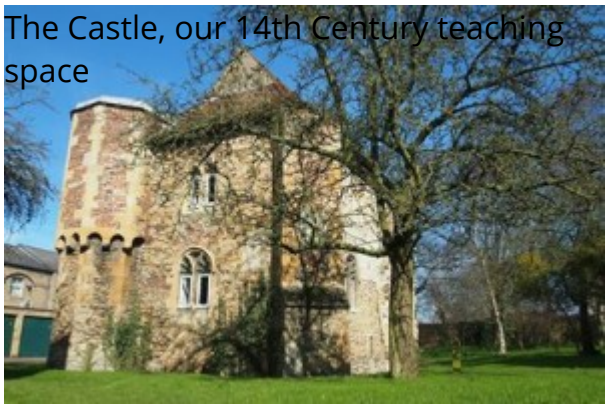
With only two weeks in England, we wanted to pack as much into the Catholic Junior College's linguistics course as possible to make this an academic and cultural experience not to be missed. And on the first day, we started as we meant to go on!



Our day in London began bright and early at the British Museum. The tour guide Mark selected some excellent exhibits to focus on, including the Rosetta Stone with a detailed demonstration of how exactly it had been used to unlock hieroglyphs – interesting stuff for a linguistics group! We went to Parliament Square and saw Westminster Abbey, Big Ben, the Palace of Westminster, and the London Eye, then to Buckingham Palace, and down the Mall past St James' Park, to Trafalgar Square. Mark had endless knowledge – even in the coach, he was constantly pointing out interesting landmarks – and this was not limited to history, as he also gave a great tour of the National Gallery. As we left in the evening for Cambridge, it was clear that this excursion was a brilliant introduction to England.



The Castle, our 14th Century teaching space

The course had a large number of highlights. Classes were held in a 14th Century Castle, a Grade I listed building. Students had a chance to see Cambridge city centre and all its famous landmarks, including a look inside King's College Chapel.The students did research with local Cambridge residents exploring phonology and lexicon, organized by Language Landscape. No trip to Cambridge would be complete without having a go at punting, navigating these traditional Cambridge flat

boats along the River Cam. There was a chance to try British food (with mixed reactions to steak and kidney pudding...) We saw the musical 'Into the Woods' at the ADC Theatre, Britain's oldest university playhouse which has produced some of our most famous actors, comedians and directors, from Emma Thompson to Hugh Laurie to Sir Trevor Nunn.



The trip was both academically and culturally enriching. The two weeks were spent in stunning Cambridge, but we also had day excursions to places such as London, Norwich and Stratford-upon-Avon. In addition, we had the opportunity to visit two English schools: The Green School, located near London, and The Norwich School in Norwich town. Both visits gave us a glimpse into the lives of schooling British teenagers and what we saw as a fascinating breeding ground for dialect contact in the UK. We had a guided tour of the Green School conducted by the student leaders, had lunch in the canteen and attended classes in subjects such as Psychology and Chemistry. Norwich School has a history of a thousand years and is breathtakingly beautiful. The students have their daily morning assembly in the imposing Norwich Cathedral, which some of us consider to be more beautiful than King's College Chapel in Cambridge! The prefects brought us around the school, explaining its history and its architecture. We also had the opportunity to record the regional accents of students in both schools.



This course was a great academic opportunity, with excellent teachers offering classes on a range of interesting topics, from varieties in American English to psycholinguistics. But it was also a chance for students to immerse themselves in a different culture and environment, an opportunity that everyone made the most of. Catholic Junior College have also written about the course, so to learn more about the students' thoughts click here.



Students with their certificates