

# St. Aidan's Catholic Academy

Willowbank Road, Sunderland, SR2 7HJ

W: [contactus@staca.co.uk](mailto:contactus@staca.co.uk) T: 0191 5200333

Twitter: [St\\_Aidans\\_RC](#)

Instagram: [sacatholicacademy](#)



To all in our community,

As 2023 nears its end, I find it immensely comforting to take stock of the journey we are on and reflect, with pride on what we have achieved as a community. The past calendar year has seen our academy face two external inspections and demonstrated what an outstanding education we give to every single one of our pupils. Our mission is clear and our determination undiminished. Alongside this we stand at the threshold of a once in a life-time event. Our academy will be materially rejuvenated over the coming months and years and I stand ready to push at every door to ensure that we get a hugely beneficial building which helps our community give our young men the best start in life that we can. Yet bricks and mortar do not define who we are. Our community transcends the fabric of our environment and I am proud that regardless of our surroundings the values that we hold dear help develop young men who will make a huge imprint on society in the future. Our success is now well known across our region. We have weekly visitors who come to see what we do and every single one of them comments on how amazing our pupils are and how they wished their school was like ours. Yet I am minded that this is no accident and in fact is built upon a long tradition of established links between all stakeholders across the academy. I am grateful for many things in my role, but the one I treasure the most is how closely we work in partnership with parents and carers to guide all our young men up their own personal mountains. It simply remains for me to wish you all a happy Christmas and a peaceful new year!

Take care and God bless.

Glenn Sanderson

## Upcoming Events

**Friday, December 22, 2023**

School closes for Christmas Holidays – 12:00pm



My dear Lord,

I resolve to serve You more faithfully.

Help me to put into practice all You have revealed.

I choose You as my Lord. I choose You as my guide and pray for Your abundant blessings tomorrow.

In Jesus name,

Amen

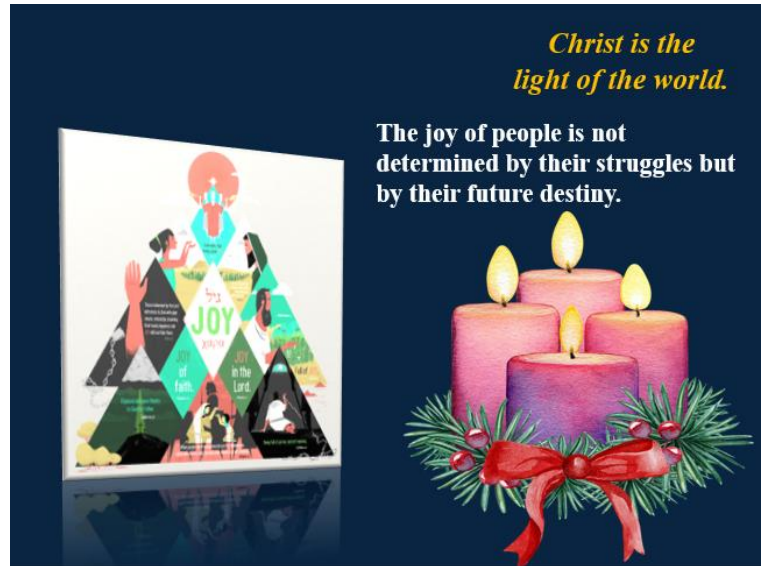
## Chaplaincy

### Sunday Gospel

John:6-8,19-28

'There stands among you the one coming after me'

A man came, sent by God.  
His name was John.  
He came as a witness,  
as a witness to speak for the light,  
so that everyone might believe through him.  
He was not the light,  
only a witness to speak for the light.



This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied: a voice that cries in the wilderness: Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.



### Christmas Hampers

This year we have been making Christmas hampers across both schools: St Aidan's and St Anthony's. Our pupils feel enormous need to help others in need and made many beautiful hampers which will go to our community. Thank you to everyone for your donations.



Please get involved in any way you can.

Thank you very much to everyone who has supported Norah's North Pole.

If you would like to find out more about Norah's North Pole and to find our links to donate please visit our website [www.norahsnorthpole.co.uk](http://www.norahsnorthpole.co.uk) or find us on social media @norahsnorthpole.

If you have any questions at all please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you

The Elves,

Norah's North Pole

Email: [elves@norahsnorthpole.co.uk](mailto:elves@norahsnorthpole.co.uk)



Please open and enjoy Advent reflections written by parishioners and people religious from our diocese.

<https://diocesehn.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Advent-Reflections-2023-FINAL.pdf>



Food Bank is open, we have variety of food should you need it. Email [kszczepanska@staca.co.uk](mailto:kszczepanska@staca.co.uk) to arrange collection time.

Thank you very much to everyone donating to Food Bank.



## Pastoral News

On Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December school will close at 12noon. Pupils can order a packed lunch to take home if they wish. The school office will close at 12noon on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December and reopen on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

## Important Dates:

To accommodate our parent evenings this academic year, school will close at 1.55pm for all pupils on the following dates:

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024

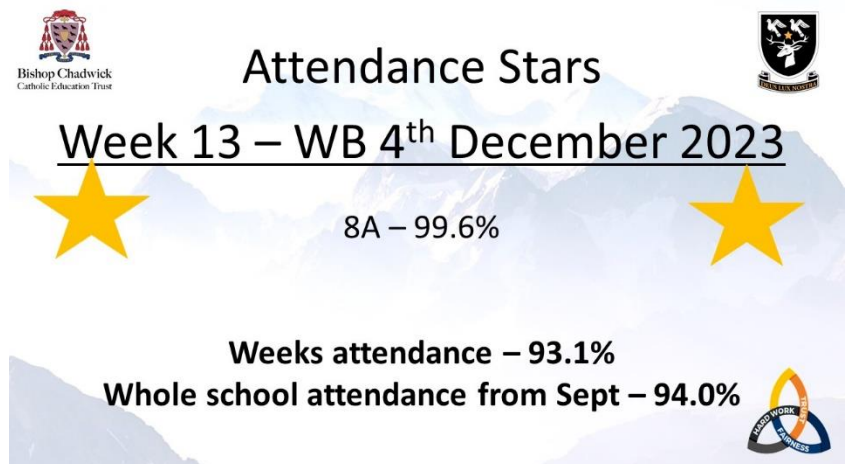
Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024

## Attendance

While we place great importance on the health and wellbeing of all of our pupils we also need to where possible minimise absence to ensure pupils are provided with a first-class education.

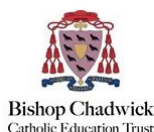
The importance of school attendance cannot be overstated – a pupil with attendance of below 91% is statistically



likely to drop on average one GCSE grade per subject. If your attendance is between 96% and 100% you are twice as likely to achieve 5 or more GCSE at Grade 5 and above.

The statistics above provide stark evidence as to why we set all of our pupils an attendance target of 97%, as we know this provides them with the greatest possible chance to achieve their best possible outcomes; this is a habit born in lower year groups and embedded in the culture and ethos of our school.

## House Competition



# Annual House Competition



## Week 13 – WB 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023

House	Overall Points	Points awarded this week
Ashbrooke	<b>4525</b>	450
Corby	<b>4075</b>	50
Brookfield	<b>4950</b>	350



### Arbor

We have now made our move to Arbor for communication and to log, track and monitor achievements, behaviour, corrections and homework.

It is essential that all parents are signed up and have access to the system. If you are having issues with this please contact 0191 5200333 Ext 222.



# Arbor

Texts and emails through The School Gateway will be switched off on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2023. Moving forward the School Gateway will only be used for payments.

**Year 7 Parents** - save the date for Parents Evening 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024 more information to follow.

### **Year 11 Survey Parents**

Please take two minutes (if you have not done so already) to complete the following Parent / Carer Survey following your son's Parents' Evening on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NWYTZHN>

### **Private E-Scooters - A message from Northumbria Police**

With the festive season fast approaching a reminder to all parents **DO NOT** buy Electric Scooters for children as Christmas presents. E-Scooters have not yet been legalised, are still considered illegal and must not be used on our roads and footpaths. If caught riding on our roads and footpaths the e-scooter could be confiscated by Police.

#### **NORTHUMBRIA POLICE - WARNING TO PARENTS – DO NOT BUY E-SCOOTERS AS CHRISTMAS PRESENTS**

**It is against the law to  
ride a private e-scooter  
on a public road  
or pavement.**



We understand that buying your own e-scooter can be tempting, especially as you can get them from many popular retailers.

#### **Why is this?**

E-scooters are classified as Personal Light Electric Vehicles (PLEVs), so they are treated as motor vehicles and subject to the same legal requirements, such as:

**MOT, Licensing, Tax, Insurance**

As e-scooters do not have number plates, signalling ability and don't always have visible rear lights, they can't be used legally on the roads.

Although unable to ride your own, there is a government trial taking place in the North East where you are allowed to ride a rented e-scooter.



## Literacy

We held our Literacy awards this week. These boys were highlighted for excelling in literacy, reading and intervention and were rewarded a book from our book vending machine. Well done, keep up the hard work!



## Character Development

For the next 2 weeks, pupils will be strengthening their character through a specific CLIMB task. Every year group has their own focus: Year 7, 8 and 9 will be focusing on Examen to support them with 'Integrity'. The **Daily Examen** is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and discern his direction for us. Examen is an ancient practice in the Church that can help us see reflect on our daily actions. This method is adapted from a technique described by Ignatius Loyola in his spiritual exercises. St. Ignatius thought that the Examen was a gift that came directly from God, and that God wanted it to be shared as widely as possible.

## PDE Cycle 1 Update

Throughout Cycle 1, Year 7 students have gained an understanding of the different careers available in the North East, and looked at the key labour market information. They have also reviewed their own skills and characteristics and see what their dream job will be in the future.

Year 8's have been looking into citizenship and politics. I know many have been interested in the different political parties and the impact that the government has on the economy.

Year 9's have been gaining a knowledge and understanding of lifestyle choices. They have developed their understanding of the risks of smoking, vaping and alcohol, along with some recreational drugs.

Year 10 students have looking at mental wellbeing and how to recognise mental health and the strategies to help, such as reframing positive thinking.

Year 11 students have been writing CV's and personal statements. Looking into techniques to be as employable as possible and how to help stand out when applying for 6<sup>th</sup> form, apprenticeships or College.

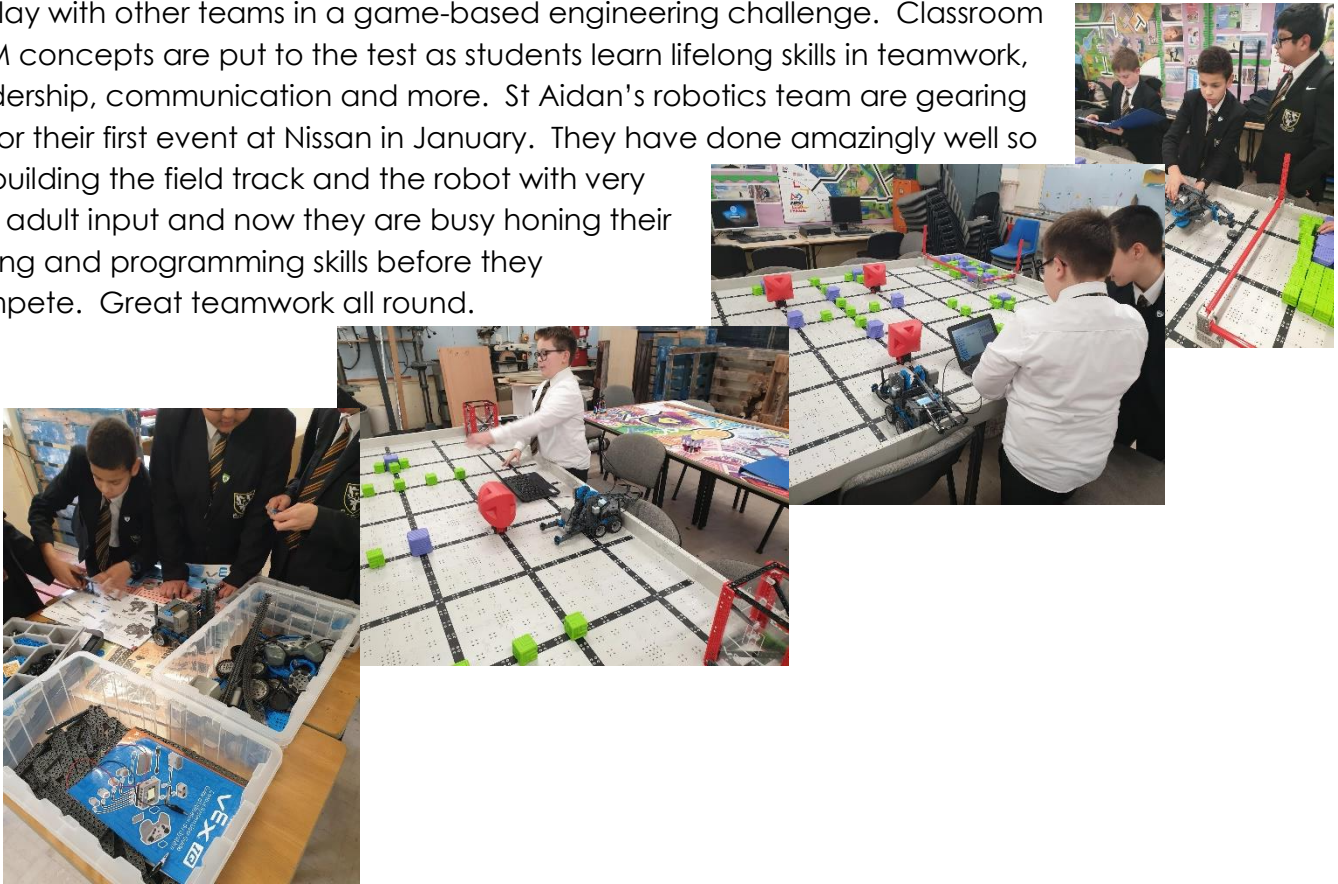
## Careers

NA college have been supporting our Engineering students with the completion of one of their coursework units. Our students, led by Mr. Dolman, had the opportunity to use industry standard machinery in a further education setting. We have received fantastic feedback from the college staff about the behaviour and attitude of our students, with all of the boys living our core values of hard work, trust and fairness while focusing on their practical unit. We are very grateful to NA College for their support and look forward to working with them again in the future.



## Vex Robotics club

In the VEX Robotics competition, teams of KS3 pupils are tasked with designing and building a robot to play with other teams in a game-based engineering challenge. Classroom STEM concepts are put to the test as students learn lifelong skills in teamwork, leadership, communication and more. St Aidan's robotics team are gearing up for their first event at Nissan in January. They have done amazingly well so far building the field track and the robot with very little adult input and now they are busy honing their driving and programming skills before they compete. Great teamwork all round.



## Community News

We held our Musical Christmas Market last week and as always, it was a huge success. Thank you so much for the piles and piles of biscuits, chocolates and food donations for our food bank and Christmas Hampers. We raised an additional £363 which has gone straight to re-stocking our food bank, just in time for Christmas. The night was filled with festive cheer, mulled wine and a variety of stalls to browse. Thank you to the businesses who came in to share their lovely products, and helped us with our Christmas shopping! A big well done to the



singers and musicians, including staff who were brilliant in their performance of the 12 Days of Christmas.

## Music

Alongside our outstanding musical curriculum, we provide opportunities for students to further experience music through instrument studies. We have a hugely experienced and talented team of dedicated instrument teachers covering all instruments. Students can take lessons in:

**Brass**

**Bass**

**Guitar**

**Piano**

**Drums**

**Woodwind**

**Singing**

**Violin**

**Cello**

We have two more weeks left of lessons before the Christmas Break (no lessons last week). We will begin again week beginning January 9<sup>th</sup>. Please keep an eye out for payment of next term's fees, they will be on the system in the next couple of weeks.

Our "Live Music Friday" breaktime slots starting up again. If you want to have a go, it is an excellent opportunity to practice your live performing skills in front of a low pressure and friendly audience.

### Music Enrichment:

Drum Fun	Tuesday	Music Room
St Aidan's Singers	Wednesday	Music Room
Rock Band	Thursday	The Bunker (4-6pm)
KS4 Music Club	Friday	Music Room

# Enrichment

## St. Aidan's Catholic Academy Enrichment Cycle 2 2023-2024

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday		
MORNING	Breakfast Canteen	Breakfast Canteen	Breakfast Canteen	Breakfast Canteen	Breakfast Canteen		
	Reading Club Reading Room Mrs Naile	Reading Club Reading Room Mrs Naile	Reading Club Reading Room Mrs Naile	Reading Club Reading Room Mrs Naile	Reading Club Reading Room Mrs Naile		
AFTER SCHOOL	Art Club 162 - Mrs Nipper	Bass Guitar Lessons Music Room Mr Harland (£72 per term)	Piano Lessons Music room Mr Shepherd (£72 per term)	Badminton Sports Hall - Mr Jones	1st Lego League – Super Power 166 - Mrs Swales	Basketball Sports Hall - Mr Adey & Lampton Coach (£1)	Cello Lessons Music room Mrs Pearson (£72 per term)
	British Sign Language 301 - Mrs Gardner	Bronze iDEA Award Digital Enterprise (ICT) 312 - Miss Cain	Violin Lessons Music room Mr Nyberg (£72 per term)	Book to film club 304 Mrs Wheeler	Brass Lessons Music room (£72 per term)	Careers Champion 103 - Mrs Osmialowski	Football (V7,8 & 9) Sports Hall Mo (*£4 per session)
	Chess Club 209 - Mr Herbertson	Sherlock's Mystery Solving 306 - Miss Sansom	Homework Club Room 313, 314	Crisp Packet Appeal 205 - Mrs Priest	Football (Year 7) Ashbrooke with Mr Hutton	Football (Year 9) Ashbrooke with Mr Flounders	Homework Club 313, 314
	Dodgeball Sports Hall Mr Hutton	Debate Club 108 - Mrs Jopling	Football with Mo Year 7&8 (£4 per session) Sports Hall	Dungeons and Dragons Reading Room Mr Richardson	Weight Lifting Club School gym Mr Watts	Guitar Lessons Music room Mr Smith (£72 per term)	Rugby Ashbrooke 3G Mr Adey
	Football (Year 10&11) Ashbrooke 3G Mr Watts	Fitness School Gym – Mr Gray	Drum Fun Music Room – Mr Wallace	Drum Lessons Music Room –Mr Wake (£72 per term)	GCSE History booster 108 - Mr Nunn	Homework Club 313, 314	Woodwind Lessons Music Room Mr Tooney (£72 per term)
	GCSE Spanish Club Year 10 & 11 104 – Mrs McKenna	Further Maths (Y11) 210 - Mrs Hudson		Fitness School gym Mr Flounders	Lego Fun Club Mrs Whitten	Maths Enrichment 212 - Mr Mann	Year 10 & 11 Music Club Mr Payne
	Indoor Cricket Sports Hall Mr Hutton	Homework Club 313, 314		Football (Year 8) Ashbrooke 3G Mr Gray	Performing Arts Mrs Moorhead/Mr Payne	Rock Band @ The Bunker 4-6pm Mr Payne	
	Keyboard Ninja Club (ICT) 312 - Mrs Cain	Justice and Peace (KS5) Briery Miss Gordon/ Mrs Priest		Gardening Club Briery Mrs Armstrong	Robotics Club 164 - Mr Wallace	Table Tennis Mobiles Mr Hamilton (Week B Only)	
	Running Club Mobile Changing Rooms- Mr Coon	Orienteering Ashbrooke Mr Watts		Guitar Lessons Music room Mr Smith (£72 per term)	STEM Activities 121 – Science Staff		
		Sparx Maths Club 312 – Mrs Smith		Homework Club 313, 314			
			St. Aidan's Singers Music room Mr Payne				
			Spanish Club 106 - Mrs Alonso / Miss Donkin				
			Litter Picking 203 - Mr Brown				
			Geography in the News 113				

Here at **St. Aidan's Catholic Academy** we believe in a curriculum that the mind, enriches the community and advances the future of our students. Our enrichment programme is integral to this broad and rich curriculum. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact:  
**0191 520 0333**

*"St. Aidan's Catholic Academy, where excellence is a habit!"*