



St. Anthony's Girls' Catholic Academy NEWSLETTER

'Let us be shining lamps, giving light to all around us.'



October 2025

SPOTLIGHT: SHINING LAMPS

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to our first newsletter of the new academic year. It has been a great start, and our students have settled in well. We are delighted at the huge numbers who have taken advantage of our extra-curricular offer, whether it's joining a sports team, music group or craft club, there really is something for everyone. Our clubs build confidence and help develop important life skills; I would encourage all students to get involved in something outside of the classroom. Our school motto reminds us to share our God-given gifts and talents for the benefit of the community: "Let us be shining lamps, giving light to all around us" (Venerable Catherine McAuley)

In these first few weeks we have placed a strong emphasis on establishing and practicing our school routines. These routines, along with our high expectations, are essential in ensuring students feel confident, organised and ready to learn. Consistency between home and school can make a big difference, and you can help us reinforce these routines by ensuring your child is in full school uniform, on time for school, has excellent attendance and the equipment they need to start the day well. Please sign their planner weekly, this is an important means of communication and helps you monitor completion of homework.

Thank you to all parents/carers who responded to our Parent Survey in September. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and reassuring that our young people feel safe and happy at school. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Have a restful half term break,
Mrs Marie Lanaghan, Headteacher

OUR SCHOOL PRAYER

Loving God,
Bless our school community here at St Anthony's.
Let us follow in the footsteps of Catherine McAuley.
May we be inspired by her determination to educate, empower and serve the poor.
Let us work together to create a just world in the true spirit of our Mercy tradition,
And as she said, '...to resolve to be good today, but better tomorrow'
We ask this through Christ our Lord,
Amen.



THORNHILL TERRACE

A plea to all parents who drop off or pick up their children on the Terrace outside school: please be mindful of other road users and pedestrians. There have been complaints about parents parking illegally and some erratic driving. Please be aware that we have a lot of children on the Terrace, particularly at 3pm, and their safety is paramount. Also, parents should not be parking, dropping off or picking up in Beresford Park or Abbotsford Grove. This is a private road and parents should use alternative roads to collect their children.

Following feedback last year, our newsletter will now be smaller and sent out at the end of each half term. For more on what is happening in school daily, please follow us on social media or visit our school website: www.st-anthonys-academy.com.





PURSuing EXCELLENCE: STUDENT SUCCESS

MILLIE MAKES HISTORY!

Huge congratulations to our champion golfer from Year 11, Millie, who came joint 1st in the Steven Gallagher Foundation Under 18 Girls' World Championship at St Andrew's Fairmont! She finished 8 under par and smashed the amateur course record!

Millie said "I am extremely proud, all the hard work I have put in has paid off. I am looking forward to continuing the hard work to further my ambition to become a professional golfer, and along the way, to go to university in America to study Business and Golf."



JESSE JUMPS TO VICTORY!

Well done and congratulations to Jesse from Year 9, who placed 1st in British Show Jumping in September! This means she is just about to qualify for the national competition.

Jesse said "It was great to win and I'm looking forward to the next stage!"

Good luck Jesse, and Arlo the horse!



KENULI: AUTHOR AT 11!

Huge congratulations to one of our talented Year 7 students, Kenuli, who had her first children's book published this half term!

The Mythical Forest - now available in our school library and on Amazon - [purchase it here!](#)



SCARLETT SWIMS TO SUCCESS!

Congratulations to Scarlett in Year 8, who has been selected for Northumberland and Durham Performance camp in swimming. In addition to this, she has also achieved eight regional short course championship qualifying times.

The regional Championships will take place on 1-2 November 2025 in Sheffield. Good luck Scarlett!

If you would like to share your child's extra-curricular achievements and to feature them in our newsletter, please get in touch!





BUILDING COMMUNITIES: FAITH AND CULTURE WEEK



In October, we had a wonderful week celebrating and learning more about our diverse community here in St Anthony's. Students and staff took part in a range of activities including mehndi and henna art, cultural dance workshops and our hugely popular cultural dress fashion show, where 19 different cultures were represented across Europe, Asia, South America and Africa, to a backdrop of flags and a soundtrack of cultural music.

Our Year 12 students took a lead role in the organisation of this event. Dindi said, "It was such a memorable experience. Seeing all cultures proudly standing for their individual country made me feel part of an inclusive and most importantly, loving family".

Nabeel said "I can confidently say it has been one of the highlights of 6th Form so far!"

Respect and understanding are two of our key British values, which this event really highlighted. Well done to all students who took part on their exemplary behaviour.

SENIOR CHOIR SING AT CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY

Adding to the celebrations of the week, our Senior Choir performed at a citizenship ceremony at Sunderland City Hall. They are pictured here with the Deputy Mayoress and the High Sheriff of Tyne and Wear.

You can hear the Senior Choir perform at our Christmas Concert, alongside our school orchestra, junior choir and other talented soloists and ensembles, which will be held on Thursday 4th December 2025; ticket information to be released soon!



SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD

To conclude the week, hundreds of our students and staff took part in a penalty shoot out on the school field to support 'Show Racism the Red Card' initiative. Bullying and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated at St Anthony's. Huge thank you to Mr Le Roy and Mr Dugdale who stepped into the nets for such a good cause.





'SISTERS OF SPEED' TAKE ON GO-KART CHALLENGE!

Congratulations to our Year 10 STEM cohort who have successfully secured the funding required to take part in 'STEM on Track' this year. The students will now build a go-kart from scratch, and will race it at the school finals in Northampton in June, for the chance to win a variety of prizes.

Huge thank you goes to our wonderful Sisters of Mercy, and local company Netgenium, who have sponsored us, allowing us to take part.

Sophia said, "We are delighted to have this opportunity to represent our school community and make history as the first St Anthony's entrants to STEM on Track. We will keep you updated with our progress over the year!"



STEMFEST 2025

Our Year 9 STEM cohort visited STEMFest at Vertu Motors Arena in Newcastle this half term, and took part in a variety of challenges and activities relating to STEM careers. They even had the opportunity to meet an astronaut (pictured) and made friends with a robot dog!

Olivia said, "It was a new and different experience for me. It has helped me to realise the different careers out there in STEM subjects".

STUDENT LEADERSHIP 2025-26

We are proud of our many opportunities for student leadership at St Anthony's, which gives our students the opportunity to be 'shining lamps', as well as helping them to develop essential employability skills for their futures. Students take an active role in many areas of school life.

Congratulations to our newly elected school council members and sixth form ambassadors, who completed application forms and campaign videos to secure the votes of their peers to become student leaders this week.

De Sales: Samantha Chavez, Joyful Osigwelem, Diane Nnaji, Larysa Joicey.

Gabriel: Lucy Callaghan, Mikayla Ngwenya, Eva Howarth, Freya Rose.

Lourdes: Mehnaz Islam, Kaitlyn Graham, Olivia Barker, Rose Roberts.

Thomas: Annabelle Tully, Amarachi Ozorji, Emili Kristopaitis, Lillie Priest.

Sixth Form ambassadors: Arshad Abdullah, Maaz Ahmed, Serena Caddick, Elizabeth Hughes, Jeffrin James, Kirtnoor Johal, Imogen Parkes, Sebastian Roca, Dindi Romero.



ALUMNI: 'TEAS AND TOURS'

Thank you to all our past students who came to our 'teas and tours' event in October to celebrate our 120 year anniversary.

We hope you enjoyed the tour of the school, walk down memory lane with our archives, and the afternoon tea with cakes hand-prepared by our amazing executive chef.

We are planning to run more alumni events in the near future; please keep an eye on our social media channels for more information.

SAFEGUARDING UPDATES

Important Online Safety Alert for Parents: Increased Risk from VPN Use by Children

Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) are increasingly being used by children, posing new online safety challenges. Recent reports show that VPN apps have topped download charts in the UK, to bypass age verification measures put in place by the recent Online Safety Act.

Why is this concerning? VPNs work by hiding a user's location and routing internet activity through another server, often in a different country. While VPNs have legitimate uses, they can allow children to:

- Bypass parental controls, school filters, and age-based restrictions, exposing them to harmful or inappropriate content.
- Conceal their online activities, making it difficult for parents to monitor their browsing history or understand what they are doing online.
- Be exposed to significant security and privacy risks, especially with "free" VPN apps.

What can you do? It's crucial to stay engaged and have open conversations with your children about online safety and VPNs. Here are some key steps:

- Talk openly with your child about VPNs, asking if they know what they are and explaining why some sites are blocked for their safety.
- Check their devices for VPN apps like TurboVPN or SuperVPN. On iPhones, look in Settings > General > VPN, and on Android, check Settings > Network & Internet > VPN.
- Use robust parental controls like Google Family Link or Apple Screen Time to help block VPN app downloads and restrict access to app stores.
- Agree on clear family rules about internet use and app installs, reviewing them regularly.

For a comprehensive guide and further support, we recommend visiting the Internet Matters website. You can find detailed information and tips in their guide: [What are VPNs? Guide for parents and carers](#).

For visual guidance and additional insights, please watch the [VPNs and Kids: What Parents Need to Know | Internet Matters Guide](#) video on the Internet Matters YouTube channel.



Proud to be St. Anthony's Girls' Catholic Academy

Open now for applications for September 2026 - to find out more visit: www.st-anthonys-academy.com

