



# Saint George's

Church of England School

## Registered Office

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## Newsletter March 2024

Dear Saint George's Parent,

Thank you for all your continued support!

It has been a very busy term academically with a number of key parent consultation events taking place, crucial mock examinations in Years 11 and 13 and assessment weeks across other year groups. All of these things sit alongside our taught curriculum which aims to equip all pupils, regardless of their start point or background, with the key knowledge and skills they need for a flourishing future. It was great to meet up with a number of our year 11 pupils recently to talk about A-Level and T-Level options moving into year 12. Because of the advice they had already received from you as parents and from us here at school, they were crystal clear about their next steps and what this would then lead them towards after Year 13.

But it's not just the academic we value here at Saint George's. When we look back on our own school days, I imagine we remember the performances we took part in, be that on the stage or on the pitch or court, the trips we went on whether just for the day or for longer, and the different speakers who came into school to encourage and inspire us. It was my very real pleasure therefore to watch seventy of our pupils perform in *Beauty and the Beast* at the beginning March. My pleasure too to be out watching the various year groups at rugby, football and netball and to hear about their impressive victories elsewhere (especially those crucial local derbies!). It was great to hear back from pupils who traveled to France in the middle of the term and had been immersed in different culture, and our absolute privilege to invite Chris Lubbe into school; Chris spoke to our Year 12 and 13 pupils about his life growing up in South Africa during the apartheid era and the opportunity to work alongside and to know President Nelson Mandela, the lessons learned and the wisdom shared will stay with our pupils for life.

For all of the reasons above, I'd like on your behalf to give a huge thank you to our dedicated teachers, teaching assistants and support staff.

You may have noticed too that we are advertising for a Head of Primary Phase to start in September 2024. Liaising closely with the Aletheia Academies Trust, this brand-new post comes as the school continues to grow towards being full over the coming years and matches the structure we see in our secondary phase. Although it means business as usual for all our pupils, I will of course keep you updated as to how this progresses in due course.



Diocese of  
**Rochester**



PROUD TO BE  
**Aletheia**  
Academies Trust



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We always look towards the spring and summer with a sense of hope and renewal, so as we approach this most important of Christian festivals, and thinking about our core values of resilience, honesty and thankfulness, may I take this opportunity to offer you a safe, happy and holy Easter.

Simon Murphy  
Executive Headteacher

### Rugby Union News - Saint George's Lead Barbarian Initiative.

Did you notice this article on the England Rugby website?

Our thanks to all of the pupils who continue to represent Saint George's as Gravesham Barbarians and thank you to Mr Bright for leading this fantastic initiative.

"In January Gravesham Barbarians was launched for U14 school students in North Kent and 22 players from seven different schools joined.....Next season in the Gravesham and Medway area, in partnership with Gravesend Grammar School, the Gravesham Barbarians U15s will complete a full roster of competitive fixtures, travelling with the grammar school as a supplementary playing side.

There are also plans to launch an U14s team in the coming season, adding age groups each following season so that there are teams from year 9 to year 13"

"St George's School, Gravesend Grammar School, and Gravesend, Old Gravesendians and Vigo rugby clubs have all helped get this initiative off the ground, with the Gravesham Barbarians led by Gavin Bright, Head of PE at St George's School."

To read the full article and find out more information, follow the link below.

<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.englandrugby.com%2Fnews%2Farticle%2Fstudents-from-seven-schools-in-new-rugby-squad&data=05%7C02%7CMURPHYS%40saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk%7C57543aa6bf534759ae5108dc4d957043%7Ccee1735c35a046bf915bc41c76a55b57%7C0%7C0%7C638470551422565263%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLjBtIl6k1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=U6xd6l1T8XOMoXEnXc1A6ZDCRtDKJM8q4uAAzjor5CU%3D&reserved=0>



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## World Book Day- Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2024



### *All different, all equal, all flourishing readers*

We are proud to acknowledge that reading is embedded in our school culture at Saint George's and something students engage in every day. However, our school community also enjoys marking one-off events to celebrate books and inspire a love of reading.

Earlier this Term, pupils across the Secondary Phase celebrated World Book Day by dressing up as their favourite book characters and donating

towards Usborne Books. Usborne Books are a publishing company who conceive, write, and design all their books in-house. We are pleased to inform our parents/carers that we exceeded our school target and raised over £600, meaning we qualify for an additional 60% to be added to our donation and sent back in the form of brand-new books equal to this value for our secondary school library!

Students were not the only ones to dress up, with staff from each Department battling for best-dressed in our Staff Fancy Dress Competition. Team Pastoral and SEND ultimately took the crown with their excellent reimagining of *Alice in Wonderland*.

Some of our Year 7, Year 9 and Year 12 students from our Secondary Phases also joined together with our Primary students to celebrate a love of reading through sharing books together. It was wonderful to see all of children engaged in reading and sharing their favourite stories together.

Thank you for your support in making World Book Day 2024 so special.



# The importance of good mental health in schools

Good mental health and wellbeing helps children and young people:

- Develop
- Attend school
- Engage in learning
- Fulfil their potential

Schools and colleges contribute to wellbeing by providing:

- a safe, calm, and supportive learning environment
- early targeted support for pupils and learners who need help

Embedding an evidence-based, holistic, whole school approach helps achieve this.

Here at Saint George's C of E we are proud to announce that we have trained 17 of our Year 12 students to become MHFA Champions, in order to support our students, and for them to understand their mental and emotional health and wellbeing. From Term 5, our MHFA Champions will be holding a lunchtime club for all students from years 7 – 13, twice a week within the Resilience Hub. This will be a safe space where they can go, chat, play games, and we hope that this will break down the barriers and stigmas that surround mental health and develop an ethos of 'it's okay to not be okay'.

We will also be incorporating an element of kindness and gratitude towards each other and exploring ways in which we can carry out random acts of kindness and gratitude which will include our school ethos of 'All Different, All Equal and All Flourishing'. We are excited for this new venture and trained 6<sup>th</sup> formers and staff are easily recognisable by the below green pin badge which they wear on their lanyards. In addition, we have a MHFA email address which all students with concerns or worries can access, or indeed, if they just want to speak to anyone:-

[mhfachampions@saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk](mailto:mhfachampions@saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk)



# Exam Stress and Anxiety

We know the additional pressures that exam stress can impact on our Year 11's and 13's in the crucial run up to their final exams, below are some support links and resources that you may find helpful:-

<https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/school-college-and-work/school-college/exam-stress/>

<https://ep.lumen.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/KOOTH-Exam-Tips-Digital-Brochure.pdf>

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults/advice-for-parents/help-your-child-beat-exam-stress/#:~:text=Listen%20to%20your%20child%2C%20give,to%20take%20the%20exam%20again.>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkmCZgbZv1o\\_t=4s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkmCZgbZv1o_t=4s)



## HOW TO DEAL WITH EXAM STRESS



As the first set of exams approach you may feel the pressure getting to you but don't let this stress overwhelm you. Stay in control with these top tips.



### BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

If you work hard and stay focused with positive energy, stress will be reduced. Believe in yourself and have the confidence to succeed.



### GET ORGANISED

You'll feel more confident and in control if you make a list of everything you need to study and create a schedule.



### MAKE SLEEP A PRIORITY

Without getting the proper rest it will be even harder to retain information. A good sleep of between 7-9 hours every night helps you have a relaxed and well-rested mind and body.



### OVERCOME PROBLEMS

If you find you don't understand some of your material, getting stressed out won't help. Instead, take action to address the



### FIT EXERCISE IN EVERYDAY

It's easy to put off exercise but remember a healthy body = a healthy mind. Doing at least 20 minutes of physical activity a day can help to improve focus and keep you relaxed.



### EAT RIGHT

Eat three healthy meals a day and limit your consumption of caffeine and sugars. Power foods for your brain include blueberries, salmon and nuts.



### TALK ABOUT YOUR NERVES

Nervousness is a natural reaction to exams, but bottling it up will only make it worse. Talking to your friends and family about how you are feeling is a great way of alleviating stress and worry.



### KEEP THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

The exams might seem like the most crucial

# Staying well during revision and exams



We asked young people to give us some wellbeing advice for exam time and this is what they told us:

- 1.** Always take a moment just to breathe, whether in the exam, before or after.
- 2.** Remember that school does offer support, just reach out and ask!
- 3.** Keep your work balanced. Spend time revising, but socialise and relax too.
- 4.** Keep a self-care routine so that your revision is the most productive it can be whilst you feel as good as possible.
- 5.** Break up revision with food and exercise to make sure you stay energised.
- 6.** Remember that results do not define you.
- 7.** Find a revision space and style that works for you: silence, background chatter, music with or without lyrics.
- 8.** Work to your own pace – everyone is different in how they work.
- 9.** If you feel nervous about the time pressure of an exam, practice timing yourself when you revise, or try some test papers.
- 10.** Plan in some treats to reward yourself, and celebrate when it's all over!