

St Benedict's Newsletter 345

13 November 2026

Catholic Social Teaching

This week , as we remembered Armistice Day on the 11th of November, our focus is on the Catholic Social Teaching theme of **Dignity**.

Armistice Day gives us an opportunity to pause, remember and reflect on the millions of people whose lives have been affected by war and conflict. We remember those who have lost their lives, those who have served, those who continue to live with the consequences of conflict, and the families and communities who have experienced loss.

At the heart of Catholic Social Teaching is the belief that every human life has dignity and worth because every person is created in the image and likeness of God. This dignity does not depend on nationality, background, beliefs or circumstances. It belongs to every one of us. “God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them.” *Genesis 1:27* These words are particularly important when we reflect on war. It can be easy to think

of conflict in terms of countries, armies and opposing sides, but behind every statistic is a human life: someone with hopes, dreams, family and people who love them.

Jesus also teaches us: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.” *Matthew 5:9* Remembering those affected by war should encourage us not only to look back at the past, but also to consider the kind of world we want to help create. Respecting human dignity means rejecting hatred, prejudice and violence, and choosing understanding, compassion and peace.

The red poppy is the powerful symbol of remembrance. Its delicate petals grew in the fields devastated by the First World War, becoming a symbol of lives lost, sacrifice and hope. The poppy brings attention to the way something so fragile can carry such a powerful message. Remembrance should be more than looking back; it should encourage us to help build peace in the future. Perhaps this is the challenge of Armistice Day: we remember those whose lives were lost by choosing to value the lives of those around us today.

We can do this by living dignity through simple ways;

- **Wisdom:** Understand that every person has value, whatever their background, beliefs or nationality. Think carefully about how our words and actions affect others.
- **Compassion:** Remember those who have suffered through war and conflict. Show kindness and understanding towards anyone experiencing loss, hardship or uncertainty.
- **Resilience:** Have the courage to challenge prejudice, reject hatred and stand up for what is right, even when it is difficult.

This week as we consider human dignity, we can ask ourselves: Do I recognise the dignity and worth of every person? How do my words and actions show respect for others? What can I do to help build peace in my school and wider community? How can I honour those who suffered in the past through the choices I make today?

Remembrance asks us to not only look back with gratitude but also forward with responsibility. We cannot change the past, but we can influence the future through the way we treat one another.

Every person matters. Every life has dignity. And every one of us has a part to play in building a more peaceful world.

Prayer

Loving God,

We remember all those who have lost their lives through war and conflict.

Comfort those who are grieving

and bring peace to those who continue to suffer.

Help us to respect the dignity of every person,

to show compassion and to choose peace in our everyday lives.

May we never forget the past

and always work towards a kinder, more peaceful future.

Amen.

Library Update



Library Newsletter

November 2026

This Month in the Library

Welcome to November's library newsletter!

Join us as we explore some of the most interesting and important events taking place this month including Reading Week, Anti-Bullying Week, Remembrance Day, World Children's Day, Thanksgiving and Doctor Who Day. 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 Computer Science Education Week, Hannukah, Jane Austen Day and Christmas!

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

'You want weapons? We're in a library! Books! The best weapons in the world!'

The Doctor, Doctor Who.

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.

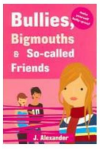
No food or drink to be consumed in the **upper (computer) area. Computers for academic purposes only.**

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

Anti-Bullying Week

***Bullies, Bigmouths & So-Called Friends*, Jenny Alexander, (Nonfiction)**



Most books about bullying tell children how to act without addressing how they feel—you can't act brave and confident if you feel stressed and helpless inside. Jenny Alexander's approach is to develop readers' psychological defences. Through a mix of exercises, quizzes, and fictional scenarios, she combines common sense with simple cognitive techniques to build up children's self-esteem. Her tone is humorous and upbeat, but always sensitive to the reader's feelings. Link: goodreads

***How To Fly With Broken Wings*, Jane Elson, (Fiction, genre: Modern Relationships, pink dot)**



Twelve-year-old Willem has Aspergers Syndrome and two main aims in life: to fly and to make at least two friends of his own age. But all the other boys from the Beckham Estate do is make him jump off things. First his desk - and now the wall. As his toes teeter on the edge, Sasha Barton gives him a tiny little wink. Might she become his friend?
Bullied by Finn and his gang the Beckham Estate Boyz, Willem has no choice but to jump. As he flies through the air he flaps his arms, wishing he could fly and escape into the clouds. Instead, he comes crashing down and breaks his ankle.
Sasha, angry with herself for not stopping Finn and his Boyz,, is determined to put things right. And soon, while the gangs riot on their estate, Willem and Sasha form an unlikely friendship. Because they share a secret. Sasha longs to fly too.
When Magic Man Archie arrives with stories of war-flying spitfires, he will change the lives of the kids on the Beckham Estate forever. And perhaps find a way for Willem and Sasha to fly ...
Touching on themes such as friendship and bullying, this is a charming tale about overcoming obstacles and finding friendship in unlikely places. Link: goodreads

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

Student Recommendation:

***The Legend of Zelda, Ocarina of Time*, Akira Himekawa, (fiction, genre: graphic novel)**



I think this is a good book because I like Manga and comic books. I also like it because it has adventure and I like the character's personalities.

Written by a Year 7. 4 out of 5 stars.

Remembrance Day

***War Horse*, Michael Morpurgo, (Fiction, genre: Animal Stories, purple dot)**



A powerful tale of war, redemption and a hero's journey. In 1914, Joey, a beautiful bay-red foal with a distinctive cross on his nose, is sold to the army and thrust into the midst of the war on the Western Front. With his officer, he charges toward the enemy, witnessing the horror of the battles in France. But even in the desolation of the trenches, Joey's courage touches the soldiers around him and he is able to find warmth and hope. But his heart aches for Albert, the farmer's son he left behind. Will he ever see his true master again? Link: goodreads

Doctor Who Day

***Doctor Who The Stone Roses*, Jaqueline Rayner, (Fiction, genre: Dystopian and Sci-Fi, blue dot)**



Mickey is startled to find a statue of Rose in a museum - a statue that is 2,000 years old. The Doctor realises that this means the TARDIS will shortly take them to ancient Rome, but when it does, he and Rose soon have more on their minds than sculpture.

Library Hours

Monday to Thursday 8.15am – 4.30pm

Friday 8.15am – 4pm

Open at morning break, lunch break and after school.

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: Christopher Shenoda 8L, Angus Palmer 8C, Sarah Feria Pestana 7P and Iris Gurrell 8P

Christmas Card Competition

We have launched our Christmas card competition, we want to see your best design in any media but must represent the schools catholic values to those receiving it. We ask that all entries display religious imagery representing part of a Catholic Christmas. There will be a

first, second and third place for each year group and a prize in the form of house points and art packs. Please send in your entries by the 25 November 2026. We look forward to receiving them.

Mrs Chacksfield

PTA Quiz Night

The Friends of St Benedict's PTA warmly invite you to celebrate our wonderful community at our Quiz and Curry Night on Friday 5th February. Join us for fun quiz aimed for all the family and meet some of your children's teachers and other parents in a setting a little bit more relaxed than your average Parents' evening! Tickets at a bargain price of £7 for adults and £5 for children. You can also buy a table ticket for up to 10 people for £40. All funds go to the Friends of St Benedict's PTA which exists to build our community and support the school with small financial project that would not normally be possible.

Tickets will be shortly available on Parent Pay.

The Friends of St Benedict's is always looking for new members and if you are interested then please email FriendsofStBenedicts@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk

John D'Mello

Chair St Benedict's PTFA

Articulation Discovery Day

New Discoveries at the Sainsbury Centre, Norwich

A group of students from year 12 and 13 had a productive day at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich this week a part of their preparation for the National Gallery's Articulation Prize.

The students were given 5 different works in the gallery to chose from and then invited to prepare short presentations for an audience. The works explored included Leonora Carrinton's the Pomps of the Subsoil, Lindsey Mendick's ceramic sculpture" no Worries if not", Ms Modern Classical Conceptualist, or Their Shadows Obscured by Ryan Gander and Henry Moore's Mother and Child Sculpture.

The day also included a series of exercises to help build skills needed for public speaking, giving the students chance to use their voice in different ways, exploring the power of pauses to help communicate their ideas with flair when faced with a new audience.

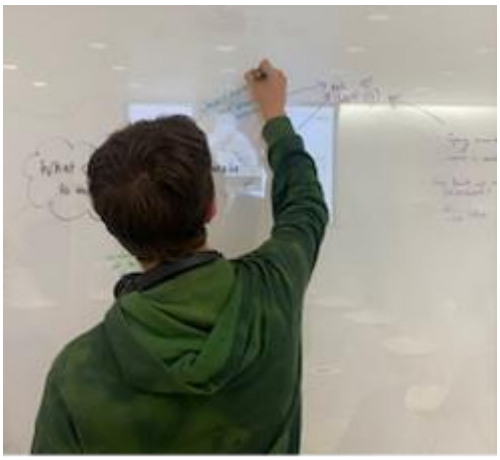
Everyone produced superb speeches, making insightful analysis and gaining confidence from presenting their speech at the end of the day.

We look forward to seeing them in in our own school internal heat which will take place in January 2027 . Well done to our wonderfully articulate sixth formers!

Mrs Chacksfield













Found USB Stick

We recently asked for donations of Jeans for our textiles department, thank you so much to everyone who did donate. In one of the pockets there was a USB stick, if you sent jeans in and are missing a stick please let us know and we will ask you to identify it.

Mrs Ashcroft

Christmas Carol Service



Careers Update

Autumn Careers Programme Highlights

After a very busy few weeks, before and after our half-term break, I can finally take stock of the Careers activities and events that have taken place in school and look forward to those that are to come. Here is a summary of the events enjoyed so far by our students:

Years 9-13

Our annual Careers Fair on Wednesday 22nd October involved students in Years 9-13 and a host of employers and organisations both 'old' and 'new'. Students in Years 9 to 11 visited the Fair during lesson time in a scheduled carousel, whilst our Sixth Formers dropped in during their free periods, breaks and lunchtime. The Fair offered our students plenty of time to explore different career pathways and roles, training, and work experience opportunities with our stand holders, who included:

Ashtons Legal, Azets Holdings (formerly Ensors Accountants), BUUK Infrastructure, Cambridge Regional College, Chartered Insurance Institute of Ipswich, Suffolk and North Essex (AXA Insurance), Colourbox Montessori School Ltd., Eastern Education Group, InvestIN, Mace Consult, NHS Healthcare, NHS Finance, Pick Everard (Civil Engineering), SLR Consulting (Archaeology), St. Nicholas Hospices, Suffolk Constabulary, University of East Anglia (UEA), Urban Forestry, and West Suffolk College (WSC) Apprenticeships.

All of the employers who attended were very positive about the event and were impressed by how polite, well behaved and engaged our students were. Students who spoke with me during the Fair shared their enthusiasm about the information and insights they had gained. It was an incredibly positive event for all involved.

InvestIN Presentations

On Tuesday 10th November, Georgia Turner from InvestIN returned to our school (she attended our Careers Fair in October) to deliver an interactive workshop for our **Year 10 and Year 9** cohorts on ***Making the Most of Work Experience (WEX)***. Georgia explained the importance of gaining work experience for future success in recruitment and career management - especially working out personal likes and dislikes! Students discussed their strengths and interests and learned about different types of work experience, alongside the top 6 skills employers are looking for, and what they need to do to find and secure their placements. Staff commented on how comprehensive the information was and how they now felt more knowledgeable about the nature and form of modern WEX.

FYI - We are in the process of organising a parent/carer online webinar about work experience - date and details to follow shortly. (The webinar will be recorded for parents and carers who are unable to attend on the day).

Year 12

After delivering her presentation on work experience, Georgia hosted a second interactive workshop for our Year 12 students on **Navigating Next Steps**. Students shared their subject preferences, future plans and career ideas and were enlightened about the main influences on our current labour market (LMI) e.g. climate change, an ageing population, automation and hybrid working. Graduate recruitment was discussed, and the power of networking reinforced. Students were encouraged to set up a LinkedIn account (if they had not yet done so) to ensure they were able to exploit new contacts and expand their opportunity networks now and in the future.

FYI - InvestIN offers a range of WEX programmes and Insight Days and although a cost is involved, as a partner school, our students benefit from a 10% discount for any experiences accessed.

Miss Hahn

for Diary:

Wed 18th November - BAE Systems Roadshow for Years 7 & 8

Theme: Material World: Engineering the Future






colourbox
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Raising awareness and promoting excellence in the recording of 12-lead ECGs


Urban Forestry
Bury St Edmunds


6 Top Skills
INVESTIN


Work Experience in a World of AI
76%
INVESTIN


Qualifications
2.86 million students in Higher Education in the UK in 2025
4,043 students achieved 3 A*s in 2025.
The Shift
73% of recruitment professionals prioritise hiring based on skills
57% intern and placement students secure graduate jobs
Skills


By 2030, there is a predicted net increase of 78 million jobs.

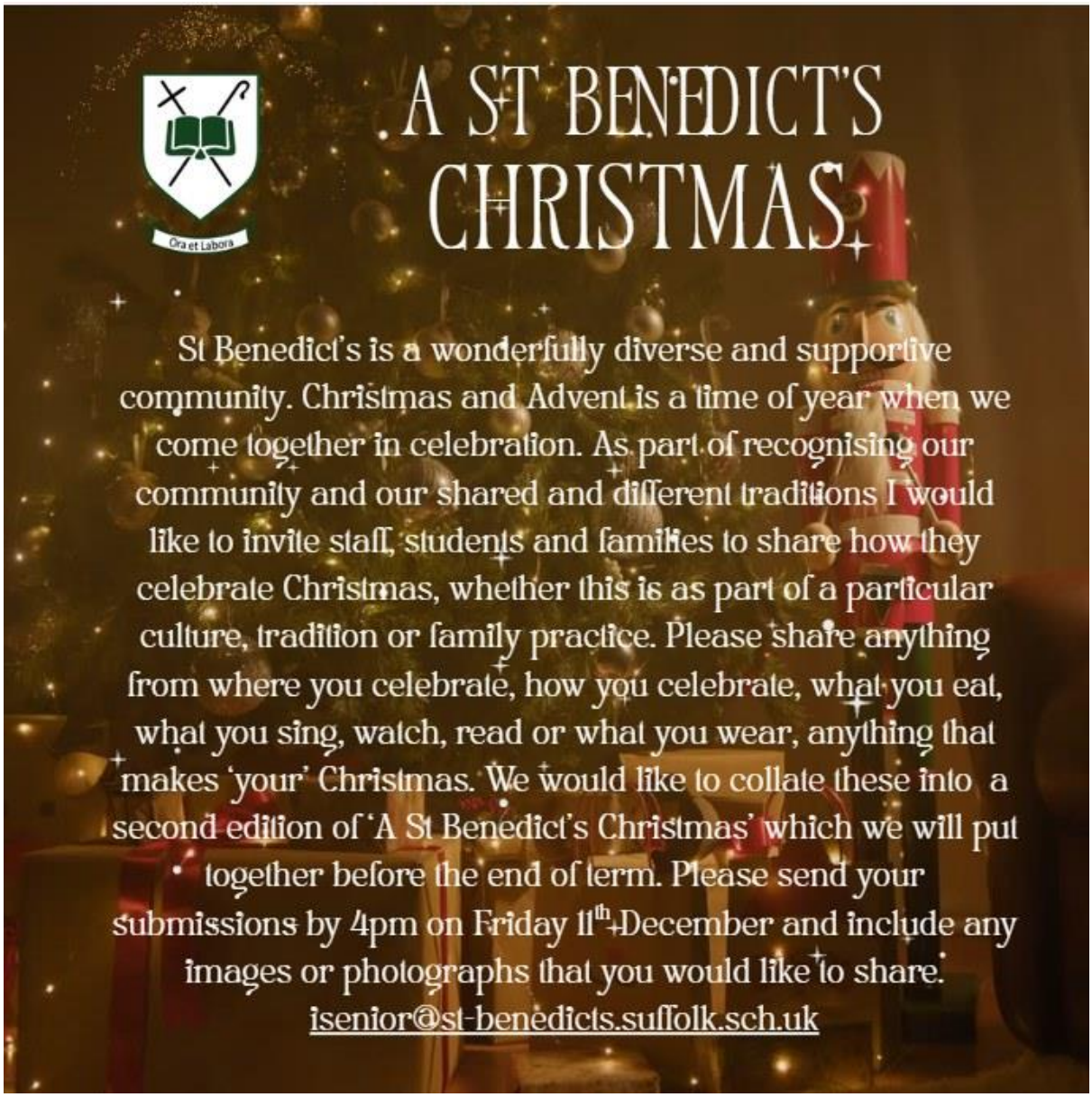

How to Prepare Effectively
RESILIENCE

PE Update-Winter Kit Reminder

With Year 11 mock examinations taking place until 30 November, some PE lessons will take place outdoors whenever possible, even in cold or rainy weather. Students are therefore encouraged to bring additional PE layers to help them stay warm and comfortable during lessons. Recommended items include a plain black training top, rain jacket, jogging bottoms, leggings (not tights), or a base layer top. Students are also permitted to wear their coats, beanies and gloves if they wish to. Thank you for your support in helping students come prepared for PE during the colder weather.

Mr Bates

St Benedict's Christmas



Invite a Friend to Mass



Parish Contact Details



Is your child a Young Carer?

Suffolk Family Carers
Living Fuller Lives

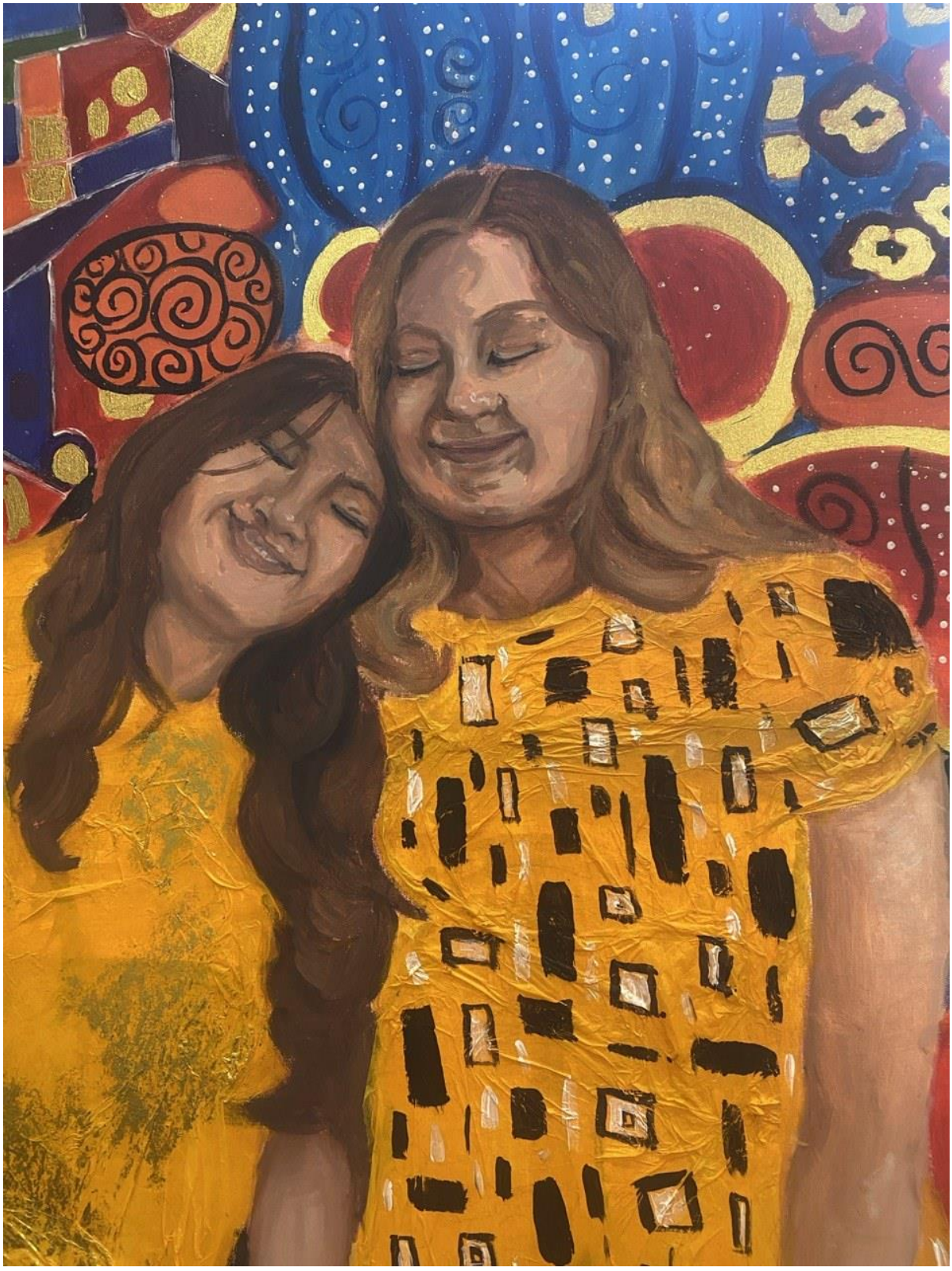
Young Carers
Young Adult Carers

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



18 November - BAE Roadshow year 7 & 8

25 November - Year 13 Parents Evening

26 November - Year 12 & 13 London Trip

27 November - PD Day

9 December- Carol Service St Edmunds

13 Christmas Concert

Term Dates

Contact Us



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www.st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk

Instagram