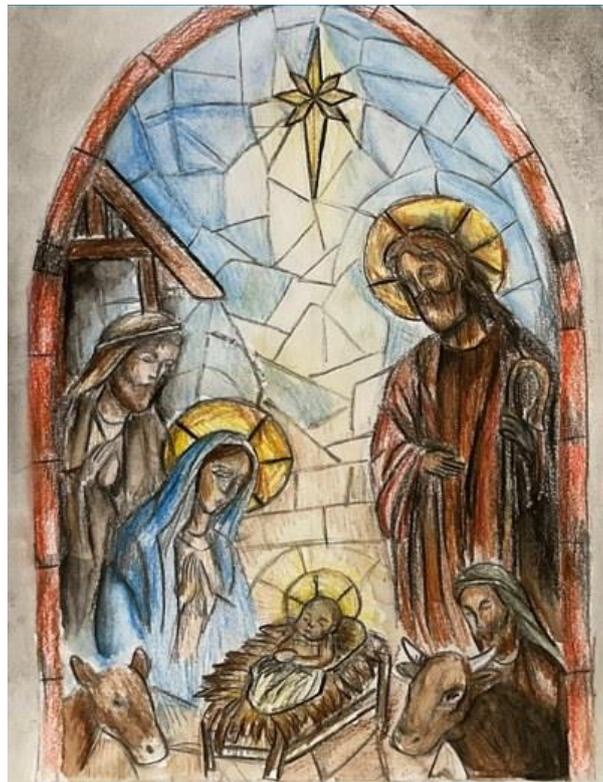




## St Benedict's Newsletter 313

19 December 2025



## Catholic Social Teaching

This week our focus within Catholic Social Teaching has been **Peace**. Often when we think about peace, we imagine it as something external, the absence of war, arguments, or conflict. Yet the Church teaches us that *true peace begins within the human heart*. Peace is not simply the lack of noise or disagreement, but the presence of harmony, with God, with others, and within ourselves.

In assemblies this week, we reflected on the idea of **inner conflict**: the experience of feeling pulled in two different directions. One pull draws us toward selfish goals, power, importance, recognition, or putting ourselves first. The other pull invites us toward friendship, kindness, compassion, and love. Each day, we stand between these two forces and are faced with a choice.

The experience of inner conflict is not new. St Paul speaks honestly about this struggle in his Letter to the Romans. He recognises the tension between knowing what is good and choosing to do it: *“I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate... For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do.”* Romans 7:15,19

St Paul reminds us that inner conflict is part of being human. Wanting to do good, yet being tempted by selfishness or pride, is something we all experience. Peace does not come from pretending this struggle does not exist, it comes from choosing which pull we will let go of. When we continue to hold on to both pulls, we remain in conflict within ourselves. But when we make the decision to drop the pull toward selfishness, something changes. We begin to experience inner peace, not because life becomes easy, but because our heart is no longer divided.

Peace grows when we choose: kindness over power, friendship over status, service over self-importance, and love over control. This is the kind of peace Jesus speaks of, a peace that comes from living rightly and truthfully, even when it costs us something. When we choose peace, we make space for joy. When we let go of selfishness, we welcome Christ more fully into our lives. We can live out the Catholic Social Teaching of Peace in simple but meaningful ways:

- **Wisdom:** Recognising when we are being pulled toward selfishness and having the awareness to pause and reflect before acting.
- **Compassion:** Understanding that others also experience inner conflict. Choosing patience, forgiveness, and kindness helps create peace not only within ourselves but within our community.
- **Resilience:** Peaceful choices are not always the easiest ones. Resilience is having the strength to keep choosing kindness and integrity, even when selfish choices seem more tempting.

*“So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand.”*

— Romans 7:21 (Catholic Bible)

This scripture invites us to reflect honestly on our own hearts. Where do we feel pulled? And which pull are we willing to let go of in order to find peace?

As we move through the week, let us ask ourselves: What pulls am I experiencing within myself right now? Which pull leads me toward peace, and which keeps me in conflict? What would it look like to choose kindness, friendship, and goodness today? Inner peace is not something we stumble upon, it is something we *choose*, again and again.

### **Prayer**

Loving God,

You know the struggles within our hearts.

You see the moments when we are pulled

between selfishness and love,

between power and kindness.

Give us the courage to let go of what divides us within,

and the wisdom to choose the path of peace.

Help us to be people who bring harmony,

first within ourselves,

and then into our world.

Through Christ our Lord.

### **Amen.**

And as we come to the end of this term and approach the celebration of Christmas, we take a moment to pause and give thanks. Catholic Social Teaching reminds us that at the heart of our faith is love, love that welcomes, heals, and brings peace. In the birth of Jesus, God draws close to us in tenderness and hope, especially to those who may feel tired, worried, or in need of comfort. May this Christmas be a time of rest, renewal, and gentle joy for all in our school community.

As we look towards the New Year, we hold one another in hope and prayer. May the weeks ahead be shaped by kindness, understanding, and care for one another, as we continue to grow together in dignity and peace. We wish all our families a blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with light and reassurance.

### **Prayer**

Loving God,

As this term draws to a close,

we place into your care all that we have lived and shared.

Bring peace to our hearts, rest to our minds,

and comfort to all who are in need.

As we prepare to welcome your Son,

we open our lives once more to your love and mercy.

**Come, Lord Jesus, come.**

May your light remain with us through the days ahead

and gently guide us into the New Year.

May your blessing rest upon our families and our school community,

now and always.

Amen.

## Sixth Form Trip to CERN

On Monday, some of the Sixth Form visited CERN, the international centre for particle physics on the border of Switzerland and France. The trip offered a valuable opportunity to see how physics studied in the classroom is applied in real research, as well as a chance to experience Geneva in the run-up to Christmas.

We began our visit in Geneva with a trip to the Christmas market on the waterfront of lake Geneva. The festive stalls, lights and seasonal food made for an enjoyable introduction to the city and allowed us some time to explore before heading to CERN.

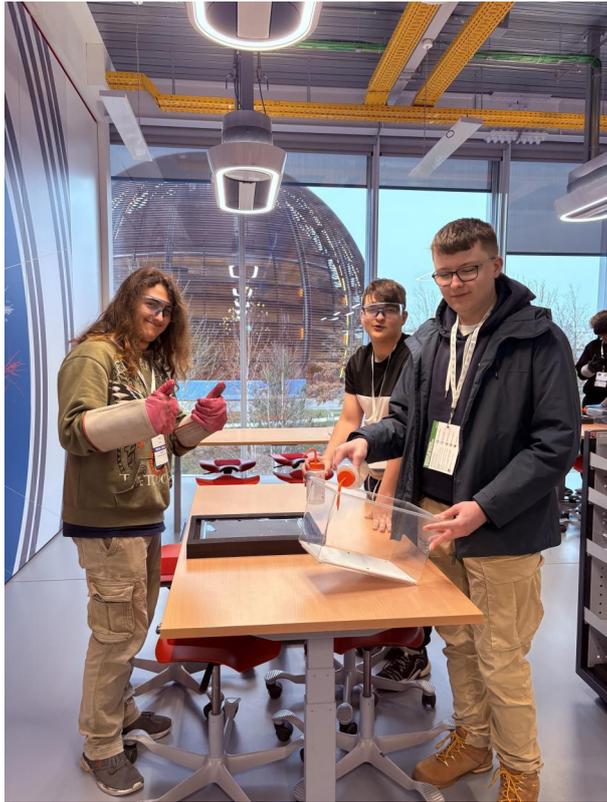
During our time at CERN, we took part in practical laboratory sessions, including making our own cloud chambers using dry ice. This allowed us to observe the tracks of subatomic particles as they passed through the chamber, helping us to better understand how scientists detect particles that cannot be seen directly.

We were also given a guided tour of the site, where we learned about CERN's history and its role in international scientific collaboration. One of the highlights was a visit to ELENA (Extra Low Energy Antiproton ring), a facility used to study antimatter. Seeing where antimatter is produced and slowed down gave us a real sense of the scale and precision involved in modern physics research.

Overall, the trip was both informative and enjoyable. It deepened our understanding of physics beyond the classroom and gave us a clearer insight into potential future pathways in science. It was a memorable experience for everyone involved and a valuable part of our Sixth Form studies.

*Ms Cleaver and Ms Mak*







## Year 10 Textiles Trip



On Tuesday 16 December, the year 10 Textiles GCSE group went to visit the local brand, Workhouse England, in their studio in Bury town centre. The students found the experience very rewarding, being able to see a working fashion studio in action and talking to the owner Iggi about his business. A huge Thank you to Iggi for giving up his time, making us feel so welcome and for allowing us to try things on too!

[workhouse-england.co.uk](http://workhouse-england.co.uk)

## Reverse Advent Calendar

A huge well done to everyone who supported this year's collection for the foodbank, it's been really impressive every day! I wondered if the flooring where I was storing the first week's collection was going to be able to support the sheer weight of your generosity!

We collected so much this year it's become difficult to estimate how it compares to previous years! What I can say with some certainty is that this year's collection has probably been one of the most generous years to date, so a huge thank you to everyone for their contribution to the fantastic result!

I know many of our parents who live outside Bury, there has been a question about whether we could be supporting some of the other local towns, Sudbury, Newmarket, Thetford etc. The hampers that are created from the donations we have given will be distributed across the county. I have also discovered that if a foodbank has an excess or a shortage the other local foodbanks all work to balance stock among themselves, so a gift to one is really a gift to all!

There was also a request to take bread sauce off the list because it's so niche! I think this is a good point and I will point this out to the team at Gatehouse next year, hopefully we can find a simpler alternative!

We have also learned from a couple of near misses that it's a good idea to use a carrier bag within the student's bag when carrying jam jars or fruit juice to school! Just in case!!

This Advent the school community has done an incredible job gathering around 6 to 8 Tesco crates per day! Thank you from all the school and the staff at Gatehouse.

*Matt Spiller*

## Christmas Concert

Thank you so much to all those who supported the Christmas concert collaboration with Bury St Edmund's Youth Concert Band on Sunday 14th December. The event raised approximately £700 to be split between the band and the Children and Families in Need in Zimbabwe. For the latter, they are utilising the funds to help with the purchase of a printer, laptop and paper for Katate Secondary School.

*Mrs Hamilton*

### **Christmas Concert**

On Sunday 14th December, many students from the school took part in a concert in partnership with the Bury St Edmunds Youth Concert Band. As a member of both the band and the Bennies Choir, I was able to experience the festivity from almost all angles, and it was a lovely afternoon.

The BSE Youth Concert Band was set up by the conductor, Rob Head, almost 10 years ago, to give the young people of Bury and surrounding areas an opportunity to join an ensemble, with no requirements of age or ability. This term, Rob has enjoyed giving students from the school an opportunity to sing alongside a live band, and to put vocals to some of the music we play. After the concert on Sunday, he said that it was a wonderful afternoon, and that "the choir sung beautifully, the band played brilliantly, and everyone had fun".

The concert began beautifully, with the first verse of *Once in Royal David's City* sung solo by Miriam Thomas, 7P. The choir then joined in, walking into the hall singing the second verse, before the band and the audience also took up the final two verses.

Highlights from the concert included some old-time classics from the band, such as *Fairytale of New York* and Mariah Carey's *All I Want For Christmas is You*, as well as a beautiful singing of *Silent Night* in four different languages (German, Spanish, French and English) by the choir.

Midway through the concert, the band played Leroy Anderson's famous *Sleigh Ride*. We were very ably assisted by Mr Tatum on the sleigh bells, and Mr Senior on the whip crack, who both 'volunteered' to play along! Mr Senior commented that he was more than happy to volunteer, and that sometimes, "A teacher's got to be prepared to make a fool of themselves somewhere"!

After the concert, the players, singers and audience members were served mince pies and cordials by teachers and sixth formers. There was a lovely atmosphere as the school and band communities joined together afterwards.

One person who truly contributed to the concert and the preparation for it was our very own Mrs Hamilton. She has put in so much effort in training our choir and organising the event. She commented that "It was a privilege to work with you all and such fun to sing with a live band" and concluded that we brought "The fun, the fabulous and the festive!"

Massive congratulations to everyone who took part, and a very Merry Christmas! We hope to see you all at next year's concert!

*Hosannah Gee, 8X*

## U15s Football

### **Sybil Andrews 3 - 6 St Benedict's**

The U15 girls played a friendly fixture against Sybil Andrews as part of their preparations for January's quarter-final clash with Northgate.

As has become a familiar pattern, Bennies began the game slowly. Despite several excellent saves from Lucy Murphy in goal, they found themselves trailing 2–0 within the opening 20 minutes. The response, however, was immediate and spirited. Polly Saade carried the ball the length of the pitch before setting up Amelia Smith, who finished calmly to make it 2–1. Moments later, Polly produced a delightful chip over the goalkeeper to level the score. Bennies then took the lead before half-time, 3–2, after Polly converted a penalty following a handball in the box.

The second half proved just as entertaining, with end-to-end action and more goals. Amelia Smith switched roles to play in goal, pulling off a series of crucial saves to keep Bennies ahead. At the other end, Polly completed her hat-trick with a composed strike into the corner. Mariella Ferdinand added her name to the scoresheet with a sharp first-time finish from a cross, before Amelia Smith capped off the performance with a powerful effort from outside the box that the keeper couldn't stop.

The match ended 6–3 in Bennies' favour—a confident display across the pitch. Special mention goes to the defensive trio of Lily Nathusius, Patrycja Golonka, and Alanna Evans, who provided a solid backbone throughout the game.

*Mr Bates*



Interact



Interact are pleased to announce the winners of their first photography competition!

1st Place: Christopher Hannaford (yellow flower)

2nd Place: Lena Kasowska (cow)

3rd Place: Sophie Wray (water)

Prizes were donated by our local Rotary club. Well done to those who participated!

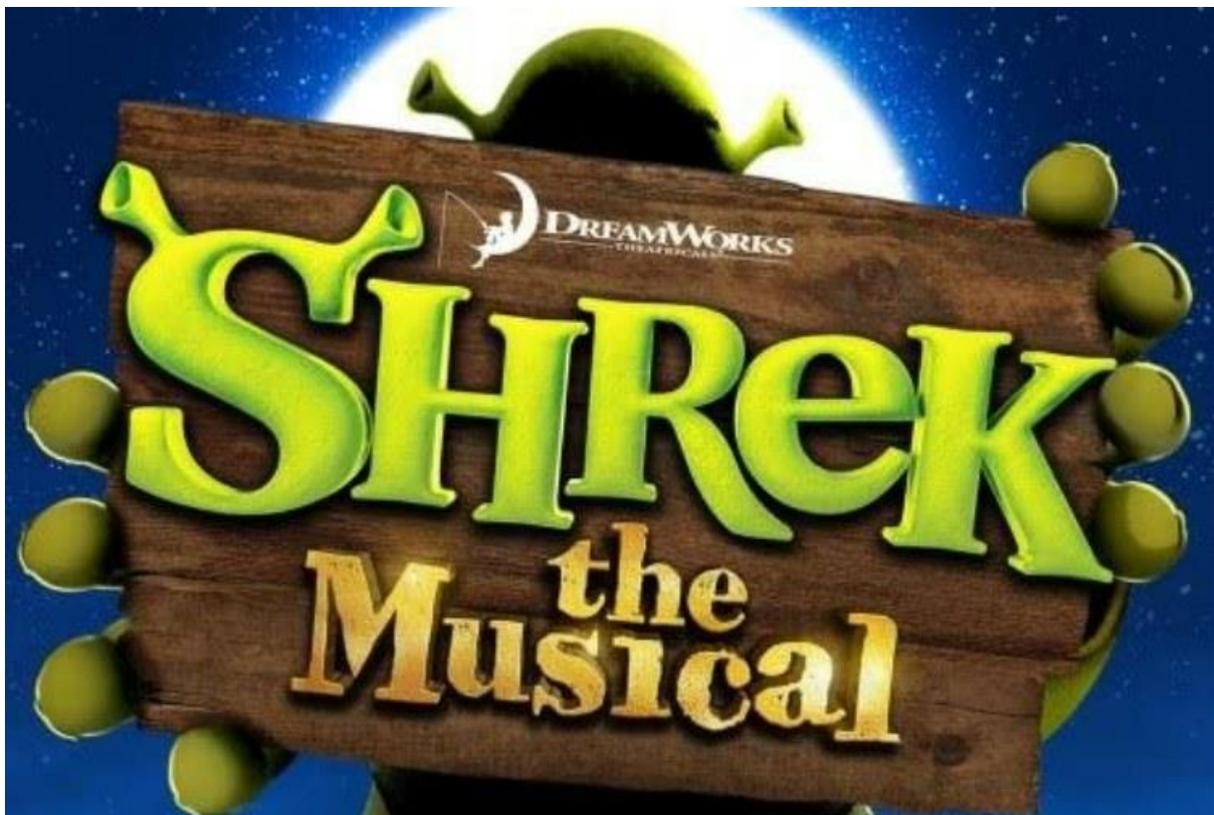
Watch this space for the launching of the Young Writer's Competition in 2026.

Mrs Hamilton





## Shrek



A massive well done to all students who auditioned for our school production of Shrek. You were all fantastic which made casting a very difficult job. A huge congratulations to those students who have made it into the cast. The first rehearsal starts 1pm on Tuesday 6th January in the music room.

Mama Ogre: Martha Heywood

Papa Ogre: Kian Daly

Baby Ogre: Thomas Hands

King Harold: Sebastian Siarkowski

Queen Lillian: Gabriella Pochec

Storyteller: Isobelle Crossley

Shrek: Sidney Astle

Pinocchio: Jeremy Robinson

Wicked Witch: Skyrrah Yarnold Da Silva

Peter Pan: Tilly F

Big Bad Wolf: Brock Coleman-Miles

3 Little Pigs: Lotte Brandon, Lilly N, Layna H

Mama Bear: Elsa Bush

Papa Bear: Naomhan Walker

Baby Bear: Jacob Bush

Gingy: Solomon B D

Ugly Duckling: Miriam Thomas

Lord Farquaad: Ella Ferdinand

Young Fiona: Alice Cocks

Teen Fiona: Chloe Ramsbottom

Fiona: Imogen Rowland

Donkey: Ethyn Juwe

Dragon: Arabella Powis, Martha Lockhart, Olivia OC, Maisie Farrow

Captains of the Guard: Christian Lupsa, Catherine Cunningham

Guards: David Message, Sebastian Peasey, Henry Petchey, Matilda Mackenzie, Teja Simkute, Ruby Smith, Tilli Zak, Madison Ferritt, Eliana Nabyonga

Knights: Kian D, Sebastian S

Pied Piper: Felix Brown

Dwarf Grumpy: Elsie Brandon

Fiona Double: Genevieve Dobson

Bishop: Rolena Hodgkinson

Puss in Boots: Erica Welch

Blue Bird: Rolena

Duluc Greeter: Daisy Farrant

6 dwarfs: Charlotte N, Elizabeth N, Florence M, Henrietta T, Emilia LS, Amelia Z

Mad Hatter: Sophia Ghit

Elf: Genevieve DM

Fairy Godmother: Amaara John

Sugar Plum Fairy: Ainslee Breske

White Rabbit: Carina Pochec

Humpty Dumpty: Edith Taylor

### **Dancers**

#### **Group A**

Teisha Roughley DC

Harriet Baldock DC

Beatrice Millington

Evelyn Scott

Isabella Horton-Weekes

Felix Brown

Clara Martinez

#### **Group B**

Amelia Z DC

Emilia L-S DC

Florence Morgan

Henrietta Tatum

Charlotte Nichols

Elizabeth Nichols

<i>Date</i>	<i>Where</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>What</i>	<i>Who is needed</i>
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> January	G1	Lunch	Story of my life	Whole Cast
Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> January	G1 & G2	Lunch	Big Bright Beautiful world Don't let me go	Mama, Papa, baby Ogre, King Harold, Queen Lillian, Storyteller, Shrek, Donkey
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> January	G2 -FT G1- Guards C2 - Dancers	3.45 – 5	Story of my life Act 1 scene 4 Dragon Dance	Whole Cast

## Senior Maths Challenge

After achieving Gold awards in the Senior Maths Challenge, 4 of our students qualified for the second round of the Maths Challenge, the Andrew Jobbings Senior Kangaroo. These were Amy John, Asir Isswiasi, Adam O'Flynn and Isaac Spiller. Unfortunately Asir was ill on the day of the competition but the other three students completed the 60 minute problem solving paper on Wednesday 19th November 2025.

The questions in this paper are designed to challenge students, and no one is expected to complete all 20 questions in the hour time frame.

Here is a snap shot, the first and last question of the paper, they generally get increasingly difficult as you go through.

20. Each cell in this cross-number can be filled with a non-zero digit so that all of the conditions in the clues are satisfied. The digits used are not necessarily distinct.

What is the sum of the answers to the clues for

1 ACROSS, 3 ACROSS and 5 ACROSS?

ACROSS

1. A factor of 1221.
3. A multiple of 17.
5. A prime.

DOWN

1. A factor of 1221 different from 1 ACROSS.
2. A cube.
4. A prime.

1	2	
3		4
	5	

This year they changed the marking system and instead of awarding merits and distinctions for high performing students, they classify the top performers as bronze, silver and gold. 5 marks are awarded for each question, with over 40 marks as a bronze, 55 for silver and 70 for gold. Very closely placed in their results, Adam managed to gain a bronze award and Amy received a silver. A fantastic result for our students.

*Mrs Nicholls*

## Axiom Maths Club

What is Axiom Maths Club?

Axiom Maths is a community of people who want to increase the number of people that are top performers in Maths, use their talents, and feel the joy of Maths. They partner with schools like St Benedict's to help students with a heart and head for Maths realise their potential. The backbone of Axiom's approach is a Maths Circle, which is called Axiom Maths Club in our school. A group of Year 7's and a group of Year 8's meet weekly to tackle challenging maths problems. In a Maths circle we work towards the 3 A's, developing the skills to be Adventurous, Articulate and Accepting. Axiom believe Maths is good for individuals and for Society.

*Written by Alice Wong, 7L*

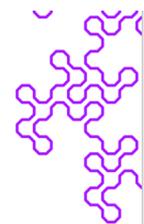
Last week, the Year 7 and 8 Axiom Maths clubs met for a Christmas party, sharing food and their Axiom experiences with each other. The two groups have worked well this term and have each completed a block of challenges. We look forward to meeting in the Spring term to tackle some new challenging Maths problems.

Below is an example Maths challenge for you to try.

Mrs Eastwood



Can you write the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 around a circle, so that **every pair** of numbers which are next to each other add up to a **prime** number?



## Careers Update

As you may be aware, my role as Head of Careers at St. Benedict's School involves providing all of our students with up-to-date, comprehensive and relevant Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) about the choices and opportunities available to them in education, employment and training now and in the future. There are, of course, key transition points during our students' education pathway when IAG is a priority focus e.g. Year 9 Options, Year 11 Post-16 Choices and Year 13 Progression.

Here is a quick status update on this IAG provision:

**Sixth Form:** 1:1 meetings are ongoing with students in Years 12 and 13 who wish to explore university or alternative pathways and employment Post-18.

**Year 11:** Post-16 conversations with each and every student in our Year 11 cohort will continue into the New Year-all should be complete by the February half-term break.

**Year 10:** Preparations for Next Steps (after Year 11) will begin in January 2026. Planning for our new Work Experience week (29 June to 3 July 2026) will be finalised - more information will follow in January too.

**Years 9:** 1:1 and whole class meetings are available for students who need additional IAG before selecting their Options choices.

**Years 7 and 8:** Careers IAG will form part of our ongoing Careers Programme for 2025-26

*Miss Hahn*

## A Level Chemists Blend Science, Creativity and Compassion

Over the last term, our A Level Chemistry students have taken part in an inspiring and highly creative enrichment project bringing classroom learning to life while making a real difference beyond school.

As part of the project students explored the chemistry behind fragrance development, gaining insight into how scents are researched, formulated and refined. Building on this knowledge, they worked together to research, design and create their own bespoke Christmas fragrance.

The project culminated in the manufacture of scented candles using their original fragrances. These candles were then sold in aid of **Smile Train**, an international charity that provides free, life-changing cleft lip and cleft palate surgery to children and adults who would otherwise lack access to safe medical care. You can learn more about the incredible work Smile Train does around the world here:  [Website](#)

Thanks to the enthusiasm and dedication of our students, the project has raised in excess of £780 for this worthy cause. We are especially grateful to Tilley Distribution, who very kindly donated the raw materials required to produce the fragrances. As a result, all proceeds from candle sales will be donated directly to Smile Train, maximising the impact of the students' hard work.

This project has been a wonderful example of how science education can combine academic rigour, creativity and social responsibility. We are incredibly proud of our A Level Chemistry students for their commitment, innovation and grateful to all who gave generously.

*Mr Senior*



## A Level Sociology

On Tuesday 7th December, A level Sociology students were visited by Lt Col (Dr.) Michelle Cunningham, who came to speak to them about her role as a Flight Surgeon in the US Air Force. Lt Col Cunningham started off by explaining what being a Flight Surgeon entails, and how she got into the role. What initially surprised students was that a Flight Surgeon does not involve performing surgery on flights but instead working as a clinician for pilots and crew members. Lt Col Cunningham explained that due to the environment that these people work in, what would be regarded as a minor issue for most people is something quite different for them. For example, a common cold is often considered a minor inconvenience, however, for a pilot or crew member who experiences frequent changes in air pressure, the issue is much more complicated and could severely impact their ability to do their job. Lt Col Cunningham explained that she loves her job since it is more varied than that of a family physician, the job that she initially trained for. As part of her role, she gets to see patients, carry out occupational health assessments and fly on board a range of aircraft to better understand the problems faced by those working in such environments.

Lt Col Cunningham spoke passionately about her role and answered the many and varied questions posed by the A level Sociologists. Furthermore, as well as providing a fascinating insight into her role in the medical profession, she also pointed out the differences between the US and UK education systems in terms of access to higher education. This will undoubtedly support the Sociology students in their studies and help bring to life the topics

that they study. A big thank you to Lt Col Cunningham for giving up her time to share with us.

*Mrs Shepherd*

## God's Eye Weaving Christmas Ornaments

Our Year 9 students have wrapped up the term with a festive and creative textiles activity, making beautiful Christmas ornaments inspired by God's Eye Weaving (also known as Ojo de Dios). This project provided a lovely opportunity to revisit and reinforce the weaving skills they have recently developed in their last textiles unit.

Students worked with focus and enthusiasm, applying their knowledge of pattern, colour and tension to produce unique and eye-catching designs. The activity was a wonderful way to consolidate their learning while embracing the spirit of the season.

All students worked brilliantly and should be very proud of the stunning ornaments they created, which they were able to take home to enjoy over the Christmas holidays. A fantastic end to a successful term in Textiles.

*Mrs Coldwell*



## Year 8 Food Tech

Year 8 Food Tech students have been getting well and truly into the festive spirit this week, decorating a fantastic range of cakes and Christmas biscuits! They showcased a variety of

skills, from hydro-dipping to piping, creating an impressive display of bright, colourful, and cheerful treats that truly captured the joy of the season.

*Mrs Peasey*







## SCIENCE NEWS – JOURNAL OF SCIENCE Volume 9, No 1; December 2025

The latest Journal of Science has been published and is available in the Science News section of the school's website, as well as on the school's social media. What the current Journal lacks in quantity is more than made up for by the quality of the students' work.

Mrs Blewitt's young biologists were very inventive when she tasked them with producing a model of a plant or animal cell using everyday materials. It was also important that they labelled the different parts of their cells with the proper scientific names.

Most notable in this issue of the Journal are the pieces of homework from the Yr9 biologists of Ms Mak and Mr & Miss Dalby-Sousa. Following a presentation in class, the students were set homework to research an important question: who made the greatest contribution to the discovery of the structure of DNA – Francis Crick & James Watson, or Rosalind Franklin? They were allowed to form their own opinion, as long as it was based on reliable information they obtained in their research. It was impressed upon them how important it is to also state sources of information – this will be vital for their studies in 6th form and at university.

Elsewhere, news may have reached you about the two latest additions to the school's menagerie. Yes, the ducks now have company in the shape of two enchanting "golden goats". They are, in fact, of a breed known as the Golden Guernsey Goat. More than this, in 2024 the breed was awarded a Royal Title and is now formally known as the **Royal Golden Guernsey Goat**. We are therefore proud to have a Royal presence in our school! A request for names resulted in them being christened **Artemis** and **Apollo**. These names will be familiar to classical scholars, especially of Greek mythology, as the divine fraternal twins,

brother and sister, of the goddess Leto. Apollo was the god of music, poetry, prophecy, and healing; Artemis was the goddess of the hunt, wild animals, and childbirth.

However, their names resonate in the world of science too, especially space exploration. As he is often also referred to as the Sun god, Apollo was chosen as the name of the American space program of the 1960s to land the first men on the Moon. The Apollo program was prematurely ended in 1972 and no one has been back since. That is due to change after a multinational program was announced in 2017 aiming to return men and women astronauts to the Moon before 2030. It was therefore almost inevitable that the new program would be named Artemis, Apollo's twin, as she is also known as the "Moon goddess".

Read all the above in the Journal of Science, available via the link below:

<https://www.st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=2803&type=pdf>





## St Benedict's Hardship Fund

# ST BENEDICT'S HARDSHIP FUND

THE ST BENEDICT'S HARDSHIP FUND IS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT FAMILIES AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE EXPERIENCING FINANCIAL PRESSURES THAT IMPACT ON THEIR EDUCATION OR FAMILY LIFE. WE KNOW THAT FAMILY SITUATIONS CAN BE VERY DIFFERENT AND THAT THE EXISTING SYSTEMS SUCH AS FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND DISCRETIONARY PURSARIES ONLY HELP A SMALL NUMBER OF THOSE WHO MIGHT NEED SUPPORT. THIS IS OFTEN THE CASE WHERE SITUATIONS HAVE CHANGED RAPIDLY, CREATING NEW PRESSURES SUCH AS FAMILY ILLNESS OR CHANGING EMPLOYMENT. THIS FUND IS CREATED THROUGH PARENTAL DONATIONS AND CAN BE USED TO SUPPORT WITH MANY AREAS SUCH AS SCHOOL UNIFORM PURCHASES, SCHOOL EQUIPMENT, COSTS OF SCHOOL TRIPS AND VISITS WHERE THESE COSTS CANNOT BE MET ELSEWHERE. GRANTS CAN BE MADE FOR INDIVIDUAL ITEMS OR ON A REGULAR BASIS.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO APPLY FOR SUPPORT FROM THE HARDSHIP FUND, PLEASE CONTACT MRS SENIOR VIA THE SCHOOL OFFICE



## Healthy Living Service

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 graphic features a central banner with the text 'Healthy Living Service' in a colorful, playful font. Above the banner is a silhouette of a person with arms raised, flanked by two small photos: one of a man and a child in a kitchen, and another of a family cycling. 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 green character with a leaf on its head.

## Uniform Expectations

We wish to remind all parents and students of the uniform policy at St Benedict's.

### Expected Uniform

- School jumper with embroidered school logo, purchased from the school supplier
- School tie, purchased from the school supplier
- White collared shirt(not a polo shirt)
- Trousers - contemporary or classic fit black school trousers
- Shorts – Boys, from Summer term tailored black school shorts are allowed
- Skirts – Kelso tartan skirt, purchased from the school supplier
- Socks or tights must be plain and of a dark colour
- Shoes should be black and of a material that can be polished
- Green gingham dress for Summer term only

### Clothing not accepted

**Body con stretch trousers that cling to the body shape is not acceptable** for boys or girls

- Trousers that expose underwear because they are low cut
- Denim, corduroy, canvas, patterned items, non-tailored shorts, culottes, jeans, **trousers that appear like jeans, leggings or jeggings**, extremes of style; ostentatious belts
- A non-uniform jumper/hoodie is not allowed to be worn in school
- Any items of extreme style such as paramilitary or gang related clothing

**Footwear not accepted**

- Coloured trainers
- High boots
- Boots or High heels
- Plimsolls or similar made
- Canvas shoes

Our uniform expectations are not optional, we have spare uniform to support all students to be correctly attired; students persistently wearing incorrect clothing or shoes to school despite our support to comply will be dealt with according to our Conduct policy.

For more information about the school uniform standards, please see the school website:

[School Uniform Page](#)

Should you require assistance to meet our uniform standards, please contact your student's form tutor. We will assist all to meet our uniform standards.



## Arbor Reports

End of term reports will be published on ARBOR by the end of the day on Friday 19th December. They will then be emailed out at a later date.

*Mr D'Mello*

## Non-Taught Languages

We have a tradition at St Benedict's of students who have taken GCSEs and occasionally A Levels in subjects that have not been taught at school. In most cases this has been because the language has been spoken at home and there has also been an emphasis on reading and writing in the home language. We regularly have a cohort of students who take Polish GCSE and have also entered students for French, Spanish, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Arabic and Chinese. We recommend that non-taught languages options are taken in year 10.

For those students who do have a second language, the school is willing to fund the cost of the examination entry and plan for the listening and speaking elements of the exam. It is entirely the responsibility of the student and parents to ensure that the pupil is adequately prepared for the relevant exam.

Examination entries need to be made early in the Spring term so if you would like to be entered for an exam in a non-taught language in summer 2026 then please complete the following form by Monday January 12th 2026.

[Non - Taught Language Qualification](#)

Caroline Edwards - Exams Officer

[cedwards@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:cedwards@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk)

## Vacancy - LSA

Job Title: Learning Support Assistant

Salary: Grade 3 range 4-6 (£25,185 - £25,989)pro rata

Job Term: Part Time, Term Time only (38 weeks) 27.5 hours per week

Appointment: Permanent

Place of work: St Benedict's Catholic School, Bury St Edmunds

Required as soon as possible

We are seeking to appoint a Learning Support Assistant to work with our wonderful students as part of our SEN team. This post will involve providing support for students with additional needs both in the classroom and in intervention sessions. St Benedict's is a 'Good' school (April 2022) with a strong reputation and a supportive local community. Applications from both experienced staff and those considering a new role are welcomed. This is term-time only role, up to 27.5 hours a week, although candidates who can offer fewer hours than this will also be considered.

Our school is committed to our mission as a Catholic community and seeks to help all our young people achieve their potential both academically and personally. We can offer a positive environment where you will be encouraged to progress further in your career should you wish, supported by a team of staff who are hardworking and dedicated to the school.

For more details of the school and how to apply please see our website

<https://www.st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk/jobapplicationforms>

or contact Stef Buchan- Head's PA.

Our Ofsted 2022 report states:

St Benedict's Catholic School continues to be a good school.

It goes on to say:

Pupils say that their school is a happy place where they feel safe and accepted. They know that their teachers look after them and provide them with the support they need.

Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to their work. It is important for them to be the best they can be. They are also respectful, kind and compassionate towards each other, their

teachers and visitors to the school. Older students are mature and self-assured, and support younger pupils in and out of the classroom.

Please see the website for the application form: [Website link](#)

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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



5 January - PD Day

6 January - Back to school

19 January - Careers Assembly: **Year 10 Next Steps** Hosted by West Suffolk College

[Term Dates](#)

## Contact Us



St Benedict's Catholic School

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Bury St Edmunds, IP32 6RH

01284 753512

[enquiries@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk)

[www.st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk](http://www.st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk)

[Instagram](#)