



St Benedict's Newsletter 302

19 September 2025



Catholic Social Teaching

This week within assemblies our focus moves to another core strand of Catholic Social Teaching: Solidarity. Catholic Social Teaching reminds us that we are one human family, called to stand together, support one another, and work for the common good. Solidarity means recognising that the joys and struggles of our brothers and sisters are also ours, because we are united in Christ.

To help us understand this, we turn to the words of St Paul, who reminds us that although we are many, we are joined together in one body through Christ: “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.” – 1 Corinthians 12:12

During our assemblies we were encouraged to consider one way we can live this out in school life is by supporting our inter-house competitions. These events remind us that while we may compete as different houses, we stand together as one community,

celebrating each other’s talents and encouraging one another to do our best, building on the dignity theme from last week. Solidarity is not just about feeling compassion but about

acting together and supporting those who are vulnerable, celebrating others' achievements, and recognising that we are stronger when we walk side by side.

St Mother Teresa reminds us of this truth when she said: "I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things."

Her words remind us that each of us has unique gifts, but it is only when we share them and work together that we build a community that reflects God's love.

At St Benedict's, living in solidarity means valuing teamwork, encouraging one another, and remembering that our differences are not divisions but blessings. Solidarity invites us to act for justice, to be peacemakers, and to stand with those in need.

Pope Francis reflects this beautifully:

"Solidarity is a word that frightens the developed world... but it is our future." (Homily, 2013)

Throughout the week we can live out solidarity in simple but powerful ways:

- **Wisdom:** Working together as a team, whether in class, sport, or friendships. As true wisdom sees that we are stronger together than apart.
- **Compassion:** Choosing to walk alongside others, sharing in their struggles and joys, and making sure no one feels left out or forgotten.
- **Resilience:** Standing firm together, especially in times of challenge. When difficulties arise, resilience means supporting one another so that no one carries their burden alone. Lifting up someone who is struggling with kind words or actions. This week let us reflect: How can I be a source of unity in my classroom, my friendships, and my family? Can I listen more carefully, include others, or step in to help someone who is feeling left out? Each small act of togetherness builds a community rooted in Christ's love.

"That they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us." – John 17:21

Prayer

Loving God,

You created us to live not in isolation but as one family.

Teach us to walk together in solidarity,

to notice those who feel alone,

to stand with those in need,

and to celebrate the gifts of every person.

May our words and actions bring unity, peace, and hope,

so that our school community becomes a reflection of your Kingdom.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Open Morning



Open Morning

Saturday 27th September 2025



Find out more about our wonderful school at our Open Morning for prospective Year 7 students.
10am to 12.30pm on 27th September 2025
For more information about applying for a Year 7 place for September 2026 please visit our website at: www.st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk



**St Benedict's
Catholic School**
*Developing Wisdom, Compassion and Resilience
through Prayer and Work*



St Benedict's Catholic School
Developing Wisdom, Compassion and Resilience through Prayer and Work

We know that choosing a secondary school for your child is a big decision. At St Benedict's we believe that our community is distinctive and unique and we have worked hard to ensure that our values are evident in all we do. We are incredibly proud of our school and the young people at St Benedict's. We hope that you will get a clear sense of the school and the distinctiveness of our community both from our materials and through visits to the school. Our school is a high-achieving one, with our curriculum underpinned by Gospel values and by our Catholic ethos in practice. Our vision as a school centres particularly on the Gospel values of Wisdom, Compassion and Resilience and our curriculum reflects these values and principles. As a school community we serve a large geographic area and welcome students and families who are supportive of our distinctive ethos from all backgrounds. As a result, our community serves many students who describe themselves as Catholic, those of other faiths and those with no faith. We are an inclusive school where students of all abilities, talents and cultures are nurtured and supported to achieve their potential. St Benedict's students are polite, conscientious, reflective and supportive of one another. We have many opportunities for student leadership including charity work and service in the local community and our students engage with a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. Our values as a school encourage students to see competition as a mutual challenge where all contribute and we take pride in both personal and collective success. As a school we hold the Gold Award for religious studies and ensure that the spiritual, moral, cultural and social development of students is a priority.

We also hold the Gold Artsmark and are a Duke of Edinburgh Award accredited centre and encourage our students to develop their understanding of the world through many extra and super curricular activities.

We are very proud of both the 2025 Ofsted report (June 2025) and our Section 48 Inspection (July 2022) which highlighted that this is a school where young people are happy and flourish and where it is 'OK to be different'. (Ofsted report)

Students leave St Benedict's well-prepared for the life that awaits them beyond school through a well-rounded education that goes beyond the confines of the academic curriculum and examinations. We believe that every one of our students should go out into the world ready to make it a better place.

If you are interested in finding out more or visiting our school, please join us for our Open Morning or get in touch.

Imogen Senior
Mrs Imogen Senior Headteacher

Careers Update

For those parents and carers who would like to know the key facts about going to university, [here](#) is a link to **The Parents Guide to University** with information about this post-18 destination.

Student Experience Opportunities

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS - Careers in STEM Virtual Event: 24th September from 5pm - 6.30pm

Gain a greater understanding on what a career in STEM could look like with 6 of the world-leading STEM companies: NESO, National Grid, Spectris, BDO, Wates and more! To register, click on this link: [Young Professionals Careers in STEM | Virtual Event Survey](#)

Exploring pathways in Years 9–13 (14-18yrs) [CareerDays.co.uk](#) runs online, **live, 1-day online Career Days** across a wide range of subjects to help students decide what career paths they may be interested in. Mornings focus on what the career is really like and how to apply to university; afternoons provide work-experience activities plus a live Q&A.

Students receive a personalised certificate afterwards.

See Autumn 2025 dates: [CareerDays.co.uk](#)

Info & booking: www.careerdays.co.uk

Ms Hahn

Year 12 Parliament Trip

On Wednesday 17th September the Y12 Politics class, and other students interested in the subject, travelled to London to visit the Houses of Parliament.

After a rainy drive down to Redbridge Underground Station we caught the tube to Westminster. Our first stop was a visit to the Supreme Court - the highest court in the land. The building in the old Middlesex Guildhall was converted into the Supreme Court after the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 and opened in 2009. Since then it has made several constitutionally important judgements. The students enjoyed learning about the court and sitting in the judges' chairs.

Then we walked up Whitehall to Downing Street, glancing left and right to see the various cabinet offices lining the street. We peered through the gates of Downing Street, but unfortunately we didn't see the prime minister as he was at Windsor Castle meeting Donald Trump! We then continued along Whitehall to Trafalgar Square, stopping to look at the Banqueting House, the site of Charles I's execution in 1649.

After a quick tour of the Tudors and Stuarts room in the National Portrait Gallery, the students had lunch in Trafalgar Square before retracing their steps along Whitehall to the Palace of Westminster.

We had a brilliant tour from our guide Emily, which included the 'Noes' division lobby, the chamber of the House of Commons (where we briefly met MP Graham Leadbitter from the SNP), Central Hall, St Stephen's Hall and Westminster Hall. Unfortunately, on this occasion we weren't able to see the House of Lords as the lords were in session.

After our tour, the students enjoyed an excellent workshop, 'Snap Election', in the Education Centre. However, the highlight of this session was a visit from two of the MP for Bury St Edmunds aides. Unfortunately, Peter Prinsley couldn't be with us in person, but his two assistants did a fantastic job in his absence. It was a lovely surprise that one of them was an alumni of St Benedict's!

Harry Dunn left St Benedict's in 2017 after completing his GCSEs and winning a scholarship to Eton. Since then he has completed a degree in medicine at Cambridge University and is working for Peter Prinsley for a few months before starting a new job in a few months time, with the aim of becoming an MP at some point in the future. He did a great job of inspiring our students to consider a career in Politics themselves.

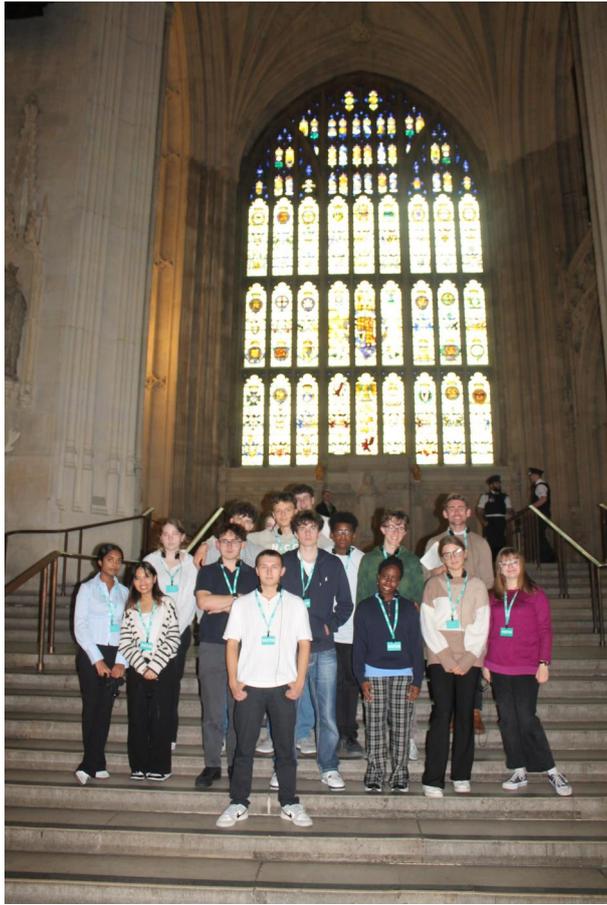
Our walk back to Westminster Station introduced the students to another important element of democracy, the right to peaceful protest as there was a demonstration in full

swing in Parliament Square. We think that Jeremy Corby was addressing the crowd as we walked past.

All in all, it was a excellent day, which provided the students with an opportunity to visit the legislature, the executive and the judiciary of the United Kingdom. The students were excellent ambassadors for the school and a pleasure to be with, which made for a very enjoyable visit.

Mr Murphy





School Musical Spoiler Alert!!



Can you guess the show? Watch this space for more details!

Mrs Roughley

[Tabata Club \(Thursdays, 15:50 – 16:30, in the hall\)](#)

Are you interested in improving your fitness in a fast, fun and non-competitive way? Then come along to our Tabata club on Thursdays after school.

Tabata - named after its Japanese founder Izumi Tabata – is a high intensity interval training (HIIT) which consists of 20 seconds of exercise at your maximum effort, followed by 10 seconds of rest, for a total of four minutes per round. You do four rounds altogether which makes a grand total of 16 minutes of exercise.

Sounds easy, doesn't it? Well, don't be fooled!

If you do it properly and work at your max, it will be tough, and you will have to grit your teeth till the end. Pushing yourself though during the intense workout intervals will give you an immediate mood boost and a real sense of achievement. You will leave being more energised, calmer and feeling good about yourself.

We are looking forward to seeing you on Thursday. All students and staff are welcome!

Ms Wintersteller and Miss Shepherd

Suffolk Historic Bike Ride

Once again, St Benedict's was represented on the annual fundraising event of the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust, an organisation dedicated to the preservation and restoration of the hundreds of important churches and chapels of Suffolk. Each year, cyclists are invited to visit as many churches as they wish, obtaining sponsorship money for their efforts. In previous years Mr Murphy has taken part and led rides on behalf of St Edmund's Church. This year, he was unable to take part, but former headteacher Hugh O'Neill, and foundation governor Dorothy Neoh took up the challenge. Starting at St Edmund's Church at 9.00am, they set off out of town. First stop was Nowton church, then a climb up to Hawstead. After a fast pit stop at Maglia Rosso, they rode out to the church of St Petronella at Whepstead, then called at Whepstead Baptist Church. After riding back across to Lawshall they stopped briefly at the Catholic church there before calling at Lawshall Church. The final leg of the ride took them through Stanningfield and to the lovely church at Great Whelnetham before returning to St Edmund's by 1.30pm. Total ride distance was about 25 miles, mainly uphill, or so it seemed. As always, there was plenty to see and admire in each of these places of worship.

If you would like to support this worthy cause, you can do so via the school ParentPay site, marking your donation SHCT. Every contribution is appreciated.

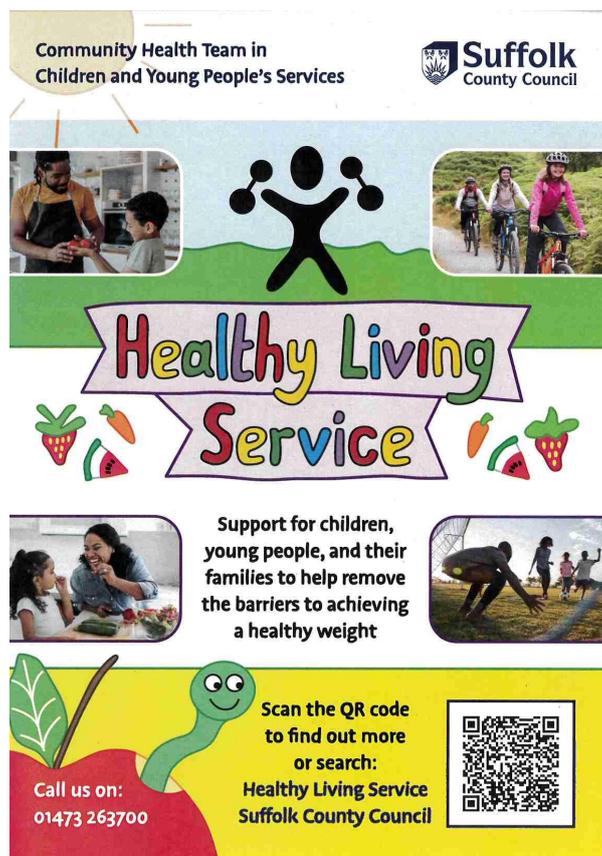
Mr O'Neill and Mr Murphy

Confirmation at St Edmunds

The date for Confirmation this year is Thursday 18th June 2026. If your child is in Y9 or above and you wish to register for this year's confirmation programme, you must attend the information meeting for parents on Thursday 23rd October at 7.30pm in the Crypt (at St Edmunds Church) and email confirmationatstedmunds@gmail.com to receive the online registration form.

Mr D'Mello

Healthy Living Information



Community Health Team in
Children and Young People's Services

Suffolk
County Council

Healthy Living
Service

Support for children,
young people, and their
families to help remove
the barriers to achieving
a healthy weight

Call us on:
01473 263700

Scan the QR code
to find out more
or search:
Healthy Living Service
Suffolk County Council

The poster features a central banner with the text 'Healthy Living Service' in colorful, playful fonts. Above the banner is a black silhouette of a person with arms raised, flanked by two circular images: one of a man and a child in a kitchen, and another of a family riding bicycles. Below the banner are icons of a strawberry, a carrot, and a watermelon slice. At the bottom, there is a QR code and a cartoon character of a green worm-like figure with a face, emerging from a red apple.

Theatre Royal Survey

Over the past two years, our youth advisory board has been working hard on projects to help support the facilitation of our work with children and young people. This is a group of 12 young people who work together to formulate projects designed specifically for children and young people who use, or would like to use, our building.

The group has created a survey to find out more about how young people would like to be involved with the Theatre and would be very grateful for any responses.

The survey isn't particularly long. But any answers we receive would be greatly appreciated.

The deadline for answers to the survey is the 1st October.

Link to survey - [Link](#)

Mrs Keefe

Uniform and Punctuality

St Benedict's Catholic School prides itself on having a neat and dignified uniform, representing our identity to the community as a whole. High standards of personal presentation reinforce our values of self-respect and pride for our school and in ourselves.

If a student is unclear whether an item of clothing or appearance is acceptable, they should – in advance – speak with their tutor or Head of Year. All clothing must be clearly marked with the student's name.

Please see the website for full details of the school's uniform policy: [Uniform](#)

Thank you very much for your assistance in helping us to maintain our uniform standards.

Please can we also remind all students that they need to be in school before the first bell at 08:50 to prevent a late mark being recorded. Please see the school website for more information about attendance: [School Day](#)

Data Collection Sheet Updates

It is important that the information we hold about your child is kept up-to-date.

Please remember that as a parent/guardian/carer, you can check, amend and update most of your child's information on Arbor, including changing your mobile number and address or adding information such as religion, family contacts, medical information and transport method.

If you are struggling to do this please email Arbor@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk where we will be able to help you.

Thanks

Mrs Defew

Reporting Absences

Reporting your child's absence

If your child is unwell or has an appointment e.g. dentist/doctor could you please leave a message by 9.00am including the reason for the absence via:

Phone: 01284 753512 and Choose option 1:

And then choose option 1 for students in year 7-11 and option 2 for students in the sixth form

OR

Email: attendance@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk

For information on what to do if your child has COVID-like symptoms please see the following link for NHS guidance:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Just a reminder that if you do not inform us by 9.00am or use the above phone/email address, you will receive an email requesting the reason for your child's absence. All unexplained absences will be marked as unauthorised and there will be a follow-up phone call from the Attendance Officer. Please note the school operates a first-day response to absences.

If, in exceptional circumstances, you need to request permission for your child to be absent from school during term time, you should complete a **leave of absence application form (please see link below)**, at least three weeks in advance, stating the reason why the absence must be taken in term time. Please note that the Fixed Penalty Fine is now £80 per legal guardian for unauthorised absences of 10 sessions (5 days) or more.

<https://www.st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=74&type=pdf>

Thank you very much.

Mrs Wesley - Attendance Officer

Dates for your Diary



22 September - Year 11 Extended Assembly on Post-16 Options with West Suffolk College

24 September - Inter-House Cross Country

25 September - Lunchtime Careers Talk (12.45-1.25pm)"An International Career in Medical Laboratory Science" with Jonathan Gregory - All Year groups welcome

27 September - Open Morning

30 September - Year 9 Information Evening

2 October - Year 8 Information Evening

7 October - Year 10 Information Evening

6 - 8 October - Year 12 Residential

10 October - PD Day

21 October - Sixth Form Open Evening

[Term Dates](#)

[Contact Us](#)



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[Instagram](#)