

THE ABI UPDATE

ISSUE 2 FRIDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER 2025

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER - MR CLINTON

Dear parents, pupils, carers and friends of Archbishop Ilsley, It has been an uplifting and joyous past couple of days. Yesterday, we had the pleasure of welcoming a plethora of prospective parents to our annual Open Evening. It made me so proud to see our young people showing leadership skills in all sorts of ways. We had Catalina and Rayyan (Head Girl and Head Boy) deliver a superb opening speech, Daniel on piano, Lorelai and Yumiko blasting out 'Rip-Tide' in O'Donnell Hall, pupil helpers in all the rooms as well as an array of fantastic guides. It made me so proud to walk around myself and see the 'Ilsley Spirit' in full flow. Thank you also to all our staff members for giving up their evening to support and welcome the new generation of children and families. Special thanks to Mr Howard and his team for getting the site ready, Mr Swain and Team IT for supporting communication and multimedia and of course the indefatigable Ms Salas for supplying all the admissions information.

Hot on the heels on this success, was visiting Year 6 at Holy Souls this morning and our Welcome Mass for our new Year 7, Year 12 and all our inspiring new staff this afternoon.

Thank you so much to Father Toby, our new school chaplain, for being such a friendly and generous host. In his sermon, Father Toby talked about aims for the year ahead and gave three key messages: to thrive; to grow and to learn. Wise advice for us all. Many thanks to Mr Cullinane and Mrs McGarry from the St Teresa of Calcutta Multi Academy Company (STOC MAC) for attending as well as Mrs Girling and Mrs Kielstra from Holy Souls Primary, cementing the notion that we are a family of schools.

Enjoy your weekend, everyone.

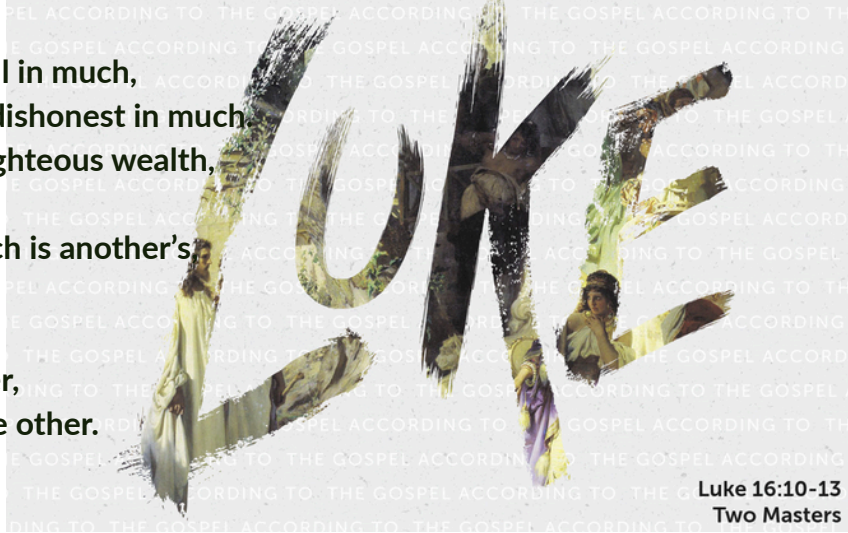
KEY DATES

- Monday 29th September - Yr 7/10 photos
- Thursday 2nd October - Welcome Mass - Yr 13 - 2.15pm in Holy Souls Church
- Thursday 9th October - Yr 11 GCSE Information Evening (5:00pm - 6.30pm)
- Tuesday 7th October - Thursday 9th October - Yr 13 Mock Exam Week
- Tuesday 21st October - Sixth Form Open Evening & Careers Convention (5:00pm - 6:30pm)
- Thursday 6th November - Year 9 Information Evening
- Wednesday 12th November - Yr 7 & 12 Parent & Tutor Meet - (3.25pm - 4.30pm)

CATHOLIC LIFE

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION: LUKE CHAPTER 16. VERSES 10-13

At that time: Jesus said to the disciples,
'One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much,
and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.
If then you have not been faithful with the unrighteous wealth,
who will entrust to you the true riches?
And if you have not been faithful with that which is another's,
who will give you that which is your own?
No servant can serve two masters:
for either he will hate the one and love the other,
or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.
You cannot serve God and money.'



How is this relevant today?

This passage speaks directly to the tension between faithfulness to God and attachment to wealth, and it carries several layers of relevance for us today.

Jesus highlights that our character is revealed in the “little things.” If we are trustworthy in daily, ordinary responsibilities—being honest, diligent, and just—then we can be entrusted with greater responsibilities. It reminds us that holiness is not only about grand gestures, but about the consistency of our everyday choices.

The passage contrasts “unrighteous wealth” (material possessions, money, resources) with “true riches” (spiritual gifts, eternal life, God’s kingdom). Our use of money shows whether our hearts are aligned with God’s purposes. This does not mean money itself is evil, but that it is temporary and limited, and how we handle it reveals what we truly value.

Jesus reminds us that much of what we possess is not truly “ours” but entrusted to us—our time, resources, talents, and opportunities are gifts from God. Being faithful stewards means using them wisely, not selfishly, and in ways that reflect God’s justice and love.

The sharpest point comes at the end: “You cannot serve God and money.” Ultimately, our hearts cannot belong to both. We are faced with a choice—do we serve wealth as the ultimate measure of success and security, or do we serve God, trusting Him to provide?

For us today, this passage challenges us to examine how we use our resources, how we handle small responsibilities, and whether our decisions reflect loyalty to God or to wealth. It asks us:

Where is my heart anchored? Who is truly my master? _____



Uniform

As the weather begins to turn colder and wetter, please remember that a school coat should be worn over blazers, not instead of them. A pupils blazer remains an essential part of our uniform and must be worn every day. Dressing smartly is not only about looking the part, but also about our pupils showing pride in themselves and in our school community.

Equipment and Standards

All pupils are expected to come to school fully prepared for learning. This means having a school bag with you every day, containing your pencil case and all required equipment. Being ready to learn helps lessons start smoothly and ensures that pupils can make the most of every opportunity. Strong standards now will set our pupils up for success later in the year.

Respect and Tolerance

We continue to expect all pupils to show respect and tolerance towards their peers and staff. Everyone in our school deserves to feel safe, valued, and able to learn without distraction. Respect is shown not only in words but also in actions – listening carefully, following instructions, and treating others the way they would want to be treated.

Kindness

Finally, kindness goes a long way. Small acts – holding a door open, checking on a friend, or offering a smile – makes a big difference to our school community. We want Archbishop Ilsley to be a place where kindness is not just encouraged, but lived out every day. Remember: it costs nothing to be kind, but the impact it leaves can last a lifetime.

ATTENDANCE



The school are delighted to announce an exciting partnership with CSAWS. CSAWS and the Central School Attendance and Welfare Service Ltd an Independent Education Welfare Service offering schools guidance, advice and direct work in raising whole school attendance and improving outcomes for pupils and their families across the Midlands area. CSAWS believe in the child's right to access education and in the direct link between good attendance and positive outcomes. An attendance review took place in school on September 9th and the attendance team will introduce some of the recommendations with immediate effect. More news to follow.

YEAR 7 - MISS BRADY

HEAD OF YEAR UPDATES

It's hard to believe that they have already completed a month here, and I am so pleased to report that they have settled in brilliantly. We have already seen some of our Year 7 pupils get involved in various extracurricular activities, such as joining the choir and becoming part of the chaplaincy team, among others. It is wonderful to see them embracing their new school community and taking on new challenges with enthusiasm.



Today, we had our welcome mass to officially kick off the school year, and it was a joy to see the Year 7 pupils participate in the service. Their presence added so much to the atmosphere, and I am confident that they will continue to make positive contributions to our school community throughout the year.

I just wanted to send a friendly reminder about our school's uniform policy, which can be easily accessed on our school website. It is important that pupils come to school dressed appropriately and in accordance with our guidelines. As the weather starts to get colder and rainy, please make sure that your child is prepared with a coat or appropriate outerwear. We want to ensure that all pupils are comfortable and protected during their time at school.

Additionally, I want to stress the importance of having the necessary equipment and materials for school, including their reading book. These tools are vital to your child's education and success in the classroom.

Thank you for entrusting your children to us here at Archbishop Ilsey. We are excited to continue supporting them in their academic and personal growth. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.



YEAR 8 - MRS WAFI

HEAD OF YEAR UPDATES

We are already halfway through the first half term, and it's been a truly inspiring start to the school year. Our Year 8 pupils recently attended their very first Welcome Mass as a year group, an important occasion that symbolises new beginnings and the continuation of their journey in faith and learning. Throughout the Mass, most pupils demonstrated impeccable behaviour, showing respect, attentiveness, and a genuine sense of community.



Beyond the Mass, many Year 8 pupils also stepped forward to support our busy Open Evening. This event is crucial in showcasing our school's strengths and welcoming prospective pupils and their families into our community. The Year 8 volunteers were enthusiastic, responsible, and welcoming, helping visitors feel at ease and providing invaluable assistance throughout the evening. Their contributions made a significant difference to the success of the event, and we are deeply grateful for their generosity and maturity. To all the Year 8 pupils who gave their time and energy, thank you. Your dedication and positive attitudes are a credit to you and to the school.

As we continue through this term, we encourage all our pupils to keep embracing opportunities to grow, serve, and support one another. In the words of 1 Peter 4:10, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." This verse beautifully reminds us that everyone has unique talents and gifts that can be shared to build a stronger, kinder community. Our Year 8 pupils have already begun living out this message, and we look forward to seeing them continue to shine.

Let us all move forward with the same spirit of service, kindness, and enthusiasm that has marked this first half term, making it a year of growth, achievement, and positive impact for everyone involved.

A Fresh Start with Purpose and Pride

As we return from the summer break, it's been great to see so many of you in Year 9 coming back with a positive attitude and a strong sense of focus. There's a real feeling that you're ready to step up, take responsibility, and make the most of everything this year has to offer.



Year 9 is an important time in your school journey. You're no longer new to secondary school – you know the routines, the expectations, and what it means to be part of this community. At the same time, you're starting to look ahead: to the subjects you'll choose for GCSE, the kind of pupil you want to be, and the kind of future you want to build.

This is your chance to set the tone. Your effort and attitude this year will shape not only your learning, but your reputation – with teachers, with your peers, and most importantly, with yourself.

That starts with the basics:

- Arriving to lessons on time, prepared and ready to learn.
- Following instructions first time, every time.
- Taking responsibility when things go wrong – including attending detentions when they are set.
- Showing respect to staff, classmates, and yourself in everything you do.

None of this is about being perfect – it's about showing growth, taking feedback seriously, and having the maturity to keep moving forward. The habits you build now will follow you into Year 10, GCSEs, and beyond. So make them count.

As Pope Leo reminds us, during this Jubilee Year, we are all called to something greater – not just academic success, but to live with purpose, honesty, and compassion. This year gives you the chance to really reflect on who you are becoming, not just what you are achieving.

Thank you to everyone who helped make our opening evening a success! We truly appreciate all the hard work, time, and effort that went into preparing for the event. From setup to coordination, and from behind-the-scenes support to those who welcomed our guests – your contributions made a real difference. It was a wonderful evening, and it wouldn't have been possible without each and every one of you. Thank you for being part of it!

So let's make this a year to be proud of. Let's take ownership of our learning, rise to the challenge, and support each other as a Year 9 community. We're expecting great things from you – and more importantly, you should expect great things from yourself.

This half term, our focus in Catholic Social Teaching is the theme:

“We are a family and each person is a precious part of it.”



At Archbishop Ilsley Catholic School, we believe that every child and adult in our community is a unique and valued individual. Catholic Social Teaching reminds us that we are all created in the image of God, and that together we form one family, where each person has dignity, worth, and something important to contribute. We will be encouraging our pupils to live out this teaching in their daily school life by:

- Being ready – coming prepared for learning, bringing the right equipment, and being on time to school and lessons.
- Being safe – looking after themselves and others as members of one caring family.
- Being respectful and kind – recognising the dignity and value of every person.

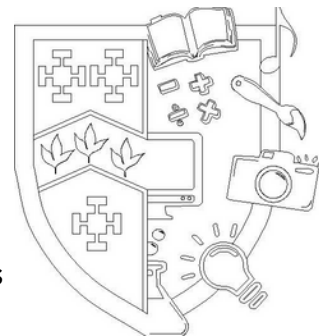
As part of being ready, we also emphasise the importance of excellent attendance. Research shows that good attendance is directly linked to strong GCSE outcomes: pupils who attend regularly make better progress, while those who miss school frequently find it much harder to achieve the grades they are capable of. Every day in school counts, and we ask for your support in ensuring your child attends consistently and punctually.

We also remind pupils of the importance of taking pride in their school uniform, which reflects our shared identity and unity. Please support us by ensuring that blazers are worn every day as part of the full school uniform. Together, as a school family, we want to build a community where every child feels valued, safe, and ready to succeed. Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

EXCITING CAREER DEVELOPMENTS AT ARCHBISHOP ILSLEY - MR MEREDITH, HEAD OF CAREERS

CAREERS

We're thrilled to announce two major initiatives designed to enhance our pupils' career readiness. Firstly, we've launched personalised Year 11 one-to-one careers meetings with our dedicated careers advisor, Ms. Williams. These tailored sessions help pupils explore their future pathways, from further education to apprenticeships and beyond.



Additionally, we're excited to kick off our week-long Work Experience programme, starting June 29th, 2026. Our Year 10 and Year 12 pupils and students will gain invaluable hands-on experience in various industries, helping them build essential skills.

We also invite parents, carers, and staff to support this initiative! If you or someone you know can offer a workplace placement during the work experience week, we'd love to hear from you. Your support can make a significant impact on our pupils' and students' futures. Stay tuned for more updates, and let's continue to support our pupils and students in their journey toward success!

We have been really encouraged by the way our Year 11 pupils have started the new school year. There is already a sense of maturity and determination from so many of them, and it has been wonderful to see pupils approaching their lessons with focus and enthusiasm. Year 11 is always a demanding but rewarding year, and the way our pupils have begun, shows they are ready to rise to the challenge.



In school, teachers have been commenting on the positive attitudes they are seeing in class – pupils who are listening carefully, working hard, and showing resilience when faced with difficult tasks. These are exactly the habits that will lead to success in their GCSE year, and we are proud of the way Year 11 are setting such a strong example across the school.

Of course, success in Year 11 comes not only from what happens in the classroom, but also from the effort that takes place at home. Establishing a regular routine of study and revision is one of the most powerful steps a pupil can take this year. Even 20–30 minutes a day spent reviewing classwork, learning key terms, or completing past questions can make a huge difference over time. These small, consistent efforts build confidence and ensure that knowledge is secure when it comes to exams.

Parents and carers play a crucial role in supporting this. Encouraging your child to find a quiet space to work, helping them build a realistic timetable, and praising their effort, all contribute to making study at home a positive habit rather than a last-minute rush. By working together, we can help every pupil balance school, home life, and wellbeing while still keeping their eye on their long-term goals.

It has been a very promising start to the year, and we are excited to see what Year 11 can achieve. With continued effort in school and at home, this year has the potential to be both successful and memorable for every pupil. Thank you, as always, for your support.

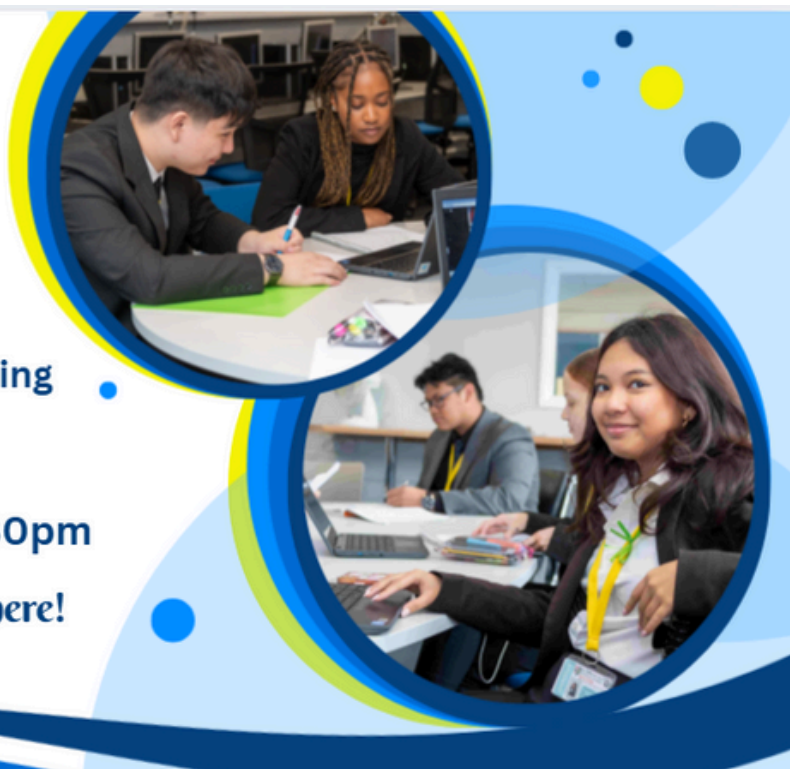


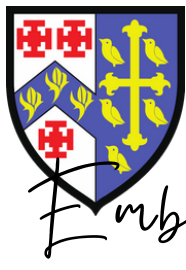
**Archbishop
Ilsey Catholic
Sixth Form**
Embrace your future

Join us for our Sixth Form Open Evening
and Careers Convention on

Tuesday 21st October 5.00pm - 6.30pm

We look forward to seeing you there!





Archbishop Illesley Catholic Sixth Form

Embrace your future

Follow us on @ABIllesley6thform to see all of our pictures and our latest news!

Have a look at all things Sixth Form using the following link:
<https://www.ilsley.bham.sch.uk/sixth-form/>

A BEAUTIFUL WELCOME MASS

This afternoon, our school community gathered in together in Holy Souls and Sacred Heart Church to celebrate a beautiful welcome mass for our new Years 7 and 12 and our new staff. Led by Father Toby, it was a special moment as we came together in faith to begin the new school year with blessings, hope and joy. Our mass today reminds us of the importance of community, compassion, and living out the values of Christ in our daily lives. Father Toby talked in his homily about journeys.

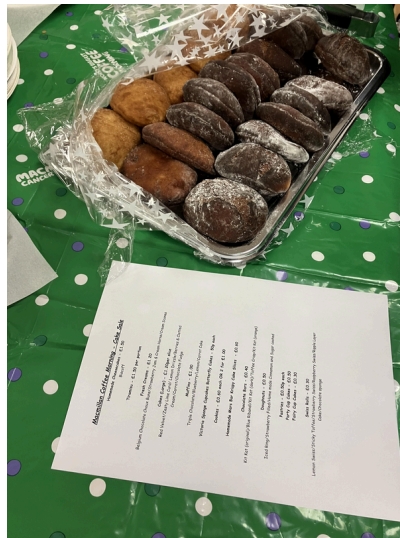


Year 7 and 12 have started a 5 or for many we hope, a 7 year learning journey with us. We wish them all well in this journey.

Pupils, students, staff and parents and carers participated with reverence and enthusiasm in our service. The Mass served as a meaningful reminder of our shared commitment to nurturing a caring and faith-filled environment that every pupils, student and staff member can be a part of. Thank you to Mr Hillen for our music and to our Year 12 and Year 7 readers, our altar servers and of course Deacon Martin and Father Toby.

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

Today our Year 12 and 13 students hosted a wonderful Macmillan Coffee Morning for staff, raising funds in support of Macmillan Cancer Support charity. Students baked and brought in a tempting selection of homemade cakes, which were enjoyed by many throughout the day.



**WORLD'S BIGGEST
COFFEE
MORNING** MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT



Cakes were on sale at break, lunch, and after our Welcome Mass for the community. A huge thank you to Mrs O'Neill for her superb organisation of the event and for her homemade treats.

A massive well done and thank you to our Sixth Formers also for their generosity, kindness and support in making the event such a success. We will let you all know how much we have raised in the coming week.





**Archbishop
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YEAR 13 MOCK EXAMINATIONS

Our Year 13 students will soon be sitting their mock examinations - from Tuesday 7th October . This is an important opportunity for to prepare for their final A-level assessments in the summer. These exams will help students to practise under exam conditions, identify areas for further improvement, and build confidence for the months ahead. We encourage all students to approach their revision with focus and determination, while also taking care to balance study with rest and wellbeing. Please keep our Year 13s in your prayers during this busy and important time in their journey.

Please see the exam timetable below. Revision guidance will be sent out to parents and carers shortly. Students have now been given their individual exam timetables today.

Tuesday 7th October 2025 MOCK EXAM	MEDIA STUDIES	9.00AM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS	HALL /CONF
MOCK EXAM	SOCIOLOGY	9.00AM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS	HALL /CONF
MOCK EXAM	BIOLOGY	9.00AM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS 15MIN	HALL /CONF
MOCK EXAM	ICT	9.00AM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS	HALL /CONF
MOCK EXAM	PRODUCT DESIGN	12.30PM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS	HALL/CONF
MOCK EXAM	PE	12.30PM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS	HALL /CONF
MOCK EXAM	SPANISH	12.30PM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	1HR 45MIN	CONF
MOCK EXAM	THEOLOGY	12.30PM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS	HALL /CONF
Wednesday 8th October 2025 MOCK EXAM	GEOGRAPHY	9.00AM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS	HALL /CONF
MOCK EXAM	CHEMISTRY	9.00AM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS	HALL /CONF
MOCK EXAM	HISTORY	9.00AM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS	HALL /CONF
MOCK EXAM	HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE	9.00AM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS	HALL /CONF
MOCK EXAM	BUSINESS	12.30PM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS	HALL /CONF
MOCK EXAM	PHYSICS	12.30PM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS	HALL /CONF
MOCK EXAM	POLICITICS	12.30PM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS	HALL /CONF
MOCK EXAM	PSYCHOLOGY	12.30PM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS	HALL /CONF
Thursday 9th October 2025 MOCK EXAM	ENGLISH LITERATURE PAPER	9.00AM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	3HRS	HALL /CONF
MOCK EXAM	MATHS PAPER	9.00AM	WRITTEN	YEAR 13	2HRS	HALL /CONF