

Dear Reverend Skivington, Directors, Staff, Grand Parents, Parents, Carers, Friends, ex-students, current students and friends of All Saints School.

Thank you first of all to Reverend Skivington for allowing us the use of your lovely church once again. This November the school celebrated its 30th year since opening and what an achievement that has been.

When I attend meetings on behalf of the school I'm often approached by people who say "I know about your school, or I was at your school, it made such a difference to my education and now I am doing... or I went on to do..." and that essentially is what Mrs Gardiner and her mother set about achieving all those years ago, "to make a difference to the young people we look after in our school no matter where they come from or why"!

Sometimes this is not a smooth journey but it is a journey all of us have to make in education. Today we have recognised the achievements of last years Year 11, nine out of ten have gone on to college, most to higher courses and one student to an apprenticeship. This is excellent and we are pleased and proud of them.

For me the term continued once we had finished in July when I took seven current students and two former students on their Duke of Edinburgh Silver Assessed Expedition done in Suffolk. All of our students were praised for their teamwork over the weekend even when one had to withdraw for personal reasons. I was so proud to see them overcoming difficulties, tiredness, fatigue, and heat to complete the three day expedition. We have seen in our slideshow today the presentations that they have to complete to achieve the expedition section. I am thrilled that today I can announce that five of them have completed the Silver Award so would Joshua Boughton, Joseph Dann, Arron Hodge and George Senior please come to the stage to receive their awards. Greta Balfour unfortunately couldn't be here today and received hers yesterday in school.

We have more good news in that Michael Palmer should hear within the next few days whether his award has been ratified and there are others who are still working to complete sections on their awards. I am also delighted to say that some are also committing themselves to go on to do the Gold Award and as a school we are happy to support them in that ambition.

I look forward in 2018 to talking with our Year 10 and 11 students about starting this award scheme as employers and colleges recognise the value of this award which shows a students willingness to volunteer, to learn new skills, to undertake some form of exercise and most importantly to challenge themselves

to work in a group to complete an expedition being reliant on themselves and their group to get through any difficulties.

This term has seen many changes with new staff joining our school, new fencing and buildings being erected, offices changing rooms and other smaller less noticeable changes.

Through all this I would like to thank my excellent staff and the support of the directors in making these improvements to our school.

I would also like to thank our students who through the school council and eco-council have made a great contribution to the school. This year we have supported through their recommendations Osigili in Kenya and the Food Bank in Norwich at Harvest time, Sugar for Shelters, Children in Need, and with a school vote, Mental Health UK.

Staff this year requested if we could hold our own Christmas Dinner, something which hasn't been done for many years. The directors agreed to fund the meal with many staff preparing the food in their own time and bringing it all together on Tuesday when we had a lovely Christmas Dinner in Lessingham Village Hall. To add to the festive occasion, we paid a pound to wear our Christmas jumpers, the proceeds together with our playing carols in Tesco's yesterday and with donations from today's service will all go to 'Crisis at Christmas'.

We have seen in the slide show some aspects of the work undertaken this term at school and I would like to especially thank all my staff for their dedication this term, however I must say particular thanks to Mrs Whitear and Mrs Woolnough for the time and effort they put into getting our students to perform at this high level and all the staff who support them in that.

Please give them a round of applause, and to our students who perform so well, On behalf of all of us at All Saints we wish you a very happy and safe Christmas holiday.

We return to school on Thursday 4th January 2018!