



BGN Newsletter

A WORD FROM THE HEADTEACHER

I am writing to you today as our final events of the year are taking place, and we are rapidly approaching the summer break.

This term we have welcomed Racha Nehme Sparrow [Admin] and Jennifer Cope [Science]. We will be saying goodbye to Shambhavi Pratap [Science], Amelie Picard [MFL], Emily Spiers [English], Heli Laiho-Murdoch [SEnCo], Dani Castle [Art], Chris Pemble [NOSSP] and Dale Boswell [History]. Finally, from the SLT team we also say goodbye to David Edmed and Hamish Savania. We wish everyone the very best in their new ventures.

It has been an absolute joy to have worked at BGN over the past 14 years. I have seen so many students embark on their journeys as slightly apprehensive Year 7s and leave us as confident young people following their GCSEs. I have also worked with the most inspirational, energetic and resilient Sixth Form students as they embark on such a wide range of higher-level courses and careers.

Being Headteacher and leading staff and students through some uncertain times has been a huge privilege. I have never taken it for granted, and have always tried to put the needs of BGN first, before all else. I will miss you all very much.

While I may see some of you during the results days in August, I will say farewell to most of our students after Mass on Tuesday. I am sure it will be an emotional day for me.

I wish all our families and friends of BGN a safe, peaceful and happy summer break.

Niamh Dolan - Headteacher



Diary dates

Tuesday 22 July

School closes at 12.30 pm for the summer break

Thursday 14 August

A Level results day – school open from 8 am to 12 pm

Thursday 21 August

GCSE results day – school open from 9 am to 12 pm

Wednesday 3 September

School opens at 8.40 am to Years 7 and 12 ONLY [Week A]

Thursday 4 September

School opens at 8.40 am to Years 7, 11, 12 and 13 ONLY

Friday 5 September

School open to ALL students

Thursday 11 September

Years 7, 11 and Sixth Form photographs

Thursday 18 September

Year 7 Welcome Mass at 6 pm

Wednesday 24 September

Open Evening at 6 pm

Friday 10 October

INSET day – school closed to all pupils

Wednesday 22 October

Sixth Form Open Evening at 6 pm

Friday 24 October

School closes at 3.20 pm for the half-term break

Monday 3 November

School opens at 8.40 am [Week A]

LOURDES PILGRIMAGE 2025: A WEEK FILLED WITH SERVICE, FAITH, FRIENDSHIP AND MORE BLISTERS THAN WE BARGAINED FOR

Why Lourdes? In 1858, a 14-year-old peasant named Bernadette Soubirous proclaimed she had 18 encounters with the Virgin Mary. During the ninth apparition, Mary instructed her to dig a hole to discover a spring of water that she drank from. This water is said to have healing properties which cured several illnesses. Lourdes has become one of the most visited Catholic sites in the world and has a special appeal for the fragile and sick.



This year's BGN pilgrimage to Lourdes involved thirty-two Year 12 students [armed with sun cream, rosaries and slightly-too-small rucksacks] accompanied by four members of staff, Ms Dolan, Mr Savania, Mr Kenny and Mrs Butler. Following a 25-hour journey by coach and ferry, we arrived bleary-eyed at the Alba hotel, stopping just long enough to drop off suitcases and grab some lunch. We then embarked on a whistle-stop tour to soak up the atmosphere of the Sanctuary and get our bearings before organising the BGN banner and attending the Birmingham Diocesan opening Mass.

The students fully immersed themselves in the experience and were an absolute joy to be around. They worked various shifts throughout the week in the Accueil hospital assisting pilgrims by taking them to Mass, helping at meal times, cleaning rooms, and taking them to visit local shops and cafés. It was a very humbling experience and the students more than rose to the occasion with kindness and patience, demonstrated by the overwhelming positive feedback received from both the pilgrims themselves and Hospitalité staff over the course of the week. They were respectful, hard-working, joyful and genuinely inspiring – a real credit to the school and we could not be more proud of how they represented themselves and our values.

Some of the highlights included the torchlight procession, visiting the Geste de l'eau, getting to know the pilgrims and witnessing Mr Savania's cleaning skills! A particular favourite was the trip to Gavarnie where we marvelled at the snow-capped glacier of the Pyrénées and the surrounding waterfalls. Some students, along with a member of staff who shall remain nameless [picture attached] braved the crystal-clear icy waters, then abandoning before frost bite set in. The students valued the new friendships they built, both with their year group, and with those from other schools. Crêpes and ice-cream were also a favourite, along with the ever-changing duty rota that always brought amusement to everyone!

Lighting the BGN candle was a focal point shared amongst the group; both a humbling and emotional experience where we remembered all those in our community who have sadly departed, and those in need of our prayers for whatever reason. Mass at the Grotto was magical, especially in the candlelight, and night prayers were really thought-provoking, reflective and emotional. Communal hymn singing in the hotel foyer was uplifting, bringing together other schools and hotel guests. In addition, Bea, Liz, Josemari and Rachel rose to the challenge at the 'Open Mic' event with their renditions of 'Viva La Vida', 'All I ask', 'Fragile' and 'You say', making us all really proud.

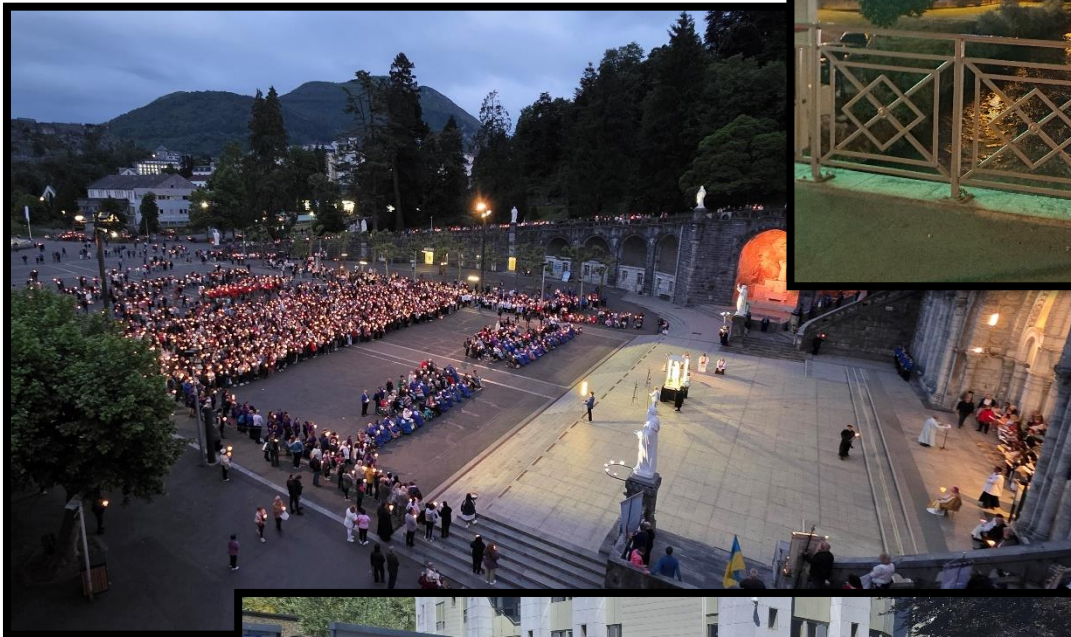
Everyone says you cannot really explain what Lourdes is like, you just need to experience it, and this is so true. Lourdes is a place for anybody and everybody, welcoming all walks of life, backgrounds and denominations. Staff and students alike want to go back which is a testament in itself. Lourdes 2025 may have taken its toll on our feet, but it lifted our spirits, was so meaningful and left us all with memories, and selfies, that will last a lifetime.

[Mr Savania and Mrs Butler]

Catholic life @ BGN



MEMORIES MADE THAT WILL LAST A LIFETIME



Compassion

Respect

Truth

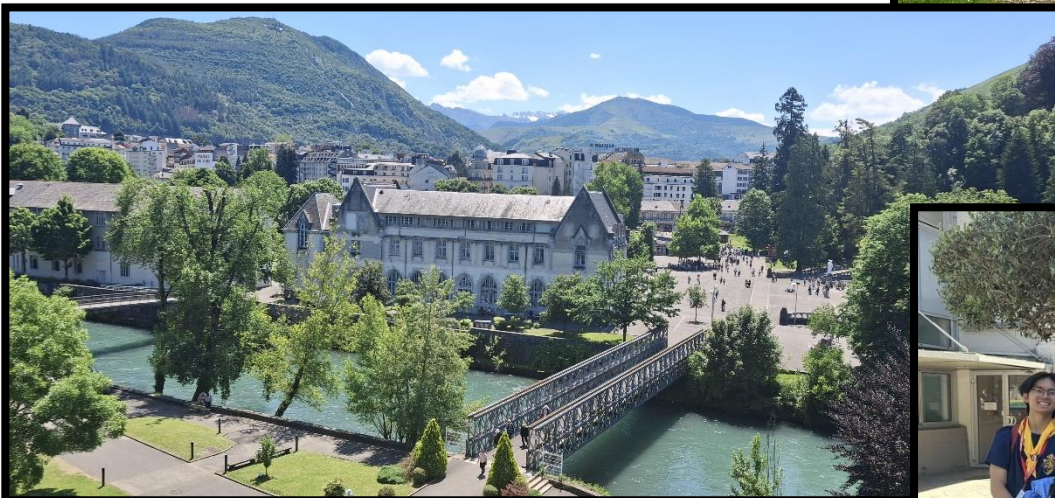
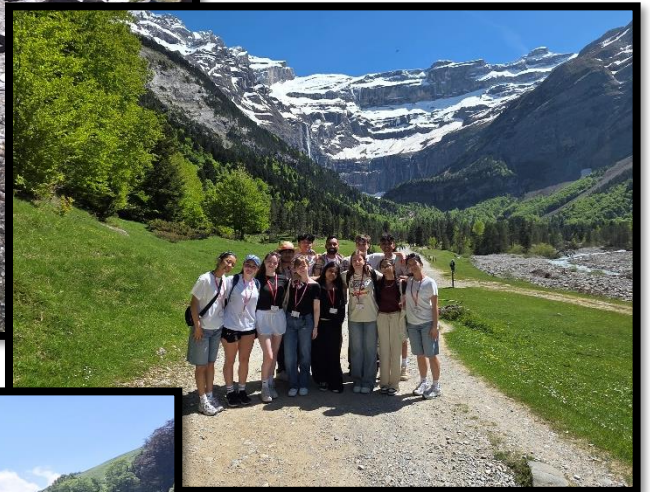
Service

Forgiveness

Catholic life @ BGN



MEMORIES MADE AT LOURDES THAT WILL LAST A LIFETIME



Compassion

Respect

Truth

Service

Forgiveness

SPONSORED WALKS LEADS THE WAY IN LOURDES FUNDRAISING

A key part of preparing for Lourdes is the fundraising - something which our group of 32 students, as a whole, were actively involved in throughout the year. We organised bake sales, raffles, even a 'guess the name of the teddy bear' competition; but none proved quite as successful as our sponsored walk.

On the morning of 17 May, days before our pilgrimage, our entire group set off on a 17km journey around Banbury. Starting at BGN, we walked to Bloxham, continued to Milton and finally up through Adderbury, eventually arriving back at BGN for the end of the school day.

Not only were we blessed with some gorgeous sunshine, we were able to appreciate the beautiful English countryside views, open fields, and a wonderful sense of community as we walked together. Along the way, we stopped every 5km to pray a decade of the rosary, which helped connect the physical element of the walk with our spiritual mission. It was a long and physically demanding day, with many sore feet and more than a few nettle stings! But, despite the challenges, we felt an amazing sense of achievement when we arrived back, knowing we had completed something meaningful - not just for ourselves, but for those we were going to support in Lourdes.

We raised a total of £2,558.68 from the walk, which was a phenomenal contribution to our overall fundraising goal.

[Rachel – Year 12 Student]



BGN PRAYER BOOK 2025

In this Jubilee Year of Hope, we wish to create a brand new BGN Prayer Book. The last one was crafted during the Year of Faith, which was announced by Pope Benedict XVI in 2012. The BGN Prayer Book is a highly valuable and well-used resource and something our tutors use with their form groups to begin the school day.

Students are currently writing their own original prayers, and we would value a contribution from yourself. This could be any of the following:-

- A favourite traditional prayer of the Church
- A prayer associated with your favourite Saint
- A prayer which is really well known or something more unfamiliar
- Scriptural, a reflection or some words of inspiration
- An original creation for our unique BGN community



I would ask that it is something that will stand the test of time so that we can continue to use your selection for many years to come.

I am ridiculously excited about the prospect of creating a new prayer book and would encourage you to contribute if you can.

If you would like to participate, please email the school office on office.4600@bgn.oxon.sch.uk under the subject heading BGN Prayer Book with your contribution. Please include your name as you would like it to appear in the BGN Prayer Book.

Thank you in advance for being with us on this journey.

EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS TAKING THE STEP...

On the very last day of the spring term, our Eucharistic Ministers were commissioned during the end of term Mass. These students underwent training before embarking on this role of service to our school community. They can now assist whenever the need arises with the distribution of the Holy Eucharist at Mass. We are blessed to have these students taking on this work.

This was Father Sean's final Mass before bidding us farewell and moving to his new parish in Birmingham. We are most grateful for the work he carried out with our young people. He was presented with a card signed by everyone in the school, which he was really touched by.



[Mrs Mawn – Assistant Headteacher]

Catholic life @ BGN



CAMINO CALLING

Hours after that final Mass, a few of us were once again with Father Sean embarking on our pilgrimage to Santiago di Compostela. This was led by Father Sean, but included many people from our BGN community. We flew to Santiago and travelled by coach to Ferrol before embarking on our 113 km pilgrimage walk back to the cathedral in Santiago di Compostela. Every day we were walking between 15 km and 20 km to our next accommodation. We walked in a variety of groups with people of all ages from 2 to 82, but met up every evening to celebrate Mass and share a meal together. Mass could take place anywhere – from some beautiful ancient churches to a hostel or even outside in a car park. The experience was incredible and enabled us to respond to Pope Francis' call to pilgrimage during this 'Year of Hope'.

One of the pictures below shows one of the stones which have arrows which direct you along the route and say how many kilometres there are to go to the destination.

[Mrs Mawn – Assistant Headteacher]



CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

This year in school, we are really working hard to increase our knowledge of, and involvement with, Catholic Social Teaching.

So, what is Catholic Social Teaching?

Catholic Social Teaching covers every aspect of life – economic, political, personal and spiritual. CAFOD have divided them into seven categories, which we aim to vitalise:-

- **Dignity:** We believe every human person is made in the image and likeness of God. This is a gift that we all share as fellow human beings; we are all infinitely loved by our Creator.
- **Solidarity:** Solidarity spurs us to stand side by side with our sisters and brothers, especially those living in poverty.
- **The Common Good:** The common good means that the fruits of the earth belong to everyone. No one should be excluded from the gifts of creation.
- **Option for the Poor:** The option for the poor reminds us of God's preferential love for the poorest and most vulnerable people. God's love is universal; he does not side with oppressors, but loves the humble.
- **Peace:** Peace is a cornerstone of our faith. Christ, the Prince of Peace, sacrificed himself with love on the cross. Today, our troubled world is still in need of peace.
- **Creation and the Environment:** In the first pages of the Bible, we read how God created the sun and the stars, the water and earth, and every creature. In '*Laudato Si'*' Pope Francis invited everyone on the planet to consider how our actions are affecting the earth and the poorest people. It is our Christian vocation to care for creation.
- **The Dignity of Work and Participation:** Church teaching has upheld the dignity of work and participation. The human person should always come before the pursuit of profit.

These principles are inspired by scripture, the writings of the Pope and other Catholic leaders about social issues.

We are called to use the seven key principles to work for the good of each, and of all.

As a staff we have been thinking of ways in which we can highlight moments in our curriculum whereby these principles are at work. Our Mission Team have been working on bringing them to life in our community throughout the year.

Recently, our governors visited our school and were pleased with the responses students could give them about Catholic Social Teaching. We are all on a journey with this together and we will continue to work on it in the coming academic year. We appreciate any support that you can give us from home with this too.



[Mrs Mawn
Assistant Headteacher]

YEAR 10s RETREAT TO SOLI HOUSE

In May, I had the honour to take a small group on a spiritual and religious retreat to Soli House in Alton. As their Head of Year, I was very proud of the way they showed their appreciation and followed the Gospel Values whilst there. Below, please find a short review from one of the pupils who attended.

[Mrs Terry – Head of Year 10]

DAY 1

On the first day, we went to meet the instructors, and everyone had a lot of fun. We got to know them and what would happen over the next few days. After a long drive, we did our first fire alarm drill, which was a roaring success. This was followed by the first activity in our small groups, looking into God and how God is in our daily lives.

An in-house activity course followed, which was Jenga or card games. Afterwards, we ate some vegetarian lasagne, which wasn't bad, being freshly cooked and hot. After dinner at 6.30 pm we had a singing practice with our big group in preparation for Mass the next day. Everyone put a lot of effort into the actions and singing, which was very surprising but fun.

At 7 pm we had a break to sort out our rooms, then back into the basement, into our big group to talk about identity and the theme of being anchored to God and the world. We then split into smaller groups to reflect upon what we had learnt and how we could use this learning in our daily lives. We then went to bed.

DAY 2

Everyone had to wake up around 7.30 am in order to get themselves ready by 8.30 am for breakfast. Then we all had to go into our small groups for a morning prayer and reflection on the day.

Afterwards, we went on a walk, trekking up to a cliff within a forest. The view was amazing, and we all enjoyed it. After lunch, we had further Mass preparation before the afternoon activities which consisted of cycling and an outdoor assault course - you can see from the photographs we had a great time!

After Mass, which was conducted by Father Chris, we did further group work and discussed: *'Who is God to us and others, and how we can reflect upon it?'*

DAY 3

On the final day we had to be up bright and early in the morning to make sure our bedrooms were spotless and that we had remembered to pack all our belongings for the return journey. This was followed by a final prayer session and we said goodbye to our instructors. At 9.30 am we departed from Soli House and headed to Alton Towers. The rides were amazing.

It felt like a dream, unreal in fact. We all had fun within our groups and enjoyed the activities. We had a great time overall!

[Don – Year 10 Student]

Catholic life @ BGN



YEAR 10S RETREAT TO SOLI HOUSE



FAREWELL TO OUR YEAR 11 STUDENTS: A DAY OF REFLECTION AND CELEBRATION

As the school year draws to a close, I bid a heartfelt farewell to our Year 11 students. Their time at BGN has been filled with growth, learning, and shared memories, culminating in a day of special events to mark this significant milestone.

Their last day was cherished with the tradition of shirt signing; with pens in hand and smiles on their faces, our Year 11s left messages, memories, and well-wishes on each other's uniforms. This time-honored ritual encapsulates the bittersweet nature of farewells marking the end of an era, whilst preserving connections that will last a lifetime.

We celebrated Leavers' Mass, a beautiful and reflective service that brought together students, staff and families to give thanks for the journey thus far. The Mass served as a moment to pause and celebrate the achievements of our Year 11s, while seeking blessings for the paths they are about to embark on. Prayers, hymns, and heartfelt messages filled the air, reminding everyone of the strong community spirit that defines our school.

The prestigious 'Sean Concannon Cup', which is awarded every year in memory of former student Sean Concannon who was sadly killed in the Lockerbie disaster, was awarded to Alfie Kelly, a student who throughout his time at school has shown great character, respect and politeness to all.

As we send our Year 11 students onwards, we reflect on the legacy they leave behind: one of hard work, camaraderie, and resilience. They have brought vibrancy to our school and enriched our community in countless ways. We wish them all the best as they step into their next chapter, whether it be further education, training, or entering the workforce.

To our Year 11s: thank you for the memories. The BGN doors will always remain open for you, and you will forever be a part of our family. Go confidently in the direction of your dreams, and know that you carry our love and support with you.

[Miss O'Neill – Head of Year 11]



ART CHALLENGE TO MAKE YOU THINK

For Term 4's photography challenge, we explored '*Juxtaposition in Street Photography*'. In street photography, **juxtaposition** refers to the technique of placing two or more contrasting elements within the same frame to create a visual or thematic tension. The goal of using juxtaposition in street photography is to make the viewer stop and think, encouraging them to engage with the deeper meaning or the story behind the image. The unexpected combinations often evoke curiosity, or highlight the complexities of everyday life.

As usual, our KS3 students produced a dazzling array of beautiful images – so many, in fact, that we have had to make extra room to show off all those we wanted to honour for their captivating work. Stanislav and Benjamin from Year 7, Bella and Talia-Rose from Year 8, as well as Marianna and Joel from Year 9 all tied for the best place in their year group. For the very first time we have decided to award a joint best overall photo to both Talia-Rose and Joel.

For the final photography challenge, students were tasked with creating beautiful compositions using light and dark contrasts created by silhouettes and/or shadows. Drawing inspiration from the work of Andre Kertesz, Jack Davison and Valerie Six, our students turned in some of the most impressive images to-date.

Jerzy from Year 7, Caio from Year 8 and Yi from Year 9 were all awarded best in their respective year groups. These were some truly striking images, and all the entries made it very difficult to judge. Our last grand champion of the year, however, goes to Benjamin in Year 7 for the beautiful photo he took.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank every student who has taken part in these challenges over the last two years. From the bottom of my heart, I am so grateful to have worked with such creative students... and you should not worry as, even though I am leaving for America, in September the challenges will continue for Years 7-9, so be prepared with your cameras at the ready this Autumn!

Pictures of our students' creativity are overleaf.

[Mrs Castle – Art Department]

School news



ART CHALLENGE TO MAKE YOU THINK



THE VOICES OF ANGELS

To round off the year, the choir have finished by performing in some prestigious venues. The first of three was held on Wednesday 9 July at Merton College Oxford. Our pupils walked in the footsteps of famous alumni such as J R Tolkien and sat under the very same tree where he used to sit, to eat their lunch. They performed in the Chapel and the religious repertoire resonated through the walls of the building. Helen from Year 7 used the words "fun, tiring and happy" to describe the day.

The next location was Wimborne Minster where previous Headteacher, Mr Dawson, was amongst the audience, having seen the advert for the event in the Bournemouth Echo. On this occasion, pupils were able to experience the unique 'chained library' including a bible from the 1300s translated into eight languages on each page! The choir performed beautifully again with all the audience members showing their appreciation of these young voices singing of the love of God. They then took a well-earned dip in the sea at Bournemouth beach to celebrate their unfailing commitment to the choir. Every Friday after school, even in the hot weather, they are there giving it their all.

Our thanks go to Mr Wilson who makes it all happen, and we welcome the input that Miss Brogden has offered too.

The final concert took place on Tuesday 15 July in the Rachel Smith Hall and gave our own local community the opportunity to hear the sound that this amazing group of young people can produce.

[Mrs Mawn – Assistant Headteacher]



PUPILS RISE TO THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

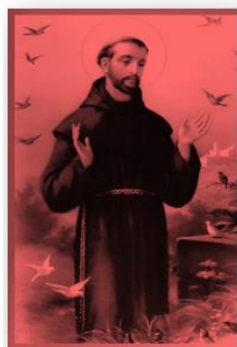
This was the first year where the Year 7s joined Faustyna which, until now, has been exclusively for the Sixth Form. Next year, we will see it continue to grow with Years 7, 8 and Sixth Form members. The Faustyna Mission Team representatives, though small in number compared to the other houses, did themselves proud by offering excellent contributions in our half-termly meetings. Many thanks go to Josemari for the Faustyna patron portrait, which is now on display in the canteen alongside the other house portraits. We have achieved a lot in our Mission Team meetings, most notably some very impressive charity fundraising; during Mission Week, three year eleven girls went above and beyond by running a raffle that took non-perishable food items as payment and collected eight boxes of food that they took to a very grateful Banbury charity.

The Pupil Leadership Team produced an excellent Christmas show bringing talent from across all years onto the stage. The PLT led whole-school assemblies throughout the year, and they were always well researched, well produced, and well presented. William, our Head Boy, took to the stage again when he brought a touch of Elvis—with all his knee jerking, hip thrusting, ‘uh-huh-huh’ extravagance—to the school production of Joseph. I would like to thank the entire PLT team for all the hard work and service they have given to the school since taking on their roles; they have exemplified the BGN values and have been wonderful role models to the rest of the school.

With forty prefect applications this year, there was no shortage of students in Year 10 willing to give their time in service to the school (or to improve their CV!). Starting their roles just after Easter as the Year 11s stepped down to focus on their exams, they have already made a big impact to the school community by supporting food queues at lunch time, providing a listening ear to younger students, and running bible studies, chess, drama, rounders, and tennis clubs for Key Stage 3 students. Thank you to all of you, I have loved working with you.



[Mr Smith – House Lead]



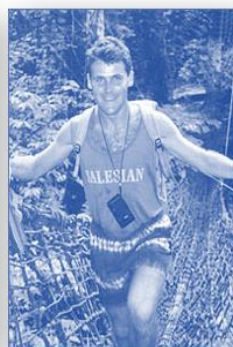
Assisi



Bakhita



Calcutta



Devereux



Edith Stein



Faustyna

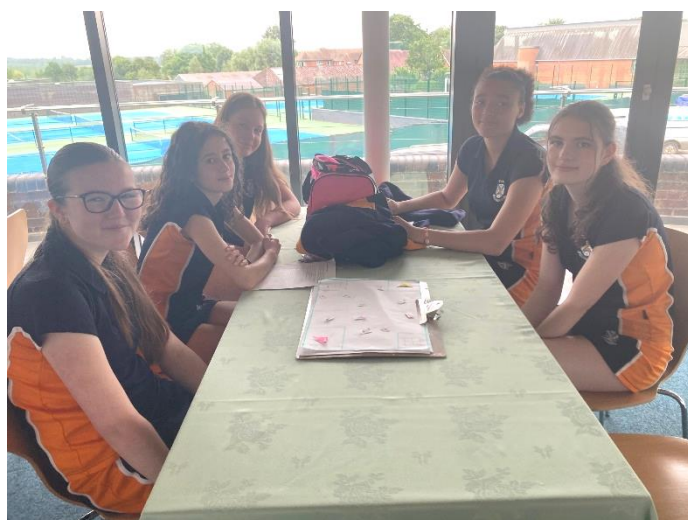
GIRLS' COACH ACADEMY

Helena, Nadia, Sarah, Emily, Ella and Evie were all selected to become members of the Oxfordshire Coach Academy. This programme is designed to work with young people in schools to develop their confidence and leadership skills, enabling them to deliver physical activity sessions for less active students in schools.

The Coach Academy programme is split into three stages:-

1. Online training led by Jenna Downing from the Youth Sport Trust. Jenna is a former Olympian who was the creator of the content for this programme.
2. After the online sessions, the leaders are set exit activities to embed their learning from each session. They are asked to plan and deliver a series of physical activity sessions on their own school site, engaging a cohort of young girls to be more engaged and active.
3. Finally, the leaders have a face-to-face session with all the leaders in other schools in our county to share good practice and develop their skills further,. This session also includes formal First Aid training which was held at Radley College.

[Mrs Thornton – PE Department]



School news



NATIONAL SCHOOL SPORTS WEEK 2025

National School Sports Week 2025 took place from 16 to 22 June. This annual event encourages schools to promote physical activity and the positive impact of sports on young people's health and well-being. The week featured various activities and challenges to help schools engage students in achieving 60 minutes of daily physical activity.



We had members of staff and students join our morning mile; this was both before school and during break time. One student, Sarim, chose to run every day, covering nearly 8km throughout the week in short 20-minute bursts.



Parkour was a hit with so many of our students discovering this new sport. It was fabulous to see them growing in confidence throughout the week. By the end of the week students were designing their own courses, some of which included somersaulting and vaulting – it was very impressive!

Whilst the dare-devils occupied the sports hall, our astro resembled a week in SW19 [Wimbledon] with 8 tennis courts being used by students en masse. It was lovely to see them being physically active in every corner of the school.



Lastly, on what, at that point, was the hottest day of the year, our most keen came and joined in our student-parent Longevity Challenge. Ethan, his dad and Mr Mawle braved the sun to complete a challenge in record time [it had never been done before!]. Look out for the next parent-student PE event in term 1 of 2025/26.



Well done to everyone involved in the week.

[Mr Mawle – PE Subject Leader]

BRAVING RECORD-BREAKING TEMPERATURES

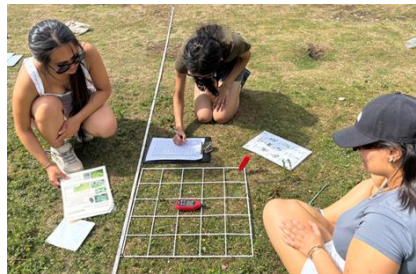
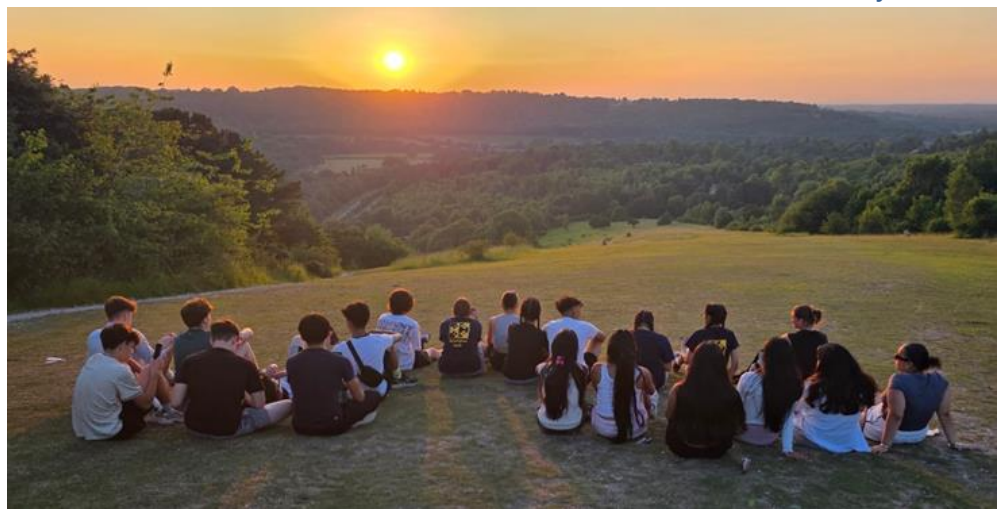
From 20 to 22 June, 26 of our enthusiastic Year 12 biology students headed off on the annual biology field trip at Juniper Hall Field Study Centre in the heart of the Surrey Hills. Despite record-breaking temperatures reaching well into the 30s, the group tackled every activity with curiosity, resilience, and good humour. The students' attitude and behaviour were exemplary throughout the trip. Whether they were collecting data in the woods, braving the heat on steep hillside transects, or engaging in detailed ecological investigations, they showed a maturity and passion for learning that impressed both school staff and the Juniper Hall team.

From statistical analysis to species identification, the course was pitched perfectly to meet the AQA specification, allowing students to apply classroom learning to real-world ecosystems: collecting and marking snails to estimate the population of snails in a pond; collecting woodlice to investigate their preferred environment; investigating succession in woodland, and the effect of trampling on species biodiversity.

Despite the sweltering conditions, the trip was a fantastic experience for all involved. It was a joy to witness our students developing independence, scientific thinking, and a deeper appreciation for the natural world.

We are both proud of every student and grateful to the staff at Juniper Hall for their exceptional guidance and support. We may all still be recovering from the heat, but the learning and memories from this trip will stay with us for a long time.

[Dr Reed – Head of Science]



SPANISH RELATIONS ARE ON THE TAPAS MENU IN OXFORD

On Wednesday both Year 10 and 12 Spanish students visited the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages at the University of Oxford, followed by a trip to the restaurant, Al-Andalus. It gave students a taste of what studying Spanish at university may be like.

The day began with a university-style lesson on '*Como Agua para Chocolate*' [*Like Water for Chocolate*], the Mexican novel and film studied at A Level. The session allowed the Year 12 students to display and expand on their understanding of key themes and techniques, while also giving Year 10 an idea of the kind of literature and analysis involved in higher level Spanish.

We then heard from a current Oxford undergraduate student about her experience studying Spanish, from GCSEs all the way to university. She spoke about what studying at Oxford is like and the different topics and literature covered in their course, whilst also giving advice on exams and which options to choose.

After the sessions we enjoyed a meal at a local tapas restaurant. We were served a variety of traditional Spanish dishes including tortilla española, patatas bravas and croquetas. The food was really good and gave everyone a chance to experience the Spanish culture.

What I enjoyed most about the trip was the talk with the undergraduate student as it gave me a better understanding of what I would like to study post A-Level. The overall experience was both insightful and interesting and has made students more excited about studying Spanish in the future.

[Matt – Year 12 Student]



MFL PARIS TRIP AND THE MAGIC OF DISNEY

We had a great time in Paris. We arrived at the accommodation on Tuesday afternoon and went to a nearby park. The next day we went into Paris and took a boat cruise along the river Seine. There were stunning views of lots of landmarks, especially Notre Dame and the Eiffel Tower. We saw other landmarks from the ground like the Louvre, the Arc de Triomphe, and Sacre Coeur. After a tasty dinner in Montmartre, we went souvenir shopping and returned to the accommodation.

The next day, we went to Disneyland. We arrived quite early so the queues were pretty short, and we really enjoyed the rides. We ate lunch in the park, then went on even more rides! On the final day we went up the Tour Montparnasse, where the views were amazing, and then we began the journey back home. All in all, it was a fantastic trip.

Thank you to Mme Savin, Mrs Thornton, Mr Kenny and Mr Medwin for taking us.

[William – Year 9 Student]



MFL PARIS TRIP AND THE MAGIC OF DISNEY



ADVANCE NOTICE OF NEXT YEAR'S MFL EVENTS

halsbury
TRAVEL

EDUCATIONAL TRIP

School Trip
TO PARIS

Tuesday 2 June - Friday 5 June 2026



RSVP

New play in French

Play touring from Nov 2025 - July 2026

Léa & Théo are the ultimate "YOLO" couple — so when Léa decides they are going to throw a big party tomorrow, it's all go, go, go.

LANGUAGE

This play is all in French and performed by 2 native French actors

AGE

Pitched at students aged 12 - 16 years old who are learning French



Onatti

MATHS CHALLENGE – JUNIOR EDITION

On 1 May we had nearly 80 Year 7/8 students who competed in the Junior Maths Challenge. There was a lot of excitement and nerves from the Year 7s ahead of this challenge. However, everyone did extremely well and it was truly wonderful to see the problem-solving taking place in the hall on the day. Well done to all those who took part. I am very proud of you all.

Congratulations go to the certificate winners who are:

Gold Certificate

Domonkos	Year 8 [Best in school and year]
Deividas	Year 8
Talia-Rose	Year 8
Harry	Year 8
Christabel	Year 8

Silver Certificate

Jonathan	Year 8
Nicola	Year 8
Dawid	Year 8
Evie	Year 8
Thea	Year 8
Lilianna W	Year 8

Shaun	Year 7 [Best in year]
Seth	Year 7
Isak	Year 7
Sara	Year 7
Scarlett	Year 7
Rocco	Year 7

Bronze Certificate

John	Year 8
Rabia	Year 8
Ollie	Year 8
Lilianna D	Year 8
George	Year 8
Amelia	Year 8

Bronze Certificate [continued]

Charlie	Year 8
Simas	Year 8
Sienna	Year 8
Johan	Year 8
Alice	Year 8
Alana	Year 8
Toby	Year 8

David	Year 7
Jasper	Year 7
Jacob	Year 7
Krupa	Year 7
Jose	Year 7
Zach	Year 7
Ethan	Year 7
Zarja	Year 7
Vedith	Year 7
Zofia	Year 7
Maria	Year 7
Stefan	Year 7
Josi	Year 7
Maddison	Year 7
Samuel	Year 7
Bryan	Year 7

Domonkos and Talia-Rose also qualified for the follow-on competitions and competed in these on 10 June. We wish them the best of luck with their results.

[Mr Pike – Maths Department]

TIRED FACES AND SORE FEET...

This was a bumper year for students in Years 9 and 10 who undertook their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award [DofE]. The school had 74 students take up the challenge across all aspects of the award: physical, skills, and volunteering. Students dedicated one hour of their own time each week for three or six months, contributing to an array of charity and community organisations.

They have mastered skills in cooking, gaming, programming, church bell ringing and so much more. Furthermore, students completed two expeditions. The first of them was an overnight camp, followed by a day training on various skills and knowledge covering camp craft, cooking, map reading and navigation. The second expedition was a two-day assessment, or qualifying expedition, where students needed to demonstrate to their assessors all they had learnt.

Much longer days, severe warm weather, and questionable navigation choices resulted in some groups walking more than 20kms on the first day. This did not dampen our students' resilience and dedication as they rose early on the second day ready to do it all over again! After a hearty breakfast, tents were dropped, bags were packed, pockets were filled with sweets and off they set. Students were tuned in, navigating precisely and accurately, with teamwork skills coming to the fore.

Although there were tired faces and sore feet, all students wore smiles when they finally reached the end point, knowing not only it was over, but that they had achieved something unique and truly special.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all our students on such a wonderful achievement in what I hope will be their first steps on their DofE adventure.

I cannot wait to see them begin their Silver Award in the next academic year.

*[Mr Thornton
DofE Co-ordinator]*



BGN LIBRARIANS LEADING THE WAY

The Oxfordshire Book Awards have been running since 2008. They are special because the awards are voted for entirely by children. BGN students, led by three of our dedicated student Librarians, had the opportunity to read the shortlisted books for Best Book in the Secondary School Category, write reviews, and cast their votes.

'*Catch Your Death*' by Ravena Guron was the clear winner with our students, and they obviously know what they are talking about as, when the results from all the schools taking part were counted, it was awarded Best Book in this category.

[Mrs Russell – LRC Manager]

As Head Student Librarian of the LRC I was given first choice of the Oxfordshire Book Awards Shortlist. I chose '*Catch your Death*'. I really liked this book as it is very mysterious and has many plot twists which make you think twice. It definitely received my vote for Best Book. The amazing thing is the second book I read was '*The Fights That Make Us*' by Sarah Hagger-Holt and this came second in the awards! I am quite an avid reader, and I loved reviewing the books for the awards.

Being a school librarian has given me different experiences like labelling the books, creating displays and seeing author events like Malorie Blackman talking about how she got ideas for her books. It also makes me proud as you get to help children gain a love of reading.

[Adam – Year 10 Student]



Tessa and Irin, Yr9 Student Librarians and Adam, Yr10 Head Student Librarian

OUR AMBITIOUS YEAR 12S ARE FOCUSSED ON THE FUTURE AND SET TO GO FAR

We held a very successful day of talks for our 'Futures Conference' on Monday 9 June. The day began with The Engineering Trust discussing apprenticeships, followed by Plus One Recruitment giving information about the jobs market and how to present to future employers.

After a break Oxford Brookes University gave a talk about student life then, post-lunch, Coventry University discussed choosing courses. We finished the event with the University of Northampton holding an information evening for students and their families on student finance. The feedback we have received from the students has been very positive:-

- ✘ "I didn't consider applying for apprenticeships before, but now I do following the conference."
- ✘ "I now know how to properly write a CV."

- ✘ "The information given about UCAS really did help me understand the process more."
- ✘ "I enjoyed learning about what life will be like when I move away for uni."
- ✘ "I loved the talks, from the first talk of the day to the last; the guest speakers presented with a lot of passion."
- ✘ "My mum and I found the student finance talk very useful and helpful."
- ✘ "Full of information, I could not think of any questions once it was over; everything was answered."

Year 12 have already been putting the advice given during the event into practice by securing and fulfilling fantastic work experience placements, and getting underway with their UCAS applications and future career plans.

[Mrs Russell – Sixth Form Administrator]



WISHING OUR YEAR 13S EVERY SUCCESS FOR THE FUTURE

Our Year 13 students dressed to impress for a wonderful evening at the Whately Hall Hotel in Banbury on Thursday 26 June. This was a well-deserved opportunity for them to catch-up with each other following study leave, as well as to relax and celebrate having completed their A Level exams. The event would not have been the success it was without the organisation and hard work of the PLT, and was topped off with star turns from the hugely talented George, Gabby and Kesten.

We are looking forward to celebrating with them again on results day, Thursday 14 August. While results will be emailed out to students via their BGN email address, the LRC will be open from 8 am until 12 noon for those who wish to collect their all-important envelopes in person.

[Mrs Russell – Sixth Form Administrator]



BGN SPORTS DAY 2025

Our intrepid team of Year 9 student reporters went out into the field armed with clipboards and pens, ready to record and report on the events of the day.

The PE Department scheduled a busy day with lots of different activities, which meant there was something for everyone to take part in.

The weather forecast suggested a high of 28 degrees, but it felt a lot hotter! Everyone had been reminded to bring suncream, a sun hat and plenty of drinks. The BGN site team organised water stations on the field to keep everyone cool and hydrated.

In the morning, there were activities such as football, rounders and various challenge activities for all tutor groups. At lunchtime the wonderful catering staff organised a BBQ, with each year group being served at a designated time. In the afternoon, there were the track and field events.

Sadly, this year, the much-anticipated staff relay had to be cancelled, as we had simply run out of time. However, this does give staff another year to practise their running skills and perfect their peak performance ready for next year's sports day!

After all the events had been completed, the numbers were calculated and Edith Stein were crowned sports day 2025 winners.

Well done to all who participated in what was a warm, atmospheric fun day for all.

Below are some highlights from the report we prepared:

Early goal from Nicholas in 9C. Can Calcutta dethrone the reigning champions? It certainly looks like it! They've even got Mr Smith shouting: *"Come on Calcutta"* – and he's an Assisi tutor!

A very excited Maks was asked to describe how he felt after the free kick he scored: *"Bang! Oh, my days! Off it goes! Bangers and Mash!"*

Krupa from Assisi commented: *"After doing the 200m I am happy that I came third because I was up against some really fast people"*.

Mirella from Calcutta said: *"I'm taking part in the 100m and relay, I enjoy sports day because of the vibes. Calcutta will win"*.

Mme Savin was heard to say: *"Great atmosphere and there is lots of team spirit. It's fantastic, great atmosphere, relaxing, the teamwork is great! I enjoy watching young people preform the best"*.

[Harinie, Thomas and Millie Calcutta, Samrat and William Assisi – our wonderful Year 9 reporters]



Sports news



BGN SPORTS DAY 2025



Sport leadership



FUTURE LEADERS IN THE MAKING

Blessed George Napier delivered six events for our Cluster of Primary Schools during the summer term. Over 700 children and 66 teams took part across eight schools including Bishop Loveday, Cherry Fields, Orchard Fields, Longford Park, St. John's, St. Joseph's, William Morris and St. Mary's Aston-le-Walls.

100 Key Stage 3 BGN students demonstrated their leadership skills by providing guidance and support to participants at each competition and festival. This involved organising inclusive and active games at the Year 2 All Stars Cricket and Early Years Multi-skills Festivals; officiating and scoring at the Year 5 and 6 Dynamo Cricket Competitions; and measuring and recording times at the Year 3/4 and 5/6 Quadkids Athletics event. Also, our Year 7 student leaders mentored and worked with Year 6 student leaders transitioning to BGN in September to help deliver the Year 3 Multi-skills Festival.

In addition, a further 15 Year 9 student leaders officiated at the Partnership Quadkids Finals held at North Oxfordshire Academy and 16 Year 9 students helped with Bishop Loveday's sports day.

As always, our student leaders showed exemplary behaviour at these events and were fantastic role models to the younger pupils.

Below are some comments from primary school teachers:

"Such a super morning. Well organised, staff/leaders so welcoming. A range of skills across all activities. BGN student leaders encouraged our SEN children which was fab!"
[St John's]

"Children engaged on each activity. BGN young leaders were great at explaining activities."

[Cherry Fields]

"Great games and fantastic Year 7 student leaders."

[St Mary's Aston-le Walls]

"BGN student leaders were very confident and attentive to the younger children."

[St Joseph's]

"Young leaders were brilliant, so supportive and helpful."

[Bishop Loveday]

Comments from Year 7 student leaders:

"Today I enjoyed helping the Year 3 children and watching them have fun. I would love to do this again."

[Chiara]

"I loved interacting with the Year 3 children and seeing them smile. This was so much fun."

[Eliana]

"I enjoyed showing the Year 6 students how to demonstrate and give clear instructions when teaching the Year 3 children."

[Charlie]

[Mr Mawn – School Sports Co-ordinator]



Sport leadership



Year 9 student leaders officiating at Quadkids



Year 7 and 8 student leaders umpiring and scoring at Year 5/6 Dynamo Cricket



Year 7 leaders delivering activities at Year 3 Multi-skills



Year 7 student leaders at Year 2 Cricket Festival



Year 7 leaders delivering Early Years Festival at Bishop Loveday

Attendance DOES matter



95%	=	47 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 8 days in total or 1 week and 3 days
90%	=	95 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 16 days in total or 3 weeks and 1 day
85%	=	142 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 24 days in total or 4 weeks and 4 days
80%	=	190 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 32 days in total or 6 weeks and 2 days

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

WHAT DO YOUR ATTENDANCE FIGURES ACTUALLY MEAN?

BE SMART BE THERE!

Percentages based on 190 academic days

SO WE WANT YOU in school on time, every day, in order to achieve the best grades possible and be the best you can be

Attendance and punctuality

Punctuality and good attendance are essential if students are to benefit fully from their education. All students are expected to attend for more than 96% of each school year. This is the national expectation for all students, as research shows that anything less than this will mean students miss out on more than 10 days of school in an academic year and will more than likely drop a grade in their achievement each year this happens. If a student's attendance is less than 90%, they will be classed as a 'persistent absentee' by Ofsted and the Department for Education.

Punctuality

At BGN we expect all students to arrive in school on time as lack of punctuality affects learning and behaviour not only of the pupil who is late, but it also has an impact on all other learners when their lesson is disrupted.

Punctuality is also a key workplace skill which must be learnt in school. Employees who are regularly late to work may lose their job.

Reporting sickness

Please notify the Attendance Office on 01295 264216 extension 518 or email: absence@bgn.oxon.sch.uk by **9.30 am each day** of your child's absence. As a duty of care to students is paramount to us, should we not hear from you, we will send a text to remind you to contact the school regarding your child's absence. If we still have not heard from you as to why your child is absent, we will telephone you as student welfare is a priority. Any unexplained absences will be marked as unauthorised.





Penalty Notices FAQs for parents/carers 2024/2025

Why is attendance important?

Every day in school counts and days missed add up quickly. Evidence shows that pupils who have good attendance enjoy better wellbeing and achieve better outcomes than those who don't.

What is a Penalty Notice?

Under existing legislation, parents/carers commit an offence if their child fails to attend school regularly, and the absences are classed as unauthorised. Such cases may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act, 1996. A penalty notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in court, whilst still securing an improvement in the pupil's attendance.

What are the costs?

From August 19 2024, under the new national penalty notice framework, all schools will be required to consider a penalty notice when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons.

This means from September 2024 the fine for school absences across the country will be £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days. If a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160.

Fines per parent/per child will be capped to two within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached a prosecution may be considered. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could be fined up to £2,500.

Can a penalty notice be paid in instalments?

No. A penalty notice must be paid in full.

Can a penalty notice be appealed?

There is no statutory right of appeal. Once a penalty notice has been issued, it can only be withdrawn if it can be shown that it was issued in error.

What happens to the money raised from paid fines?

Money raised via fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

Where can I find more information about penalty notices?

If you have any queries or want further advice the County Attendance Team can be reached on attendance@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Help raise funds for BGN



easyfundraising

Did you know that whenever you buy anything online – from your weekly shop to your annual holiday – you could be raising free donations for Blessed George Napier School with *easyfundraising*? There are over 8,000 retailers onboard ready to donate including Amazon, eBay, Argos, John Lewis & Partners, Compare the Market, ASOS, Booking.com, Sainsbury's, Debenhams, Next, Moonpig, Just Eat and M&S, to name but a few. Even better, it will not cost you a penny extra to help us raise funds.

All you need to do is follow these simple steps:-

1. Go to [BGN cause page](#) or scan the QR code below to join for free.
2. Every time you shop online, go to easyfundraising first to find the site you want and start shopping, or download the 'Donation Reminder' tool.
3. After you have checked out, the retailer will donate to Blessed George Napier School, at no extra cost to you.

There are no catches or hidden charges, and Blessed George Napier School will be really grateful for your donations.

Thank you so much for your anticipated help and happy online shopping!



Friends of BGN



WE NEED YOUR HELP

**Thursday 11 September 2025
@ 6 pm in the LRC**

Do you have any experience in fundraising? If so, then we would love you to join us, at our next meeting [details above] to help us raise funds to enhance the facilities in our school. We will be planning fundraising events for next year—all ideas are very welcome.

JOIN US!



Friends of BGN



BLESSED GEORGE NAPIER QUIZ NIGHT



FRIDAY 17TH OCTOBER 2025

7 PM FOR 7.30 PM START

When?

TICKETS - £5 PER PERSON

What?

**AVAILABLE FROM THE ONLINE SCHOOL SHOP
IN SEPTEMBER VIA THE SCHOOL WEBSITE**

MAXIMUM OF EIGHT PEOPLE PER TEAM

PLEASE BRING PAYMENT RECEIPT WITH YOU ON THE NIGHT

**LICENSED FUNDRAISING CASH ONLY BAR
PLUS NIBBLES!**

[PLEASE DO NOT BRING YOUR OWN DRINKS]

How?

Who?

Where?



BGN 200 Club



Why not join our 200 Club? For just **£5** a month you have the opportunity of winning **£100** every month whilst donating to a very worthy cause – your child's school.

We currently have spare numbers available, so if you are interested or require any more information, please contact our 200 Club Administrator at finance@bgn.oxon.sch.uk.

April's winning number is **30**

May's winning number is **163**

June's winning number is **102**