



Parent and Carer Bulletin

Issue #16 | 30th January 2026

A message from Mr M Doyle (Assistant Headteacher)

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the halfway point of the academic year at English Martyrs, I wanted to take this opportunity to reflect on the fantastic progress our students have made so far and to update you on the important events taking place in the months ahead. I also wanted to express my gratitude for the warm welcome extended by our students, parents and carers since joining the team in September; it really has been a privilege to become part of this community.

My role is to identify strategies and academic interventions that help every learner reach their full potential, ensuring all students leave English Martyrs with strong qualifications. Each week, Mr G Thompson (Head of School), Mr C Cocoran (Deputy Headteacher) and I meet with Curriculum Leaders to discuss every Year 11 student individually, ensuring our support is sharply focused on achievement. I have been hugely impressed by the dedication and passion of our Curriculum Leaders, who work tirelessly to provide the highest quality education.

The EMS Period 6 timetable has quickly become a cornerstone of our Year 11 support. It has been inspiring to see so many students commit to these after-school sessions and to watch the cohort grow increasingly ambitious. Regular attendance has already proved invaluable in helping students work towards their best possible grades.

Last week, motivational speaker Cameron Parker encouraged Year 11 to attend as many Period 6 sessions as possible to achieve their "World Cup dreams", further strengthening the culture of aspiration within the year group. I am delighted to report that, thanks to strong engagement with our support package and continued refinement of high-quality teaching, outcomes in the English and Maths winter mock exams improved by over 10% compared with last year's cohort.

We warmly invite all parents, carers and students to our Year 11 Revision Information Evening on Tuesday 3rd February, 4:00–6:00pm. Subject representatives will be available to offer practical guidance on supporting your child through the final stages of their GCSEs, and we will be distributing the Year 11 Revision Packages. The evening will provide clear strategies to help students prepare effectively and achieve — or exceed — their target grades.

Last week, I also delivered assemblies on the Catholic virtue of self-belief, encouraging students to recognise and use their God-given gifts in service of others. As part of this, we are supporting CAFOD, our chosen charity. In 12 weeks, I will be running the London Marathon for English Martyrs and Team CAFOD, launching a series of initiatives to promote students' physical, mental and spiritual development. Training is well underway, and I hope to complete the 26.2 miles in one piece!

If you would like to join our students in supporting this important cause, donations can be made through the link below:

<https://www.justgiving.com/page/mark-doyle-ems>

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully,

Mr M Doyle
Assistant Headteacher

Sixth Form Updates

Exploring the Uses of AI in Year 12 and 13 PPD

Thank you, Miss Malcolmson, for delivering such an engaging and insightful AI session to our Year 12 and Year 13 students during their PPD lessons last week. Students found the session extremely helpful and left with a much clearer understanding of both the beneficial uses of AI and the potential drawbacks. Students also had the opportunity to engage interactively throughout the session with online quizzes.

Year 11 Sixth Form Check-In

This week, a group of Year 11 students were invited over to the Sixth Form during tutor time to discuss their next steps and explore whether EM6 is the right place for you.

Don't worry if you haven't been selected to come over just yet, there will be plenty of other opportunities.

If you already know you'd like to join EM6, please submit an online application. If you're unsure and would like to talk things through, feel free to speak to a member of the Sixth Form Team: Mrs Henderson, Miss Jackson or Bev.

Year 13 Aspirations

It is an exciting time for our Year 13 students who are considering apprenticeships as their next step after sixth form. Amazing Apprenticeships have recently updated their higher and degree apprenticeship listings, which provide an excellent overview of current opportunities available nationwide.

In addition, a number of local employers, including Cleveland Police and EDF, are currently recruiting apprentices. Full details of these opportunities have been shared with students via the Careers Team page.

To further support students, we are pleased to have a Support for Adviser from the Department for Work and Pensions delivering lunchtime drop-in sessions over the coming months. These sessions are designed to support students who are exploring apprenticeships and/or part-time employment.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact Bev Scaife at bscaife@ems.bhcet.org.uk.

Ms Jackson



EMS RE Trip

ROME

OCTOBER 2026

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

Visits to iconic landmarks such as the Vatican City, St Peters Basilica, and more, with guided tours and educational activities designed to enhance students' understanding of historical Catholic buildings linked to their curriculum in RE. As well as this it will include evening meals at venues such as Hard Rock Café and a pizza making workshop in the heart of Rome.

**REGISTER YOUR INTEREST NOW - LETTERS AVAILABLE
FROM RE STAFF FOR CURRENT Y10 & Y11 WHO ARE
JOINING EMS6**

Holocaust Memorial Day

This week, our school community came together for a deeply moving Celebration of the Word to mark Holocaust Memorial Day, held on Tuesday 27th January 2026. This annual act of remembrance invites us to reflect on the six million Jewish people who were murdered during the Holocaust, alongside Roma and Sinti communities, disabled people, political opponents, Jehovah's Witnesses, gay people, and many others persecuted under the Nazi regime. We also remembered those who suffered in subsequent genocides, including Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.

The theme for this year, Bridging Generations, guided our reflection. Students learned that as survivors grow fewer, the responsibility of remembrance passes to us to listen to their stories, to carry them forward, and to ensure that the lessons of the past inspire a more compassionate future. The theme encouraged students to see remembrance not only as an act of memory but as a bridge between history and hope, calling us to shape a world where such suffering is never repeated.

During the liturgy, students from across the school reverently led Scripture readings from Deuteronomy, Isaiah, St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, the Psalms, and the Gospel of Matthew. These readings offered powerful messages about unity, courage, dignity, and the call to bring light into darkness. Together, they helped our school community reflect on the importance of standing against prejudice, discrimination, and hatred in all its forms.

Our pupils also led us in prayer, remembering all victims of genocide and praying for unity among peoples, for courage to challenge hatred, and for peace across our world today. Moments of stillness invited the whole community to pause and honour those whose voices were silenced, while committing ourselves to being people who speak out for justice, compassion and human dignity.

As part of the national Light the Darkness initiative, families were invited to join people across the country at 8pm by lighting a candle and placing it in their window. This simple but powerful act serves as a symbol of solidarity, remembrance, and a shared commitment to standing against antisemitism and all forms of prejudice.

At English Martyrs, we believe every person is created in the image and likeness of God, and this truth guided our reflections throughout the service. Holocaust Memorial Day offers our school a moment not only to remember but also to act to recognise our shared responsibility in building a future shaped by compassion, justice and unity. Our students were encouraged to become bearers of light: young people who listen deeply, act justly, and carry the stories of the past into their daily choices, friendships and classrooms so that the horrors of genocide are neither forgotten nor repeated.

Mr McCartie

The Catenians Support Three EM6 Students on Their Upcoming Pilgrimage to Lourdes

This week, our EM6 community had the pleasure of welcoming Gavin Robinson from the Catenian Association, who visited to present bursary cheques to three of our Year 12 students Erin, Amy, and Joe as they prepare for their pilgrimage to Lourdes this April.

During his visit, Gavin spoke to our Year 12 students about the work of the Catenians, a longstanding Catholic organisation committed to service, fraternity, and charitable giving. He explained how the Association supports Catholic young people across the country, particularly through bursaries that enable students to take part in meaningful projects such as Lourdes pilgrimages. His message highlighted both the generosity of the Catenians and the importance they place on nurturing the next generation of Catholic leaders.

The presentation took place during the Year 12 Moral Ethics lesson, where students had the opportunity to hear more about the spiritual and humanitarian significance of the Lourdes pilgrimage.

Following his visit, Gavin expressed his gratitude and admiration for EM6 in a heartfelt message:

“...thank you so very much for allowing me to come to EMS yesterday to present the Catenian Bursary cheques to some of your students. Wow, what a lovely 6th form you have there. It was great to meet Joe and Erin, and what a lovely, polite, engaging and confident young person Amy is. I wish all 3 of them a very holy and rewarding pilgrimage to Lourdes and all the very best for their futures.”

We are incredibly proud of Erin, Amy and Joe for choosing to take part in this profound experience of faith and service. Their willingness to give their time to support others reflects the very best of our school values compassion, dignity and hope.

We extend our sincere thanks to Gavin and the entire Catenian Association for their generous support, encouragement and belief in our young people. Their kindness helps make opportunities like this possible and inspires our students to continue growing as leaders of faith within our school and wider community.

Mr McCartie



Year 11 PREP Exams

Y11 PREP Exam Timetable 16th February – 6th March

	Monday 16th February	Tuesday 17th February	Wednesday 18th February	Thursday 19th February	Friday 20th February
Lesson 1	Biology 1hr45(triple) 1hr15(combined)	English Language 1hr45	Chemistry 1hr45(triple) 1hr15(combined)	Maths Paper 1 1hr30	English Literature 1hr45
Lesson 2			French Reading 45m(F) 1hr(H) Spanish Listening 35m(F) 45m(H)		
Lesson 3					
Lesson 4	History 1hr50	Religious Education 1hr30	French & Spanish Writing 1hr10(F) 1hr15(F) Comp Science iMedia Business Studies	Comp Science iMedia Business Studies	History 1hr30
Lesson 5			Product Design 1hr40	CNAT Sports Science GCSE PE	Geography 1hr30

Half Term Intervention 23rd February - 27th February

	Monday 2nd March	Tuesday 3rd March	Wednesday 4th March	Thursday 5th March	Friday 6th March
Lesson 1	Maths 1hr30	English Language 1hr45	Physics 1hr45(triple) 1hr15(combined)	English Literature 2hr15	Maths 1hr30
Lesson 2					
Lesson 3	Spanish Reading 45m(F) 1hr(H) French Listening 35m(F) 45m(H)				
Lesson 4	Music 1hr30	Religious Education 1hr30	Comp Science Business Studies CNAT Sports Science GCSE PE	History 1hr20 Geography 1hr	Religious Education 1hr
Lesson 5					

The English Martyrs Catholic School and Sixth Form College



The National Space Agency - Science

The Science Department were delighted to welcome The National Space Academy to English Martyrs School and Sixth Form this week to work with a group of Year 7 students. Students engaged in several activities based on the current NASA Artemis Space missions that hope to return humans to the Moon. They studied the survival challenges astronauts face in space, including the effects of low pressure on the human body, and investigated the physics of rockets and propulsion. Students even had the opportunity to launch their own rockets on the school field, as well as try on a real astronaut suit. An out of this world experience indeed!

Ms Manning



Geography Revision Weekend – March 2026

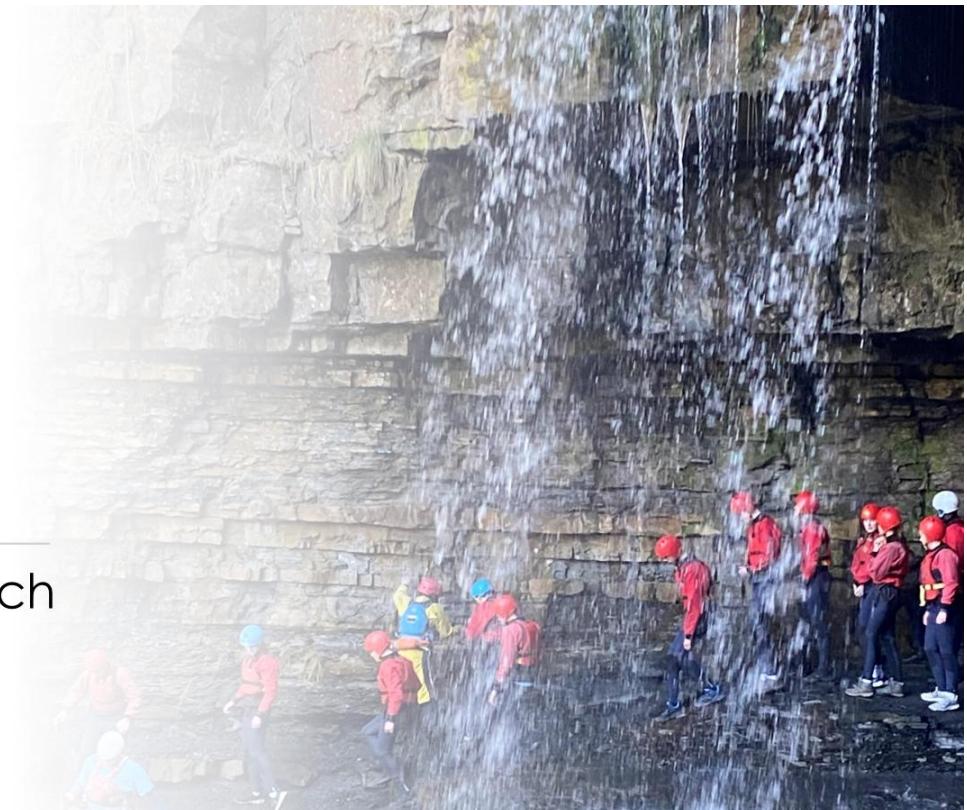
Get ready for a fun, active and energising short weekend designed to help you boost your grades ahead of the summer exams! Join us for Friday evening and Saturday morning for packed interactive sessions, hands-on activities, expert guidance, and plenty of opportunities to strengthen your confidence in every part of the course.

Whether you want to secure top marks or simply feel more prepared, this is your chance to revise in a relaxed, motivating environment with friends. Don't miss it!

GCSE Yr 11 Geography Revision Adventure

Weardale 2026
Friday 27th –
Saturday 28th March

See Mrs Martindale for a letter or ask your geography teacher for more information.



Year 10 Religious Education

Mrs Fairclough's Year 10 GCSE Religious Education class have been exploring the significance of the Rosary this week. Students learned about its origins, the structure of the prayers, and how each decade encourages deep reflection on key events in the life of Jesus and Mary.

The class engaged thoughtfully with the meaning behind the Mysteries and discussed how the Rosary is used in personal and communal prayer.

Ms Fairclough



Theologian of the Week – A Level Religious Education

We are delighted to celebrate the achievements of our A Level Religious Education students through our Theologian of the Week award. The awards recognise students who demonstrate outstanding engagement, insight, and academic excellence in their theological studies, whether through exceptional contributions in class or high-quality independent work beyond the lesson.

For Year 12, the award is named after St Augustine, reflecting the curiosity, intellectual honesty, and depth of reflection that characterise both his thought and the early stages of advanced theological study. Students who receive the St Augustine Award show a willingness to question, explore, and develop their ideas with rigour and independence.

This week's St Augustine Theologian of the Week is Charlotte Boagey.

For Year 13, the award is named after St Thomas Aquinas, in recognition of sustained excellence, clarity of argument, and the confident application of theological, ethical and philosophical reasoning. Recipients of the St Thomas Aquinas Award exemplify mature scholarship and a deep engagement with complex ideas, preparing them well for examination success and further study.

This week's St Thomas Aquinas Theologian of the Week is Saffron Brown.

The Theologian of the Week award highlights our commitment to academic ambition and celebrates the rich tradition of theological thinking at the heart of A Level RE.

Ms Fairclough



EMS Parent Community Advisory Board

We are delighted to invite you to be part of an exciting new initiative at our school – EMS Parent Community Advisory Board.

This group is being created to strengthen communication between school and home, ensure parent and carer voices are heard, and work together to co-design improvements that benefit our pupils and wider school community. Above all, it is about building even stronger trust, relationships and shared understanding between families and the school.

The Advisory Board will:

- Provide a forum for parents and carers to share ideas, perspectives and feedback
- Support open, constructive communication between school and families
- Collaborate with school leaders to help shape future developments and priorities
- Strengthen links between the school, families and the wider community

We are keen for the board to reflect the diversity of our school community. No previous experience is needed – just a willingness to listen, share, and work positively together for the benefit of our children.

Meetings will be held half-termly at times designed to be as accessible as possible, and involvement will be supportive and flexible.

If you are interested in joining, or would like to find out more, please complete the short expression of interest form (link below) by Friday 20th February.

[EMS Parent Community Advisory Board – Fill out form](#)

We truly value the role parents and carers play in our school, and we hope many of you will consider being part of this important new partnership.

Mr Gray

Dates for the Diary

Dates	Event
3rd February	Y11 Exam Preparation Evening for students and Parents (4pm – 6pm)
16th February – 6th March	Year 11 PREP Exams
10th February	Year 10 Parents Evening (3pm – 6pm)
17th February	Year 13 Parents Evening (3pm – 6pm)
19th February	Year 9 Options Evening (3pm – 6pm)