



## Anti-Bullying Week

This week has been national Anti-Bullying week and this has been the focus for house assemblies. It is important that we maintain this as a high priority so that our students can feel safe and happy at school. We have effective systems in place but this annual reminder is very useful.

## Westminster House

Zahid Akbar has been appointed Head of House in place of Alistair Clifford who left at half term. Jacqui Reid continues in her role as Student Support Officer.

**A reminder that school will close at 2.00 pm on Tuesday 24 November for the Year 7, 10, 12, 13 Parents' Evening**

## Bishop Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo Nobel Peace Prize Winner 1996

Last Friday 13 November, Bishop Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo from East Timor visited Year 9 and 10 Religious Education students to talk about his life and struggles in East Timor. Bishop Belo had been at the heart of the struggle for East Timor's independence from Indonesia but instead of following a path of violence, he proclaimed a peaceful approach. At risk to his own life, Bishop Belo tried to protect the people of East Timor from violence and persecution from Indonesia. Bishop Belo was asked by one of the students if his life had ever been in danger and he said that on two occasions there were attempts to assassinate him. The visit emphasised that non violence is the true Christian way to deal with conflicts and as the Bishop said "we should all try and find peace in our hearts".

## Focus on Focus Day

The remainder of this week's newsletter is devoted to last week's very successful Focus Day. Yet again, staff put on a wide variety of engaging activities for the students, making the most of the extended period of time. We had several groups of visitors in to run activities and they all commented on how receptive, well-behaved and engaged our students were.

## Celebrations

We had a real buzz going in art. Students were creating little clay Divas in celebration of Diwali. They were learning new skills in 3D design but also learning about a different culture.

We started by making a practice clay 'pinch pot' which allowed students to experiment with a new technique and then look at using 'impress' tools to stamp Indian style patterns into their work. Once they were happy, they created their real Diva and the results were fantastic! Students have been invited back this week to collect and paint their Divas.



Within Design and Technology students had a taste of Celebration cooking, learning new piping skills to decorate biscuits and cakes made earlier in the lesson.

In Product Design the pupils looked at creating a moving image using CAM and mechanisms. The students enjoyed their time within the department, with some returning to Mrs Butter's room on Monday to improve and change their moving picture.

## Discovering Chinese Culture

Year 9 students were given the opportunity to take part in a Chinese Culture day on Thursday 12 November. They engaged in a range of workshops delivered by the Languages faculty and Chinese teachers from Oundle School: Chinese language,



calligraphy, tai-chi, creating lanterns for the Lantern festival and discovering the meanings of Chinese year signs. Ben Chapman said it was quite interesting to learn about different aspects of Chinese culture. Sami Mohammed was very enthusiastic about the Chinese language workshop and said "it was the best workshop of the day".

We are hoping to offer an after-school Chinese club run by the Confucius Classroom and any students that are interested should come and talk to Ms Rodriguez.



### Forensic Science

Year 10 students enjoyed a day of forensic science activities. They used the correct techniques for taking fingerprints and used them to identify each other. They examined crime scenes and used living indicators to predict how long the body had been there. Some students were slightly squeamish about the maggots found. They used chemical techniques such as flame tests and chromatography to collect evidence. Tearing their hair out for science, they examined hair samples from crime scenes and their own ones for key pieces of information.

They also had the opportunity to analyse famous crimes through the ages which led to the development of the techniques that they had used through the day. On the whole they had a thoroughly investigative and rewarding one in science.

*Mr Mannion*

### Macbeth – Shakespeare Schools Festival

The Year 10 and 13 Drama students performed in a creative adaptation of Macbeth alongside two other schools, including St Thomas More. They spent the morning of focus day at the Key Theatre experiencing a professional technical and dress rehearsal, then returned in the evening for a performance in front of a paying audience.

"My favourite was being part of a professional production on a public stage. A2 drama explored Butoh physical theatre and made witches which were freaky and distorted. Using deconstructed movement alongside the Year 10s was fun and received an amazing review from the professionals who reviewed our play. We are now hoping to include what we have learnt in our own devised performance for our A2 exam."

*Fatemah Dhanji*

### HumanUtopia

Our newly recruited Year 10 Heroes were put into action on Focus Day, where our year 8 students completed the 'Who are you?' day alongside the HumanUtopia team. Each and every Hero that participated was tremendous. They took the stand to be the ones who talked in front of the whole group (150 students). They supported and led their small groups extremely well, ensuring that the Year 8 students were comfortable and confident enough to talk openly. The Year 8 students were also fantastic. The day is emotional and thought provoking, yet the students fully engaged at all stages throughout the day. The Year 8 students were asked to confront the negative feelings they might be trying to ignore and to talk about times where they have felt sad, upset or hurt. The work they complete is aimed at showing them it is okay to be themselves, that it is healthy to talk about feelings, good or bad and that within school there are many different people they could talk to. This time we also did an extension day where Year 8 were split into their houses in order to spend a period with the team of Heroes. This was an invaluable addition and helped secure the thoughts from the Focus Day and build the relationships between Hero and student.

The HumanUtopia team yet again left our school with nothing but praise and hopes to work with us again. Watch this space!

*Mr J Hayes*



### Sixth Form

The sixth form had a series of workshops surrounding the serious issue of Driving Safely. They got to experience a simulated car accident, test their reaction times, create an advert, consider the law and test their knowledge of statistics. It was an eye-opener to learn that 1 in 4 young people have an accident within the first year of passing their test. It was worrying that many students openly admitted that they did not always wear a seat belt! Having watched an advert about the dangers of not wearing a seat belt, I hope that their minds will have been permanently changed! The aim of the day was not to scare or deter anyone from driving but to encourage them to be safe. The final session of the day concentrated on being a passenger and how your behaviour can impact on the driver. The results from the evaluation completed by students showed that 95% enjoyed the day and with 94% believing that they had learnt something which would have an impact on the decisions that they would make in the future. A successful day then!

*Mrs Wilmore*