

Heartbeat



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Issue 10

Students enjoy the American Dream

This week, Heartbeat goes Stateside, as we hand over exclusively to the recent Art & Drama trip to New York. With the students was Drama teacher Mr Thirlwall. This is his account of the trip.

Twenty-three Sacred Heart students and three staff recently enjoyed an Art and Drama trip to New York, writes Drama teacher Mr Thirlwall.

The excited party were waved off by their parents at Manchester Airport on the morning of Wednesday, October 18, before checking in for the seven and a half hour flight to the Big Apple.

After touching down at New York's John F Kennedy International Airport, we made the short coach journey through the borough of Queens and across the East River via the 59th Street Bridge to Manhattan Island, where we were dropped off at the Vanderbilt YMCA – our accommodation during our stay in the city. A short time later, we headed off on the short walk to Grand Central Station, a place – like so many locations in New York – instantly recognised by many in the party, owing to its appearance in numerous famous films over the years. We headed down to the station's bustling dining concourse, where the range of food offered was mind-boggling. The choice was so good, we decided this would be where we would go for breakfast each morning.

So, loaded up with filled bagels, donuts and coffee the next morning, we walked to West 34th Street for a drama workshop led by Laura – a

Broadway actress.

Although some of our students had no drama experience and were self-conscious to begin with, Laura soon had them coming out of their shells with lots of fun activities. We were joined by Emily Cramer – an actress in the Broadway production of School of Rock, which we were going to see the following evening – for the final half hour of the workshop. She spoke about her role, before answering some great questions from our students.

Next up on our itinerary was a Circle Line ferry trip around the island of Manhattan on both the Hudson and East Rivers, taking us past the Statue of Liberty, the new World Trade Center and below many iconic bridges – the most famous being the Brooklyn Bridge. The party then had their first experience of the New York subway, taking a train a few miles south to the 9/11 Memorial Plaza – site of the world's most devastating terrorist attack 16 years ago.

Our students were reflective and sombre as





they stood amongst hundreds of visitors at the Memorial Plaza – the centrepiece of which is a huge water feature surrounded by a plaque engraved with the names of the victims of the attack.

A subway ride took us uptown and to our first experience of the iconic Times Square where, amidst the towering LED digital billboards, we strolled around the shops and got ourselves something to eat before wearily making our way back to the YMCA. After a well-earned night's rest, we set off the following morning to Grand Central Station for more delicious filled bagels and coffee. After breakfast, we headed to the Guggenheim Museum, via the subway. In addition to the many iconic works of art on display, students and staff alike were overwhelmed by the modernist style building itself, designed by renowned

American architect, Frank Lloyd Wright.

A short walk, across 5th Avenue brought us to Central Park. There, we enjoyed a stroll past the Metropolitan Museum of Art, before taking a picnic lunch next to the Strawberry Fields John Lennon memorial, just a short distance from his Dakota Building apartment, in the beautiful autumn sunshine.

Next up was a subway ride to Rockefeller Plaza and a short walk to MOMA, Museum of Modern Art, where we were treated to galleries packed with some of the most recognisable art works of the 19th and 20th centuries.

The group then walked back to the hotel for a quick freshen up before heading back to Times Square and on to the Winter Gardens theatre for the performance of School of Rock, which

had students and staff enthralled from start to finish.

No visit to New York would be complete without a visit to the iconic Empire State Building, where we headed after a hearty breakfast of American pancakes with maple syrup. The elevator rapidly took us to the viewing gallery on the 102nd story, from where the views of Manhattan and New York's outlying boroughs were simply breathtaking – especially under the clear blue skies and glorious sunshine with which we had been blessed for the duration of our visit. Before heading back to JFK Airport for our Saturday night flight back home, there was just enough time for a visit to Macy's department store for the group to buy any last minute gifts and souvenirs. Several hours later our travel-weary tourists were re-united with their excited families at Manchester Airport.

Students and staff alike agreed that this had been a truly unforgettable and awe-inspiring experience. All involved offer special thanks to Mrs Campbell, who organised the trip so meticulously.

News in brief

Anti Bullying Week takes place this week.

There is a meeting this morning for Year 8 students regarding the London trip, which departs on Friday.

