

# Heartbeat



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Issue 18

## Year 11 documentary given an 'inspiring' perspective



A charity worker whose father was killed in the 1984 Brighton bombing has taken part in a documentary being made by Year 11 students.

Jo Berry visited Sacred Heart earlier this month to speak to the Year 11 students during RE lessons as part of the GCSE course that looks at terrorism.

Jo's father, Anthony Berry, MP, was killed by the IRA when the Brighton Hotel was bombed in 1984. Patrick McGee was later convicted of the killing.

Her remarkable testimony, which is to be included in a documentary the students are making, sees Jo turn the tragedy into something positive and not surrender her humanity and go down a path of hate and

revenge. Patrick McGee was released early from prison as part of the Good Friday agreement, which saw peace in Northern Ireland for the first time in decades.

Jo said: "I wanted to meet Patrick to find out why he did what he did. He apologised for hurting my family but felt he had no choice in planting the bomb as his own community were suffering at the hands of the British soldiers in Northern Ireland.

"I understood where he was coming from and now we both work for a charity promoting peace, called Building Bridges for Peace.

"I am committed to a world where violence is never an option and am against the death penalty."

Jo's amazing testimony was well received by the students. Grace Morgan (11T) said: "I think it was really inspiring that Jo could tell her story and be able to forgive Patrick McGee."

Grace's sentiments were echoed by Nicole Ferro (11E), who said: "I think it is amazing how Jo could stay so peaceful and positive through that time of pain."

The students also reflected on how Jo's attitude might impact on them.

Lucy May (11H) said: "Jo has inspired me to be a more forgiving person and if she can forgive Patrick for something so huge, then I can certainly forgive people for all the little things."

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Keir Flowerdew (11E) praised Jo, not only for her ability to forgive but to then use the experience as one to help others. He said: "We all think Jo is very brave, especially as her first thoughts after her father's death were to help others and to understand those who killed her father."

While Michael Waters (11D) summed up the mood of everyone by saying: "Jo's talk really opened my eyes. She inspired the whole class."

Head of RE, Mr Moorhead, was delighted with how the visit was received and with the work of Year 11. He said: "I was so impressed with the Year 11 students. They researched Jo's story for



homework and found out about the charity. Katy Williams (11T) wrote the letter to invite Jo to the school. Then the whole class raised the funds to pay for Jo's train fare and hotel as she lived in Somerset.

"Their commitment has been excellent.

I am extremely proud of the students. On the day, they listened and asked some very perceptive and intelligent questions.

"A camera crew also came in for the talk, so we now have a permanent reminder of such an amazing experience."

Since giving her talk, Jo has been in touch to thank staff and students. Jo added: "Thank you so much for giving me such an amazing, inspiring and moving experience.

"I thought the students were outstanding and so intelligent and articulate. The hope for the future!

"Thanks for looking after me so well and making it a very special experience. I look forward to seeing the video."

# Lower Site's musical high

Students at Lower Site were treated to assemblies with a difference recently as our more musically-minded pupils treated them to a showstopping extravaganza.

The assemblies were designed for Year 7 and 8 to consolidate work covered in class, whilst also enjoying some fabulous performances, which included; The Sword Dance, by Nathan Sanderson and Andrew Doyle (both 11D), Joe Murdoch and Joe Moorhead (both 11C), Ethan Snow (9S), and Matthew Foy (11R), a piece by the Samba band and African Drummers, a performance based on Stomp and a drum solo by Nathan Sanderson.

Performers included 60 students right through the year groups from 7 to 13.

Sam D'Auvin (13C), Nathan Sanderson and Andrew Doyle helped to co-ordinate the performances, along with

Music's Mr Foy and Mrs Morison.

Head of Music, Mr Foy, said: "The performers really should be proud of what they achieved with this performance.

"They have put in so many hours re-



example of what you can achieve with regular practice and dedication."

Samba band rehearsal takes place in the Upper Site Hall on Tuesdays from 3:15pm. All welcome.

hearsal already and this is only one of many performances they have given this (academic) year.

"They really are an

## News in brief

**Morning Eucharistic Services take place at Upper Site tomorrow and at Lower Site on Thursday.**

**Year 9 Parent Consultation Evening takes place from 4.30pm on Thursday. On Friday, our Year 12/13 drama students will see an evening performance of Hobson's Choice at the Octagon Theatre, Bolton.**