La Retraite
Roman Catholic Girls' School

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LONDON, SW12 0AB
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LARETRAITE.CO.UK
HEADTEACHER: MR D MALINS

11th February 2026

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Time flies by very fast, we are already in February and the Year 11 students are well into their last mock exams. They have done really well and shown great determination and resilience. We have great belief in their futures.

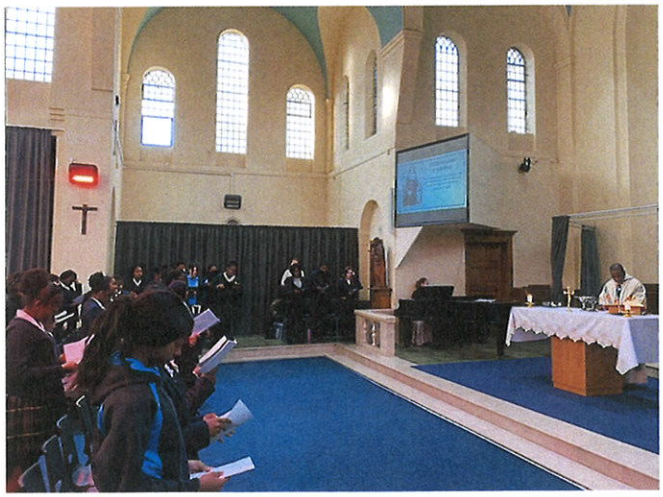
With all the turmoil and suffering in the world, it is refreshing to witness on a daily basis the kindness and consideration shown by our young people. They very much echo the words of Pope Leo, who argues *'that true fulfilment is not found in fleeting success or fame but in the belief that each person is loved and wanted by God'*. Many adults could learn from the example set by the students here at La Retraite.

The school's new ASD resource base is starting to take shape and we are really excited about this development for the school. The units will have a brick layer added and the playground will be refurbished. It will be officially opened in June by Canon Victor Darlington.

Staff

We send our congratulations to Ms Sharif (Geography) on the birth of her new baby and welcome Mr Jaye to the Geography department who is covering her maternity leave.

Faith life of the school - Spring 1 Highlights



This half-term has been filled with meaningful moments of prayer and service. We began with a staff reflection on the Epiphany, followed by an all-school Mass celebrating this important feast.

Year 10 gathered for Mass in honour of Saint Marianne Cope, reflecting on her example of compassion and care for those most in need. Our partnership with St Bede's Parish has continued to grow as Fr Pawel trained a new group of Year 7 altar servers, giving students a deeper role in the liturgy.

Student leaders contributed to a Celebration of the Word on the theme of serving others, offering a strong witness to faith in action. T wo Year 13 students also led an uplifting Affirmation Week, encouraging gratitude and appreciation across the school.

Chaplaincy launched *Stillness and Scripture* with Year 7, providing a quiet space for reflection and helping students explore how Scripture can guide their daily lives.

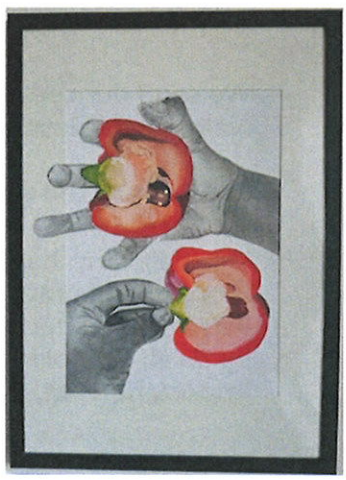
Spring 2 – Key Events Ahead

The next half-term will continue to offer rich opportunities for prayer and formation:

- Year 9 will celebrate Mass on the theme of St Joseph, Husband of Mary.
- Year 9 students will take part in a retreat on *Convocation*, supported by the parish and the sisters at the neighbouring convent.
- Year 7 form groups will attend Mass at St Bede's as part of a new initiative to deepen their spiritual development.
- Students will have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent.
- Selected Year 10 students will participate in a NET Ministries retreat exploring the theme *Never Alone*.

University offers

We are delighted to share that our A Level students have begun receiving their university and apprenticeships offers, with some fantastic outcomes already secured. These include offers from Russell Group universities such as UCL and King's College London, as well as two prestigious Oxbridge offers, one from the University of Oxford and the other from the University of Cambridge. We are incredibly proud of our students' hard work and resilience in navigating what can be a demanding and competitive application process.



Stunning Year 12 A Level Art piece by Suray

Student wellbeing - *Supporting your child's wellbeing at home*

As part of our ongoing work with the Anna Freud Centre, we continue to strengthen how we support students' emotional wellbeing across the school. Parents and carers play a vital role in this work, and small, consistent actions at home can make a real difference.

We encourage families to:

- *Keep conversations open*
  Regular, low-pressure check-ins help children feel safe to talk. Simple questions such as "How has today felt?" can be more effective than "How was school?"

- *Notice changes, not just behaviours*
  Changes in sleep, mood, appetite, or routines can be early signs that a child may be struggling. Curiosity and calm reassurance are often more helpful than immediate problem-solving.

- *Protect routines and rest*
  Consistent sleep, meal times and screen boundaries support emotional regulation, particularly during busy or stressful periods.

- *Normalise feelings*
  Letting children know that it is okay to feel worried, frustrated or overwhelmed helps reduce shame and builds emotional literacy.

- *Encourage help-seeking*
  Remind your child that trusted adults at school are always available. Speaking to someone early is a strength, not a weakness.

If you have any concerns about your child's wellbeing, please do not hesitate to contact the school. We value working in partnership with families to ensure every child feels safe, supported and able to thrive. You can also find some guidance on other support organisations on our website: https://www.laretraite.co.uk/Resources-for-Parents-Carers/

Achievements

The following students have achieved an amazing number of merits.

Year 7		Year 8		Year 9		Year 10		Year 11		Year 12		Year 13	
Gael Maegan	541	Sakinah	447	Mofiyinfoluwa	449	Khadijah	485	Mariam	378	Onyinyechi	211	Condolezza	274
Faveur	530	Desire	421	Bridget	435	Gresa	366	Chyianna-Kay	325	Buruj	169	Kanyinsola	237
Mariama	508	Naba	421	Aminah	432	Princess	331	Oyinkansola	325	Sarah	167	Hermione	226
Patricia Adorada	470	Diana	415	Sara	421	Johanna	327	Treasure	323	Malak	156	Casey	219
Chloé	469	Conoha	413	Annevie	413	Ayomide	306	Tiffanie	323	Zainab	156	Chelsea	132
				Miral	413	Kaira	306						

Super impressive!

La Retraite Sporting Life

The PE department has been very busy with a range of activities and fixtures.

Our Year 7 and 8 **badminton team** competed in a tournament against Oasis Academy, BTG, City Heights and The Elmgreen. Students played exceptionally well both as individuals and then in a pair for the doubles. The year 9 and 10 also performed phenomenally as well. Both sets of students were approached to represent the borough in the London Youth Games and La Retraite were the overall winners in both competitions. 'Well done' to Gael and Alexis, (Year 7), Aicha and Chioma, (Year 8), Kendal and Angelica, (Year 9) and Akayaa and Gillian, (Year 10).

Year 12 took on the Year 13 **football** team for the right to be called 'La Retraite Champions'. A very tight match finished in a "4 all" draw. We are all looking forward to the re-match!

Year 7 and 8 played their football fixtures against Dunraven this week. Final score 3-1 and 2-1 respectively to Dunraven. We wish all the best in their future matches!

The **LR6 Mixed Volleyball team** played their first volleyball fixture travelling to East London to face a Bacon's College team. They started nervously, losing the first set, but eventually prevailed, winning 2 sets to 1.

We were very privileged to welcome `*The Inside Lane*', created by Lilian Okolie (LR alumni and track & field journalist), who, with Bianca Williams, (Olympic Silver medallist) and Ian Wright (Arsenal football legend) delivered a relay workshop to our fastest sprinters in Year 9 and 10. Lilian works with young people developing their confidence and leadership skills through building sprint relay teams. A selected group of Year 9 and 10 students had a magical time learning from the stars. You can see a little film about their fabulous day: https://www.instagram.com/p/DUihbA4DFtm/

This term, in PE lessons, all students will be attempting the Cooper run – a 12-minute fitness test. Please make sure your daughter has a water bottle for her PE lesson. The best runners will feature on our PE noticeboard and receive a small prize!

Netball Fixtures for the next term are:

- Monday 24th February: LR vs Charter School East Dulwich - Year 8 & 9
- Monday 2nd March: LR vs Dunraven - Year 7 & 9
- Tuesday 10th March: LR vs Charter School East Dulwich - Year 7 & 10
- Thursday 12th March: LR vs The Elm Green – Year 9

Bianca Williams & Axiah

Events and trips

Thank you again to all the staff who have helped organise a huge range of trips and thank you to the students for their enthusiasm. The following are just some examples of trips that have happened since the beginning of November

- Jack Petchey Awards ceremony
- `Matilda the musical', Drama trip
- `A Christmas Carol' theatre trip, Drama trip
- V & A `Upstart', Art and Careers trip
- St George's soup kitchen volunteering
- 'H.M.S. Pinaforce' Opera, Music trip
- 'Ballet shoes', National Theatre visit
- Year 10 Fine Art trip to the Royal Academy
- 'Bengal Tiger' theatre trip

- Phoenix book club
- Urban Debate league competition
- Sheriffs Challenge- Year 12 T Level Legal students competed in this auspicious debating competition, only being squeezed into second place by a few points.
- National Archives- Year 10 History trip
- `La Traviata' Opera – Music trip
- Independent bus and travel workshop
- T Level Health trip to various museums (UCL Pathology, Royal College of Nursing Museum, Welcome Collection & Hunterian Museum)

Parking to drop off/pick up your child

A request from Mr Steward, the Director of Business & Operations

A couple of local residents that live on Cavendish Road have complained that whilst dropping off and waiting to pick up students, a number of parents/family members leave their car engines running continuously. This has become a problem for the residents since Atkins Road has become a 'school street', as there is a marked increase in the numbers of cars parking up in Cavendish Road before and after the school day as they are now prohibited from access to Atkins Road. Whilst we understand the need to keep warm in your car at this time of year, please do also bear in mind that the neighbours have to live with the noxious smell of fumes from running engines and one of our neighbours suffers from serious asthma.

Antibullying

Positive relationships are an important part of school life, and the vast majority of students manage friendships well. Occasionally, young people may experience difficulties with peers or feel unsettled by the behaviour of others. When this happens, it is important that they feel heard, supported and know where to turn.

In school, students are encouraged to speak to a trusted adult such as their tutor, class teacher, or Head of Year if something is worrying them. Ongoing work with students also helps them to understand what bullying is, how it differs from everyday friendship challenges, and the importance of sharing concerns early.

Parents and carers are encouraged to raise any concern, however big or small, using the ***Report a Bullying Concern*** section of the school website, (https://www.laretraite.co.uk/Report-a-Bullying-Concern/. This outlines what to do if your child feels bullied and explains how the school works with families to support students' wellbeing. Please be reassured that any concerns raised are taken seriously and managed with care, professionalism, and a clear focus on student safety and wellbeing.

House music

Thank to Mr Moran for organising such an excellent competition. The standard of the entrants was very high and it was very difficult to choose a winner. The winners are:

Music House Competition 2026 Results

Student vote

1st	**Monique** (10 Love)	*When I Was Your Man*	[102 votes]
2nd	**Erych** (10 Faith) and **Kersteen** (11 Sc1)	*Perfect Harmony*	[95 votes]
3rd	**Julie** (12 May), **Chryssa** (11 Sc2), **Kersteen** (11 Sc1), **Tiffanie** (11 Sc2), **Desta** (10Cha), **Georgia** (9 Faith), and **Hayley-Rose** (11 Sc3)	*Still Into You*	[94 votes]

Staff vote

1st	**Breana** (13 Ach), **Kymanuele** (13 Ach), **Heli** (12 May), and **Rachel** (13 New)	*Ain't No Mountain*
2nd	**Francisca** (10 Love) & **Condolezza** (13Frei)	*Part Of Your World* & *Never Enough*
3rd	**Chaisley** (11 Ma1)	*Sir Duke*

Congratulations to everyone that participated

News from the library

Our library clubs have been incredibly popular this term, and we are delighted with the enthusiasm shown by our students.

Book Club and Creative Writing continue to be very well attended, and all students who are reading the four selected books are looking forward to the Awards Ceremony in May.
We are also excited to launch our new **"Patch and Chat" Embroidery Club,** which will begin on the 27th of February, running every Friday after school from 3:15–4:30pm. Students should bring a small scrap of fabric, and all other materials will be provided.

In celebration of the **National Year of Reading 2026** and as part of our **World Book Day activities**, we will be hosting a Manga Pop-Up Shop in partnership with ***Forbidden Planet*** on **4th March** at lunchtime in the library. Students will be able to purchase books and related merchandise, with both cash and card payments accepted. *Forbidden Planet* will run a quiz and Q&A time, and there will be prizes to be won by the students who will be participating.
There will also be additional activities and competitions taking place throughout the World Book Week, with full details shared on Teams for all students to take part.

Finally, as ever, a really big thank you to everyone – you all help make La Retraite such a fantastic community.

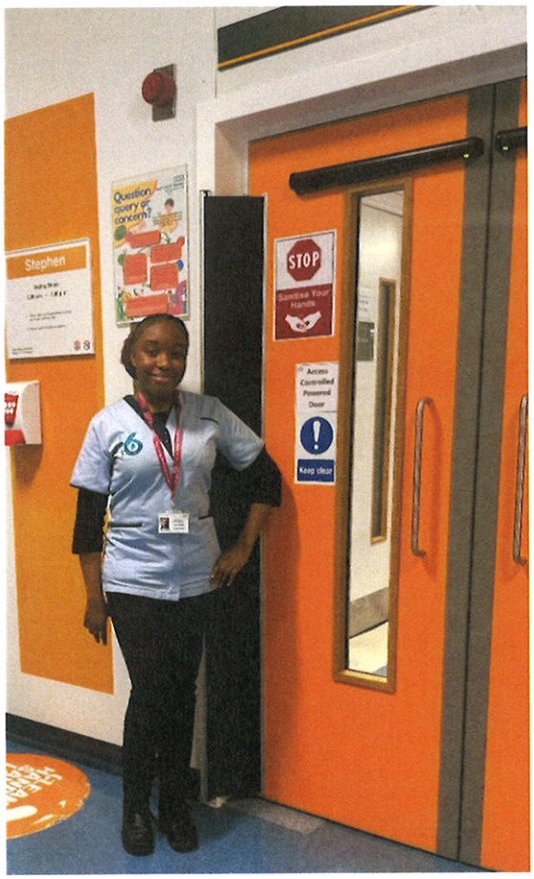
I leave you with the prayer of St Ignatius of Loyola:

Teach us, good Lord,
To serve you as you deserve;
To give, and not to count the cost,
To fight, and not to heed the wounds,
To toil, and not to seek for rest,
To labour, and not to ask for reward,
Save that of knowing that we are doing your will.
Amen

Kind regards,

Dominic Malins
Headteacher

Ian Wright: Arsenal and Crystal Palace legend



Marylin, T Level Midwifery student on placement