



The English Martyrs  
Catholic School and  
Sixth Form College

# Parent and Carer Bulletin

Issue #1 | 11<sup>th</sup> September 2026

## Dear Parents and Carers,

As we begin a new academic year, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all members of our school community. In particular, I would like to welcome those families who are joining us for the first time. Starting at a new school is an exciting milestone, and we are delighted that you have chosen to become part of our community. We look forward to working in partnership with you over the coming years to support your child's development, success and wellbeing.

It has been a tremendous start to the academic year, and I have been incredibly impressed by the positivity, enthusiasm and maturity shown by students across all year groups. The school has quickly settled into its routines, and classrooms have been purposeful, focused and filled with learning from the very first day.

A special mention must go to our Year 7 students, who have made an outstanding start to secondary school life. Moving from primary school to secondary school is a significant transition, yet our newest students have embraced the challenge with confidence and enthusiasm. Their excellent behaviour, willingness to engage in lessons and eagerness to become involved in school life have been a credit to themselves and their families. Staff have been particularly impressed with how quickly they have adapted to new routines, navigated a larger school environment and built positive relationships with both peers and teachers. We are extremely proud of the way they have begun their journey with us.

This week, we were also delighted to celebrate our Year 8 Mass, which took place on Wednesday. The Mass was a wonderful expression of our faith and school community, providing students with an opportunity to come together in prayer and reflection. Year 8 students participated with great reverence and respect, demonstrating the values that are central to our Catholic ethos. The quality of students' involvement throughout the celebration was exceptional, and I would like to thank all those who contributed to making the Mass such a meaningful occasion. It was a wonderful reminder of the importance of faith in our daily lives and the strength of our community when we gather in worship.

As I watched our Year 8 students participate so respectfully and prayerfully in Wednesday's Mass, I was reminded of the many strengths recognised during our recent CSI inspection. The celebration captured so much of what makes our school special: a strong sense of faith, a genuine commitment to living out our values, and a community that comes together in prayer and worship. It was a fitting example of the culture that was acknowledged so positively by inspectors and one in which we can all take great pride.

As we look ahead to the year before us, there is a genuine sense of optimism and excitement. We remain committed to providing the highest quality education for every student, whilst ensuring that faith, personal growth and wellbeing continue to underpin all aspects of school life.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. Together, we will ensure that this academic year is one of success, achievement and opportunity for all our students.

I wish you and your families a happy and restful weekend.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Glenn Thompson  
Head of School



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## Sixth Form Updates

Our Sixth Form students have made an excellent start to the new academic year. It has been a pleasure to welcome so many young people into our college community and to see them settling in so well, both academically and personally. Attendance has been outstanding, and staff have been highly impressed by the maturity, enthusiasm and commitment students have shown throughout their first week.

Year 12 students took part in a range of introductory sessions highlighting the exciting enrichment opportunities available to them. These included Level 3 qualifications in Personal Finance and Oracy, the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), and a variety of student leadership roles. A number of students also worked with our media team to share their reasons for choosing EM6, so keep an eye on our social media channels to hear their stories.

We were delighted to welcome David from Northumbria University, who delivered an informative session for Year 13 students on personal statements and student finance. As students begin to consider their next steps beyond Sixth Form, this guidance is invaluable. Should you have any questions about university applications or post-18 pathways, please contact Bev at [bscaife@ems.bhcet.org.uk](mailto:bscaife@ems.bhcet.org.uk).

We are excited to see all that our Sixth Form students will achieve this year and look forward to supporting them throughout their journey.

**The Sixth Form Team**

## New Bicycle Storage Facility

We are pleased to announce that our bicycle storage area has been relocated to a new position closer to the main school building, providing improved and easier access for students who cycle to school.

It is fantastic to see an increasing number of students choosing to cycle as a healthy, active and environmentally friendly way to travel to and from school. We are delighted that so many students are making use of this option.

As a reminder, for the safety of everyone on site:

- Students must dismount and walk their bicycles whilst on the school site.
- Students should use the designated cycle paths and routes outside of school where available.
- All cyclists should follow the Highway Code and ride responsibly at all times.
- We strongly encourage students to wear a helmet and ensure their bicycle is roadworthy.

Our aim is simply to keep all members of our school community safe. We thank students and parents/carers for supporting these expectations and helping to promote safe cycling habits.

**Mr Gray**

## Year Group Leadership Teams

We are delighted to confirm our Year Team Leadership pairings for the 2026/27 academic year. Our Pastoral Leaders (PL) and Academic Pastoral Leads (APL) have thoroughly enjoyed welcoming students back to school and look forward to working closely with students and families throughout the year.

### Year 7

PL: Miss Williamson

APL: Miss Dadds

### Year 8

PL: Mr Hutchinson

APL: Mrs Hodgson

### Year 9

PL: Mrs Wilson

APL: Mr Corcoran

### Year 10

PL: Miss Taylor

APL: Mrs Stirk

### Year 11

PL: Mr Blackwood

APL: Mrs Sweeting

If you have any year group-specific queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your child's year team.

**Mr Gray**

## Year 8 Mass

A warm welcome to Fr Joseph O'Brien who celebrated Mass with Year 8 this week. Fr Joseph will be celebrating Mass with other year groups during September and October, and we look forward to working with him over the coming year.

**Mr Tucker**

## SEND Cookery Club – A Tasty Term of Learning and Fun

A reminder to parents/carers that some families who were previously eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) have not yet submitted a new application for this academic year.

If your child received FSM previously, please complete a new application as soon as possible to ensure your child continues to receive any support they may be entitled to.

A link to the FSM application was sent to parents/carers via the Arbor App each week throughout the summer holidays. If you do not currently have access to Arbor, we strongly encourage you to sign up as it is our primary method of communication with families. If you require assistance accessing Arbor or completing the FSM application, please contact the school and we will be happy to support you.

### How to Apply

1. Visit: <https://fsm.lgfl.net/>
2. Scroll down the page and click "Check Now"
3. Select:
  - Local Authority: Hartlepool
  - School: English Martyrs
4. Tick the confirmation box
5. Click Save and Continue
6. Follow the on-screen instructions

### Information You Will Need

#### Parent/Carer Details

- Full Name
- Date of Birth
- National Insurance Number
- Email Address
- Mobile Number
- Relationship to Child

#### Child Details

- Full Name
- Date of Birth

### FSM Application Link:

<https://fsm.lgfl.net/>

Please complete an application even if you are unsure whether your child is currently eligible, as eligibility can change and the process only takes a few minutes.



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## Student Welfare and Communication

At English Martyrs, the health, wellbeing and welfare of our students is always a priority. If a student feels unwell during the school day, they should speak to a member of staff who will ensure they receive appropriate support and care.

Students should not contact home directly using their mobile phones if they feel unwell. Instead, they should inform a member of staff, who will follow the school's established procedures. Where necessary, parents/carers will be contacted by the school through official channels.

This process helps us to:

- Ensure students are properly supervised and supported.
- Assess any medical or welfare needs appropriately.
- Maintain accurate records of student wellbeing concerns.
- Communicate important information clearly and consistently with parents/carers.

We are fully committed to supporting all of our young people and understand that students may occasionally feel unwell during the school day. By following the correct procedures, we can ensure that every student receives the care they need and that parents/carers are kept informed through the appropriate channels.

**Mr Gray**

## Absences

From September 2026, The English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form College will only accept reports of daily student absence via the attendance line on 01429 273790, selecting Option 1. App messages and emails will no longer be accepted for reporting a child's absence.

When leaving a voicemail, parents and carers must clearly state the student's full name, form group, and the specific reason for absence. General statements such as "unwell" will not be sufficient; we require a full explanation of the illness or circumstance causing the absence. This change has been introduced to safeguard our students and ensure that absence information is communicated accurately and consistently. Please note that a member of staff may contact you to discuss your child's absence as part of our commitment to student welfare and to offer support where appropriate.

**Ms Corcoran**

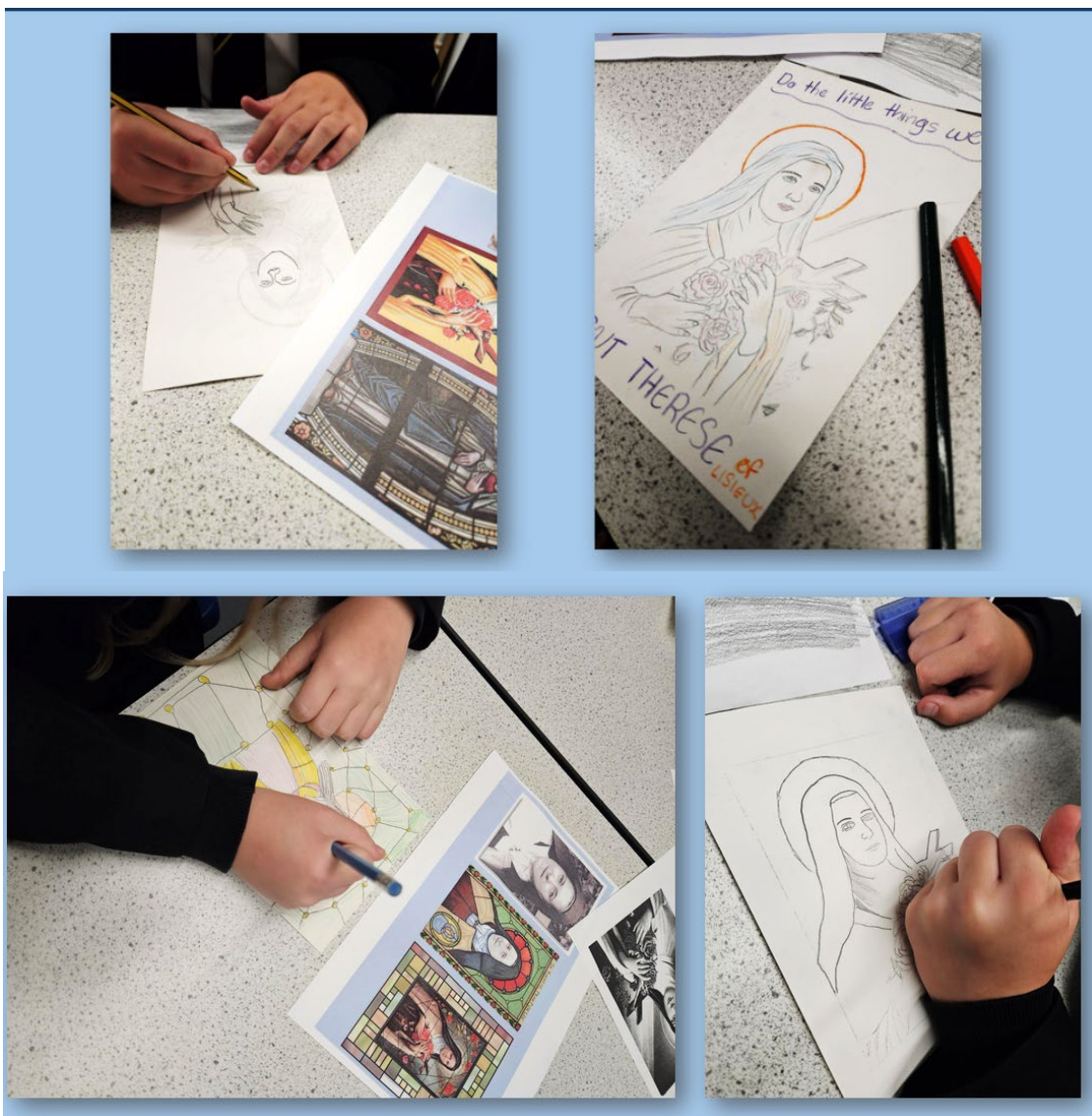
## KS3 Art Students Respond to St Thérèse Portrait Competition

This term, Key Stage 3 Art students are taking part in our exciting St Thérèse Portrait Competition. Inspired by the life and legacy of St Thérèse of Lisieux, students have explored portraiture techniques while reflecting on the virtues of faith, compassion and service.

Students have produced a range of thoughtful and creative responses, experimenting with drawing, shading, colour and composition to create portraits that capture both the likeness and spirit of St Thérèse. The competition has provided an excellent opportunity for pupils to develop their artistic skills while engaging with an important figure in our Catholic tradition.

We have been impressed by the creativity, effort and dedication shown by students across all year groups, and we look forward to sharing some of the outstanding entries and announcing the winning artists later this term. Well done to everyone involved for their fantastic work and enthusiasm.

**Mr Meynell**



## Year 11 Period 6 Timetable

| Y11 P6 Intervention 2:45pm- 3:45pm |                                                       |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Monday                             | English                                               |
|                                    | Art                                                   |
|                                    | Business Studies                                      |
|                                    | Hospitality and Catering                              |
| Tuesday                            | Photography                                           |
|                                    | Enterprise and Marketing                              |
|                                    | Child Development                                     |
|                                    | <i>No Period 6 intervention due to staff training</i> |
| Wednesday                          | Maths                                                 |
| Thursday                           | History                                               |
|                                    | Science                                               |
|                                    | iMedia                                                |
|                                    | Geography                                             |
| Friday                             | Computer Science                                      |
|                                    | Health & Social Care                                  |
|                                    | RE                                                    |
|                                    | Engineering Design                                    |
|                                    | French                                                |
|                                    | PE                                                    |
|                                    | Performing Arts                                       |
|                                    | Sports Studies                                        |

## Key Dates

|                         |                                        |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 11th Sept – All Day     | Flu Vaccination – Whole School         |
| 14th Sept 15:30 – 18:00 | YR 11 Information Evening              |
| 15th Sept               | School Photographs – Years 7, 9 and 11 |
| 29th Sept 15:30-18:00   | Yr 6 Open Evening                      |
| 14th Oct 17:00 – 18:00  | Parents Forum                          |
| 20th Oct 15:30-18:00    | Yr 8 Parents Evening                   |
| 3rd Nov 15:30 – 18:00   | Yr 7 Parents Evening                   |
| 17th Nov 15:30 – 18:00  | Yr 10 Parents Evening                  |
| 1st Dec 15:30 – 18:00   | Yr 11 Parents Evening                  |
| 8th Dec 15:30 – 18:00   | 6th Form Open Evening                  |

