



St Benedict's Newsletter 341

2 October 2026

Catholic Social Teaching

This week our focus is on the Catholic Social Teaching theme of **The Common Good**. It is about recognising that we are all part of something bigger than ourselves. Our school is made up of people with different backgrounds, languages, cultures, experiences and talents. These differences do not divide us; they can enrich our community and help us learn from one another.

The Common Good can be seen in the everyday choices we make: following school expectations, looking after our shared spaces, including others, being responsible, and thinking about how our behaviour affects those around us. It is not about giving up who we are or what we need. Instead, it is about recognising that we are connected to one another and that a positive community depends on everyone playing their part.

Languages Day gave us the opportunity to put these words into practice. By learning about different languages and cultures, we show curiosity and respect towards others. We begin to understand that our own experiences are not the only experiences that matter and that we can learn something from everyone, a community is strongest when everyone has the

opportunity to contribute. A language someone speaks, a tradition they celebrate, or a culture they share can become something that enriches the whole community.

St Paul reminds us: “No one should seek their own good, but the good of others.” — 1 Corinthians 10:24 This challenges us to think beyond ourselves. Languages Day encourages us to listen, participate and appreciate what others bring to our school. It reminds us that we all have something to contribute and something to learn.

We can contribute to the Common Good around the school in simple ways;

- **Wisdom:** Being willing to learn from people whose experiences are different from our own.
- **Compassion:** Showing respect and kindness towards everyone, recognising the dignity and value of each person.
- **Resilience:** Having the confidence to step outside our comfort zone, try something new and engage with people and experiences that may be unfamiliar to us.

As we think about the Common Good this week, we might ask ourselves: What can I learn from someone whose language or culture is different from mine? How can I help others feel that they belong? What can I contribute to our school community? How can I celebrate difference rather than be afraid of it?

The Common Good reminds us that everyone has a part to play and Languages Day reminded us that we are stronger when everyone has a place and a voice. Our school community is enriched by the many different people who make it what it is. When we listen, learn, share and celebrate together, we help to build a community where everyone can belong, contribute and flourish.

Loving God,

Thank you for the many different people

who make up our school community.

Help us to celebrate our differences,

learn from one another

and always treat others with kindness and respect.

Give us wisdom to learn,

compassion to include others,

and courage to try new things.

Help us to build a community

where everyone belongs.

Amen.

Careers Update

Post-16 meetings with students are now underway!

I have now begun meeting with our Year 11 students (162 in this year's cohort) to review their post-16 choices and find out more about their preferences and passions. Each and every student will have at least an hour's appointment with me, following which they will be emailed a report that includes the main points of our conversation and links to websites and pages about career paths we have discussed.

Information about post-16 choices for parents and carers

After meeting with some parents, it has become clear that I need to support parents and carers to better understand different levels of post-16 qualifications (Levels 1, 2, 3 and beyond) and the newer post-16 options that exist e.g. T Levels, and those that are new for 2027 e.g. V Levels and AAQs. I will be sending Year 10 and 11 parents and carers some resources next week to help improve awareness and confidence in supporting students with these choices.

Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Opportunities

Free BFI Film Academy (16-19 yrs)

17th, 18th and 26th October – 30th October (7-day course)

Course Hours: 10:00 – 17:00

Course Location: University of Suffolk (Ipswich)

Sign up to the Suffolk BFI Film Academy course for the chance to make a film in a team, attend masterclasses by film professionals, access industry equipment, and be part of our growing Film Academy network offering year-round events, opportunities and more! The industry professionals delivering this year's BFI Film Academy include the award-winning writer-directors Jane Gull and Chris Andrews.

Applications Close: 4th October 2026

Note: Travel costs ought not to be a barrier. Please contact us, as bursaries and financial assistance may be available for those who meet the eligibility criteria.

For more information and to sign up, please visit: www.uos.ac.uk/bfifilmacademy

[CLICK HERE TO FILL IN THE APPLICATION FORM FOR SUFFOLK](#)

Reminder:

Weekly Careers Guidance Drop-in for Y12 & Y13 students - Raven Centre Common Room

No booking required.

See last week's Newsletter for:

- NHS Allied Healthcare Virtual Work Experience Day - 04.10.2026

Ms Hahn

Norwich Cathedral Trip

On Friday 25th September, a group of fourteen students went to Norwich to attend the School's Mass. The Cathedral of St. John the Baptist was very majestic with large arches and engravings, but we learnt that it was actually only built in the very early 1900s.

The atmosphere was amazing with all the schools from the Diocese of East Anglia gathered together. There were some brilliant hymns and lovely music and Bishop Peter gave a great homily on being *gracious*, *generous* and *grateful*. He also told us about Pope Leo's visit to France and what the Diocese of East Anglia's motto on their coat of arms meant: devoted to the ministry of Christ. All the schools also received an East Anglia 50 Years plaque to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the formation of the Diocese.

After the mass, we had our picture taken with the bishop and went into the garden to eat our lunch before heading back home.

Altogether, it was an exceptional day.

Amelia Selfoss



Sixth Form Artist Workshop

Artist Workshop with Denise Franklin: Working with Cold Wax and Oil Paints

Our A Level art students had fun exploring the medium of Cold Wax under the expertise and guidance of local Artist Denise Franklin this week. Denise, whose work is for sale in a number of Suffolk based galleries, took time to share her expertise and skill in using this unusual medium as part of a two hour workshop held in the art dept.

Students enjoyed creating textures using an array of tools from palette knives, rollers and mesh alongside applying pigments and gold leaf inspired by the colours of Denise's autumnal atmospheric paintings. The works will be built up in layers, with students using their own images to generate miniature studies as part of their personal investigation project.

Thank you Denise for an informative and fun afternoon – we look forward to sharing our results with you later this term

Ms Chacksfield

You can find Denise's work on display as part of the Suffolk Open Studios Programme which opens from 17th – 25th October . Click here to find out more : [Suffolk Open Studios – Artists opening their studios to the public](#)



1 - Lopham Fen

By Denise Franklin





International Languages Day 2026

What a brilliant celebration of languages and cultures we had! **A huge thank you to all students and staff** who contributed to making International Languages Day such a success.

It was wonderful to see so many students proudly wearing their **beautiful cultural costumes**, showcasing the rich diversity within our school community.

A special well done goes to all our talented bakers. We received **25 amazing cakes, muffins and biscuits**, representing a wonderful variety of countries and cultures. Some of the delicious treats included: Gâteau au chocolat (France), Scottish biscuits, Irish Guinness chocolate cake, Dutch apple cake, Swedish chocolate cake, Mézes Krémes (Hungarian honey cram cake), Zimbabwe flag Bannana Bread, Sernik (Polish baked cheesecake) ,Chec cu mere (Romanian apple cake), Cozonac (Romanian sweet bread), Cupcakes, Flags biscuits and many more wonderful creations! The standard was incredibly high, making it very difficult for our judges to choose favourites. Therefore, five names were drawn from a hat to select our final top five cakes.

Congratulations to our winners:

- Saige Musinake 7L
- Victor Ionescu 7L
- Matilda Mackenzie 8A
- Empress Sayre 8C
- Rowan Kimber 12C

We raised an incredible **£218.11** for St Nicholas Hospice Care. Thank you to everyone who baked, donated and purchased cakes.

A big thank you to our Sixth Form students for their fantastic help with the cake sale, including setting up, selling cakes, and supporting the event throughout the day. Your hard work and enthusiasm were greatly appreciated.

We would also like to recognise our fantastic **Language Ambassadors**, who delivered engaging taster sessions in Romanian, Italian, Hungarian, Russian, Polish, German, Slovakian and Filipino. Their confidence, preparation and enthusiasm were outstanding, and they did a fantastic job sharing their languages and cultures with other students.

Ara Anacleto - Year 13

Raf Calumpiano - Year 13

Franek Saladra - Year 10

Matei Podar - Year 11

Nadia Kroszkiewicz - Year 11

Patrycja Golonka - Year 10

Amelia Zabojsz - Year 11

Nina Siarkowska - Year 11

Izzy O'Flynn - Year 12

Zuzanna Bulacz - Year 12

Lisa Ferino - Year 10

Imogen Knight - Year 10

Maxim Zak -Year 13

"Different languages, one school, endless opportunities to learn from one another."

MFL team

Ms Drabik







ST BENEDICT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
CAKE SALE ALLERGEN LABEL

Cake Name: Honey + Choc Cake

Made By: Miles Millard

Contains:
☒ Gluten ☒ Egg ☒ Milk ☐ Nuts
☐ Peanuts ☐ Soya ☐ Sesame

May Contain: Nuts

Suitable for:
☒ Vegetarian ☐ Vegan

ALLERGY ADVICE:
Prepared in a home kitchen. Allergens cannot be
guaranteed absent due to cross-contamination.

FOOD & DRINK RESPONSIBILITY

School is an allergy aware environment. We aim to promote allergy awareness and provide an allergen-free environment for the absence of allergens. Parents and carers remain responsible for deciding what is suitable for their child.









ST BENEDICT'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
CAKE SALE ALLERGEN CARD
Cake Name: **Hungarian Honey cream cake**
Made By: **1224 F.**
Contains: ☒ Gluten ☒ Egg ☒ Milk ☐ Nuts
☐ Peanuts ☐ Soya ☐ Sesame
May Contain: **nuts**
Suitable for:
☐ Vegetarian ☐ Vegan
ALLERGY ADVICE:
Prepared in a kitchen



Year 9 Boys Football - Bennies vs Mildenhall

On Tuesday, the Year 9 boys played their first fixture of the season away against Mildenhall. Despite ending on the wrong side of a 3-2 scoreline, it was arguably the best football a St Benedict's team has played for some time and a performance full of positives.

Bennies started the game exceptionally well, moving the ball confidently and linking play effectively through midfield. The opening 20 minutes were very evenly contested, with both teams creating opportunities. Unfortunately, Mildenhall took the lead with a fortunate lobbed effort that looped over Archie to make it 1-0.

The boys responded brilliantly. A quick attacking break saw Edward M race down the wing before delivering a cross which eventually broke to Oscar G, who finished well to level the scores at 1-1.

Just before half-time, Mildenhall regained the lead with a well-struck free kick, leaving Bennies trailing 2-1 at half time.

The second half remained evenly balanced. As Bennies pushed forward in search of an equaliser, Mildenhall caught them on the counter-attack and extended their lead to 3-1. However, the boys refused to give up and continued to battle until the final whistle.

The game came alive in the closing stages when Oscar G chased down a long ball, beat the goalkeeper and coolly finished to make it 3-2. Despite creating pressure in the final few minutes, Bennies were unable to find the equaliser.

Every player contributed positively and worked incredibly hard throughout the match. Oscar G deserves special recognition for scoring both goals, but the joint Player of the Match awards go to Harry P and Stanley A for their outstanding midfield performances, composure on the ball and ability to link defence and attack.

Although the result did not go our way, it was a very encouraging performance with plenty to build on as the season progresses. The boys should be proud of the effort, teamwork and quality they showed throughout the match.

Mr Taylor



Being Good Neighbours During Drop-Off and Collection Times

At St Benedict's, we are proud to be part of a wider community and greatly value the positive relationships we have with our neighbours. We would like to ask all parents and carers to be mindful of local residents when dropping off and collecting students each day.

We appreciate that Beetons Road can be extremely busy, particularly in the afternoons. During these busy periods, we kindly ask families to park considerately and to respect residents' parking spaces, driveways, gardens, and property boundaries. Small acts of consideration can make a significant difference to those who live nearby and help us maintain the strong community relationships that are so important to our school.

We would also like to remind parents and carers that the small car park at the front of the school is strictly for permit holders only and should not be used for student drop-off or collection.

As a school founded on respect and community, we all have a role to play in looking after our local environment and being considerate of our neighbours. Thank you for your continued support and cooperation in helping us ensure that St Benedict's remains a positive and respectful presence within our community.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

Mr Taylor

Year 10 Art - Cambridge Trip

62 Year 10 Art and Textiles Students explored Cambridge Museums this week as part of their GCSE coursework focused on the theme of 'Structures'.

We started the day visiting the Museum of Zoology or the Sedgewick Museum of Earth sciences, where we found ammonites, fossils, amazing crystal formations and an array of skeletons from hippo to bushpig and armadillo. Students worked with care and attention, focusing on making beautiful drawings from the objects they found. A break outside in glorious sunshine for lunch was well received, and students took time amidst the architecture of Cambridge University, to ready themselves for the small walk to the Fitzwilliam Museum where we spent the afternoon.

Here we found treasures from across the ages, amidst beautiful floral paintings, impressionist works and contemporary paintings by renowned artist Frank Bowling.

It was a delight to see the students conduct themselves with such maturity throughout the day. Thank you for being such a wonderful group Year 10, for making the day so enjoyable and to all the staff and volunteers who helped make the day possible.

Ms Chacksfield





Inter House Cross Country

On Wednesday 23rd September St Benedict's hosted its annual Inter House Cross Country Championships. It was fantastic to see so many of our students volunteer to represent their respective houses in each age group.

The first race of the day was the Year 7 Boys and Girls, who had to complete a 2400m course. Lydia Astle was a clear winner in the girls race with a time of 11.06, followed by Aggie Gordon 12.34 (who bravely ran with a bruised left foot) and Amelia Viljoen in third (12.56). The team results were as follows: 1st Subiaco, 2nd Nursia, 3rd Monte Casino.

The first three places in the Y7 Boys race were fiercely contested, as all three athletes closed within four seconds of each other. First, Ernie Abbs (9.45), second Thomas Knight (9.48) and third Louie Oxborrow (9.49). The team results were as follows: 1st Subiaco, 2nd Nursia and 3rd Monte Casino.

The Year 8 and 9 students' races were combined, and they had to complete a 3200m course. Rosie Coleman was once again the fastest in her year group as she finished first in 14.26, followed by Maggie Matthews in second in 15.30 and Iris Gurrell third in 16.57. The team results were as follows: 1st Monte Casino, 2nd Subiaco, 3rd Nursia.

The Y8 Boys race saw the closest finish of the day with Christopher Hannaford in first position (15.34) just outsprinting Joseph Bonnet into second (15.35) followed by Ted Wetton in third (16.35). The team results were as follows: 1st Monte Casino, 2nd Subiaco, 3rd Nursia.

Monte Casino claimed first and second places in another close finish in the Y9 Girls race with Sophia Collins crossing the finishing line in 18.08 just ahead of Genevieve D'Mello in 18.09; with Amelie Penine finishing not far behind in third in 18.37. The team result was as follows: 1st Monte Casino, 2nd, Nursia, 3rd Subiaco.

The Year 9 Boys race was also fiercely contested with Sidney Astle (12.31) leading for the majority of the race, before Solomon Brokenshire Dyke (12.29) made a move in the closing stages to finish two seconds ahead. Evan Cameron secured third position in 13.46. The team results were as follows: 1st Monte Casino, 2nd Nursia, 3rd Subiaco.

The Year 10 and 11 races were also combined, which made for a very exciting race between Sophie Bolton and Oliver Lamas. Sophie Bolton was a clear winner in the girls race finishing in 13.36. Beatrice Harpur-Davies, who usually favours the sprints and hurdles, finished an excellent second in 16.37, ahead of Imogen Knight in third, who also ran strongly to finish in 17.19. The team result was as follows: 1st Nursia, 2nd Subiaco, 3rd Monte Casino.

Gregory Slater ran superbly to finish in first position in the Y10 Boys race in 14.12, ahead of two Subiaco athletes who packed well in second and third, Jacob Deeming (15.05) and Alexander Balmer (17.16). Their performance helped Subiaco to first in the team competition, with Monte Casino second and Nursia in third.

Friends and rivals Amelia Smith and Lucy Murphy had a 'Keely versus Georgia' style battle in the Y11 Girls race. Both girls were neck and neck for a lot of the race, before Amelia pulled ahead to finish in first position in 15.39, followed by Lucy in 15.51 and Eliza Rowley in 19.10. All three girls hail from the famous 'Dalby Stable' and therefore it was no surprise that Monte Casino finished in first position in the team race. Unfortunately, Nursia and Subiaco failed to complete teams.

As previously mentioned, Oliver Lamas and Sophie Bolton, pushed each other hard in the combined race, which meant that Oliver Lamas was a worthy winner of the Y11 Boys race, finishing in 13.30. His Pacers teammate Noah T'Sjoen, who is enjoying an excellent run of form through regular training, finished in an excellent second position in 14.14, just ahead of Noah Wilkinson in third in 14.20. This was another excellent race for Noah who has won his year group race on many occasions but is now concentrating more on his main love of rugby.

All in all, it was great morning of races. We are incredibly proud that so many students showed such resilience to push themselves in order to fulfil their potential. There were also many acts of compassion as they not only encouraged but also celebrated each other's successes and provided comfort for any disappointments.

Once again Mrs Slater and her sixth form team were incredible. As well as providing superb assistance at the finishing funnel recording the names and times of the finishers, they also brought a lot of atmosphere by supporting the athletes in the younger year groups, which helped to create a buzz of community and fellowship.

The results of the races will now be used to select the teams for the first round of the Suffolk Schools Cross Country Championships at the Royal Hospital School on the 15th October, in which St Benedict's have a history of performing well. We wish the teams every success.

Mr Murphy

English Speaking Union - Sixth Form Competition

On Monday 28th September, six of our Sixth Form students took part in the St Benedict's round of the English Speaking Union's annual Sixth Form Public Speaking Competition.

Our team spoke over Zoom and answered adjudicators' questions on issues of their choice, with Joseph Marris giving a very informed view of the Holy Crusades and their causes and influences, while, in interesting juxtaposition, Melisa Simsek shared her knowledge and strong feelings about the Iranian Revolution of the late 1970s and its repercussions for today. Adding to the variety, William Digings propounded his well-founded opinions on the wisdom of global space exploration while Randal Bakasa spoke with passion about the relationship between diagnosis and treatment, connecting radiography and pharmaceutical science. Cassius Cooper, who has an ambition to become a corporate lawyer, explored the question

of whether a law can be legal but still unjust, and Linduli Jayaneth, the only Year 12 in the group, gave us an insightful examination of the effects of AI on human capability.

All of the participants, and those of us watching, enjoyed a lively evening during which our students demonstrated admirable skills of research and oratory, both in their speeches and in their erudite responses to challenging questions by the judges. I should like to congratulate all the speakers, and particularly Linduli and William, who have successfully progressed into the next round to represent St Benedict's in the semi-final in November.

Mrs James

OLOW Trust Writing Competition

In the summer term, Year 7 students were invited to take part in a 500-word writing challenge run by Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Multi-Academy Trust. Now the results are in, and St Benedict's swept the board in the Year 7 category, with Barnaby Coates coming 1st, Elijah Dow 2nd, and Bobby Talbot-Hadley 3rd. The task was to write an original story of up to 500 words based on the idea: 'It appeared overnight'.

This is what the judges had to say:

We were impressed by the outstanding entries submitted by pupils from St Benedict's Catholic School, whose stories demonstrated imagination, ambition and excellent storytelling skills.

First Place - Barnaby

Barnaby impressed the judges with a thrilling adventure story that followed a farmer's pursuit of a mysterious creature whose gigantic footprints appeared overnight. Full of humour, suspense and imaginative detail, the story kept readers engaged throughout.

Second Place - Elijah

Elijah captivated readers with a powerful narrative exploring survival, sacrifice and hope in a world overrun by the undead.

Third Place - Bobby

Bobby delighted readers with a festive adventure in which Father Christmas recruits a young helper to recover stolen fairy dust and save Christmas. His story combined originality, humour and warmth, making it a memorable and entertaining read.

Barnaby's Story

It appeared overnight. Joe didn't know where from and he didn't know how. But maybe he didn't *want* to know. Joe lived on a remote farmland, right next to the woods. It started with small things. Well... Small compared to what happened later. First, he noticed some of his

crops had been crushed. Next, it was his livestock. They had been *squished flat*, a beef pancake in the muddy plains. The rest were gone by sunrise the next day, with deep gauges he could only identify as *claw marks*. They were the only traces that anything was there in the first place. Then, the footprints started to appear. One in front of his house. Two in the field. Another just outside the woods. Joe would have assumed these were rogue animal prints, but these were *huge* and unlike any print he had ever *seen*! They were sort of like a cat's paw, with talons like an eagle's and had a chimpanzee's opposable big toe...

Joe knew it was time to act. Soon it would be *him* lying squashed in the centre of an abnormally shaped footprint. He decided to track the creature creating such strange marks. Deep into the forest they led him. Miles and miles. For the tracks were spaced the length of a half marathon apart as if the *thing* had flown with every step (not that Joe had the patience to measure the distance). "Ugh. Should've brought the car." He muttered to himself. But at that point it would have been longer to head back than to carry on. It took him seven and a half days to traverse the distance, and by the end Joe had run out of food and was contemplating eating his thumb, when he saw it. An enormous mountain. Or at least... It had *been* a mountain. But it seemed to have been *hollowed out*, like scooping out the green stuff from an avocado to make guacamole. Joe gasped. *Something* flew down on feathery wings, too fast to focus on and dived into the hollowed-out mountain and disappeared. But before it completely vanished, Joe caught a glimpse of an *enormous chimpanzee's* opposable *big toe*. Joe swore. "Welp" Joe thought, "You only live once!" As he charged into the mountain opening!

Along the cave floor, Joe crept. Deeper into the gloomy depths. Joe gazed in wonder at the treasure trove of gold and jewels decorating the walls. Joe had to admit, the monster had good taste. He wondered where it got the treasure from. It was then that he saw it. Not the creature, but a jeweled necklace. That necklace... had been his mother's. He had put the necklace on her when he had buried her after she'd died. That meant that this creature was a *graverobber*! This made Joe see red, and he ran up the mound of gold coins towards the necklace. He grabbed it and ran, not wanting anything to do with the creature whatsoever.

Elijah's Story

It Appeared overnight.

They appeared overnight. It was a cold winters evening at the barn when all changed, the first of many, and the last of hope.

I regret it.

I regret not being there.

Now I am alone, but not lost.

If they hit you, you hit back harder.

There was a rustle in the garden outside so my oldest went out with the thought of an old lost raccoon. But when he approached the noise with his knife, it jumped out. I wasn't there to help his vain struggle but close enough to hear the sound of despair, death and loss. My daughter, who was fast asleep woke with a jolt and screamed as 'they' leapt into her, she stood no chance against both of them so when she let go I only just got to her stained room.

The only way to survive is together but when you can't trust anyone the tables change.

Pain has got everyone, everything, what we value most will always be lost. I shake out of my memory, the night I lost everything 13 years ago. My old keychain rusting against my axe. The trinket is all I have left of my old life before. Hell rained down on all of life and death. As I grasp my new life by the reins. I give a prayer to the first world, the final love and last life.

They gather in hordes; headshots are the only way to rid the corpse of its spores. These creatures- the 'zombies, walking dead, the undead – so many names for such hideous beasts. They are the first cruel part, but the spores that land and continue to live until a creature touches them and then undead takes over. The zombies don't kill they consume, and they won't stop until all human life is lost.

I joined with a young orphan 'Amos' who had seen too much for a boy of 13, He is good with a bow, and his small hatchet. On the morning of when it all happened, I remember how our barn, surrounded by untouched woodland, smelt of cinnamon and a hot summers day. The kids were always leaving their books and toys around the house. How different it looks now.

Amos and I grabbed our weapon and we left to scavenge for food. Taking care being silent on the dry fallen leaves. We head to the fresh foliage of mushrooms and berries staying vigilant. Silent, until Amos trips. We just stare at each other not daring to speak, listening with every inch of our souls. Then we hear it, thundering footsteps from every direction heading straight to us. The groans and unhuman shrieks get louder as we sprint to the barn. We aren't fast enough they will catch us, 'I can't lose another child'. I urge Amos on further, faster. I must protect him. I can slow them down, let him get safe. I raise my axe and swing just as the first gruesome body enters the clearing. I kept swinging cutting and fighting until I hear the familiar click of the lock on the barn. Amos is safe. We lock eyes and a million words pass through the one look. As the door shuts, I succumb to the inevitable end. Knowing at least I was able to protect Amos when I was unable to protect my family.

Bobby's Story

I am 10 years old and I still love Christmas! Every year, Dad and I always count down the days and celebrate in style. But sometimes it doesn't work out too well: last year, we bought a colossal Christmas tree but it was knocked over in the wind and fell on the telegraph wire which supplied electricity to the whole town!

This year, we were brainstorming ideas when once again our lights flickered on and off! "What in the world was that?" Dad exclaimed and we turned the radio on. People were

talking about this weird, abnormal time glitch. Our best theory was: Father Christmas stalling on his sleigh in the sky, but we just couldn't hit the nail on the head...

Finally the lights came back on! We finished our work and were all snuggly in our beds, waiting for Christmas! Obviously I know Father Christmas isn't real, so I don't need to worry about being on the 'Naughty List'.

It felt like the middle of the night when I woke up. A large shape had suddenly *appeared* in my doorway.

A substantial red-clothed man with a white beard whispered urgently: "No time for Ho Ho Ho's; get in my sleigh. I desperately need your help."

Realisation dawned on me: FATHER CHRISTMAS!

As we were riding in the sky, Father Christmas started explaining: someone had hacked into his computer in the North Pole and stolen the code to the safe where the fairy dust was kept. He couldn't get round the whole world in one night without it and all the children would be devastated with no presents in the morning. So all we needed to do was retrieve the dust from wherever it was.

Fortunately, there was a tracking device attached to the cork of the fairy dust bottle, which led us right to culprit's address. On the way, Father Christmas entertained me with his repertoire of bad jokes: "What did the elf say to his wife when she bought him his favourite present? You're ELF-less darling!"

We eventually arrived at the thief's front porch. A side window was left ajar and we climbed inside. We were in a big room.

I whispered, "look up." There was a ceiling hatch just above us, and the dents in the carpet below indicated a ladder must have been there. We tapped the hatch and the ladder unfolded before our eyes.

We climbed into a dusty little room and had a good search.

I whooped as I picked up the bottle of Fairy dust.

"Thank you Jess, you don't know what this means to me" Father Christmas beamed, delighted at the re-*appearance* of the dust.

Christmas day...

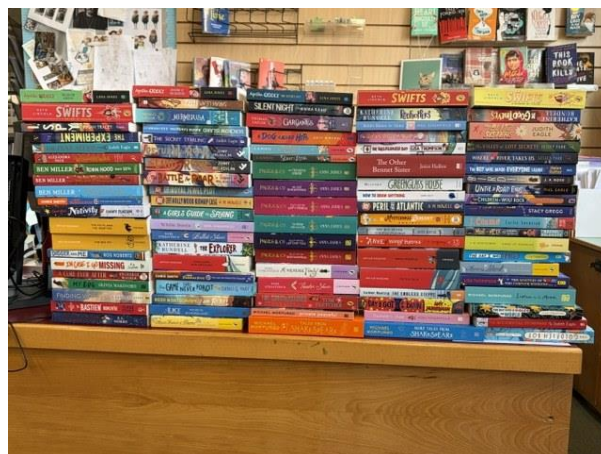
I leapt out of bed and rushed downstairs. An extra present had *appeared overnight* under the tree.

I ripped open the packaging. It was an iPad.

"THANK YOU, I WILL ALWAYS BELIEVE IN YOU!" I shouted. I hoped he would hear me back home, slumbering in his cosy armchair.

Bury Literature Festival Writing Competition

In other writing competition news, Hosannah Gee, attended a 'bookshop lock-in' on Wednesday 30th September to claim part of her prize for winning the Bury Literature Festival Writing Competition. Winning this competition meant that Hosannah was able to hand pick 100 new books for St Benedict's school library – a fantastic result for the school!





St Benedict's Reading Challenge

Congratulations to the following students who have already completed the Year 8 Reading Challenge (only 5 weeks into the school year!): Dithira Jayaneth 8L, Ishaan Jeby 8A, Layna Hammett 8X and Alice Wong 8L.

Mrs Oakes

Library Update



Library Newsletter

October 2026

This Month in the Library

Welcome to October's library newsletter!

Join us as we explore some of the most interesting and important events taking place this month including Black History Month, Dyslexia Awareness Week, Earth Sciences Week, National Poetry Day and Halloween. 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 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 Reading Week, Anti-Bullying Week, World Children's Day, Dr Who Day, Thanksgiving and many more.

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

'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere'
Martin Luther King Jr

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

Black History Month

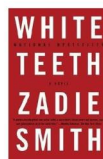
Black and British, David Olusoga (Nonfiction, history)

A short, essential introduction to Black British history. When did Africans first come to Britain? Who are the well-dressed black children in Georgian paintings? Why did the American Civil War disrupt the Industrial Revolution? These and many other questions are answered in this essential introduction to 1800 years of the Black British history: from the Roman Africans who guarded Hadrian's Wall right up to the present day. This new children's version of the bestseller *Black and British* by award-winning historian and broadcaster David Olusoga is illustrated with maps, photos and portraits. Link: [goodreads](#)



White Teeth, Zadie Smith, (Fiction, genre: Young Adult, red band)

At the centre of this invigorating novel are two unlikely friends, Archie Jones and Samad Iqbal. Hapless veterans of World War II, Archie and Samad and their families become agents of England's irrevocable transformation. A second marriage to Clara Bowden, a beautiful, albeit tooth-challenged, Jamaican half his age, quite literally gives Archie a second lease on life, and produces Irie, a knowing child whose personality doesn't quite match her name (Jamaican for "no problem"). Samad's late-in-life arranged marriage (he had to wait for his bride to be born), produces twin sons whose separate paths confound Iqbal's every effort to direct them, and a renewed, if selective, submission to his Islamic faith. Set against London's racial and cultural tapestry, venturing across the former empire and into the past as it barrels toward the future, *White Teeth* revels in the ecstatic hodgepodge of modern life, flirting with disaster, confounding expectations, and embracing the comedy of daily existence. Link: [goodreads](#)



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

Student Recommendation:

The Song Walker, Zillah Bethall, (Fiction, genre: Adventure, green dot)

A girl named Tidda has a plane crash, she walks miles in the desert. She meets a friend called Tarni. They escape through dreams.

Written by a Year 7.

Rating: 4.5 out of 5



Dyslexia Awareness Week

Percy Jackson Series, Rick Riordan, (Fiction, genre: Fantasy, orange dot)

Rick Riordan is dyslexic and so is the character he created, Percy Jackson. Dyslexia is portrayed as a trait of the demigods and depicted as a strength.

Lately, mythological monsters and the Olympian gods seem to be walking straight out of the pages of Percy Jackson's Greek mythology textbook and into his life. Zeus's master lightning bolt has been stolen, and Percy is the prime suspect. Percy and his friends have just ten days to find and return Zeus's stolen property and bring peace to a warring Mount Olympus. Link: [goodreads](#)



World Poetry Day

101 Poems for Children: A Laureate's Choice, Carol Ann Duffy, (Nonfiction, Poetry)

Carol Ann Duffy, the former Poet Laureate, has chosen her favourite poems for children for this stunning collection of classic and modern verse, exquisitely illustrated by multi-award-winning illustrator Emily Gravett. 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: Dithira Jayaneth 8L, Layna Hammett 8X, Ishaan Jeby 8A, Alice Wong 8L

Is your child a Young Carer?

Suffolk
Family Carers
Living Fuller Lives



Young
Carers

Young
Adult Carers

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

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



2 October - Year 8 & 9 Youth SVP Sleepover

6 October - Year 10 Information Evening

8 October - Lunchtime Careers Talk "Here I am, Lord - Don't Send Me!" with Fr. Dick. All Welcome

8 October - InterHouse Sports Day

9 October - PD Day

20 October - Sixth Form Information Evening

[Term Dates](#)

Contact Us



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Bury St Edmunds, IP32 6RH

01284 753512

enquiries@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk

www.st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk

[Instagram](#)