



the KITE

ST DAVID'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE NEWSPAPER

SEP - DEC
ISSUE #3

An exciting new expansion, celebrating St David's debut appearance in British esports, 2023's most inspiring teacher & what's been happening around College.



Also available in Welsh



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ST DAVID'S ESPORTS DEBUT IN THE U

St. David's College will debut in competitive E-sports gaming tournaments on October 11th with students readying up for the **British E-sports Student Championship** and the **Welsh Esports League**.

This marks a significant milestone for the College, offering invaluable experiences and opportunities for students to proudly represent their College Esports team for the first time. Learners will be engaging in intense competition with schools and colleges from across the UK, showcasing their gaming prowess in competitive online gaming leagues.

Our IT department has made extensive efforts to establish a dedicated gaming room for the college this year. Each system has been equipped with state-of-the-art and updated hardware, guaranteeing that students can engage in **e-sports** tournaments with the best performance. These changes ensure consistent frame rates across all games, crucial for keeping pace with the intense speed and competitive nature of these games.

Individual students have been assigned different roles to commit to within their teams, to ensure they look after and support their groups; these roles can include Coaches, managers, promoters, event organisers and media marketers. Students will often be tasked with creating their own events and it's these efforts that will present our learners with invaluable opportunities to build upon their skills in

esports in readiness for **life after college** and create sizable experiences they can use within their **UCAS applications**.

A total of 130 students have expressed keen interest in getting themselves involved with the College E-sports community. Under the guidance of Mr. Hazel, these students will be preparing for the main tournaments through structured competitive learning sessions held every Wednesday from 4 pm to 6 pm, after regular college hours. The main tournament features competitions in highly popular and competitive gaming titles, such as **League of Legends**, **Rocket League**, **Valorant**, and **Overwatch 2**.

League of Legends features a dynamic 5-player **multiplayer online battle arena**, wherein our learners from team Crystal Crusaders must engage in a fierce strategic competition against an opposing college. The success of a team hinges on their management of resources, infantry and skills; executing a careful and methodical advancement within three lanes to gradually gain the upper hand and seize pivotal moments to strike at their opponents' resources.

Rocket League presents a high-octane and challenging 3-player multiplayer online football match, with the unique twist of controlling rocket-powered cars – the challenge is as formidable as it sounds. Our learners from team Dynamic Drifters must work together and communicate effectively



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K ESPORTS STUDENT CHAMPIONSHIP

with their rocket-powered vehicles, juggling the metal football with their car chassis towards the opponent's goal.

Valorant immerses players in a team-based **first-person tactical shooter** set in the near future, where 5 players on each side engage in fast and intensive rounds. Before each round starts, players are assigned to either the defending or attacking team. In this high-action environment, our learners from team Shadow Siren's (female only) or Recon Raiders (male only) must work together swiftly to accomplish objectives, aiming to gain an edge over their opposition by putting them at a strategic disadvantage.

Overwatch 2 share similarities with Valorant in that, players partake in fast-paced 5-a-side rounds of attacking and defending team gameplay. Our learners from team Vortex Vanguard will need to collaborate effectively to beat their opponents by points. Scores will be tallied at the conclusion of each round, with the hopes of securing victory through strategic play and effective teamwork.

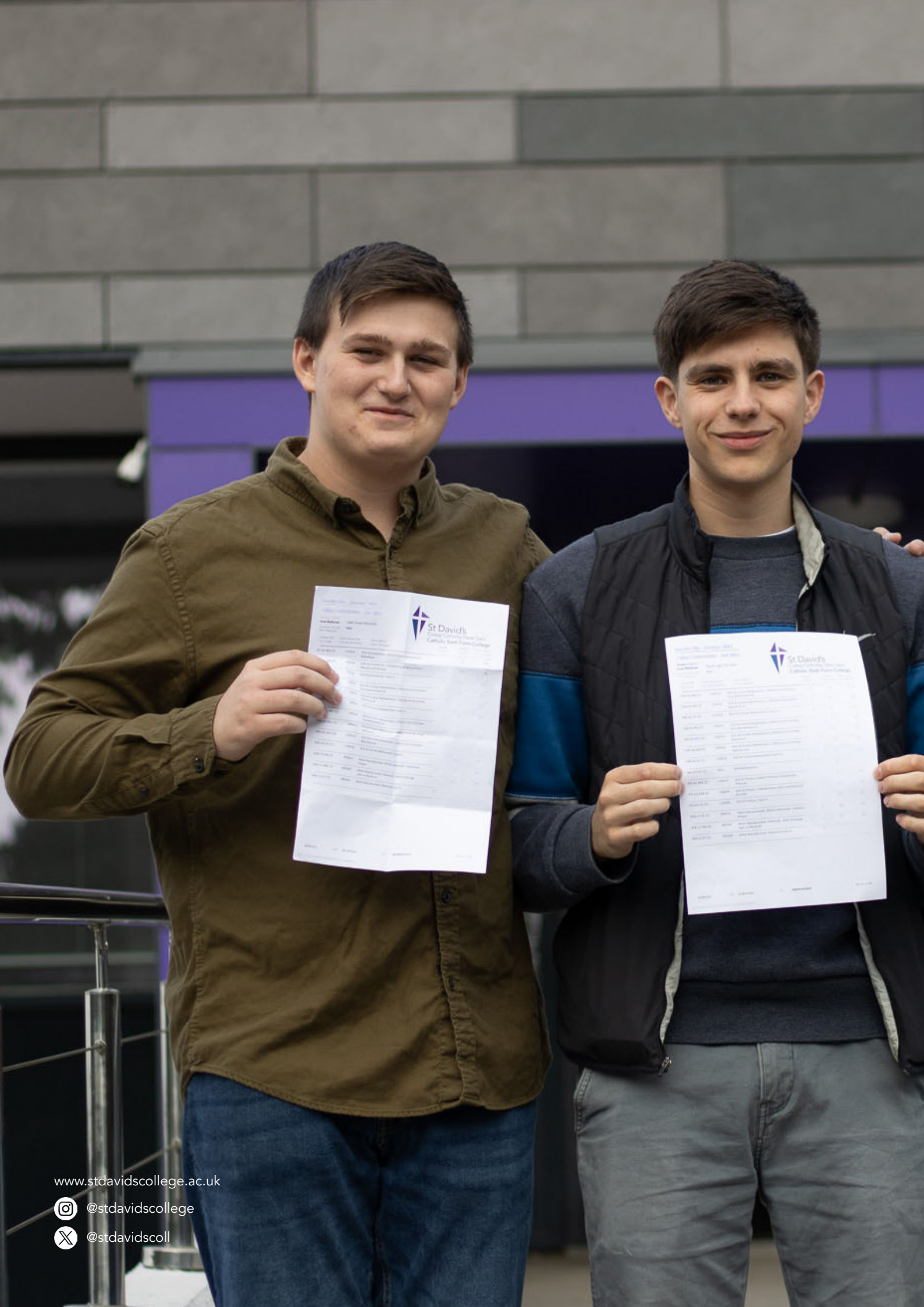
Beyond the main championships, students can engage in broader cup tournaments. These include the **Women in E-sports tournament**, designed exclusively for female-run teams such as the Shadow Siren's in Valorant and Overwatch 2. **The Williams Esports competition** places our learners into high-speed racing in **F1 2023**, pitting them against students

from across the UK. Additionally, students can participate in **Street Fighter 5**, a side-on **1v1 fighting game**, and Apex Legends, a 20-player battle royale, both accessible at any time.


Mr. Hazel has extended his lunchtimes for gaming clubs in his classrooms outside of tournament schedules. These clubs welcome all students every lunchtime on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Although, the Friday lunchtime session is exclusively a female-only gaming day, providing a supportive environment for students to actively participate in gaming activities.


The creation of our e-sports team signifies an exploratory chapter for our College, unlocking many opportunities and career paths for our students. Equipping them with invaluable experience in coaching, management, promotion, event organization, and marketing, all tailored to their respective e-sports teams. These skills will not only serve as their fundamental roles within the team but also as a versatile set of knowledge applicable to their post-college journeys, potentially as future e-sports competitors. We look forward to seeing the progress of our e-sports team and the development of our students throughout the year. We are excited to see the potential strides they may make in the near future.

Stay updated with St David's Esports by following their Instagram: ([@stdavidsesports](https://www.instagram.com/stdavidsesports))

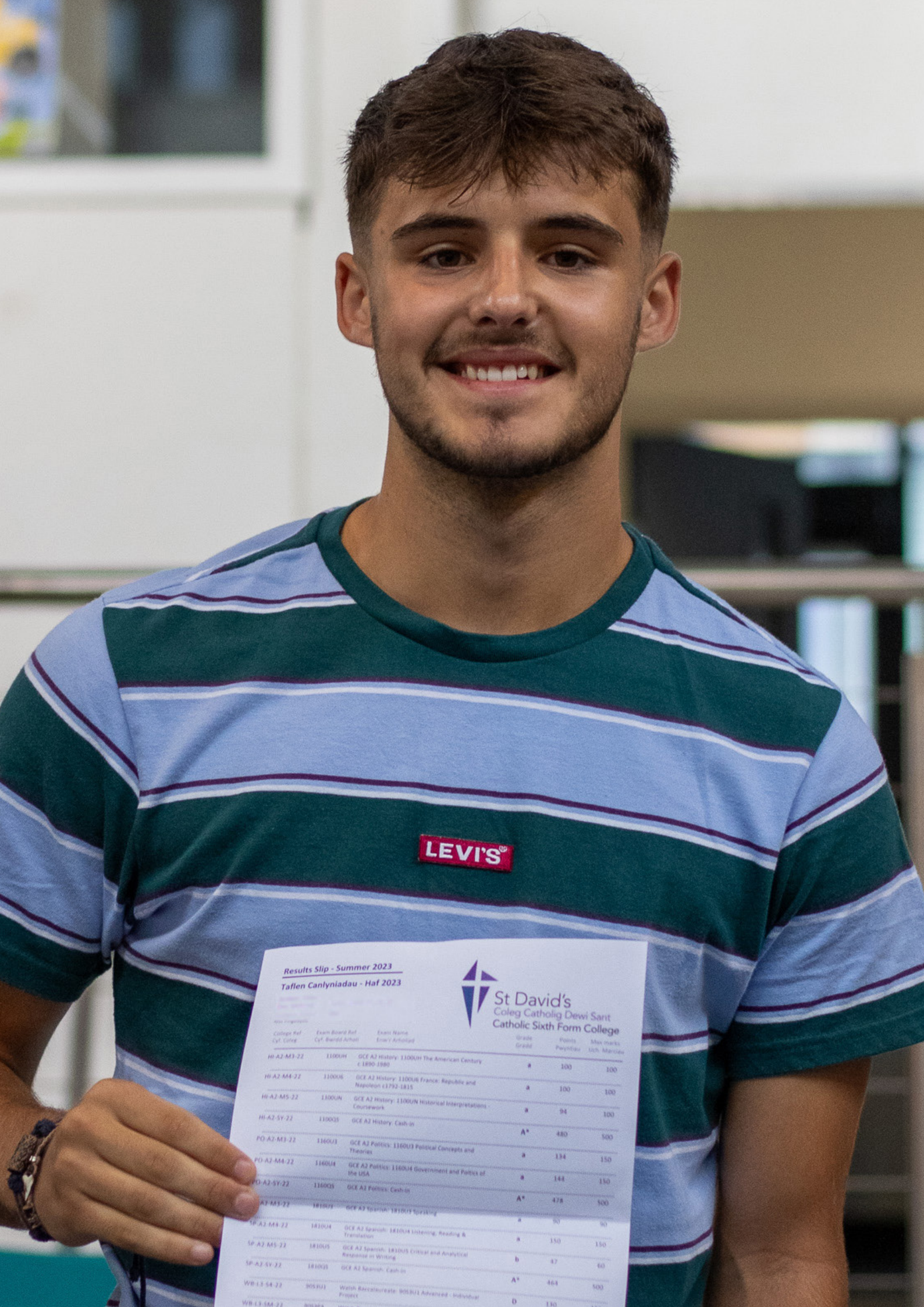


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Results Slip - Summer 2023						
Taflen Canlyniadau - Haf 2023						
Exam Information						
College Ref Cyl. Coleg	Exam Board Ref Cyl. Bwrdd Arholi	Exam Name Enw'r Arholiad		Grade Gradd	Points Pwyntiau	Max marks Uch. Marksw
HI-A2-M3-22	1100UH	GCE A2 History: 1100UH The American Century c.1890-1980		A	100	100
HI-A2-M4-22	1100U6	GCE A2 History: 1100U6 France: Republic and Napoleon c.1792-1815		A	100	100
HI-A2-M5-22	1100UN	GCE A2 History: 1100UN Historical Interpretations - Coursework		A	94	100
HI-A2-SY-22	1100Q5	GCE A2 History: Cash-in		A*	480	500
PO-A2-M3-22	1160U3	GCE A2 Politics: 1160U3 Political Concepts and Theories		A	134	150
PO-A2-M4-22	1160U4	GCE A2 Politics: 1160U4 Government and Politics of the USA		A	144	150
PO-A2-SY-22	1160Q5	GCE A2 Politics: Cash-in		A*	478	500
SP-A2-M3-22	1810U9	GCE A2 Spanish: 1810U9 Speaking		A	90	90
SP-A2-M4-22	1810U4	GCE A2 Spanish: 1810U4 Listening, Reading & Translation		A	150	150
SP-A2-M5-22	1810U5	GCE A2 Spanish: 1810U5 Critical and Analytical Response in Writing		B	47	60
SP-A2-SY-22	1810Q5	GCE A2 Spanish: Cash-in		A*	463	500
WB-L3-S4-22	9053U1	Welsh Baccalaureate: 9053U1 Advanced - Individual Project		D	130	
WB-L3-SM-22	9053Q4					

RESULTS DAY

The anxious wait for A-level results ended on Thursday, as students attended college to collect their results and share their success with friends and staff.

Qualifications Wales announced in February that they would be looking to transition back to pre-pandemic processes, so 2023 grade boundaries were expected to drop to “broadly midway between 2019 and 2022”.

Grades of learners from St David's College remained above 2023 national average grade boundaries, with notable successes in A*- B grades being 2.4 percentage point higher (60.3%), and A*- C grades being 3.6 percentage points higher (82.5%) than the national average.

Results of learners taking their AS exams are especially high, with 30.6% of grades being A grades, the top grade achievable; 5.1 percentage points above the national average. A – B grades were 6.8 percentage points higher than the national average (52.1%). This places our lower sixth learners in a very strong position as they begin their final A level year in September.

Learners on the St David's Honours Programme performed particularly well, with 59% of students' grades being an A* or an A and 95% of grades between an A* to C.

More than 400 learners are now progressing from St David's to university, with almost 40% of those heading to Russell Group universities. Many other learners are progressing on to apprenticeships, degree apprenticeships, and employment opportunities.

There were a huge number of success stories on a morning where 'what ifs' turned into realities. It is however important not to lose sight of individuals. Congratulations to Michael who was offered a place to study Medicine at Cardiff University after achieving four A*s.

Every teacher that taught Michael recognises how deserving he is of this place on a medicine degree programme. His results show the passion he has for his chosen field. Michael was applauded by his Medical Preparation Programme teachers as he received the news of his offer from Cardiff University, and it's fair to say that no one could hide their excitement or delight.

Congratulations to Dylan who showed real maturity and discipline in his preparation for exams this year, culminating in an outstanding set of results of A* A* A* A.

Dylan has been an active member of the college community this year. He even gave up time during his revision sessions to speak at events for learners who are starting their A-levels in September. In this way preparing the next generation of learners for what lies ahead by sharing his own learned experience.

More stories are coming through as learners and teachers share in their excitement over what comes next.

On the results, Principal Mark Leighfield said:

“Well done to all learners who are progressing from St David's to the next chapter in their lives. We have seen a fantastic set of results, which clearly demonstrate a tremendous level of commitment and dedication from students and staff within the whole college community.

Thank you to all members of staff at St David's who have worked together to provide for our learners so well. The results we see today reflect their dedication to the young people of our community.

As a college, we now look ahead to a new year, with new students choosing to continue their education at St David's. We look ahead to the opening of our new college building, as well as to other major renovations on the college campus. There are many reasons to be grateful and excited as we move into the new academic year.”



2023'S MOST INSPIRING TEACHER

Congratulations to Mr Raggett, our **Criminology** teacher, for winning the **University of South Wales** 'Most Inspiring Teacher or Adviser' award for 2023.

Education is a transformative journey, and behind every successful student lies an inspiring teacher. In recognition of their hard work and contributions throughout the year, the University of South Wales hosted their annual USW Teacher and Adviser Awards, an event celebrating exceptional educators who go above and beyond to enrich and develop their student's education and experience throughout their academic journey in college or school.

Mr Raggett was nominated by several of his students, which goes to show the overwhelmingly positive impact and inspiration that Mr Raggett has clearly had on the St David's community.

On the award, Deputy Principal Lisa Newman said, "Congratulations to Mr Raggett on this fantastic achievement; a very deserving award that recognises the passion and enthusiasm that he has for teaching and his commitment to learners' wellbeing."

The awards ceremony was held at the Conference Centre at the USW's Treforest Campus on Friday 7th July 2023, where lots of teachers attending had come from various educational establishments, including our Mr. Raggett.

Each of the award winners would be receiving a £500 prize towards continuing their own professional development or staff wellbeing initiatives within their school or college.

"We will use the prize money to help the next generation of kids," Mr Raggett stated, who looks to focus his vision on the future development of the next generation of learners at St David's College, enabling our students to strive further and achieve higher than before.

This title highlights Mr Raggett's ability to inspire and support students in their pursuit of knowledge and personal growth into well-rounded learners and individuals on their academic journey throughout St David's College. We're pleased to see the hard work and commitment Mr. Raggett has shown, be recognised.

ST DAVID'S EXCITING NEW EXPANSION



An exciting new addition to the College began construction in June of last year and is now in its final stages, set to unveil an array of state-of-the-art facilities for both students and staff by the end of October this year.

There are a lot of reasons to get excited about our new College building, as it will house an impressive roster of features, including eight modern **classrooms**, an upgraded computer room, a **Learning Resource Centre**, an Atrium, outdoor social areas, and a state-of-the-art lecture theatre capable of encapsulating larger crowds of students for lectures.

This new structure will provide dedicated spaces for six distinct curriculum areas. **Psychology**, **Sociology**, **History** and **Politics**, which were previously located in the Annex building, will now find their classrooms in this new facility as well as **Law** and **Criminology**. The remaining rooms will be allocated for the Learner Support Centre and the Honours programme. All these new adjustments will help to free up additional space within the Annex building, facilitating the transition to the new Pastoral Hub.

If you have never been familiarised with an Atrium before, this newly appointed area will serve as an exclusive spot of relaxation for students to unwind, study, or otherwise socialize with friends. It features curved and styled red and white sofas, comfortable cushioned stools and vending machines placed throughout the room, and an open-roofed section and front-facing expansive pane glass windows that welcome in the natural sunlight. Adjacent to the Atrium, will feature various outdoor social spaces integrated around the new building. These spaces will offer students pockets for group socializing and peaceful corners for students looking to study without interruption.

The Learning Resource Centre endorses productivity and studying without distractions and easy access to the College library or utilization of the LRC's e-services. Initially located in the lower levels of the main College building, another LRC room will now be made available within the new structure, equipped with upgraded computers and modernized facilities.

The expanded lecture theatre now accommodates a larger student audience, with a capacity of 75 seats and an impressive screen that enhances the showcasing of presentations and lectures. This upgrade also helps to inspire future facilitations of host guest speakers, allowing them to address larger groups of students more effectively.

The introduction of this new building marks an exciting and exploratory phase for our College and its community. Inviting the arrival of modernized equipment and facilities, streamlining access to valuable resources for both students and staff to take advantage of. We look forward to seeing the opportunities and improvements these new features will bring to our College's future.



2023'S LEAVERS CEREMONY

On September 7th at the Cardiff Cathedral, the Class of 2023 gathered for one last time under the same roof at this year's Leavers Ceremony.

Throughout their two-year academic journey with at St David's, they exemplified exceptional commitment, passion, and ambition. We take immense pride in the remarkable achievements of our students, especially considering the significant challenges posed by the landscape of education amidst and after the **COVID-19 pandemic**. These resilient individuals have not only adapted but have also flourished and persevered in their relentless pursuit of knowledge.

Class of 2023 Valedictorian **Dylan Balch** summarised the event nicely, by saying:

"Students and teachers alike were unfamiliar with the environment that we walked into together in September 2021. Perhaps, with some uncertainty and stress along the way. Nonetheless, the two years that we as students have spent together at St David's have been some of the most significant and transformative in our lives to date and if we don't realise that now, we certainly will in the years to come."

More than 150 awards were awarded on an evening where students, teachers and family members could celebrate the accomplishments of learners before they embark on their next journey – whether it be university, an apprenticeship or employment.

This meaningful recognition is likely to create lasting positive memories for them as they move forward beyond their time with us at St. David's College. They have gone above and beyond what was expected, and these awards are a well-deserved recognition of their outstanding efforts.

"You can always be the best you can be, so congratulations

for all of that which you have achieved. Well done, you deserve it for all of the work you have put into it. Christianity looks to the future and yours is ahead of you. Enjoy it and live it." – Father Gray

We were delighted to be joined by the headteachers of local Catholic High Schools, St Richard Gwyn, St Illtyd's and Corpus Christi. They presented the Scholarship awards to the exceptional students that are progressing from High School on to St David's.

During the ceremony, the hundreds in attendance were treated to three musical interludes performed by our upper Sixth form Music and Performing Arts students: Iustina Chirila, Lucy-Jo Evans, and Ffion Bowley. Iustina Chirila initiated the show with a classical piece, "Se tu m'ami, se sospiri," which captured everyone's attention and set a positive tone for the rest of the evening. Lucy-Jo Evans sang a rendition of "I Hope You Dance," and later in the evening, Ffion Bowley gave us her rendition of "For the Beauty of the Earth."

After the ceremony had concluded, as the students and their parents regained their composure from the excitement of the awards, it was evident that tears of joy had been shed throughout the night. A wave of positive emotions continued to fill the atmosphere outside the cathedral, undeterred by the extreme heat that had enveloped the cathedral during the awards ceremony.

Students, staff, parents and invited guests then able to head across the road from the Cardiff Cathedral to have refreshments at the Cornerstone; a much-needed cold drink for some parched throats after the extreme heat waves.

We hope that the Class of 2023 will fondly remember their experiences at St. David's and carry these valuable memories with them wherever life may take them. Congratulations to all of you and good luck!



The Student Art Show was a resounding success, attracting enthusiastic students and proud parents who admired the hard work and dedication our learners have shown through meticulously perfecting and finalising their art pieces for the exhibition.

The event showcased a delightful blend of talented artistry amongst our learners, demonstrating the high quality of work and passion each student had for their craft. Each exhibiting artwork was a testament to their immense creativity and drive to always create and approach art from new and interesting perspectives.

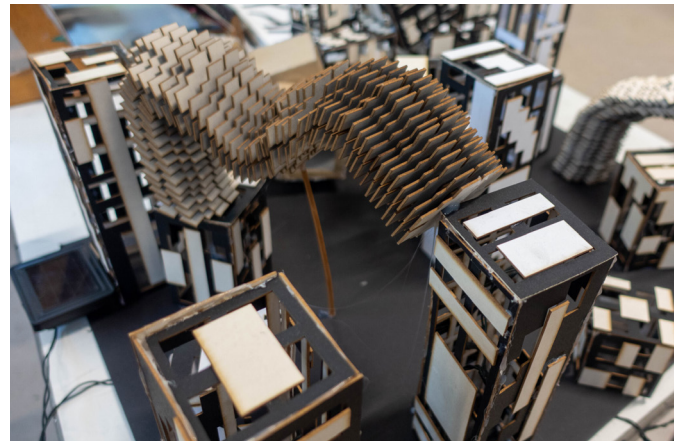
While it might seem premature to highlight specific students who excelled with their projects and designs, we are eagerly awaiting the release of the results for our learner's submitted final works to properly recognize and applaud their outstanding achievements on each of their individual creative journeys.



We're very proud of what our students accomplished for this year's art exhibition, unsurprisingly creating spectacles of intrigue for everyone that attended, discussing the meanings and methods behind each piece's conception. We can commend all learners on the extraordinary efforts shown through the obvious and minute details of their work.

For our learners, showcasing their art is of utmost importance; our students can use this experience to continue to strive and develop themselves to better, achieve higher goals and create impressive artworks that will serve to complement their future **art careers** and portfolios.

It not only helps to boost their confidence as growing artists but provides them with a well-deserved platform to exhibit the fruits of their labour and to be recognized for their hard work by peers, family and friends. It's a moment of celebration that acknowledges their growth, skill development, and artistic endeavours as future aspiring artists.



We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who participated in this great art exhibition, celebrating our wonderful, creative, and benevolent young individuals' artistic minds and skills.

To everyone that attended the art show, we're very pleased you were able to witness the amount of passion our learners put on display, and we thank you for coming. Their contributions have truly made this exhibition a memorable experience for St David's.



On October 3rd, our **AS mathematics students** participated in the impressively difficult **Senior Mathematical Challenge** hosted by the **UK Maths Trust**, showcasing their exceptional mathematical and problem-solving abilities. We were thrilled to see two of our AS students excelling and achieving well-deserved Gold awards, distinguishing themselves from the other AS learners, who had achieved a respectable mix of bronze and silver awards.

Both, Skylar Liao and Priya Amin displayed exceptional mathematical prowess and skill, as Skylar achieved an impressive score of 85 in the Senior Maths Challenge, closely followed by Priya Amin, who secured an equally impressive score of 81 points. Both students establishing themselves a Gold place within the competition.

The Senior Mathematical Challenge was comprised of 25 challenging mathematical questions, which our learners needed to solve within a 90-minute time window. These questions are created in a way to get students engaged, with the application of critical thinking and a wide range of mathematical and problem-solving skills. This challenge caters to both beginner and experienced problem solvers, with a range stimulating math-based challenges.

The UK Maths Trust is dedicated to promoting and enhancing the mathematical education of children and young people across the UK. To achieve this, it provides structured opportunities for learners to test and improve their mathematical skills through a series of organized mathematics competitions held throughout the academic year. We wish both Skylar and Priya the very best

of luck as they have both been invited to participate in the **Andrew Jobbings Senior Kangaroo Mathematics Challenge**. These invitations are only presented to students who have obtained qualifying scores in the Senior Mathematical Challenge. We are pleased to see that Skylar and Priya are among the few students who have received invitations to compete in the Senior Kangaroo Challenge in recognition of their exceptional performance, securing Gold awards in the preliminary math challenge rounds.



St David's History students uncover local history with the CAER Heritage Project in Caerau and Ely, finding interesting archaeological discoveries dating back to ancient Rome.

The CAER Heritage Project is an ambitious project that aims to preserve and promote the rich cultural heritage of the CAER region. Established in 2011 as a collaborative effort between Action in Caerau and Ely (ACE), Cardiff University, local schools and residents, community groups and many others.

Caer Hillfort is a historically significant area located in the Rhondda Valley in South Wales, highly regarded for its archaeological impact. This nationally important site is surrounded by the west Cardiff suburbs of Caerau and Ely, which is home to some communities facing serious social and economic challenges.

From the beginning the guiding principle has been to actively promote community togetherness within groups and Archaeologists, historians and conservationists in the co-

production of archaeological and historical research to create educational opportunities, break down barriers to educational progression, promote skills development and challenge the negative perceptions of these communities and inject positive change.

St David's learners worked alongside students from Cardiff University for archaeological finds of significance, whilst focusing on the preservation of the local area's history, awarding the students with an educational experience in Welsh history and culture.

Learners were able to take part in the excavation, processing and sieving of their finds, while also being able to see some of the current finds at the site, including an arrowhead that would have been used for hunting, a blue bead from a Roman necklace and several Roman coins.

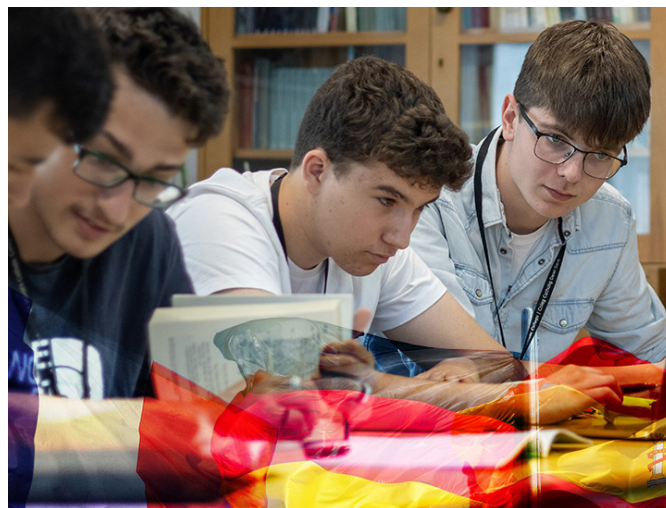
Learners took a tour of the historical site and its heritage while discussing the rich history and details of the area from existing CAER Heritage scholars, who gave insight into life at Cardiff University and scholarships on offer within the ELY and Caerau area.

It's important for learners to become more knowledgeable of their local area and its rich and impressive history, as quite often students have stated that they were unaware of its location and local work, but thoroughly enjoyed the educational experience.

Giving our students a chance to participate in an Archaeological site with a taste of a possible career within this field; they're far more eager to study Early History at a University level.

Unfortunately, learners were not able to experience trips and activities from the CAER Heritage Project in recent times due to the COVID restrictions that were set in place. So, there's a boost of positivity for all our learners, having a level of normality introduced back into college life.

We're excited to organise more trips focused on discovering local history in 2023-2024.



There are countless benefits of studying modern foreign languages alongside other courses in sixth form.

Global Perspective: In an increasingly interconnected world, the ability to speak multiple languages is a powerful asset. Learning a new language will not only help you communicate with people from diverse cultures but also give you a unique perspective on global issues. It's the key to becoming a truly **global citizen**.

Enhanced Career Prospects: Multilingualism is in high demand across various industries. Employers highly value candidates who can communicate with international partners, clients, and customers. Whether you're interested in business, medicine, or the arts, your language skills will set you apart from the competition.

Cognitive Benefits: Learning a foreign language isn't just about words; it's about cognitive growth. It sharpens your problem-solving skills, improves memory, and enhances critical thinking. These benefits will undoubtedly enhance your performance in other courses as well.

Boosted Confidence: Mastering a new language is a confidence booster. It gives you the courage to step out of your comfort zone, engage in meaningful conversations, and participate actively in class discussions. Your newfound self-assuredness will carry over into all areas of your academic and personal life.

Cross-Cultural Understanding: Language and culture are intertwined. By learning a language, you gain insight into the customs, traditions, and values of a different culture. This cross-cultural understanding is invaluable in today's diverse world and fosters empathy and tolerance.

Study Abroad Opportunities: Imagine spending a period of time in a foreign country as part of your degree, fully immersed in its culture and language. Learning a foreign language can pave the way for incredible study abroad experiences, which not only enrich your education but also provide unforgettable memories.

Impressive College Applications: When it comes to university applications, admissions tutors are always looking for well-rounded candidates. Including modern foreign languages in your portfolio shows admissions officers your dedication to broadening your skill set and your commitment to a comprehensive education.

Global Networking: Your language skills will allow you to connect with people worldwide, expanding your network for future opportunities in research, internships, and career development.

A Well-Rounded Education: Complementing your main subjects with a modern foreign language demonstrates a well-rounded education. It's a testament to your versatility and adaptability, which are vital skills in today's fast-paced, ever-changing world.

Studying a foreign language will truly broaden your horizons and set yourself up for success in an increasingly globalized world. Your journey starts now!



Well done to the Upper Sixth Performing Arts who have been working on the collaborative project with Mr Crowley, which took the form of a musical – Shrek!

The students worked incredibly hard on the project – and didn't get ogre-whelmed – as they had to perform & also adopt a production role. This included costume design, set design, props designers, assistant choreographers, and marketing. Being able to manage a part of the production, on top of the performance rehearsals, learning lines and practicing choreography, meant that as well as developing their performance skills in Musical Theatre, they also developed a whole range of interpersonal skills such as project management, working to tight deadlines, effective communication within a team and technical skills. It's fair to say, they were swamped with work in the build up.

The cast performed the musical to an audience of parents and friends on Tuesday night, before a 3-day run of performing for local Catholic primary and high schools – who all had a very positive experience, with great feedback from audiences. All involved in the productions should be very proud of the positive audience reactions.

Year 9, 10 and 11 pupils from Catholic partner school Mary Immaculate enjoyed the performance, saying "We really enjoyed being given a glimpse of what studying performing arts at St David's looks like, the performance was amazing & we enjoyed the Q & A with Mr Crowley and the cast".

Pupils from Marlborough Primary School made the trip up Penylan hill with lots of energy, saying "We just want to thank you so very much for the most uplifting and amazing performance. The cast were so talented, we hadn't laughed so much in a long time".

Well done to Melody, Becky, Harry, Harrison, Shay, Florentina, Isabella, Nicole, Aimee, Ruby, Lilwen and Taigah on a fantastic week of performances – your hard work showed!





STUDENTS CONQUER GRUELLING 5-DAY BRECON BEACONS EXPEDITION

From October 30th to November 3rd, a group of five students braved the cold and wet weather as they embarked on a challenging 5-day, 4-night expedition up the mountain in the Brecon Beacons. Navigating through rocky terrain and slippery paths, and enduring uncomfortable nights of sleep, our determined learners had completed their journey. They returned with excitement, eager to share the intricate details of their adventure, involving teamwork, attentiveness, perseverance, and the discovery of new-found skills.

Before this expedition could begin, Kayra, Durukan, Andrei, Filip, and Morgan, had to ready themselves with the not-so-easy decision of adapting to new skills to help navigate and set up tents hastily through harsh weather conditions whilst trailing up the mountain path. Andrei noted, "We acquired the skills to decipher maps and utilise specific notations. The initial day was mainly training us the basics such as map reading, navigation techniques, and tent setup."

For the first 3 nights of the journey, Storm Ciaran was ruling the mountain with fierce winds and downpours of rain, making it too dangerous for our young adventurers to continue. So, they returned to the main building, where they would then wait until the storm subsided to carry on their expedition. "Due to Storm Ciaran and the harsh conditions it created, we had the luxury of sleeping inside the building for 3 nights," added Andrei.

Returning to the mountainous path, our 5 learners would traverse difficult and diverse terrain, until they would ultimately reach their destination on

top of the 790-meter-tall mountain. The students would discover some amazing spectacles at the pinnacle of the mountain, with a panoramic view of the surrounding landscapes wrapping around the base of the mountain. However, this was not the end of their journey, as now they "had a challenging descent along a steep route. Despite walking for 6 hours, the panoramic views justify our efforts," noted, Andrei.

Another notable segment of their travels includes the "Taff path," says, Andrei. These learners embarked on a 5-hour hike along the Taff path, discovering skills on how to navigate un-pathed mountainous terrain using bearings, whilst bracing the incredible 70mph winds that continued to barrage the path ahead. Despite all these strenuous efforts throughout these 5 days, the students had learned a lot of valuable life skills and would spend, "every evening, with amazing moments of laughter and storytelling. This experience provided me with crucial lessons on teamwork, attentiveness, perseverance, and an understanding of our physical capabilities," says, Andrei.

Our learners had this to say, after their expedition:

"I feel the DofE expedition was challenging, but it helped me build up resilience" – Kayra.

"I'd like to thank Dan and Morgan for their exceptional guidance and help during the expedition and for being amazing instructors. I can't wait for the upcoming expedition in April." – Andrei.





WORLD YOUTH DAY

In July and August 2023, St David's College students accompanied the [Archdiocese of Cardiff](#) and the [Diocese of Menevia](#) on a two-week pilgrimage to [World Youth Day](#) in Lisbon, Portugal. World Youth Day is one of the largest gatherings of people in the world, and routinely attracts between 2 and 4 million young people who want to get a sense of the Universal Church.

Meg described the vigil as a particular highlight, and expressed how much she "appreciated that there are many different ways for people to pray and there are many ways people can interact with each other and share their opinions".

Aaron went in search of an opportunity to meet new people, explore a new country, and get closer to God.

Charlie shared how it was a great chance to make new friends from all over the UK and beyond. Another pilgrim talked about how the experience was their first time outside the UK, and would recommend it to other young people: "it was an amazing experience".

While the next World Youth Day is a few years away, St David's is already arranging new opportunities for international spiritual pilgrimage and experience that welcomes students of all faiths and none. Stay tuned!



The theme was "Mary arose and went with haste", a quotation from the Gospel of Luke (7:39). Libby, Meg, Charlie, Aaron, Kezi, Thabo, and Dianella joined Archbishop Mark O'Toole and over fifty other pilgrims on the journey.

The first week was spent in the Diocese of Porto, exploring the rich cultural history and life of the Church from their local accommodation in the town of Aguda. Their second week was spent in Fátima, where they visited key historical sites and welcomed Pope Francis to a public prayer service before the Shrine. The trip culminated in World Youth Day itself, a major event that hosted around 1.5 million pilgrims to a communal all-night vigil and Mass.





ST DAVID'S GREEN CAREERS FAIR

From November 6th to 11th, St David's College observed National Green Careers Week by hosting a new Green Careers Fair. This groundbreaking event was exclusively dedicated to fostering awareness and understanding of sustainability and green career options among students. As climate change concerns intensify, with approximately 60% of young people expressing worry (Bath University, 2021 survey), the fair aimed to illuminate diverse [career pathways](#) available in various fields, emphasizing the crucial role each student can play in shaping a sustainable future.

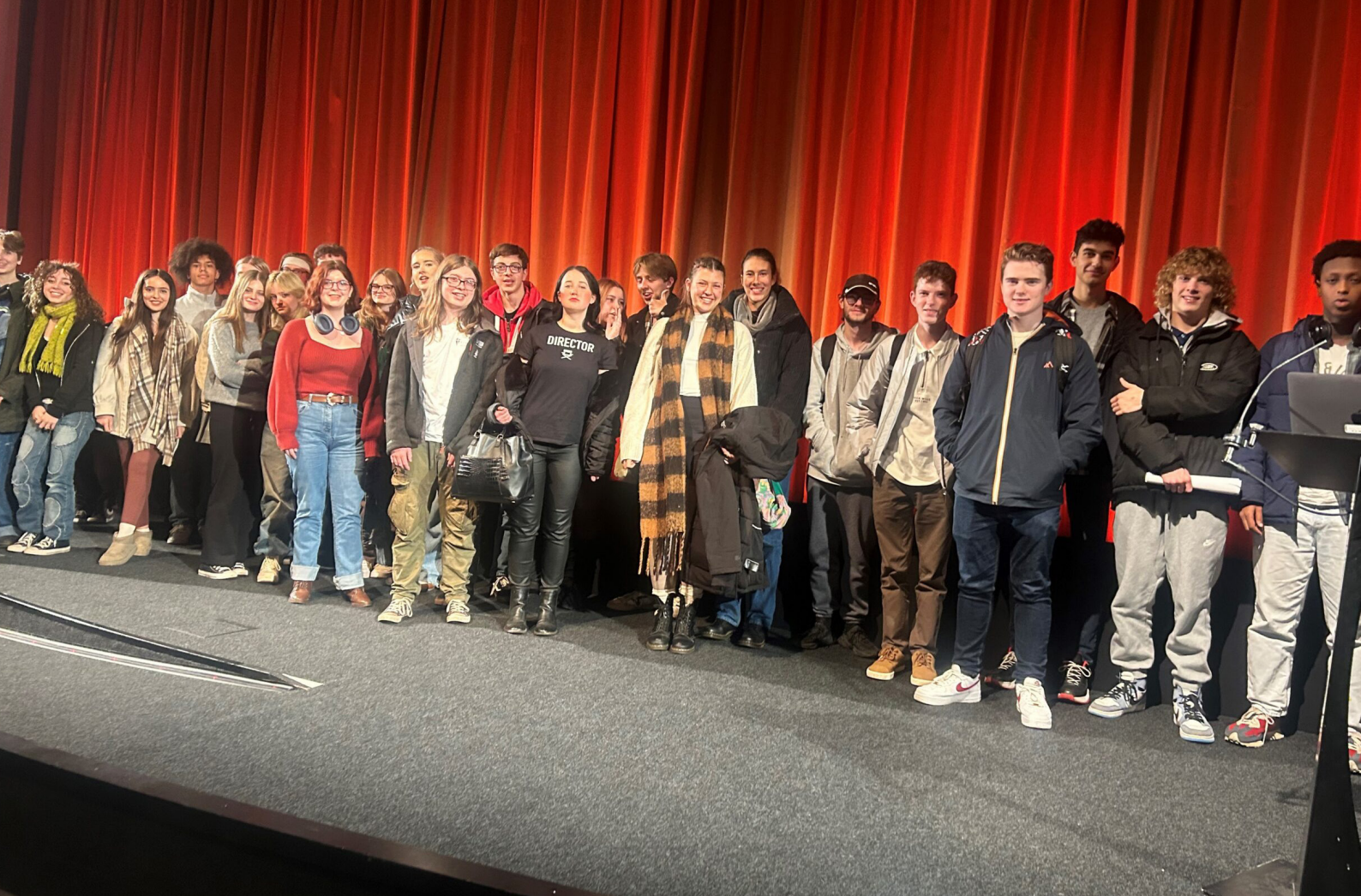
The fair, open to all St David's students exploring university admissions, apprenticeships, employment, or contemplating future opportunities, attracted an estimated 600 participants engaging with exhibitors. A dynamic mix of universities and companies participated, creating a vibrant platform for students to explore and connect with potential green career options.

Prominent universities such as the University of South Wales, Cardiff Met University, Cardiff University, and Swansea University seized the opportunity to showcase their green-focused degrees. Examples include the University of South Wales presenting sustainable fashion, Cardiff Met University highlighting sustainable leisure and tourism, Cardiff University's Net Zero Innovation Institute and Swansea University promoting Environmental Science and Marine Biology degrees.

Leading companies, including [Mott McDonald](#), EDF Energy, Principality Building Society, and entrepreneur [Zoe Binning](#), added a practical dimension to the fair. Mott McDonald featured VR Headsets illustrating construction sites, EDF Energy spotlighted opportunities at [Hinckley Point C](#), Principality Building Society shared sustainability initiatives for branches and headquarters, and Zoe Binning showcased her sustainable events business. The fair also welcomed engineering companies like Hoare Lea and SD Solutions, construction firms such as Tilbury Douglas, Encon, and Galliford Try, architects from [Powell Dobson](#) and Stride Treglown, and institutions like The Royal Town Planning Institute and Dwr Cymru.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to all exhibitors who dedicated their time to inspire and educate St David's students. Your contributions have played a pivotal role in shaping the green careers of the next generation, fostering a commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship.

St David's College's Green Careers Fair successfully bridged the gap between students and green career opportunities. By showcasing a diverse array of options from esteemed universities and leading companies, the event not only inspired but also empowered students to contribute meaningfully to the sustainable future of our planet. We extend our gratitude to all involved for making this transformative event a resounding success.



STUDENTS GET A WINDOW INTO FILMMAKING AT THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

On Friday, November 10th, 48 of our AS and A2 learners attended the British Film Institute in Southbank, London for a conference centred around one of their film sets of Alfred Hitchcock's **Vertigo (1958)**.

This experience provided our learners with a first-hand glimpse into the intricacies of **filmmaking**, but also served as a window into the inner workings of the film industry. Students had the chance to speak with individuals working on the film set, who shared their passions for the industry, providing invaluable insights for our students and enhancing their understanding and practical knowledge.

Hitchcock's masterpiece, "Vertigo," is a timeless fever dream where a retired detective, Scottie, grapples with romantic fixation after a concerned friend requests him to **investigate** into his mysteriously behaving wife. This haunting yet impressive cinematic achievement stands the test of time, delving into the challenging terrain

of the **human psyche** and our deepest desires. Naturally, this cinematic exploration sparked vast discussion amongst our learners, immersed in thought-provoking questions prompted by the film's complex and twisting narrative.

The conference leader, Miss Ellis, commented: "St David's students were exceptional in their behaviour and their responses to questions."

Following the end of the conference, students had a two-hour window to explore Southbank under the guidance of their tutors. During this time, they immersed themselves in the **local history** and food, enriching their overall experience.

Well done to all of the students who enthusiastically embraced the trip to the BFI conference, actively engaging in question-and-answer sessions, and demonstrating eagerness to learn. The knowledge gained will undoubtedly play a large role in their academic pursuits throughout the year.



ST DAVID'S LARGEST OPEN EVENING

On Thursday, November 9th, St. David's College hosted its biggest Open Evening event on record, with over 850 prospective students researching the College as their next step after High School. It was delightful to witness the enthusiasm of these young people, exploring every corridor and classroom of St. David's and **uncovering the opportunities** we have to offer.

It was exciting to witness so many students actively engaging with teachers, current students, and staff to find out about St David's **courses**, departments, and **activities**. The vibrant spirit of our college community shone brightly during the Open Evening, and this would not have been possible without the dedication of over 175 of our current students who volunteered as student ambassadors. Their efforts were instrumental in coordinating the event and creating a welcoming atmosphere of openness and shared enthusiasm.

IT & E-sports Teacher, Mr Hazel, stated:

"The turnout for the Open Evening was truly inspiring. Seeing such large numbers of potential students and their enthusiasm was a testament to the growing interest in our educational offerings. It was a bustling, energetic atmosphere that really showcased the vibrant community we have here at the college."

Criminology Teacher, Mr Raggett, said:

"The turnout at the Open Evening was truly remarkable, with a large number of attendees showing a keen interest in the Criminology."



Among the numerous student ambassadors at the Open Evening, many played a pivotal role in providing valuable “insight into their time at St. David’s, the wealth of support on offer, and the courses they study”, as noted by Miss McLaren. It was wonderful to witness our attendees gaining a substantial understanding of the community-based and positive atmosphere that St. David’s establishes throughout the academic years, with its students, teachers, and staff members.

As these new learners familiarised themselves with the community and diverse array of courses at St. David’s, a large level of interest was gravitated to one of the more recent additions to our course offerings. Mr. Hazel added, “The students were incredibly engaged, especially regarding the new Esports course.” These learners displayed curiosity in abundance about E-sports’ numerous future pathways and careers. Mr. Hazel further noted, “Many were particularly keen on understanding how the course is designed to equip students with real-world skills for the future,” emphasizing their remarkable curiosity and eagerness to learn and discover more.

IT & E-sports Teacher, Mr Hazel, described the event as this:

“This Open Evening was a resounding success. It highlighted the college’s commitment to innovative and relevant courses like Esports. The engagement from the students and the community was beyond my expectations, signalling a bright future for this program. It’s an exciting time to be part of an institution that’s at the forefront of integrating **vocational courses** that appeal to the next generation.”



This perfectly encapsulates the essence of the Open Evening event. With multiple new developments that are taking place at St David’s, including the opening of a **new building**, there is an undeniable thrill in being part of a larger and growing College Community. We welcome the next generation of learners, knowing that this community will always be at the forefront of shaping their educational experiences, helping them to achieve and navigate their unique academic journeys, and creating memorable experiences with friends along the way.

Director of Recruitment, Admissions & Data, Miss McLaren, informs us that:

“As applications are now open, we are looking forward to meeting applicants at our Guidance Sessions and to helping them to prepare for College life, including making informed course choices.”



EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES: CHLOE'S INSPIRING VOLUNTEER WORK.

Congratulations to Chloe, for being nominated for the C3SC Volunteer of the Year, in recognition of her inspiring voluntary contributions, and for becoming a beacon of positivity and inspiration through her volunteer efforts. From mentoring younger children in her local youth club to engaging with the community through the St John's Ambulance's cadets and promoting online safety with children in Wales, Chloe's commitment to making a difference is remarkable. She shares her journey in finding confidence through empowering communities and looks to inspire others to participate.

"Currently, I volunteer as a young leader at my local youth club" Chloe notes, where she ensures children aged 7 to 9 not only have fun, "but also get educated on important matters".

Chloe has created a trusting, safe, and informative space for these young learners, covering topics such as mental health, period poverty, healthy eating, body image, and future planning. She guides them through courses like the **Duke of Edinburgh** and cooking skills programs, providing practical skills and building their CVs for future endeavors.

Chloe's involvement with the cadets, a program coaligned with St John's Ambulance, extends to various community work like a recent sponsored walk for an ovarian cancer charity fundraising event. Engaging with the community through events like Race for Life, marathons, fun days, and police events, she actively contributes to raising awareness on issues affecting the population.

Her commitment to the online safety of young people is reflected in her contribution towards the Keep Safe Online group in Wales, with a focus on creating a space in which they can "discuss key issues we think young people face and explore ways we can educate them".

Chloe shed some light on why she thought it was important to volunteer:

"Firstly, the amazing people you meet! Whilst volunteering in your local area you get to learn so many things you didn't know before. It's so nice to go out of your comfort zone and interact with people you may not have ever spoken to before."

"Secondly, I would say the experience and the chance to promote personal growth. In day-to-day life we all face our own difficulties but volunteering it's a chance to challenge yourself and try something new. I think it is so important as it develops your empathy, your understanding, your communication and most importantly your perspective. This is a great thing and these kinds of skills and exposure are very useful for life."

Chloe's journey into volunteering started at her local youth club, where she gradually transitioned from visiting and socialising with friends to becoming a proficient youth leader after the club had offered Chloe to join a program called 'Stronger Me,' where she soon became a young leader. Volunteering, for her, is not just a commitment but a passion that has become an integral part of her identity. She details that "volunteering is just a part of me now, it's what I love to do, and I would be so lost without it, the opportunity, the people and everything about it just amazes me."

Recognised as a nominee for Volunteer of the Year with C3SC, Chloe emphasises the importance of meeting new people, gaining experiences, and promoting personal growth through volunteering.

For those considering volunteering but unsure where to start, Chloe offers straightforward advice: "Just do it. Embrace the experience with an open mind, caring heart, and passion for making a positive impact." In Cardiff, there are numerous opportunities for voluntary work, from charity shops to local clubs and youth organisations.

Chloe's nomination was a tremendous achievement, and her dedication and impact were evident, standing out as the only 16-year-old among nominees aged 25.

Chloe's optimistic outlook and commitment to the betterment of the local community is inspiring to St David's College community and the local Community, congratulations on this fantastic achievement!

We wish you the best of luck in the next steps of your future endeavours, Chloe.

You can find out more about volunteering through the C3SC website at: <https://c3sc.org.uk/volunteer/>



SETTING THE STANDARD FOR ANTIRACISM EDUCATION IN WALES

St David's College community is proud of its diversity and continues to take steps towards fostering inclusivity and combating racism by becoming the first further education institution in Wales, to collaborate with DARPL, Black Leadership Group and Show Racism the Red Card to train all staff on antiracism. This initiative aligns with the Welsh Government's ambitious plan to become an anti-racist nation by 2030.

The antiracism training day featured engaging workshops conducted by aforementioned prominent organizations, and impactful individuals like Kiani Perera and Stella Mbubaegbu. Prior to the workshops, attendees were moved by the compelling story of Ibrahim Tarafdar, as featured in the documentary titled "Breaking Barriers: One Man's Journey" (watch here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5OfB_m5A5Ug).

Ibrahim Tarafdar's story serves as a powerful testament to the impact of positive role models on individuals and communities. The documentary chronicles his journey of overcoming adversity, shedding light on the real-world consequences of systemic racism. St David's College acknowledges the importance of personal narratives like Ibrahim's in fostering empathy and understanding among its staff.

Chantelle Haughton and Leon Andrews, the director and organizer from DARPL, played a crucial role in orchestrating the antiracism training day. Their commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion within educational institutions has been instrumental

in making this initiative a reality. The college also extends its gratitude to Dean Pymble, Tom Knight, and the entire team from Show Racism the Red Card, whose workshops provided invaluable insights and tools for combating racism.

Additionally, a special acknowledgement goes to Stella Mbubaegbu, a key figure in the Black Leadership Group, who shared her expertise during the training sessions. Stella's contributions have been instrumental in guiding the staff towards a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in building a truly antiracist environment.

St David's College believes that education is a powerful tool in dismantling prejudice and fostering a society that values diversity. By taking this proactive step in training all staff members, the college is not only contributing to the Welsh Government's vision for an antiracist Wales by 2030 but also setting a commendable example for educational institutions nationwide. The commitment to ongoing education and awareness is crucial in the collective effort to create a more inclusive and equitable future for all.





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