



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

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

Headteacher: Michael Coady BSc.

15 July 2016

LETTER TO PARENTS

SUMMER TERM 2016

Dear Parents

I am pleased to report another very successful year at St Alban's. The hard work of the staff and students was properly recognised when the Estyn and Archdiocese teams came in and we received two very good reports. We were also selected as a New Deal Pioneer school leading teaching in the Gwent region and across Wales.

The key to success at St Alban's, just like Wales in the European Football championships, is teamwork and I am really grateful that we have such a strong team and all involved, parents, pupils, support staff, teachers and governors contribute greatly to our success. There have been many highlights in the school and I present some now.

Students visited the Senedd and met the queen on Tuesday, 7 June. David Jones, Miles Harding & Rhys Evan Jones sang with Boys Aloud, presented flowers and met the queen. Owen Ashford, representing Torfaen Young People's Forum, also met the queen.

Huge congratulations to our year 9 Mock Trial team who competed in The National Final of the Magistrates Court Mock Trial Final in The Royal Courts of Justice on Saturday 18 June. This year over 270 teams entered this competition from 51 areas around the UK. We were the first Welsh team actually to even reach the final round in over two decades and we were placed 8th overall. This team were the best team I have ever worked with and we were definitely robbed by English judges!

A magistrate accompanied the team to London who is an experienced judge in this competition and this is the message that he sent to Mrs Thomas:

"I was amazed that St Albans only came 8th! It was such a pleasure being amongst such confident, intelligent, able, polite, accepting, well prepared and competitive students. They do St Albans proud and should be very pleased and proud to have been the first Welsh team to reach UK finals in over two decades and to finish in the top half of the final. Please wish all of them well, give my regards and I look forward to seeing some of them as legal counsel in the future. If I can assist in any way please let me know."

Team members:

Anastasiya Gwinell, Anna Davey, Gabe Edwards, Connor Bollen, Bethan Davies, Demi Heward, Thea Rogers, Olivia Saunders and Ethan Preece.



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

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

Headteacher: Michael Coady BSc.

It's been a fantastic year for our Mock Trial teams, with both Year 9 and Sixth Form teams appearing in the UK finals.

The team appeared on Radio Wales on the Saturday morning, here is the link:
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b07g7wm5>

Performing Arts

During Festival Week Disney Choir performed in Disneyland Paris. This is the Music Department's eleventh trip to Disneyland but it was the first time they have performed in the Walt Disney Studios. There was a large audience who enjoyed the performance so much that some of them were waiting to meet the choir at the stage door.

This year's Whole School Production of 'Grease' involved over one hundred students and sold out for all four performances (*each with a different cast*). Mr Cook (*who over saw the production*) was so very impressed with all the students for their hard work to prepare the production in just three weeks and their fresh, innovative ideas. Particular credit goes to Director, Miles Harding and Choreographer, Phoebe Jones.

The Lower School Production of 'Camp Rock' was a huge success for our young people once again.

Eve Carter, 8G, won 'CHAMPS OF CHAMPS' at the Welsh theatre dance championships, in the song and dance section. She will now go to the British Championship at Blackpool in August.

Science

Jac Wivell, Maxwell Allen, and Caitlin Joyce, all Year 7, won the 'Night with the Stars' competition on our astronomy evening

The Year 12 Engineering team competed at the Big Bang Science Fair in Swansea, they didn't win but will all be receiving Gold Crest award

Sporting Achievements

Senior football team reached the final of the Gwent Cup. Year 9 Rugby team have reached the final of the Dragon's Cup which will be played at Rodney Parade in September.

Mason Sullivan, Cian Smith, Josef Cowell, Oliver Wadley, Jordan Malson, Lewis Thomas, Sam George, Callum Oliver, Dyfan Thomas, Harry Bown and Joe Walbyoff represented Pontypool Schools in rugby this year.

Pontypool Schools rugby are touring Spain and the following boys have been selected:
Joe Cowell Year 9 and from Year 10: Sam George, Lewis Thomas, Oliver Wadley, Callum Oliver.
Charlotte Scarborough and Emily Taylor played netball for the County.

Libby Daley played Netball for SE Wales and the County.
Charlotte Scarborough played Cricket at Gwent and Wales level, U15, U17 and Senior level.



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

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

Headteacher: Michael Coady BSc.

Charlotte also won the Tom Maynard Trust Award where she receives 2 years of sponsorship and funding of £1,000 each year through SSE next generation sport. Charlotte was also invited to train with England U19 development team at Wellington College.

Ellie Sanford played football for Wales U15.

Staff Leaving

As with football, Summer term is the transfer season and this year sadly we say goodbye to a number of colleagues who have contributed hugely to the development of St Alban's school.

Lynsey Evans has only been with us for one year covering a maternity leave but she has shown great dedication to St Albans and determination to see our students achieve the best they can. She has proved herself to be an excellent teacher, we wish her well at her new school, Acton High London.

The English Department will also greatly Miss Sarah O'Keefe. Sarah is a genuinely outstanding teacher who is at the leading edge of teacher development. She has been central to transforming the quality of teaching, not only here at St Alban's, but across the Gwent region through her work in designing and leading the regional Excellent Teacher Programme. Sarah cares deeply about our young people and there are very many young people very grateful for the endless hours Sarah has devoted at lunchtime and after school to enable the students to achieve the best they can. Sarah has contributed hugely to the life of the school through her leadership of Literacy, through organising events like World Book day and even the gardening club. Sarah is moving to be a teacher of English and a Leader of teaching at Corpus Christi High School Cardiff. She leaves with our heartfelt thanks and very best wishes for the future.

A number of long serving colleagues are retiring.

Good lunchtime supervisors are not only hard to find but worth their weight in gold and we are lucky that we have had two colleagues who have devoted many years to serving the young people of St Alban's. Coleen Higgins (29 years) and Gloria White (13 years) have got to know and cared for thousands of our young people across the generations. The main reason why Coleen and Gloria have been so good in their role is that they know all our students by name and care greatly for them as individuals. Students like and respect this and Coleen and Gloria, with a firm word or a quiet stare are central to managing good behaviour at lunch times. They have also taken on the role of exam invigilators and our students will certainly miss their calming presence.

We also say goodbye to Jan Kenvin (23 years). Jan has been our office manager, and has had the unenviable task of being my PA for fifteen years. Jan cares deeply for the young people and the staff; she has looked after our sick room and been a highly valued and well respected school counsellor, not just in her formal role with the students but informally with the staff. Jan is a genuinely kind person who looks out for the welfare of others. There are very many students and staff who are very grateful for Jan's support and guidance. I am going to miss Jan greatly, keeping



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

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

Headteacher: Michael Coady BSc.

me organised for fifteen years has been a herculean and fairly thankless task and I am particularly grateful for her good sense, calm professionalism and wise council.

Other long serving colleagues leaving are Mike Edwards (38 years) and Julie Gloss (36 Years). Mike, a history teacher and head of humanities is possibly the longest serving teacher at St Alban's and our expert on the history of the school. The highlight of the year for many generations of our young people has been Mike's tour of the Hanbury house with its associated histories. Mike's great skill is to engage and enthuse our youngsters with a real passion for the study of history and very many young people not least our local Member of Parliament are very grateful for Mike's teaching. Mike is a maverick who has steered his own course as a teacher, not for him the formulaic fads following the latest fashion but a genuine understanding over what makes a good teacher. For this reason Mike has been able to contribute greatly to our Excellent Teacher Programme. To serve the school for 38 years with such dedication and professionalism is an outstanding achievement and we are very grateful for all he has done for the school and our young people.

Julie has held many roles including PE teacher and head of Sixth Form but for the last sixteen years she has been Assistant Head. As our senior team has been restructured three times over the years she has been the glue that has held us all together. She has the onerous task of writing the school timetable and organising all the external examinations we have been very fortunate that because of Julies thorough planning, clear thinking and organisation the school runs with great efficiency. When we have faced difficulties, Julie has been a rock of calm assurance and a source of great wisdom. Julie is a leader of great integrity and I am very grateful for the outstanding support she has given as a senior leader. It is not possible to serve a school for 36 years without developing a genuine love and concern for the school and our young people and in all our battles to secure a thriving future for St Alban's, Julie's steely determination and passion for St Alban's has been a great support to us all. Fortunately for us Julie will return in a part time capacity to help us sort our timetable and organise the external examinations.

I would like to wish all colleagues who are retiring, a very well deserved, long, happy and healthy retirement.

Finally, I would like to wish all our students and our families a very restful summer break and that all return safely and energised for an exciting new school year.

Students finish school for the end of the academic year on Friday, 15 July, 2016. **The school will re-open for students on Friday, 2 September, 2016, at 8.40am. Year 12 Students will register on Thursday 1 September at 11.00 a.m.**

Yours sincerely,

Michael Coady

Phone 01495 765800

Fax 01495 765802

michaelcoady@stalbans.schoolsedu.org.uk