



St Benedict's Newsletter 303

26 September 2025



Catholic Social Teaching

This week within assemblies our focus turns to another essential strand of Catholic Social Teaching: The Common Good. The Church teaches us that society can only flourish when we work together for the wellbeing of all, not just for ourselves. The Common Good calls us to look beyond our own interests, to consider how our choices, actions, and words affect others, and to ensure that no one is excluded from the blessings of community life.

We are reminded in Scripture that:

*“Let each of you look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.” –
Philippians 2:4*

Our assemblies this week have encouraged us to ask: *“How do my words and actions help to build up the whole community?”* We have explored the difference between meanness and bullying. Both are wrong and both can hurt, but they are not the same. Bullying is different as it’s not just a one-off, it’s something that continues and wears someone down.

Meanness can be like a cut, it stings in the moment. But bullying is like a wound that keeps being opened again and again. It is repeated, intentional, and can deeply damage a person’s

dignity. That is why it harms not just the individual, but also the Common Good of the whole community.

The Common Good reminds us that our words matter. Every person has dignity, and we are called to build up, not tear down. We live this out in school life when we contribute to group work, support our inter-house competitions, and just as importantly when we choose kindness, stand against bullying, and include those who might otherwise be left out.

St Augustine reminds us: *“What does love look like? It has hands to help others, it has eyes to see misery and want, it has ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of people.”*

His words capture the heart of the Common Good: love is practical. It is seen in the small, everyday choices we make to support one another and to ensure no one is left out.

At St Benedict’s, working for the Common Good means treating others with fairness, sharing our talents generously, and remembering that we are all responsible for making our school a place where every person feels valued and included.

Pope Francis challenges us with these words:

“The common good... is the good of ‘all of us,’ made up of individuals, families and intermediate groups who together constitute society.” (Address, 2014)

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

- **Wisdom:** Seeing how our words and actions affect others, and choosing what builds up rather than breaks down.
- **Compassion:** Caring for those who might otherwise be forgotten, ensuring no one is left behind or excluded.
- **Resilience:** Persevering in doing what is right, even when it costs us something personally, for the sake of others.

Jesus teaches us: *“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.”* – *Matthew 7:12*

This week let us reflect: Am I willing to think not only about myself but also about others? Do my words build people up, or do they tear people down? Do I make choices that strengthen the Common Good of our school community? Each small act for the Common Good helps to build God’s Kingdom here on earth. This week challenge yourself to do one small thing each day to benefit the wider community (hold a door open, include someone new, share your time, or offer words of encouragement). Remember: even one kind word can restore dignity and strengthen the Common Good. Together, these small acts of love help us all flourish.

Prayer

Loving God,

You call us to live not just for ourselves, but for one another.

Help us to seek the good of all people,

to share what we have,

to listen with patience,

and to act with justice.

May our words and actions always build up the Common Good in our school community,

and may they reflect your love for the world.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Open Morning - Tomorrow



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

Careers Talk: An International Career in Medical Laboratory Science

On Thursday this week, our very own Jonathan Gregory (Science and IT Technician) delivered a superb talk about his international career as a biomedical scientist. After completing his A Levels, Jonathan started working in pathology for the NHS on an apprenticeship-style programme at age 18yrs. Following a decade in the role, he and his wife, (also a biomedical scientist) agreed they had reached the ceiling for progression in their careers and decided to leave the UK to work in the military hospital in Riyadh (capital of Saudi Arabia)! Returning to the UK after 6 years (and a host of wonderful encounters with Saudi locals and camels), Jonathan joined a small company as a technical specialist, developing technical equipment and services for hospitals, vets, and water companies. This new role involved world-wide travel, taking Jonathan from the USA and Canada to Europe, India, Australia, China and South Korea.

So, what does a Biomedical Scientist actually do? Jonathan identified the four main areas of Biomedical work: Infection, Blood and Cell Sciences, and Genetics and Molecular Pathology. He spoke about the incredible advances biomedical scientists have made, and continue to make, in our world, citing the example this week of the breakthrough in treating Huntington's Disease (announced on 24th September). Jonathan explained to the 25-strong student audience that today, biomedical scientists are legally required to be registered with

the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and can enter the profession via 4 main routes: an [IBMS](#) Accredited BSc degree with registration portfolio (the most efficient route), an IBMS Accredited BSc degree without registration portfolio, a Non-IBMS Accredited BSc degree or an "Equivalence route" i.e. already working at the level of a biomedical scientist. Having enlightened us all about the amazing opportunities and life experiences his career had offered him, Jonathan encouraged all of us to think of Life as a journey, not a destination, and to *enjoy the ride!*

Jonathan's "ride" continues at St. Benedict's...

Student Volunteer Opportunity

[Brightstars](#) are looking for volunteers aged **14yrs and above** to support play sessions with children and young adults with SEND. See attached flyer for more information.

Miss Hahn



The flyer is for Brightstars, featuring a pink heart logo with the text 'BRIGHTSTARS'. The main title is 'Volunteer Opportunity' in large black font. Below it, a text box says 'We are looking for people aged 14 and above to come and volunteer at our SEND playgroup.' To the right is a graphic of three hands (blue, yellow, green) reaching up towards stars. Below this is the 'BRIGHTSTARS We Care' logo. A photograph of a building with a ramp is shown. A purple section at the bottom contains the following text: 'WE NEED HELP WITH:' followed by a bullet point 'Assisting with our play sessions for children and young adults with SEND'. To the right of this, it says 'WE RUN ALTERNATE SATURDAY SESSIONS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. CHOOSE TO HELP IN OUR MORNING OR AFTERNOON GROUP.' and provides the email 'brightstarsbse@btinternet.com'.

BRIGHTSTARS

Volunteer Opportunity

We are looking for people aged 14 and above to come and volunteer at our SEND playgroup.

BRIGHTSTARS
We Care

Join us this Autumn at The Bury HUB

WE NEED HELP WITH:

- Assisting with our play sessions for children and young adults with SEND

WE RUN ALTERNATE SATURDAY SESSIONS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. CHOOSE TO HELP IN OUR MORNING OR AFTERNOON GROUP.

email:
brightstarsbse@btinternet.com

Inter-House Cross Country Championships 2025

On Wednesday 24th September, the school hosted its annual **Inter-House Cross Country Championships**. It was fantastic to see so many students take on the challenge and volunteer to represent their house. Thanks to their enthusiasm, we saw record-breaking participation across all age groups.

Year 7 – 2400m

The first race of the day was the Year 7 Boys and Girls. It proved to be a thrilling contest, with Max Smart (Subiaco) edging ahead of Rosie Coleman (Nursia) in the final moments to take the win in 10:14. Rosie finished close behind in 10:16.

In the boys' competition, Joseph Bonnett (Monte Casino) finished second in 10:47, followed by Christopher Hannaford (Monte Casino) in third with 11:06. In the girls' event, Magdalena Matthews (Nursia, 11:31) and Niamh Walsh (Nursia, 11:45) completed the podium.

- **Team Results:** 🏆 Subiaco | 🥈 Nursia | 🥉 Monte Casino

Years 8 & 9 – 3200m

Year 8 Boys saw a strong showing from Monte Casino, with Sidney Astle (12:56) taking the first spot, Evan Cameron (Nursia) securing second place in 13:14 and Solomon Brokenshire-Dyke (13:19) finishing in third.

- **Team Results:** 🏆 Monte Casino | 🥈 Subiaco | 🥉 Nursia

In the Year 8 Girls race, Clara Needham (Subiaco) claimed victory in 16:12, followed by Alice Nowak (Nursia, 18:05) and Catherine Cunningham (Monte Casino, 19:04).

- **Team Results:** 🏆 Monte Casino | 🥈 Subiaco | 🥉 Nursia

In the **Year 9 Boys** category, Gregory Slater (Monte Casino) took first place with a time of 13:08. Finn Brinkley-Everard (Subiaco) took second in 13:56 and Charlie Glading (Monte Casino) third in a time of 14:33.

- **Team Results:** 🏆 Monte Casino | 🥈 Subiaco | 🥉 Nursia

The **Year 9 Girls** race was dominated by Nursia, with a clean sweep of the top three. Sophie Bolton delivered the standout performance of the day, finishing in 11:55, ahead of Beatrice Harpur-Davies (14:17) and Imogen Knight (14:41).

- **Team Results:** 🏆 Nursia | 🥈 Subiaco | 🥉 Monte Casino

Year 10 – 3200m

In the Year 10 Boys race, Jake McConnell (Monte Casino) came home first in 13:18, followed by Oliver Lamas (Nursia, 13:40) and Noah Wilkinson (Monte Casino, 14:25).

- **Team Results:** 🏆 Monte Casino | 🥈 Nursia | 🥉 Subiaco

The Year 10 Girls race saw an impressive podium sweep by Monte Casino, all from 10P: Amelia Smith (14:33), Lucy Murphy (14:44), and Alanna Evans (17:38). Hannah Jakubowski ran superbly in her first St Benedict's Cross Country, finishing fourth in 18:01.

- **Team Results:** 🏆 Monte Casino | 🥈 Subiaco | 🥉 Nursia

Year 11 – 3200m

The Year 11 Boys event was led by two Nursia athletes: David Lupsa took first place in 12:55, with William Glover following in 13:50. Leon Maloba (Subiaco) claimed third with a strong run in 14:01.

- **Team Results:** 🏆 Nursia | 🥈 Subiaco | 🥉 Monte Casino

In the Year 11 Girls race, Monte Casino dominated once again. Molly Murphy won in 14:18, followed by Eleanor Slater (16:02) and Eliza Ionescu (21:33). Their performance delighted Mr Wallace, especially with Tia Wynne-Rogerson finishing fourth (21:46), securing the team victory.

- **Team Results:** 🏆 Monte Casino | 🥈 Subiaco | 🥉 Nursia

Overall Results

The overall results were as follows:

- **Team Results:** 🏆 Monte Casino | 🥈 Subiaco | 🥉 Nursia

Sixth Form

We would like to extend a huge thank you to our **Sixth Form helpers**, who not only recorded times and positions with great accuracy but also provided fantastic vocal support throughout the day. Some even joined in for the final race, where Subiaco athletes **Maxwell Easton** (19:10) and **Finn Senior** (21:52) took first and second place respectively, followed by **Edison Lorejo** (Monte Casino) in third (21:54).

Looking Ahead

Unfortunately, we can't name every student who participated, but we are **exceptionally proud of all of you** for representing your houses and giving your best effort.

The top eight runners from each race will now go on to represent the school at the **Suffolk Schools Cross Country Championships** at the Royal Hospital School on **Wednesday 24th September**. We wish them every success!

Mr Murphy



Youth SVP Sleep Out: A Night of Compassion and Community



On **Friday 19th September**, twenty Year 8 students took part in a powerful and meaningful event—the **Youth SVP Sleep Out**—to show solidarity with those experiencing homelessness. Sleeping under the stars on the school field in Duke of Edinburgh tents, the students aimed to raise awareness and funds for the **St Vincent de Paul Society**, which supports individuals and families facing housing insecurity. The evening began at **6:30pm** as students arrived and set up their tents. With the sun setting, they spent time playing games on the field before participating in a lively and fun-filled game of **glow stick capture the flag** once night fell. Afterwards, the group gathered in K6 to warm up with **hot chocolate and popcorn**, followed by a **reflective prayer**, offering a moment of thoughtfulness and gratitude. By **9:30pm**, the students settled into their tents, chatting quietly and enjoying each other’s company before lights out. In the morning, they were welcomed with **croissants and fruit juice** before heading home at **9:00am**, tired but proud of their experience, compassion, maturity, and resilience shown by all the participants. They were an absolute credit to the school, and it was a pleasure to share this experience with them. So far, the group has raised an impressive **£570** in sponsorship for the St Vincent de Paul Society—and the total is still growing! If you would like to help increase this amount, **donations can still be made via ParentPay**. A heartfelt thank you goes to **Mrs Berry, Mr Adams, and Mrs Wray** for generously giving up their Friday evening to supervise and support the students, making this event possible.

Participants:

Amaara John, Sidney Astle, Hattie Baldock, Tony Butler, Sophia Collins, Genevieve D’Mello, William Dobson, Thomas Hands, Caleb Howes, Charles Jackson, Jagoda Karpinska, James Knight, Natalia Lagowska, Edwyn Lloyd, Beatrice Millington, Ellis Parsons, Ralph Rice, Maximilian Supke, Dominika Synowiec, Hettie Tatum.

Mr Murphy

Year 10 Art Trip to Cambridge

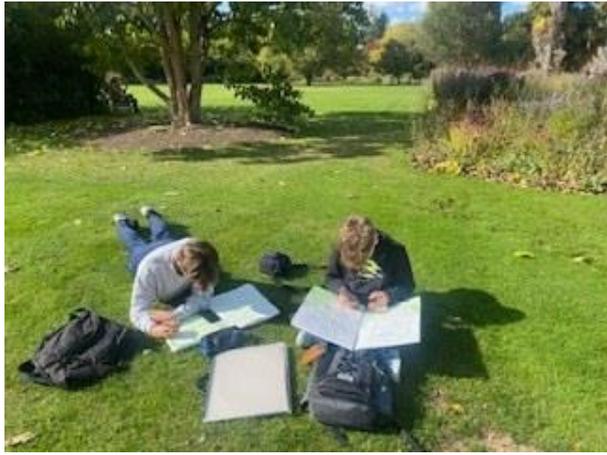
Our 45, Year 10 Art and Textiles Students visited Cambridge Museums’ this week to make studies for their first project of the year on the theme of ‘Structures’. We started the trip well in the sunshine with a visit to the Botanical Gardens making drawings of tropical plants, cacti, alliums and even pomegranates.

We took a short walk to the Zoology Museum to capture studs of butterflies, stick insects, dodo skeleton’s and even a circular saw shell that had travelled to the UK on Darwin’s famous ‘Beagle’ Voyage. The students focus in the gallery was inspiring, and their mature approach is to be commended. We finished the day with a short trip to the Fitzwilliam Museum to gather photos of classical sculptures and armour suits especially to inspire the textile students.

We will use these studies and images to develop 3D structures, paintings and prints over the coming months.

Thank you, Year 10, Miss Stemp, Mr Aligia, Mrs Dunn, Mr Green, Miss Thorne and Miss Tomms for an excellent start to the course and a great trip.

Ms Chacksfield





[Tollgate Roadworks - starting Monday 29 September](#)

The works are programmed to commence on Monday 29 September 2025 and, at present, we are aiming to complete them by early summer 2026. We will issue further updates during the scheme to advise of progress.

The project will involve reconfiguring the junction, replacing the current one-way clockwise system to enable two-way traffic in all directions. We have attached a plan to provide greater detail on the works.

In order to minimise the impact on local road users, residents and businesses, the works will be phased, with varying traffic management throughout. Further details regarding each of the phases can be found below.

Phase One

What will we be doing?

The first phase of the works will include the establishment of our site compound and the removal of the current traffic islands. A temporary road surface will be installed on parts of the gyratory as part of this phase. Permanent traffic signals will be reconfigured and relocated to accommodate construction. This phase of works will be completed alongside Cadent's essential gas works.

On what dates will we be working?

Phase one is scheduled to commence on Monday 29 September 2025 and will continue until Monday 13 October 2025.

At what times will we be working?

- Between 8pm and 6am.
- Please note that Cadent will be working during daytime hours, and Tollgate Lane between Mildenhall Rd and Hanover Close will be closed 24 hours a day to facilitate these works.

What traffic management will be in place?

- During our working hours (between 8pm and 6am), the gyratory will be closed approaching from all directions for the safety of highway users and our operatives. Multiple diversions will be installed to help road users continue their journeys, and these will be signposted.
- The B1106 (Thetford Road) will be closed travelling towards Bury St Edmunds only from Monday 29 September, for 24 hours per day. While this closure is in place, traffic towards Bury St Edmunds will be diverted via B1106, A134, A143 and no vice versa.
- Tollgate Lane will be closed between Hanover Close and the gyratory from Monday 29 September until Monday 13 October, for 24 hours per day. While this closure is in place, multiple diversion routes will be installed for traffic travelling from or to different directions. A graphic showing the various diversion routes for each of the four major routes which run through the gyratory is attached to this email, and the routes will also be signposted.

Phase Two

What will we be doing?

Phase two of the works will involve widening the inner gyratory.

On what dates will we be working?

Phase two will commence once phase one is complete on Monday 13 October. We anticipate this phase of the scheme will finish in early to mid-January 2026, with a break over the Christmas period.

At what times will we be working?

These works will be carried out during the daytime.

What traffic management will be in place?

- The inner lane of the gyratory will be closed. Temporary traffic signals will also be in place.
- The B1106 (Thetford Road) will remain closed travelling towards Bury St Edmunds only from Monday 29 September, for 24 hours per day. While this closure is in place, traffic towards Bury St Edmunds will be diverted via B1106, A134, A143 and no vice versa.

Phase Three and Four

We will provide a further update detailing the third and fourth phases of the scheme, as well as the traffic management required for this, nearer the time. We will also provide another update regarding phase two before it begins.

As you may already be aware, Cadent commenced their essential gas maintenance works along Fornham Road in August 2025. While these are currently being done under temporary traffic lights, they will utilise our road closure during the first phase of the programme, with Cadent working during the day and us carrying out our works overnight. This collaboration will minimise the need for future road closures, reducing disruption to the local community and highway users.

Please use any contacts within your division or parish to circulate this notification.

If you need more information, please call us on **0345 606 6171** or email customer.services@suffolk.gov.uk



Suffolk Highways Tollgate Gyratory
diversion routes

| | | From | | | |
|----|-----------------------|---|--|---|--|
| | | A1101 Fornham Road | A1101 Mildenhall Road | B1106 Thetford Road | Tollgate Lane |
| To | A1101 Fornham Road | | A1101, B1106, A134, A1101 | B1106, A134, A1101 | Tollgate Lane, Beetons Way, Western Way, A1302, A1101 |
| | A1101 Mildenhall Road | A1101, A134, B1106, A1101 | | B1106, A1101 | Tollgate Lane, Beetons Way, Western Way, A1302, A134, B1106, A1101 |
| | B1106 Thetford Road | A1101, A134, B1106 | B1106, A1101 | | Tollgate Lane, Beetons Way, Western Way, A1302, A134, B1106 |
| | Tollgate Lane | A1101, A1302, Western Way, Beetons Way, Tollgate Lane | A1101, B1106, A134, A1302, Western Way, Beetons Way, Tollgate Lane | B1106, A134, A1302, Western Way, Beetons Way, Tollgate Lane | |

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

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



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](#)