



Work Experience is valuable as you gain the essential transferrable skills necessary for a certain job title. It is not only an opportunity for the work placement to showcase their job prospects, but also a chance to show what you as a SMW Year 12 student represent.

As well as the additional bonus, it is great on UCAS applications! For my work experience, I shadowed the director of the bioresource team at Atkins Realis. Atkins Realis is a world-renowned engineering consultancy firm located in multiple countries across the world. I learned of the world-leading research and engineering contributions they are making to solving growing socio-economic problems due to the climate crisis. For example, the NEOM project in Saudi Arabia. I enjoyed my work placement week particularly how it built upon the certain concepts I learn about in my A-level subjects as I got to translate my learning to real world issues.



Mikael Year 13

Lourdes



In Year 12, 4 students were given the opportunity to join the Birmingham Archdiocese on the pilgrimage to Lourdes. We had an amazing time in which we have developed our relationship with God, with ourselves and others. The week was spent participating in daily masses celebrating God, Mother Mary, St Bernadette and the Birmingham Archdiocese. In addition to this, we also spend some time as volunteers assisting sick pilgrims in the Accueil, where we completed a range of tasks such as taking them to mass, exploring the local area and making sure that they enjoyed their pilgrimage just as much as we did. This gave us the opportunity to work alongside the diocese members and form friendships and lifelong relationships with those that we wouldn't have been able to meet without this experience being available to us. As well as taking part in Torchlight processions and visiting the Grotto, we were able to explore the local town of Lourdes in order to see the place of St Bernadette's birth and her local parish church. We did this in order to gain understanding of Bernadette's life and the years that led up to the apparition of Mary, which made Lourdes what it is today. We were able to go through fundraising in which we held events such as our bake sale and a GoFundMe page.

Alice Year 13



Sutton Trust Summer School

From the 15 to 20 of July, I was able to travel to Edinburgh University as a part of the Sutton Trust's Summer School programme. The week involved studying Sociology and Philosophy with university lecturers and developing my understanding of a university lifestyle. This also included a project day in which we looked at the admissions process for the University of Edinburgh from a sociological perspective. We were also given the opportunity to explore Edinburgh such as climbing to Arthur's seat, going on underground ghost tours, competing for points in the clan cup and visiting all the landmarks such as the castle and historical monuments. On the last day we had talks on personal statements, career paths and financial support before graduating. The week was rounded up with a Scottish ceilidh and a silent disco; the whole week allowed me to make new friends, explore university life and study whilst exploring a new city.



Phoebe Year 13

Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

Last year, I received the opportunity of undertaking an EPQ project alongside my A-Levels. I decided to focus on researching the use of quantum dots within the treatments and diagnosis of lung cancer. I was able to evaluate primary and secondary sources which helped to enhance my research skills. It was a challenging but enriching experience where I was able to gain valuable skills such as referencing, presenting and writing a dissertation. Overall, I would absolutely recommend this unique opportunity to anyone who wants to gain crucial and transferable skills that they can utilise in their future.



Lizeth Year 13



Made in Stoke

This year, I was fortunate to be a part of the 'Made In Stoke' Event Team. The aim of the event was to spread awareness to our lower peers of the school that because they live in Stoke, they should still dream big. Key note speakers delivered speeches relating to their careers and over 40 former students were available at lunch time to discuss their careers and offer advice. Me and my friend Lizabeth were made in charge of producing informant booklets of the alumni students of St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy. Through this experience, I gained valuable skills such as communication, teamwork and organisation skills. I also was able to meet the alumni as well and ask questions about their career path and advice they had for me. It was an enjoyable experience and I will take what I learned from this event into the future. Overall, I would recommend to my lower peers to get involved with events such as Made In Stoke as it has given me valuable insight into a variety of careers as well as having developed many employability skills.



Merin Year 13

Geography Trips



At the end of the last academic year our geography class went on various trips to collect data for our coursework. We went to Formby, Salford, Trentham, and a transect from Hanley to Stone. I collected data along the transect in to help with my research into how health varies moving out of the city of Stoke on Trent. As well as collecting data, we also had the opportunity to explore the regeneration in Salford and the coastal processes along the coast in Formby. Over the two weeks some highlights were: interacting with the public, seeing the beavers in the wetlands in Trentham, and experiencing a more built up city.

Kaela Year 13



Steps 2 Medicine

The steps to medicine programme is a widening access programme which aims to increase the numbers of successful applications to medical school from students belonging to under-represented groups. St Margaret Ward is one of the schools that offer this programme.

It is the perfect opportunity for aspiring medical students to experience what it is like to study medicine. With talks from professionals in the field, a mock university day as well as presenting your research to like-minded individuals the programme also offers clinical work experience, guidance for the UCAT and medical interviews.



I took part in the steps to medicine programme in year 12 and it was one of the best things that I did. It was an eye-opening experience which fuelled my passion for medicine and helped me gain transferable skills.

Hamaayil Year 13



Being part of the Sixth Form community has allowed me to take on many different responsibilities. One of these being mentoring students of the lower school years. By doing this, I am able to give the students an opportunity to talk to someone similar to their age about some of the things that may be bothering them in their school life or even their home life. I have been able to form relationships with them and become a safe place for them to go to when they feel that they cannot talk to any adults about some of the things that are bothering them or they are struggling with. These can be issues revolving around mental health or even issues revolving around their school studies or friendship problems within their school life.

Abby Year 13



Mentoring a Year 9 student was a rewarding experience for me as a college student because it allowed me to develop valuable skills while making a positive impact. Guiding them through their academic challenges helped me improve my communication and leadership abilities. It also gave me the chance to reflect on my own learning journey, gaining a fresh perspective on the subjects we discussed. Additionally, it was fulfilling to see their confidence grow and know that I played a part in their progress, which reinforced my sense of responsibility and empathy.

Younes Year 13

London Trip

Towards the end of the last academic year the Sociology, Politics and History classes took a trip to London to see the House of Parliament, the Camden markets and took a boat tour down the Thames river to see the key landmarks of London. Not only was the trip useful for all of our studies it enabled us to experience the culture of a more developed city and tour the capital. We took a guided tour of Parliament and learnt important details about how our country is ran as well as experiencing the beautiful architecture. Overall, it was a very successful trip!

Oliwia Year 13



Lasallian World Development Project

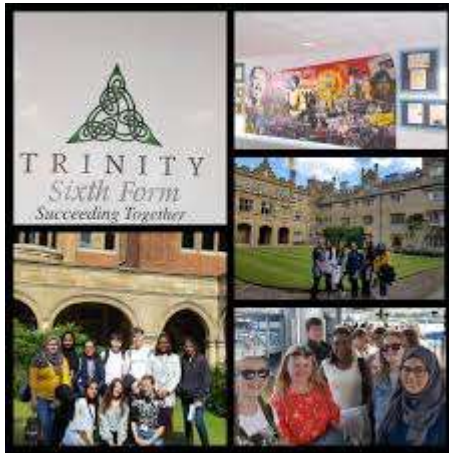
In the summer of 2025, I will be travelling to Kenya to build schools in a deprived areas of the country. A group of 12 young people including me will embark on this project for 5 weeks and we will persevere though the harsh weather and the challenges that will be thrown at us to build a safe place for the people of this community to complete their education. The people of this community currently have no place to learn and are not shielded from their environment which means that most of the time school days are cut short because of the extreme heat. I hope to change this by completing this project that the people in the community will have a long-lasting area for education which they can uses for many years. In order to go, I will be fundraising in my school and local area in various ways such as raffles.



Matilda Year 13



Year 12 – Starting a new school Sixth Form



My experience at St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy is great. When I first came here everything was different and new; I was confused and very nervous. These feelings soon faded due to the welcoming atmosphere I experienced from the teachers. Their positivity made me feel relaxed and I soon adapted. Teachers have been careful to enunciate every word carefully so that I can understand their accents which are very different from what I was used to in Zimbabwe. The students are really amicable and nice so that it has been easy to make friends, even being from a different country. I am very happy in the Sixth Form.

Chantelle Year 12

Law Internship

Six of our students have all been accepted onto an internship with Cleary-Gottlieb, a highly regarded international law firm, over October half term. St Margaret Ward is one of only four sixth forms in the country that has been accepted and the **ONLY** school-based sixth form.

The internship is certificated and, on successful completion, each student will receive personal letters of recommendation from both Cleary-Gottlieb and HSBC. Congratulations to all six of our students!

Mrs Mills
English department / Sixth Form Team





ESB



Mrs Collins who is a chief examiner for ESB joined us to examine the English Speaking Board exam. The award involves students presenting to a group of their peers on three areas. She was with us in 2023 too, and jumped at the opportunity to come back. She said SMW is such a nice school and the students are lovely. She asked that we request her for our future ESB examinations as she loves coming here. She has also offered to provide us with additional training for the future year 12 staff and students. This sentiment was not just expressed by her but all the examiners.

... and all the students passed the exam, virtually all with Merit or Distinction.

Mrs Yates Sociology Teacher / Sixth Form Team

Loughborough University Visit

Before going on the Year 13 trip to Loughborough University I had no interest in going to university at all, however after listening to some of the lectures and exploring the campus, I now feel much more open to the idea. It was very educational, I got the opportunity to see what university life is like compared to studying at sixth form. I was



I was interested by the Business lecture, as a current BTEC business student, and learnt a lot about the course and what it entails. I gained knowledge I wouldn't get from anywhere other than going to the open day and actually speaking to the students on campus.

Toby Year 13



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