



St Benedict's Newsletter 304

3 October 2025



Don't Forget - Friday 10 October is a PD day (no students in school)

Catholic Social Teaching

This week within assemblies our focus turns to another strand of Catholic Social Teaching: **The Option for the Poor**. The Church teaches us that the measure of any society is how it treats its most vulnerable members. Pope Francis puts it simply:

“The measure of the greatness of a society is found in the way it treats those most in need, those who have nothing apart from their poverty.” (Address, 2013)

It tells us that to live out this principle means to put the needs of the poorest and most overlooked at the centre of our choices, ensuring that no one is ignored or left behind.

In our assemblies this week we were reminded in Scripture that: *“Then the King will say... ‘For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was sick and you took care of me... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.’”* – Matthew 25:34–36, 40

In this powerful passage, Jesus challenges us to recognise Him in those who are most in need. The way we treat the hungry, the sick, the lonely, or the poor reveals whether we are truly following Him. This is sometimes called the “sheep and the goats” teaching, a reminder that our faith is shown not just in words, but in compassionate action.

This week we have been encouraged to reflect: *Do I notice the needs of others around me? Do I stop to help, or do I pass by?* The words of the hymn “*When I Needed a Neighbour, Were You There?*” echo this same call. They remind us that every person we meet is our neighbour, and that our response of love and service is never just about helping “them”, it is about recognising Christ in them.

Pope Leo XIV has reminded us: *“The poor are not a distraction for the Church. They are our beloved brothers and sisters... they put us in contact with the truth of the Gospel.”* (Vatican News, 2025) His words echo Jesus’ own teaching in Matthew 25: when we welcome, feed, and care for those in need, we are not just performing an act of kindness, we are meeting Christ Himself. Whatever we do to the least of our brothers and sisters, we do unto Him.

At St Benedict’s, living out the Option for the Poor means looking after those who may feel vulnerable or excluded, whether that’s in our classrooms, out on the school field, or beyond our school gates. It means listening with patience, giving generously of our time and talents, and remembering that serving the most vulnerable is not an optional extra for Us, it is at the very heart of the Gospel.

Throughout the week we can live out the Option for the Poor and Vulnerable in through:

- **Wisdom:** Seeing clearly the needs of those around us and understanding how our choices can either help or harm the vulnerable.
- **Compassion:** Caring for those who might otherwise be forgotten or left out. Asking someone to join your group in class.
- **Resilience:** Persevering in our commitment to fairness and justice, believing that small acts of kindness, repeated over time, truly can transform lives and build a fairer community.

This week let us reflect: Jesus reminded us that when we care for the hungry, the sick, the lonely, or the forgotten, we are caring for Him. We are therefore called to see Christ in those who are often overlooked. Let’s ask ourselves, Do I sometimes walk past someone in need because it feels easier not to notice? How would I act differently if I truly saw Christ in them? And can I share my time, energy, or kindness in a way that brings hope to someone else?

Each choice we make is a chance to show love, not just in big, dramatic actions, but also in small ways that bring dignity to others. This week challenge yourself to do one small act each day for someone who might be struggling or overlooked, like invite them to join in, share a word of encouragement, or give up some of your own time to help. Remember: when you serve others, you are serving Christ Himself.

Prayer

Loving God,

You are close to those who are poor, vulnerable, or forgotten.

Open our eyes to see the needs of others, and open our hearts to respond with love.

May we recognise Christ in the hungry, the sick, the lonely, and the excluded.

Help us to live with wisdom, compassion, and resilience, so that no one is left behind.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Looking ahead, the Catholic Church will mark the **World Day of the Poor on Sunday, 16th November 2025**. The theme is “*You are my hope*,” a reminder that our care for the poor is not just about charity, but about hope, dignity, and addressing the deeper, structural causes of poverty. We are challenged to look beyond quick fixes and instead commit to long-term justice, where everyone has the chance to flourish.

Careers Update

What do Qualification Levels mean?

For those parents and carers (and students) who would like to better understand **qualification Levels**, here are a few resources that may help: [What qualification levels mean: England, Wales and Northern Ireland - GOV.UK](#) [Career pilot : Get information : Your choices at 16 Post 16 Options Made Simple](#) [Do you know your levels?](#)

Student Experience Opportunities - Browne Jacobson (Free) Virtual Law Work Experience

Faire Programme - October Half-term Tuesday 28th October 2025 | 9am - 4.15pm

Gain an insight into the legal profession and hear from exclusive speakers including: Barbara Mills KC, Chair of The Bar Council and Deputy High Court Judge, Caroline Green, Senior Partner at leading law firm Browne Jacobson, Ellie Reeves MP (Rachel Reeves’ sister...) and Solicitor General for England and Wales, as well as a host of other top legal professionals.

Register at: [Browne Jacobson Virtual Law Work Experience Faire Programme - October Half-term Survey](#)

1-Day London Medicine Work Experience Events – (October 2025) For students aged **14+ years** who prefer **in-person** work experience, there are two full-day events at University College Hospital, London:

Saturday 25th October – A&E + GP Surgery Sunday 26th October – On-Call Doctor for a Day

These immersive days give students a realistic insight into life as a doctor, with hands-on activities and guidance from NHS professionals. They are ideal for students interested in

careers in medicine and/or healthcare and provide certificates for future applications to medical school. For full details visit: [Medicine Work Experience Day Event](#)

Future Doctors Month – Free Online Programme (November 2025)

Throughout November, students aged 14yrs + who might be considering a career in Medicine, can take part in Future Doctors Month, a completely free, month-long virtual programme. 6 live sessions with NHS doctors (case studies, clinical skills, medical ethics) Recordings available for 60 days, so students can watch on-demand. End-of-programme knowledge test with an official Certificate of Completion (ideal for UCAS applications). [Register for Future Doctors Month](#)

Ms Hahn

English Schools Cross Country

English Schools Cross Country Cup – First Round Success

On Monday 29th October, 23 students from Years 7 to 10 proudly represented St Benedict's in the first round of the **English Schools Cross Country Cup**, held at Woodbridge School.

Junior Girls

The first event of the day was the Junior Girls' race, covering one large 2100m lap.

Rosie Coleman led the team home with an impressive 6th-place finish, followed by **Magdalena Matthews** (14th), **Clara Needham** (19th), and **Niam Walsh** (23rd), making up the scoring team. They were well supported by **Alice Nowak** (35th) and **Ainslee Breske** (38th), who also ran strong races.

Junior Boys

The Junior Boys ran two shorter laps, totalling 3200m. **Sidney Astle** had an excellent run, finishing 6th, closely followed by **Evan Cameron** in 7th and **Solomon Brokenshire** in 14th. **Max Smart** ran an assured race to complete the scoring team in 22nd. **Joseph Burnett** (33rd) and **Christopher Hannaford** (34th) also competed with determination.

Intermediate Girls

The Intermediate Girls also ran two of the shorter laps. **Sophie Bolton** dominated the race from start to finish, taking 1st place in style. She was strongly supported by **Amelia Smith** (6th), **Lucy Murphy** (7th), and **Beatrice Harpur-Davies** (12th), all of whom contributed to an excellent team performance. **Imogen Knight** (14th) and **Alanna Evans** (18th) narrowly missed the top four for St Benedict's. Although official results are pending, it's likely the Intermediate Girls placed **second overall** and will progress to the next round of the competition.

Intermediate Boys

The Intermediate Boys faced a longer challenge, running two large laps totalling 4200m.

Jake McConnell ran superbly to finish 4th, with **Olive Lamas** close behind in 5th. **Aiden Cameron** (19th) and **Kasper Kolodziej** (24th) completed the scoring team, narrowly missing out on qualification for the next round. **Noah Wilkinson**, carrying a minor injury from a recent rugby match, showed great resilience to finish 27th.

All of the students were fantastic ambassadors for St Benedict's and represented the school with pride and determination. Their performances were especially commendable given that the majority of competing schools were from the independent sector.

It was particularly encouraging to see several **Year 7 students** competing — and scoring — in what is often a tough, older age group. We now await official confirmation of results, with high hopes that our **Intermediate Girls** team will advance to the regional finals.

Well done to everyone who took part!

Mr Murphy



1 - Sophie Bolton



2 - Lucy Murphy



3 - Amelia Smith

Year 11 Geography Field Trip

On Tuesday and Wednesday this week, the Year 11 Geography students headed into the centre of Bury St Edmunds to complete the human geography fieldwork component of their GCSE course. The three classes were investigating the success of the regeneration of the Cattle Market. During the visit, students developed essential data collection techniques such as land use surveys and questionnaires. All students engaged with great enthusiasm, and several members of the public contacted the school to praise how well they conducted themselves. The accompanying photo shows one group taking their research very seriously — with a little help from Paddington Bear, who was clearly keen to get involved in their survey! The next step is to analyse and write up their findings in class to help ensure success in their Paper 3 Geography exam this summer.

Mr Sayer

Girls Maths Competition

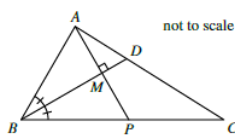
This year the United Kingdom Mathematics Trust started a new competition, taking similar problem-solving questions from the long running Maths Olympiad for Girls, which is a 2.5hour exam but written as a 1.5hour test instead. The competition is designed to challenge and inspire budding female mathematicians studying A Level Maths or Further Maths.

This year we entered two of our A Level Mathematicians, Amy John and Helena Bulacz, who both excelled and earned Distinctions. We love to have a 100% success rate!

Here is the last question on the paper. How would you do if you had competed?

Mrs Nicholls

5. The diagram shows triangle ABC with side lengths $AB = 85$, $BC = 160$ and $CA = 103$ units. The bisector of angle ABC intersects the side AC at point D . The line through A perpendicular to BD intersects BD at M and BC at P .



- (a) Which of the following statements are correct?
- (i) D is the midpoint of AC .
 - (ii) M is the midpoint of AP .
 - (iii) P is the midpoint of BC .
- Enter 1 for each correct statement and 0 for each incorrect statement. For example, if you think that statements (i) and (ii) are correct, you should enter 110. [2 marks]
- (b) State the length of PC . [2 marks]
- (c) The line through A perpendicular to the bisector of angle ACB intersects it at N . Find the length of MN . [6 marks]

U15 Boys Football – West Suffolk Cup Tournament

On Wednesday 1st October, the U15 Boys Football team took part in the West Suffolk Cup Tournament, hosted at County High School. Four schools competed in the cluster: St Benedict's, Sybil Andrews, King Edward VI, and County High. In the opening round, St Benedict's were drawn against County High, while Sybil Andrews faced King Edward VI. Our boys started brightly, creating several good chances, but it was County High who struck first, finishing a cross at the back post to take a 1–0 lead. St Benedict's responded well, and Finn Brinkley-Everard equalised with a composed finish, cutting inside onto his right foot and placing the ball into the far corner. With the scores level at full time, the game went to penalties. Both teams displayed clinical striking of their penalties, it was only after County High's seventh penalty flew over the bar that St Benedict's seized the chance. Danylo Bartkiv stepped up confidently and buried his penalty to send the team into the playoff final. In the other semi-final, King Edward VI overcame Sybil Andrews, setting up a final between St Benedict's and King Edward VI. The first 20 minutes were evenly matched, with both sides creating opportunities. However, King Edward VI broke the deadlock with a well-taken goal from their striker. Moments later, captain Archie Crisp made a crucial defensive challenge but was forced off with an ankle injury – a big setback for the team. King Edward VI took advantage, adding several quick goals to extend their lead. Despite battling hard until the final whistle, St Benedict's were beaten 5–0. Although the result didn't go their way in the playoff, the boys showed determination, teamwork, and school spirit throughout the tournament, representing St Benedict's with pride.

Mr Bates



Bullying

LET'S END BULLYING



Reminder on who to go to when you are concerned about others in school.

If you witness meanness or bullying, it's important that you don't stay silent. Meanness is usually a one-off unkind comment or action, it stings, but it often happens in the heat of the moment. Bullying is different: it is repeated, intentional, and involves an imbalance of power, where someone is made to feel small or unsafe. Both are wrong, and both need to be addressed. If you see or experience either, your first point of contact is always your tutor, but you can also speak to any member of staff you trust. This could be a member of the safeguarding team, Mrs Bourne, Mrs Bailey or Mrs Berry. By speaking up, you will empower the victim (which could even be yourself) to take back some control. At the same time, you will encourage others to follow suit and realise that it is always okay to call people out when they are hurting others with their words or actions. Speaking up also gives those who are being mean or bullying the chance to stop, re-evaluate their behaviour, and change for the better. In this way, everyone can grow, and our whole community becomes stronger.

From playgrounds to parliament, our phones to our homes, unkindness can hide, and in silence it grows.

But together we can be powerful, steady and true — The greater good starts with you.

Use your Power for Good to stand up, speak out, challenge unkindness, cast away doubt.

Online or in person, when something feels wrong, each small action can help others stay strong.

Too often we pause, unsure what to do, Compassion is brave, Compassion is wise — and it starts with you.

Together, let's turn the darkness to light.

So, ask yourself now, and make it understood: How will you help the Greater Good.

Ms Coogan



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



7 October - Year 10 Information Evening

6 - 8 October - Year 12 Residential

9 October - Inter House Sports Day

10 October - PD Day

15 October - Lunchtime Careers Talk (12.45-1.25pm) "A Career in Ecology" with Beatrix Hayter-Gare. All Year groups welcome

16 October - RHS Cross Country

21 October - Sixth Form Open Evening

24 October - Break up for half term

[Term Dates](#)

Contact Us



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