

NEWSLETTER CHRISTMAS 2008

8 December 2008

Dear Parents

I INTRODUCTION

1. The term has passed very quickly and it is difficult to believe that it is now the Christmas holidays. It does not seem to be that long ago that we were processing the GCSE and A Level results. However, time flies when you are enjoying yourself!

The term has been very busy, with much hard academic work, many personal and team achievements and the splendid production of West Side Story.

There have been the usual round of Open Evenings and the Open Morning. All the staff have been involved in these. I would particularly like to thank the pupils who have helped. The prospective parents and pupils who have been shown round have commented very positively at how impressive the helpers and guides have been.

The Senior Prefects have been excellent in helping us to organise various events. They have also been wonderful company at our weekly meetings. I have been very impressed with them and I am extremely grateful to them for all that they have done. They are a fine example of what the younger pupils should be aspiring to.

I have enjoyed watching the pupils playing games, hockey, football, rugby and eventually netball. I have been impressed by their talent, dedication and team spirit. There have been many successes, individual and in teams. The Games and PE staff will comment upon these in greater detail later in the Newsletter. I would like to thank those staff who give so generously of their time each week to ensure that the pupils have such splendid opportunities.

West Side Story was a superb production and I was very proud of the pupils and staff involved. I have received letters of thanks from the primary schools who came to watch the matinee on Wednesday. I look forward to the arrival of the DVD (four showings was not enough for me!). I must thank the staff who put in so much time and effort.

A highlight of the early weeks was the Upper 3rd Welcome Mass which was a great success. Monsignor Quinlan said the Mass and his homily set a perfect tone. The format changed slightly, so that the pupils stayed with and "hosted" their parents. This seems to have been successful and the pupils enjoyed the responsibility. This event was quickly followed by the PFA Cheese and Wine evening, again successful in bringing new blood to the PFA meetings.

Mr Hales and I have worked hard to improve the already strong links between the College and the Prep. We have met once each week and I have visited Prep classes, attended the Prep 5 and 6 welcome evening, the Pre-Prep play, and given awards for creative writing to Prep 6 children at the Prep assembly. Mr Bartlett has been given a number of names of volunteer staff from the College who are keen to form curricular links with the Prep curriculum co-ordinators. Mr Bartlett, Mrs Harrison, Mr Hales and I met to discuss how we will progress this and it is intended that early next term we will have a social evening to meet and greet.

The new website is up and running and those who have worked on it are very excited about the 'new look' site. I am very grateful to Mr Little (a parent) who helped us to set it up. I am also grateful to Mrs Earles, the Network Manager, who has done much work on the content of the site.

Many other staff have also been very generous with their time. Perhaps their contributions are not as much in the public domain, but they are equally important and appreciated. There are many extra curricular activities taking place during the normal working week. Others help organise aspects of school life outside their normal teaching allocation. All of their efforts contribute to a busy and purposeful school and I am very grateful to them.

Two unsung members of staff are Mrs Heaton and Miss Neish in the Library. They help the pupils on a day-to-day basis and are crucial to the pupils learning outside the classroom.

I would also like to thank all the support staff, who have had a very busy term. Many of them also worked through the summer holiday to ensure that term started smoothly. Mr McGoff, the Site Manager, with his team of Mr Dillon and Mr Marsh. Mr Mackey and his maintenance team of Mr Wild and Mr Partridge. Mr Fletcher, the Bursar, and his staff Mrs Hilton, Mrs Henry and Mrs Waghorn, and the College Matron, Mrs Hamman. The catering staff, who provide such excellent meals on a daily basis and refreshment at events. The cleaning staff, under Mrs Cassanova, who have kept the College looking so clean, and have won a national award for cleanest independent school in the country from Sodexo.

The Main Office staff have worked very hard to ensure the smooth running of the administrative part of the school: Mrs O'Donnell, Mrs McGoff, Mrs Haughton, Miss Duff and Mrs Burnage. My thanks also go to the Receptionists, Mrs Haughton and Mrs Doherty, who are available from 8am every day.

We are very grateful to the PFA for a splendid Christmas Fair, which has raised over £9,500 so far with money still coming in. The PFA have provided us with an excellent new piano, which is now in the Academic Hall and will be used for College masses, and College and Prep concerts.

Mr Hennigan, Head of Technology, has been appointed to raise the profile of the College in the press. Since his appointment at half term, he has managed to get several stories printed in the local and national press, as well as getting students slots on television and radio. If your son or daughter has done something inside or outside of the College that you think is newsworthy, please contact Mr Hennigan by emailing thennigan@stbedescollege.co.uk.

The spiritual life of the College has been a priority. It has been good to renew my acquaintance with Fr Dearman. He says Mass each morning he is here. He was involved in West Side Story, playing the piano parts for instruments we did not have in the orchestra. We have introduced pupil and staff retreats. Last weekend the Upper 5th went to Blencathara retreat centre and in June Upper 4th pupils will have an opportunity to visit the centre. Staff

retreats to Ampleforth have been pencilled in on 17th and 18th April and 1st and 2nd May. We have also introduced a “Book of Intentions” in the Chapel, which Mgr Quinlan was the first to sign. If you have any intentions please ask your son/daughter to include them in the book. There is also a “Thought for the Week” which acts as a focus for our prayer in Form Time.

2. **Staff News**

In the Business Studies/Economics Department, I am pleased to say that Mr Glancy has now returned to school, as has Miss Delaney after a shorted period of absence. I am extremely grateful Mrs Keighran, who has helped us out during this difficult time. In order to help the department further, and any examination candidates who may need additional assistance, she has kindly agreed to stay with us until Easter.

After a long association with the College, Mr Martin retires on 31 December. Mr Martin was appointed as an assistant teacher in 1980. He was quickly recognised as a man with management potential and in 1984 was appointed as Head of Fifth Form. When Mr Mulvey retired in 1991, Mr Martin was appointed Head of Physics and then in 1997 promoted to Head of Science. Mr Martin has given exceptional service to the College over many years. He has coached football teams, notably the 2nd XI, and has been integral to the charity work of the College, setting up the CAFOD group in 1984 and running it for ten years. He has also helped on the College pilgrimages to Lourdes. We wish him a long and happy retirement.

Modern Languages. I am delighted to advise you that Mrs de Castro gave birth to a son, Louis Romero, on Sunday 7 December and mother and baby are doing well. We are very fortunate that Mrs Roig, a parent and native Spanish speaker, is covering Mrs de Castro’s maternity leave.

Music. Miss Darby has been appointed Head of Music with effect from 1 September 2009.

Classics. Mr Gibson has been appointed Head of Classics with effect from 1 September 2009 on retirement of Mr Maree.

Assistant Examinations Officer. Mr Cahill of the Mathematics Department has been appointed Assistant Examinations Officer from September 2009, to take over from Mr McKeogh who retires in August 2009.

3. **Your Help Is Needed**

I am afraid that there are one or two points that I feel I must make.

I expect the full co-operation of parents in matters of discipline. I highlighted in my earlier newsletter about the partnership between home and school. We aspire to teach and live by the Gospel values and this is a joint responsibility between College and home. It is also the basis of school discipline.

- (a) The College will not tolerate bullying, it goes against everything we stand for. Pupils must not suffer in silence. If there are any concerns they should speak to someone they can trust. If they have raised issues with you, please do not hesitate to contact us.
- (b) The College will not tolerate poor behaviour on the buses. I expect all older pupils, particularly those in the Sixth Form, to report anything on public transport which may

reflect badly on the College or, more importantly, incidents which involve pupils being unkind to each other or bullying incidents. Pupils who misbehave on the buses can expect a very stern punishment. I have authorised a number of Sixth Form students to act as bus monitors. They have my authority to intervene if pupils are misbehaving. The pupils can speak to the students if they have any worries on the buses. Any pupil reported for misbehaviour can expect a severe punishment.

- (c) The College will not tolerate any behaviour which reflects badly on St Bede's. We have worked very hard over many years to establish a reputation for being a well disciplined school, whose pupils respect themselves and others. I will not allow this reputation to be eroded.
- (d) I am particularly disappointed when staff, who have organised a trip, either as part of the curriculum or recreational, report that the behaviour of pupils on the trip has fallen short of our usual high standards. I would warn pupils who wish to take advantage of the trips, and therefore the generosity of the staff, that normal school rules apply on trips. If they do misbehave on school trips, they can expect a very stern punishment when they return.
- (e) To continue on the theme of discipline, the majority of our pupils are very well behaved. However, there has been some low level misbehaviour during the term and this can be extremely wearing for the very hard working staff. Eventually pupils who are guilty of a number of smaller offences will hit the radar and they can expect to be dealt with by the Heads of Years and if the behaviour does not improve at a higher level.
- (f) I will not tolerate disrespect to members of the St Bede's staff (College or Prep, Teaching or Non-Teaching).
- (g) When the pupils return in January, I hope that uniform will not be an issue. I expect shirts to fit, so that top buttons are done up and ties are neat. Hair should be neat, neither too short nor too long. It is parents' responsibility to ensure that their children are correctly turned out. If they are not, they risk being sent home to correct the matter. I refer you to Mrs Meehan's comments on the next page.
- (h) The staff at St Bede's work extremely hard to ensure that the pupils have the best educational experience possible. Please ensure that you pick up your son/daughter promptly following after-school activities or weekend matches and commitments. There have been a number of occasions recently when pupils who have stayed in school for practices, matches or rehearsals have not been picked up at the arranged time. There will obviously be occasions when unavoidable delays occur, but could I ask for your co-operation in this matter so that staff, who often have their own child-care arrangements to honour, are also able to leave at the pre-arranged time. In emergencies, of course, your child will be safe on the school premises.
- (i) I have been surprised at the number of requests for absence outside normal school holidays. I would point out that taking your child out of school will be disruptive to their education. I understand that in certain circumstances it is unavoidable. However, I would point out that under the normal rules of etiquette, in all cases, you should write or Email to request permission. Where I am presented with a fait accompli, I will record the absence as unauthorised.

- (j) I should be very grateful if parents would telephone the College before 10am to report a pupil's absence.
- (j) Pupils leaving College early for a medical appointment or other engagement, must present the appointment card or a note from their parents to the Form Teacher before signing out at the Main Office.

II PASTORAL MATTERS

Mrs Meehan, Deputy Head, writes.....

1. Uniform

As the term has progressed, some of the students have become casual about adhering to our uniform policy. Uniform expectations are clearly published each year, but various infringements have crept in. I would therefore ask parents to support us in our efforts to enforce the following:

- Nail varnish should not be worn.
- Jewellery is not allowed.
- However, one discreet stud earring may be worn in the ear lobe. Earrings are not allowed for boys.
- Scarves should be either dark blue, black or school uniform and should not be worn in the building.
- Gloves and hats should not be worn in the building.
- Outer coats should be dark blue or black and should be without logos.
- College students should possess a College tie. This is longer than the Prep School tie.
- Socks for boys should be dark grey.

School uniform should be correctly worn, so top buttons should be fastened, ties should cover the top button and t-shirts worn under shirts should not be visible. Skirts should not be too short and trousers should not be worn loosely below the waist

2. Fundraising

This year we have an excellent Charity Committee which has met regularly and been busy keeping charitable giving at the forefront of the minds of the pupils. Miss Katherine Taylor has already organised Christmas Shoe Boxes for orphans in China and these have been shipped off. The Lower School pupils will be providing Christmas Hampers for distribution in the local community and members of the Sixth Form who visit Cornerstone regularly are organising collections of underwear to help people during the winter months. Mr McKeogh's Walk for Life has once again been organised with characteristic enthusiasm and rigour and Mr Hennigan has started rehearsals of Young, Gifted and Green in preparation for their concert in Gorton Monastery in March.

3. Education in Personal Relationships

The 'Called to Love' programme has now started and I would like to take this opportunity to inform parents of U3 and L4 pupils that classes will be moving into the Education in Personal Relationships part of the course in January/February. Each year I remind you of your right to withdraw your sons and daughters from this teaching. However, you cannot withdraw them

from the Science teaching on human reproduction. If any parent wishes to withdraw their child from the EPR teaching, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

III ACADEMIC MATTERS

Mr Bartlett, Deputy Head: Director of Studies, writes....

1. Scholarship not just learning

Having just returned from the HMC Academic Deputies conference, I can look back on two days of fascinating lectures, useful reflections and an opportunity to benchmark what we do within the academic life of the school compared with our colleagues trying to achieve similarly high standards elsewhere in HMC. HMC is the body of the leading independent schools and therefore it is very important that we are an active member striving to achieve similar standards to other leading schools. The key theme was encouraging: 'Scholarship', an ideal for so much of the time undermined by government, QCA or exam board initiatives. However St Bede's is also a Catholic College and any talk of scholarship has to be seen in the context of the individual and developing students to the best of their individual abilities and God given talents.

One of the great burdens upon students in recent years has been the ever-increasing numbers of exams and resits. Indeed, recently an exam board culled the phrase 'learn and discard', surely anathema to all of our parents, colleagues and students who believe that learning is more than just a matter of acquiring knowledge to pass exams. In the spirit of true learning that the College has attempted to develop over its 130 year plus history, we have been reflecting on the new GCSE examinations that pupils will sit from 2011 and for which we start teaching in 2009 (the current Upper 4th). St. Bede's College will only offer examinations for GCSE in the Upper 5th. There will be no units examined in the summer of the Lower 5th.

There are two exceptions to the above:

- (a) The science subjects will remain, as is currently the case, offering one unit (for each science subject taken) at the end of the Lower 5th and the balance at the end of the Upper 5th. This retains the status quo.
- (b) For pupils in set 3 for Mathematics, unit exams will be offered from summer 2008 for the Lower 5th and then again in the summer of the Upper 5th. This is designed to ensure 100% pass rate at GCSE in a matriculation subject.

Our overriding concern is to reduce the excessive examination of pupils, dislocation to the school year caused by the proliferation of examination sessions, mocks and the need for study leave. We also wish to ensure that subjects that retain terminal examinations are not disadvantaged. We are convinced that this policy best serves the interests of all of our pupils and continues to ensure that our pupils continue to develop the benefits of scholarship as opposed to just learning that have served them so well over the past century and a half.

2. Sixth Form Options

I am very grateful for the very prompt responses from the Upper Fifth regarding their choices for next year. Father Dearman and I are now ensuring that all the combinations fit. Should any student want to make a change to their choices before GCSE results, it is crucial that they see me as soon as possible or send an email so that no disappointments occur. It is frustrating

when a request for changes arrives too late, for we do all we can to accommodate every request.

3. **Modern Foreign Languages**

As parents will be aware, we have spent much time over the last few years strengthening the role of Modern Languages. One area deserving of reflection has been the provision of languages in Upper 3rd. Currently all pupils take French and then try “taster” Spanish and German in Lower 4th before making choices for the Upper 4th. We are well aware of the progress made in language provision up to the age of 11 and wish to ensure that the link between key stage 2 and key stage 3 is as seamless as possible. To this end, we invited Mrs Nicki Perry, a leading advisor to Cheshire LEA and shortly to join a government post advising on languages across the country, to lead a CPD session on ‘Transition in Languages’. She explored with the MFL department the current best practice and how we might offer a different range of languages on entry to the College and further meet the needs of students.

Once again I invite parents to contact me, by telephone or email mbartlett@stbedescollege.co.uk, if they have comments or queries on our provision in any area of the academic life of the college.

IV **PREPARATIONS FOR PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS IN 2009**

Mr Service, Examinations Officer, writes....

1. **AS and A2 January 2009 Exams**

The AS and A2 examinations for the Upper 6th commence on **Thursday 8 January** and continue through until the end of the month. Please note that Upper 6th students will be allowed study time for the 24 hours prior to an exam. When students have an afternoon exam, it is recommended that they attend College in the morning, but they will be free to work in the Library. Any absences must be covered by a note from parents. Every student has received their own personal timetable and it is their responsibility to attend examinations punctually.

2. **A2 Examinations in May and June 2009**

Interviews are being held for all Upper 6th students and their parents on **Wednesday 4 February**. Teachers, working in pairs, will interview students at half-hourly intervals between 1.30 and 8.00pm. Details of appointments will be sent to Upper 6th parents at the beginning of next term. Timetables of A2 examinations in the summer will be available for the Upper 6th at their interview in February. I enclose a copy of the Headmaster’s handout distributed at the recent Parents’ Evening, which contains important information. Upper 6th study leave will commence on **Friday 15 May**.

3. **AS Examinations in May and June 2009**

I enclose a copy of the Headmaster’s handout distributed at the recent Parents’ Evening, which contains important information. Lower 6th students will be interviewed with their parents on **Wednesday 11 February** when they will receive a copy of their of their AS examination timetable. There will be a Higher Education Evening for Lower 6th on **Tuesday 24 February at 6pm**. The evening will concentrate on the Lower 6th preparations for their AS examinations in May, revision technique and on the availability of extra help for

students who experience difficulties with particular subjects. There will be an address from Mr Roger Gould of Lancaster University focusing on university applications, living away from home and, above all, on the financing of university education. Lower 6th study leave will commence on **Friday 8 May**.

4. **GCSE Examinations in May and June 2009**

All Upper 5th pupils will be interviewed in the presence of their parents on **Wednesday 21 January**. Two teachers will conduct the interviews, which will concentrate on subjects that need attention following the recent mock GCSE examinations and the drawing up of a revision programme. Please refer to the Headmaster's notes distributed at the recent Parents' Evening, a copy of which is enclosed. Upper 5th study leave commences on **Thursday 14 May**.

5. **Poetry Live**

Mrs Hazell, English Department, writes....

Parents of Upper 5th pupils will have received by "student post" during the "Mock" examinations a letter from the English Department giving full details of the day conference for GCSE students which is organised by *Poetry Live!* This will take place at the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester on **Monday, February 9th 2009** and will be of tremendous benefit to all Upper Fifth pupils as they prepare for their GCSE English and English Literature examinations. Please ask your child's English teacher for further details if you have any queries about the details of this activity.

V **NEWS FROM AROUND THE COLLEGE**

1. **Sixth Form Report**

Mr Grierson, Head of Sixth Form, writes....

Members of St Bede's Sixth Form have continued to impress throughout the term with their contribution to the extra-curricular life of the College. News of their individual performances and achievements will appear elsewhere in this report, though it is worth noting many Sixth Form students represent the College each week in the various sports teams, including Football, Rugby, Netball and Hockey – the First XV Rugby team having enjoyed a particularly successful season to date.

Perhaps pride of place this term goes to the many students (both cast and crew) who took part in the fantastic production of *West Side Story*, which proved to be a most memorable and enjoyable College event. My thanks to all the Sixth Formers who involve themselves in activities, be they sporting, dramatic or musical, as they add so much to the life of the College.

I would also like to pay tribute to the members of the Charity Committee, who continue to work extremely hard to raise money for good causes, both locally and overseas.

Some of the most impressive contributions made by Sixth Formers during the term came during the recent Open Events season. Significant numbers of Sixth Form students, particularly from the Lower Sixth, gave up their time to promote St Bede's. Mention should also be made of the members of the Senior Prefects Team, who spoke so eloquently during the various evenings.

Clearly the thoughts of the Upper Sixth will turn to the January examinations, be they AS resits or new A2 examinations. Careful and thorough preparation, including detailed revision and the practice of past paper questions is essential if the university offers which are currently arriving are to be met.

That said, on behalf of the Sixth Form Pastoral Team, I would like to wish all St Bede's Sixth Form students and their families a very Happy Christmas and successful New Year.

2. **St Bede's Literary and Philosophical Society**

Mrs Norton of the English Department, writes....

In September of this year The St Bede's *Literary and Philosophical Society* was launched. The Society is open to all Sixth Formers and Upper Fiftths. The aim of the Society is to broaden the access our Sixth Formers have to avenues of enquiry beyond the curriculum in a variety of disciplines. The *Lit and Phil* meets every Thursday lunchtime and is run by Mrs Norton (Society Secretary) and Mr Griffin (History Department). Some of the events and talks so far this term:

- Mock Trial
- Student Speeches
- Consumerism vs. Sustainability Competition
- Public Speaking Competitions
- Library Skills
- Book Group
- Oxbridge Essay Prizes
- Dr Glyn Redworth, Manchester University Historian on his book 'The She-Apostle'
- Edward Docx, old-Bedian and successful writer, on his career as a writer

The Society has an elected committee:

- President: Zoë Li (L6)
- Vice President: Michael Nally (L6)
- Deputy President: Trung Ton (L6)

The Society would like to thank all the students and staff at St Bede's who have offered their support, in particular Mr Berry, Mrs Lockett and Mrs Hazell. Finally, we would like to offer our thanks to Monsignor Quinlan for agreeing to be Patron of the St Bede's Literary and Philosophical Society.

3 **Young, Gifted & Green**

Mr Hennigan, Head of Technology, writes....

- (a) It has been a very busy term for those students involved with Young, Gifted & Green and the forthcoming concert at The Monastery on Saturday 7 March. Eilish Hayes, Megan Duffy, Rachael Partakis, plus Fidelma and Pierce O'Brien were asked to appear on Channel M TV's breakfast programme. While Beth Noble, Fidelma and Pierce O'Brien took part in a two hour live radio broadcast on ALL FM's award winning radio show - The Full Irish. They also made it into the *Irish Post*, the *South Manchester Reporter* and *The Western People* in Ireland. Rehearsals are in full swing for the dancers and musicians who are currently practising every Tuesday lunch time and rehearsals will increase after Christmas.

- (b) **YGG Concert – Saturday 7 March 2009.** Tickets are now available and are selling very quickly, they will soon go on sale to the general public and we are expecting the show as usual to sell out. Parents are advised to purchase their tickets early to avoid disappointment. They are priced £20 each for Adults, £15 for students and OAPS. There is a licensed bar at the venue and doors will open at 6.45pm, with the show starting promptly at 7.30pm. A number of very high profile guests have been invited to this very special event and it should be a memorable occasion.

To order tickets, please send a cheque (payable to St Bede's College) with your order and ask your son/daughter to personally deliver it to Mr Hennigan in B11 who will be able to give them the tickets immediately.

- (c) **Concert Programme.** We are looking for sponsors and any parents who wish to take an advert in the programme can contact Mr Hennigan at the College on 0161 227 9225 or email thennigan@stbedescollege.co.uk
- (d) **Lowry DVD.** Our sell out show at The Lowry filmed by LG Films is now available at a cost of just £10 each (please make cheques payable to St Bede's College).

4. **Run/Walk for Life**

Mr McKeogh, Head of Business Studies/Economics, writes....

If Christmas is a time for you to "eat, drink and be merry" then don't despair if you pile on the calories - all is not lost! Just make a note in your diary for **Sunday, 8th March** when we are organising our fifth Run / Walk for Life in Heaton Park. As before, you will be able to run or walk either the 5km or 10km course. All the money raised in sponsorship will go to the T.L.C. Charity in South Africa, which is an orphanage for young children whose lives have been disrupted by the effects of Aids. Further details and an application form will follow in the New Year.

VI **SPORTS REPORTS**

1. **Girls' Sport**

Mrs McCormick, Head of Girls' PE, writes....

- (a) **Cross Country.** So far, we have only entered one competition this term - The Manchester Schools' Cross-Country. All the teams acquitted themselves well and the U15 team, having completed only two races, won the trophy. The U15 team were:

Aimee Standring
Kerriane Cawley
Helen Shires
Sarah Lopeman
Natasha Keyworth

Congratulations to all the participants.

- (b) The **Netball** teams have continued to impress. The U16 team won the Manchester and District tournament and the Catholic Schools' tournament. Unfortunately, they seem to have peaked too early and failed to qualify for the North West round of the national schools' competition. This is very disappointing as we hoped that this team would have reached the national schools' final this year. No other netball tournaments have

yet been played but the results of the friendly competitions auger well for the U13 and U14 teams. Our U12 team have made excellent progress so far and have won a good percentage of their friendly matches.

- (c) The U15 team have started the **Indoor Athletics** season well by qualifying for the Manchester Schools' final. Results from the preliminary meetings are as follows:

Vanessa Jones	Hurdles	1st	}
Joy Adewusi	60m	4th	} 1 st in the Relay
Kerriane Cawley	200m	3rd	}
Natasha Keyworth	800m	1 st	}
Amy Quayle	Shot	4 th	
Grace Kennedy	High Jump	2 nd	
Sarah Lopeman	Long Jump	4 th	

- (d) **Hockey**

Mrs O'Neal writes....

The teams made a good start to the season against tough opposition, Rydal and Penrhos, with three teams out of four recording wins. Results during the season so far have been favourable to our teams, with the U13, 14 and 15s all having won most of their matches. The enthusiasm and reliability of the senior squad is fantastic and they deserve some success, which will be forthcoming with continued hard work.

The U12s have some very promising talent emerging. Girls are encouraged to join clubs outside school in order to continue improving their skills, knowledge and understanding of the game, which they can then use to improve their school team standard.

The following players who have been selected to play for the county – Imogen O'Toole (U18), Bethan Hunt (U17) and Helen Shires (U16). A number of girls are attending the U14 Development Coaching and we are hopeful that more of our players will also be selected to represent the county.

Finally, congratulations to Evie Woodruff – top goal scorer to date.

2. **Boys' Sport**

Mr Rafferty, Head of Boys' PE, writes....

- (a) The **First XV Rugby** team continues to have an impressive season winning six and losing one game. Recent games have resulted in victories against William Hulme's 49-0 and Ormskirk School 35-3. Local rivals WHGS are always a tricky team, and for most of the first half of the game they certainly played very well. However, in the second half, playing a more expansive game enabled the back line to use their pace. This resulted in a further five tries being scored.

The one loss this season against St Ignatius College Galway (50-14) was no disgrace. Conceding three excellent tries in the opening ten minutes, the team realised that a concerted effort both individually and collectively was needed to avoid a huge loss. The response was positive, Captain Alan Irwin, having his best game of the season, lifted the teams spirits with some good foraging runs. Thys Hartley and Greg

Hamilton also had good games. St Ignatius College had a formidable team, strong, fast and very well coached. They are certainly the best senior team to play at St Bede's for many years and they have invited St Bede's First XV to Galway in either February or March 2009.

The First XV team are displaying an excellent attitude in training, and this is being reflected on match day.

(b) **U14s Rugby**

Mr Nally writes....

The team continue to show a wonderful attitude to training, turning out in numbers each Tuesday evening. Peter Wooldridge, Joe Kennedy, Ben Langslow, Chris Foulkes, Sam Walsh and, in particular, Mark McKnight, have stood out to be the star tacklers.

Mr Rafferty, Head of Boys' PE, writes....

(c) **Indoor Athletics Result**

Congratulations to all the boys who competed in the recent indoor league at Sports City. Overall they achieved 3rd place.

Nathan Maguire	4 th place	200m	}
Billy Fraine	4 th place	800m	} 4 th place
Luke Hulme	3 rd place	Long Jump	} Relay
Joe Bradley	2 nd place	400m	}
Sean Dwyer	3 rd place	High Jump	
Ross Gillespie	3 rd place	Shot Putt	

(d) **Cricket**

The poor summer played havoc with our cricket fixtures with seven finals still having to be played in September. However, the continued wet spell only allowed one final to be played. The organisers decided that due to the ongoing poor weather and lack of club grounds available to play the finals, both finalists share the trophies.

UNDER 12s – Manchester Catholic and Manchester Schools Finalists

UNDER 13s – Manchester Catholic Finalists

UNDER 14s – Manchester Catholic Winners and Manchester Schools Finalists

UNDER 15s – Manchester Catholic and Manchester Schools Finalists

UNDER 17s – Manchester Schools Finalists

(e) **Olympic Games 2008**

Congratulations to former pupil Andrew Steele who competed in the recent Beijing Games. Andrew ran a lifetime best of 44.9 winning his heat in the 400 metres. Reaching the semi final of the 400m was a magnificent achievement. Andrew has agreed to pay a visit to school to speak to pupils about his experiences of competing in the Olympic Games/Training/Health etc.

(f) **Football Reports**

1st XI

Mr Fallon writes....

After a somewhat slow start to the season, a young First Eleven side have started to improve. They have had encouraging wins against Bluecoat Oldham 7-0, Altrincham 4-1 and Audenshaw 3-0. It was also pleasing to defeat our local Catholic rivals, St Ambrose, 4-2. I have been very impressed with the players' attitude and their will to win. Dominic Robson has played extremely well and Marcus Thomas Rouse has been an able deputy for our injured Captain Michael McKeown.

Players receive a representative tie for playing ten games and recent recipients were:
Lower Sixth – Joshua Inyang, Dominic Carr, Michael Nally and Gabriel Ali.

Upper Fifth – Callum Connor, Christian Lloyd, William Keane, Feme Oyebadejo, Alex Money and Michael Keane.

2nd XI

Mr McCotter writes....

The second eleven go from strength to strength with competition for places in the squad to compete for the Blackrock trophy hotting up. Captain, Ciaran Flanagan, has moved into midfield and, with the experienced Alex Garside playing up front, the side has a more attacking structure. Recent victories include Audenshaw (6-0) and St Ambrose (4-3).

Under 15

Mr Byrne writes....

The U15 footballers have continued their improvement throughout the term. There have been mixed results, some of which have not reflected the often high levels of ability or desire the team show on the pitch. A disappointing loss to Altrincham Grammar (3-2), when the team relaxed having taken the lead in a game we really should have won, have been tempered with outstanding home victories over Repton (5-0) and Bury Grammar (5-1) and a superb comeback away from home to win 5-4 at Compton House having trailed 3-0 well into the second half. The squad is becoming increasingly competitive with players finding form and returning from injury; confidence is high heading into the second half of the season.

Under 14

Mr Dumbill writes....

The Under 14s have enjoyed a mixed start to the season. A combination of poor weather and tough cup fixtures has prevented the team from putting together a run of good results. Nonetheless, there have been notable victories against local rivals Bolton School, Bury Grammar and Compton House. It is to be hoped that the boys, who have impressed in training this half-term but have yet to play a match, will have a good run in the Manchester Cup.

Under 13

Mr O'Hagan writes....

The U13s have not had great results at the start of the season, but enjoyed a win over MGS. However, it is in the cup games that the team have shown their true form. In the county cup they were unlucky to lose on penalties to a much bigger Salford

Academy side. In the Catholic Cup they beat St Damien's 5-1 to go through to the quarter-final, which they lost to The Barlow. A second round tie against Burnage High School beckons in the Manchester Cup. In the ISFA Cup, after impressive wins over Bolton (2-0) and Birkdale (4-0), the boys travelled to Berkshire for the quarter final against Elstree School, which they won and are now through to the semi-final against The Grange School.

Under 12

Mr Bargery writes.....

At the time of writing the team have progressed through to the last sixteen of the Manchester Schools' Cup, and to the quarter final stage of the Catholic Cup. In the first round of the Manchester Schools' Cup, St Bede's beat Manchester Academy on penalties after the match finished 2-2, and in the first round of the Catholic Cup Holy Family were defeated 3-0. Other victories so far this term have come against MGS (4-1), QEGS (2-1) and Bury (4-1). In the English Schools' Cup, St Bede's beat St Benedict's Liverpool (2-1) before an unfortunate defeat in extra time against Radclyffe school from Oldham.

VII ST BEDE'S AT HOME AND ABROAD

1. Upper 6th Trip to Malham Tarn

Dr S Powell, Biology Department, writes.....

Twenty three Upper Sixth pupils took part in this year's Biology field trip to Malham Tarn. This trip is an essential part of their A Level in Biology, allowing them to collect data for their A Level coursework. The countryside around Malham is spectacular and even managed to tempt Mr Barnes out of retirement to accompany the trip. This was enhanced by 5 days of excellent weather, far better than most of the summer, and this certainly made wading in streams and investigating bogs a much more enjoyable experience! Fresh air and the lack of television was certainly a challenge for some students, but one they took in their stride. With many thanks to the staff of the Malham Field centre for their invaluable help and support, the students gained not only data but also invaluable real life ecology which will enrich their studies as they progress towards their A2 exams.

2. Italy

Mr B Bartlett, Deputy Head, writes....

Take 30 sixth formers, 3 staff (Messrs Griffin and Bartlett and Mrs Harter), two of the most beautiful cities in the world and add gorgeous weather and you have the perfect setting for an October visit. Many miles were walked under Mr Griffin's guidance, the Vatican and St Peter's fully explored, and all the classical sights uncovered. It was an excellent counterpoint to the history and ancient history taught in Bedian classrooms. We were delighted by the reflective and spiritual way in which students chose to celebrate Mass at St John Lateran and how many of the party chose to climb Scala Santa on their knees as an appropriate act of devotion. In Florence, there was more time for relaxing, art in the Uffizi and Academia, shopping on the Ponte Vecchio and even time to take in a student rally! A two hour visit to Sienna completed a splendid week that has turned many of the students into Italiaphiles!

3 (a) **Geology Trip to Tenerife**

Mr Loader, Head of Geology, writes....

Despite the imminent danger of facing temperatures that are currently 24 deg C , an intrepid party of Upper and Lower Sixth geologists will traded the comforts of the classroom and a Manchester winter at the beginning of December, for a few days on the slopes of an active volcano, Mt. Teide on Tenerife. There they studied at first hand, the effects of previous hazardous events, in an attempt to understand the geological processes involved in the next big eruption. It meant crossing lava fields, estimating the speeds of deadly pyroclastic flows, predicting megatsunamis and entering into the abyss of the volcanic caldera. Shorts were the order of the day, but hard hats, hammers and GPS always accompanied them as they battle against time to answer the question “When will Teide next erupt?”

But as they trudged back along the beach after another action-packed day at the rock face, it was encouraging to know that both staff and students back here at home were so appreciative and supportive of their efforts! And, although this year’s fieldtrip is now over it is only “adios Tenerife” – until next time!

(b) **Geography Association Student-led Debate**

Whilst Mr Loader and Miss Tomkinson were studying volcanic hazards with the geologists on the Tenerife fieldtrip, two Geography/Geology students left behind were entered for a student-led debating forum held on the 3rd December, at Manchester University by the Local Manchester Branch of the Geographical Association.

The topic for this year’s forum is “GEOHAZARDS”. Jonathan Gaskell and Oliver Ball of the Lower Sixth had their presentation accepted entitled: "The hazards of hazard data: Geographers beware!" This is based on the erroneous science in some geography textbooks, and even media programmes such as “Horizon”, which is often quoted by students in exams with very little evaluation of the validity of the evidence.

It is said that when the flank of the Canary Island of La Palma collapses in a future eruption, the associated tsunami will wipe out the eastern seaboard of the United States. They argued that the hazards associated with the so called "Megatsunamis" are inaccurate and have been completely over-hyped. Both Jonathan and Oliver have studied this topic as part of their A level Geography and Geology courses and were particularly keen to "put the record straight". They were congratulated by the Geography Association on producing such a thought-provoking presentation. They also have plans to share their ideas with their peers at a future Lit. and Phil. Society meeting.

4 (a) **Dordogne 2010**

Mr Berry, Head of English, writes....

Booking for this activity began briskly, with most places taken quite quickly. There are still a small number of places available. Upper Third and Lower Fourth pupils interested in taking part in this exciting and interesting venture should see Mr Berry for information. Parents wishing to know more are welcome to be in touch, perhaps by email: jmberry@stbedescollege.co.uk.

5. **Art Department Trip to The Tate**

Mr Rooney, Art Department, writes....

On Saturday 15th November 2008, the Art Department took 21 AS and A2 students to London to visit the Tate Britain and the Tate Modern. Although a little blurry eyed due to the 6am start at Manchester Piccadilly, we arrived enthusiastically at the Tate Britain at 10.45am and took in The Turner Prize, the fantastic Francis Bacon exhibition and the extensive collection of contemporary 20th Century art, with the work of artists as diverse as Richard Hamilton, Tracy Emin and David Hockney displayed throughout the maze of rooms within the Tate Britain complex. We were even witnesses to an installation of runners through the Gallery foyer! We then proceeded to the Thames and caught the Tate Boat which transported us to the Tate Modern at Bankside. Here we absorbed the Abstract Expressionist paintings of Mark Rothko, which perfectly complemented the rest of the collection we had seen at both sites. After an exhausting yet enjoyable day, we headed back to Euston, caught our return train and began to engage in a debate about the validity of what was on show at the Turner Prize. This was particularly relevant when juxtaposed with the work of Francis Bacon! A fantastic day was had by all and we look forward to our return next year.

VIII MUSIC AND DRAMA

1. Mrs Meehan, Head of Music, writes....

The Music Department held a very successful Music Festival in October. It attracted 42 applications and the standard of performance was consistently high. Mr Dean provided thoughtful and useful adjudications and Miss Darby organised the evening.

2. Mrs Alderson, Head of Drama, and Mrs Meehan write....

Many thanks to all who supported West Side Story (November 6-8). As the show's Director, it seemed a long torturous journey at times, with tough and risky decisions to be made along the way, but my supportive staff travellers made the trip enjoyable! I should like to pay tribute to all the colleagues who generously gave of their free time over the week of the performance but to specifically mention those who were in it for "the long haul" - Mrs Meehan, Miss Cochran, Mrs McGuire, Mr Mason, Fr Dearman, Mrs Hazell, Mr Loader, Miss Taylor, Mr Rooney and Mr Wilcock. I should also like to thank Mr Barber for his enthusiastic support for the project.

However, there can be no show without its stars and so I must also thank all the students who participated on stage and in the crew and their long-suffering parents who had to ferry them to and from hours and hours of rehearsal.

At the risk of sounding like someone making a speech at an awards ceremony (forgive me - at the time of writing my beautiful bouquet has not yet wilted and I am surrounded by cards and congratulatory letters) I must thank our audiences whose appreciation meant so much to the entire company. And, in answer to the numerous questions we have had, the title of the next big show in 2010 has yet to be decided!

Incidentally, if you missed West Side Story copies of the DVD are available at a cost of £17.50. Orders to Mrs Alderson please.

In addition to working on the major College production, the Drama Department has been very busy this term with seven evening theatre trips involving students from Lower Fifth upwards. Another exciting event for A Level Theatre Studies students was a practical workshop by Frantic Assembly (physical theatre company) which really informed our

understanding of their "Othello". Meanwhile, Mrs McGuire has also been very busy with her Speech and Drama students, leading to considerable success in the LAMDA exams. Congratulations to the following pupils:

Speech and Drama Awards November 2008

Speaking of Verse and Prose

Grade 3

Sean Driscoll
Bethany Dronsfield
Ronan Edwards
Hannah Murphy
Thomas Oulton
Lauren Treanor
Elizabeth Walker

Grade 3 with Merit

Lois Cassin
Lewis Croke
Tom Jowett
Joseph Killingley
Timmy Kilroe
Charlotte Stockton

Grade 3 with Distinction

Andrew Shires

Grade 4

Caitriona Edwards
Grace Kennedy

Grade 4 with Merit

John Carey
Anna Grace
Leah Grace
Eleanor Harrison

Grade 5 with Merit

Oliver Ball
Eamonn Kennedy

Grade 6 with Merit

Harvey Roberts

Grade 6 with Distinction

Luke Leahy

Grade 7

Oliver Hinds

Grade 7 with Merit

Jenny Hampson

Grade 7 with Distinction

Rosanna Al-Mulla

Grade 8 with Merit

James Carroll

Devised Performance (Duologue)

Grade 4 with Merit

Hannah Callow
Grace Caveney
Isabel Edwards
Emily Doyle
Elizabeth Gould
Amy Horne
Natasha Keyworth
Eleanor Ogilvie

Acting (Duologue)

Grade 4 with Merit

Patrick Abbey
Joy Adewusi
Aidan Edwards
Mattie Lopeman
George McMylor
Olivia Murphy

Grade 4 with Distinction

Anna Grace U4
Leah Grace U4
Acting (Combined)

Grade 5 with Merit

Laura Falkiner-Rogers
Fiona Flanagan

Grade 5 with Distinction

Megan Tollitt
Sophia Whitehead
Acting (Solo)

Grade 4 with Distinction

Mark Hampson
Nick Jones

Students from the entire 11-18 age group will be presenting a selection of the best of their work at a special Speech and Drama Evening to be held in the Academic Hall on 27 January. We hope to you are able to attend and further details will follow. Students who would like to begin Speech and Drama lessons should collect the appropriate peach coloured form from the Main Office.

IX PFA

Mrs Janet Hollins, Chair of the PFA, writes....

On behalf of the PFA, I want to thank all parents, friends, pupils and staff for their support and help in organising the Christmas Fair. The total amount raised will be announced in the New Year and all the proceeds will go towards the cost of the new grand piano, which arrived in early November. The next PFA event is a Dinner Dance on **Friday 24th April 2009**, which is a joint venture with the Prep school. The PFA can now be contacted by email (pfa@stbedescollege.co.uk). Wishing you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the PFA.

X COLLEGE MEALS

The fee for College lunches will be collected by Form Teachers on the first day back after Christmas:

Spring Full Term £130.50. Half Term £65.25

XI KEY DATES

Tuesday 6 January	Easter Term begins, 9.15am
Wednesday 7 January	A2/AS January exam season starts Prep 6 Evening in preparation for the Entrance Examination, 4.00-5.30pm
Saturday 10 January	College Entrance Examination
Thursday 15 January	Upper 3 rd Parents' Evening
Monday 19 January	11+ Interviews begin
Wednesday 21 January	Upper 5 th Interviews
Tuesday 27 January	Speech & Drama Evening for all year groups, 7.30pm
Friday 30 January	11+ Interviews finish
Sunday 1 February	AS Drama Practicals Rehearsal, 10am-4.00pm
Wednesday 4 February	Upper 6 th Interviews AS Drama Practical Examination, 7.00pm
Thursday 5 February	Lower 5 th Parents' Evening
Monday 9 February	Upper 5 th – Poetry Live at Bridgewater Hall
Wednesday 11 February	Lower 6 th Interviews
Thursday 12 February	Lower 4 th Parents' Evening
Friday 13 February	Half Term begins, 3.50pm

Monday 23 February	Return after Half Term, 9.15am
Tuesday 24 February	Lower 6 th Higher Education Evening
Thursday 26 February	Upper 4 th Parents' Evening
Tuesday 3 March	Open Afternoon for Pupils who have been offered places in the Upper 3 rd September 2009
Thursday 5 March	Spring Concert, 7.00pm
Sunday 8 March	Walk for Life, Heaton Park A2 Drama Practicals Rehearsal, 10.00am-4.00pm
Monday 9 March, or Tuesday 10 March, or Wednesday 11 March	L5 Geography Trip to Buxton <i>tbc</i>
Wednesday 11 March	A2 Drama Practical Examination, 7.00pm
Thursday 12 March	Lower 4 th Options Evening
Thursday 19 March	Careers Convention, 6.00pm
Thursday 26 March	Upper 4 th GCSE Options Evening
Monday 30 March	Presentation of A Level Certificates
Wednesday 1 April	Battle of the Bands, 7.00pm
Wednesday 1 April and Thursday 2 April	AS and A2 Drama Biennial London Theatre Trip
Wednesday 1 April to Wednesday 8 April	French Exchange to Senlis
Wednesday 1 April to Sunday 5 April	L4 Paris Trip
Friday 3 April	End of Term, 12noon

Finally, students should have a good rest (for the senior pupils, interspersed with periods of hard work), as you will need to return refreshed for the challenges which lie ahead next term.

With every good wish for a very happy and holy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

M L Barber
Headmaster