

## Saintes for a week as students travel to France

*Seven of our MFL students travelled to Saintes, France, recently, as they took part in the return leg of the French Exchange visits. Accompanying them was Head of MFL, Mr Sayer. Here is his account of the trip*

You will remember that back in November, Sacred Heart played host to a group of 21 French lycéens (that's Sixth Formers to us) who stayed in the homes of some of our Year 11, 12 and 13 students.

They experienced our everyday lives here, both in the College and what it was like to be Liverpool teenagers for a week.

Just before Easter, it was our turn to become French. "The best one yet!" was the comment from a number of our French Exchange veterans.

At 5.30am on March 14, seven students, Mrs Callaghan and I travelled to Liverpool John Lennon Airport en-route to Bergerac, France.

Excited for the adventure ahead of us, we were embarking on the second leg of the French Exchange, which would see us spend seven nights with our French partners.

After the flight and then a two-and-a-half hour coach trip in France, we arrived in the French town of Saintes, home to our host school, the Lycée Bellevue, and our French partners. We spent the next seven nights living as guests with our host families and living the lives of French teenagers.

On the Wednesday, we spent our first morning becoming acquainted with our 'new school'. We were given a tour, seeing all their facilities and paying particular attention to their impressive common room. That afternoon we were judges, as some of the French students gave presentations in



English of some mathematical research they had been conducting. We were asked to evaluate how well we thought the students had performed.

On Thursday morning, some of the older French students took us on a walking tour of Saintes and rounded it off with a civic reception in the Town Hall with one of the Mayor's representatives.

During the week, the Sacred Heart students attended lessons with their French partners. We went to everything from English and Maths through to Russian and Latin.

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### News in brief

There are French Speaking Tests taking place in the Loretto building from 3.15pm tomorrow. Lower Site is closed on Thursday due to the Mayoral elections. Also on Thursday are the EPQ Presentations in the Sixth Form Centre. The Year 13 Leavers' Mass also takes place on Thursday. Plans for the 2017-18 French Exchange have started. It will be open to all students in next year's Year 11, 12 and 13. If you are interested in taking part, please see Mr Sayer for details.

# Pilgrimage cheques out

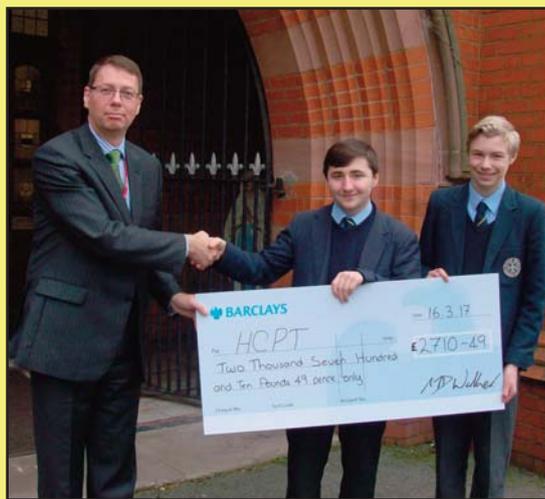
Disabled and disadvantaged people from the Merseyside area enjoyed a Pilgrimage to Lourdes last month, thanks to the fundraising work within our College.

Staff and students took part in numerous fundraising activities to ensure the disabled and disadvantaged pilgrims were able to spend Easter at Hosanna House at the foot of the Pyrenees.

A cheque for £2710.49 was presented to HCPT Chief Executive,

Phillip Sparke, who spoke to our Year 10s about the value of such a Pilgrimage and the rewards it can bring to all who are involved with such a special experience.

RE's Mr Hurst was quick to praise the fundraising work that makes trips like this possible. He said "We, as a College, take great pride in our associations with charities and were delighted to help another charity in such a small but significant way."



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We were able to see what everyday life was like for a French student from the inside. Of course, we noticed many differences in the routines of the college, but it was also refreshing to note that school life still has its similarities the world over.

On Friday, we travelled by train into the stunningly beautiful port town of La Rochelle, where we enjoyed the world-famous aquarium, sights and shopping of the old town. We learnt about the city's rich culture, history and heritage before enjoying a spot of lunch by the harbour. This was followed by some well-deserved retail therapy in the afternoon.

The weekend saw our students relaxing with the host families. Trips to in-

teresting places such as Bordeaux and the seaside resort of Royan were enjoyed by many.

On Monday morning, we visited one of the local primary schools, which turned out to be the highlight of the week for some of our students.

We started by giving a little presentation on Liverpool, in both French and English. The primary pupils loved hearing some authentic English, while they were fascinated by our stories of football and the Beatles. After a tour of the primary school, we were treated to some performances in English from the Year 5 and 6 pupils who, among other renditions, had learnt off by heart the words to Yellow Submarine. Tuesday arrived all too soon and it was time for us to depart on our return

journey home. Our stay in Saintes allowed students to enjoy an insight into French everyday life and culture, and the famous cuisine. Most importantly, however, our students were able to fully immerse themselves in the language, gaining invaluable practice and boosting their confidence.

Erin McGee (11C) said of the trip: "The French Exchange enabled me to improve my French and also make a lot of new friends. It is a unique experience, which I would recommend to everyone. It was very enjoyable." Caelin McDermott (11R) added: "I enjoyed the French Exchange because I made new friends, improved my speaking and listening skills and had the opportunity to see a town which is very different to Liverpool."