



St Benedict's Newsletter 338

11 September 2026

Catholic Social Teaching

As we begin a new school year, we are given the opportunity to make a fresh start. A new year brings new lessons, new friendships, new challenges and new opportunities to discover more about ourselves and the people we are becoming. It is also an opportunity to think about how we want to live our lives and the difference we want to make to the world around us.

Throughout this year, we will continue to explore the different themes of Catholic Social Teaching (CST). CST is the Church's way of helping us understand how our faith should influence the way we live, the way we treat others, and the choices we make. It reminds us that our faith is not simply something we believe; it is something we are called to put into action.

CST themes include **Dignity, Solidarity, The Common Good, Option for the Poor, Peace, Creation and the Environment, and Dignity of Work and Participation**. Although each theme has a different focus, they are all connected by one central belief: **every person is made in the image and likeness of God and is called to live in relationship with others.**

St Paul reminds us: “Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.” — 1 John 3:18 This is at the heart of Catholic Social Teaching. It challenges us not simply to talk about kindness, justice, dignity or compassion, but to consider what these things look like in our everyday lives. How we speak to someone who is struggling, whether we include someone who feels left out, how we care for our environment, how we use our talents, and whether we stand up when something is unfair can all be expressions of our faith.

As we begin this new school year, we might therefore see CST as an invitation to look beyond ourselves. We are part of a school community, a local community and a much wider world. Our choices matter, our actions matter, and we have the ability to make a positive difference.

As we begin another year together, we are invited to live out our school values of **Wisdom, Compassion and Resilience**:

- **Wisdom:** Taking time to understand the world around us, listening to different perspectives, and thinking carefully about how our choices affect other people and God's creation.
- **Compassion:** Recognising the dignity of everyone we meet and looking for opportunities to show kindness, inclusion, generosity and understanding.
- **Resilience:** Having the courage to stand up for what is right, persevering when things are difficult, and being willing to learn and grow from our experiences.

As we begin this new school year, we might reflect and ask ourselves: What kind of person do I want to become this year? How can I make a positive difference to the people around me? How can I turn my beliefs into actions?

A new school year gives each of us the opportunity to begin again. We may not know exactly what the year ahead will bring, but we can choose how we respond to it. Through our choices, our relationships and our actions, we can help make our school a community where everyone is valued, supported and encouraged to flourish.

Heavenly Father,

As I stand at the threshold of this new beginning,

I come before You with a heart full of gratitude.

Thank You for the gift of fresh starts

and the chance to begin anew.

Grant me Your wisdom and guidance

as I step into uncharted territory.

May Your light illuminate my path,

helping me release the past
and embrace the future with hope and enthusiasm.
Let this new chapter be filled with Your blessings and grace,
shaping a beautiful journey of faith and purpose.
Help me to recognise the dignity of those around me,
to show compassion through my actions,
and to have the resilience to face whatever challenges come my way.
May I use the gifts You have given me
to serve others and make a positive difference in the world.
Amen.

Careers Update

Welcome to our first Autumn Term Careers Update!

As well as the information and opportunities highlighted below, I would like to make you aware of a *brand-new* Extracurricular Club: "Explore Your Future - Careers Guidance" which I will be running on Tuesday lunchtimes my colleague, Mrs Kennedy (Head of Business and Economics). All years are welcome. We are keen to find out what students are interested in and plan to impart our wisdom and share our knowledge on all things careers. Please do encourage your child(ren) to sign up if they want to explore their future pathways now. It is never too early!

Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Opportunities

Junior Chef Academy - Y10 Students

Location: Cambridge Regional College

Duration: 8 weeks from 6-8pm

Start date: Wednesday 4th November 2026

Gain food preparation and cookery skills, improve confidence and your ability to work in a team, plus learn more about careers within the hospitality sector.

To apply: email Graham Taylor at: gwtaylor@camre.ac.uk with a paragraph about why you are interested in this opportunity

Deadline for applications: Monday 28th September 2026

Fully Funded Opportunity

For Year 10 Students

JUNIOR CHEF ACADEMY



DELIVERED BY COMPASS GROUP UK & IRELAND

Gain key cookery and food preparation skills

Increase confidence and the ability to work effectively as part of a team

Gain a greater understanding of the hospitality sector and career pathways

TO APPLY

Email a paragraph about why you are interested in this opportunity to Graham Taylor by Monday, 28th September : gwtaylor@camre.ac.uk

Starting on Wednesday, 4th November 2026, 6:00 - 8:00pm for 8 weeks

Students would need to organise their own transport to and from our Cambridge campus.



Held at

Cambridge Regional College, Cambridge Campus, King's Hedges Road, Cambridge, CB4 2QT

Parent and Carer Guidance about University Applications

Having navigated the process of university applications with my son within the last two years, I feel it would be useful to share the following information links with you. The most immediate tip I have is **breathe!**

There is a wealth of information available, contacts within UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) and Student Finance England (SFE) who take the time to explain and guide you through the process. It is far less complex than we often imagine - you just need to follow the process step by step!

As a starting point, take a look at:

[Applying to University - learn about everything involved](#)[Get undergraduate student finance: step by step - GOV.UK](#)

Then explore: [What can I do with my degree? | Prospects.ac.uk](#)

The more informed you are, the more confident and relaxed you will feel about the process.

Note: I will be holding a weekly Drop-in session for our Sixth Formers in the Raven Centre Common Room from w/c 14th September where they will be able to ask/ talk with me about anything education, training and careers related.

Careers in the British Army

For students interested in careers within the British Army, please see the September Newsletter which contains useful information and resources about skills and pathways.

Note: Father Richard White (Fr Dick) will be delivering a Careers Talk to students next month which will include his international role as an Army Chaplain.

Have a lovely weekend.

Miss Hahn

The graphic is a vertical layout for the British Army Careers Newsletter. At the top, it has the title 'BRITISH ARMY CAREERS NEWSLETTER' and the Army logo. Below this is a section titled 'YOUTUBE SERIES - 3 MILESTONES' featuring three video thumbnails: 'VISITING AN ARMY CAREERS OFFICE', 'ASSESSMENT CENTRE', and 'BASIC TRAINING (HARROGATE)'. Each thumbnail includes a brief description of the video's content. The next section is 'HUBS', which lists resources for 'PARENTS AND GUARDIANS' (podcasts, application guidance, myth-busting, expert webinars) and 'EDUCATORS' (lesson resources, workshops, careers guidance, employer engagement). Below this is a call to action: 'KNOW SOMEONE WHO'D BENEFIT? PLEASE SHARE THIS WITH COLLEAGUES, PARENTS AND CARERS' with a 'REGISTER YOUR INTEREST' button. The following section is 'WANT TO STAY CONNECTED' with social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. The final section is 'GET IN TOUCH' with a background image of a soldier and a drone, containing contact information for booking talks and requesting materials. At the bottom, there are QR codes and links for 'SEARCH ARMY JOBS' and 'BASE'.

BRITISH ARMY CAREERS NEWSLETTER

YOUTUBE SERIES - 3 MILESTONES

VISITING AN ARMY CAREERS OFFICE
Thinking about joining the British Army? This video explains the application process step by step, helping to demystify the journey.

ASSESSMENT CENTRE
Unsure what happens at Assessment? This video takes you through the three-day Assessment Centre experience equipped with practical tips.

BASIC TRAINING (HARROGATE)
Discover what life is really like at the Army Foundation College, Harrogate, as Junior Soldiers share their experiences in their own words.

HUBS

PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

- PODCASTS
- APPLICATION GUIDANCE
- MYTH-BUSTING
- EXPERT WEBINARS

EDUCATORS

- LESSON RESOURCES
- WORKSHOPS
- CAREERS GUIDANCE
- EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

KNOW SOMEONE WHO'D BENEFIT? **REGISTER YOUR INTEREST**

PLEASE SHARE THIS WITH COLLEAGUES, PARENTS AND CARERS
Help more people access helpful resources, events and advice.

WANT TO STAY CONNECTED

GET IN TOUCH

WANT TO BOOK A TALK, REQUEST MATERIALS OR ASK A QUESTION?
Call your local office or email the Army Outreach team at: rg-nrcoutreachadmin@mod.gov.uk

SEARCH ARMY JOBS

WANT TO BOOK A TALK, REQUEST MATERIALS OR ASK A QUESTION?
Call your local office or email the Army Outreach team at: rg-nrcoutreachadmin@mod.gov.uk

SEARCH ARMY JOBS

BASE

Creative Writing Competition Success

Congratulations to Hosannah Gee 9X who has won the 12-17 category in the Bury Literature Festival writing competition. The challenge was for entrants to write up to 800 words on the theme of 'To be continued...' where they took a favourite character or book and imagined what happened next or how the character would react in a different situation. Hosannah chose Alice in Wonderland and the judge, Ashley Hickson-Lovence said of Hosannah's entry: *"It's imaginative, funny and really enjoyable to read. I loved the way it brings Alice in Wonderland into a more modern world while still keeping the strange, playful feel of the original. The narrator has a really strong voice and the ending makes you want to know what happens next."*

As well as winning a host of goodies for herself, Hosannah has also won 100 books for the school library. She will be attending a special celebratory “bookshop lock-in” at a local bookshop later in September to choose which books she would like to add to the library.

I would also like to congratulate other students from St Benedict’s who entered this competition: Ishaan Jerby 8A, Elsie Brandon 8L, Adam Bulacz 9A, Amelia Selfoss 9L, Evan Cameron 9A, Max Sukpe 9L and Alexis Josy 11S. I thoroughly enjoyed reading all of their entries.

Mrs Oakes

Winning Entry

I was falling. Falling rapidly, down, down, down. Down to the depths of the earth, down quite probably to my grave. My perfectly straightened hair was now flying up above my head, and the skirt of my dress had been blown up round my neck. At least I was wearing shorts, not that there was anyone around to see me.

As I fell, I looked all around me, the panic gradually draining out of me like water from a bath. There were shelves lining the walls of the hole, and on them were arranged curiosities from all the corners of the globe, as well as some more familiar objects, such as make up items, every type of iPhone ever invented, and a gaming console that looked suspiciously like my brother's. Thinking of mobile phones, I reached into my pocket for mine. "Oh drat, it's not there!" I muttered, vexed at the fact that it had inevitably fallen deep down into the abyss. The hole was going on for seemingly forever, I noted, and I could have sworn it was getting hotter. "I'll get to Australia at this rate!" I laughed, seeing at the same time a joke book on one of the shelves.

I whizzed downwards for what seemed like miles, and the seconds turned into minutes, and the minutes into hours. Soon, though, I got used to the sensation, and I drifted into a dreamy reverie. "Reverse flying," I commented aloud to myself. "If anyone ever wondered what flying feels like, it's like this. Just backwards. Except it's not actually backwards, is it? More like opposite. But then wouldn't the opposite of flying be walking, or maybe standing still? No, I know what it is!" I exclaimed, pleased that I had at least dug myself out of this intellectual hole, if not the physical one. "It's called flying in the non-conventional way! Yes, most people think of flying as zipping around or soaring upwards into the clouds, but why shouldn't you fly downwards? After all, even after you reach the clouds, you'll have to come down eventually!"

I pondered this for a while, and arranged my body into a position in which I could comfortably read the book I grabbed from a nearby shelf. Essentially, I was hugging my knees and resting the book on top of them. This did, of course, mean that I fell faster than usual,

but it was worth it for the joy of a good book. "At least I'll reach the bottom quicker." I remarked.

Looking at the book, I marvelled at the intricate details on the cover. It was embellished with gold ink, and looked like it had been done by hand a very long time ago. It was entitled, 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland'.

"This just gets curiouiser and curiouiser!" I cried.

Three hours later, I landed with a huge bump on a cold, hard floor, the impact leaving me sore, stunned, and annoyingly far from the end of my book. After sitting in the air for so long, the solid ground beneath my feet felt strangely solid and dependable. Taking a tentative step forward, I gazed all around me. I was in an echoey underground chamber, made of an orangey soil, perhaps clay, and suspended by thick, stone pillars. There were coloured doors arranged round the circumference of the chamber, ranging in size from those that looked suitable for a mouse and those that an elephant could fit through. In the centre of the room, there was a small, three-legged table on which rested a can of Fanta and a delicious-looking cupcake. As I approached, I saw that there was a label tied to each of them, saying, 'eat me', or 'drink me', each for the respective item. Opening the can of Fanta, and stuffing the cake in my pocket for later, I took a slurp. The refreshing fizz trickled down my throat, giving me at the same time an unnatural feeling, quite different to the normal prickling sensation you get from drinking something fizzy. A wave of heat washed over my whole body, from head to toe, before I felt something go pop inside of me, and suddenly I felt as if my skin was shrinking and my organs were being sucked inwards to my core. I was scared, and about to scream, until another wave, this time of calm, washed over me, and I felt relatively normal.

Looking around me once more, I realised that I had, indeed, shrunk to about the size of a mouse. Walking composedly towards a door, I grinned and turned a handle. I knew what happened in this world now, and I was about to start my own new chapter. Pulling open the door, I stepped outside into the sunshine. This was it.

PE Kit Expectations

As we begin the new term, we would like to remind parents and carers of our PE kit expectations to help students get the most from their lessons. This has been taken directly from the school's website. Please visit the school website for more information.

Compulsory

(Only the sports shirt needs to be ordered from C&D uniform suppliers)

- Green sports shirt, embroidered with "St Benedict's" logo
- Black shorts which are plain (See examples below)

- Black football socks

Optional

C&D provide options for all plain black additional sportswear but these can be sourced elsewhere as long as they meet the criteria of being plain and black

- Black Training top
- Black rain jacket
- Black jogging bottoms
- Black Leggings (see examples below)
- Black baselayer top

Examples of correct shorts and Leggings for Girls

Leggings

Sports leggings should also be plain black and should not be see through or have any patches that are see through. Tights will not be acceptable for PE lessons.

Shorts

If you buy alternative plain black shorts, please can you ensure that they are not skin tight material such polyester. However girls shorts should **not be** the spandex (close to the skin) 3 – 5 inch versions which are not appropriate for school PE lessons activities.

Footwear

- For outdoor autumn/winter activities such as football and rugby, football boots are required
- For indoor lessons we strongly suggest Astro Turf trainers, which can be used both in the school gym and also the all-weather surface outside
- No plimsolls are allowed to be worn

Reminder: Aerosol deodorants and body sprays must not be brought into school. If students wish to bring deodorant for use after PE, roll-on deodorants are recommended.

Mr Bates



International Day of Languages 2026 - Tuesday 29 September

We're looking forward to celebrating the many languages and cultures that make up our diverse St Benedict's community. Students will enjoy a range of activities throughout the day, including a tutor quiz and language taster sessions led by bilingual students.

We are also promoting the national **European Day of Languages Writing Competition**, themed "*One Powerful Message*", inviting students to create a piece of writing in a language they are learning.

Parents and carers can help make the day even more special by supporting two key events:

International Baking Competition

Students are invited to create cakes, biscuits or savoury bakes inspired by their culture or a country of their choice. Entries will be displayed and judged on Languages Day, with a charity cake sale taking place the following day in support of St Nicholas Hospice.

Cultural Dress Celebration

Students are welcome to wear appropriate cultural dress to celebrate their heritage and the rich diversity of our school community. A whole-school cultural dress photograph will be taken during the day.

We look forward to another fantastic celebration of languages, cultures and global citizenship at St Benedict's

Ms Drabik, MFL team

Suffolk Historic Churches Trust Ride & Stride

On Saturday 12th September, Hugh O'Neill, a retired headteacher from St Benedict's, will be leading the St Edmund's Church bike ride to support the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust. Alongside Norfolk, Suffolk boasts the largest concentration of medieval churches in Europe. However, maintaining these historic landmarks requires significant funding. This

annual event unites cyclists from across the county to raise vital funds for their upkeep. The money raised by Hugh and his team will be split equally:

- 50% will go directly to St Edmund's Church.
- 50% will go to the Trust's grants chest, which helps churches across the county with urgent repairs like leaking roofs or crumbling masonry.

We wish Hugh and his team the very best of luck and excellent weather for their journey! If you would like to sponsor the team and support this fantastic cause, donations can be made quickly and securely via ParentPay. Thank you for your support.

Mr Murphy

Library Update



Library Newsletter

September 2026

📅 This Month in the Library 📅

Welcome to September's library newsletter!

Join us as we explore some of the most interesting and important events taking place this month including Start the Year Strong, International Literacy Day, Roald Dahl Day, Hobbit Day and National Coding Week. Whether they are moments from history, key religious dates, cultural celebrations or awareness days, we will be highlighting them via engaging displays and book recommendations. Also, don't forget, we will have plenty of fun and creative activity sheets available too. You can complete them during a quiet moment in the library alone, with friends or take them home for later.

Looking for your next great read? We will also be sharing a range of reading recommendations chosen by students and staff for all ages and interests. They are perfect for discovering something new and inspiring.

Next month we will be celebrating Black History Month, Dyslexia Awareness Week, World Poetry Day and many more.

Mrs Hayter-Gare, the library helpers and the English Department.

'At the moment that we persuade a child, any child, to cross that threshold, that magic threshold into a library, we change their lives forever, for the better.'
Barack Obama.

Welcome to St Benedict's Library

Our library is a safe space to read, play chess, play games, chat with your friends, study and research.

Whether you are looking for your next favourite book, help with research, a space to study, chess pieces or activity sheets we are here to help.

Food and drink are allowed in the **lower area** but please keep it clean and tidy.

No food or drink to be consumed in the **upper (computer) area**. **Computers for academic purposes only.**

Go to the main desk to check out/return books or, if Mrs HG is absent, use the forms provided on the desk.

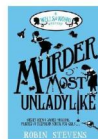


Book recommendations

Student Recommendation:

Murder Most Unladylike, Robin Stevens, (Fiction, genre: Crime and Thriller, red dot)

A year 9's summary: Someone is murdered at their school and they are the only ones who know about it. Can they convince everyone else? First, they will need some proof. I would recommend this book because it is a mystery so you always want to know what will happen next and it has some plot twists.
Rated: 5/5 Stars. Link: [goodreads](#)



Start the Year Strong:

All the Pieces of Me, Rebecca Westcott Libby Scott (Fiction, genre: Modern Relationships, pink dot)

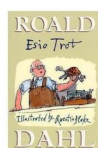
Year 8 can be tough for everyone, but for Tally it feels even tougher. Everything seems to be changing as she and her friends get older. Make-up, boys, social media, GCSE prep - why is it all starting to feel so different? Tally has always known that being autistic means some things are harder for her than they are for other people. But becoming a teenager has left Tally feeling like she has no idea who she even is anymore. Link: [goodreads](#)



Roald Dahl Day:

Esio Trot, Roald Dahl, (Fiction, genre: Adventure, green dot)

Mr. Hoppy is in love with Mrs. Silver, but her heart belongs to Alfie, her pet tortoise. Mr. Hoppy is too shy to approach Mrs. Silver, until one day he comes up with a brilliant idea to win her heart. If Mr. Hoppy's plan works, Mrs. Silver will certainly fall in love with him. But it's going to take one hundred and forty tortoises, an ancient spell, and a little bit of magic. Link: [goodreads](#)



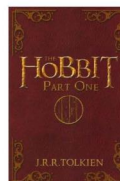
Contact Mrs HG with any questions. rhayter-gare@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk

Hobbit Day:

The Hobbit, J.R.R. Tolkien, (Fiction, genre: Fantasy, orange dot)

Smaug certainly looked fast asleep, when Bilbo peeped once more from the entrance. He was just about to step out onto the floor when he caught a sudden thin ray of red from under the drooping lid of Smaug's left eye. He was only pretending to be asleep! He was watching the tunnel entrance!

Whisked from his comfortable hobbit-hole by Gandalf the wizard and a band of dwarves, Bilbo Baggins finds himself caught up in a plot to raid the treasure hoard of Smaug the Magnificent, a large and very dangerous dragon. Link: [goodreads](#)



Start the Year Strong:

Be Happy Be You: The teenage guide to boost happiness and resilience. Penny Alexander, Becky Goddard-Hill (Nonfiction)

This positive and insightful guide gives you the tools to build your confidence, eliminate negative feelings and boost happiness in all areas of your life.

Being a teenager has its own unique challenges, but it's also the perfect time to shape your own mental wellbeing and happiness. Scientists reckon 40% of your happiness is within your control, that's A LOT of happiness and this book will help you to harness it...

There are tons of ideas to try from creating an anxiety toolkit, to planning a digital detox and meditating, plus you'll learn the science behind why they work. Carry out the activities by yourself or with family and friends and take your happiness into your own hands! Link: [goodreads](#)



Library Hours

Monday to Thursday: 8.15am-4.30pm
Open at morning break, lunch break **and** after school
Friday: 8.15am - 4pm

Book Club Wednesday after school
Chess Club Tuesday lunchtime



Reading Challenge

Available to all year groups.

Check out the posters in the library and around the school or talk to Mrs HG and the Library helpers.

This month's winners:

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

ARBOR Parental Information Verification



Please could we ask all parents to log onto their ARBOR accounts to ensure that you still have access to the system.

Once on the system, please check that the information that we hold is correct and up to date for each child that you have at the school. If it is not then please make any changes that are needed directly on the system.

If you are unable to make changes or would like some help then please email the school Arbor Support team on:

Arbor@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk

Mrs Defew

Dates for your Diary



17 September - Year 12 Information Evening

19 September - Open Morning

20 October - Sixth Form Information Evening

[Term Dates](#)

Contact Us



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01284 753512

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www.st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk

[Instagram](#)