

St. Aidan's Catholic Academy

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To all in our community,

As we enter the Lenten season, I am acutely aware that time set aside for reflection and contemplation is critical in achieving a sensible balance in life. Across all areas of our school I see this balance playing out; from areas where dedicated silent study is visible through to mind-blowing creativity as well as reflective spiritual mindfulness. What I am so enthused about is that it is our young people who spearhead this. I witnessed a class of pupils this week who were waiting for the staff member to arrive by all reading silently and engaging with literature for pleasure, without any adult intervention. This intrinsic motivation is something we have been working on developing with our pupils for a while, but it is humbling when you see them take ownership of their personal journey's and collectively seek to summit their own mountain's. I am currently involved in important meetings concerning our school rebuild and hope to have some more concrete information to share with you in the coming weeks. What is undeniable, is that within the next few years our young people will be educated in a setting that rivals any I have seen anywhere. It is a huge privilege to lead our community through this next phase of our journey and I take it very seriously. What I can guarantee all stakeholders is that we will get the best outcome for our community in all aspects of the build; from the smallest details right through to the overall aesthetic of the building.

Take care and God bless

Glenn Sanderson



Upcoming Events

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

Y9 Options Information Evening



Father, I ask for your forgiveness for all the ways that I have fallen short in my thoughts, in my words and in my actions. Search my heart O God. Expose the darkness and bring my sin into the light. Help me turn away from my wicked ways that separates me from you, Lord. Create in me a pure heart Father God and help me become more like your son, Jesus.

Amen.

Chaplaincy

Sunday the 3rd Week of Lent

John 2:13-25

Jesus Clears the Temple Courts

When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father's house into a market!" His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me."

The Jews then responded to him, "What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?"

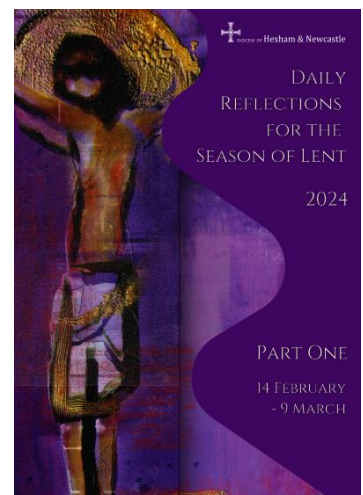


Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" But the temple he had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many people saw the signs he was performing and believed in his name. But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people. He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person.

Hexham and Newcastle Diocese produces Lent Reflections. The authors are from our diocese. Sister Francis from Oaklea Convent has written a most thought provoking reflection, this collection is very inspiring as we move through our Lenten journey.

<https://diocesehn.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Lent-Reflections-2024-Part-1-small-file.pdf>



Every year we support many charities; local (Christmas Hampers and Norah's North Pole), national (Macmillan Cancer Support and international (CAFOD) to support our global community.

CAFOD Big Lent Walk brings together thousands of walkers from England, Wales, Scotland and beyond who walk an incredible 200km in 40 days to fight global poverty. We are taking part in this fundraiser too. We encourage your son to walk for CAFOD during the Lent. He can take pictures of his walk and forward all the information to Ms Szczepanska who will include it into school's fundraising page. Please use the link below to donate.



<https://schools.walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/st-aidans-catholic-academy2024>

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

We welcome donations of long life food. We are in need of tinned potatoes and tinned meat.

Thank you very much to everyone donating to Food Bank.



Pastoral News

Important Dates:

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

Wednesday 6th March 2024

Tuesday 30th April 2024

Easter holiday: We break up at 12 noon on Thursday 28th March and return to school on Monday 15th 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.



Attendance Stars

Week 21 – WB 19th February 2024



8C – 98.5%



Weeks attendance – 91.4%

Whole school attendance from Sept – 93.3%



House Competition



Annual House Competition

Week 21 – WB 19th February 2024

House	Overall Points	Points awarded this week
Ashbrooke	7875	100
Corby	7275	250
Brookfield	6900	200



Arbor

A reminder that all communications are now made through Arbor. The School Gateway continues to be used for payments, including the topping up of lunch accounts.



Safeguarding

Online Safety

Please take time to review your son's mobile device. Although they can have their advantages, social media accounts can also be used to bully and share inappropriate material. In April, Year 7 and 8 will take part in an Online Safety workshop with Northumbria Police to support them to keep themselves safe online.

Pupils have been reminded to leave any online chats that are not used for their expected purpose #dontbeabystander.

Make Your Mark

This week all pupils have been involved in 'Make Your Mark'. UK Youth Parliament's Make Your Mark helps form leaders of the future. It provides young people with a unique opportunity to let decision makers know the issues they're most affected by.



After learning a little bit about Make Your Mark, all pupils had the chance to vote for the issue most important to them.

Their votes are returned to Sunderland City Council to be countered and are then shared at Youth Parliament.

To find out more please [click here](#).

BALLOT PAPER

Youth Parliament
MAKING OUR MARK

Make Your Mark 2024

We want to know what topic you care about most. You have **one** vote, please mark an **X** in the box next to the topic you would like to vote for.

Education & Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
International Relations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health & Wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rights, Equalities & Democracy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs, the Economy & Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crime & Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Culture, Media, Sport	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate Change and the Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth Work & Young People's Services	<input type="checkbox"/>

Composer in the Making!

Harry has successfully secured a place as an apprentice on the Young Composers programme. He was one of just forty from a field of nationwide applications!

Forty apprentices are enrolled onto a series of nine online composition workshops led by the professional composer, Rory Wainwright Johnston. Apprentices will fast-track their skills in composition, and will be given valuable opportunities to meet with industry professionals to gain an insight into the professional world of composition. Apprentices are set tasks between sessions, and receive personalised feedback from Rory. Well done Harry!



STOP! THINK FRAUD!

Did you know?

Fraud accounts for almost 40% of all crime. In just one year, 1 in 17 adults in England and Wales were victims of fraud. That's nearly 3 million of us.

1 in 5 businesses were also a victim of fraud over a 3-year period. In other words, fraud is rife and it can happen to anyone.

Think you're immune from fraud?

Fraudsters can use highly manipulative methods to get us when our defences are down. Nobody is immune from fraud. We can all be more alert to the risks, and we can all do more to protect ourselves.

Four ways to frustrate a fraudster

Q1. Do you stop to check who's really contacting you?

Fraudsters often call or message people, pretending to be from their bank, other well-known and trusted companies, or even someone they know. They can be very convincing, particularly if they've already managed to get hold of some personal information, for example by looking on social media. Having earned their victim's trust, they often ask them to hand over confidential information, make a payment or give them access to their phone or computer.

How to reduce your risk

Never take calls or messages like this at face value – always take time to stop, think and check if the caller or sender is who they say they are.

If you've received a suspicious call or message:

- don't be rushed into a quick decision – think carefully before handing over money, personal details or access to your device
- if you have any doubts, hang up and do not call the number provided
- be aware that fraudsters can spoof phone numbers, so the number that appears on your caller ID may not be proof of who they are
- instead, check with the organisation directly using contact details you know are correct, such as those on a utility bill, official website, on the back of your card or by 159 for banks
- if you get a message from a family member asking you to send money, use known contact details to check if it's real

Q2. Do you automatically trust offers and click on links?

“Half-price tickets to a sold-out gig!”
 “Incredible savings on a last-minute holiday – hurry!”
 Fraudsters know most people love a bargain, so they use discounts, time pressure and FOMO (fear of missing out) to pressure them into paying out for non-existent deals. Or they urge people to click on links in phishing messages that can take them to a fake website, where the fraudster can steal cash and personal details, or infect the victim's device.



How to reduce your risk

If you see a tempting offer:

- don't be rushed into a quick decision – always take time to stop, think and check if the message, offer or advert is genuine
- don't automatically click a link, particularly in unexpected messages

- if you're not 100% sure, don't use the link to click through – go direct to the organisation's website
- always stay on trusted websites and use the site's recommended payment methods
- avoid paying by bank transfer or virtual currency
- think carefully before you hand over any money or personal details

Q3. Do you use the same password for different accounts?

Lots of people use the same password for multiple accounts, such as email, bank account and social media accounts. Less to remember, right? But imagine if a fraudster gets hold of that password. Now they can access all of their victim's online accounts.

How to reduce your risk

Choose a different password for each account. Too difficult to remember them all? You can keep track of passwords using a [password manager](#), or by using [three random words](#) to make them more memorable.

You should:

- never choose a password that features names, places and numbers that are personal to you
- choose a different password for each account that is strong and hard to guess but if you can't change them all at once, prioritise your email account

Q4. Do you use 2-step verification?

Even if someone has chosen strong and unique passwords for their email and bank accounts, there's always a risk – however small – that a fraudster could get hold of them. If they do, there's nothing to stop them accessing those accounts to steal money and other personal details.

How to reduce your risk

[Setup 2-step verification](#) (2SV) on your most important accounts, such as email and social media. 2SV works by asking for more information to prove your identity when you're logging into an online account. It's one of the most effective ways to protect your online accounts from criminals.

For more information, please visit: <https://stopthinkfraud.campaign.gov.uk>

Our pastoral team can be connected on the following emails.

Ashbrooke House – Mrs McKenna – kmckenna@staca.co.uk – Ext: 201

Corby House – Mr Gray – agray@staca.co.uk – Ext: 223

Brookfield House – Mrs Halliday – mhalliday@staca.co.uk - Ext: 216

Community News

Acting Success

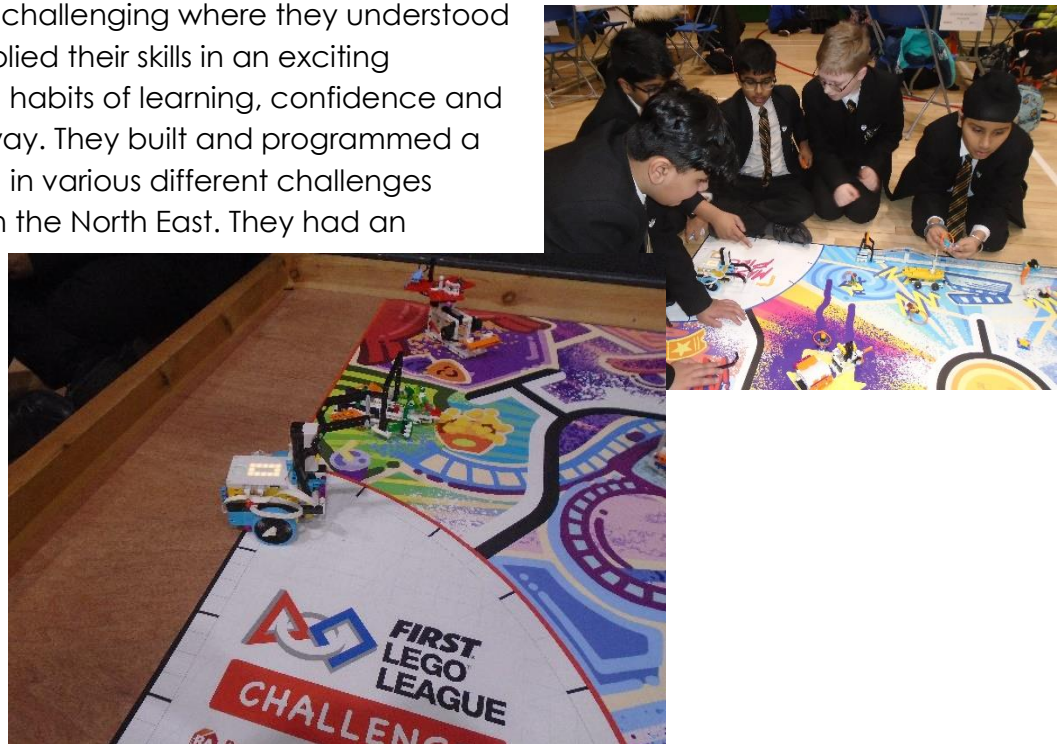
Mikki H in Year 7 has been involved in a fantastic recording experience recently. He landed a role in a BBC radio 4 production called "William's Castle" which is based on a young boy who was living at a church, as his father was at sea and mother couldn't manage. It's a local story centered around The Holy Trinity Church in Hendon. His family and us are so proud of him! The drama will air on the 1st April. Check it out at the link below!

[Jay Sykes Media - William's Castle - BBC Radio 4](#)



Enrichment

St. Aidan's Lego League club competed at Nissan on February 6th. Students developed skills in discovering, exploring and challenging where they understood the basics of STEM and applied their skills in an exciting competition, while building habits of learning, confidence and teamwork skills along the way. They built and programmed a Lego robot that competed in various different challenges against other schools within the North East. They had an enjoyable day and are now looking forward to the next competition in 2025.



Careers

National Careers Week 4th – 8th March 2024

Next week we will celebrate - NCW2024 by sharing careers information, advice and guidance with all of our stakeholders with a focus on our 'Future Career',

Themes that will feature throughout the week include:

- Destinations
- Motivation
- Passion
- Qualifications
- Talent

Keep a look out for links to our school website, stories of success and useful links to career pathways and vacancies. Follow us @St_Aidans_RC



Music

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

Instrumental lessons:

Monday	Bass	Mr Harland
Tuesday	Violin, Piano	Mr Nyberg, Mr Shepherd
Wednesday	Drums, Guitar, Brass	Mr Wake, Mr Smith, Miss Brierley
Thursday	Guitar	Mr Smith
Friday	Woodwind, Cello	Mr Toomey, Miss Pearson

All lessons are now after school between 3-6pm.

If you wish your child to sign up to/continue instrument lessons please email me at musiclessons@staca.co.uk stating your son's name, form and desired instrument. For further information please see our [Instrumental Music Policy here.](#)

Our "Live Music Friday" breaktime slots is continuing this half term - it's an excellent opportunity to practise your live performing skills in front of a low pressure and friendly audience. Please see Mr Payne for further details.

Personal Development Education

The students are currently studying Relationships and Sex Education in their PDE lessons this cycle, up until Easter. Each year group focuses on age-appropriate topics that allow them to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way. Over the next fortnight each year group has been learning:

Year 7	How to stay safe online, risks and dangers of social media and gaming.
Year 8	Tough relationships - the importance of tolerance, kindness and forgiveness.
Year 9	Marriage - The qualities of a committed relationship.
Year 10	Pregnancy and abortion - the types of abortion. Reasons for abortion and understanding the emotional impact of abortion.
Year 11	Pornography - The dangers of pornography and the impact on relationship desire.

Parents and carers can access the resources for Relationship and Sex Education via the parental portal, using the information below.

Website <https://www.tentenresources.co.uk/parent-portal/>

User Name: st-aidan-sr2

Password: island-458

ChildLine: www.childline.org.uk Phone: 0800 1111

Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk

Samaritans: www.samaritans.org Phone: 116 123

MIND: www.mind.org.uk/ or Phone 0300 123 3393

TALK TO FRANK [Honest information about drugs | FRANK \(talktofrank.com\)](http://www.talktofrank.com)

Sporting Success

After successfully winning the Sunderland regional competition, the U16 boys travelled to Newcastle Eagles' Vertu Arena to compete against the top ranked schools from the rest of Tyne and Wear. Split into two groups of 5 with only the top 2 reaching the semi-finals, it was important to start the competition off with a victory. St Aidan's began with a solid 15 - 4 win against Gateshead's Christ College and followed that up with a comprehensive 22 - 9 victory over Mortimer School from South Shields with Aldrin, Adam and David leading the scoring.

A win in the 3rd game against Whitley Bay would ensure the boys qualified for the semi-finals and after a tense back and forth, St Aidan's showed more composure and scoring ability to win the match 18 - 14. In the final group game St Aidan's faced off against Jesmond Park from Newcastle, a team packed with junior Newcastle Eagles players. After a strong performance the boys were unlucky to lose 11 - 6.

In the semi-final, St Aidan's played Marden High and it was another close game with St Aidan's finally coming out 12 - 7 winners and qualifying for the final against Jesmond Park. Again, it was so close for the boys as they all battled hard and had many opportunities to take the lead and the title but it was Jesmond who finished the game victorious by 4 points, 13 - 9.



A fantastic achievement for the u16 boys to finish 2nd out of all of the schools in Tyne and Wear and is testament to their ability, dedication and teamwork and is something they can take away as a significant achievement from their time here at St Aidan's. Also, a huge thank you to Arnel and Mark from Lambton Basketball Club for their time and effort, not only in coaching our students but also to provide invaluable support on match days."

English Champion

On Saturday 24th February, Zach took part in the British weightlifting English championship in Maidstone, Kent. Zach lifted a total of 135kg which won him a GOLD medal and is now the English U15's Champion. Well done Zach, this is an outstanding achievement.



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 (Y7,8 & 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!"