



Alumni: Look what you can achieve!

Hamzah Abbas

2011-2016



“I joined Corpus Christi from St. Joseph's in 2010 and left in 2015. I completed GCSEs in English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, RE, German, Computer Science and History, before going on to do A-Levels in English Literature, Psychology and Mathematics at Cardinal Newman.

Following this, I went on to the University of York to study English Literature, graduating in 2020. During my time at university, I wrote for and edited 'The York Tab' and also had work experience at 'The Sunday Times'. This experience led to me winning the BBC's Student Journalist of the Year 2019, securing a place on the BBC's Journalism Trainee Scheme.

I have been working as a trainee journalist for the BBC since September 2020, across Radio 4's Today, Panorama and Newsnight.”

Michael Sutton

2005-2010



“I left my primary school St Maria Goretti's and joined Corpus Christi in 2005, where I achieved 10 GCSEs A*-A, served as Deputy Head Boy and received the Knights of St Columba award for outstanding contribution to school life.

I went on to study History at Cardinal Newman College & Lancaster University, where I received a fully funded scholarship to study for an MA in politics. At university, I was elected President of my campus, which meant I organised events such as Freshers Week & the Christmas Ball for over 1000 students alongside studying for my degree.

After leaving education I joined the graduate scheme at British Telecom in 2017 as a Business Improvement Professional - a fast track programme to progress graduates into senior management positions. I've continued to study for further qualifications which I manage around my day job, including becoming a Chartered Credit Manager (CICM) & Six Sigma Practitioner.

The hard-working values that I learned at Corpus Christi, coupled with the support I received from my teachers, had a big impact on all of these achievements and continue to influence me to this very day.”

Inspiring future generations of pupils at Corpus Christi

Victoria Bamber

1999-2004



“After leaving our school in 2004 I went on to attend Cardinal Newman College and Salford University, where I achieved a 2:1 in Journalism and Broadcasting. I moved to Edinburgh to get some writing experience and expanded my skills in public relations and marketing.

I now live in London and currently run the Communications department of Amref Health Africa, a global charity that saves lives by improving healthcare across Africa. It's my job to talk to the media and shout about the work all that the charity does.

I have recently returned from a trip to Kenya, living and working alongside the Maasai tribes and nomadic people, documenting how support from the charity has improved their access to healthcare.”

We are always very proud at Corpus Christi to hear about our ex-pupils who have moved on to successful careers in their working lives.

Our Alumni display occupies prominent positions in our school helping to inspire current pupils, highlighting what can be achieved in life.

Holly Bray (Sutton)

2002-2007



“After leaving St Maria Goretti Primary School, I joined Corpus Christi in 2002. During this time, I achieved 12 GCSEs, alongside being involved in several extra-curricular activities including multiple school productions, the steel band, and the Close Harmony Choir.

I went on to study English Language at Cardinal Newman College and Lancaster University, and then completed a master's degree in Magazine Journalism at the University of Central Lancashire. At this time, I also started my blog called A Branch of Holly, which went on to win three national industry awards.

I was employed as Marketing Co-ordinator at Cardinal Newman College before launching my own coaching business, A Branch of Holly, which is now in its fourth year. My aim is to help small business owners learn how to work more effectively and develop a personalised business model, so they can create a business that supports the lifestyle they want to live. Since starting my business, I have worked with over 100 clients and been able to hire my first team member, which meant that my business could continue while I took maternity leave. In the future, I am looking forward to launching new offerings, expanding my team and continuing to serve my community doing work that fulfils me every single day.

I know I would not be where I am today without the hard work and dedication that was instilled in me during my time at Corpus Christi. The values I developed as a pupil are the same values I hold to this day and will continue to pass onto my clients.”

Jade Walkden-Fenerty

2011-2016



“My education started at The Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School, until I then moved up to Corpus Christi in 2011. Looking back, I'm really grateful for my time in high school, as I made really strong friendships with people who inspired me and pushed me to do well, and have supported me in all of my life choices so far. I completed my A levels at Cardinal Newman College with grades of AAB, which honestly I didn't think I was capable of - but all of my hard work and revision running up to exam season paid off!

I'm currently in my 2nd year, studying a joint honours degree in English with Communication and Media at the University of Liverpool, and after I have graduated I plan to do my Masters degree at the University of Manchester.

If I had any advice to give to current students at Corpus Christi, I'd say don't be afraid to try different paths, or to even start again, until you find what makes you happy.”

Ellie Martin

2009-2014



“At school I loved science but struggled with mathematics. I had to work for my grades, good results didn't come naturally, but with support I achieved a B in mathematics.

I went to study at Cardinal Newman College swapping from A levels to BTECs and then went to Cumbria University where I graduated in Diagnostic Radiography.

Studying hasn't always been plain sailing for me. At college I changed to a BTEC to suit my learning style and balancing university with the other demands of life was at times challenging.

After graduating I was placed on the register of Radiographers to work through the covid pandemic. Every covid patient has an x-ray and the Covid pandemic has been a year that I doubt I will not witness again in my career.

The key to my success is consistency and reaching out for support when I needed it, whether that was academically or emotionally. If I could go back and give my 15 year old self any advice it would be to not undervalue yourself – show up, get the work done and find what works for you and the results will come.”

Emily McDonald-Romero

2007-2012



“I attended primary school at English Martyrs and moved up to Corpus Christi in 2007. I was always inspired by the faith life of the school and it really stayed with me as I was growing up.

I completed my GCSEs and studied A-Levels at Runshaw College and moved to Spain and taught English in schools, academies and even at a university! I moved back home two years later and completed my degree at UCLan in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages with Spanish. After a lot of hard work, many hours in the library and support from my family and friends, I graduated in 2018.

Once I completed my degree, I began to volunteer at Corpus Christi in the Chaplaincy department and recalled the care and support that I had felt during my time here as a pupil. I have now worked at Corpus Christi for three years and I absolutely love what I do! It just goes to show that with hard work, perseverance and a desire to fulfil your God-given calling – anything is possible!”

Bradley Lewis

2009-2014



“I left St. Gregory's Primary School in 2009 and started at Corpus Christi, leaving in 2014. I completed GCSE's in English Language, English Literature, Maths, Engineering, Combined Science, RE and PE. I enjoyed Engineering, which drove me to pursue a career within the industry. My hard work and determination to achieve my goals carried through from Corpus Christi to my professional career. I began a multi-disciplined Engineering apprenticeship with Alstom in 2014 and became an Electronics Technician in 2019. This progression within my field was enabled by my drive to further my education through a level 4 NVQ Rail Technician apprenticeship.”



Alumni: *Be inspired by our past pupils!*

Louise Martin (nee Cox)

1976-1981



“I left St Thomas More's Catholic High School in 1981. I was set 3 for most lessons, and was the invisible child, always did their homework, never late, never caused a problem. I cruised, did what I had to do to survive. My options were all practical subjects (no homework required) I was entered for CSEs and gained all eight as well as two O'levels paid for by my parents.

Within a week of leaving school, I was in the workplace and my typing skills being put to good use. Being the youngest of 5 sisters I found conversing easy with my elders and I made good progress in the business world. By 1986 I was working as a Local Government Officer and soon had a supervisory position.

Then came the family and I decided I wanted to spend as much time as possible with my young family, so set up a business from home, and had the benefits of both worlds.

I returned to the workforce in 2000 as a school clerk of a large primary school with 300 children on roll. This was about the time that the Government was offloading more and more duties from the local authority to the schools and the post of School Business Manager was being created. Training was heavily subsidised and I enrolled on a Certification of School Business Management. The educational experience was exhilarating, I excelled and emerged myself completely in the learning process, all the time juggling work and being mum.

Roles in school changed. I became the lead for HR, Finance, Premises, Health & Safety and Environmental issues. I created a networking group with other local primary schools, sharing good practice and offering support to the less confident. Every time I thought about moving on for my career progression, the Headteacher beat me to it, so I ended up staying for 15 years.

2 years after the CSBM, I enrolled on the Diploma for School Business Management, again excelling at the work based education and forging networking links further afield from my Penwortham cluster.

2014 saw a big change, after a few attempts, I finally managed to secure a position within a high school. This high school had undergone a devastating fire in 2013 and lost two thirds of the school buildings. Staff were unhappy with leadership and industrial action had taken place. There were lots of staff absences and the quality of education was less than satisfactory.

A school in 'Requires Improvement', falling roll, overstaffing and long term absences soon put the finances in a deficit position and I was tasked to come up with a recovery plan to pay off the £500,000 debt within a three year period.

Fast forward to 2020, debt cleared, school considered 'Good' by Ofsted, teaching good, happy staff, thriving students. Not bad for an 'average' child.”

Rebecca Tootell

2007-2012



“I am a Personal Development, Health and Physical Education Teacher in Sydney, Australia. I attended St. Claire's Catholic Primary School before moving onto Corpus Christi Catholic High School between 2007 to 2012.

At high school, I was definitely not the brightest pupil in the class and had a number of challenges to overcome throughout my high school years. It was throughout this time the teachers at Corpus Christi helped me realise that I was more than capable of achieving and hard work alongside dedication was vital to allow me to succeed. The teachers provided me endless opportunities to be the best version of myself. This included giving up their lunch time, staying behind after school and providing endless amounts of advice and guidance over the years. This really taught me that if you work hard, try your best, listen to feedback and are motivated to succeed, you will be the best version of yourself. These life skills have shaped the person I am today and are now embedded in the lessons that I teach to my pupils.

After achieving 8 A*-C GCSE's, I attended Cardinal Newman College where I studied an Extended Diploma in BTEC Sport. I then continued my studies at Leeds Beckett University where I achieved a First Class Honours Degree in Physical Education before completing my Teaching Degree at the University of Cumbria. I am now a high school Personal Development, Health and Physical Education Teacher, teaching pupils between 11 – 18 years old at Northern Beaches Secondary College, Sydney, Australia.

I honour my achievements to my previous teachers, many of whom still work at Corpus Christi and are the reason behind my academic success and professional development.”

Kevin Kilbane

1988-1993



“I was a St Gregory's pupil who enjoyed a happy and successful high school at Corpus Christi and signed for Preston North End football Club as an apprentice on the day I left school in 1993.

I broke into the first team in 1996, making 55 appearances and scoring three goals. From PNE I moved to West Brom, Sunderland, Everton, Wigan, Hull City and Huddersfield Town to eventually end my career at Derby County making a total of 600 appearances and scoring 53 goals.

I was awarded my first Ireland cap against Iceland in September 1997. I was thrilled to represent Ireland and proud to stand second only to Shay Given as the most capped Irish player of all time. As a versatile left-sided player I mainly performed in defence after spending much of my career as a winger. I also played in the World Cup play-off ties against France in November 2009 and also played against Brazil in London.

I scored a total of eight international goals, always remembering with pride my spectacular headed goal in the UEFA 2012 qualifying tie against Andorra at the Aviva Stadium in September 2010. Unluckily sustaining a back injury brought an end to my remarkable feats in international football.

Towards the end of my career I have concentrated on forging a media career and now work as an analyst for Virgin Media Television (Ireland), BBC Radio 5 Live, BBC Match of the Day, Football Focus, Final Score and Ireland's Newstalk Radio Off the Ball Football Show.”

Rebecca Hopkins

2011-2016



“I started Corpus Christi in September 2011 following my primary education at St Gregory's where I was strongest in English and Physical Education. This continued when I went to Corpus Christi where I played in almost all school teams. Some of my fondest memories are playing netball and basketball matches away at other schools and rounders tournaments in summer. The PE department were always supportive of me throughout and their advice shaped my attitude to life in general, in terms of resilience and understanding the importance of team work.

When I started high school I became aware of the balance of developing existing knowledge from primary while being introduced to a range of new subjects such as design and technology and in particular electronics, where I believe my flare for precision and intuition first developed.

Paired with consistent teaching in STEM subjects such as maths and physics, I began to develop a liking to numerical principles in general. My teacher at the time pushed the idea of strong discipline and work ethic but also to learn and gain knowledge. This I think helped me detach from exam stress and gain an impressive range of GCSE's in 2016.

I moved onto Cardinal Newman College to study Mathematics, Economics and Accounting and also played for the netball team and Preston netball club. I really developed a head for figures at college and I decided to further my education by starting a degree in Mathematics at UCLan.

So the butterfly effect has taken its course and thanks to a number of key members of staff and the ethos at Corpus Christi, I'm about to graduate this year and hopefully become one of those influential members of staff teaching mathematics one day too.”

Brandon Worrall

2009-2014



“Brandon a student from Corpus Christi and Preston's College has described what it was like to star in hit TV series 'Peaky Blinders', alongside Tom Hardy.

Brandon, landed a recurring role in season four of the BBC's famous gangster drama, starring as one of the blinders.

After studying Drama GCSE and Level 3 Performing Arts at Preston's College, Brandon now studies at The Academy of Live and Recording Arts North Drama School.

Brandon shot several episodes on the Liverpool set and has filmed scenes alongside stars such as Cillian Murphy, Paul Anderson and Helen McCrory.

Brandon said: 'Being on set was crazy, especially on the first day when I got to Liverpool and saw all the street set out in 1920's style with everyone in their costumes.

'It was like I jumped back in time, besides all the camera equipment.

'Working with such talented actors the likes of Cillian Murphy and Helen McCrory was a huge thing for me because not only did I learn so much, but it made me want to pursue my career in acting even more.”

Sarah Van Parys

2002-2007



“I left Corpus Christi in 2007 and I am 30 now and been a freelance Theatre Director for around seven to eight years after studying Drama at Liverpool John Moore's University between 2009 and 2012. I trained as a Director at the Everyman and Playhouse Theatre and also run a theatre company called 'Falling Doors Theatre' and Co-Artistic Director of 'Theatre in the Rough'. I am very excited to be moving to London next year to join the Old Vic to complete a directing residency, a fantastic directing opportunity I got before COVID hit - though a bit delayed I am looking forward to the challenge and it is going to be very exciting!”

Malique Martins

2011-2016



“I initially went to Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School where I really enjoyed mathematics and very early in life in my last year at primary school decided I wanted to own my own business, whatever that was going to be.

I went on to Corpus Christi Catholic High School in 2011 and further enhanced my love for mathematics but picked up a new love for Business Studies. Alongside this, I captained the school football team from years 7 to 11 and played for the school's successful basketball team reaching the Lancashire Cup finals.

Being a black student and going to a multi-cultural school really helped my confidence, although there were a few hiccups, the support was always there in excessive amounts when

I needed it. It is fair to say, the earlier years in school were tougher, mainly for not being a good student and hanging around with the wrong crowd. It was in year 9 and receiving the right guidance from my form teacher and a few other members of staff, I was later selected to be Deputy Head Boy.

Now, in 2021, I am in my final year of a Business Management Degree at UCLan, as well as establishing and registering two profitable businesses.

It was through hard work, determination and the ability to take constructive criticism that I am now on track for a First Honours Degree, a substantial qualification in providing a firm foundation for my businesses to thrive and be successful.”