



The English Martyrs
Catholic School and
Sixth Form College

Parent and Carer Bulletin

Issue #14 | 16th January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of our second week of the Spring term, we look forward to the next stage of the school academic year. For English Martyrs and many other schools it is about returning to normalcy and sustaining the strong foundations which we, as a school, have already began to improve from September. These foundations include attendance, behaviour and academic achievement. Beyond this, which makes this school a special place is our focus on pastoral care, looking after our most vulnerable and developing students' character so that they can be successful people once they leave our school.

As a school we continually review our pastoral offer for our students. Part of this process that will begin next week, is a full review of our SEND offer. We want to ensure that we are utilising funding effectively and distributing resources so that they have the biggest impact on the achievement and wellbeing of our students. This has coincided with the appointment of our new SENCO, Kathryn Spears, who has worked at this school for many years, bringing a wealth of experience with her to this important role. We are excited about what the future may bring for our SEND offer. This will directly impact all our students through our inclusive offer inside the classroom and interventions outside of the classroom. It will build upon our foundations of attendance, behaviour and academic achievement to improve the life chances of our students.

I am happy to announce that our school attendance continually improves. The school has worked incredibly hard since September to improve the attendance of all our students. We are now well above the secondary school average for Hartlepool. You would have hopefully seen, our 'In it to win it' initiative and our attendance league challenges. Students are rewarded for good attendance, as we know how important this is, to their personal success in Year 11 but also to their future success as employable individuals. We are building good habits within our students that will prepare them for the future and highlight the importance of being reliable and available in the world of work. I would like to congratulate all of our students who had been acknowledged for their attendance and the winners of 'In it to win it' who each received one of the following prizes - Apple Air pods, Nintendo Switch and £100 shopping voucher. The prizes for this half term have been revealed with students gaining the opportunity to win a £500 bike voucher, Cloud 9 hair straighteners and £100 shopping voucher. Students with 100% attendance for each week will gain a voucher to be placed in the box for the prize that they want the most. Every week with 100% attendance the student will gain another voucher providing them with more chances to win the prize they want the most.

I hope you and your families have a restful weekend.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Glenn Thompson
Head of School



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Celebrating Success

We are thrilled to announce that four of our Year 12 students - Charlotte Boagey, Amy Coulton, Annabel Mason, and Violet Parkinson - have been accepted onto the prestigious Realising Opportunities scheme!

What is Realising Opportunities?

This national programme works with leading universities across the UK to support students in achieving their full potential. It provides:

- ☑ Access to academic resources and mentoring
- ☑ Opportunities to develop key skills for university success
- ☑ Recognition that can lead to reduced entry requirements at partner universities

This is an incredible achievement and a fantastic step towards their future goals. We are so proud of their hard work and dedication!

Ms Jackson



Y7 and Y8 Sportshall

Year 7 and 8 girls and boys Sportshall Athletics teams qualified and attended the Tees Valley Sportshall Athletics Finals on Wednesday facing the top schools in the district.

A standout performance from our Year 7 boys resulted in a 3rd place finish. All students showed grit and determination throughout their events and were a credit to the school. We are looking forward to a strong summer athletics season with our students. Stand out performers included Darcie Gray, Jack Warrington, Karson Boothe and Isaac Carruthers. Well done Team EMS.

Ms Parker

Year 11 Art and Photography

The Year 11 Art enrichment sessions are going from strength to strength. Weekly attendance is increasing, and progress is being made. Period 6 is designed to provide targeted support and extended opportunities for students to refine their coursework and develop their creative outcomes. This dedicated time allows learners to:

- **Consolidate Skills:** Reinforce key techniques in drawing, painting, and mixed media to strengthen technical proficiency.
- **Personalised Guidance:** Receive one-to-one feedback and tailored advice to address individual areas for improvement.
- **Portfolio Development:** Enhance and complete sketchbooks and final pieces to meet assessment objectives and improve overall quality.
- **Creative Exploration:** Experiment with new materials and processes beyond the constraints of regular lessons, fostering originality and confidence.
- **Progress Monitoring:** Track and review progress against targets, ensuring students remain on course for their predicted grades.

This enrichment not only supports academic achievement but also nurtures independent learning and resilience, giving students the best possible chance to excel in their GCSE Art outcomes.

Mr Meynell

Cards for Care Homes

Sister Margaret sends a massive "thank you" to the students at EM6 (St. John Paul II Award Group) and the students at Savio for their beautiful Christmas cards. The nuns at Boarbank Hall were delighted to distribute the cards to residents in their care home. Residents felt "moved", "touched" and "delighted" to receive the cards from "such kind young people." This was a wonderful example of "living the Gospel" and "upholding the values" of English Martyrs School and Sixth Form. The nuns will be praying for all the staff and students over the coming year.

Mr Tucker



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Mathematics

We are pleased to announce that Sparx Maths is now available to all students at EMS.

- Homework will be set every Wednesday and must be submitted by the following Tuesday.
- Students can access Sparx using their school email login.
- The more homework completed, the more Sparx will personalise each student's learning journey, helping them strengthen their understanding and achieve success.
- Research by the University of Cambridge shows that students who regularly engage with Sparx Maths achieve up to 67% more progress compared to those who do not.

Year 10

From next half term, Year 10 students will be completing a full set of GCSE practice papers. This helps us check their progress and make sure they are fully prepared for their end of year exams.

Assessment dates:

Paper 1: Wednesday 4th March
Paper 2: Wednesday 11th March
Paper 3: Wednesday 18th March

Each paper will last one hour, and students should try their best to complete as much as they can. This gives us an accurate picture of how they are doing and supports our reporting for date drop 2.

Why we are doing this:

- **Build confidence early:** Completing real exam-style papers now helps students get used to the format and reduces pressure later in the year.
- **Identify the right gaps:** Teachers can see whether a student needs help with specific topics or with exam technique, allowing us to provide the right support.
- **Encourage independence:** Students will receive Sparx codes linked to the topics in each paper, helping them take ownership of their revision.

Our aim is to reduce long-term stress, boost confidence, and support every student in achieving their best.

Mr Murray



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EMS Attendance League

This week, the Season 2 Attendance League Champions enjoyed a celebratory breakfast with their Form Tutor!

A huge congratulations to:

- 🏆 Diamond - 7TM1
- 🏆 Platinum - 8JB2
- 🏆 Gold - 8MC1
- 🏆 Silver - 9AL2
- 🏆 Bronze - 9MC1

Season 3 is now in progress! Who will claim the Championship title by February Half Term?

Ms Corcoran

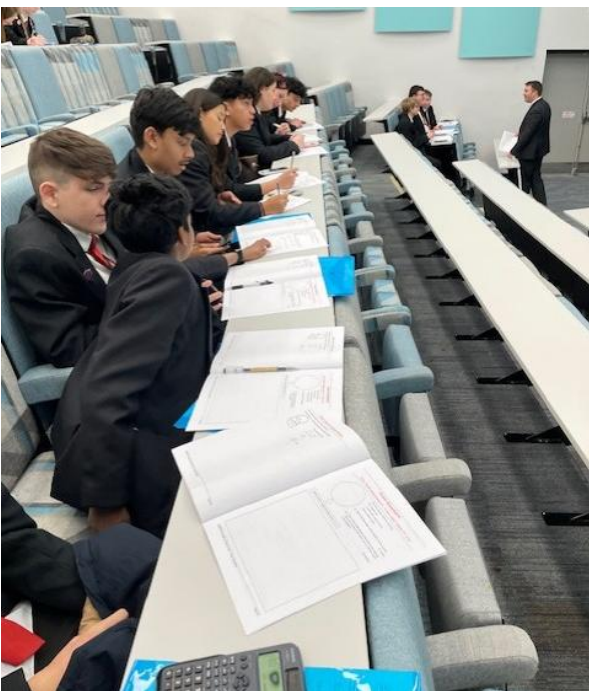


Higher Level Maths Advancement Programme

Some of our Y11 students represented English Martyrs at the Higher-Level Maths Advancement Programme Study Day this week. The study day, held at Teesside University, was specifically designed to prepare students for the demands of the more challenging GCSE mathematics content. The topics covered on the day will help students secure the highest grades at GCSE. Through interactive sessions and collaborative activities, students gained strategies and insights that will support their success in mathematics and future study.

At EMS, we are committed to ensuring our academic offer provides students access to the highest possible grades and therefore we maximise the opportunity to participate in annual and one-off experiences such as the Higher-Level Maths Advancement Programme.

Mr Doyle



RE Homework – Access via Seneca



SENECA LEARNING (Homework Access)

Dear Parents/Carers,

This is a reminder that all Religious Education (RE) homework is completed through the Seneca Learning platform. Please support your child by ensuring they can log in and complete their assigned tasks on time.

Why we use Seneca?

- Interactive, engaging revision and learning resources
- Evidence-based activities that support memory and recall
- Progress tracking for teachers and students

How to Log In

- 1) Go to <https://www.senecalearning.com>
- 2) Click Log In and choose Student
- 3) Enter your child's school email address and password
- 4) Open the assigned RE course and complete the tasks

Need Help?

If your child has forgotten their login details or experiences any issues, please ask your child to request a password reset from their RE teacher.

Year 11 PREPS and Year 11 Exam Preparation Evening

The finalised PREP timetable (below) is now available for Y11 students. The students will receive a personalised timetable to mirror the experience for the summer. As always, we are committed to supporting students however we can. We know that any assessment can be stressful and so if any students feel they need additional support, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Also, there will be the Year 11 Exam Preparation evening for parents and students on 03/02/2026 from 16:00-18:00. This is to share good practice, subject specific information and guidance and exam tips, so that parents and carers can support students at home.



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Week 1	Breakfast Booster	Exam (P1 & P2)	Booster (P3)	Exam (P4 & P5)	Period 6
Monday 16th February	Biology	Biology (75 mins / 105 mins)	History	History Paper 1 (110 mins)	English
Tuesday 17th February	English	English Language Paper 1 (105 mins)	RE	RE Paper 1 (90 mins)	Chemistry
Wednesday 18th February	Chemistry	Chemistry (75 mins / 105 mins)	French Reading/Spanish Listening (45 / 60 mins) / (35 / 45 mins)	French / Spanish Writing / Product Design (70 / 75 mins) / (70 / 75 mins) / (100 mins)	Maths
Thursday 19th February	Maths	Maths Paper 1 (90 mins)	Computer Science / iMedia / Business / Sports Science / PE	Computer Science Paper 1 / iMedia / Business Paper 1 / CNAT Sports Science / GCSE PE Paper 1 (90 mins) / (90 mins) / (90 mins) / (75 mins) / (75 mins)	English
Friday 20th February	English	English Literature Paper 1 (105 mins)	History Geography	History Paper 2 / Geography Paper 1 (90 mins) / (90 mins)	Maths
Week 2	Breakfast Booster	Exam (P1 & P2)	Booster (P3)	Exam (P4 & P5)	Period 6
Monday 2nd March	Maths	Maths Paper 2 (90 mins)	French Listening / Spanish Reading (35 / 45 mins) / (45 / 60 mins)	NFER Maths and English / Music (60 mins) / (90 mins)	English
Tuesday 3rd March	English	English Language Paper 2 (105 mins)	RE	RE Paper 2 (90 mins)	Physics
Wednesday 4th March	Physics	Physics (75 mins / 105 mins)	Computer Science Business	Computer Science Paper 2 / Business Paper 2 / CNAT Sports Science / GCSE PE Paper 2 (90 mins) / (90 mins) / (75 mins) / (75 mins)	English
Thursday 5th March	English	English Literature Paper 2 (135 mins)	History Geography	History Paper 3 / Geography Paper 2 (80 mins) / (60 mins)	Maths
Friday 6th March	Maths	Maths Paper 3 (90 mins)	RE	RE Paper 3 (60 mins)	

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



Dates for the Diary

Dates	Event
5 th – 16 th January	Year 13 PREP Exams
2 nd February	Y11 Exam Preparation Evening for students and Parents (4pm – 6pm)
16 th February – 6 th March	Year 11 PREP Exams
17 th February	Year 13 Parents Evening (3pm – 6pm)
19 th February	Year 9 Options Evening (3pm – 6pm)

