NEWSLETTER

October 22nd 2026

ST. AIDAN'S CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Staff Retreat and INSET Day

After a busy and positive start to the new school year, our pupils will not be in school on Friday 23 October and will begin their half-term break with a well-earned opportunity to rest and recharge.
On this day, staff will come together for our annual Staff Retreat and INSET Day, with a particular focus on the Ignatian Examen, supported by the Jesuit Institute.
The Examen is already an important part of daily life at St Aidan's, encouraging our boys to pause, reflect, give thanks and recognise God's presence in the ordinary moments of their day. The retreat gives staff that same valuable opportunity to step away from the busyness of school life, reflect together and reconnect with our shared purpose in supporting and caring for the young people entrusted to us.
At the heart of the day will be our school mission:

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10

We hope all of our pupils and families enjoy a restful half-term break after such a busy start to the year, and we thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Mrs Whitten Headteacher

WORD OF THE WEEK

Cycle 1 Week 7 :

Destitute - De/sti/tute
Word Class: Adjective

Etymology: From Latin *destituere*, meaning "to abandon"
Student-friendly Definition: Extremely poor and lacking basic things such as food or shelter.
Example sentence: In *Kestrel for a Knave,* Billy's family life can seem destitute and harsh.

Cycle 1 Week 8 :

Propaganda – Pro/pa/gan/da
Word Class: Noun

Etymology: From Latin *propagare,* meaning "to spread"
Student-friendly Definition: Information used to persuade people, often by only showing one side of the truth.
Example sentence: In *Animal Farm,* the pigs use propaganda to control the other animals.

PUPILS OF THE WEEK

Cycle 1 Week 6:

Kriv (7B)
Nominated for embodying our core values on Ashbrooke's mountain trip this week - persevering, working hard & encouraging other members of the group when they needed it. Kriv represented our school brilliantly throughout the day.

Vince (8D), Jack (8M), Bobby-John (7A)
Exceptional standard of history work. The boys should be so proud of how their work embodies St Aidan's Standard.

Sam (8D), Sam (8A), Ahmed (8R)
Excellent work produced in geography! Their books embody St Aidan Standards and have been shown to Y7 as a visualizer example. Well done boys!

Samuel (10A)
Over recent weeks, Sam has demonstrated a much more positive approach to school life. He has become increasingly responsible, respectful, and focused in lessons, showing a level of maturity that has not gone unnoticed by staff and peers alike.

Oliver (11B)
Oliver has attended homework club all week and the attitude and application he has shown towards his studies has been really commendable. Oliver is very conscientious and diligent in his approach to all his subjects and is determined to maximise his potential with regards to his GCSE results next Summer.

Equally refreshing, whilst in Homework Club, Oliver is willing to assist other students in their studies, most notably this week towards another Year 11 student who required assistance. Oliver displayed a caring and generous nature towards the student which embodied superbly the school ethos of supporting all members of our community.

Cycle 1 Week 7:

Dindu (10A)
Nominated for his impeccable manners and for consistently setting a positive example, encouraging his peers to uphold the same high standards of behaviour and respect.

Aran (11A), Mohammad (11M), Solomon (11M)
For being exceptional role models to a year 7 pupil, engaging with him to ensure he feels he belongs to the St. Aidan's community. Thank you!

ACHIEVEMENT POINTS TO DATE: 13653 (AV: 14.82 PER PUPIL)

WELLBEING STATEMENTS

Cycle 1 Week 7 :
Make time for activities that help you relax, recharge, and enjoy yourself.

Cycle 1 Week 8 :
Value your strengths and achievements while continuing to build confidence in your abilities.

REMINDER - ST AIDAN'S ALUMNI REUNION

We are hosting our next alumni reunion on Thursday 3rd December, 1pm-4pm.

We would like to extend a warm welcome to any former members of staff or former pupils. Please register via the link below.

https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/1c2nwyDNEC

SETA ENGINEERING APPRENTICESHIP & CAREERS EVENT

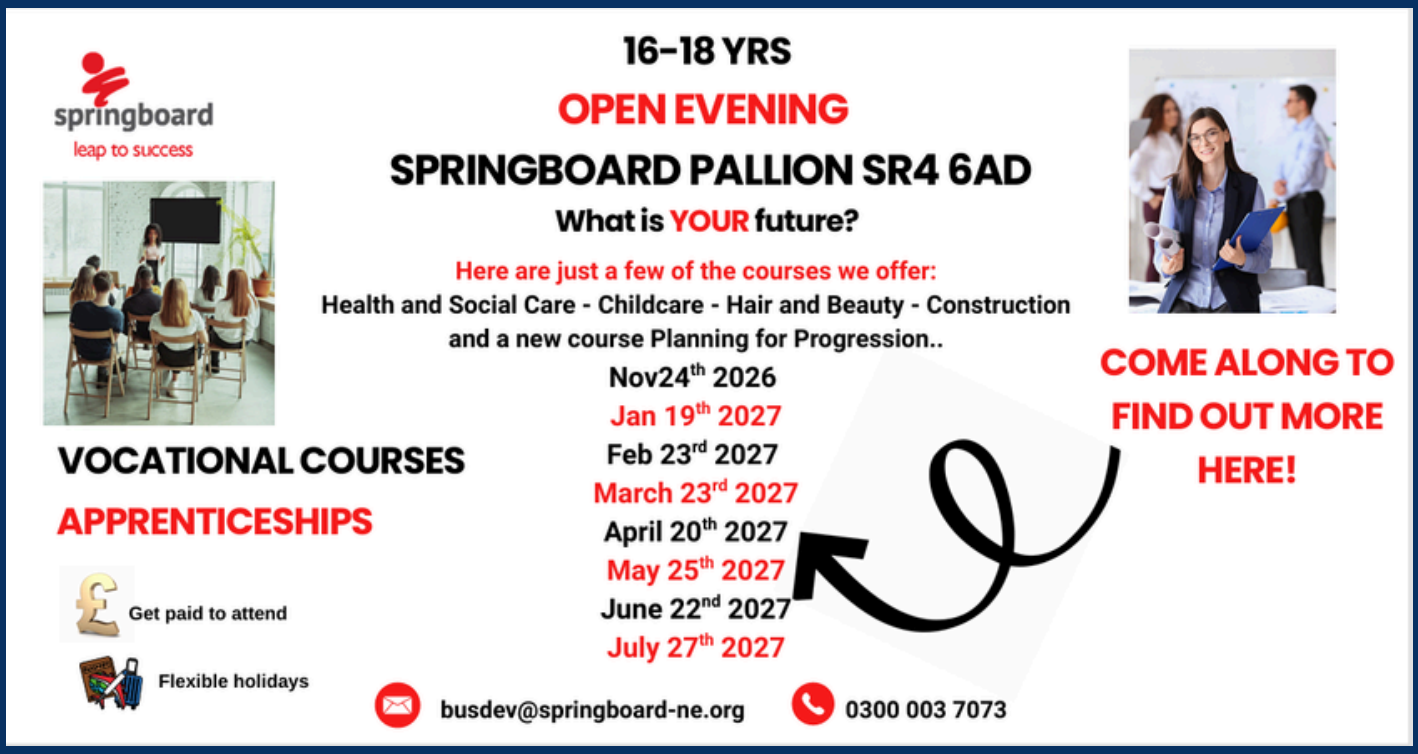




SPRINGBOARD OPEN EVENINGS

Springboard are holding a number of Open Evenings across the academic year from 3pm to 5.30pm.

Please see dates in the flyer below and contact Springboard direct for further information.



YEAR 9 FOOTBALL FIXTURES

Our Year 9 A team had two important cup fixtures this week. We hosted Ponteland High School in the ESFA trophy on Wednesday.

St. Aidan's led from a Sam (9C) goal but conceded late, drawing 1-1 and just losing out after an epic penalty shoot out where 10 players from either side took penalties.

On Thursday night we were away in the County Cup to The Hermitage School. St. Aidan's let a 1-4 lead slip but eventually came out 3-5 winners.

Goals were scored by Lucas (2) from 9B, Sam (2) from 9C and Bright (9D), earning the boys an away trip to St John's RC Academy in the next round.

Thanks to all the lads involved and parents for their help and support.

HENDON LADS GROUP

Hendon Lads Group is a newly launched free weekly youth group for young men aged 11-16 at Hendon Youth Hub.

The group provides a safe, supportive space where young people can relax, make friends and take part in a range of positive activities including:

- Gaming
- Sport
- Trips and activities
- Food and social time

Sessions take place every Monday from 5pm to 7pm at Hendon Youth Hub, SR2 8JX.

Their aim is to create a welcoming environment where young men can build confidence, develop positive relationships and access fun activities within their local community.



CONFIRMATION PROGRAMME INVITATION

Father Charles from **St Mary Magdalene's, St Cuthbert's (Seaham), and St Joseph's (Murton)** warmly invites all pupils currently in **Year 9 and above** to sign up for the parish **Confirmation Programme.**

Confirmation is an important step in faith, offering young people the opportunity to deepen their relationship with God and strengthen their commitment to the Church.

If you are interested in taking part, please contact Fr Charles for full details, including programme dates, times, and registration information.

We encourage all eligible pupils to consider this opportunity as they continue their faith journey.

GOLF ACHIEVEMENT

Congratulations to Sonny (10A) who plays for Wearside Golf Club Junior Team. Over the past year Sonny has achieved a 55% improvement rate and helped his team to victory in the Junior League.

He has now been invited to join the U16 Durham County Team which is a fantastic achievement. Well done Sonny, we are all extremely proud.

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

Friday 23rd October 2026
Inset Day - School Closed

Monday 26th October - Friday 30th October 2026
Half Term holiday - School Closed

Monday 2nd November 2026
School re-opens - normal school hours

Wednesday 4th November 2026
Yr 8 Virtual Parents Evening 2.15pm - 6.15pm
School closes at 1.55pm for all pupils - Enrichment sessions cancelled with the exception of Peripatetic Music Lessons

Wednesday 11th November 2026
Yr 9 trip to Billy Elliott

Wednesday 11th November 2026
Yr 10 Parent Revision Day 5.00pm - 6.00pm

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