

St Martin's School

Newsletter



Issue 34

Goodbye and Best Wishes as Staff Retire

By Mrs D Griffiths, Senior Assistant Headteacher

At the end of this term we say a fond but sad farewell to two of our very dedicated and experienced teachers. Mrs Dawn Chives and Mrs Elizabeth McNeill will be retiring from St Martin's School and we will miss them both very much.

Mrs Chivers retires after 38 years of teaching (28 years at St Martin's). She has taught a range of subjects, including PE, Art, English and Maths and has been our Special Educational Needs Coordinator for 13 years. Mrs Chivers has helped and supported thousands of pupils during her time in St Martin's and encouraged them to overcome many difficulties and challenges. Mrs Chivers has also supported many, many teachers and Learning Support Assistants and ensured that the wide variety of pupils' needs have been met. In addition, she has organised and attended countless skiing trips to America and parts of Europe.



Mrs McNeill has taught French and Spanish at St Martin's for 22 years and has inspired a love of languages in many pupils, some who have gone on to study and use their languages further. She has also been a very supportive and caring form tutor to countless pupils. Mrs McNeill has organised and attended numerous school trips to France including trips to Boulogne, Normandy, Euro Disney, Parc Asterix and Paris.

Both members of staff have made an enormous contribution to the life of the school (50 years between them!!). Countless pupils and staff have benefitted from their expertise, wisdom, dedication and care and they really have made a difference to so many lives. St. Martin's in September will be a very different place without them and we thank them for all their hard work, their commitment and their many achievements. As they leave us for pastures new, we wish them good health and great happiness – diolch yn fawr iawn.

We also say goodbye to Miss Davies, (Maths), Mr Abraham, (English), Miss Rivers, (Technology) Mr Rees, (Cover Supervisor) Mr Johnson, (Learning Support) and Mr Nixon (Learning Support) We would like to thank them for all their hard work and commitment and we wish them well for the future.



Prom 2015

The Year 11 Prom took place on Thursday 25th June 2015. It was a fantastic night, with students turning out in glitz and style! Many would have made celebrities envious of their entry to the party, with some arriving in stretched limousines and even a party bus! The ladies and gentlemen who attended enjoyed every minute, they imbibed a mocktail on the terrace in the evening sunset and then partied on the disco dance floor. The night will also be remembered for the amazing magicians' tricks and the fun the students and staff had in the photo booth with all those props!

A huge thank you to Miss Jones and the Prom Committee for organising the event and congratulations to the Year 11 leavers for completing their examinations. Good luck this summer!



Head Girl Gains Place At Law Summer School

Mrs K Joyce, Head of Business & Law

Our new Head Girl, Olivia Lloyd, has secured a prestigious place to attend Law Summer School at Swansea University 1-3 July 2015. It is an all-expenses paid residential course, introducing attendees to a career in Law and life at Swansea. What is even more impressive is that there are only 10 places available, and even more so, Olivia did not even apply! Swansea remembered her from a previous contact and texted her directly to invite her! Well done Olivia!

Head Boy and Head Girl

Congratulations to Joshua Walton and Olivia Lloyd on their



appointment to Head Boy and Head Girl and to Deputy Head Boy and

Deputy Head Girl, Daniel Osborne and Emily Williams.



St Martin's Goes Platinum!



After four successive green flags, the school has finally achieved its ultimate aim in attaining the platinum award. Wow, this is fantastic news! Mr Tim Lyons, Head of Geography and Geology would like

to congratulate and thank the teachers and pupils for all their hard work, endeavour and sheer persistence. The pupils (past and present) have been amazing especially the members of the eco-club along with Arty Latham, Chemical Williams and Hysterical Ferris. Sorry Historical Ferris! The school has been busy developing its grounds with a series of small habitats such as ponds, wetlands and woodlands in an effort to increase its biodiversity. The flower gardens and Woodhenge look pretty good too. However, there is still plenty to do and improve. If you have any ideas, let us know as we are always looking for something that's a little bit different.

My Wonderful Week with the English Department



By Declan Flynn, Year 10

The week of 22nd-26th June, I had the pleasure of completing my work experience with the English Department. I arrived keen and ready to go, prepared for

whatever task was thrown at me. For the first day, I had the privilege of working all day with the magical Mrs Withers and was able to help some of our younger pupils with their challenging tasks. By lunchtime, I was exhausted and had begun to understand that being a teacher isn't just that! You have so many roles and wear so many hats; it's almost like a performance.

During my week, I was assigned many other tasks and was even allowed in to the forbidden stock cupboard! This room comes with warning signs and rumour has it that it even has a floor, which I managed to find eventually! The antiquities in there were even older than Mrs Underwood! I can genuinely say that it has made me consider my path in to teaching and has made me realise the preparation that I will have to do in order to succeed at this vocation and be as incredible as the teachers I observed this week. I can honestly say that working with Mrs Underwood and the English Department has given me more enthusiasm, positivity and inspiration than I could ever have wished for. It is very sad that no other year groups will get to experience work placements, but I am just so happy that I got to do it with such a wonderful team of committed and enthusiastic teachers; they really are amazing!

Year 8 Nepal Cake Sale

By Hollie Mitchell and Alex Darby, Year 8

The Nepal Earthquake affected thousands of people, taking away lives, homes and families in an instant. A group of year 8 pupils decided to take matters into their own hands, to raise awareness and funds to support the victims of this tragedy.

In May, pupils in Year 8 held a bake sale. Pupils and staff donated cakes, cookies and doughnuts, and volunteers from Year 8 worked hard to advertise the event with a poster campaign.

In total, we raised £218.67, which has helped to feed and clothe victims of the earthquake. We are very proud of everyone who took part and would like to say thank you to everyone who donated.



Ivan Raymond Trafford Memorial nears completion

By Mr M Ferris, Teacher of History

9S helped Mr Ferris landscape the ground around Caerphilly's newest war memorial. The story of Ivan Raymond Trafford whose Spitfire plane crashed on the side of Caerphilly Mountain in 1941 is well known by many St Martin's students. Students planted bulbs and helped to move top soil. It is hoped that a plaque will soon be added and that an official opening will soon be arranged.



Musical Notes

Such a busy term! Highlights included...

- The Urdd Eisteddfod
- Year 7 Drumming Workshops,
- Year 12 Peer Mentor Training,
- St Martin's Brass teaming up with Bedwas to perform on the Level 3 stage at St David's Hall
- iPad Training with Year 9,
- Josh Isaac singing with Only Boys Aloud on television.
- Ukulele practice with Year 8.



- Jacob Dawson continuing piano master classes with Richard Meyrick.
- Mrs Perry retires after a long stint in St Martin's. We are sorry to see her go.

Ebola Investigation



By Mr J Richards, Teacher of Geography

Mr Richards' Geography / Eco Club has been carrying out a number of investigations this year. The group repeated their litter survey, which showed that the overall quantity of litter on the school site fell between the start and end of the Spring term. They have also been investigating the Ebola epidemic in Africa. They have

researched the disease itself, the causes, the symptoms and how the disease has spread globally. Have a look at their research and learn about some of the horrible symptoms that the unfortunate people suffering with the disease have to face!



Competition Winner!



Chloe Arundel, Year 7, won the competition to redesign the Eco code rules and poster. Here she is with her final design. These posters can now be viewed in every classroom around the school.

Daf 'Eco' Jenkins!



Well done to Dafydd Jenkins Year 9. He is without doubt the battery recycling king of the school. For the last three years he has collected more old batteries than anyone else. Mr Yeoman was so impressed he rewarded him with cinema tickets.

Busy Bakers and Makers!



By Mrs F Shopland, Head of Technology

A busy year for Technology students making chocolate bar wrappers, flashing decorations, re-usable bags and fruit crumbles!

Transition Taster - Next Year's Cohort Have Landed! Attendance On The Up... Again!



By Mrs A Griffiths, Year 6 Teacher

For the last few weeks, St Martin's has been abuzz with 150 new faces sampling life at secondary school. Pupils' first course commenced with designing St Martin's superhero biscuits, and making a BIG SPLASH in the pool. Main course

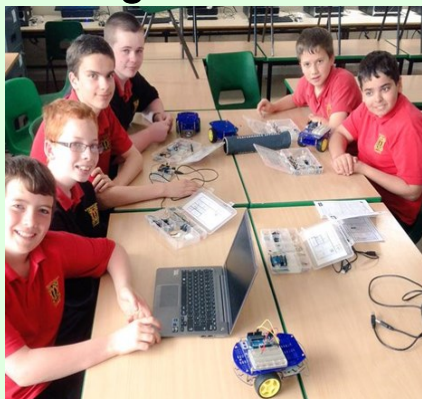
offered a plethora of tasters, from jaffa cake tasting in Food Technology to experiencing the wonders of the world in Geography. Pupils' expertise and skills were certainly put to the test in Science when challenged to separate salt from rock salt - careful crushing, dissolving, filtering and evaporating, sweetened this scientific process. A brief spell in the IT suites allowed pupils to sample the designing of comic heroes, and to programme using KODU. For dessert, pupils were tempted to plot co-ordinates in Mathematics and to WOW English teachers with their rich vocabulary. A quick taster of Welsh and Spanish topped off the culinary experience, wetting pupils' appetites for September's new menu!

Again!

By Mr G Evans, Assistant Headteacher

Attendance across the school has increased for the 5th year in a row. This year the school achieved 92.8%. Well done! However, we still have much work to do as the target for next year is 93.5%. As of September 2015, the fixed penalty system for non-school attendance and lateness will be implemented by the school. The current guidelines state that any parent/carer of a pupil with 5 days unauthorised absence within a school term may be liable for a fixed penalty fine of £60. Any pupil taking a holiday of 5 days or more which is unauthorised by the school will also be liable for a £60 fine via the fixed penalty scheme. We strive for all pupils to achieve a minimum of 95% attendance. Can I take this opportunity to remind you that good attendance equals good results!

Teenage Game Testers Wanted!



By Mr M Lewis, Head of ICT

Since its launch in Dec 2014, the beta game-maker tool Make IT: Technobabble has shown just how creative children are and how keen they are to share their creativity with the BBC. To help shape the product, the BBC want to hear from you. They're recruiting a small trial group, to run for seven weeks. As part of the trial you'll get to use the tools ahead of everyone else, provide feedback and suggestions and help make it a great success. For more information go to - <http://bbc.in/1KjZncb>

Attendance Rewards Trip



By Julie Owen, Pastoral Support Officer

At the end of Spring term, 35 lucky pupils from Years 7-11 participated in a fun morning of kayaking at 'Cardiff White Water' in Cardiff Bay. The trip was a reward for pupils with outstanding and most improved attendance and all of the pupils involved represented St Martin's well with their excellent behaviour.

Many had never experienced kayaking before but that didn't stop their enthusiasm! The pupils learned new skills and enjoyed playing games on the water. Well done to all of those involved for their excellent attendance so far this year! More attendance trips will be taking place throughout the Summer term so if you'd like to be in with a chance to go, make sure you're in school!

Urdd Eisteddfod

By Mr B Mock, Head of Welsh

The amazing and talented students at St Martin's School competed for the first time in the Urdd Eisteddfod and reached the national finals at Llancaiach Fawr in May. The competitions were of a very high standard and our students fully deserved their places in the competitions. They performed so well and we are very proud of them all. We also took part in the promotional video for the Eisteddfod and sang with Matt Johnson in the opening ceremony. The students enjoyed their day on the Maes and made every effort to



speak Welsh. Bendigedig! The school extends a massive thank you to Mrs Williams, Mrs Cobner and Miss Jones who made this massive achievement possible. Da iawn bawb! We will be

Urdd Animation Workshop



By Mr D Latham, Head of Art

During the recent Urdd Eisteddfod pupils and staff from St Martin's held an animation workshop using Stop Motion on I Pads. It was a great success and well received by the public who took part. Well done to Mr Mock who is now looking to be the next Walt Disney after his introduction to animation. A big thank you to ex pupil Carys Carter who took time out from studying animation at degree level to help

out. The Art Department has continued working hard developing its animation work this term. Pupils in 8S have been putting together an animated film to commemorate World War 1. The film is about a young soldier from Caerphilly fighting in the trenches. The group have been working in many mediums ranging from drawings, Photoshop, stop motion, sand animation and cut outs. Hopefully the film will be ready for its premiere in September after editing through the summer.



Physical Theatre Workshop



By Mrs L Weston, Curriculum Leader of Drama

St Martin's School welcomed professional actor and workshop leader Jimmy Whiteaker (Splendid Productions) to spend the afternoon working with GCSE and A Level Drama students on the 1st July 2015. The students were able to participate in a range of exercises exploring Physical Theatre and the practitioner Stephen Berkoff. It was a great day and the students excelled under Jimmy's guidance.

National School Sport Week

Rounders

Well done to all of the girls who competed in the CSSA Rounders tournament in Ystrad Mynach on Monday 22nd June. Teams from Years 7, 8 and 9 played superbly throughout the day, with some excellent individual performances.

NASWT Athletics

There was very tough competition in a huge South Wales School's annual NASWT athletics competition at Leckwith Stadium on Tuesday 23rd June. St Martin's pupils came away with some excellent results. There were some notable and outstanding performances from the following pupils:

- Luca Contino Year 8 - High Jump - 1st overall 1.54
- Matthew Golledge Year 8 - 1500m - 2nd overall 5:28
- Anya Lennon Year 7- 1500m- 2nd overall time of 5.28
- Jack Fox Year 10 - 1500m - 2nd overall time of 4:43
- Niall Reed Year 8 - Javelin - 3rd overall 27.07
- Grace Leggett Year 8- hurdles- 5th overall
- George Welsh Year 8 - Discus - 7th overall 20.07

Well done to all of our athletes!

Caerphilly 2k run

On Sunday 21st June, 26 fleet-footed St Martin's pupils participated in the Caerphilly 2k run. Everyone who took part did themselves and our school proud. Crossing the line in first place was our very own Ben Davies, Year 9.

Staff circuit

17 staff braved the scrutiny of St Martin's pupils at lunchtime on Friday 19th June to take part in the Circuit Training event organised by our talented Sports Leaders Jasmine Morgan and Abigail Inseal to raise awareness of National School Sport Week.

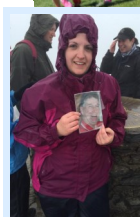
Silver ambassadors

A big well done to Sam Hughes, Jack Osborne, Olivia Beament, Megan Chung, Darcy Boyes and Abbie Sykes who were nominated to become Silver Sport Ambassadors.

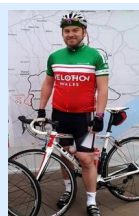
St Martin's Sports Day

By Miss R Picton, Head of PE

A great big thank you to everyone who was involved and participated in this year's Sports Day. A great day had by all! With a slightly alternative sports day this year to encourage participation, we saw many more pupils getting involved. A big thank you to all the leaders, Year 11s and Year 12s who helped on the day.



Mr Richards took part in his first cycling race at Velothon Wales in June. He finished the 50km course in 1 hour and 57 minutes. **Miss Donovan** completed The 3 Peaks Challenge, climbing Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon. She raised £850 for Velindre. Fantastic!



Sports Tour - Barcelona 2015



By Miss R Picton, Head of PE

We had the pleasure of taking 40 boys and girls from year 8,9 and 10 to Barcelona for a football and netball tour during the May half term. After 2 days of training and tournaments, the U16 netball team came 2nd in their pool, U14's came 5th. The U16 football team, played an age grade above and came 3rd in the Bronze cup. The year 8 boys came runners up in the Gold cup. We also visited the Loret De Mar water park, and a few people came back from the water park a little pinker than when they arrived, and Mr Faulds came back with very sore feet, which he only mentioned once or twice. With swimming, shopping, water parks, a visit to Nou Camp football stadium, slingshots, ice cream fights and the occasional stop for a burger, we managed to get all 40 home safe and sound. Every pupil was a credit to themselves, the school and the PE department and were an absolute pleasure. Both sets of coaches commented on the attitude and manners of our groups, which was a fantastic reflection on the school.

Young Engineer of the Year Award 2015



By Mrs A Whitcombe, Head of Biology

Ex pupil Jason Good has won the title of Young Engineer of the Year at the ESTnet Awards in March. Jason is now a Senior Process Engineer at IQE's Photonics Business Unit based in Cardiff. IQE are the

leading global supplier of advanced semiconductor wafer products. Jason was an exceptional student who studied Chemistry at Oxford University after leaving school. Well done Jason we are immensely proud of you.

Smart Reporters



Well done to Jack Williams in Year 8 our resident DJ on Smart Radio who came along to record the Urdd experience for our school radio. He was aided by none other than multi lingual Caleb Mock who both interviewed people in English and Welsh. They were most professional and did our school proud.

Hall of Fame

If you're visiting St Martin's please look out for the pupils displayed in the 'Hall of Fame'. Each Head of Department has nominated one pupil. Why not take a look?

