



St Benedict's Newsletter 326

24 April 2026



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

Just a reminder that if you do not inform us by 9.00am using 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

Klondyke Cup Winners

The inaugural U16s Rugby Klondyke Cup between St Benedict's and County High was held on Wednesday 22 April at the Bury St Edmunds Rugby Club. There was an amazing atmosphere in the stand with students, teachers and parents cheering on their respective schools.

Girls Match Report

Final score: 19-17 to St Benedict's

After a few training sessions as a group, our U16s team was well prepped and ready for the game with an expectant baying crowd.

Captain Izzy Wakes kicked off excellently with a strong defensive line chasing up putting County under pressure from the off. This theme remained consistent with some excellent first up tackles before a breakaway try from County to put them 0-7 up. From sustained pressure we unfortunately conceded again to go 0-12 down, but this is where the Bennies girls showed their real resilience. They regained possession after one of Sophie Rankin's many turnovers and managed to score with Audrey Harvey going over, which was converted by Izzy Wakes to make it 7-12. At this point Harriet Tovey went down injured, which motivated our girls to push even harder with Agnes Paul then scoring, which was again converted by Izzy Wakes to make it 14-12. After the second half County managed to score from lots of strong carrying to make it 14-17. Driven on by the crowd though and in the last few moments of the game, Flora Bromley-Martin picked and scored out wide to make it the last score of the game and a win for St Benedict's, 19-17.

However, our win wouldn't have come without real dedication shown by our players, for example Molly Murphy making an 80 metre chase to stop an almost certain try.

For those who weren't there, the crowd were excellent and clearly drove our girls forward, so thank you to all for that support.

Many thanks, Mr. Elmer

Boys Match Report

After the girls had claimed victory, it was time for the boys to continue the show. With the passion of St Benedict in their hearts, they took to the pitch, ready to make a statement. From the first whistle, the lads were all over the County opposition. It didn't take long until we managed to win a penalty in the opposition 22, at which point the team captain Seamus Gallgher stepped up to kick for 3 points. Unfortunately, it wasn't meant to be, but it didn't take long until the Bennies boys managed to power their way over the line, taking the score to 5-0. With a wonderful nudge from the now reliable boot of the team captain, the score went to 7-0. It didn't take long for the next score, which again was converted to take the score to 14-0. A few moments later, a breakaway try saw the lads scoring under the posts again, which after being converted took the score to 21-0. At this point, it looked like our boys in green were going to absolutely demolish the now timid County opposition. With the ever-reliable green army in the crowd spurring on the lads, it was only a matter of time.

At half time, the boys were given an inspirational speech from our very own director of rugby, Sam Tatum, to help them drive home the victory. Then, as the second half kicked off, County immediately scored against us to take the score to 21-5. However, the boys weren't ready to give up so easily, and it didn't take long until the small but deadly Noah Wilkinson ran half the pitch to take the score to 26-5, then converted to 28-5. County, now quivering in their boots, knew that they had to do something, and after being held up once, they eventually managed to trip over our line and take the score to 28-10, converted to 28-12. After an awe-inspiring speech from our highly experienced expert sixth form coaches, Adam

O'Flynn and Kairo Boyaram, the boys knew that they had to finish the game on a high. Finally, as the clock turned red, our very own (slightly smaller but still as deadly) Jake McConnell dived over the line to seal the victory, which after being converted, topped off the battering at a nice 35-12.

The game saw star performances from many of the lads in the squad and choosing a man of the match was not an easy task. However, Frederick Scott's work rate in attack and defence as well as a number of impactful carries deserved to be commended, his performance fully encompassed the core values of St Benedict's. A huge congratulations to all the lads who played on Wednesday, the heart they showed and the 'jouez rug' that they played is a true testament to St Benedict, you should all be proud of yourselves, and some of you should consider picking up a proper shaped ball more often. Finally, a huge thank you must be given to Mr Taylor, for organising the event. A huge thank you to the thunderous crowd that helped pushed the lads over the line. Without you, the outcome might have been different. And the biggest thank you must go to the incredible coaches, Adam and Kairo, for the wealth of knowledge, experience and the time that they have sacrificed to help get the lads to where they are today. Without them, such a victory would not have been possible.

Congratulations lads, you've earned a well-deserved break from revision this weekend.

Adam O'Flynn

Year 13 Student and Head Coach



1 - Kairo Boyaram and Adam O'Flynn

U16 Boys Coaches





Catholic Social Teaching

This week, our focus has been on the theme of The Common Good, reflecting on how our actions, choices, and attitudes affect not just ourselves, but the whole community. This builds upon our reflection from last week, where we first explored the Gospel reading from Luke 24:13–35, The Road to Emmaus. By returning to this passage again, we have been reminded that God’s Word often speaks to us more deeply when we take time to revisit it and reflect again.

In assemblies we considered how the disciples on the road to Emmaus were struggling to make sense of everything that had happened. They had all the information, Jesus’ life, death, and the reports of the Resurrection, yet they could not see the bigger picture. Like them, we can sometimes feel overwhelmed by information, uncertainty, or challenge, and find it difficult to join the dots.

Catholic Social Teaching reminds us that the Common Good is about ensuring that everyone has what they need to flourish. It recognises that we are not meant to walk alone, but together, supporting one another and taking responsibility for the wellbeing of all. This is powerfully reflected in the Emmaus story, where Jesus chooses to walk alongside the disciples, listening to them before helping them understand.

Scripture tells us:

“While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them.” —

Luke 24:15 This simple but profound moment reminds us that Jesus meets us where we are, even when we are confused or unsure. It is only when He opens the Scriptures and breaks the bread that their eyes are fully opened. Understanding comes through relationship, trust, and time.

At school living out the Common Good means recognising that our learning, behaviour, and decisions affect others. It calls us to be patient with one another, to listen, and to act in ways that build up rather than isolate or divide. Alongside this Gospel reflection, students also explored the Prayer of Serenity, which helps us respond to life with balance and faith:

“God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.”

This prayer invites us to pause, reflect, and trust, recognising that while we cannot control everything, we can choose how we respond. It encourages resilience, responsibility, and faith, all of which are essential in contributing positively to the Common Good. In school, this means recognising that moments of challenge, whether in learning, relationships, or decision-making, are opportunities to grow. When we trust Jesus to walk with us, like the disciples on the road, we begin to see more clearly how our actions connect and why they matter.

We can live out the Common Good through our school values in simple and meaningful ways:

- **Wisdom:** Taking time to reflect, to listen closely, and to seek understanding, trusting that clarity often comes through patience and faith.
- **Compassion:** Recognising those around us who may be struggling and choosing to walk alongside them with kindness, empathy, and respect.
- **Resilience:** Continuing the journey even when things feel difficult, trusting that we are not alone and that growth often comes through perseverance.

As we reflect this week, we might ask ourselves: Am I aware of how my actions affect others? Do I take time to listen and understand different perspectives? How can I contribute positively to my school community and the wider world?

When we allow Jesus to walk with us and open our eyes, we begin to see how our individual steps contribute to something much bigger, the building of the Common Good.

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,
enjoying one moment at a time;
accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;
taking, as Jesus did,
this sinful world as it is,
not as I would have it;

trusting that You will make all things right

if I surrender to Your will;

so that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with You forever in the next.

Amen.

Careers Update

Having completed all of my Year 11 post-16 meetings and student reports last month, my focus is now directed to Sixth Formers and younger students who need or want guidance on future choices, and creating a fresh programme of events!

Our next Careers Talks will be delivered by alumni and public sector employers (see the Diary below). Year 10s will learn about vocational pathways and apprenticeships in their Next Steps assembly with West Suffolk College, and Year 9 and Year 12 students will benefit from the wisdom and insights of alumni entrepreneurs in (respectively) an assembly and Business class.

In the meantime, here is a *reminder* about Degree Apprenticeship and other new opportunities on offer to students:

Student Opportunities

Year 13

Degree Apprenticeships with [Barnes Construction](#)

Degree apprenticeships in Management, Site Management and Construction Planning

Applications close this week. Interviews to be held in May.

Note: applications must be made **in writing, enclosing your current CV** marked: "For the attention of Mr S Severwright, Divisional Surveying Director" sent to the address on the website, or by e-mail to: recruitment@barnesconstruction.co.uk.

[Podiatry Degree Apprenticeship](#)

For information and applications contact Rachel Richardson, Suffolk Podiatry Clinical Lead at: rachel.richardson11@nhs.net.

Closing Date: 14th May 2026 - Apply [Here](#)

Students aged 14yrs +

UCAT Support with "Get Into" Conferences

Get Into Medicine Conference: **Saturday 25th April, 9am-1:30pm**

https://medicmentor.org/get-into_medicine_conference_signup/Register at: [Get Into Medicine Conference Sign Up - Medic Mentor](#)

Get Into Dentistry Conference: **Sunday 31st May**, 9am-1:30pm

Register at: [Get Into Dentistry Conference Sign Up – Dental Mentor](#)

NEW!

FREE Online Conference on Applying to University – Saturday 25th April 10.am to 1pm

Lancaster, Exeter, Cardiff, Bath and Keele universities are joining together tomorrow to offer students online sessions including: Choosing a Course, Writing an Effective Personal Statement, Managing Your Money and Ask the Students & Experts. For All information and the booking form [click here](#).

[Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship \(PCDA\)](#)

For students who are **unsure about** going to **university**, or who want a more **practical**, hands-on option: the PCDA allows students to earn a salary of £42,000 while working towards a fully funded (BSc) Hons degree in Professional Policing Practice. For more information visit: [Police Apprenticeship and Traditional Entry | Join The Police](#)

Students in Years 10-13

Get into Law - Virtual (Zoom) Work Experience Day - 28th May, 10am to 4pm

Take part in legal workshops, hear from international law firms and the UK's biggest university offering law degrees. Network in virtual booths (*under 18s should be safeguarded by a parent or carer*) and gain a Certificate of completion. Apply [here](#)

Request!

Please let me know if your child(ren) access any of the above opportunities by completing the following **short** survey: [Careers Student Opportunities – Fill in form](#)

Your feedback will help me understand the best way to share information with you.

Miss Hahn

Helping Young People Navigate Social Media Trends

Across the country, discussions about young people's use of social media has been a hot topic recently, with growing concerns about the impact of fast-moving trends. We want to share a few key ideas to help students and families better understand these trends and the potential risks they can bring.

Social media trends move fast, from viral challenges to lifestyle aesthetics, young people are constantly shown new ideas about how they should look, act, and live. While many trends

are creative and fun, problems can arise when students follow them without fully understanding what they involve or how they might affect their mental health and safety.

Trends often show a distorted version of reality and can create pressure to fit in. Joining in may feel like the only way to stay relevant or avoid being left out. This pressure is increased by the speed of social media, where fear of missing out (FOMO) can push young people to act quickly, rather than think things through.

Some trends also take the form of online games, dares, or challenges. Although these can seem harmless or funny at first, they may involve risks that students haven't fully considered. Young people may feel encouraged to take physical, emotional, or social risks that could harm themselves or others.

It's important to remember that students aren't being careless, they're navigating a digital world designed to grab their attention. Algorithms promote what is popular, not always what is safe or healthy.

So, what can help?

Parents can support young people by having open, calm conversations about what they're seeing online and encouraging them to think critically about trends.

Students can help protect their wellbeing by pausing before joining in and asking simple questions:

- *Is this safe?*
- *Does this make me feel good about myself?*
- *Does it reflect who I am?*

Social media isn't all bad, but it works best when used thoughtfully. The aim isn't to avoid trends completely, but to approach them with awareness, confidence, and a strong sense of self.

If something online makes a student feel uncomfortable, worried, or unsafe, they should speak to a trusted adult or a member of school staff, such as Mrs Bourne, Mrs Bailey, Mrs Berry or Mr Foreman as soon as possible.

It may also be helpful to remember that most social media platforms have age restrictions (typically **13+ years**) including sites such as TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, YouTube, and X. These limits are in place to help protect young users, and using platforms before the recommended age can increase exposure to content or situations that may be difficult to manage.

Fidget Toys

Dear parents,

In recent weeks we have noticed an increase in the number of students bringing their own fidget toys into school. We understand that for some pupils, fidget toys can be a useful tool to aid concentration in the classroom and there are certain pupils with whom we have agreed to the use of a fidget toy in school. However, for the vast majority of our pupils they are an active distraction and do not support learning.

Therefore, from next week, students will receive a behaviour point if they use a fidget toy in the classroom if the use has not been approved by the SEND Department, the Senior Progress Leaders or the Pastoral Team. A list of students who have approval for the use of fidget toys is held by these teams and it is also available on the student's Arbor page for teachers to ensure that those with approval do not receive sanctions for this. If a student has approval to use a fidget toy this should have been specifically discussed with them by one of these teams. If you or your child would like to check that this is approved, please contact myself or your Senior Progress Leader. Those with approval for the use of fidget toys should also know that we ask that fidget toys are small and discreet to ensure that these do not prove a distraction in the classroom.

We do hope that this will allow all students to remain engaged in learning without distraction and for those with the use of fidget toys to be able to access these suitably. If you would like to discuss this further do feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your support,

Mr Scarfe

Friends of St Benedict's Parents Teachers Association

We are looking to resurrect our once active Parents Teachers Association to help with fundraising and general awareness of our school in the local community. If you think you might be interested in getting involved then please send me an email: JD'Mello@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk

No huge commitments are needed at this stage. To begin with it would be good to get a small group together to explore how we could take this forward.

John D'Mello

Is Your Child a Young Carer

A young carer is a child or young person aged between 5 to 25 years old whose life is in some way different or restricted because they provide, or intend to provide, practical or emotional support to someone else.

The person they provide care for is often a parent, a relative who is physically or mentally ill, frail elderly, disabled or misuses alcohol or substances. Young carers could also be supporting and caring for a disabled brother or sister.

If you think your child is a Young Carer, please call Ms Bourne on 01284 753512 to discuss, or contact Suffolk Young Carers directly at www.suffolkfamilycarers.org or 01473 835477



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

Dates for your Diary



28 April - Lunchtime Careers Talk with Dorcas Sukami, Growth Officer at West Suffolk Council - **Soft Skills - Big Impact: building your future, one conversation at time**

29 April - **Year 9 Alumni Assembly** with Lauren and Matt Rowley, ATTREN

1 May - Alumni Lunchtime Careers Talk with Lauren Buckley, Social Events Manager, The Dorchester - **A Career in High-end Events Management**

7 May - Lunchtime Careers Talk with Sgt Darren Rivers, RAF - **Careers in the Royal Air Force**

5/6/7 May - A Level Art Exam

11 May - Public Exams Start

11 May - **Year 10 Next Steps Assembly** with West Suffolk College

22 May - Break up for half term

[Term Dates](#)

Contact Us



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