



St Benedict's Newsletter 339

18 September 2026

Catholic Social Teaching

This week we look into one of the central themes of Catholic Social Teaching: **Human Dignity**. At the heart of our Catholic faith is the belief that every human being has inherent dignity and worth because every person is created and loved by God. Our dignity does not depend on how successful we are, how we look, how popular we are, what grades we achieve, or what others think of us. We are valuable simply because we are human and made in the image and likeness of God.

This has an important message for us as a school community. If every person has dignity, then the way we speak to one another, include others, respond to mistakes and treat those who may be different from us really matters. We are called not only to recognise our own worth, but also to recognise the dignity of those around us.

“God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them.” *Genesis 1:27*
This simple verse reminds us that every person carries something of God's image within them. It challenges us to look beyond appearances, achievements or differences and to see the value that God sees in each person.

Jesus also reminds us: “Love your neighbour as yourself.” *Mark 12:31* Loving our neighbour begins with recognising their dignity. Sometimes that might mean including someone who is alone, standing up when someone is being treated unfairly, listening without judging, or simply choosing our words carefully. We can show this in our school in simple ways;

- **Wisdom:** We can choose not to judge someone by their appearance, reputation, social media presence or one mistake they have made. Instead, we can try to understand others and recognise the person behind what we see.
- **Compassion:** We can show dignity through small acts of kindness: listening, including others, encouraging someone who is struggling and making sure that nobody feels invisible or excluded.
- **Resilience:** Recognising our own dignity means understanding that mistakes and setbacks do not define us. We will all get things wrong, experience disappointment and face difficult moments. Resilience helps us to learn, grow and try again, remembering that our worth does not disappear when things don't go as planned.

As we go through this week, we can take a moment to consider: Do I recognise my own worth and dignity? Do the words I use help other people to recognise theirs? Is there someone in our school community who might need to feel included or valued this week? When someone makes a mistake, do I see the mistake, or do I still see the person? Our challenge this week is simple: try to see people as God sees them, as individuals of worth, dignity and possibility.

We may never know how much a kind word, a smile, an invitation or a moment of patience means to someone else.

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for creating each one of us in your image and for giving every person dignity and worth.

Help us to recognise the value in ourselves and in everyone we meet.

Give us the wisdom to look beyond appearances,

the compassion to notice those who may feel unseen,

and the resilience to keep choosing kindness even when it is difficult.

Help our school to be a community where everyone feels respected, valued, included and safe.

May we remember that every person we meet is precious in your eyes.

Amen

Careers Update

This half-term sees a number of important Careers events taking place in school. We are entering the final stage of our reassessment for accreditation of the [Quality in Careers Standard](#) which we have successfully held since 2022. To achieve the Standard, we must submit our careers education and guidance programme for rigorous external assessment. A wealth of evidence has already been sent to our Careers Education & Guidance assessor for review. This will form the basis of further in-depth interviews with myself, our SLT Careers Lead and student Focus groups in all key stages. Improvement rather than perfection is the goal, and we are hopeful of another successful outcome. I will let you know the result after the half-term break, when the verdict is confirmed!

Final preparations are also underway for our Careers Fair which takes place on Thursday 22nd October. We will welcome 24 employers and training organisations again this year, over a third of which will be new to this event. A full list of participants will be revealed shortly, and students and staff will, as usual, be briefed on attendees, questions to ask and etiquette for the Fair. If you wish to take a look at our previous event, here is the link on our website:

[Careers Fair Article](#)

Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Opportunities

Students in Years 10-13 interested in Careers in Health

West Suffolk Health Academy programme - Oct - Nov 2026

This NHS Foundation Trust Health Academy programme comprises four sessions that will be held in person at the West Suffolk Hospital - Education Centre on the following Saturday mornings from 9.00am to 12.00pm:

31st October/ 7th November/ 21st November/ 28th November 2026

Notes:

- students will need to **attend all 4** sessions to receive a certificate of attendance (great to add to a CV/ mention in a personal statement)
- **deadline** for applications is **4th October 2026**
- applications **must** be signed by a parent/guardian **and** the school; if not, the application will be rejected

For more information email: volunteer.services@wsh.nhs.uk or see the attached flyer to scan the related QR Code.



Get into Medicine/ Get Into Dentistry

The Get into Medicine or Get Into Dentistry Conference is a complete guide to the medical or dental application journey. Students get essential insights into the medical/dental UCAS application process, connect with professionals, fellow students, and gain a deeper understanding of a future career in medicine or dentistry.

Upcoming Get Into Medicine conference dates:

Sunday 20th September from 9am - 1:30pm

Sunday 27th September from 9am - 1:30pm

Register here: https://medicmentor.org/get-into_medicine_conference_signup/ **Next Get Into Dentistry Conference date:**

Saturday 26th September, 9am - 1:30pm

Register here: <https://dental-mentor.org/get-into-dentistry-conference-sign-up/>

Ipswich Town FC Foundation - Post-16 Football and Education Programme Event

ITFC Foundation are holding an Information Event on Wednesday 14th October for students and their parents/guardians to learn about their post-16 football and education programme. The Foundation will be hosting a practical event on Tuesday 27th October (in half-term) where students can take part in a session run by their coaches. Attending both events will offer students a full insight into this programme.

To register: click on the following link

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/vVnVKQ5tzc?origin=lpLink> or scan the QR code on the attached flyer.



Breaking Down the Army Assessment

Free online Webinar for students, parents and carers

 **Tuesday 22 September 2026**

 **18:00 to 19:00**

During the session, Army experts will walk students, parents and carers through every stage of the Army Assessment Centre, including:

- What the Assessment Centre is and what it is designed to assess
- Medical, academic, fitness and teamwork activities
- What assessors are looking for
- The career discussion and how to prepare
- Common misconceptions and concerns
- Practical tips to help candidates feel calm, prepared and confident

 **Register here:** [Breaking Down the Army Assessment](#)

Reminders:

Please encourage your child(ren) to sign up for the **Extracurricular Club**: "Explore Your Future - Careers Guidance" which I will be running on Tuesday lunchtimes my colleague, Mrs Kennedy (Head of Business and Economics).

Careers Guidance Drop-in session for our **Sixth Formers** in the Raven Centre Common Room from w/c 21st September where they will be able to ask/ talk with me about anything education, training and careers related.

See last week's Newsletter for:

- **Junior Chef Academy - Y10 Students**
- **Careers in the British Army**
- **Parent and Carer Guidance about University Applications and Student Finance**

Have a lovely weekend.

Miss Hahn

Silverstone Museum Trip Inspires Future Designers

On Wednesday 16 September, 45 Year 10 and Year 11 GCSE Product Design students enjoyed an exciting and educational trip to **Silverstone Museum**, the home of British motorsport history. Accompanied by staff, pupils spent the day exploring the fascinating world of racing, engineering, and design while gaining valuable insight into the cutting-edge technology behind modern motorsport.

The museum brought to life the rich history of motor racing at Silverstone, from its origins as a World War II airfield to its development into one of the world's most famous racing circuits. Students had the opportunity to view an impressive collection of historic and modern racing cars, showcasing the evolution of design, materials, and engineering over the decades.

One of the highlights of the visit was the museum's extensive range of interactive exhibits. Students took part in hands-on activities that demonstrated the science and technology behind motorsport. Both pupils and staff also enjoyed testing their driving skills in the SIM Suite, where they experienced the thrill of racing on a professional simulator. This was followed by an exciting 4D cinema experience, which gave everyone the sensation of speeding around the famous Silverstone circuit.

During the day, students attended an informative presentation about how racing cars are designed and manufactured. They learned about the advanced materials used in both race cars and driver safety equipment, including **carbon fibre**, **Nomex**, and **Kevlar**. The presentation explained how these innovative materials provide exceptional strength, lightness, and protection, making them essential components in modern motorsport.

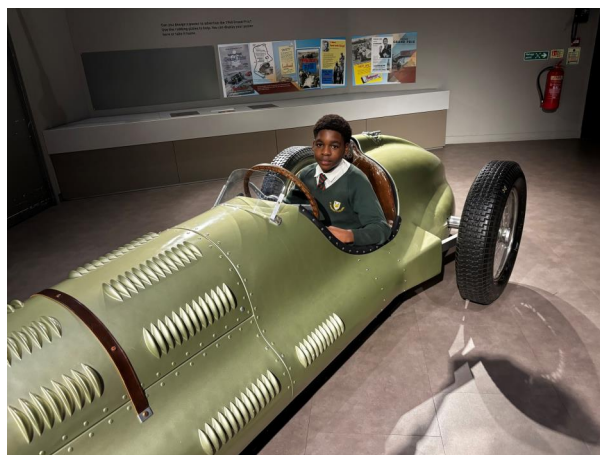
The session also highlighted the enormous scale of the motorsport industry and the wide variety of careers available within it. Students discovered opportunities ranging from design and engineering to data analysis, marketing, mechanics, and project management. They were amazed to learn that the costs associated with designing, building, and maintaining competitive racing cars can run into many millions of pounds each season.

After exploring the museum, the group visited the **Heritage Track Trail**, where they were fortunate enough to watch some small-scale racing action taking place on the circuit, albeit from a distance, sadly. This provided a fantastic opportunity to see motorsport in action and appreciate the speed, precision, and teamwork required for success.

Of course, no trip would be complete without a visit to the museum shop, where students had the chance to purchase souvenirs and mementos of the day.

The visit proved to be both enjoyable and inspiring, linking perfectly to areas of Product Design studied in the classroom. Students returned with a greater understanding of materials, manufacturing processes, and the exciting career pathways available within the motorsport industry. A good day was had by all, and the trip will undoubtedly remain a memorable highlight of the school year.

Mrs Kellett







Articulation Competition



What is Articulation?

- A national public speaking competition, with visual culture at its centre.
- An opportunity to talk about issues that are important to you, using the arts as a vehicle to do so.

The annual Articulation Prize invites those aged between 16 and 19 to deliver a 10-minute presentation to an audience about a work of art, architecture or an artefact in a museum or gallery setting.

Students are invited to **each deliver a 10-minute presentation to an audience about a work of art, architecture or an artefact of their choice**. [Adjudicators](#) then assess each presentation as a whole, looking at content, structure, delivery and the speaker's original approach and unique potential. You don't have to study art to join the programme.

Following our successful participation at the National Grand Final last year, where Amy John was a successful finalist presenting a talk on Augusta Prima Porta in London, St Benedict's will run an internal heat to become part of the regional trials and final competition again this year.

How do I get involved?

October 20th 2026:

1. Sign up if you are interested in participating by emailing Mrs Chacksfield on cchacksfield@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk before **Thursday 15th October**
2. Think about an artwork of your choice that you might want to make a presentation on. This could be inspired by visits that you have made to local galleries or studios.

Friday 13th November 2026:

10 x Students who have expressed their interest will be invited to attend the **Articulation Discovery Day at Sainsbury Centre, Norwich Friday 13th November, 10am - 3:30pm**.

Benefits of taking part in Articulation

- Develops public speaking, independent research and presentation skills
- Development of visual analysis and critical thinking
- Increases confidence and interview skills
- Supports academic accreditation and UCAS applications
- Prepares you for employability and using transferable skills

Ms Chacksfield



Inter House Cross Country

The Inter House Cross Country Championships will take place on Wednesday 23rd September.

Year 7 - Period 1

Year 8/9 - Period 2

Year 10/11/12/13 - Period 3

All students taking part should come to school in their PE kits and ensure that they have warm and waterproof clothing for before and after their event. They should also ensure that they have a water bottle. We wish all the runners well and are looking forward to a good day of racing. The races will also be used as a trial to select the teams for the Suffolk Schools Cross Country Championship in October.

Mr Murphy



INTER HOUSE CROSS COUNTRY

Wednesday 23rd September 2026

Period 1: Year 7: 2400m

Period 2: Years 8/9: 3200m

Period 3: Years 10/11/12/13: 3600m

Please sign up with your form tutor



The races will be timed, and the results will be used to select the school teams for the Suffolk Schools Cross Country Championships, at the Royal Hospital School (RHS) on 15th October 2026

CERTIFICATES WILL BE AWARDED FOR 1st, 2nd, 3rd



Friends of St Benedict's Parent Teacher Association

The Parent Teacher Association of St Benedict's is now up and running. Our first major event will be a fund raising Quiz on Friday the 5th February 2027. Please keep the date free and

look out for details of how to register. The aim of the association is to build and strengthen our school community while raising funds for special projects for the school. If you would like to join the PTA then please email me here at the school.

John D'Mello

JD'Mello@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk

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.

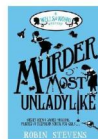


Book recommendations

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)

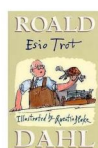
Year 8 can be tough for everyone, but for Tally it feels even tougher. Everything seems to be changing as she and her friends get older. Make-up, boys, social media, GCSE prep - why is it all starting to feel so different? Tally has always known that being autistic means some things are harder for her 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](#)



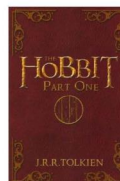
Contact Mrs HG with any questions. rhayter-gare@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk

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



Tomorrow - 19 September - Open Morning

23 September - Inter House Cross Country Trials

25 September - Year 10 & 11 Silent Disco

29 September - Year 9 Information Evening

1 October - Year 8 Information Evening

2 October - Year 8 & 9 Youth SVP Sleepover

6 October - Year 10 Information Evening

8 October - InterHouse Sports Day

9 October - PD Day

20 October - Sixth Form Information Evening

[Term Dates](#)

[Contact Us](#)



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[Instagram](#)