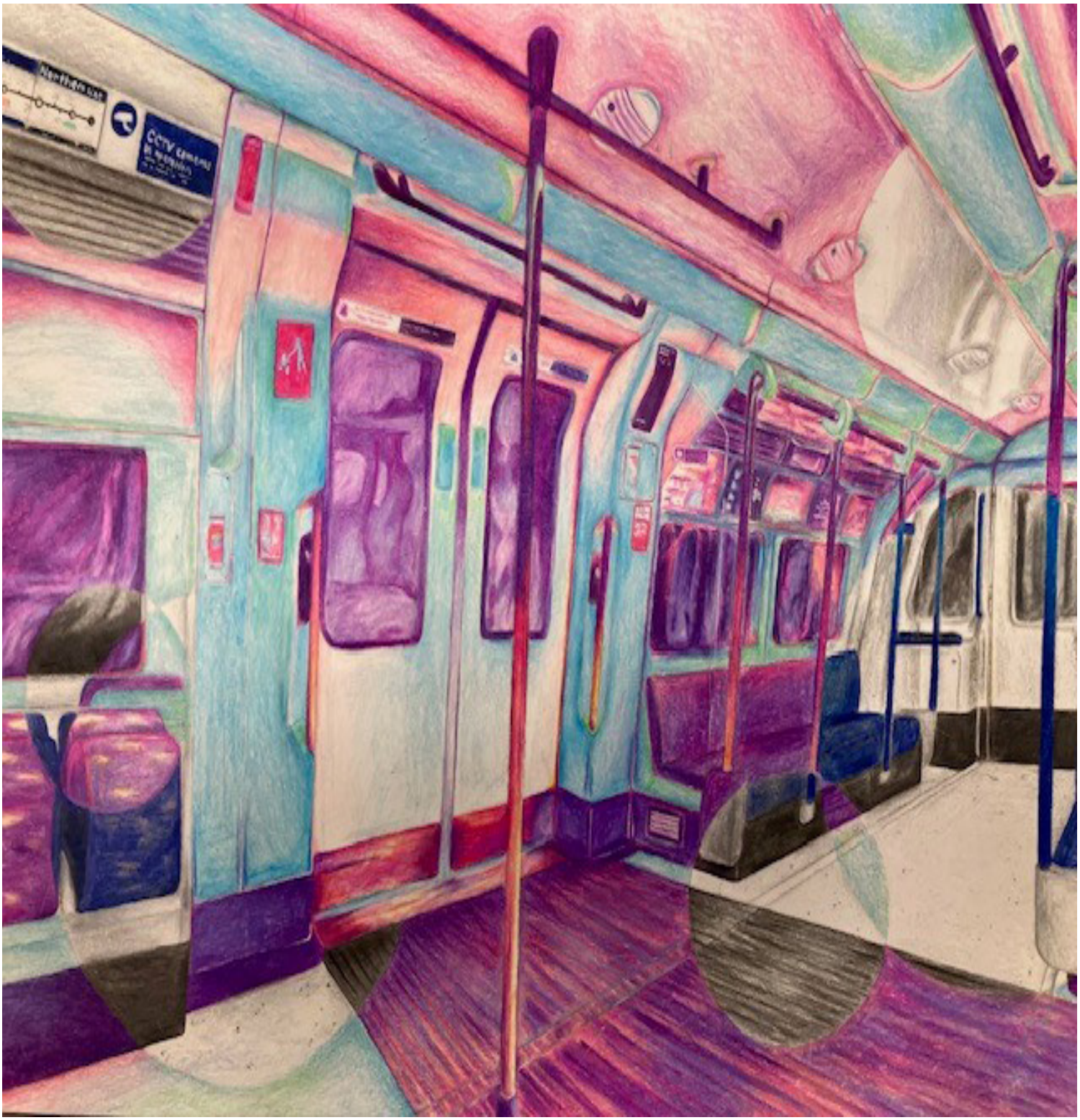
The Douglass

Summer 2025



By Erin in 12S

SUMMER MESSAGE

As we reach the end of another academic year, I would like to thank you sincerely for your continued support of Bishop Douglass Catholic School. The past few weeks have been filled with enriching activities, including sporting events, Horizons Week trips (among them a special visit to Rome), and the lively production of our school play. These joyful moments have marked the culmination of a productive and positive year, shaped by steady improvement, renewed purpose, and the dedication of staff and students alike.

Our commitment to academic rigour has remained central. This has been evident through targeted interventions, additional mock examinations, and curriculum refinements. I am proud of how our examination groups, both Year 11 and the Sixth Form, have approached the season with determination and maturity. We now await our public examination results with optimism and confidence in their efforts.

Despite the ongoing financial pressures affecting schools nationally, I am pleased to report that, through prudent financial planning, careful economies, and the generous support of our donors, we have succeeded in setting a balanced budget for the year ahead. I am particularly pleased that we have been able to invest in an improved school minibus, which will allow greater ease in attending trips and sports fixtures, an important part of the life of the school.

Looking forward, our priorities include strengthening links with our feeder primary schools, continuing to refine our curriculum, and preparing diligently for the next Ofsted inspection as we enter a new inspection window in September. I am also pleased to confirm that we are fully staffed for the new academic year. At the same time, we bid farewell to several valued colleagues who are moving on. These include Mr Cian Cronin (Humanities and Head of Year 7), Ms Elisabeth Daly (Head of Music and Pastoral Assistant for Year 8), Ms Anna Shimwell (KS3 English Lead and Careers Lead), Mr Isaac Abdulahi (Science), and Ms Nuala Singh (Support Staff). We thank each of them for their contribution to Bishop Douglass.

A very special mention must go to Mrs Betty Pavlou, who is retiring after 38 years of outstanding service to the school. Betty has been a constant presence, first as a pupil, later as a parent, and in recent decades as our much-loved librarian and school administrator. Her warmth, kindness, and unwavering commitment to the school have left a lasting impact on generations of students and staff. She truly embodies the spirit of Bishop Douglass, and we wish her every blessing as she begins a well-earned retirement.

Our school culture remains rooted in high expectations, strong pastoral care, and a values-led approach. From September, Mr Hart will be supporting Mr Patrick in leading our behaviour systems, ensuring a consistent and purposeful environment for learning. As always, I ask for your continued support in upholding our standards, particularly with regard to uniform and appearance. Pupils must return in full and correct uniform, with tidy haircuts and styles that meet school expectations. These details matter, and your reinforcement of them at home helps to maintain the high standards we expect and value.

While summer offers time for rest, it should also be a period of growth. I encourage all our pupils to read widely, revisit key concepts, and use their time well. We hope they will continue to live by the values we promote, integrity, effort, and self-discipline, whether or not they are under direct supervision.

Finally, I would like to share a brief personal update. From September, I will be taking a short sabbatical to complete some postgraduate theology studies. During this period, I will step back from the daily leadership of the school but will remain closely involved as a member of the Trust Board and will continue to support the strategic direction of Bishop Douglass. I am delighted to announce that Mr Graham Burt will be returning to the school as Deputy Headteacher. His experience, wisdom, and deep knowledge of our community will greatly strengthen the leadership team alongside Ms Henderson.

Martin Tissot, Executive Headteacher

Thank you once again for your trust and partnership this year. I wish you and your families a restful, refreshing, and enriching summer break.

Michelle Henderson, Headteacher

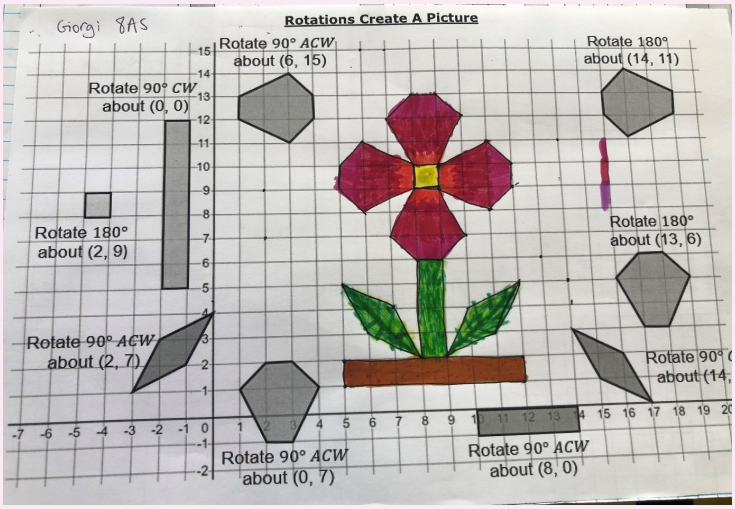
CURRICULUM SUCCESS

Mathematics

University of Greenwich - Greenwich Maths Time

On Wednesday 25th June, students visited The University of Greenwich. The day was filled with fascinating activities that brought mathematics to life in unexpected ways. One of the highlights was learning mathematical magic tricks, where numbers seemed to perform impossible feats, until we uncovered the clever maths behind them. We also explored the curious world of topology, discovering how holes in shapes can completely change their properties. It was a fun and educational excursion that portrayed ways maths can be used far beyond the classroom.

Pupils in Year 8 have had the opportunity to explore applications of the topics they have recently learned in class. Giorgi in 8AS has rotated shapes to create a flower.



Pupils in Years 9-11 and Year 8 have recently sat the Intermediate and Junior Challenge, respectively and we are pleased to announce the following successes:

Intermediate Gold:

Jalal in 11W, Akari in 11M, Elizabeth in 11M, and Stefano Year 9AS

Junior Gold:

Antoni in 8AS, Edward in 8AS, Shalev in 8AS, and Adam in 8AS

English

Resigned - The Weight of Memory - by Nojus in 8AS

Gunshots flew through the air. My feet felt heavy, my heart pounding out of my chest. "GRENADE!" Sargent Jack shouted. Shrapnel and broken screams erupted from the sight. How did I get here, why did I believe I was better than anyone else? I froze. My body glued to the ground. My head began to spin. I tried to gather myself up, and I saw him…My friend, the one you meet in school who you expect to spend the rest of your life with. Blood poured from his mouth, bleeding the life out of him.

I dropped to my knees, putting his hand in mine as the blood soaked the ground beneath us. His breath became shallow, broken gasps. His eyes wide staring into mine, desperate for something I couldn't give. I Held on tighter, if I didn't let go maybe he wouldn't leave me. but the light in his eyes faded, and all that was left was that empty, distant stare I'll never forget…

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BANG! My eyes slowly opened, the light burning them. I began to panic, 'where am I?' 'what's going on?' I questioned myself. As my body regained consciousness I stumbled to my feet. But suddenly I realized. Realized that every night I have the same dream. His bloody body Infront of me. 5 years ago, I had gone to Afghanistan to patrol borders. It was supposed to be a simple night, but things took a turn…A terrorist team had surprised attacked us, and the unimaginable happened. We fought till our body's gave up, till our arms felt num, but it wasn't enough. My friend, the one, I spent my years with, who helped me at my lowest lows, had engraved his name into the battle ground. It's time to let go. I was done fighting. I was resigned.

CURRICULUM SUCCESS

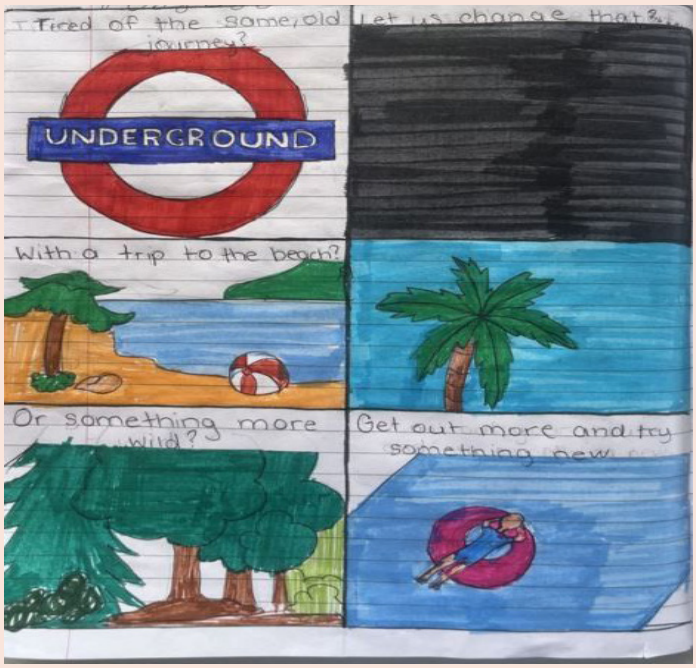
Information Technology

This year in Year 8 IT, students have explored a wide range of topics including computer hardware, programming skills, and the exciting features of Microsoft Excel. This half term, they've taken on an entirely new challenge: video editing.

Using Adobe Premiere Pro, a professional video editing software, students have enthusiastically begun learning how to cut, sequence, and refine video content. Applying their understanding of sequencing, they've worked hard to ensure their video clips flow smoothly and tell a clear story.

To help prepare for their final projects, students have handed in excellent storyboards as part of their homework. These storyboards have played a key role in planning their video adverts, which promote summer holidays for a well-known travel company. The results so far have been fantastic, each class has shown excellent focus, creativity, and determination to master this new skill.

Student testimonial -"Video editing for me has been very interesting and very inspiring to advertise a business and help it grow. it has also been very fun and has not been too challenging from the past couple of weeks!"
by Kaid in 8AS.



Business

Business Department Summer Endeavours

A real highlight was welcoming back a former student Daria Zielinska, who is now a successful entrepreneur. Students were engaged during the presentation about their journey since leaving school and starting a thriving business. It was a great opportunity for students to hear real-life advice and ask questions about what it takes to succeed in the world of business. It was nice seeing students collaborate with amazing ideas that can inspire and prepare them for the future.

Students on the Vocational Business course also took part in mock interviews this term as part of their coursework. This gave them valuable experience in preparing for interviews and helped build their confidence and communication skills – fantastic preparation for the workplace or further education.

Finally, we are saying a farewell to our Year 11 and Year 13 students and we are looking forward to celebrating with them on results day.

CURRICULUM SUCCESS

Religious Education

This term, our Year 7 students have been learning about how the Catholic Church responds to important questions of faith through Church Councils. They discovered that this tradition began in the time of the apostles, with the very first council—the Council of Jerusalem—recorded in the Bible (Acts 15, Galatians 2). Students explored how Councils continue to meet from time to time to give authoritative guidance on matters of belief and morals, known as dogma, and how these decisions shape the Church across the centuries.

This term, Year 8 students have been studying Hinduism as part of their learning about world religions. They have explored key beliefs about God in Hinduism, including the idea of Brahman—the ultimate reality—and how Hindus understand God through different deities such as Vishnu, Shiva, and Lakshmi. Students have learned how these beliefs influence daily life, worship, and the celebration of important festivals like Diwali and Holi.

Year 9 students have been deepening their understanding of Judaism—one of the world's oldest monotheistic religions. They have explored key Jewish beliefs about God, the covenant, and the importance of the Torah. Students learned how these beliefs are expressed through worship, festivals, and daily life, including practices such as Shabbat (the Sabbath), kosher food laws, and the celebration of Passover.

Year 10 students have completed the Sources of Wisdom and Authority unit as part of their Edexcel Catholic Christianity course. They have studied how Catholics understand the Bible as the Word of God, and how it is interpreted through the guidance of the Magisterium (the teaching authority of the Church), Sacred Tradition, and the role of the Pope and bishops. Students explored how these sources work together to help Catholics understand and live out their faith in today's world.

History

Over the course of this academic year our dedicated attendees of History Society have investigated a whole range of topics. Starting with a passion for Victorian coins, we often looked at Saxon hoards discovered in the news. We looked at historical themes including Black History Month and International Women's Day and also enjoyed a range of presentations on the Roman Empire, Filipino politics and Hong Kong in the 21st century. The club meets every Friday lunch and would welcome new members.

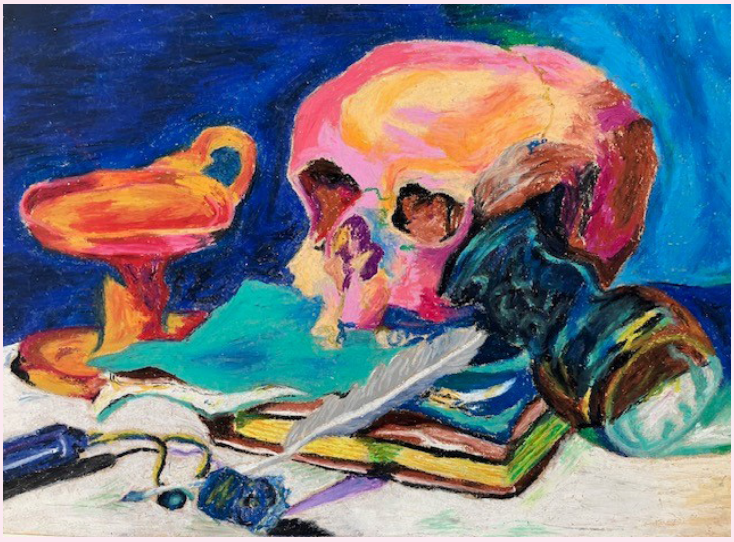
As a reward for active participation, the History Society enjoyed a field trip last week to the Museum of London Docklands as well as the Royal Observatory I'm Greenwich. We learned about the Match girls strike and how the problem of longitude was finally solved. I'm already excited for September!!

Science

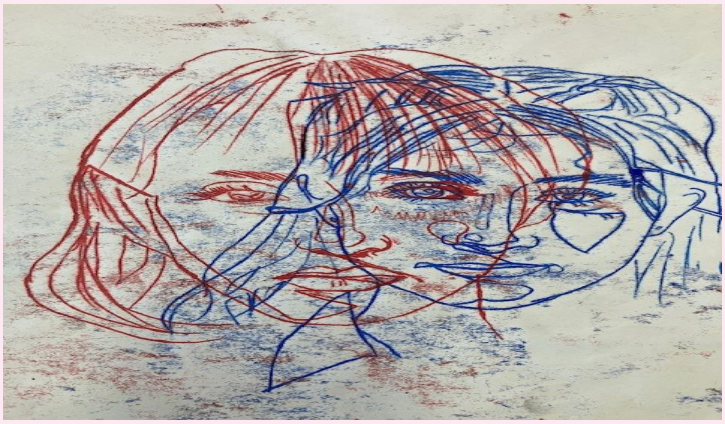
This term a group of our students recently visited the Royal Society in London, a special opportunity offered to selected students in recognition of their consistent hard work and enthusiasm in science.
During the trip, they explored interactive exhibits, learned about cutting-edge scientific research, and took part in hands-on activities. It was a truly inspiring day for our students, which they thoroughly enjoyed.

CURRICULUM SUCCESS

Art



By Akeelea in 12M



By Solaleh in 12M

By Ara in 12M

Media Studies

As we wrap up another exciting academic year in the Media Department, we're proud to celebrate the creativity, critical thinking, and technical skills our students have demonstrated across all year groups. Year 10 students have begun developing ideas for their magazine website coursework, focusing on proposal writing, audience research, and initial design planning. Their thoughtful and imaginative concepts show real promise, and we're excited to see these projects come to life in the next academic year.

Our Year 12 cohort has been diving deep into the film industry, exploring everything from production processes and marketing strategies to the influence of media conglomerates. Their analytical insights and ability to link theory to real-world examples have been outstanding.

A special mention goes to our now-departed Year 13 students, whose final coursework submissions raised the bar yet again. They created striking UK and Global film posters and DVD covers, combining Photoshop skills with genre conventions and marketing knowledge. Their work was both professional and imaginative – you'll find some of the highlights featured alongside this article.

Finally, during Wider Horizons Week, the Media Department got hands-on with podcast production. Students scripted, recorded, and edited a range of engaging episodes, showcasing their storytelling abilities and technical skills behind the mic.

Well done to all our Media students for a fantastic year, we can't wait to see what you create next!

CURRICULUM SUCCESS

Modern Foreign Language

This term, pupils across all key stages have continued to develop their language skills while exploring the rich cultures of the French- and Spanish-speaking worlds. From café conversations to literary analysis, students have shown curiosity, creativity, and growing confidence in their communication

Year 7 pupils have been learning how to get around town and enjoy everyday experiences in French. They practised ordering food and drinks in a café, learning how to express themselves in real-life situations. The unit ended with a virtual trip to Paris, where pupils explored famous landmarks such as la Tour Eiffel, les Catacombes, and le Bateau Mouche. This cultural journey helped bring the language to life and sparked curiosity about travel and French heritage.

This half-term, Year 8 pupils explored the world of sport, not just as fans, but as future champions. They learned how to talk about their favourite sports and athletes, express opinions using comparisons, and give directions using clear, confident language. Beyond vocabulary, the topic encouraged pupils to reflect on what it takes to succeed in sport, including the importance of discipline, healthy lifestyle choices, and perseverance. They also learned how to describe injuries and speak to a doctor, valuable skills for real-life situations. The unit was enriched by learning about inspiring Francophone sportspeople, helping pupils connect language learning with global role models.

This term, Year 9 pupils explored the richness and diversity of the French-speaking world. Through topics such as travel, music, and sport, they developed their ability to communicate in different time frames while learning about real people and places. A highlight was discovering the inspiring story of the women's national football team of Cameroon, which sparked thoughtful discussions about gender, representation, and global sport. Pupils also practised using formal language in everyday situations, helping them build confidence for real-life conversations.

Year 10 pupils have been focusing on how to live well, both physically and mentally. They explored French food culture, learning how to describe meals, mealtimes, and healthy eating habits. Pupils also discussed the importance of mental wellbeing, how to avoid unhealthy choices, and how to talk about lifestyle changes. Using real-life role models such as Sadio Mané, Rachel Keke, and Grand Corps Malade, students reflected on how determination, resilience, and positive habits can lead to personal transformation. The topic encouraged thoughtful conversations about health, identity, and the power of small changes.

Drama

We have had lots of exciting things happening in the Drama Department this Summer Term. We started the term off with a workshop for Year 10 GCSE students, from The Moving Mountains Group. This is a theatre company run by 2 of my past pupils who are now both professional actors for the stage and screen.

The Mountains Group - The work the Mountain Group did with the Year 10's then helped prepare them for their Devising practical exams which they completed in June.

Students involved in our Musical Theatre Club performed some numbers from our Spring Term 'Songs from the Shows' Production at St Michaels Primary School in Highgate. The students then led both Drama and Music workshops with 2 of their Year 6 classes.

We said a fond farewell to our lovely Year 13 A-Level Drama student. They have been an absolute joy to teach these past few years and we wish them all the luck and love for their future success.

ENRICHMENT

Wembley Stadium - Wider Horizon

Some of our pupils were taken to Wembley Stadium during the Wider Horizon week. Some interesting facts about the Stadium; there are 90,000 seats - the largest stadium in the UK and second largest in Europe after Camp Nou in Barcelona. The stadiums iconic arch spans 315 metres - the longest single span roof structure in the world.

Cricket - Wider Horizon

We have had a fantastic cricket week during wider horizons. We played a lot of cricket and looked to both introduce new players to the sport and to advance the skills of those already playing the game. We visited Radlett CC in Hertfordshire and saw Middlesex 2nd XI take on Kent. We then had a guided tour of the Oval before playing more cricket back at school. What has been most exciting is to have seen both the interest and enjoyment of the players along with the beginnings of a girls' cricket club. After the summer we hope to introduce a hard ball element for those that our interested, an afterschool club as well as a dedicated girls' club. Hopefully these are exciting times for BDCC

Bertha Earth - Wider Horizon

Bertha Earth ambassadors spent a week at Jamie's Farm, where they got stuck in with farm life. From cooking, caring for animals, hiking and wood chopping, students enjoyed every moment.

ENRICHMENT

Sixth Form - Wider Horizon Week

The Wallace Collection and the Grayson Perry exhibit - By Erin in 12S and Medina in 12L

Walking into the Wallace Collection, it felt like we'd been transported back to the 18th century as we were immediately immersed, surrounded by the Rococo-style architecture, echoing that of the Versailles palace; truly, the Wallace Collection embodies the very idea of elegance and excellence. With paintings and sculptures ranging from the 14th to 19th century from predominantly all over Europe, it never fails to impress, the layers of meaning behind every colour, every shape, the overall composition, especially in the oil paintings harbouring the Renaissance style. In particular, those which focal point lied in the theme of muliebrity were intriguing to us such as 'The Strawberry Girl' by Sir Joshua Reynolds and the understandably famed 'The Swing' by Jean-Honoré Fragonard. For the second part of our trip, we visited Grayson Perry's "Delusions of Grandeur" exhibit right under the Wallace Collection, and needless to say, the difference was powerful: unlike the dramatic yet harmonious succession of paintings we had just seen, we were immediately met with a barrage of lurid colours and bizarre imagery. The fluidity demonstrated in his work is spectacular with his vast variety of mediums such as his tapestries and iconic urns, and subverting Rococo art such as in his 'Fascist Swing', a psychedelic subversion of Fragonard's 'The Swing', and of course including anti-establishment and liberating messages in terms of sexuality he's come to be known for. Indeed, few artists can match his sense of freedom even in the contemporary scene. And perhaps the most fascinating part of this exhibition was his new alter ego, Shirley Smith, who has an alter ego of her own, Millicent Wallace, who she imagines to be the heir to the Wallace collection - frankly, we left the exhibit rather confounded by the chaos he creates as he seamlessly switches perspectives between himself and his persona. In a way, it was hypnotising how he convincingly brings Shirley Smith to life with her own thoughts and 'Delusions of Grandeur'.

Barnet Athletics Championships

Despite the hot weather on teh 1st of July, our pupils excelled at StoneX Stadium for this year's Barnet Athletics Championships. We had fantastic results in the heat stages which saw most of our pupils reach the finals. Despite the pressure and increased level of competition in the finals, many of our pupils were able to bring home a medal and at the very least represented the school and themselves admirably.

Lashae in 8F - 300m - 1st place
Braiden in 9C - 300m - 2nd place
Oluwaseun in 9W - Javeline - 2nd place

Emmanuel in 10 - Discus throw - 3rd place
Ky'Len in 10W - 100m - 3rd place
Rahma in 10O - 200m 1st place
Reimiah in 10W - 200m 2nd place
Marc in 10L - Javelin - 3rd place

Marc, Ky'Len, levi and Remiah - Relay - 1st place

ENRICHMENT

Horticultural Collage Competition

Bishop Douglass School swept the board again in Hampstead Garden Subarbs collage competition! Year 10 students produced some beautiful collages using plant and other materials. 1st prize went to Asha in 10C, 2nd prize went to Nourry in 10O, and 3rd prize went to Cindy in 10C. Congratulations to all three.

Book Club

This year, the book club was delighted to take part in The Carnegies Shadowing, a nationwide reading initiative where young people and children in schools "shadow" the judging process for the well-known Carnegie Medal for Writing and Illustration (formerly known as the Kate Greenaway Award).

Back in January, the book club was allocated one of the nominated books, which we read each week during our Tuesday lunchtime meetings. Once we had completed the book, the students began preparing to present why they felt our book, Glasgow Boys by Margaret MacDonald, should win the award.

Each student prepared their own slide and cue card ahead of the presentation day at Mill Hill Library. On 13th June, the book club, with the help of Madam Yager and Madam Lowdell, was delighted to place 3rd out of nine schools from Barnet for our presentation of Glasgow Boys.

We felt proud of this achievement, as it was our first year entering the Shadowing Scheme, and the students are eager to participate again next year, with hopes of coming first!

Noah in 7C, Elldana in 7C and Merve in 7C wanted to share their thoughts on the initiative:

"The Carnegies were an amazing opportunity to present the book that we read in book club. I loved the experience; it was really fun even through it was a little scary presenting in front of everyone, as it was my first time public speaking, but I was so proud I did it!" - Merve

"The Carnegies is a cool event where schools from Barnet and other parts of the country could vouch for their book, in the chance of winning money and iPads for our school libraries." - Noah

"At this spectacular event, I challenged myself to talk to new people from different schools. Talking in front of over 100 people was nerve-wracking but really mind-opening and overall, the whole experience over the last 6 months was really fun and I am so glad we came in third place!!" - Elldana

OUR CATHOLIC ETHOS

Catholic Life

Students from our school went on a special pilgrimage to Westminster Cathedral to celebrate the Year of the Jubilee – Pilgrims of Hope. The day was a meaningful journey of faith, where students came together in prayer, reflection, and celebration. As pilgrims, they joined others from across the diocese to mark this holy year, focusing on the theme of hope and renewal. During the visit, they attended a special Mass, lit candles, and took time to reflect on their own faith journeys. The experience helped students to feel more connected to the wider Church and inspired them to live as people of hope in their everyday lives.

This term our students also had the opportunity to go on pilgrimage to Rome. Once we arrived in Rome, our pilgrimage began with a visit to the oldest catacombs in the world – an underground cemetery filled with early Christian history. Students were fascinated to see the tombs of early Popes and saints, reminding us of the deep heritage of our Catholic faith.

As true pilgrims, we travelled much of our journey on foot. One of the highlights was our visit to one of the Seven Wonders of the World – the Colosseum. Our brilliant Sixth Formers, Arya and Josiah, led an engaging and informative tour, sharing facts and stories that brought ancient Rome to life. Of course, no trip to Italy would be complete without a compulsory gelato stop!

We also had the chance to enjoy some iconic Roman sights. Students visited the stunning Trevi Fountain, where tradition says to throw a coin and make a wish, and the beautiful Spanish Steps – a favourite spot for pilgrims and tourists alike. These moments added joy and wonder to our journey, helping students experience the culture and beauty of the Eternal City.

The following day, we entered the heart of the Church: Vatican City, the smallest country in the world. We explored the Vatican Museums and stood in awe beneath Michelangelo's masterpiece in the Sistine Chapel. We then visited St. Peter's Basilica, where some students had the unique opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation – a truly moving moment, with Gabriele confessing in Italian and Dutchess conversing with a Filipino priest! Our pilgrimage ended with the incredible privilege of walking through the Holy Door – only open during the Jubilee Year – reminding us of God's mercy and calling us to be Pilgrims of Hope.

Our end-of-year Mass was a beautiful and prayerful celebration of all we have experienced and achieved as a school community. Canon Mehall Lowery led us in a joyful liturgy, reminding us of God's constant presence throughout the academic year. It was a moment to reflect on the blessings we've received, to give thanks, and to look forward with hope. As part of our Catholic Life, the Mass brought students and staff together in faith, reinforcing the values of love, service, and unity that shape our school. With hymns, prayers, and a spirit of gratitude, it was a fitting way to end the year and prepare our hearts for the journey ahead.

TERM DATES 2025-2026

AUTUMN TERM 2025

First Half: Tuesday, 2 September - Friday, 24 October

Half Term: Monday, 27 October - Friday, 31 October

Second Half: Monday, 3 November - Thursday, 18 December

SPRING TERM 2026

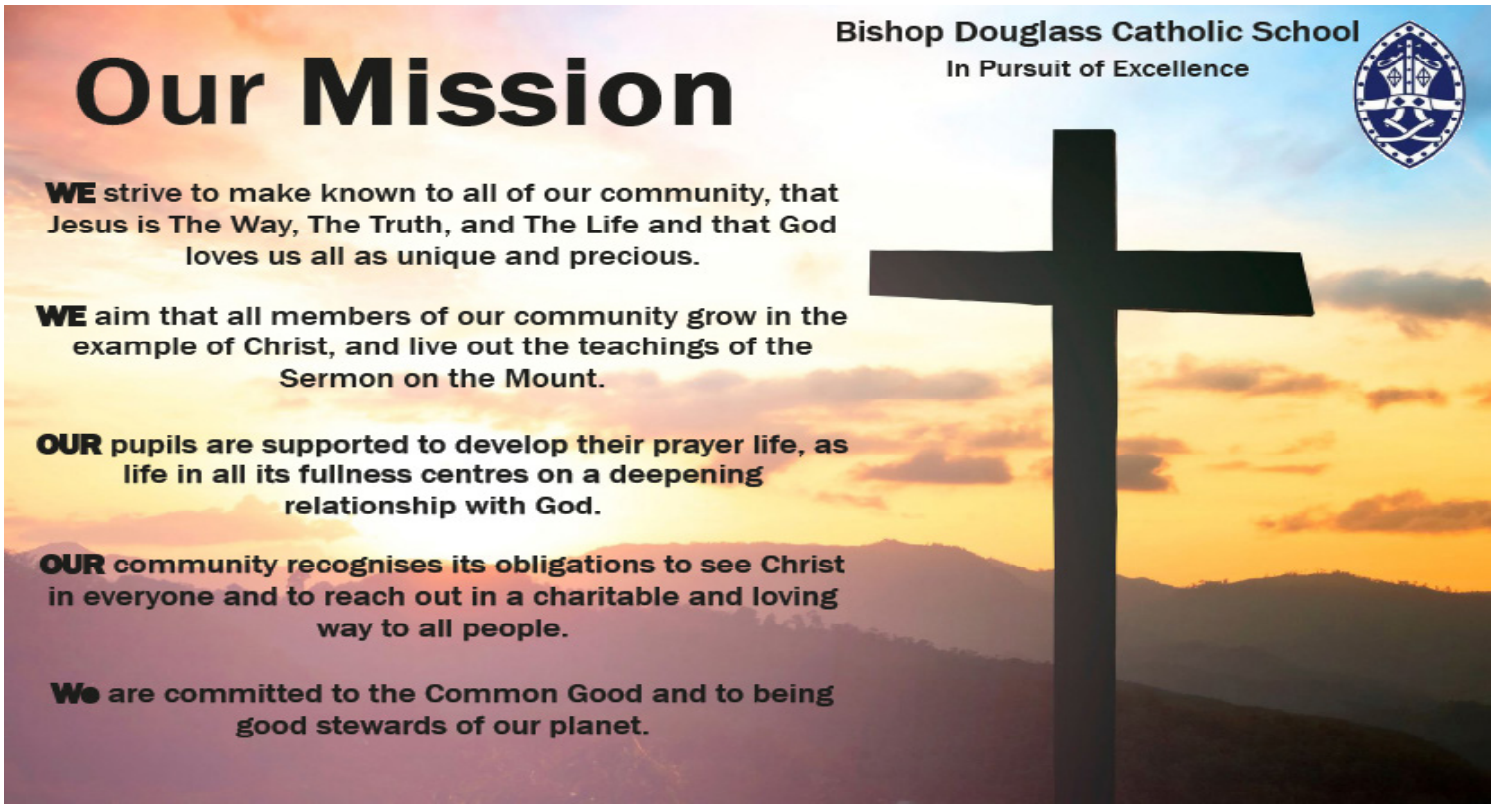
First Half: Monday, 5 January - Friday, 13 February

Half Term: Monday, 16 February - Friday, 20 February

Second Half: Monday, 23 February - Friday, 27 March

SUMMER TERM 2025

First Half: Monday, 13 April – Friday, 22 May

Half-term: Monday, 25 May – Friday, 29 May

Second Half: Monday, 1 June – Tuesday, 21 July