

Newman Catholic College

Everyone Counts
Everyone Contributes
Everyone Succeeds

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2020



“We know how crucial it is for our young people to stay on top of their learning but also stay connected to their school, teachers and peers.”
Mr Coyle, Headteacher

Ms Coltin sets a fine example by continuing her classes during a spell of self-isolation.

Keep calm and carry on

Lessons streamed into classrooms during periods of self-isolation.

THE School has come up with a fresh way of minimising disruption in the classroom when teachers are self-isolating. Staff at Newman Catholic College are streaming lessons back into the classroom via Google Classroom while at home. The lesson is broadcast onto the classroom's video screen, with a cover teacher on hand to resolve any issues. Likewise, if a pupil in the same class is also self-isolating, they can log on at home. Headteacher Mr Coyle said: "We discovered that private

schools were offering this to their students, so we were determined to give our own students the same top-class learning experience. "We worked extremely hard to finesse our online system while the schools were partially closed, knowing that issues like this may well arise. "We know how crucial it is for our young people to stay on top of their learning but also stay connected to their school, teachers and peers. "We have truly outstanding teachers at this school who have strong bonds with our students.

We knew that if they had to spend large periods outside the classroom that would impact learning. "So far this has worked incredibly well for both staff and students. With infections on the rise it is likely this will be an ongoing situation, so we are glad we have found a solution." Deputy Head of English Ms Coltin taught for two weeks at home while self-isolating in November. She said: "It was reassuring that the students did not miss their English lessons. There is a very personal connection that exist

between the teachers and students at this school. "Even the best cover teacher cannot replicate that relationship. If I had missed teaching classes it would have had a detrimental impact on our students. "It also takes some pressure off the supply teacher, who may not be an English specialist. I think the boys responded to it fantastically, it worked really well. "We are clearly living in very uncertain times so it is more important now than ever to create a degree of stability for our pupils, I think this does that."

Remote success

Students in our English as an Additional Language (EAL) unit bucked a nationwide trend by logging on to remote learning classes in record high numbers during lockdown.

Around 86 percent of students across all year groups logged onto the Google Classroom portal every single day throughout school closures.

According to charity the Sutton Trust, 66 percent of students at fee paying private schools were logging on but that was still much less than students at Newman Catholic College.

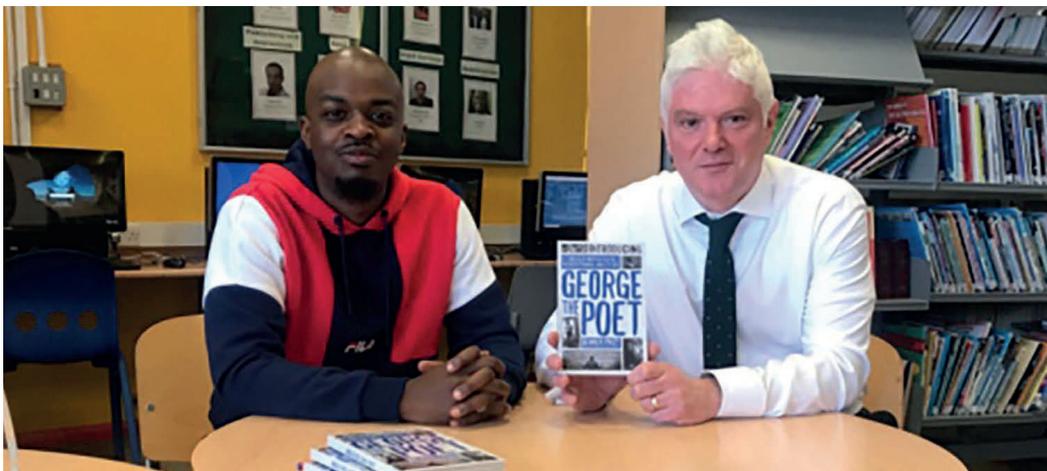
Head of EAL Ms Jasiczek said: "The data on student learning has surpassed all expectation.

"To have nearly 90 percent of student accessing remote learning is a truly incredible achievement.

"That is a testament to the relationships we have developed here between staff and students.

"The students in our unit want to come into school and engage with their teachers and friends."

Guests put students on the write pathway



Headteacher Mr Coyle with special guest George the Poet who helped inspire our students.

THE school has welcomed some of the top names in black British literature as part of our Black Boys Book Club project.

Names to have visited include George the Poet - who performed at Prince Harry and Megan Markle's wedding - Nick Makoha and DD Armstrong.

Students have also performed poetry at the British library as part of the Africa Writes festival last year.

Set up by Deputy Head of

English Ms Coltin, the book club meets for an hour and half once a week after school, often welcoming special guests.

It was set up to help students connect with black writers whose work they could relate to more readily than those usually included in the curriculum.

She said: "There was a gap in the curriculum of literature that spoke to the experiences of young black boys in the UK.

"There is lots of stuff by America writers but not British. It is something that I wanted to address through this club.

"We have been incredibly lucky because we have had some truly inspiring guests who have come in and spoken to our students.

"We have kept the club going virtually as best we could during the lockdowns but are now looking forward to next term to get it going again."

Old boys return in teaching roles

TWO former students have returned to the school to as learning support assistants to get on the job experience before training as teachers.

Mr Smith attended between 2006 and 2014 before getting a degree in architecture from the University of Kent.

Mr Detour left the year before and studied philosophy at university.

Mr Smith said: "It was strange to come back to the school in a teaching capacity. It was always a school with a strong family ethos, so I am very happy to be back home.

"I really want to become a teacher and can think of no place better to do it than where I came to school myself.

"I come from the same background as these students so I can talk with them in a



Mr and Smith and Mr Detour have taken up new positions as learning support assistants.

positive way."

Mr Detour added: "This has always been a very welcoming and diverse school and if

anything, it has become more so since I left."

"It is a very special place and with a very special feeling.

"It is something that I love being part of. I want to help continue that growth as a school and inspire the students."



Campers scoop awards

YEAR 9 students volunteered at the school and took part in activities ahead of a camping expedition for their Duke of Edinburgh award.

To receive the bronze award students have to put in 50 hours of volunteering, three months of physical activity and practice a

skill to receive the prize.

The scheme has previously been offered to older students but this is the first time Year 9s have had the opportunity to participate.

Student Malik said: "I am loving it so far. It is something to focus on outside of school work and something that will look good

on my CV when I'm older."

Teacher Ms Emmerson, who leads the project, said: "A lot of the skills and experience the students will get when working towards their Duke of Edinburgh will stand them in good stead in their academic career and beyond."

Stage set for apprentices

FORMER Newman Catholic College students are kickstarting their careers with apprenticeships at the school.

Franz and Purvina are working in our Creative Arts Department learning to be live technicians while Aliya is getting on the job experience as a science technician.

The trio are working towards their level 3 National College Creative Industries (NCCI) apprenticeship qualification which includes 30 hours a week paid practical experience plus remote classroom learning.

Franz and Purvina have been working across creative arts, learning skills as varied as lighting, costume and set design and prop making.

Franz was one of the top performers at GCSE last year but decided to shun A Levels in favour of an apprenticeship.

He said: "I want to become a teacher but I also have a love for the creative arts so this programme was perfect for me.

"I really value the practical on the job experience I have gained working alongside the teachers and support staff here."

Purvina arrived in our sixth form speaking very little English but has flourished since joining the NCCI scheme.

She said: "I really enjoy costume making and making the props. It is something that I am really interested in."

Head of Creative Arts Mrs Beime Francis said: "I have been impressed with the maturity in which our apprentices have conducted themselves.

"Because of their age they are able to bring understand empathy and patience to their engagements with our students.

"With the additional professional skills they can provide, the school Creative Arts Department now has the feel of a theatre company."



Franz, Purvina and Aliya are gaining vital experience working in our Creative Arts Department.

Banking on volunteers



Antonio, pictured left, with fellow volunteers Moussa and Joseph at the school food bank.

STUDENT Antonio says he was inspired to volunteer for the school food bank because he wanted to repay the support his family received.

The Year 10 student gives up his time every Friday afternoon because his family once relied on food banks when they arrived in the UK from Greece.

Every week he helps to put up and pack away the tables and distributes the food to families in need as a thank you to those who helped him.

He said: "For me, it is so important to give back. There was a time when we first arrived in the UK that my family needed food banks.

"If there had not been those volunteers there to help my family, we might have gone hungry. There are families in that position now that need our support."

Assistant Headteacher Miss Grace is the teacher who leads the

Headteacher Mr Coyle reflects on a hugely challenging time for everyone at Newman Catholic College.



As school terms go – this ranks right at the top as both the most challenging and the most rewarding.

In the first place the challenge of keeping everyone safe, the bubbles, staggered days, masks, temperature checks, marquee, sanitisers, open windows, remote learning, the list is endless, has meant constant vigilance and additional work for all.

Secondly though, in the midst of the challenges, the astonishing pride in observing teachers learn new skills, adapt, highlight their fortitude, resilience, skill and through it all, teach. I have never felt so proud of my profession.

Without question however, the greatest reward was watching our students return en masse in September and pick up where they left off in March; smart, quick-witted, good humoured and eager to learn.

If the example of NCC's student body is anything to go by the future of this nation is in good hands.

We have continued to provide a top class education despite the challenges presented by the global pandemic and I would like to draw your attention to the question of remote lessons.

I will share with you my frustration at learning how private schools in England were delivering 'live' lessons throughout the first lockdown compared with the remote diet our students were experiencing.

Teachers at NCC are motivated by the determination to overcome the inequality that sadly is a characteristic of our society.

This moral indignation led to an intensive surge of energy that produced in short order live lessons on Google Classroom of an incredible quality.

As the Blended Learning Day on November 6 highlighted the quality of the product and the universal engagement of the pupils illustrates how far we have travelled. Again this bodes well.

We are fortunate at NCC that relationships between staff, students and parents have always been so strong. This is the bedrock of a successful school. The last eight months have further enhanced this relationship. We are closer than ever.

Whether it is through Chromebooks, food banks, home visits or just the general goodwill that kept this community thriving, we are stronger than before.

I wish you all a peaceful Christmas and let's look forward to 2021.

As the great Irish poet Seamus Heaney said: "If we winter this one out, we can summer anywhere."

See you on January 5.

Campaign socks it to the bullies



STUDENTS will be better equipped to deal with an issue of bullying that arises in the school thanks to a new promotional video.

The film sign-posted resources available at the school including our Student Anti-bullying Ambassadors and the confidential reporting email address.

Anti-bullying lead student ambassador Antonio said: "The video we feel has been a huge success because so many more students know where to come if there are any issues with bullying.

"This is not a school that has a bullying problem but that is no reason to be

complacent. It is because of initiatives like this the school is a welcoming place."

Staff and students also donned odds socks to mark Anti-Bullying Week which took place in November.

Anti-bullying Staff Lead Ms Goodin said: "We wanted to communicate to students in this video that they can speak out about bullying in confidence.

"This is a message that we want to reintroduce to our older students but to introduce it for the first time to our Year 7 students.

"Anti-bullying week is the best time to get these messages out there."

Food bank thrives thanks to support



Mrs Gristock and Miss Grace pictured with some of the generous donations.

THE school has said a massive thank to our network of community supporters who have been donating to the food bank.

Elaine Gristock, account manager at holistic wellbeing centre The Yard, has been collecting goods from customers before delivering to the school.

Meanwhile, Elm Wood Tennis Club members have been donating regular cash gifts to buy food for the vulnerable families.

Mrs Gristock said: "Because the school is so excellent at promoting this important work via social media, we became aware of the need for help in our community.

"Miss Grace in particular is an inspiration for all the work she does to support the most vulnerable in the community. Now more than ever we need people are in need, we must be there to help."

Assistant Headteacher Miss Grace said: "We are grateful for the huge support from our community. Proof that we work best when we work together as a community.

"Without their incredibly generosity we would not be able to support the amount of families we do. Special thank to Elaine who has become one of our most active supporters."



Elaine Gristock @ElaineG... · 22/10/2020
 #Foodbank donations needed today, Thurs 22nd. I'll be at @gracelandyard 9-3.
 Donations will go to @NCCBrent for its #foodbankfriday.



Placing focus on figures from black history

THE school marked Black History Month with a series of activities and events celebrating current and historical BAME figures.

Every day in October students were emailed a fact profile of people of African and Caribbean descent who have made an outstanding contribution.

The list was drawn those with a local or modern relevance such as the founder of the Notting Hill carnival Claudia Jones and campaigning footballer Marcus Rashford.

Each subject department picked a black champion which student had to research and compile a report.

Head of Year 9 Miss Richards said: "We wanted to make this year's celebration as relevant to our students as we possible could so the understood the importance and context of this month.

"Someone like Marcus Rashford who as a top footballer our students will look up to is a tremendous role model, his campaign has captured the attention of the whole nation.

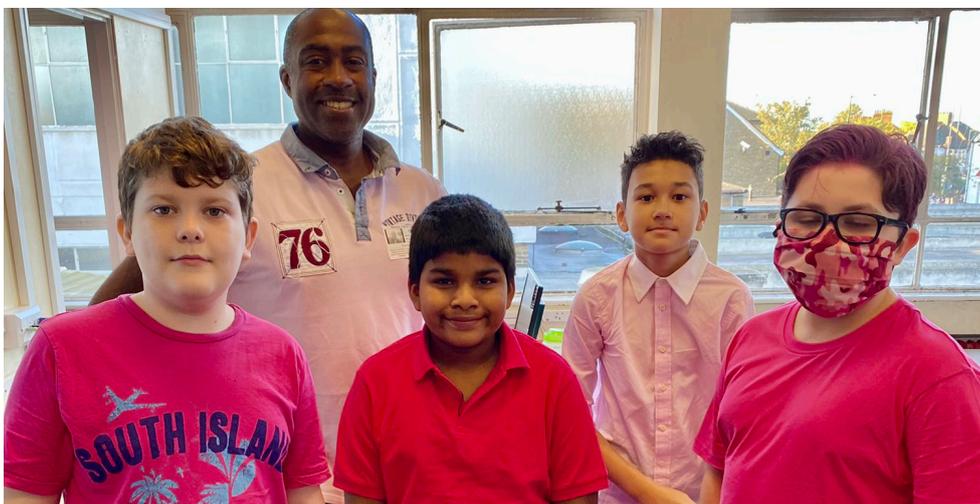
"There are cultural negative perceptions of young black boys which has a tangible impact on a young person sense of themselves and identity.

"We are changing that narrative by shining a light on these exceptional people who did not live decades ago in another country but are here and now, and are people like them."



Bruk was inspired to create this excellent piece of art for Black History Month.

Day devoted to key skills



STUDENTS took their learning beyond the classroom focusing on their mental and physical well-being during our Drop-Down Day.

The Year 7 students took part in four workshops where they learned key skills such as expressing emotions, resilience, how to eat well and the importance of exercise. There was also a special session on resilience and staying safe which was led by a community police officer.

Year 7 Daniel said: "It was really interesting to spend the day learning stuff you maybe would not in a classroom subject. My favourite part was the workshop on healthy eating and exercise."

Student Matheus said: "I feel like I learned a lot in the personal safety workshops. They were interesting and informative."

University place is the aim for Brilliant Club students

BRIGHT Year 9 and 10 students have completed a degree level six-week programme aimed at boosting their chance of getting into a top university.

Under the instruction of a PHD tutor pupils have been learning about antibiotics resistance in the treatment of bacterial infections.

The biology and medicine project saw students completed a 2000-word university style dissertation as part of their participation in the Brilliant Club.

There are also plans to visit a top university to sit in on lecturers, tour the campus and meet student undergraduates' next term.

The Brilliant Club is an award-winning university access charity that works with schools to increase the number of pupils from underrepresented backgrounds progressing to top universities.

Year 10 Sami said: "It was a very interesting programme because it combined two subjects' areas that I really enjoy.

"It was a more challenging type of learning because the stuff we were learning was more advanced than what we learn in class.

"The classes were really interesting and it was great working with a PHD researcher because they have a very deep understanding of the subject."

More able coordinator Ms



Remembering the fallen

THE school marked the sacrifices made by soldiers in conflict by laying a wreath at the graves of war heroes in Willesden on a Remembrance Day. There was also a whole school virtual assembly.



ChaplainNCC @Cchaplain... · 11/11/2020
@NCCBrent Remembers. "They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old."
Words from today's #ArmisticeDay



Smart said: "This is an excellent project because it allows students to get a real insight into the type of work they would need to com-

plete at a top university.

"We want our students to be highly aspirational and to be motivated to apply for the very

best universities.

"This project gives them the belief these prestigious institutions are not out of their reach."

Kitty and Martha serve up loyalty

KITCHEN staff Kitty Morrissey and Martha Diver have seen a lot of changes in the 43 years they have both worked Newman Catholic College but something will never change – their commitment to the students.

The pair joined the school the same year The Queen celebrated her Silver Jubilee and the Sex Pistols topped the pop charts, in 1977.

In their early 30s when they joined, they are both now past pension age but have lost none of their sense of humour or zest for life.

For nearly half a century the pair, both of whom hail from the Emerald Isle, have helped to create the family, homely environment that makes Newman Catholic College such a special place.

Both 75, neither have any thought of retiring. Kitty says, only half-jokingly: "They will have to take me out in box."

"I love it here. The school has changed an awful lot in that time but I love it as much now as I did when I first started.

"When first started Mr O'Boyle was the headteacher and 90 percent



Kitty and Martha have worked at the school since 1977.

of the students were from Irish backgrounds. Now we have a wonderful mix which is great."

Martha, whose son attended

the school, said: "As long as we are still fit and as long as they will have us then we I'll keep on working."

A DETERMINED student is the school face of a capital-wide campaign against ending free travel for 11 to 17-year-olds in London.

Year 11 Dillan, who aged 12 is the youngest person ever to speak at a Brent Council meeting, has been raising awareness about plans to axe Zip Cards.

He has been creating presentations which have been shown to students across the school to get backing of the Don't Zap the Zip campaign.

Free travel for young people was suspended during the first lockdown.

It was due to return in October half term but has been pushed back until spring 2021.

Students who live more than two miles from school will still receive free travel, the government say.

Dillan said: "This is an incredibly badly conceived move by the government because I genuinely believe this will prevent some students coming into school.

"There are many families in London who will not have the money to spend on travel so their children can't get to school. Those children simply will not come.

"It is our role as politically active students to raise awareness about this campaign and to get as many students on board as possible."

All aboard scheme to save the Zip Card



Headteacher Mr Coyle lends his support to the Don't Zap the Zip campaign.

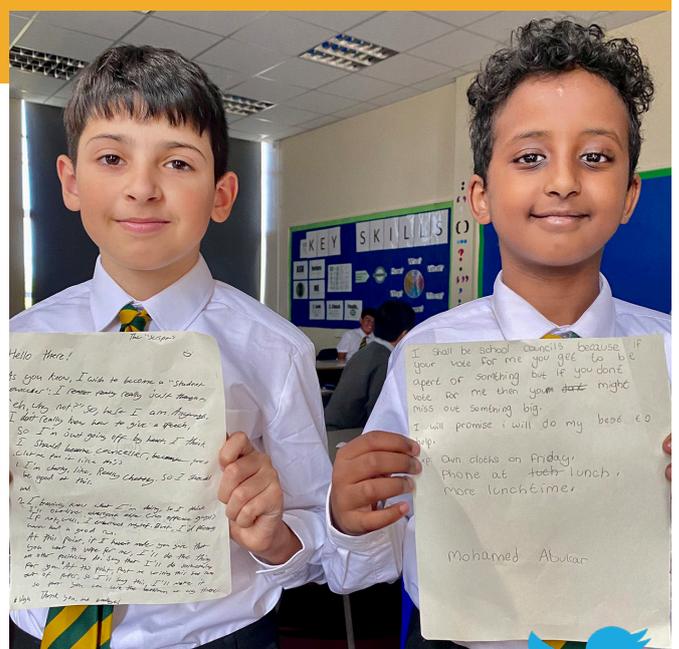
Around the school



THE Commissioner's Takeover Day puts young people into decision-making positions, experiencing the world of work. Brent Council invited Junior, Moussa, Denito, Daniel and Wali to join the council and senior officials for the day. They are pictured with Mr Coyle and Mr King.



YEAR 13 students showcase their outstanding art work.



YEAR 7 Artemis and Mohammed display their speeches which formed part of their application to join the Student Council.



Andreea Tanase
@AndreeaTanase19



Replying to @NCCBrent @CchaplainNc and 3 others

Proud mama 🥰



THE school did not let the Covid-19 pandemic stop the annual winter play concert – this year held virtually. If you missed the excellent performance of A Midsummer Night's Dream then you can watch it back on our YouTube channel.

PHOTO CALL



STUDENTS have been developing some key life skills such as emotional control and resilience thanks to Sport and Thought.



YEAR 7, 8 and 9 students will combine a love of art and science by creating ecology inspired art work for the Biomedica Meltdown project.



Two ex-students Vishal and Gentjan called in. They both held the position of headboy in sixth form and they are now enjoying university life.



THE school has been recognised for its outstanding contribution to community at a virtual assembly. Mr Coyle is pictured with the award.

Harlesden Police @MPS... · 22/10/2020
 Congratulations @NCCBrent for being given the Outstanding Contribution Award for your hard work and commitment to your students and the community. An excellent achievement 🎉🏆 #Harlesden



TEACHER Mr Hughes – an ex-student who has taught at the school for 21 years – celebrates his birthday with tea and cake in November.



FORMER student Kadeem is learning multimedia and production skills at the BBC. He popped in to the school in October to say hello.

YEAR 7 and 8 student making friends with Ms Anjali therapy cat who is trained to help people relax and heal.



MAKING gingerbread men in food technology class.



YEAR 13 Business Studies students Andrei, Fabian and Miles were the winners of a competition to use dry sticks of spaghetti and string to create a structure that would support a marshmallow.