

The St John Bosco Arts College

Bosco BULLETIN

JULY 2025



CHOIR OF THE YEAR



St John Bosco
ARTS COLLEGE

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Headteacher's Welcome

As we come to the end of another incredible academic year here at St John Bosco Arts College, it's important to reflect on the achievements and efforts of our students, staff, parents, carers and governing body.

This past year has been truly remarkable for all here at St John Bosco, with a plethora of amazing activities and accomplishments to look back on fondly. We have continued to live out our five Salesian values of Love, Faith, Community, Respect and Hope, which have seen our students flourish academically, spiritually, morally, and socially. It has been a pleasure to witness students welcome the opportunities they've been given throughout the year with both hands and see the growth and resilience they have developed on their journey to fulfilling Bosco's vision of going 'into the world as good Christians and honest citizens'.

Amidst our joy on a successful year, it's important to acknowledge the profound sadness we recently faced with the passing of Mrs Anna Park following a long illness. Anna was a beloved member of our school family for nearly 26 years. Her creativity, kindness and unwavering dedication as an art teacher and subject leader enriched the lives of students and staff alike, and will continue to live on in every mural, sketchbook and heart she inspired. We hold her memory in our hearts and in our prayers.

Whilst we carry the poignant memories of this past year, there is also so much to celebrate. I encourage you to turn the page and immerse yourself in the articles and updates within this newsletter that showcase the shared journey we have been on and the collective Salesian spirit that makes our school so special. I would also like to extend an invitation to our upcoming open evening on Thursday, 25 September, that provides an opportunity for parents, carers and prospective students to experience in person our vibrant and welcoming school atmosphere.

The 2024/25 academic year marks my tenth school year as headteacher of St John Bosco, and I continue to be filled with pride, admiration and gratitude for all that we have accomplished together as a school community. I am excited and optimistic about the opportunities that lie ahead and what we can achieve together next year.

Mr Gidman



Annual awards celebration

At our annual prize giving day, we were joined by singer-songwriter and former St John Bosco student, Helen Maw.

Helen, a hugely successful musician who graduated top of her class and has worked for music publishers whilst promoting her own songs, shared an inspirational speech with students about the impact her formative years at St John Bosco had on her career in the industry.

Helen said: "It was an honour to be asked back to St John Bosco Arts College to celebrate the students' successes. My experience at St John Bosco shaped me to who I am today, and I loved every minute."

Deputy head girl Evie, presented Helen with a bouquet of flowers as a token of our

appreciation before saying: "We always find it inspiring to hear about successful women and especially when they have been where we are."

The day celebrated the achievements of students across the school, both academically and interpersonally with awards also given for overall contribution to school life. Key Stage 4 students accepted subject prizes, whilst Key Stage 3 pupils received recognition for their hard work and consistent effort.

Students who completed GCSEs and A-levels during the 2023/24 academic year, also returned to revisit the school and receive their official examination certificates.

Throughout the awards ceremony, attendees were treated to several incredible student performances:

- The school band opened the celebration with its cover of California Dreamin'.
- The cast of the school's production of Moana took to the stage with a rendition of 'How Far I'll Go'.
- The award-winning choir sang 'Proud' by Heather Small and its cover of 'Shine' by Emeli Sandé.

The heart-warming celebration was closed with the whole school community joining together for the school hymn to St John Bosco.

Mr Gidman said: "St John Bosco Arts College is a family that supports one another through every stage of their journey. It was delightful to be able to welcome Helen back to our school community for a wonderful day of celebrations."



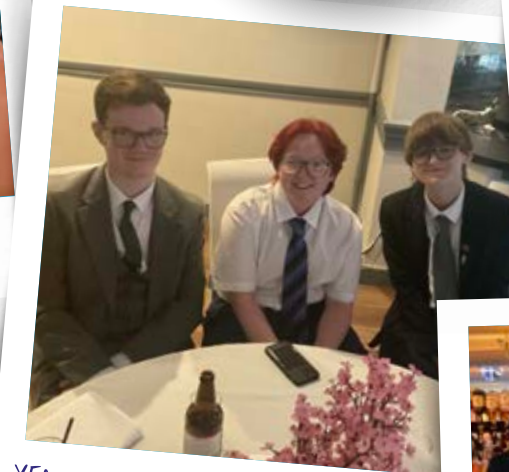
2025 PROM

In June and July, we had the pleasure of honouring our Class of 2025 year groups. In June, we celebrated our Year 13 leavers in style, taking advantage of the beautiful panoramic views of Liverpool's waterfront at the Mercure Liverpool Atlantic Tower Hotel. It was a wonderful evening filled with fun, laughter, and unforgettable moments.

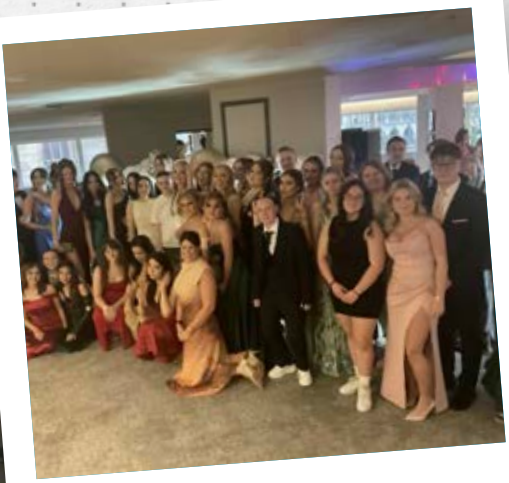
Less than a month later, we got to do it all again with our Year 11s, marking the end of five fantastic years at Bosco. Held at The Devonshire House on Edge Lane, many memories were made during the special event that will be treasured by both staff and students.



YEAR 11



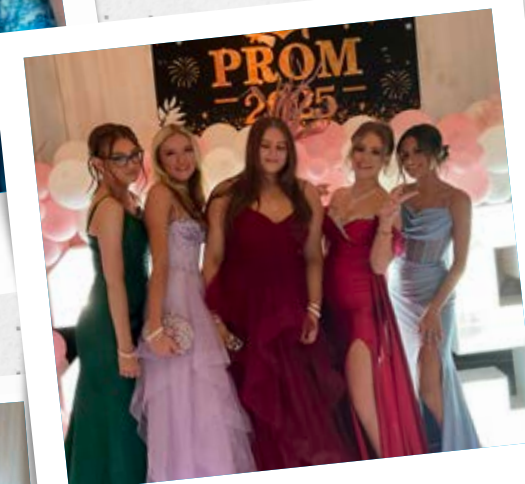
YEAR 13



YEAR 13



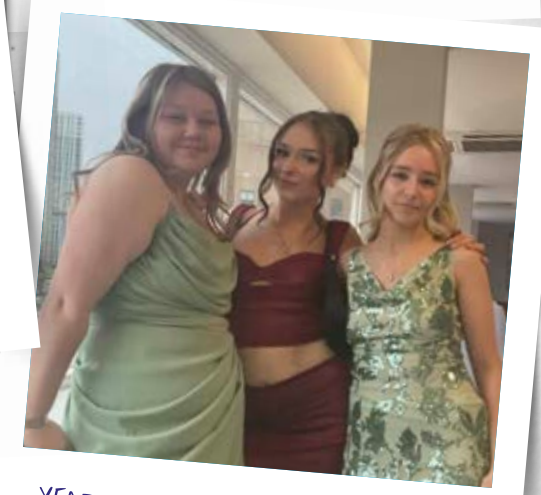
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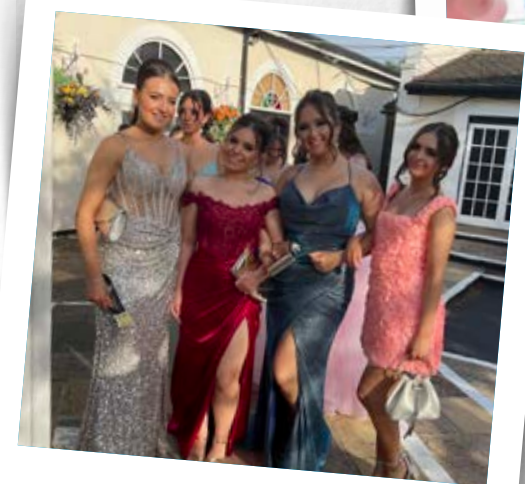
YEAR 13



YEAR 11



YEAR 13



YEAR 11

Success in prestigious choir competition

In March, we achieved great success in the Catholic Schools' Choir of the Year competition, winning first place.

12 schools across the Liverpool region entered the competition, and we were selected as one of seven choirs to compete in the final held at the Metropolitan Cathedral.

The prestigious event, organised by Joe Watson, choral director for the Archdiocese of Liverpool, was attended by other students, staff, parents, and members of the local community.

Our talented choir passionately performed 'Hosanna' by Ligertwood and 'Shine' by Emeli Sandé, wowing the esteemed judging panel that included Dr Christopher McElroy, director of music at the Metropolitan Cathedral, and Archdiocese of Liverpool choral directors Samuel J Ferry, Emma Baker and Rebekka Irwin.

Malcolm McMahon OP, the Archbishop of Liverpool, was the guest of honour and presented the choir its prize. Additionally, Monsignor Anthony O'Brien, Dean of

Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, was present to hear the choirs perform.

On the night, our students also had the opportunity to come together with the other finalists to form a mass choir and perform a fantastic and inspiring rendition of 'Rhythm of Life', celebrating their achievement in reaching this stage of the competition.

Our victory was a testament to students' hard work, reflecting their commitment to working as a team and the importance of having hope and spreading love, something that we strive to do in all aspects of life.

Ms Finnegan said: "Winning this competition was an unforgettable experience for the children. Singing together, both in competition and as part of the mass choir, strengthened their confidence, teamwork, and love for music. It was a moment they will cherish forever."

This amazing success also followed the choir's appearance at the 2024 Educate Awards, where guests from schools and colleges across the North West



Supporting students to make informed decisions for the future

This academic year has been full of exciting and meaningful careers-related activities designed to prepare our students for the future. From Year 7 through to Year 13, we've offered a wide range of experiences to help students explore their interests, develop employability skills, and make informed decisions about their next steps.

Careers Fair

In July, we held our annual Careers Fair, where we brought over 30 employers, training providers, colleges and universities together to offer our students invaluable insight into the world of work and further education.

All students had the chance to speak directly with representatives from various industries from engineering and healthcare to creative arts and technology. They also had the opportunity to discover apprenticeship opportunities, vocational training and higher education pathways.

The event created an inspiring environment for students to explore career options, ask questions and start mapping out their next steps with confidence. Feedback from both students and exhibitors was overwhelmingly positive, and we look forward to making next year's fair even bigger and better!

Shaping Futures Programme

Our Shaping Futures programme has been supporting students to explore their interests, develop essential skills, and confidently plan their next steps. The programme aims to equip every student with the knowledge and confidence to take control of their journey, whether that leads to university, apprenticeships, or entering the workforce.

Unifrog

Throughout the year, all students have had access to Unifrog, a comprehensive online platform, that supports career exploration and decision-making. With Unifrog, students have:

- Researched thousands of university courses, apprenticeships, and training opportunities
- Compared different career paths and entry requirements
- Built their personal profile to track skills, achievements, and experiences
- Accessed tools for writing CVs, personal statements and preparing for interviews
- Received tailored suggestions based on their interests and goals



Sporting successes

Bosco's Inaugural Primary Olympics

This year, Mrs Wharmby and the PE team hosted our very first Primary Olympics! The day was designed to introduce primary school children to a wider range of age-appropriate, but still challenging, sports.

The sportsmanship and atmosphere on the day was incredible, with lots of teamwork taking place which helped foster a healthy competition between five of our local primary schools.



Mr Blackburn's Marathon

Back in April, Mr Blackburn ran the distance of a marathon to raise money for Claire House Children's Hospice. Running to school (setting off at 5:45am!) as well as during lessons 3, 4 and five, Mr Blackburn completed the full 26.2 miles with the support of students who got involved and ran London Marathon's 'Mini Marathon'.



Half a decade of Liverpool Schools Girls' Football

Maddison Robinson has completed her fifth and final year representing Liverpool Schools Girls' Football winning the national plate with the U15s. Well done Maddison!



Students take to the floor at Blackpool Tower Ballroom

In May, eight students performed at the world-famous venue in Blackpool as part of a dance competition that saw them waltz away with 18 titles, including the prestigious 'most outstanding school of the day' and 'best commercial technique'.



Salesian Games 2025

In June, our students headed down to London to compete in the annual Salesian Games and finished on the podium in third place!

Overall, the team brought back 27 medals including 15 bronze, six silver and six gold.

The students were exceptional in their behaviour, effort and representation of the school and we are very proud of them all.



SPORTS DAY

This year's Sports Day was filled with excitement, determination, and plenty of fun — despite the rain forcing us to cut some events short. Students of all abilities showcased their talents across a range of activities, making it a memorable day for everyone involved.

Well done to all participants — your effort, energy, and smiles made it a fantastic day!



Overjoyed to receive 'Outstanding' in the Catholic Schools Inspectorate

We were thrilled to receive an 'outstanding' rating from the Catholic Schools Inspectorate in September.

The Catholic Inspectorate assesses schools across three categories: Catholic life and mission, religious education and collective worship.

The report commented that the Salesian principles of respect, understanding, affection and humour are at the heart of all we do; ensuring that Christ is at the centre of our work.

The report also praised our senior leaders and the chaplaincy team for being 'outstanding role models', noting how their passion ensures our Catholic life and mission are vibrant and relevant to all school community members.

Students spoke passionately about the influence and exceptional work of our chaplain, Mrs Quirk, who is highly regarded, seen as the 'head of the family', and loved by all.

Mrs Quirk said: "We are extremely proud to have been awarded 'outstanding' from the

Catholic Schools Inspectorate. Our Salesian principles are the cornerstone of our school community, and we aim to support our students to embody those principles through their own faith."

Key highlights from the report that reflect the heart of our school

"All staff and students at St John Bosco exemplify their mission statement 'Together we inspire each other to flourish in faith, hope and love.' Consequently, students are happy and feel safe, resulting in a calm and purposeful feel throughout the whole school."

"All students, regardless of their background, faith, or culture, feel appreciated and show respect to each other and to adults."

"Pastoral care is second to none, with the school placing a particular focus on supporting the most vulnerable within the community."

"All students willingly participate in lessons, with behaviour being outstanding both in and out of the classroom."

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
INSPECTORATE**

Students delivered a show-stopping production of Disney's Moana

Over 70 students wowed audiences with their show-stopping musical adaptation of the popular Disney film Moana back in February.

Students from Years 7 to 11 were involved in the production, both on stage and behind the scenes.

The inspirational enchanting tale that tells the story of an adventurous teenager on a daring mission to save her people, demonstrates how anyone can achieve their goals, if they just believe in themselves.

The ensemble performance used innovative creative approaches to transport the audience to the island of Motunui and kept them engaged throughout.

The talented cast acted, sang, and danced their way across the Bosco stage in two sold-out performances. Across both nights, they performed to over 400 parents, carers, and community members.

Additionally, the cast delivered a special matinee performance to 300 primary school students who were completely enthralled by the performance.

Rosie who played the protagonist Moana, dazzled with a heartfelt rendition of 'How Far I'll Go.' Taking on the role of the loveable Maui, Elsie, left the crowd in stitches with her energetic performance of 'You're Welcome.'

Mr Gaffney said: "The cast truly embodied their roles, bringing each character to life and captivating the audience from start to finish.

The dedication shown by every performer, from the auditions all the way to the final curtain, has been phenomenal. A massive well done to you all – you should be so proud."

Mr Gidman, commented: "Our students never fail to amaze me with their passion, hard work, and talent."



A trip down memory lane



A night at the theatre

In May, Ms Finnegan and Mr Gaffney took 20 students to see the world-renowned Hamilton at the Liverpool Empire.

All students thoroughly enjoyed themselves and were a credit to our school community.

Duke of Edinburgh

In the summer term, our Bronze and Silver DofE cohorts completed their qualifying expeditions around Rivington in Chorley.

The Silver Award students, who completed three days of walking and camped for two nights, demonstrated incredible resilience throughout the whole weekend. Even when they found things exceptionally tiring due to the hot weather, they kept on going.

The Bronze Award students joined on the Saturday and were in high spirits as they set off in their groups for the walk.

Camping overnight resulted in toasting marshmallows and making s'mores before students went to bed to recharge for the final walk.

A huge well done to everyone who took part – we're sure they made memories that'll last a lifetime.



Geography fieldwork

June marked the Geographical Association's #NationalFestivalOfFieldwork and our geographers took this in stride throughout the month.

A Level Geographers completed urban studies in Liverpool and Manchester, focusing on how globalisation affected urban areas in the UK.

While Year 10 headed to Ainsdale Beach to collect valuable data that they turned into detailed graphics and analysis for their GCSEs.



Summer rewards trip to Blackpool Pleasure Beach

Across the summer term, we launched an incentive for students in Year 7 to 10 to reward excellent behaviour and attendance. The top 50 per cent of students in each year group for the overall number of ClassChart points achieved qualified for the trip.

Going international in Berlin



At the start of July, our history department took students on the first international trip since the pandemic! The school tour to Berlin enriched students' understanding of history, particularly the Cold War and Germany which we study at GCSE.

During the trip, students visited significant sites such as the Berlin Wall, Topography of Terror, Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe.

It was a wonderful three-day trip and despite an action-packed itinerary (and 38-degree heat), the students were absolutely fantastic. Members of the public and teachers from other schools commented on how outstanding they were on multiple occasions!



Spotting some famous names from our Germany study



Brandenburg Gate



Sachsenhausen Memorial



Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe



East Side Gallery

Berlin 2025 snack box



Annual Feast Day celebrations

On Friday, 31 January, we celebrated the Feast Day of our school's patron saint, St John Bosco.

The annual celebration was an opportunity for us to come together for collective worship and gave pupils the chance to participate in Salesian activities.

The Feast Day celebrations began with a school-wide mass, led by Fr Anthony Kelly.

This year's theme was based on the Salesian Strenna for 2025 – 'anchored in hope, pilgrims with young people'.

Each year group participated in different activities throughout the day that centred on highlighting the importance of our core values of 'Faith, Hope, Love, Respect and Community'.

Year 7 students were asked 'what does it mean to be a Salesian?' and were tasked with designing their very own Salesian superhero characters and costumes. After developing their incredible creations, Year 7 took part in a superhero costume catwalk to showcase their designs.

Year 8 and 9 pupils attended a local cinema to watch the Moana 2 movie, while pupils from Year 10 participated in a game of Bosco Bingo and even got to compete to create a form mascot.

Year 11 students played inflatable games and created bespoke dream catchers.

For a special treat, sixth form students headed into Liverpool City Centre to visit Top Darts, where they played interactive and digital darts.

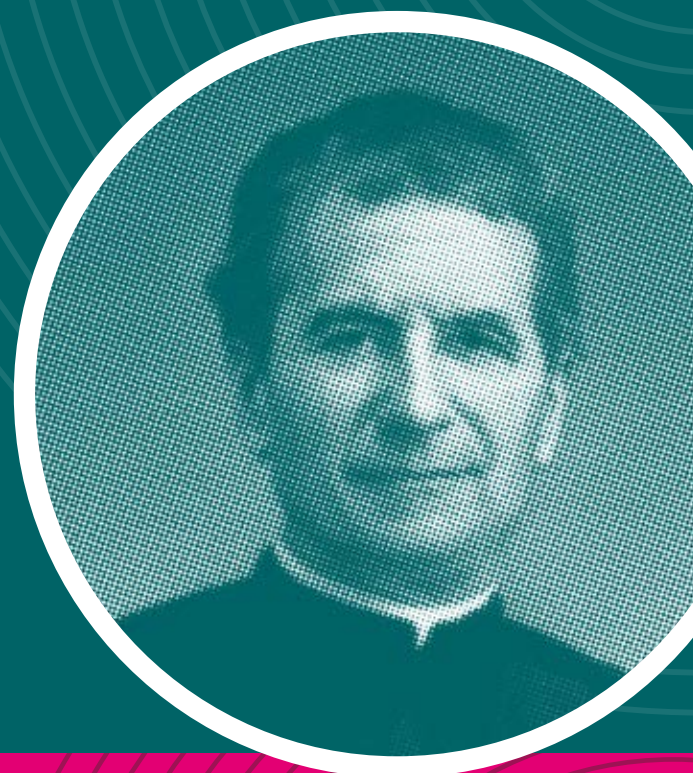
The jam-packed schedule allowed students to enjoy some time away from the day-to-day of school life.

Students shared why they feel it is important to celebrate the life and work of St John Bosco.

One student said: "Celebrating St John Bosco reminds us of the values of compassion and dedication, which guide us to make a difference in our community."

Another added: "St John Bosco's life inspires us to live out our mission to flourish in faith, hope, and love, supporting one another, just as he did."

Mr Gidman, said: "The Feast Day of St John Bosco is one of the most important dates in our calendar and is a chance for our school community to come together to give thanks and celebrate the life and teachings of St John Bosco."



What Year 7 say about us



Sairah

"When I first started in September, I was a bit nervous even though I had attended Year 5 Fun Day and the Big Fish Little Fish projects. When the first day came around, I felt like I had a thousand butterflies in my tummy! Now that Year 7 is nearly over, I realise how different I feel. I have honestly had a lovely time in Year 7 – I have joined lots of new clubs, made lots of new friends and grown in confidence, especially in my maths work."

Hollie

"My first year at secondary school has flown by so fast! Mrs Barclay has been a wonderful head of year – she helped me so much when trying to overcome fears and phobias, and was so understanding and supportive. Even when I moved form groups I felt safe because I knew Mrs Barclay was there for me every step of the way!"



Darcie-Lou

"Year 7 has gone by really quick! I'm so thankful to all my teachers, especially Ms Lunney! Ms Lunney has helped me with lots of things, and when I was having a tough time, she told me that "problems" are not really problems. She said they are "hurdles of life" – they are things we can get over and they won't stop us getting to the finish line! I now live by that quote!"



Miley

"Before I started St John Bosco, I was nervous and excited. I knew that it was such a big school with so many people, but I knew that I would be okay. A few months into the school, I realised how much I had a passion for music, drama and dance. Soon after, I auditioned for the school production and luckily got the lead role of Annie! I now feel like Year 7 has gone by so fast and I think about how far I have come since those new starter nerves. I'm very excited to make more memories throughout my time in school!"



A Prayer of Gratitude and Renewal at Year's End

Loving Father,
We give thanks for this year.
For all the many happy times, the friendship and support.
For all the teaching and learning that has taken place in
our school, both in and out of the classroom.
For the talents and gifts that have been shared and the
challenges that have been faced;
For the respect and care that has been given.
For the faith that has been lived in our daily struggles,
For the hope that has lifted our hearts,
And for the love that has kept us going
We give thanks to the community that we are, and we
ask you Lord –
Bless our families as we take our holidays, may return
renewed and refreshed to continue our journey
together in faith, hope, respect, community and love.
We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.
Amen



Key dates for the calendar

Thursday 14 August 2025 – A Level results day

Thursday 21 August 2025 – GCSE results day

Monday 1 September 2025 – Staff INSET day

Tuesday 2 September 2025 – Staff INSET day

Wednesday 3 September 2025 – School opens for 2025/26

A FINAL THOUGHT

Thank you for your continued support and
dedication to our wonderful school.
From everyone at St John Bosco Arts College,
may we wish you a safe and restful summer break.