

St. Aidan's Catholic Academy

Willowbank Road, Sunderland, SR2 7HJ
W: contactus@staca.co.uk T: 0191 5200333

Twitter: St_Aidans_RC Instagram: sacatholicacademy

To all in our community,

I always think that once a full month has passed, the school finds its equilibrium. A level where the holidays are distant memories, new friendships have formed and the initial excitement has passed. This year, I feel more than ever, that academic endeavour has taken root as if we had never been away. This week my colleagues have been carrying out lesson visits to see what sort of experience our pupils get – they have been blown away. A genuine partnership exists between staff and pupils where mutual respect and shared goals underpin everything we do. Our pupils speak highly of an education which is of high challenge but carried out in a safe and nurturing environment. To demonstrate this, we have already begun exam preparation with Y11 by introducing revision sessions after school in most subjects. The buy in by the pupils has already been exceptional and it fills me with pride to see that our community, which has been so successful for so long now, never rests on its laurels and fully appreciates that every young man who comes through our doors deserves our total commitment. This belief is not just visible with our examination year groups either. Enrichment activities continue to be hugely popular with a huge variety of activities running and a large number of pupils immersing themselves in art, culture and sport. It really is holistic teaching in action – and I for one like nothing better than seeing the school buzzing well after timetabled lessons have finished.

Take care and God bless.

Glenn Sanderson



Upcoming Events

Monday, October 9, 2023

Y11/13 Parent Information
Session

Dear Lord,

Bless us in this year's endeavors.
Help us to face all the challenges
and guide us towards the path
of success.

May we make new friends and
grow with others.

May we learn something new
each day and be a better
person with every knowledge we
attain.

Amen.

Chaplaincy

Sunday Gospel

Matthew 21:28-32

The Parable of the Two Sons

“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.”



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

Thank you very much to everyone donating to Food Bank.



Pastoral News

Save the date:

Tuesday 3rd October - Year 7 Parent Information Session. part 1

Monday 9th October - Year 11 Parent Information Session.

Wednesday 11th October - Year 7 Parent Information Session. Part 2.

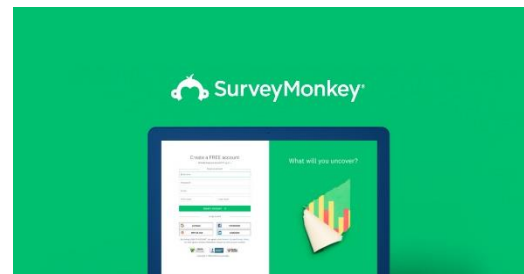
Friday 20th October - This is a staff training day. School is closed to all pupils.

Monday 30th October - Year 8 Parents Evening. Save the date. More information to follow

Year 7 Parent Survey - For Year 7 Parents only.

We are keen to gather your views on your experience of your sons' transition from primary to secondary school.

Please complete this short survey. This will allow us to review your experiences and improve our practice if needed.



<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WMH7LCM>



Annual House Competition



Week 3 – WB 18th September 2023

House	Overall Points	Points awarded this week
Ashbrooke	750	250
Corby	950	300
Brookfield	800	150



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 3 – WB 18th September 2023



7C– 99.3%

Weeks attendance – 94.2%
Whole school attendance from Sept – 95.5%



Parent Engagement Sessions September and October 2023



DATE	TIME	WHAT'S ON	MORE INFORMATION	VENUE
29 th September	9:30am - 11:30am	Macmillan Coffee Morning	Coffee Morning in Aid of Macmillan Cancer Care	Staff Room
3rd October	5:30pm	Year 7 Parent Induction Programme - Achievement, Behaviour, Enrichment, Wellbeing and The Curriculum	An opportunity for you to learn more about the day-to day life of our school. We will take you through school policies, school procedures and how we will support your son to reach the top of his mountain and be the best version of himself.	Upper Room
4th October	9:30am	Walk and Talk with our school Chaplain Miss Szczepanska	Enjoy a relaxed chat with our school Chaplain in the beautiful Backhouse Park.	Backhouse Park
9th October	5:30-6:30pm	Y11/Y13 Parent Information Session	More information will be shared closer to the date via a letter.	Upper Room
11th October	2:20pm	Rosary in the Chapel	Time to focus on prayer in the Month of the Rosary.	School Chapel
11th October	5:30pm	Supporting Literacy and Numeracy	This is an ideal opportunity for you to learn more about the day-to day life of our school. Within the presentation we will take you through school policies, school procedures and how we will support your son to reach the top of his mountain and be the best version of himself.	Upper Room
30th October	2:15-6:15	Y8 Parents Evening	This will take place online and sessions will be available to book nearer to the time.	School Cloud

Safeguarding

Sexual Harassment and Abuse in Schools

You may have heard in the media over the last 18 months about research conducted about child-on-child abuse and sexual harassment and abuse in school. This is something that we spend time educating our young people, in an age-appropriate way, about.

Read more about national findings using the link below. There are also some useful parent guides should you need them.

[Talking to your child about online sexual harassment: A guide for parents | Children's Commissioner for England \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/talking-to-your-child-about-online-sexual-harassment-a-guide-for-parents/)

Revision Techniques

It is not too early to get into good routines leading up to your Mocks and Final GCSE Exams.



Manage your time

Planning your time effectively can really help to reduce stress during revision and exam periods.

Make a plan

Create a weekly revision planner. It may be helpful to list all of your exam subjects first and decide how much time to allocate to each one. Allow more time for the topics you find more difficult. Make sure your revision plan is realistic so that you can stick to it.

Preparing for exams

Find a good study space. Having a good study environment will help you to get the most out of your revision time. Make sure your study space is quiet, free from distractions and comfortable, with a good-sized and well-lit desk if possible.

Take regular breaks

When revising, it's important to take 5- or 10-minute rest breaks every hour. You could have a snack, exercise, or get some fresh air.

Minimise stress

Plan your revision at a manageable pace, giving yourself enough time to eat, drink and sleep properly. Light exercise every day will also help to reduce stress. Find time to relax too. Many people find it difficult to go to sleep immediately after revising, so an optimal time to relax would be right before bed; this could just be reading a book for half an hour. If you're feeling stressed and anxious, help and support is always available from our Pastoral Team and your subject teachers.

Revision strategies

Set up everything you need (stationery, laptop, snacks, drinks, etc) before you start revising.

Common methods

Each person will have their own preferred approaches to revision, but make sure you find techniques that help you to grasp, consolidate, and retain the knowledge required for your programme. These could include:

Flashcards: Summarise key concepts on small cards or using a flashcard app and use these as memory prompts. This can be a productive way to spend 'dead' time when you can't do much else, for example, when travelling on a bus.

Memory aids: Using diagrams, mnemonics and memory hooks can help to remember specific facts. You could put them on post-it notes and stick them somewhere visible, such as around your room or house.

Past papers: Timed practice with past papers can help you understand what is expected of you in the exam and develop your exam technique.

Sporting Success

British Weight lifting Champion!!!

Earlier this month Zach lifted at the British weightlifting age group championships held in Leeds. He lifted 62kg snatch and an 80kg clean & jerk giving him a competition total of 142 and securing first place, and the British U15 champion title and a gold medal.



Zach has been weightlifting for the past 3 years, his commitment and dedication to the sport is excellent. He comes to the club early and helps coach the younger lifters and is our youth committee leader. Zach's coach is incredibly proud of how hard Zach works and his passion, is inspiring the younger generation of weightlifters in the club.

There was also success for Ben (Year 7) who competed in his first ever National competition and secured a bronze medal. Ben has been training with the club for over a year now and is developing really well. His coach has said that "He's an asset to the club and always positive and encouraging to his teammates."

Year 11 Football – County Cup Round 1

The Year 11 football team beat a very strong Hummersknott Academy 3-2 in the first round of the county cup. The boys battled hard against a confident side who had a string of very good players. Hummersknott couldn't handle the aerial presence and physicality of the St Aidan's, which was evident when Ethan D smashed in a header from close range from an excellent free kick by Liam. Hummersknott scored direct from a free kick to make it 1-1 before L. Pace scored from the edge of the box to make it 2-1. Half time was called early due to an unfortunate injury to A. Smith who had fallen awkwardly onto his shoulder. This was a great shame as A. Smith had been brilliant in the centre of midfield, we wish him all the best with his recovery. In the second half Hummersknott were a constant threat and after a string of blocks and saves they eventually scored. The game looked as if it was going to penalties, but with just minutes left on the clock, Liam delivered a mouth water corner into the 6-yard box that was headed home by Ethan D to win the game! You can watch the winning goal @



[St Aidans PE Department \(@staca_pe\)](#) • [Instagram photos and videos](#)

PDE

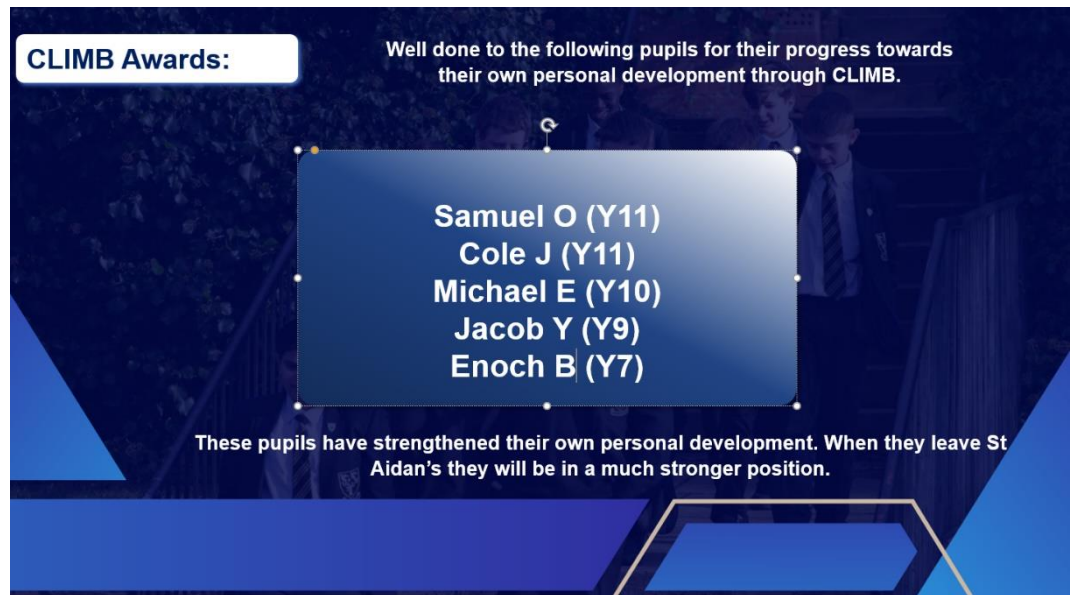
Personal Development Education is taught fortnightly to all pupils. This is a non-academic subject which covers topics from Citizenship Education, Relationship, Sex and Health Education as well as Careers Education.

Year 7	Transition and life in secondary school.
Year 8	Healthy lifestyle choices and the importance of personal hygiene.
Year 9	Health and Wellbeing. The importance of diet and exercise on the body.
Year 10	Work Experience and how to contact employers.
Year 11	Post 16 choices; A levels, BTEC's and

CLIMB Awards

CLIMB is purposeful; all tasks allow you to develop knowledge, attitudes, skills, relationships and behaviour that can be utilised in and outside the classroom. This involves thinking processes, managing emotions, values and relationships along with a range of life skills that assist you in coping with the challenges of everyday life.

The focus of this cycle is Challenge, Leadership and Belong. We have seen many pupils engaging with the tasks. Well done to the following pupils who have been acknowledged for their efforts in assembly this week.



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://Honest information about drugs | FRANK (talktofrank.com))

Careers

Careers Programme

NHS Cadets

We are delighted to share the news that we have partnered with St Johns ambulance and NHS England to deliver the NHS cadet programme for KS4 and KS5 pupils. This is a fantastic opportunity for pupils planning on a medical/healthcare route when leaving school or for those who would like to explore the sector further. In recent years work experience in this sector has been difficult to access due to the pandemic and safeguarding purposes. NHS cadets will allow pupils not only to develop their knowledge of the sector but to access work experience/experience of the workplace with local trusts, healthcare providers and universities.

NHS cadets will be delivered by a project manager employed by NHS England on a weekly basis throughout the academic year. A letter containing further information has been shared via the

school gateway and the character development team for pupils. A short application will need to be completed for all pupils hoping to gain a place as an NHS cadet.

KS4 - Tuesday 2.50-3.50

KS5 – Wednesday 3.00-4.00

Both sessions will commence after October half term.

World Anatomy Day

When: Sunday 15 October 2023 10:00am - 4:00pm

Where: The Fire Station

In celebration of World Anatomy Day, the University of Sunderland alongside Teesside and Newcastle University are hosting a fun-filled regional anatomy event.

Not only will there be stands with lots of fun hands-on activities for families to take part in but, there will also be stage shows for you to see how the wonderful world of anatomy works.

All ages are invited to come along and take part in this do not miss event. This event is free to all attending and spaces are limited.

Sign up [here](#) to secure your place with your family!

Careers Fair - Save the date

We are holding a **careers fair** in school on the **18th October 2021** for all Yr11 and Yr13 pupils. They will have the opportunity to meet with a range of education providers and employers.

Any businesses wishing to attend the careers fair and share valuable information with our pupils can contact Mrs Osmialowski, Careers Leader.

Work Experience – Save the date

Yr10 work experience Monday 8th – Friday 19th July 2024

Yr12 work experience Monday 15th – Thursday 18th July 2024

Any businesses able to host pupils for one week of work experience can contact Mrs Osmialowski, Careers Leader.

Unifrog

In keeping with our commitment to provide pupils with outstanding careers guidance and tailored support when choosing their next step after school, we will now be using Unifrog; an award-winning, online careers platform. All pupils now have access to this excellent website and will be introduced to the platform during their PDE/Careers lessons over the coming weeks.



The Unifrog platform is designed to support learners in making the most informed decisions about their futures and has a range of tools that are suitable for all year groups. Each pupil has their own personal account that provides a wide range of information related to their interests and aspirations.

We have also set up a parent login so that you can use Unifrog as if you were a pupil yourself, allowing you to support your child throughout the process. The sign-up code you need is:

STAIParents and you can sign up here: www.unifrog.org/code

University Admission Tests

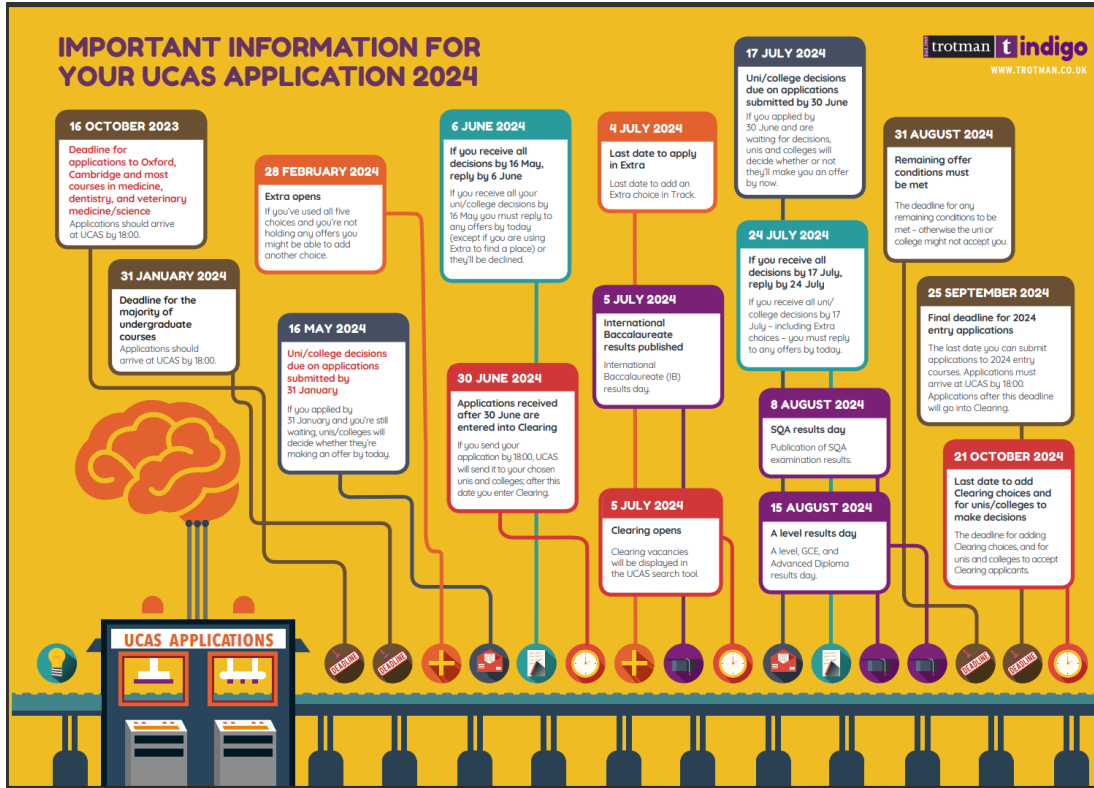
If you apply for a course that requires an [admissions test](#), you'll need to check the registration deadline for the test, when you will sit it and what it includes, as well as the deadline for your UCAS application.

Many courses that require you to sit a test have a 16th October UCAS application deadline, but your course may be different, so it's important you check key dates and deadlines. To see if your course requires you to sit an admissions test, check the course description in the search tool.

Most admissions tests happen between August and November the year before you're due to start your studies – some even earlier, before you've sent your UCAS application!

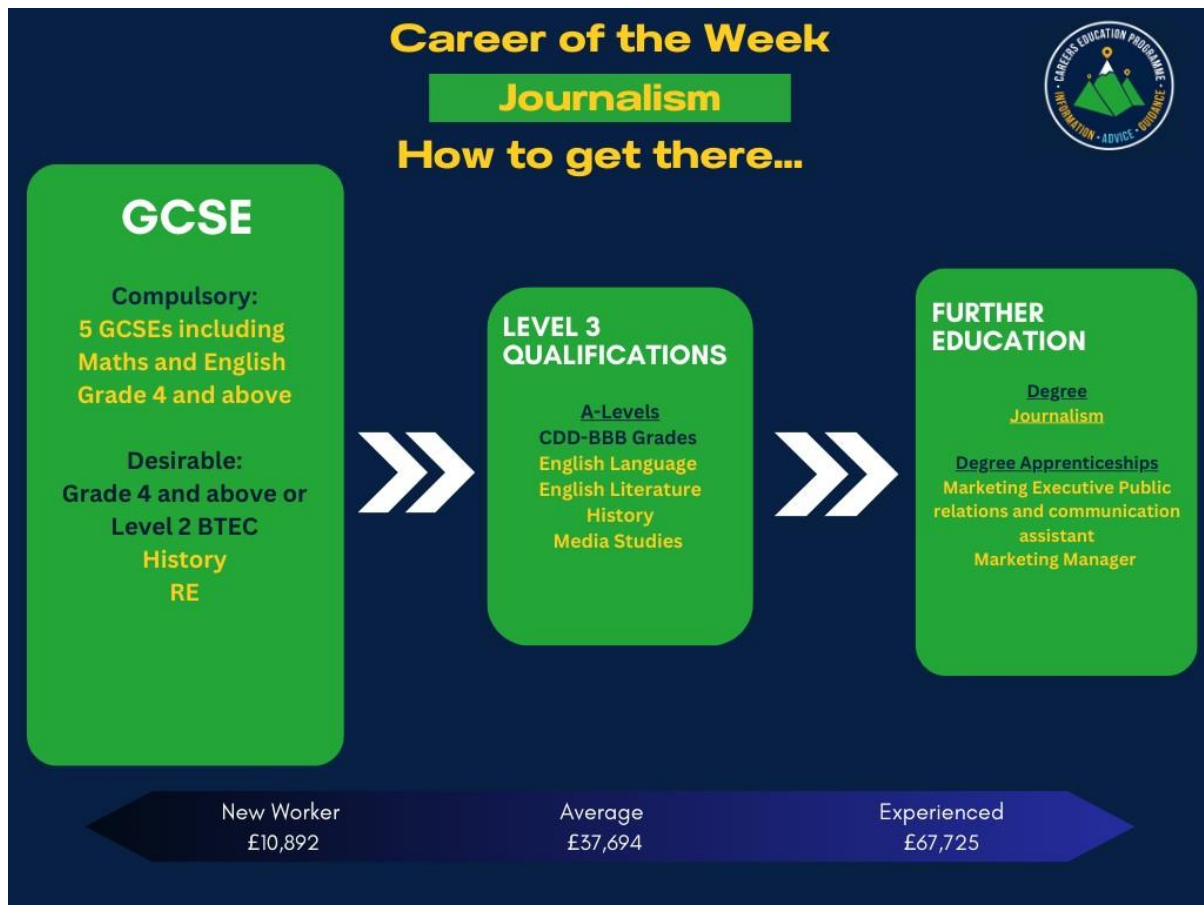
Remember to check the date of your admissions test – some take place before the UCAS application deadline.

UCAS Applications



Links to career information and advice for both parents/carers and pupils can be found on our school website. Please follow us on twitter to follow our careers journey! @SACA_CareersEd

Career of the Week



Music

Macmillan Coffee'n'Music

Well done to Jacob for performing for our community guests in the staff room. His brilliant singing and guitar playing was appreciated by all. He then went on to perform with the Rock Band in the main school hall for Live Music Fridays – what a professional! Great standard of playing also from Harry and Alex.

Year 7 Welcome Mass

Absolutely outstanding singing by the Year 7 on Tuesday this week, they really are a pleasure to work with. The Y9 band provided an equally brilliant backing to the mass. Well done all!

Music Enrichment:

St Aidan's Singers Wednesday Music Department

Drum Fun Wednesday Music Room

Year 8 Rock Band Thursday The Bunker (4-6pm)

Instrumental lessons:

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

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 are 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.







Meet the Team

The staff team at St Aidan's all have one collective goal and that is to ensure that every young person summits their own personal mountain. Ms Swales is the newest member of our staff team to join us on our journey. A teacher with many years' experience, Ms Swales has returned to St Aidan's after completing her teaching practice with us twenty years ago! Already an integral part of our community, Ms Swales is a favourite with both pupils and staff alike. Her subject knowledge is second to none and her areas of expertise are interesting and varied. From resistant materials and construction through to food and textiles, all tastes and interests will be easily catered for by Ms Swales' expertise. Welcome to St Aidan's and thank you for joining us on our continued drive for excellence.



Enrichment

St. Aidan's Catholic Academy Enrichment Cycle 1 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	Bass Guitar Lessons Music Room Mr Harland (£72 per term)	Dodgeball Sports Hall Mr Hutton - 	Piano Lessons Music room Mr Shepherd (£72 per term)	Guitar Lessons Music room Mr Smith (£72 per term)	Basketball Sports Hall Mr Adey & Coach (£1) 	Guitar Lessons Music room Mr Smith (£72 per term)	Drum Lessons Music room Mr Wake (£72 per term)
	Bronze iDEA Award Digital Enterprise (ICT) 312 - Miss Cain	Indoor Cricket Sports Hall Mr Hutton 	Violin Lessons Music room Mr Nyberg (£72 per term)	Badminton Sports Hall - Mr Jones 	Maths Enrichment 212 - Mr Mann	Lego Fun Club Mrs Whitten	Cello Lessons Music room Mrs Pearson (£72 per term)
	Chess Club 209 - Mr Herbertson	Volleyball Club Sports Hall Mr Hutton	Homework Club Room 313, 314	Book to film club 303 Mrs Wheeler	Brass Lessons Music room (£72 per term)	Performing Arts Mrs Moorhead/Mr Payne 	Woodwind Lessons Music Room Mr Tooney (£72 per term)
	Camp Craft 111- Mrs Kilminster	Fitness School Gym – Mr Gray	Football with Mo Year 7&8 (£4 per session) Sports Hall	Dungeons and Dragons Reading Room Mr Richardson	Careers Champion 103 - Mrs Osmialowski	Robotics Club 164 - Mr Wallace	Football (Y7&8) Sports Hall Mo *£5 a session
	Football (Year 10&11) Ashbrooke 3G Mr Watts	Board Games 206 – Mrs Cooper	Drum Fun Music Room – Mr Wallace	Equality and diversity group 160 Mrs Gill	Fitness School gym Mr Watts	Science Club 121 – Science Staff	Homework Club 313, 314
	Further Maths (Y11) 210 - Mrs Hudson	GCSE Spanish Club Year 10 & 11 104 – Mrs McKenna		Fitness School gym Mr Flounders	Football (Year 9) The Limes with Mr Flounders	Table Tennis Mobiles Mr Hamilton	Rugby Ashbrooke 3G Mr Adey
	Archaeology Club 110 - Mrs Jopling	Sparx Maths Club 312 – Mrs Smith		Football (Year 8) Ashbrooke 3G Mr Gray	1st Lego League – Super Power 166 - Mrs Swales	Rock Band @ The Bunker 4-6pm Mr Payne	BTEC Music Mr Payne
	Homework Club 313, 314	British Sign Language 301 - Mrs Gardner		Homework Club 313, 314	Homework Club 313, 314	GCSE History booster 108 - Mr Nunn	
	Keyboard Ninja Club (ICT) 312 - Mrs Cain	Justice and Peace (KS5) Briery Miss Gordon/ Mrs Preist		Science STEM Award 125– Science Staff	NEA Master Class Room 401- Mr Morris	Educake Support 223 - Mr Stephenson	
	Orienteering Ashbrooke Mr Watts	Handwriting Club 123 - Miss Hodgson		St. Aidan's Singers Music room Mr Payne	Football (Year 7) The Limes with Mr Hutton 		
	Art Club 162 - Mrs Nipper			Gardening Club Briery Mrs Armstrong			
				Running Club Sports Hall - Mr Coon			
			Spanish Club 106 - Mrs Alonso/Miss Donkin				
			Crisp Packet Appeal 205 - Mrs Priest				
			Litter Picking 203 - Mr Brown				

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!"