

Keynotes

November to December 2025



Dear Parents and Carers

As the term comes to a close, it has been a blessing to enjoy a few moments of calm and reflection despite a very busy time in our lives - the momentous build up to Christmas!

Last week it was a pleasure to light our Advent candle at the start of each year group assembly and lead the students in a period of reconciliation. Our examination of conscience looked at preparing 'The crib of our hearts' where we imagined our heart as a house where some rooms are bright, some are messy, and some might even be locked. We explored which rooms may need God's light in them this Advent season. Many of us build walls in our hearts on occasion – walls of pride, walls of hurt and walls that say "I'm fine" when really we are not. It is unique to faith schools and Catholic schools in particular that we take time to reflect on these aspects of our lives. As part of the same assembly, we examined the Japanese art of 'Kintsugi', the art of repairing broken pottery by mending the fractures with glue combined with gold, silver or platinum. The concept that the fracture is celebrated and even more beautiful because of how it has been repaired is apt when recognising reconciliation as an act of repair. Following reconciliation, we should have something stronger, more vibrant: something to glorify ours and God's presence.

This week we enjoyed our annual Carol Service in St Joseph's Church. It was a joyful and uplifting experience which celebrated this year's school theme of belonging. There is an emphasis on travel in the nativity story and our drama students reflected that one does not need to be born in a particular place or have close connections to feel like they belong. It is the people, the community and the service to others that draw us in and helps us to feel loved. A lovely addition to our Carol Service was a video of several members of our community, staff and students, saying merry Christmas in their native language.

Christmas, at its core, is a celebration of love, compassion and togetherness. It is a time to appreciate the bonds of family, the joy of friendship and the gift of giving. As we prepare to break for the holidays, I want to take a moment to express my sincere wishes to each and every

one of you.

Amid the festivities, let us not forget the true meaning of Christmas - the birth of Jesus Christ, a symbol of hope and salvation. As a Catholic secondary school, we are guided by the teachings of love, kindness and Catholic social teachings that are particularly pertinent at this time. Ensuring the preferential option for the poor has been at the forefront of our minds and we encouraged our students to make contributions to the collection for the Salvation Army Christmas campaign.

This academic year started very well with some outstanding exam results at both GCSE and A Level and a record number of students joining our Sixth Form. The outcomes for your children both academically and pastorally continue to be high, due to an exceptional team at school and great support from home. In November, we enjoyed our PTA Christmas Fair. It was an afternoon of festive fun, fundraising with amazing raffle prizes, wonderful performances from our choirs and musicians and lots of Christmas goodies to purchase. The event raised an amazing total of £6840 which the school will be able to put to excellent use. The PTA do a terrific job and if you have just a few

hours a year to spare and support them, please get in touch via pta@st-peters.surrey.sch.uk.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated teachers, staff and students for their hard work and commitment throughout the term. Together, we have achieved greatly, and I am proud of the sense of community that defines our school. As this edition of Keynotes will show, it has been a busy term and I hope you enjoying reading it.

As you gather with loved ones, may the spirit of Christmas fill your hearts with joy. Let us embrace the opportunity to share kindness and goodwill with those around us, and may the lessons of this season resonate in our actions throughout the coming year.

Wishing you all a happy and holy Christmas filled with love, laughter and cherished moments. May the New Year bring continued success and happiness to our St Peter's family.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T Miller'.

Mr T Miller, Headteacher





Year 7 Christmas Art Competition

Congratulations to Lois H 7FR for winning this year's Year 7 Christmas Card competition and to our two runners up, Henry S 7TE and Betsy H 7KO. We received a record number of entries this year and would like to thank everyone who entered the competition. It made the final decision very difficult! Thank you to Mrs Bromley and Mrs Lynch for organising and to the PTA for sponsoring this event.



Year 11 Update: Mocks, Motivation and Baby Goats

As I write this article, Year 11 are heading toward their mock exams and it has been fantastic to see the growing sense of focus and determination across the year group. Their attitude in lessons has been increasingly mature and many are clearly starting to take ownership of their revision and future plans.

A real highlight recently was the Sixth Form Taster Day. It was brilliant to see students engaging so enthusiastically with potential A Level subjects - asking thoughtful questions, exploring new topics and imagining what life might look like next year. For those who were out visiting other colleges, the feedback was equally positive, with

many returning inspired and excited about the opportunities ahead. Some student quotes were "It was a really good day, but now I want to do four courses and I don't know what to change!", another expressed it was a real moment of clarity "I am now 100% sure of what I'm doing! Psychology, Sociology and Biology!"

Of course, no school update would be complete without mentioning the baby goats. Yes, baby goats! A few lucky students got the chance to hold them during their visit to Merrist Wood and let's just say, some were more confident than others. There were a few nervous faces when the parents of the baby goats started appearing! Merrist Wood and Guildford College gave some students a fantastic opportunity to look at life outside of St Peter's.

Back in school, Year 11 showed great enthusiasm during Michele Miller's visit. Her session on revision techniques was packed with practical advice and it was encouraging to see students genuinely engaged, taking notes, asking questions and even volunteering ideas. It is clear that many are starting to understand that effective revision is not just about working hard but working smart.

All in all, Year 11 are showing real promise. With continued effort and support, they are on track to make the most of their mocks and beyond.





Spanish Club

This term, our KS3 Spanish Club has been bursting with energy, creativity and cultural discovery. From the kitchen to the classroom, we have explored the richness of Spanish-speaking traditions in many memorable ways.

Cooking Palmeritas

One of our highlights was baking palmeritas - delicious puff pastry treats shaped like little hearts. Students loved rolling, folding and sprinkling sugar before watching them puff up golden in the oven. It was a sweet way to bring Spanish flavours to life!

Exploring Mexico and Día de Muertos

We also journeyed across the Atlantic to Mexico, learning about the vibrant traditions of Día de Muertos. Colourful skulls, marigolds and stories of family remembrance gave us a deeper appreciation of how culture celebrates life and memory, culminating with the making of our own altar with papel picado and Frida Kahlo.



Helping with Open Evening

Our creativity did not stop there. For Open Evening, club members proudly contributed by making a bright, festive bunting. It added a splash of Spanish colour to the event and showed off our teamwork and enthusiasm to visitors.

A Club Full of Spirit

Whether cooking, crafting or exploring traditions, the KS3 Spanish Club has been a place of laughter, learning and community. We can't wait to see what adventures await us next term!



St Peter's Keys

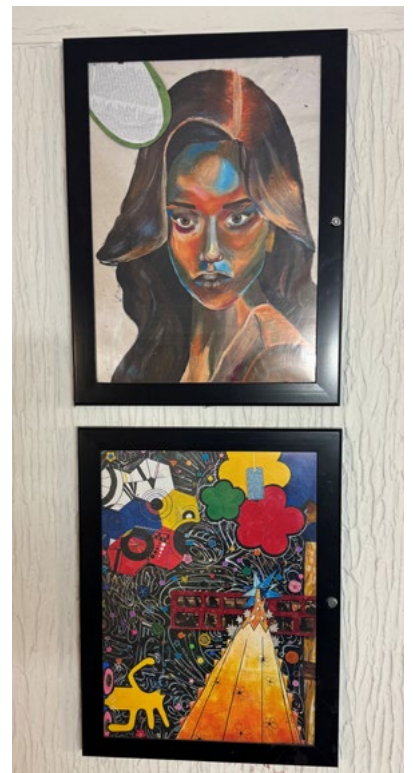
This half term, the St Peter's Keys were awarded to Emmanuel in 8TE for his achievements outside of school in Taekwondo. Earlier in the term, he won a gold medal in the GB Championships and has now been invited to the 2026 World Championships in Benidorm. Good luck, Emmanuel!

'Art @ The Station'



I am delighted that St Peter's was again chosen to be part of this year's Art @ The Station programme. Art @ The Station is a local organisation that works with local schools and education providers to display artwork at some of the stations in the area.

This year we have displayed some of our outgoing Year 11 work. Next time you are using Guildford Station and find yourself walking through the underpass, make sure to spend some time to take in the fabulous work on display. The work can be found towards the ramp for Platform 9 and will be on display until January.





Mental Health Update - Celebrating Wellbeing Together

This half term, our school has focused on celebrating wellbeing by exploring how empathy and contribution strengthen mental health and belonging. Research shows that giving boosts wellbeing, reduces stress and builds a sense of purpose, and we have seen this in action across our community throughout the term.

Belonging Week

We launched the term with Belonging Week and a Whole School Assembly, where we encouraged students to reflect on what neurodiversity means, how we can live out our school values in everyday actions and practical activities to support mental health.

Across tutor times, students have led discussions, worked on creative courage projects and taken part in kindness challenges. These were all designed to help them reflect on love, courage, justice and service in our community, and how responding

to others' needs can support wellbeing.

Mental Health Champions

Our trained Mental Health Champions have been busy leading lunchtime wellbeing activities and creating posters to signpost support and guidance for students on topics such as sleep, screen time, study habits and ways to improve mental health over the winter months.

Their training this half term has focused on listening skills, empathy and practical strategies to promote positive mental health across the school.

The team has supported students with writing gratitude notes to staff and peers, learning how to be an upstander and exploring the benefits of guided meditation. Our Mental Health Champions have worked hard to build connections within school and highlight key messages about protecting mental health.

How Parents Can Support at Home?

- Encourage empathy: ask your child to describe how they support themselves and others.
- Reflect together: what's one way you helped someone this week? How did it make you feel?
- Model kindness: share your own experiences of giving and how it impacts your wellbeing.

Resources for Families

- Action for Happiness: Kindness Calendar: <https://actionforhappiness.org/calendar-monthly/2025-12>
- Mental Health Conversation Starters: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/supporting-children-s-mental-health-10-conversation-starters-for-parents-online-safety-guide>

Together we can help our young people understand how the ripple effect of kindness will promote the wellbeing of all.



Christmas Concert

On 26th and 27th November, almost 200 students took part in the annual Christmas Concert featuring ensembles, bands and choirs.

There was an impressive display of individual and group talents. Part one consisted of a wide range of music, such as 'Mr Brightside' by The Killers and 'Sit Down You're Rockin' the Boat' from Guys and Dolls.

After the interval, part two featured 13 songs performed by different ensembles including an A Cappella performance of

'Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas' and 'Some Might Say' by Oasis. The concert ended in style with the '12 Days of Christmas' sung by everyone.

This of course wouldn't have been possible without the help and effort from Miss Myatt, Mrs Hanford, Mrs Gregg, Ms Meoli, Miss Pollard, Mrs Spenser, Miss Byrne, Mr Bates, Miss Calvert and to all the parents who have encouraged their children to practise each night. Have a merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

Written by Michael 12RO



Belonging Week

In the first week of November, we hosted our first St Peter's Belonging Week. This included the whole school participating in lesson activities, tutor times and lunchtime workshops that promoted Belonging. Each day of the week focused on a different rock.

On the Monday, we focused on the rock of **Love** and Neurodiversity within our community. Enrique in Year 12 has summarised the day:

What is Neurodiversity? Neurodiversity is the concept that recognises and values the variety of ways in which people's brains work, emphasising that differences in thinking, learning and behaviour are natural, promoting inclusion and understanding of neurological differences, and they should be accepted. It often relates to conditions like Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and others. These are natural and valuable variations of the human brain wiring. These differences affect the way people process information and interact with the world around them.

How Neurodiversity week started? In our Whole School Assembly – which started Neurodiversity Week - the Head Students and staff wanted to start the week by promoting and sharing the voices of students and teachers' personal experiences who are neurodivergent. The assembly was very successful in



engaging all students and teachers who commented on how wonderful it was to listen to willing students who shared their experiences with the whole school.

During the day, lessons 2-5 all began with a 10-minute activity which shared facts and information about the different neurodivergent conditions (ADHD, Dyslexia and Autism). Students found them interesting, enlightening and had conversations about their own thoughts and experiences.

On Tuesday, we focused on the rock of **Justice** and promoted the upcoming national Anti-Bullying Week. Ms Meoli led a workshop on how to influence change as a teenager. Wednesday saw us focus on the rock of **Courage**. Sixth Formers and staff kindly shared their courageous stories to inspire the rest of the school.

On the Thursday of Belonging Week,

staff and Sixth Formers hosted our first Wellbeing Festival. It was a vibrant celebration of creativity, connection and mindfulness where students explored wellbeing through art by painting kindness rocks, expressed unity in RE with a "We Are One" collage and enjoyed mindful movement in PE with yoga-inspired activities. Computing showcased a digital resource demonstrating how students embody each rock, while Maths encouraged strategic thinking through board games and logic puzzles. Science brought fun and teamwork with a Mario Kart challenge and DT offered hands-on creativity in textiles and architecture. Our Wellbeing Champions led the photobooth and captured joyful moments, making the day a true reflection of our commitment to fostering a caring, inclusive school community.

Finally, on Friday we focused on our rock of **Reflection**. This involved a gratitude activity where every student and staff member in the school was asked to complete a custom made thank you card and hand deliver it to someone else in the community by the end of the day. On this day, Miss Resa also ran a workshop on gratitude journaling to support any students hoping to start this as a habit.

All in all, the week brought the school community closer together and it was lovely to see a buzz around school, centred around how proud we all are to belong to this school.

Student Report on Belonging Week

The Belonging Festival was an event that occurred during this year's Belonging Week. This new initiative was launched by a Head Student's proposal during their application to become a Head Student. This week was created to promote kindness, diversity and strengthen our shared sense of belonging within our school community, while reminding us of the values that connect us as a school.

Each day of the week focused on a different St Peter's rock (love, courage, reflection, service and justice) and the activities held during this week gave the students time to reflect on what these values meant in their own lives and promote our Catholic ethos.

All the activities had different intentions,

for example, the Mario Kart competition aimed to create a supportive community spirit. The mindful movement session used yoga-inspired exercises which focused on mindfulness and relaxation. This is significant as it provides students with ways to find peace at times of stress that they may encounter. Additionally, the Art Department's activity of kindness rock painting was a great opportunity for students across all years to celebrate their skills together and have a memento of the week. While all the activities were very different, they all shared a common goal of creating a sense of belonging by bringing people together.

One of the standout moments was the Mario Kart competition, as the participants demonstrated a level of resilience by competing publicly. I

particularly loved the hats and costumes they wore which showed their dedication and commitment to the activity.

We are hoping that this week was both inspiring and insightful for everyone who participated in it, as it gave students the opportunity to reflect on their own qualities and what they bring to our school community. We hope it showed them that they can use their qualities to help make a difference and make lasting impacts on those around them, inspiring them to reach their potential and become the best versions of themselves.

Following reflections within our Student Leadership meetings, we have decided that this is an initiative that will be repeated, building upon the foundations for it to be bigger and better and creating more meaningful messages to take away.
Written by Chloe 13TE and Plum 13RO



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HOMELESS, VULNERABLE, OPEN
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Year 7 Anti-Bullying

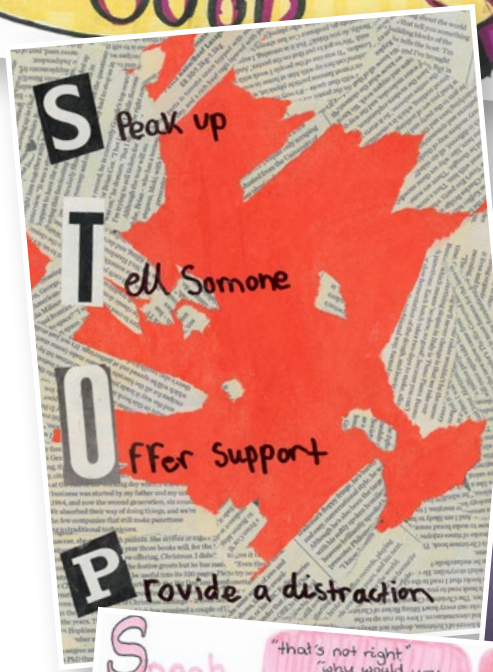
The Year 7s have learned how to STOP bullying in their Citizenship lessons.

STOP stands for:

- S** • Say something, such as "can you explain why that is funny?"
- T** • Tell someone.
- O** • Offer support to the victim and ask them if they are OK.
- P** • Provide a distraction in the moment by talking about something else, such as "does anyone know if we have assembly tomorrow?"

These anti-bullying posters were created by Lois 7FR, Alessio 7BA, Aine 7FR and Florence 7FR.

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying-week-2025/anti-bullying-week-2025>





RAG Week 2025

In late November, RAG (Raising and Giving) Week was a highlight in everyone's calendar. We host this event every year to raise as much money as we can for our charities: Shooting Star Hospice and Papyrus.

Some key highlights this year included the Teachers vs Students football match – where it is safe to say the teachers were absolutely thrashed by our Sixth Form team. Although the competitive side of the teacher team really came out when they began to lose 3-0!

Another huge highlight was the Teacher Talent Show, where we watched a vivid

display of teachers' hidden talents involving plenty of singing and dancing. The atmosphere was truly electric and everyone got so involved and invested in the performances. A huge thank you is owed to all the students – not forgetting the amazing teachers who put their heart and soul on stage.

It's important not to forget the classic Sponge the Teacher. At as little as three degrees, our committed staff turned up ready to be attacked by buckets and sponges galore – full of ice-cold water. A huge thank you and well done is owed to the brave teachers who took part and turned up, despite the

freezing conditions to create such a memorable event.

Through all your efforts combined with these iconic events, we have broken the previous record and successfully raised a whopping £4300! This will be split evenly between the two charities. So, we want to say a huge thank you to everyone involved – we couldn't have done any of this without the valuable contributions of the parents on JustGiving and all the students and teachers who turned up, contributed and participated. We couldn't have done it without you!

Written by Victoria 13KO



PTA December Update

This year has been a whirl of lovely events from termly Secondhand Uniform sales and a Family Quiz Night, to serving refreshments at the various school events including the Year 13 graduation drinks, concerts and musicals. The team at St Peter's PTA would like to thank each and every one of you for your engagement in the various events and schemes over the course of this year.

We had a particularly fabulous turn out for the Christmas Fair – it was busy, buzzy and brilliant fun! The Christmas Fair is the result of the school staff, students, PTA and community working together and it could not happen without you.

We would like to extend a massive thank you to the exceptional contributions from:

- The very talented Music and Art students, the student year groups and Sixth Formers for their volunteering time and creative stall contributions.
- The wonderful teachers who donate their valuable time to this event.
- The Lettings, Finance, Administration and Site teams for their ongoing patience and help.
- Seymours for their generous

partnership and sponsorship.

- Revology Events for the fabulously uplifting disco.
- Field Marketing for the brochure design and online raffle and auction set up.
- All our generous, local businesses who kindly donated prizes for the raffle and auction.
- All the wonderful stall holders for the fabulous festive market – we had over 30 stalls this year!
- All the parents and carers who kindly gave donations, time and energy to the set up and running of this fair.
- Thank you everyone for making it such a merry start to the festive season.

Fundraising Update

In February 2025, we gave the school a cheque for £22,500 from the PTA funds raised in the previous two years. This was used to refurbish the school library and transform it into a fresh, modern space.

The next fundraising target is for an additional covered outdoor area for the students.



As of 9th December, the grand total raised in 2025 is £14,030! Please see the picture below for a breakdown of how you have helped us to raise these funds over the year.

We will be holding the PTA Annual General Meeting in late January, early February. This will report on 2025 and plan out the activities for 2026. We would love to see you there. Please contact PTA@st-peters.surrey.sch.uk if you would like to get involved.

We would like to wish you all a peaceful Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

Susan, Rebecca, Mel, Natacha, Pav & Emma on behalf of the PTA Team.

School PTA Fundraising Update

£14,030

Raised in 2025
(to 9th December)

St Peter's PTA Fundraising Summary



Japanese Visit to St Peter's

At school, my host sister Lola introduced me to her friends and I was able to talk with many people. Although I often struggled to keep up with the fast pace of conversation or unfamiliar vocabulary, I didn't give up. Instead, I asked them to speak more slowly. I also asked about the meanings of words which helped me expand my vocabulary.

Everyone was kind and adjusted to my level of English. Still, I felt frustrated when I couldn't express myself as I wanted. Even students from different grades spoke to me and when I said I was from Japan, they greeted me with "Konnichiwa!" and asked questions about Japan. I was surprised by how many people were interested in Japan.

During a Religious Studies class,



there was a prayer followed by a gesture of making the sign of the cross which confused me because I wasn't familiar with the custom. It gave me insight into Christian beliefs.

During my homestay, I reflected on my previous study abroad experience and made an effort to spend time with the family instead of staying in my room. At first, I was nervous and found it hard to keep conversations going which felt awkward. But as we baked sweets, watched movies and played games together, I gradually opened up. I learned that it's important to express my preferences and feelings - like what I want to do or what foods I like - rather than keeping them to myself.

In the UK, I especially enjoyed visiting castles like Windsor Castle and the Tower of London. My host sister and host mother both loved history and they taught me a lot about the current royal family, historical events and the uses of weapons and buildings. It was fascinating to not only see these places but also learn about them as I explored.

Written by Lily from the MeySen Academy

A Review of 'A Christmas Carol'

'A Christmas Carol', written by Charles Dickens, is a ghost story about a man named Ebenezer Scrooge and four ghosts who teach him valuable life lessons. We watched a theatre performance of it and in my



opinion, I liked how there were only three actors playing all the parts. It was in the Exam Hall and I remember whispering to the person next to me about how cool the background was. I also really liked how the actors were focused all the time and it made the show engaging and exciting.

The performance helped me understand the novel better because in the text it

used a lot of old-fashioned words, but when I watched the play, I understood it more and it helped me to visualise the settings and characters. My favourite thing was how the actors knew what they were doing and how they managed to play all the characters with three people which was amazing! Overall, it was a fun performance and I really enjoyed it.

Written by Faye 7ST



Othello Trip Review

On 24th November, the Year 12 and 13 English Literature students travelled to London to visit the Theatre Royal Haymarket and watch their production of Shakespeare's Othello starring David Harewood OBE, Toby Jones OBE and Caitlin Fitzgerald.

It was an extremely engaging and entertaining trip because studying the

play as a part of the English Literature A Level means spending a lot of time analysing the text on the page, so seeing it performed live was a refreshing and exciting change of perspective as we were offered the opportunity to witness Shakespeare's tragedy in a professional theatrical setting.

Beyond its academic value, the trip was also a brilliant opportunity to share an experience with other students

and enrich our understanding of Shakespeare in the way it was meant to be experienced, offering new insights to consider in our essays. Overall, the visit to the Theatre Royal Haymarket was both enjoyable and worthwhile, strengthening our understanding of Othello while reminding us why theatre is still such an important and exciting way to engage with literature beyond the classroom.

Written by Freya 12RO



Polecon Conference – Year 12 Politics Trip

In November, our A Level Politics class headed to the Polecon Conference at the Methodist Central Hall in Westminster and it turned out to be a real eye opening and intriguing day. We got to hear from a varied lineup of speakers, some key figures included Richard Tice, Zach Polanski, Sir Lindsay Hoyle and Sir Jacob Rees-Mogg, who all had completely different takes on how politics should work. Being able

to hear their well-informed and (for the most part) eloquent answers, the whole experience felt much more real than just reading about it in class, partly due to the lively atmosphere within the audience.

The best part was when we had the opportunity to ask questions and get genuine responses. Enrique asked a great question to Sir Jacob Rees-Mogg about

the economy which sparked a surprisingly energetic response from the audience. Hetty followed up with a thoughtful question for Catherine West about how the Labour Party plan to sustain their leadership for the rest of the term. Overall, it was a fun and fascinating trip that left us feeling more connected to what is happening in UK politics right now.

Written by Freya 12RO and Emily 12FR



Salvation Army Appeal Success

The toy appeal for the Salvation Army was a great success! St Peter's embodied the spirit of Christmas by engaging all year groups in gathering toys, games, clothes and food for those in need this festive season. Each year group's contributions were invaluable and filled two minibuses! The experience was even more rewarding when our Year 12 SALT (Student Action Leadership Team) members dropped off the contributions in person and listened to all the ways every small act will spread into the wider community.

Written by Maisie 12FR

The experience of working to gather donations for the Salvation Army was such an amazing opportunity, I'm glad to have accepted. Due to time constraints, my group really came together as a team to create our presentation that would hopefully

convince our year to donate.

I knew I'd done all I could - creating, printing and laminating posters, organising and arranging scripts for the team to follow and learning my speech off-by-heart - but despite that I couldn't help but be nervous. After some last-minute adjustments, we were finally ready to deliver our assembly which, according to the audience, went down well. The whole project felt so fulfilling from seeing our collective work come together, to delivering the assembly itself, to hearing people say they enjoyed my speech and somehow found the jokes funny, to counting the gifts and realising how much we managed to gather. I'm so grateful for everyone that helped make this possible and for all the donations we managed to gather.

Written by Louis 12TE



Year 13 Networking

Our Sixth Form students have been actively preparing for life beyond school, exploring future pathways and building the confidence needed for the workplace. In November, Year 13 took part in a Speed Networking event where they met employers face-to-face and practised holding conversations with professionals they had never met before. Although many were nervous at first, students quickly grew in confidence and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Opportunities like this not only broaden their understanding of different industries but develop the communication and interpersonal skills that will support them in interviews, networking and the workplace in the years ahead. Thank you to all our parents and alumni who supported our students!



Year 11 Interviews

Year 11 have had a very busy and productive term. In November, they took part in practice interviews with external business professionals, using the CVs they had prepared in the summer term of Year 10 and finalised at the start of Year 11, as the basis for discussion. Each interview lasted 15 minutes, followed by five minutes of verbal feedback and an additional written summary to support reflection and improvement. Many students commented on how helpful and enjoyable the experience was.

"I immediately felt at ease and felt as though I had someone who I could relate to. Thank you so much for this brilliant experience." **Will**