

ST JOHN'S WEEKLY NEWS

A Learning Community guided by Gospel Values

7 SEPTEMBER 2026

WEEK B



In our final week of the academic year in July, our focus was on celebrating the achievements of our students. Each year group had reward assemblies and activities to recognise success, determination and improvement in areas such as academic achievement, behaviour, attendance and whole school contributions. A special thank you to The Friends of St John's who kindly funded these end of term rewards.



We also celebrated our Year 12 students' first year of Sixth Form with a trip to the beach, where they looked back with gratitude and looked forward to the opportunities and challenges of Year 13. It was a wonderful day of celebration, reflection and friendship as students recognised how far they had come and prepared for the next stage of their college journey.



Continuing our end of term celebrations, all year groups visited St Mary's Church for a special summer liturgy led by our wonderful Chaplain, Emma. The theme of the liturgy was 'Looking Back with Gratitude, Looking Forward with Hope', and students and staff were encouraged to reflect on the academic year and its successes, challenges and friendships to be thankful for. Our school choir and orchestra performed our school hymn and a slideshow of photos from the year was shared to look back on the many memories made and experiences shared. The liturgy ended with each student bringing a candle forward, a reminder of the light they bring to our community and how they shine in their unique way.

Sports Day is always a highlight of our school calendar, and this year was no exception. Our students truly threw themselves into the events, sportsmanship and teamwork. Well done to Aidan who were the winning House and thank you to the PE department for all their organisation.



COMING UP THIS WEEK

Monday 7- Our Enrichment Programme gets fully underway this week, with around 70 clubs for students to choose from across lunchtime and after school. There really is something for everyone and we hope students will make the most of these fantastic opportunities to develop a skill, pursue a passion or make new friends. A copy of the Enrichment Programme for the Autumn term will be sent to all parents and carers this week.

Friday 11- Year 7 Soar and Explore trip to London- deadline for expression of interest. Please refer to the letter sent via the Arbor app and email for more details

REMINDERS

A reminder that the Arbor app is the best way to receive important messages, check and top-up dinner balances, pay for trips and monitor your child's behaviour, attendance and homework. We are working on making the app even more useful for parents and will be sharing news of the student app this week.



A WORD FROM LISA BYRON, HEADTEACHER

It has been wonderful to welcome all of our students and staff back to school this week after what we hope was a restful and enjoyable summer holiday. Our students have returned with positive attitudes to learning and an enthusiasm for the year ahead. It has also been fantastic to see how well they have adapted to our new mobile phone pouches, and this has allowed for a smooth process at the start and end of the day. As well as being linked to government legislation, we look forward to the positive impact the pouches will have on students' learning and mental health. We will be sending out our full mobile phone policy to parents and carers this week.

It has also been lovely to meet our new Year 7 students and officially welcome them into our Learning Community. They have made a great start to their time at St John's and we look forward to watching them go from strength to strength.



Last week, all year groups had welcome back assemblies to share expectations and aspirations for the year ahead. As part of these assemblies, we took the time to remember Jaxon, who sadly passed away during the summer holidays, and to pray for all who love him. Students will be given the opportunity to write their own memories of Jaxon and messages to his family in our special memorial book available in the Chapel. We continue to pray for Jaxon's family and friends and send them strength during this difficult time.



Results Day Success

Back in August we held our Results Days for our Year 13 and Year 11 students, and there was so much to celebrate! Our students' hard work paid off and there were lots of smiles across both days.

At Key Stage 5, our students achieved an impressive 99.5% pass rate for A Level and 100% pass rate for Vocational. Over 53% of our grades were A*-B and over 87% were A*-C, placing us above both National and North East averages. And there were so many individual success stories to celebrate too, including

achievement of top grades, overcoming challenges and the majority of our students securing their first choice university or apprenticeship. We are so proud of all of our students and wish them the best of luck in their next steps. They will always be a part of our St John's community.



At GCSE level, our students out-performed local averages in many areas, including 4+ and 5+ in English and Maths, and we were very proud to have the best outcomes in Bishop Auckland in these key areas.

There were so many success stories to celebrate on the day too, with students making incredible progress, students achieving a full house of top grades and students showing resilience in the face of adversity. We have been delighted to welcome many of our Year 11 students back into our Sixth Form to continue their journey with us, and wish those who have moved onto pastures new the best of luck.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- ❑ **Wednesday 16 September**- Year 11 Information Evening
- ❑ **Thursday 17 September**- Year 11 English Beamish Trip
- ❑ **Tuesday 29 September**- Open Evening
- ❑ **Friday 9 October**- Trust PD Day- School closed to students
- ❑ **Wednesday 14 October**- Year 13 Information Evening
- ❑ **Thursday 22 October**- Sixth Form Trip to Boston
- ❑ **Friday 23 October**- Break up for half term
- ❑ **Monday 2 November**- School reopens
- ❑ **Monday 2 November**- Year 11 and Year 13 mock exams
- ❑ **Wednesday 4 November**- Year 8 Residential Retreat



1 Heard a Whisper...

Last year we spread so much joy and gratitude through our I Heard a Whisper initiative, celebrating our staff for their hard work, care and commitment to our learning community. Over 200 emails were sent from parents, students and colleagues, thanking staff for going above and beyond.

We are looking forward to sharing more of these wonderful nominations this year, so please send an email to pass on your gratitude to a member of staff.

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