

A message from the Principal

Welcome to the Spring Term newsletter. In this edition, you will find information on this summer's public exams, a welcome to our new Chaplaincy Team and a report on a whole host of activities and events that have taken place in the College so far this term. But first, the Government's 'Living with Covid' plan should hopefully mean that we can look forward to a summer where we are able to return to some semblance of a normal college day without social distancing and wearing face coverings. We will, of course, need to remain vigilant as we move forward as there is still some Covid-19 circulating. For the safety and wellbeing of the whole SFX community, it is important that the latest isolation guidelines are followed. There is a section on the latest guidance a little later in this newsletter. May I take this opportunity to wish you all a blessed and happy Easter.



Easter Reflection

Easter marks the resurrection of Jesus which is, of course, the foundation upon which the Christian faith is built. However, before we reach this period of celebration, we remind ourselves of the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the desert by making sacrifices ourselves or being selfless throughout the 40 days of Lent. The Lenten reflection in religion and philosophy lessons, this year, has the theme "peace and forgiveness". This is particularly poignant given the events in the Ukraine. Using the resilience of the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as a stimulus, students have been making origami cranes. In Japanese culture cranes are referred to as the "bird of happiness" and represent good fortune and longevity. An ancient Japanese legend promises that anyone who folds a thousand origami cranes will be granted a wish by the Gods. I'm hoping that given the College has in excess of one thousand students, the same will be true, and that our wish for peace in the Ukraine will be granted.



Exams

It is clear that the Department for Education is steadfast in its approach for exams to go ahead this summer albeit with a number of adaptations. These adaptations, which apply to GCSE and A level examinations, were published on 7 February and include information which will help students focus their revision and will give an indication of some of the content, texts, topics, themes and skills that students can expect in their exams. Students should

All BTEC students sat external exams in January. For many, this will have been the first time many of this cohort will have experienced formal exam conditions and they took on this challenge with great aplomb. The grades which students received earlier this month were generally very pleasing given the disruption students have faced over the past two years.

All A Level students have just sat their second set of end of term exams which were set with the advance information in mind, so hopefully students have been able to focus their revision. These exams will have also acted as a run through ahead of the "real" exams in the summer. The outcomes of these end of term exams feed into Progress Reviews and are a contingency measure should the summer exams be cancelled and we have to revert to Teacher Assessed Grades.

Careers and Progression

I'm delighted to report that our Careers Team processed 472 UCAS applications this year. This is just shy of a record for the College and represents 88% of our Yr 13 cohort. It was particularly pleasing to see an increase in the number of students applying to Russell Group and Top Third universities which is great testament to the aspirations and ambitions of our students.

Last week we held our first HE and Employment Fair of the year which was targeted at Yr 12 students. With 42 universities and organisations represented, it was an excellent opportunity for students to begin quizzing representatives about their courses and to begin planning their next steps after SFX.



The Careers Team: Ms. Green and Mrs Lawrence

Student Study Leave

Yr13 A level & Yr12/13 GCSE lessons will continue until 27th May. After Half Term lessons will continue as directed by your teachers Yr13, Level 1 & Level 2 BTEC, CTEC, UAL lessons will continue until you have completed all work and been signed off by your teacher

Our Home, Our Vote Campaign

Our Head of Languages and Travel and Tourism, Ms Zingale, along with a group of college students have been campaigning for the 3 million Young Europeans' Network, an organisation which gives a voice to EU citizens residing in the UK.

Currently, our students are working with the organisation to call upon the Government to level up voting rights so that all residents can have a say in local democracy. As well as hearing from local MP for Battersea, Marsha de Cordova, students leafleted in the local community encouraging all citizens to register to vote in the upcoming local elections in May.



College Events

In January, the College marked World Holocaust Day by participating in an on-line webcast and hearing the experiences of one survivor, Eva Clarke BEM. It was a truly edifying event and Eva's story was incredibly captivating and thought-provoking. The students who attended were so humbled and so captivated that you could have heard a pin drop!

As well as receiving a visit from Battersea MP, Marsha de Cordova, Politics students also heard from the Advocacy Academy who encouraged students to apply for their Social Justice Leadership Fellowship which is an immersive six-month crash course in social justice.

Earlier this term, we held a series of Ready4Work sessions. Over the course of 3 days, year 12 business students had the opportunity to engage in a skills-building workshop, participate in mock interviews and listen to speakers from a range of industries. Ahead of our venture into T levels, the programme also served as a useful way to engage employers who may be able to partner with the College to support students with their industry experience. If there are any parents whose employers would be willing to support students develop essential industry skills then please do get in touch with our Work Placement Coordinator, Natalie Green: n.green@sfx.ac.uk.



Jack Petchy Awards

Congratulations to Natalia Heat, David Cepeda, Jaylen Stewart, Hannel Barnes, Chiamaka Bah, Mariam Bempong and Axada Yoonis for winning a Jack Petchy Student Achievement Award. Melissa Edwards, one of our Attendance and Achievement Officers won a well-deserved Leader Award. Each Award winner receives £300 and will decide how they wish for the College to spend it.



Royal Opera House Art Exhibition

It was wonderful to be able to hold our first Art Exhibition since the start of the pandemic. Our Yr 13 UAL Art and Design students were able to exhibit the pieces they have been working on as part of the Royal Opera House's National Design Challenge 2022. The competition had the theme of Peter Grimes, Benjamin Britten's sombre opera about a fisherman ostracised by his community. Students produced work that encompassed different aspects of design such as fashion, graphic and architecture (set design). Student pieces have been entered for this national competition.



Gabrielle Pereira
De Andrade



Brandon Catacuamba

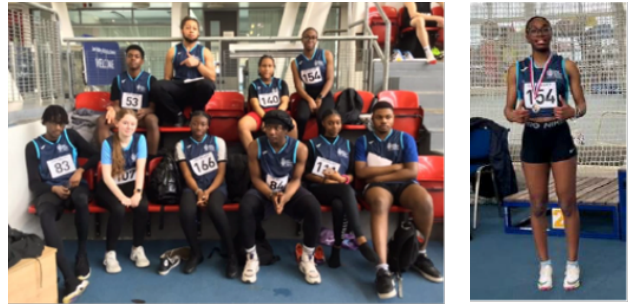


Adeolu Ogunyemi

Sports Round Up

Congratulations to Niyah Costley who earlier this month won a gold medal at the AOC Indoor Athletics Competition held at Lee Valley Stadium. The College sent 10 students in total, 3 reached the finals of their respective events, with Niyah winning gold in the Women's 60m event.

Congratulations also to the Football Academy who made it through to the semi-finals of the Catholic Schools' Cup, unfortunately losing out to Richard Challenor School for a place in the final .



Young Enterprise Team - Cell Phone

We have a thriving Young Enterprise Team who meet every Monday at 1pm in the Business Department. This year the YE Team have designed a product which, I for one, think is ingenious and should be attractive to both parents/carers and students alike. Students often say that they can't complete their work or even get to sleep at night because of the distraction of their mobile. The YE Team have attempted to solve this problem with the "Cell Phone". The Cell Phone is a device that holds a mobile phone and locks it in for a set time period, decided by the user. The device, along with some good discipline, will ensure that the mobile phone cannot be accessed, except in an emergency. Knowing how students seem to be attached to their phone these days, I'm sure all students would find this a useful study aid, especially in the run up to exams this summer.

In true "The Apprentice" style, the team, along with competitors from other schools, had a pitch at Spitalfields Market to test consumer interest for the product. Despite a pitch with low footfall, the team were very proactive and managed to come away with over £100 of product sold.

If you would like to support the Young Enterprise Team and purchase a Cell Phone, please contact Mr Graham: c.graham@sfx.ac.uk. The College will be hosting the Young Enterprise Regional Final on 4th May.



Our new Chaplaincy Team

I am delighted to welcome our newly appointed Chaplain Rev. Tony Flavin and Apprentice Chaplain, Gabrielle Williams-Hamer to the College. Rev. Tony and Gabrielle will be leading on the Spiritual Life of the College. The Chaplaincy here at SFX is at the heart of our college, with the Spirit of the Gospel at the centre of our way of life, relationships and community. We want to accompany each student on their journey through college, offering support and opportunities to develop spiritually, morally and intellectually. We are proud of our Catholic tradition whilst also welcoming students and staff of all faiths and none. If you are keen to get involved with the Chaplaincy, then please email our College Chaplain A.flavin@sfx.ac.uk or Apprentice Chaplain g.williamshamer@sfx.ac.uk.



Parent Governor Vacancy

There is a vacancy on our governing body for a Parent Governor for which we are seeking a volunteer to be elected to serve for 2 years. If you are interested in this position, email the Clerk to the Governors, Mrs Eleanor Lewis: e.lewis@sfx.ac.uk.

Vaping

In the last newsletter, I raised my concern over a very small number of students using high strength THC liquid in vape pens. This year, we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of students who are vaping, although I'm pleased to report that we have not had any further incidents linked to the use of THC oil. We have, however, had occasion to deal with students vaping on the College site. I would like to remind all students that we will not tolerate the use of vape pens or e-cigarettes on the College site and that we have a zero tolerance towards drugs of any kind, including THC oil. Using or purchasing vaping paraphernalia remains illegal for those under the age of 18 and I urge students to research the associated impact of vaping on health before making the decision to take up vaping.

Please note the updated COVID guidance from the Department for Education

From 1 April:

- people with symptoms of a respiratory infection, including COVID-19, and a high temperature or who feel unwell should stay at home and avoid contact with other people, until they feel well enough to resume normal activities and they no longer have a high temperature.
- anyone with a positive COVID-19 test result will be advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for **five days**, which is when they are most infectious. (*Tests will no longer be freely available, so this is for those who do have access, such as healthcare workers, or who have paid for a test to confirm a suspected infection.*)
- children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people, where they can. They can go back to school, college or childcare when they no longer have a high temperature, and they are well enough to attend.

Save our BTECs

I would like to thank everyone who supported the #ProtectStudentChoice campaign which closed in January. You will recall that this campaigned against the proposed withdrawal of funding for BTEC qualifications which many of our students choose to study. The campaign, supported by three former Secretaries of State for Education, achieved more than 100k signatures, which means it will now be debated in Parliament. The current education secretary, Nadhim Zahawi, has agreed to delay any decision until 2024 and acknowledged that some BTECs will continue to play an important role in 16-19 education for the foreseeable future, which is a promising response.

Key dates for your diary			
Term	First Day	Half Term	Last Day
Summer 2022	Tuesday 19th April 2022	Monday 30th May - Friday 3rd June 2022	Friday 8th July 2022 (Yr 12 Students)
UAL Extended Diploma Performance - 'Tomorrow Belongs to me' (a version of Cabaret): Wednesday 27th April 2022, 6pm Thursday 28th April 3:30pm and 6pm			
Additional Bank Holiday (In lieu of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee): Friday 29th April 2022			
UAL Diploma Performance- Déjà vu & 'The Conflict in between' (re-imagined Shakespeare): Thursday 12th May 2022, 6pm			
Geography Field Trips: Wednesday 27th April 2022 Wednesday 22nd June 2022			
End of YR12 Exams: 13th - 17th June 2022			
Careers Week : 4th - 8th July 2022			