

# Maricourt Catholic High School Christmas Newsletter



Catherine MacAuley is quoted as saying;

“We must strive to do the ordinary things extraordinarily well.”



During the Rewards assemblies on the last week of term I was so pleased to have recognised so many examples of that. Our pupils have filled the corridors, classrooms, fields and halls of Maricourt with hard work, Mercy values, activities, laughter and above all the light they carry in their hearts. This term, staff and pupils have been an inspiration, I thank them for their commitment and wish everyone a joyful Christmas.

We recognise Christmas as a time to relax and spend some quality time with our families. We also know that many families will be facing difficulties at this time. Please do get in touch with us if there is any way we can help you and your family during the festive period or beyond into 2024.

This year marks a significant period in the history of the school. The Sisters of Mercy, founders of the school in 1957, will be signing over the trusteeship of the school early in the new year. We will be forever indebted to the sisters and their contribution over many generations to the people and families of Maghull and our wider community. We will always hold the Sisters in our prayer, and will ensure that through our celebration and promotion of Mercy values, we will keep the charism of Mercy embedded in all we strive to do.



I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter. I thank all parents for their support during the Autumn term and look forward to welcoming our young people back on January 8th 2024. God Bless you and your families.

Mrs Hatton

# Chaplaincy

A very busy and enjoyable term at Chaplaincy. We began the year by welcoming our new year 7s with a Mass of leadership and service for our new Form Captains, and our new Head Boy and Girl Matthew Bolton and Nell Ross.

Our "Good Cup of Tea" day was very well attended by



parents and carers and we reminded ourselves of our call to be a movement of Mercy in the school, local community and the world

CAFOD Young Leaders from year 12 and year 13 completed their training and enjoyed a day of reflection and celebration at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King. Bishop Tom Naylor awarded certificates and Bishop John Arnold reminded us of the call to live simply, sustainably and in solidarity with the poor with a talk on Laudato Si.

Year 7 enjoyed a Welcome Day organised by the RE team. We finished the day with a beautiful Mass at St George's. They reflected upon their journey of life up until starting at Maricourt and their hopes for the future.



Some of our young people were Confirmed in November and it was a joy to see them take this step of faith surrounded by their families and supported by their parish community.

On Remembrance Sunday our Cadets took pride of place in services to honour those who gave their lives so that we can live in freedom. At St Andrew's Church, Grace Kenyon, a cadet with the RAF, laid a wreath on behalf of the Maricourt family.



We celebrated Youth Sunday, the Feast of Christ the King with taking a leading role in the 11.30am Mass at St George's. It was a joyful celebration of the hope that our young people bring to the life of the Church, and we were delighted to have Mr Loughlin, from our Music Department, play piano for us alongside the

very talented Louis Barton from Year 7

A fantastic retreat to Savio House in Bollington took place at the end of November with staff and pupils thoroughly enjoying the experience. A mixture of year 7 and 8 pupils accompanied by Miss McDonald from Geography, Mr Loughlin from Music, and Julia our chaplain, experienced the warm hospitality from the Savio team and an invigorating walk up "White Nancy" was enjoyed by all! We made some wonderful memories, and we are looking forward to going back to Savio in the future.

Liverpool Youth for Christ organised an in-house retreat with pupils from year 7 to 11 in the Chapel. This took place the week beginning 11th December and gave an opportunity to step away from the hustle and bustle of Christmas preparations to reflect upon the real reason for our Christmas celebrations, the



birth of Jesus our Saviour.

Our therapy dogs Dougal, Barney and Pepper continue to support some of our pupils with their weekly sessions, and we are grateful that they have brought joy and enabled the healing process where needed. We continue to have daily drop ins at Chaplaincy at break and lunchtimes and we are planning for next year's activities!

We finished the term by singing carols at Damfield Care home on the 8th December and thanking God for the trusteeship of the Sisters of Mercy with a special Mass on 14th December.



Our final end of term celebrations will be Advent services of prayer and reflection for all years. We are truly blessed to have the opportunity to work with so many gifted young people. We pray for a peaceful and holy Christmas for all our families.

God bless you and thank you for your support.

# Uniform and Standards

We continue to be proud of our uniform policy and we will always strive to maintain high expectations for all our pupils. The support from families in our drive for continuous improvement is always appreciated. Since the successful removal of coats indoors, students are walking around school and eating lunch together looking comfortable and smart. This along with line ups has contributed to a much more calmer orderly environment.

The efforts made by students to come to school without make up, nail varnish, false eyelashes and jewellery is contributing to the improved uniform standards. Parents have been very complimentary about the rise in our standards in uniform, and many of you have commented on the positive moves.

We understand that students may decide to opt for beauty treatments over the festive period, but we do want to reiterate that these need to be removed before we return to school on January 8th. It would not be wise to get any fresh piercing until the summer holidays as jewellery is not permitted.

I am sure some students will look at investing in some new training shoes over the Christmas period. Please do save these for social times, as trainers are not allowed. We are very proud of how well all our students have adapted to wearing smart footwear for school and this must continue.

We are also aware that this is a challenging time for many families. We do have a wide range of school uniform in school which is in excellent condition and available free of charge. Feel free to contact Arnold Student Services if you need any items.

We are also accepting donations of very good condition uniform and footwear. These can be dropped off at any reception.

I am sure you will agree that together we have made continuous improvements but your ongoing support is greatly appreciated. Please ensure skirt and tie lengths are an acceptable length when your child leaves for school, and continue with the message that blazers are compulsory and should never be replaced by a hoodie, half zip or coat. Finally please ensure your child has an appropriate sized school bag for school (must fit A4 books inside).

Thank you all for your continued support

## New Procedure for School Meals

From next term, pupils will need to have sufficient money on their dinner money balance before being able to purchase items and if they go overdrawn they will need to bring a packed lunch to school or make other arrangements until the outstanding balance is cleared.

If you will have difficulty in repaying the outstanding balance or if you have a query with accessing Parent Pay please contact the finance office by phoning the school number 0151 330 3366 or by e-mail to [finance@maricourt.net](mailto:finance@maricourt.net)

Please note that we can accept card payments over the phone if you prefer to clear the balance using this option.

If you think that your child may be eligible for free school meals then please contact your local authority to apply for this. If you are unsure, contact your child's Progress Leader

Further information can be found on the school website <https://www.maricourt.net/school-life/catering/>

## Attendance

**Successful Children attend school every day!**

Every day and every lesson counts in a child's education. Each missed lesson results in gaps in knowledge and missed learning. Students should aim for 100% attendance, missing school only when absolutely necessary.

100%	0 days absent	All students should aspire to high attendance
95%	10 days of school missed. Your child would miss <b>50 lessons</b>	
90%	20 days of school missed. Your son/daughter would <b>miss 100 lessons</b> , including 18 English and 18 Maths lessons	Students with attendance below 90% are categorised as " <b>persistently absent</b> " and will be placed on intensive monitoring.
85%	30 days of school missed Your son/daughter would <b>missed 150 lessons</b> including 26 English and 26 Maths lessons	Absence levels this high are shown to have a significant, negative impact on progress, including much lower grades at GCSE.

Contribute to your child's success at school by ensuring their attendance is high.

Guidance for attendance at school with common illnesses is below;

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

# Spotlight on Careers Education

## Key stage 3



All year groups were invited to attend our annual careers convention which was a great success and allowed students the opportunity to engage with Universities, Colleges, Apprenticeship providers and Employers. Students enjoyed the experience and said it has inspired them to think about their own destinations and career choice interests. Year 9 have enjoyed the Aintree Racing to school careers event which allowed them to explore careers in the wider world. It was very competitive and the students came up with a variety of jobs and skills for the work place which was fantastic to see and will prepare them for their options choices next year. We will keep you posted about further details on options after the Christmas break. Our careers ambassadors participated in organising events for careers. We look forward to working with you on future career plans in school. Well done to everyone involved.

## Key Stage 4

Year 10 students have been busy preparing and sourcing work experience opportunities for summer 2024. Please remember all self-placement forms need to be returned by 22nd December. This will be an inspirational opportunity and give students a real understanding of the world of work and allow them to gain new knowledge and skills to prepare them going forward.

Year 11 students have had a busy term. They have attended application workshops and mock employer interviews to prepare them for post 16 interviews. Feedback from employers about their conduct was 'outstanding'. They have also had appointments with our external Careers Adviser to help support them to make informed decisions about their next steps post 16. If you are yet to see the careers adviser, please do not worry as they will continue into early next year.



## Key stage 5

Year 12 have been busy preparing work experience placements and enjoyed attending the careers convention which will support them going forward with personal statements and UCAS applications. Year 13 have also engaged in mock employer interviews with Universities and employers to prepare them for post 18 applications and are now busy revising for final exams.

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# Spotlight on PSHE

## Royal Court Terriers, Theatre In Education.

We had the privilege of welcoming back the Royal Court Theatre company to produce two educational performances, both delivering a strong message for our students.

Year 8 and 9 enjoyed the performance of 'Reckless' which tackled issues of racial hatred and the use of social media to incite racial hatred. The performance has hard hitting and complimented what the students have been studying in the PSHE curriculum.

Year 9 enjoyed a performance of 'Eve's Story' which was a follow up to the 'Terriers' performance they enjoyed last academic year. This performance cleverly tackled issues of, violence, coercive relationships and criminal exploitation. The students thoroughly enjoyed the performance and it sparked interesting discussions surrounding such an important topic.



## Racing to School and the Jockey Club Year 10 Enterprise

This term we welcomed back Carrie and Grant from Racing to School and the Jockey Club. Our year 10 students took part in an enterprise and marketing activity. The students were tasked to work collaboratively to plan a marketing campaign for the upcoming Becher Chase at Aintree Racecourse. The students had to decide how they would spend their assigned budget and present their ideas.



# Spotlight on Performing Arts

The Year 7 pupils have been busy in their Drama lessons, learning about mime, facial expressions, presentation, group work, how to be a supportive audience member. Here, one class are watching themselves and evaluating their assessment pieces.

Well done Year 7!



## Matilda Jr

Rehearsals are moving on fantastically for our upcoming production of Matilda! Performances are on 7th, 8th and 9th February.

**Tickets on sale after Christmas**



# Spring Term 2024 - Key Dates

Spring Term Starts: **Monday 8th January 2024**

Mid Term Holiday: 12th February  
to Friday 16th February

Term Ends: 28th March

Parents Evenings  
Year 11 - 23rd January  
Sixth Form - 30th January  
Year 9 - 5th March  
Year 8 - 12th March  
Year 10 - 19th March

15th and 16th January - Sixth Form Retreat

### Assesment Weeks

W/B 15th January - Year 10 Assesment Week  
W/B 22 January - Year 9 Assesment Week  
W/B 29th January - Year 8 Assesment Week  
W/B 5th February - Year 7 Assesment Week

# Spotlight on Food Technology



Year 9 have been completing an end of rotation practical assessment; planning and making their own dishes. Miss Ray is very proud of their resilience and what they have achieved.



Year 10 have spent time focusing on presentation and plating skills this term. Excellent results. Keep up the good work. We have some Michelin star chefs in the making!



# Spotlight on RE

## Year 7 Welcome Day

In October, Year 7 students had a school based retreat to complete their induction to Maricourt Catholic High School led by the RE department. The day started with a welcome assembly before pupils returned to their form bases to reflect on their journey through life to Maricourt. They then turned their focus to the future, and set goals for their time in school. These were written on 'sugar cubes' and formed part of our post-Communion reflection in Mass, which was celebrated in St George's Church. The retreat day allowed us to reflect on the example of Catherine McAuley, the founder of the Sisters of Mercy, and we hope that our pupils will always "strive to do ordinary things extraordinarily well."



## Second Generation Holocaust Speaker, Lu Lawrence

A selection of Year 9 and Year 10 students were fortunate enough to participate in a Zoom interview with Lu Lawrence, the daughter of Holocaust Survivor Zigi Shipper. She shared her father's story of his experiences in the Łódź Ghetto and in multiple concentration camps. Lu only found out about her father's experiences later on in life, and she has chosen to continue to share her father's experiences so that people never forget what happened during the Holocaust and so that we can learn from history.

Connor from 10C asked a question which prompted Lu to share the story of Zigi being discharged from hospital with only one change of clothing - a British soldier's uniform. 16-year old Zigi was supposed to have dyed the fabric, but did not, which led to him being questioned multiple times by the police for impersonating a soldier!





# Spotlight on Dance

This term some of the wonderful Maricourt dancers took part in an English National Ballet workshop at Manchester Palace Theatre. Pupils from all year groups watched the performance of Giselle then learnt all about how the piece is linked together. The English National Ballet then visited school to teach the pupils some choreography to be performed on stage alongside dancers from the English National Ballet at the Liverpool Empire. This was a very rewarding, inspiring & fun experience for our dancers.



# Reading ‘The Maricourt Way’

“I read because one life isn't enough, and in the page of a book I can be anybody” Richard Peck

This term we welcomed our new Librarian and Reading intervention lead. Mrs Smith will be working a range of pupils across the school community to help foster a love of reading. Keep an eye out on school social media for upcoming events and clubs.

Within the classroom, pupils are being challenged to ‘think hard’ before, during and after reading a piece of text, and across the school we have adopted a reciprocal reading strategy which involves predicting, questioning, summarising and clarifying. This allows pupils to develop their vocabulary and understanding so they become strategic and knowledgeable readers.

Research shows that a shared experience of a book, and ultimately a repertoire of books is a powerful platform to develop meaningful, purposeful interactions and a buzz about reading. During form time pupils have been engaged in reading a book with their form tutor. Our texts have been chosen to either be a ‘window’ to the world, or a ‘mirror’ to allow self-reflection.



Parent challenge: Can you set aside 10 minutes per day to dedicate to ‘reading for enjoyment’ with your child? #10minchallenge

## Why reading matters: It is a simple truth:

- ✓ Successful reading helps determine academic success.
- ✓ Those who read for just 30 minutes per week are more likely to report greater life-satisfaction, and self-esteem.
- ✓ Research suggests that 14-year olds who read often and independently know 26% more words than those who never read.
- ✓ Reading improves academic outcomes in ALL subjects.
- ✓ All reading is valuable – news articles, factual books, magazines, autobiographies, interviews.

We recommend the following websites to support your child reading at home:

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/>, <https://www.literacyshed.com/>, <https://wordsforlife.org.uk/parent-support/>

# Welcome from Maricourt library

Our new Scholastic Book Club is up and running!

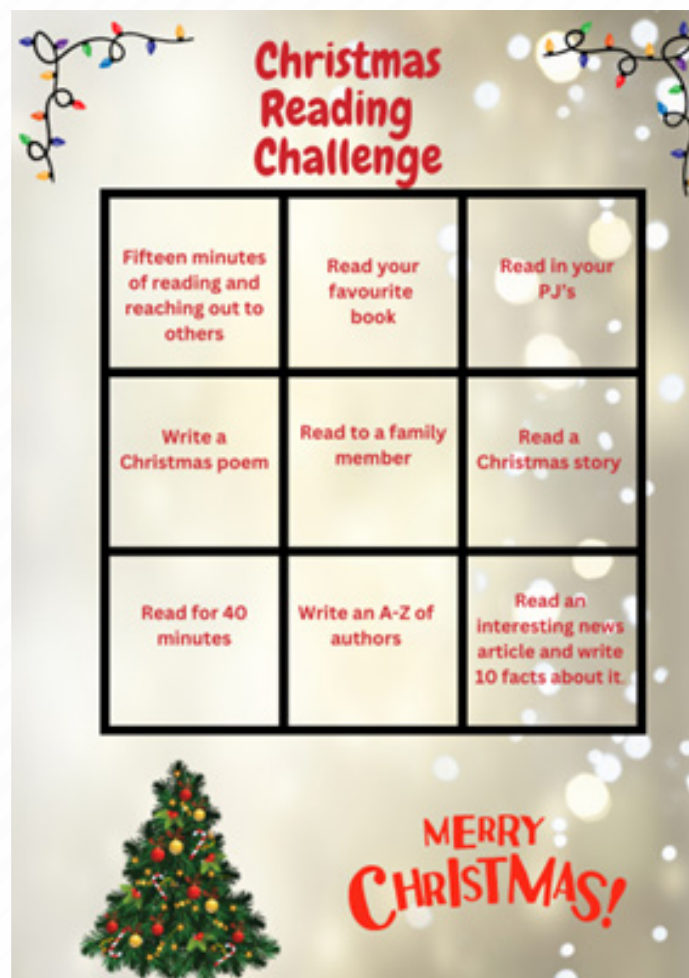


We have recently launched a new Scholastic book club for Maricourt School which allows parents and carers to purchase the newest releases at great discounted prices while also supporting the school. For every £1 you spend on the Book Club, our school will earn 20p in book commission. Please visit <https://schools.scholastic.co.uk/maricourt/digital-book-club> to browse the latest books and order online.

Please place your order online by February 15th, 2024.

Mrs Smith has also created a library Instagram Account - @maricourtlibrary.

Please follow and like, watch this space for exciting reading activities and events during 2024.



Had too many mince pies? Bored?!!  
Why don't you take part in our Christmas Reading Challenge

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and Happy Reading  
Mrs Smith – Librarian

# Spotlight on PE



Since September we have had over 2,500 individual attendances to clubs or appearances in our school teams. Wow!

The PE and Dance staff continue to provide countless opportunities for our young people as well as having many of our local Primary Schools taking part in competitions at Maricourt run by our Junior and Senior Sports Leaders through our SSSCo programme. Badminton Club continues to be popular as do our 5-a-side, Fitness and Dance Clubs

We've enjoyed some exciting off-site activities with our Year 7 boys playing in the Ian Lavery Memorial Tournament at Everton's Finch Farm training group where they met the Everton FC Ladies squad. Meanwhile our girls have been to Manchester to work the English National Ballet and played Rugby by at Preston Grasshoppers RFC.

Our boys have made a great start to the year with all of our teams unbeaten in the Sefton Cup. We have had a record number of boys selected to represent the Sefton Schoolboys. Following our Summer tour to Football Salou, our Year 9's have enjoyed a brilliant start to the season and progressed to the last 32 teams in the ESFA National Cup. The first silverware of the season has been won by our Year 7 boys who won the B/C team SGO tournament.

Our boys have taken part in the SGO Basketball event held at Liverpool John Moore's University and had a great time.

Rugby continues to thrive with huge numbers at our weekly training nights and tournaments every Wednesday at Ormskirk and Waterloo Rugby Clubs to compliment our Lancashire Cup fixture.

We entered a number of teams into the Sefton Cross Country Championships who are now well into the season.



Our girls have also had a busy start to the year. Netball club is proving very popular with our girls and Sports Leader alike as they prepare for the Euro Disney Netball Tour later this school year.

Our girls have enjoyed friendly and National Cup football fixtures. The highlight so far has been our Under 13's winning the SGO tournament held at Marine AFC where our girls played incredibly well.

Like our boys, the girls have taken part in the SGO Basketball event held at Liverpool John Moore's University and competed in the Sefton Cross Country Championships.

A few individual mentions our year 11s who are enjoying success at a National level with Dominik winning a Silver medal in TaeKwonDo at the British Championships and Lois competing at a national level in Dance.

All of our clubs will re-start in the first week of January and we hope to see our teams continue their success in the next half term and progress to lots of Cup Finals. We look forward to sharing the experiences of our pupils from the December Ski Trip in our next update.



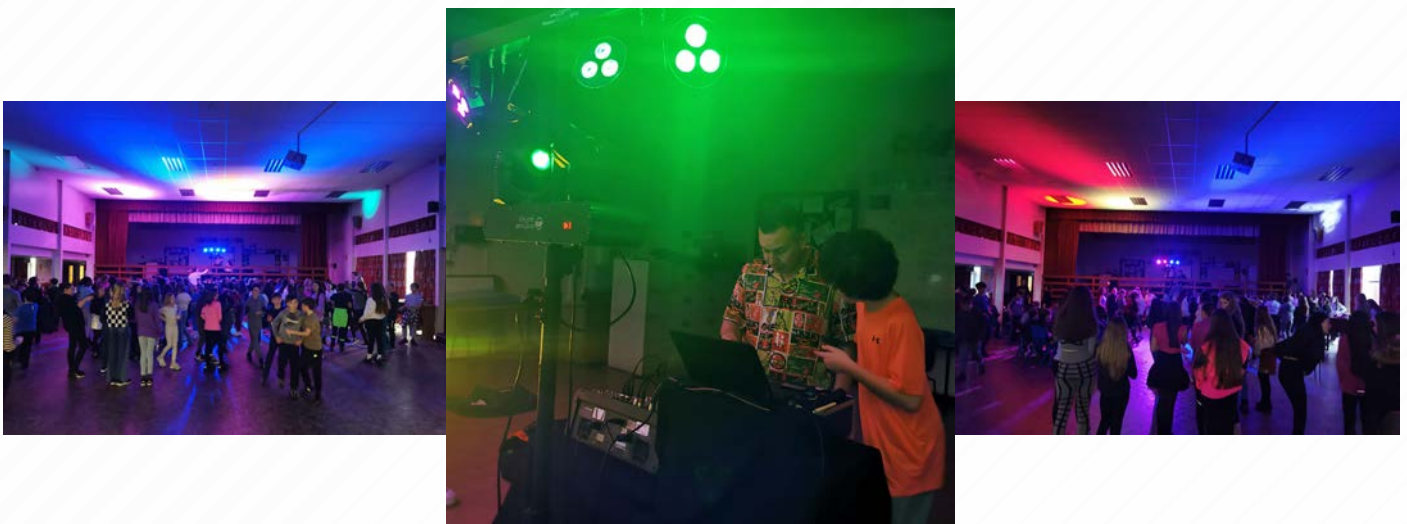
# Year 7 and 8 Rewards Day Monday 18th December

On Monday we celebrated an amazing rewards afternoon for those students who have a positive behaviour record on Class Charts. Year 7 and 8 enjoyed a Christmas quiz, followed by dancing their socks off at the school disco. The pop corn machine was in full flow and very popular! Years 9, 10 and 11 went to watch the Marvel Movie at the Showcase Cinema. What better way to start the festive celebrations than to watch a movie. Those students who stayed in school also got to enjoy a Christmas Quiz (Thank you Mr Gunn) and watch a Christmas movie.



Our year 7 and 8 students started our final week of term in fine Christmas spirit as we celebrated their successes this term with a disco and quiz competition. The students danced the afternoon away and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The popcorn proved a very popular refreshment and the Christmas quiz competition that followed was also enjoyed by all.

Well done Year 7 and 8 students!



## Rewards assemblies

All year groups enjoyed the Advent Service, which gave everyone the opportunity to come together in prayer and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. This was followed by a rewards assembly, here we celebrated term 1 for positive reward points, attendance, punctuality, extra curricular and most importantly the Mercy Values Award for each year group, which was presented by Mrs Hatton.

# Christmas Dinner

Christmas dinner was a success in both Newman and Arnold. Friends laughed and listened to music together, whilst they tucked in to a delicious lunch. There was a great vibe about the place, from candy canes, to chocolate, Christmas crackers and party hats. The Kitchen Staff and Welfare Officer really pulled it off!



# School Council

This term we have seen the formation of a new School Council. School Council plays a pivotal role in enhancing opportunities offered for students at Maricourt. The Council have collaborated with Form Captains and Progress Leaders to gather the views of every student at Maricourt. During our first meeting, the Council celebrated the achievements of our students, whether that be academic, athletic, artistic or working with our external partners. The Council were able to suggest improvement points for Maricourt and were pro-active in suggesting ways we could make our school a better place. Stay tuned for more exciting initiatives from our School Council as they continue to work tirelessly for the betterment of our school.