

9th February 2024

Dear All,

A friend of mine who is both a parent in one Xavier school and a teacher in another, told me just before Christmas, “you know the holidays are coming up when you get a long letter from the CEO”. I am not sure whether that was an endorsement or merely a jibe but with that in mind, I shall try to keep this as brief as this last half term has been.

Whether you're reading this as a member of staff, governor, parent, pupil or any other member of the wider Xavier community, you will no doubt be looking forward to a well-earned half term break. As always, everyone has been exceptionally busy in all our schools, and there has been no shortage of successes to celebrate.

Congratulations to everyone at St. Cuthbert's, Englefield Green who have just been awarded the Quality Inclusion Mark, and nominated as a Centre of Excellence for the great work they do on inclusion. We are delighted that they have achieved this national recognition for the efforts they go to ensure that every child feels genuinely cherished.

Well done to all at St. Thomas of Canterbury in Merrow, who have had their Ofsted inspection this week. We shall have to wait for the report to be published before we say too much, but it was a very positive experience all round, particularly the recognition from the lead inspector of the things that we think are so important about Catholic education. We look forward to the school receiving the praise it deserves.



Finally on the subject of congratulations, the Xavier Board of Directors had a special visit to their meeting this week from Bishop Richard and Julie Oldroyd, Director of Education for the Diocese. They were there to recognise the outstanding service provided to Catholic Education by our former CEO, Ani Magill. In recognition of Ani's contribution and achievement over the last 40+ years, she has been appointed a Dame of the Order of St. Gregory, one of the highest honours conferred in the Catholic Church, by Pope Francis.

High honours aside, there have been countless smaller, but no less noteworthy, successes for children, students, parents and staff members across the whole of Xavier this half term, and we offer out heartfelt congratulations to all those who have achieved triumphs of whatever size in recent weeks.

Many thanks to all those who are giving up their half term holiday to take young people on school trips, skiing or otherwise, over the next week. Your commitment to affording youngsters these wonderful opportunities is commendable; please know that these are the memories of school that many will cherish the longest.

Lent starts next week of course, and we would encourage everyone to spend a bit of time over the next few days thinking about what we might do to turn and move a little closer to God over the coming weeks. This usually entails challenging oneself to take something on or give something up, supported by prayer, in order to improve our relationship with God. A commitment of this sort throughout the journey of Lent will always lead to blessings and grace come Easter; on behalf of everyone here, I wish you a fruitful 40 days.

Thank you for everything that you have done to contribute and support the education of our pupils and students over this latest half term, I continue to feel blessed to serve within a community of such wonderful people.

Happy half term!

God bless,

James Kibble
CEO