NEWSLETTER

November 13th 2026

ST. AIDAN'S CATHOLIC ACADEMY

"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die."
John 11:25

During the month of November, our school community remembers and prays for all those who have died.

This week as part of our November 11th Remembrance celebrations, we reflected on the sacrifice made by servicemen and women who gave their lives in times of conflict. A particular focus was placed on the Unknown Soldier, whose tomb serves as a powerful symbol of all those who made the ultimate sacrifice and whose names may be known only to God. Through prayers, moments of silence and discussions, pupils considered the values of courage, selflessness and peace.

Inspired by Christ's call to love and serve others, our school community came together in gratitude and remembrance, praying for all who have died and for a more peaceful world.

Throughout the Month of Remembrance our memorial book is outside of our chapel and all members of our community are welcome to write in names of the deceased who they would us to pray for. If you have someone you would like us to add to the book please email: contactus@staca.co.uk

Mrs Whitten Headteacher

WORD OF THE WEEK

Cycle 1 Week 9:

Desolate - De/so/late
Word Class: Adjective

Etymology: From Latin *desolatus,* meaning "abandoned"
Student-friendly Definition: Empty, lonely and without much life or comfort.
Example sentence: In *Of Mice and Men,* the landscape feels desolate, reflecting the men's isolation.

Cycle 1 Week 10:

Prowl – Prowl
Word Class: Verb

Etymology: From Middle English, likely linked to moving about stealthily.
Student-friendly Definition: To move quietly and carefully, often as if searching for something.
Example sentence: In *The Tattooist of Auschwitz,* danger seems to prowl around every corner.

PUPILS OF THE WEEK

Cycle 1 Week 8:

Ethan (7F)
Nominated for his excellent attitude to learning in Geography.

Anjola (7B)
Nominated for his excellent oracy and participation in lessons!

Sourish (8R)
Excellent proactiveness in starting our Christmas Hamper Appeal. A real demonstration of compassion that embodies our core values.

William (10F)
Nominated or excellent summative assessment in History. Well done!

Morakinyo (11C)
Nominated for excellent hard work and revision in RE

Cycle 1 Week 9:

Aaron (7M), Jack (7M), Thomas (8M) Chinonzo (9F), Lewis (9F), Daniel (9F)
Nominated for Pupil of the Week in recognition of the enthusiasm and maturity they showed in accepting the invitation from St Leonard's parishioners to attend Mass.

They represented the school exceptionally well by taking an active role, reading at Mass and carrying the offertory gifts. Their reverence, confidence, and willingness to participate contributed greatly to the celebration and demonstrated our school's commitment to faith and service.

They were excellent ambassadors for the school and made a positive contribution to the life of the parish community. We are very proud of the way they conducted themselves and the example they set for others.

Well done and thank you for representing the school with excellence.

ACHIEVEMENT POINTS TO DATE: 17193 (AV: 17.95 PER PUPIL)

WELLBEING STATEMENTS

Cycle 1 Week 9:
Make responsible choices that support your health, well-being, and future goals.

Cycle 1 Week 10:
Use technology and social media safely, responsibly, and in a balanced way.

STAYING SAFE ONLINE: SEXTORTION AWARENESS ASSEMBLY

This week, all pupils took part in a safeguarding assembly focused on sextortion, an increasingly common online crime affecting young people across the UK.

The assembly aimed to raise awareness of what sextortion is, how it can happen, and the steps pupils can take to keep themselves safe online. Pupils learned about the warning signs to look out for, including contact from unknown individuals on social media, requests for personal images, and attempts to pressure or manipulate young people into sharing private information.

Pupils were also reminded that if they ever feel uncomfortable, worried, or threatened online, they should not respond to demands and should speak to a trusted adult immediately. Information was shared about how to report concerns and access support both in school and through organisations such as CEOP and Childline.

At St Aidan's, the safety and wellbeing of our pupils remains a top priority. We encourage all families to continue conversations about online safety at home and to support young people in making safe and responsible choices when using the internet and social media.

Together, by raising awareness and promoting open communication, we can help keep our young people safe online.

For more information please Internet Matters: **What is sextortion? Guidance for parents | Internet Matters**

JOIN SUNDERLAND INTER FAITH WALK

Join people from across Sunderland on Sunday 15 November for the annual Inter Faith Walk. This year's theme is "Lighting the Way for a Shared Future" which celebrates the diversity within our communities.

Meeting at the Stadium of Light for a (start 12:30pm), we will then walk over Keel Crossing making stops at St Mary's Church and the Sunderland Minster, then onwards to the Sikh Gurdwara on Stockton Road. Following a light lunch, we will visit then walk to Backhouse Park observing the former Sunderland Synagogue and finally, we will visit Sunniside to see new and old community spaces.

Everyone is welcome!

SMALL STEPS

All pupils from Year 8 to Year 11 recently took part in an engaging and informative session delivered by Small Steps, an organisation dedicated to reducing extremism through education, compassion and understanding.

The session encouraged pupils to think critically about the influences they encounter both online and offline, while promoting respect, tolerance and positive discussion. Through open and honest conversations, pupils explored the importance of challenging harmful narratives, understanding different perspectives and making safe, informed decisions.

The presentation was extremely well received and provided valuable opportunities for students to develop awareness of current issues, build resilience, and reinforce our school's commitment to creating a safe, inclusive and respectful community for all.

Parents and carers are also invited to access support and information from Small Steps. Please see the accompanying advert for details of upcoming parent sessions and opportunities to learn more about these important issues.

We would like to thank Small Steps for sharing their expertise and supporting our students with this valuable learning opportunity.



REMEMBRANCE DAY 2026

On Wednesday the school gathered to commemorate the Armistice; the ceasefire that brought an end to World War One.

The members of History Club selected the theme of 'lost but not forgotten'. From 1915 the British Government declared that bodies would no longer be brought home for burial, instead they would be buried where they fell, primarily in France and Belgium.

The Unknown Warrior, buried in Westminster Abbey brought comfort to so many families who could not visit the burial site of their loved ones to grieve.

After the thought-provoking assembly, we gathered on the school yard at 11:00am to respect the two minutes silence along with a recital of the Last Post.

Here at St Aidan's we respect the sacrifice of so many and seek to preserve their stories of bravery and honour.

We would like to thank all the boys who participated in the delivery of such a moving assembly.



SUCCESS FOR FINN AT KARATE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Join people from across Sunderland on Sunday 15 November for the annual Inter Faith Walk, celebrating this year's theme, "Lighting the Way for a Shared Future."

Meet at the Stadium of Light from 12:00pm (start 12:30pm)

Visit places of worship and community spaces across the city, enjoy a light lunch, meet new people, and celebrate Sunderland's rich cultural and faith diversity.

Please bring a head covering for the visit to the Sikh Gurdwara.

Everyone is welcome!





NORAH'S NORTH POLE

This Advent season, we are supporting Norah's North Pole, our Christmas Hamper Appeal, and Jude's fundraising efforts.

We are inviting everyone to support our Christmas Hamper Appeal. We have already begun preparing the hampers and hope to have them ready by 7 December. We would be very grateful for donations of festive treats, including sweets, chocolates, biscuits, Christmas cakes, and Christmas puddings. Thank you for helping us bring some Christmas joy to families in our community.

During Advent, we are reaching out to support others through Norah's North Pole, our Christmas Hamper Appeal, and Jude's fundraising campaign. We would be very grateful if you could support Norah's North Pole. Further details on how to get involved are available on their website.

https://norahsnorthpole.co.uk/

GENERAL REMINDERS

ABSENCE REPORTING

Parents are required to call the student absence line each day to report any absence. Please dial the main school number and select Option 1.

Please ensure that you provide your child's full name, form group and a reason for the absence.

PASS OUT REQUESTS

Pass Out requests should be emailed to contactus@staca.co.uk. Please include your child's full name, form, date, reason for the Pass Out and collection/leaving time.

Parents will receive an email to confirm that the Pass Out has been completed.

Students need to collect their Pass Out slips from the Student Support office prior to their appointment. They should present the slip to their class teacher at the time stated on the Pass Out and make their way to the Main Reception.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Tuesday 1st December 2026
Year 10 Cinema Trip to see Ebeneezer - Please sign up via Arbor

Thursday 3rd December 2026
St Aidan's Alumni Reunion 1.00pm - 4.00pm

Friday 18th December 2026
School Closes for Christmas Holidays

Monday 21st December - Friday 1st January 2027
Christmas Holidays

Monday 4th January 2027
School re-opens - normal school hours

Monday 11th January - Friday 22nd January 2027
Year 11 & Year 13 Mock Exams

Tuesday 12th January 2027
Year 9 Virtual Parents Evening 2.15pm - 6.15pm
School closes at 1.55pm for all pupils - All Enrichment sessions cancelled however **Peripatetic Music Lessons are still taking place.**