



**ST ALBAN'S RC HIGH SCHOOL**  
The Park, Pontypool, Torfaen, NP4 6XG

**YSGOL UWCHRADD GATHOLIG SAIN ALBAN**  
Y Parc, Pontypwl, Torfaen, NP4 6XG

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**Headteacher:** Michael Coady BSc.

22 March 2016

**EASTER LETTER TO PARENTS**

Dear Parents

This has been a very busy and successful term for us all at St Alban's.

Five students from Year 9 attended the Stock Market Challenge at Cardiff Metropolitan University on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March and won! They competed against 25 schools, which included sixth forms, and were the overall winners. Our financial whizz-kids are Connor Bollen, Cameron Trimm, Olivia Shott, Tiana Jackson and Charlotte Chipper. Congratulations to them all, they should be extremely proud of themselves.

Congratulations to Year 9 Mock Trial Team for another convincing win at this year's Mock Trial competition which took place in Newport Crown Court on Friday. The team: Eryn Cowell, Adam Mulligan, Thea Rogers, Ethan Preece, Anna Davey, Beth Davies, Dan Amphlett, Gabe Edwards, Connor Bollen, Anastasiya Gwinnell and Olivia Saunders. The winners shield stays at St Albans for the 6th year running. They were the clear winners. In particular Anasatiya Gwinnell was praised for an outstanding performance.

Congratulations as well to the 6<sup>th</sup> Form students involved in the BBC Schools Report. Our students' feature is the most shared item in the country on Twitter and Facebook and is now on the main BBC news website Arts section. See link below:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schoolreport/35730258>

Disney Choir, Senior Choir and Pontnewydd Ladies Choir sang in the Cwmbran Salvation Army Citadel on 12 March and raised over £800 for the Mother Janet Orphanage in Uganda.

On 1<sup>st</sup> March Fr. Hayman celebrated a St David's Day Mass with Year 7 and 8 which was followed by the school Eisteddfod. It was a very special occasion that was enjoyed by all.

Pupils had been working hard on various competitions across all departments but the day's events focused on Instrumental Competitions, Poetry Recitation, Singing Competitions and Dance. In addition to the traditional competitions there was also a bonus round for pupils from each house who took part in a Welsh cake eating competition!

Chloe Packwood 8G had the following to say; "Overall the Eisteddfod was a very good day and was very enjoyable for everyone to celebrate St David's Day. The staff put an amazing day together"

Dozens of pupils took to the stage to perform in front of their peers. All pupils who reached the stage earned a medal and certificate. Prizes of £5 or £10 WH Smith vouchers were awarded for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> places and points were added for each competitor. The winning house with over 500 points was L.

Llongyfarchiadau! / Congratulations!



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**SUCSESSES IN THE CHRISTMAS TERM**

Congratulations to our Sixth Form Mock Trial team who won for the third year running in Cardiff Crown Court. The judges praised them for being the stand out team. The team has now qualified to go to The Old Bailey for the UK National final on 23 April, 2016.

Some Year 11 students met, interviewed and discussed key local issues with the MP for Torfaen, Mr Nick Thomas-Symonds. An ex-student and previous Governor of the school, he very kindly came into class and will be giving us a mention in an upcoming parliamentary debate!

Year 10 GCSE Music class performed a concert at Sight Cymru on 9 December. It was a lovely concert and very well received by the public who attended and the staff at Sight Cymru. Our Carol service was held at Our Lady & St David's Church and the Senior Choir sang at Horeb Chapel in Trinant on 17 December.

The Year 9 Advent and Options Retreat at Llantarnam Abbey was a great success. The students thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Year 9 students are currently writing articles about homelessness, one of which we are hoping might be published in The Big Issue Cymru.

Madison Fitzgerald-Wilkins, Year 8, was inspired by a television advertisement to fundraise for elderly people in the community. Madison's project raised £5,000.

Year 8 Fire Watch programme was a big success with the following pupils attending New Inn fire station on 25<sup>th</sup> November:

Annabelle Jones, Kesarai Woodhouse, Fionn Coffey, Evan Perry, Seren White,  
Daniel Amor, Eve Carter, Ethan Hands, Luke Omar, Madison Fitzgerald-Wilkins

Year 8 students enjoyed Inspector Training, working through our murder mystery scheme of work and becoming sleuths. Some were spotted wearing deer-stalker hats and responding to crime scenes with yellow police tape and body lines on the floor!

In the Senior Maths Challenge this year we had 3 outstanding results:

Arran Edwards qualified for the British Mathematical Olympiad – only 1000 pupils in the UK are invited to enter this each year.

Sam Mawby and Nicholas Gammage qualified for the Senior Kangaroo – 3000 students are invited to take part in this.

These students sat their papers on 27<sup>th</sup> November. The BMO was a 3 and a half hour paper which had Arran still writing at the end! An excellent achievement.

Other notable results were:

Gold certificates for Arran Edwards, Sam Mawby, Nicholas Gammage,

Silver certificates for Daniel Morgan, Tomas Patterson

Bronze certificates for Sophia Liu, Chris Harding (who doesn't take A2 Maths!), Daniel Gallagher, Ellis Pheasant, Shaun Pullin (all year 13) and Abigail McFadden Year 12)



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A group of 27 pupils went to Cologne to experience the Christmas Markets. Highlights of the trip included a visit to Cologne Cathedral and several Christmas Markets, a trip to the Lindt Chocolate Factory where they saw a chocolate sculpture worth £12,000 and pupils got to visit the chocolate fountain as many times as they wanted. They also visited the German Sport and Olympic Museum which included a lot of hands-on activities and sporting exhibits and some pupils got to play football on the roof top terrace. Lots of pupils have asked if they can go back next year

All students, from Year 7 to Year 13, have been making better progress than ever with their Reading Logs. Thank you so much for supporting them with this at home.  
St Alban's reached Phase 4 of the Torfaen Healthy Schools scheme in November, 2015.

The GCSE pupils for Food and Nutrition and Design Technology went to Cadbury World to learn all about how Cadbury's operate including; sourcing their ingredients, designing and making their products, market research and quality control. Free samples were issued to all the pupils and they had a trip 'back in time' and had some hands-on experience of tempering and moulding chocolate. A great day was had by all and the pupils were a credit to the school.

The highlight of the Christmas term was our Prize Giving Evening to celebrate the achievements of our students, which was held in the school hall. We were delighted to welcome Simon Weston, OBE, as our Guest of Honour. Simon gave an inspirational speech which enthralled the students, parents and guests and then presented the student awards. Simon is a war veteran of the Falklands, an author, charity supporter and an accomplished public speaker. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the evening and pictures are on the website.

### **SCHOOL PRODUCTIONS**

Our drama department had another outstanding whole school production in February with "Jesus Christ Superstar". The students as always gave superb performances and everyone who saw the show had a wonderful evening's entertainment.

Next term students in Years 7, 8 & 9 are putting on a production of "Camp Rock". There are over 70 students taking part. The dates are Tuesday, 24 May, Wednesday, 25 May and Thursday, 26 May, 2016. Further information will be given nearer the time.

### **ABSENCE REPORTING/ATTENDANCE**

If your son/daughter is going to be absent from school you must contact 01495 765800 and select option 1 to leave a message, by 9am. For pupils requiring medical appointments can you please ensure these are made outside of school hours, if this is not possible appointments should be made at either the start or end of the school day and pupils need to be in school prior to, or following the appointment. Our expected pupil attendance is 95% + therefore any other circumstances, such as holidays, that result in pupils missing school are unlikely to be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.



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**MOBILE 'PHONES**

Mobile 'phones should be switched off at all times during school time and kept in pupils bags. Students can only call home from one of the offices with the permission of the member of staff they are with. We ask for parents to refrain from texting and calling their children during the school day as this is a serious distraction and can have an unsettling impact. Please call the school if you need to communicate with your child in an emergency during the school day.

**YEAR 11**

If your child has made arrangements with their teacher for one of the Easter Revision sessions on the timetable at the end of this letter, it is important that they have returned a permission slip to that teacher.

Please note we do also require permission for your child to be off-site at lunch time as we are not in a position to provision to provide lunch.

**EXAMINATIONS**

All Year 11 students are issued with a personalised examinations timetable. Students should use this timetable to organise their preparation and revision. It is very important that students turn up for all exams well prepared. Please be aware that if a student does not attend for an examination he or she has been entered for parents could be charged the entrance fee if there is no doctor's note.

Prom deposits should be in by now. If you have not paid yet please do so as soon as possible.

**EASTER SERVICES**

<b>Cwmbran</b>	Holy Thursday 7.30pm Our Lady's Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper
Good Friday	3.00pm Our Lady's Good Friday of the Lord's Passion 3.00pm St David's Good Friday of the Lord's Passion
Holy Saturday	7.30pm Our Lady's Easter Vigil
Easter Sunday	9.30am Our Lady's 11.15am St David's

<b>Abergavenny</b>	Maundy Thursday Mass 7pm with watching at the Altar of Repose until 9pm.
Good Friday	Stations of the Cross 11am Solemn Vigil 3pm
Holy Saturday	Confessions 10.30-11.30am Easter Vigil 8.30pm Easter Sunday: Mass 11am - NO EVENING MASS

**For St Alban's Parish Pontypool, please see details on separate sheet.**

I wish you all a happy and a Holy Easter.

Yours sincerely

**MICHAEL COADY**  
**HEADTEACHER**