



The English Martyrs
Catholic School and
Sixth Form College

Parent and Carer Bulletin

Issue #10 | 5th December 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we enter the season of Advent which marks the start of the liturgical year, we are invited to prepare spiritually for Christmas through prayer, reflection, and acts of charity. Advent originally began as a season of preparation for Christmas and Epiphany. Its exact origins are uncertain, but by the 4th century it was observed in various forms, often with fasting and prayer, and by the 6th century it had become the four-week season we know today.

This week I have had the pleasure of leading Celebration of the Word each day with a different year group of students. We have discussed the significance of the Advent Wreath and the lighting of the Prophets candle or the candle of Hope. This is the first of the four candles to be lit. Each Sunday a new candle will be lit leading up to Christmas and our celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, the long awaited and promised Messiah. As we journey through Advent, we are reminded that this is a season of hope—a time when we look forward with expectation to the coming of Christ at Christmas. Hope is not simply wishful thinking; it is a deep trust in God's promises and a light that guides us even in uncertain times. In school, we are encouraging the children to reflect on what hope means for them, and how they can share that hope with others.

As a school we are working hard on preparing the end of term celebrations for our students. On Thursday 11th December, we will be hosting our Christmas Jumper day and also our Christmas meal for all students. Each tutor group will have a special sitting in our dining hall that will be decorated differently to the usual day, to emphasise the special time of the year. Each of the tutor groups will have lunch as a community along with their form tutor to celebrate Christmas as a strong Catholic Community. The Senior Leadership Team will be on hand to serve the students meals to emphasise our togetherness and support that we have for each other. English Martyrs School want every student to enjoy this day, therefore all Christmas dinners for our students will be paid for by the school. If a student does not want the traditional Christmas dinner, alternatives will be available, again paid for by the school. We hope that this gesture shows our students that being a member of the English Martyrs community goes far beyond academic successes. This week at EMS we have decorated and blessed our school Christmas tree and placed our Advent Wreaths around the school building. Our school community is filled with anticipation, joy and hope for what the future holds.

I wish you and your family, a blessed and hopeful Advent.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Glenn Thompson
Head of School



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**Christ Has No Body Now
On Earth But Yours**

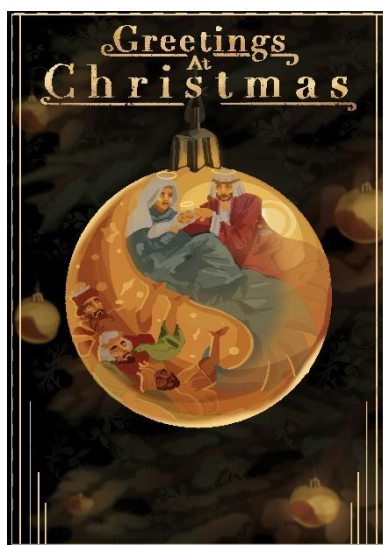
Year 13 Graphic Design

We are delighted to celebrate the creative achievement of Year 13 student Freddie Meggison, who has designed a stunning Christmas card for our school and college. Freddie's design captures the festive spirit with a perfect balance of originality and seasonal warmth, showcasing his strong sense of composition and attention to detail.

The card reflects Freddie's ability to combine traditional holiday themes with a modern graphic approach, making it both visually appealing and meaningful. His work demonstrates not only technical skill but also a thoughtful understanding of design principles—qualities that will serve him well in his future creative endeavours.

Congratulations to Freddie for producing such an outstanding piece of work that represents our community beautifully!

Mr Meynell



Pastoral Support Team/ Virtues Drop Down Day

As the end of term approaches please continue to be aware that our Pastoral Support Team are here to help with all queries including, admissions, attendance, safeguarding, pastoral care, SEND and anti-bullying.

Our latest Safeguarding Newsletter will be published soon. The aim of this is to support parents and raise awareness of potential risks to our students.

We are absolutely delighted that the morning of Wednesday 10th December is our second Virtues Curriculum 'drop down' event for Key Stage 3. Please send your child to school as usual for a morning which builds on our daily offer around justice, equality and fairness, mutual respect, how to combat prejudice and active citizenship- world values which are embedded within the core of our Catholic mission. This half terms focus will be around routine, structures and support for all.

Mr Lindsay



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Year 11 Mathematics – Sparx Maths

We are pleased to announce that Sparx Maths is now available to all Year 11 students.

- 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.
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Mr Murray

From Field to Lab: Turning Data into Discovery!

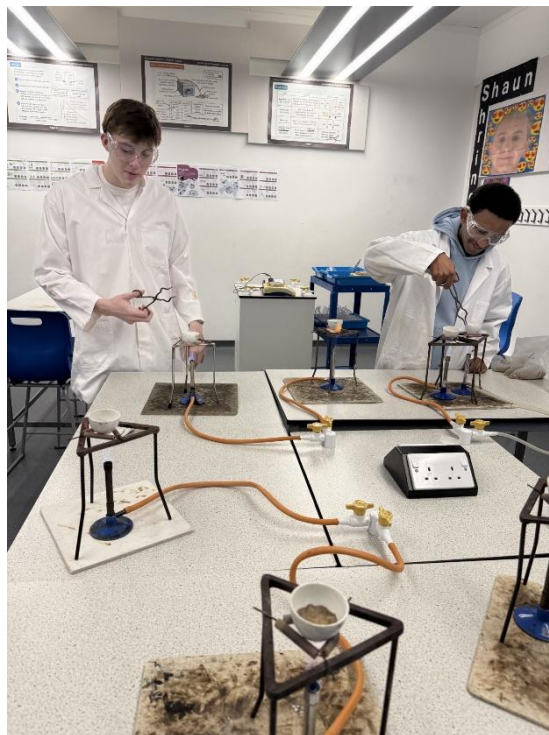
Our students have been busy analysing soil samples collected during their recent fieldwork. This hands-on investigation forms a vital part of their NEA projects, helping them develop critical research and analytical skills.

Geography isn't just about maps—it's a subject that opens doors! According to the Royal Geographical Society:

“Geography opens doors to other degrees such as business and administrative studies, law, engineering and technology, and the other social and physical sciences. It was also found to be the most relevant A Level subject in teaching students about climate change.”

We're proud to see our students applying theory to practice and preparing for futures that make a difference# Geography #Fieldwork #NEA #ClimateChange #STEM #FutureReady

Ms Martindale



Key Stage 3 Religious Education

In Year 7 we have been learning about the Bible and what it means that scripture is inspired. We use white boards to give quick answers to teacher's questions and progress check throughout our lessons.

In Year 8 we are learning about prophecy and promise and why John the Baptist is important for Catholics - we even put ourselves in his shoes and ate his favourite delicacy - locusts and honey!

Ms Fairclough



Key Stage 3 Online Library

All students in Key Stage 3 have access to a range of free books through our online library.

To access these students will need to visit the school website click Students- Literacy and Reading- MyOn KS3 Library. They will see the image on the next page below:

Click on the red link and use their computer login to access a huge range of reading resources. This can be accessed via a phone, tablet or computer.

Students who read regularly will earn points and rewards!

Mr Jones

– KS3 Online Library

[Home](#) / [Students](#) / [Literacy & Reading](#)

ALL students in year 7-9 students have access to our free online digital library, MyOn. There are over five thousand different books to choose from and the books are all linked to ZPDs and STAR reading. There are multiple genres and subject areas available to all.

Students can access MyOn by following this link www.myon.co.uk/login

Student logins are the same ones used to login to the school computers.

Christmas Celebration Day – Thursday 11th December

We are delighted to announce that Thursday 11th December will be our Christmas Celebration Day at English Martyrs.

Students are warmly invited to wear a Christmas jumper to school on this day to help celebrate the festive season. Please note that the Christmas Jumper will replace the school blazer. All other uniform must still be worn.

As part of the celebration, all students will enjoy a Christmas lunch and take part in a range of festive activities. We ask that students bring trainers to change into for certain activities.

Christmas Jumper Donation & Swap

To help us support one another as a community, we are collecting donations of any unwanted Christmas jumpers. These can be handed in at Student Services.

If any student who would like to freshen up their Christmas look are welcome to visit Student Services to swap their jumper for a different one.

Thank you, as always, for your support. We look forward to a joyful and festive day with our students.

Mr Gray

Helping You Support Your Child's Future

We know how important it is to have conversations about careers at home. Talking Futures is a brilliant resource to help you feel confident in guiding your child's next steps. The website offers practical tips, guides, and activities to make these discussions easier and more meaningful.

👉 Explore resources today: www.talkingfutures.org.uk

As always support is available on the careers section of school website, in school via our careers team or by email ems-careers@ems.bhcet.org.uk

Ms Mincher

Spreading Festive Cheer!

Our amazing college students have been busy creating beautiful hampers filled with essentials and treats - from toiletries and cozy hats & scarves to biscuits and chocolates.

These thoughtful hampers will be donated to The Mission of Seafarers in Hartlepool, supporting those who spend long periods away from home at sea. 🌊 ⚓

A huge thank you to everyone involved for showing kindness and generosity this season! ❤️
#CommunitySpirit #StudentInitiative #MissionOfSeafarers #Hartlepool #GivingBack

Ms Jackson



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KS3 Students Take Part in Christmas Card Inter-house Competition

In the run-up to the festive season, KS3 students embraced their creativity by taking part in the annual Christmas Card Inter-house Competition. The event, organised by the Art Department, aimed to celebrate artistic talent while spreading seasonal cheer across the school community.

Students were challenged to design an original Christmas card that captured the spirit of Christ. They explored a wide range of techniques, from traditional drawing and painting to digital illustration and mixed media. Themes ranged from classic winter scenes to imaginative contemporary interpretations, showcasing the diversity of ideas and styles within the department.

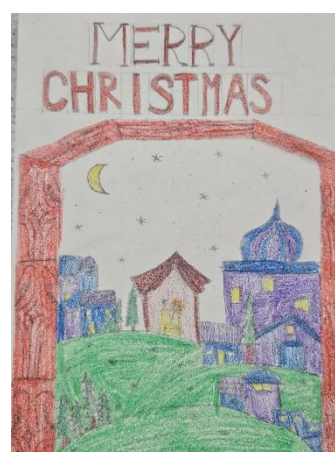
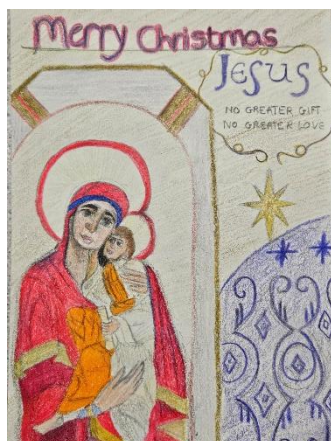
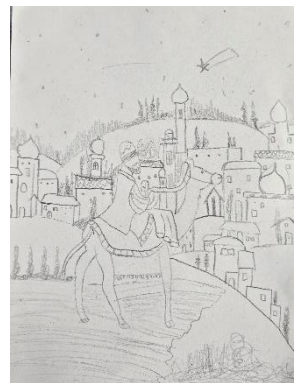
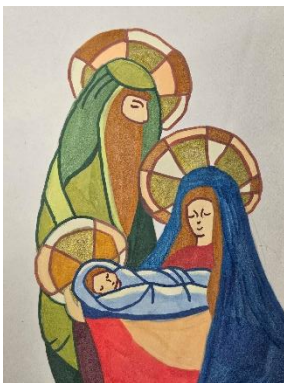
The competition generated an impressive response, with entries judged on creativity, composition, and overall impact.

Mr. Meynell commented:

"The standard of work this year has been exceptional. Our KS3 students have shown incredible imagination and skill, and it's wonderful to see their enthusiasm for art reflected in these festive designs."

The competition not only highlighted the artistic talent within KS3 but also fostered a sense of community and celebration as the school prepares for the holiday season.

Mr Meynell



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Sportshall Athletics Success

Following the Hartlepool Schools Qualifier held at Mill House Leisure Centre.

Year 7 Boys and Year 8 Girls were crowned town champions.

Year 7 Girls and Year 8 Boys were runners up in their categories.

All students were fantastic ambassadors for the school and showed grit and determination in challenges such as an obstacle course, six lap race, sprinting, jumping and throwing activities.

All teams progress now to the Tees Valley Finals in January.

Excellent work everyone. Good luck in the finals.

Ms Parker

Hospitality and Catering

In Year 10 Hospitality and Catering, students have been looking at the art of plating and how important presentation is when presenting a dish. Students planned and designed their dish on paper, annotated different presentation techniques, accompaniments and garnishes; made their chocolate torte, then brought their design to life on a plate demonstrating their skills and creativity.

All students worked incredible hard and showed excellent resilience and confidence when presenting their chocolate torte. They should be incredibly proud of their efforts. Here are some of the highlights.

Ms Sanderson



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Hospitality and Catering

Year 7 have been working incredibly hard across all subject areas this week, and it is always a pleasure to visit lessons and see the fantastic effort and engagement from our students. Last week, some of our brilliant pupils took part in a community clean up, heading up and down Catcote Road and around the local shops, collecting litter and helping to improve our local area. By the end of the clean, we had filled five huge bags which is a wonderful achievement.

Next week is our Christmas Jumper Day, and we would love to see all students getting involved by wearing a festive jumper. If you require any support with this, please contact the school and we will be happy to help. This day also coincides with our Christmas dinner, where students will enjoy their meal together as a form group with their tutor.

Our rewards trip is fast approaching, and plans are now finalised. A reminder that behaviour and attitude remain key for those attending the cinema, and we expect all students to continue demonstrating a positive approach in school each day.

We have noticed a slight decline in attendance recently, and we understand that there have been a number of winter bugs circulating. However, we are aiming for one final push before the Christmas break so that Year 7 can finish the term as the top attending year group. Every day really does count.

Finally, we warmly invite all Year 7 parents and carers to join us at St Joseph's Church on 16 December for our Christmas celebration. It would be wonderful to see as many of you there as possible.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Mr Hutchinson



Christmas Liturgy Invitation – Tuesday 16th December

We warmly invite all parents and carers to join us for our Christmas Liturgy at St Joseph's Church, Hartlepool on Tuesday 16th December at 18:00 pm.

This special celebration is an opportunity for our school community to come together in prayer and reflection as we prepare for the joy of Christmas this advent season. We look forward to welcoming you and your families.

Mr McCartie

End of the Autumn Term 2025/26- Friday 19th December 2025

The final day of the Autumn Term will conclude at 12.30pm. Please make arrangements for your child to leave site safely at this time. All school transport will be operational for the earlier finish, and lunch will be provided for students before the end of the school day.

EMS Safeguarding continues throughout the Christmas break with a reduced service. Details are available by asking to speak to the Safeguarding Office.

Mr Lindsay

Y11 P6 Intervention 2:45pm- 3:45pm Half Term 2		
Monday	RE iMedia Geography Sports Studies	French Spanish Computer Science
Tuesday		
Wednesday	Science	History
Thursday	Maths PE Business Studies	Art Photography
Friday	English Child Development Hospitality and Catering Health & Social Care	Product Design Performing Arts Textiles

Dates for the Diary

Dates	Event
9 th December	Year 9 Parents' Evening
11 th December	Christmas Celebration Day
16 th December	Christmas Liturgy at St Joseph's Church
19 th December	Last day of Term. Students finish at 12.30pm

