The skills they learned, practiced and developed are life skills that will aid them in their personal growth and their everyday life."

We would like to thank all staff who attended the trip to ensure it was highly successful, and a huge well done to Year 7- a great start to life at Mary Immaculate High School.



Keeley D- *"I liked Archery as I felt like Robin Hood. It was great to try something new and learn how to fire a bow and arrow. I loved spending the day with my form class."*



Building Days



Joel D- "It was good as I had the opportunity to try something new, we worked as a team in some activities, and I loved being the strong one to lift my friends!"



Jared A-R- "I had a huge fear of heights, but the teachers and my friends encouraged me to have a go. Then I had a go with support and now I realised that it's good to step out of my comfort zone"



Mr Phormula



In late October, the Welsh department and Year 9 pupils were delighted to receive live virtual sessions delivered by Mr Phormula via Teams from his home in north Wales. Mr Phormula is a pioneering beat-boxer and live looping artist who has worked with Hip hops greats such as The Pharcyde, Jungle Brothers, Boy better Know, Plan B, Professor Green and legend Krs-One. He is the current Welsh Looping champion and in 2013 he was the Vice UK Looping Champion.

Mr Phormula shared with us how he uses the Welsh language in a modern way in his musical career. Pupils were thrilled to hear how he beatboxes and raps in Welsh and English and that, by having the ability to speak Welsh, it has been his element of being unique and giving him an edge which has allowed him to be successful in his music career.

The pupils were really responsive to him and the “buzz” created within the sessions was plain to see on their faces. The freestyling he did using Welsh words given at random by the pupils was a massive hit, clearly exhibiting his skills and his ability to incorporate the Welsh language into his act with ease and some style.

We look forward to working with him again soon - Diolch Mr Phormula.



[Check it out / Gwiriwch el Allan!](#)

<http://www.mrphormula.com>

www.youtube.com/user/mrphormula

Love Reading Campaign



Take a look at our free books!

This year, the Schools Love Reading campaign was launched by Cyngor Llyfrau Cymru (Books Council of Wales). Their amazing programme provides a voucher for one free book for all pupils aged 3-16 in Wales. Thanks to this wonderful opportunity,

Mary Immaculate School was able to host a book fair in partnership with a local Cardiff bookshop to allow pupils to choose a book with their voucher. With our newly refurbished Library in the LRC, and the launch of the Accelerated Reader programme, it has been a joy for staff to see the enthusiasm our pupils have developed for reading. We hope to continue to see this grow and flourish, so that every pupil can open a book and escape to another world.



New Open Plan Toilet Block

Over the summer months as well as refurbishing the canteen area, Mary Immaculate also had a complete refit of the main downstairs pupil toilet block. The old block had been in place since the school was first built and was a tradition style block consisting of two rooms for boys and girls with standard toilets installed.

The modern style of toilet block, as shown in the picture is an open plan design with the whole area open to the corridor with the hand basins located in the middle of the area. While being open plan there are sides reserved for boys and girls respectively – both with enclosed cubicles. Each cubicle has a floor to ceiling door for complete privacy and has a ceiling mounted speaker through which music is played 24/7 to give all pupils a sense of “audio privacy” as well.

The end result of the redevelopment is a fresh, bright, welcoming and secure private environment for our pupils’ comfort.




MI Cafe Ref

As pupils left for the summer break, the builders rolled into Mary Immaculate to begin the long anticipated expansion of the school canteen. The canteen in its existing form was simply too small for our pupil numbers and with Mary Immaculate High having an extra year 7 class this year more space for our pupils to dine in had to be provided.

The works themselves were carried out in conjunction with Cardiff City Council and their project managers and contractors. The foundations for the new extension were laid first, then the roof was braced with new structural steels while the existing external wall was removed. The new extension walls were then built and the roof extended to cover the new area. Windows colour matched to the rest of the school were then fitted to make the new area weather tight and the internal finishing was then begun.

The extension has added the capacity for an extra 60 pupils to be accommodated within the dining area, and with winter weather now well and truly upon us this extra space is already proving invaluable to our pupils every break and lunchtime.

As you can see from the photos all that remains to complete the build is the rendering and painting of the extension's external walls. A covered external "veranda" area is also planned to provide undercover external dining space and will hopefully be completed in time for the summer term.

A photograph of a school canteen. The room is filled with round, light-colored tables and colorful plastic chairs in shades of blue, light blue, and purple. The ceiling has recessed fluorescent lighting. Large windows with green frames are visible in the background, looking out onto a brick building. A potted plant is placed near the windows. The overall atmosphere is bright and clean.

"The environment is unique and bright. It's lively and makes lunch an enjoyable and relaxing time".
Paige, Maise and Soliana. Years 10 and 7.

Furbishment



"It's sleek, modern and spacious allowing lovely views of the fields to be seen as we eat. As a bigger space, it provides more room to meet with friends.

**Abigail, Megan, Isabelle and Imogen.
Years 11 and 7.**

*"It is spacious, colourful, bright and airy. A pleasure to be in for lunch".
Bart, Jacob and Karam. Yr 10.*

the MARY IMMACULATE SPORTSLETTER

The latest sporting achievements from MARY IMMACULATE HIGH SCHOOL



Mary Immaculate's year 8 football team have managed to put previous disappointing results behind them and have gained their first victory of the season. At the start of the term, the team lost to Whitchurch High School and local rivals Cardiff West in heavy defeats, resulting in an early exit in both the Welsh cup and Cardiff and Vale cup competitions. In true Mary Immaculate fashion, the players rallied together and decided they would turn their disappointment into motivation. The number of players attending football club on a Thursday afternoon increased dramatically and the level of skill improved drastically. They were finally able to work hard as a team, rather than as individuals and it was time to play another fixture.

A friendly game was organised against Cathays high school, and it was the perfect opportunity for our lads to show how far they have come in a short space of time. 21 players put their hands up to represent their team with stand-in team manager Osazee Odigie unable to play. Ellis Amuzu was asked to captain the team on this occasion as he took charge of arranging the teams' formation and starting line-up. During the game, the team showed real determination and produced some magical moments. This was rewarded with an emphatic victory on their home patch. All 21 players enjoyed game time, despite some not being able to stay for the team photo.

The Final score was 5-1 to Mary Immaculate.

In September 2022, Mr McDonnell was appointed as the newest member of Mary Immaculate PE department. With his rugby coaching background (previously worked as a WRU Rugby Hub Officer), the aim was to turn MIHS into a school that competed with the best rugby schools in the surrounding areas.

In recent years, the school has been able to produce talented players such as Mackenzie Martin who has represented Wales u20s this year, as well as Blessing Kilonda who is currently training with Cardiff Blues senior squad at the age of just 17.

With the introduction of rugby club on a Tuesday afternoon the numbers attending have been extremely impressive. The highest number of pupils that turned up to train was 53, this is an astonishing number of pupils.

The year group currently leading the way in rugby is our new year 7 pupils who are currently unbeaten. They have played two away games (St Cyres and Cantonian) and have fielded 24 players each time - this is something all schools would be lucky to have! Next up for the year 7 rugby team is Llanishen High School on Monday 28th November and its a home game.



For all the latest sport news follow the PE Dept @MI_PE_Dept