



THE ABI UPDATE

ISSUE 5 FRIDAY 14TH NOVEMBER 2025

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER - MR CLINTON

Dear parents, pupils, carers, and friends of Archbishop Ilsley,

There are many times I am impressed with the conduct of Archbishop Ilsley's pupils and students. Open Evening is an obvious example, donations for the hamper masses and sports day are two other examples.

However, my favourite, although sombre and poignant, is our Remembrance Service that takes place every November.

Having worked at four other schools, most institutions hold some kind of silence on the 11th November; however, no school has every pupil, student and every staff member on the playground in absolute reverent silence for a 30-minute service which includes prayers, laying of wreaths, the Last Post and for the first time, the names of all pupils and staff members that have passed away were read out by Mr Royston, Mr Rees and Mr Henvey.

You can see their names honoured later in this issue. If you wish to add to this list or spot any mistakes or wish to add dates, please contact the school at the email address above with the subject 'please remember'.

I hope you all enjoy your weekend and that you manage to stay out of the rain!

Mr Clinton

KEY DATES

- Monday 17th - Thursday 20th November - Year 11 Geography fieldtrips
- Tuesday 18th November - Year 7 Internet Safety Workshops
- Tuesday 25th November - Year 7 Internet Safety Workshops
- Monday 1st December - INSET Day. School is closed to pupils and students
- Thursday 4th December - Year 11 Parents' Evening (3.45pm - 6.15pm)
- Monday 15th December - Academic Celebration Evening 5.30pm - 7.00pm
- Tuesday 16th December - Sixth Form Christmas Community Afternoon Tea
- Friday 19th December - school closes for Christmas holiday
- Monday 5th January 2026 - School reopens for Spring 1



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

**Sixth Form applications
are open...
have you applied yet?**

CATHOLIC LIFE

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION: JOHN 2:13–22

Just before the Jewish Passover Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and in the Temple he found people selling cattle and sheep and pigeons, and the money changers sitting at their counters there. Making a whip out of some cord, he drove them all out of the Temple, cattle and sheep as well, scattered the money changers' coins, knocked their tables over and said to the pigeon-sellers, 'Take all this out of here and stop turning my Father's house into a market.' Then his disciples remembered the words of scripture: Zeal for your house will devour me. The Jews intervened and said, 'What sign can you show us to justify what you have done?' Jesus answered, 'Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews replied, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this sanctuary: are you going to raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the sanctuary that was his body, and when Jesus rose from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the words he had said.



How is this relevant today?

Keeping Our Hearts a Place for God

In this reading we hear the striking scene of Jesus cleansing the Temple. He overturns tables, drives out animals and speaks firmly. At first glance, it can seem like a story about a building long ago. But this passage carries a message that speaks powerfully to our lives today.

Jesus' actions remind us that certain things in life are meant to remain sacred. The Temple had lost its sense of reverence; noise, distraction, and self-interest had taken over. In our own time, we may not be selling cattle in church, but our hearts and our homes can easily become crowded with busyness, pressure and the constant pull of the world around us. It becomes harder to make space for what truly matters. This passage invites a gentle but important question: What fills the atmosphere of our school, our homes? Are we creating space for calm, prayer, kindness, and connection? Or do we sometimes allow stress, schedules, or screens to take over the "sacred space" where community, faith and family life are meant to grow?

Jesus also challenges us to have the courage to address what is not right. Just as He confronted injustice and dishonesty in the Temple, we are called to stand up for integrity, fairness, and respect—values that our pupils and students learn not only from lessons at school, but from what they see lived out at home. Finally, Jesus points beyond the physical Temple to something deeper: His own body as the true dwelling place of God. This reminds us that holiness is not confined to churches or chapels. Every one of us is a temple of the Holy Spirit. How we speak, how we treat others, how we use our time—all of it reflects what we are choosing to hold in the "inner sanctuary" of our hearts. As we walk through the busy months of the school year, may this Gospel encourage us to pause and "clear out" whatever keeps us from fully receiving God's presence—whether it is hurry, worry, or simply too much noise. When we make space for God, we make space for peace, gratitude, and love to flourish in our families.

"Take all this out of here and stop turning my Father's house into a market."

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning. We will remember them.

Tuesday 11th November was the day that we remembered all the service men and women who have given their lives for our country. They may have come from the Army, they may have been from the Navy or they may have been part of our Air Force. It was a particularly poignant day because we also remembered those who are no longer with us.

After the minute's silence and last post, as a school community, we remembered all those who have died; Mr Royston, as one of the longest serving members of staff, read out the names of staff members who have sadly passed away. Mr Rees and Mr Henvey, both former pupils, read out the names of 48 former pupils who have also sadly passed away.

We remember....

Thomas Brockington – Thomas was from Acocks Green died in World War One in 1916 – he was aged just 21.

Daryl Hickey who came to Archbishop Ilsley between 1991-1996. Daryl died on 12th July in 2007. He was a member of our armed forces.

Sam Newey, died in 2023 in Ukraine when he was on a voluntary mission alongside British Army.

We remember....

Howard Ashton; Barry Clarke; Trina Clarke; Rita Griffin; Pauline Hatton; Brian Hickey; David Howard; Carol Maguire; James McVeigh; David Pass; Phil Perryman; Mary Quigley; Tracey Rodgers; Mary Savage; Helen Scahill; Brian Stone; Sudesh Surti

We remember...

Roger Bagnall (2025); Clare Baxter; Marie Bradley; Kevin Bradley; David Clift; Gary Connolly (2021); Michael Cuddy; Sandra Daly (2025); Kevin Doran (2022); Cameron Dunne (2020); John Enright (2014); Stephen Fall (2025); Candice Fitzgerald; David Fletcher; Matthew Forde; Catherine Francis (2021); Sarah Frost (2021); Father Simon Hall (2025); Janine Harvey; Lynda Henry; Anthony Herron (2025); Daryl Hickey (2007); Darren Hollis; Anthony Hudson (2019); Archie Hughes (2022); Alivia Jacob; Colin Kearns; Richard Keogh (2024); Kevin Kerr (2022); Kieran Lavin; Robby Lebita (2016); Sarah Masterson; Sean McGoldrick; John McGory; Sam Newey (2023); Adrian O'Kane (2017); Michael O'Neill; Barry O'Neill (2025); Michael Parry (2018); Melanie Powell; June Reilly-Fieldhouse; Agoth Ring (2012); Louis Sheldon (2022); Hugh Shriane (2024); Angela Studards; Martin Sullivan (2015); Charlotte Teeling (2018)

BEHAVIOUR AND STANDARDS - MRS BURNHAM

PASTORAL



As we settle back into our routines after half term, it's been encouraging to see so many pupils arriving prepared for learning and demonstrating pride in their appearance. Thank you for continuing to reinforce our expectations each day, consistency from all staff truly makes the difference.

This week, our focus remains on uniform, equipment, punctuality, respect and tolerance. Pupils should arrive at each lesson on time, with the correct equipment, ready to engage positively in their learning. Please continue to remind pupils that pride in uniform reflects pride in themselves and in our school community.

We also ask everyone to show respect and tolerance towards one another: in classrooms, corridors, and social spaces. Small acts of kindness and consideration help build the calm, inclusive environment that allows every pupil to flourish.

Let's keep up the high standards and ensure the positive momentum continues as we move through the term.

YEAR 8 - MRS WAFI

HEAD OF YEAR UPDATES

We began this half term with our CSI inspection, and Year 8 were truly outstanding. They demonstrated the very essence of our core values; respect, kindness, and integrity. Throughout the inspection, pupils engaged thoughtfully, showed great pride in their school and reflected the strong moral foundation that underpins our Catholic community. Their actions and attitudes served as a wonderful example of how faith and learning go hand in hand.



The inspectors joined us for our Remembrance Assembly, and they were deeply impressed by how well-behaved, respectful, and well-presented Year 8 were throughout. Their calm and reflective presence captured the solemn nature of the occasion and showed their understanding of the importance of remembrance and gratitude. It was clear that the values we promote each day are lived out through their words, actions, and mutual respect for one another.

During our Remembrance service this week, all pupils stood together in silence to honour and reflect on those who have given their lives to protect and safeguard our freedom. The atmosphere was deeply moving, filled with reverence and compassion. This act of collective remembrance reminded us of the strength that comes from unity, peace, and faith.

As Scripture reminds us: "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." — John 15:13. This verse beautifully captures the spirit of our Remembrance service, a moment not only to look back with gratitude but also to look forward with a renewed commitment to living out love, peace, and service in our daily lives.



Year 7 have had a fantastic return to school after the half-term break! They've come back refreshed, enthusiastic, and ready to learn. It's been wonderful to see their positive attitude in lessons and the way they've supported each other as they've settled back into routine. As we continue through the term, please can we remind all families of the importance of adhering to our school uniform policy and ensuring pupils bring the necessary equipment each day. Being well-prepared helps pupils to get the most out of their lessons and contributes to a focused and successful learning environment.

In addition, please note that the canteen queue is currently no longer than five minutes. With 1,200 pupils and a 40-minute lunch break, all pupils have ample time to purchase and enjoy their lunch. Therefore, early lunch passes will not be issued for this reason.

Some of our lucky Year 7 pupils also had the opportunity to visit Stratford as part of a Design and Technology trip. They represented the school brilliantly and enjoyed a fantastic hands-on learning experience that brought their classroom studies to life. See below for some photos of their day. Well done to all involved.

Last week, as you know, our school had a Catholic Life Inspection. During this time, Mr McMahon and his wonderful form, 7JHN, delivered a fantastic form assembly. They showcased their talents brilliantly and taught us all about Saint John Henry Newman. Well done to everyone involved — you made us all very proud!

Lastly, thank you to all those parents and carers who were able to join us on Thursday for our Year 7 Parent and Tutor Meetings. The evening was very well attended and lots of important conversations took place. It was a great way for our you, new parents and carers to build those all important relationships with your child's tutor.



As we return from the holiday, we take a moment to remember how Pope Leo would want us to treat one another—with kindness, respect, and a spirit of compassion. His teachings remind us that every person deserves dignity and understanding, and that our daily actions should reflect love and fairness. Coming back together after time apart gives us the opportunity to renew our commitment to community, to listen more deeply, and to serve each other with generosity and patience. In doing so, we live out the values that Pope Leo cherished—building harmony, seeking justice, and nurturing peace in our relationships and in the world around us.



It's wonderful to see our pupils so actively engaged in our collective worship. They have once again planned, prepared, and delivered an inspiring assembly to the entire year group, showcasing their commitment and enthusiasm. It's truly heart-warming to witness their involvement and the positive impact they have on our school community.

Before half term, I had the pleasure of visiting Year 9 classes, and it was such a rewarding experience to see the incredible work they are doing. The dedication and effort they are putting into their studies is truly impressive. It's clear that they've been given a wealth of opportunities to challenge themselves, try their best, and achieve success. It's moments like these that highlight the positive and supportive learning environment we strive to create for all our pupils.

On the 11th of November, our school came together in a poignant and reflective gathering to remember all those who have served and sacrificed for our country. The atmosphere was one of deep respect and I was especially proud of the exceptional behaviour displayed by Year 9 during this solemn occasion. Their attentiveness, reverence, and maturity throughout the service were truly commendable, showing a deep understanding of the significance of the day. Their conduct was a testament to the values we hold dear in our school community.

As we prepare for Advent, let us take this time to reflect and commit to giving our very best in everything we do. It's a season of hope and anticipation, and a perfect opportunity for each of us to strive to be the best version of ourselves. Whether in our actions, our relationships, or our work, let's embrace the spirit of Advent by showing kindness, generosity, and a commitment to personal growth. Together, let's make this season one of positivity, purpose, and progress.

YEAR 10- MR BRUTON

As we move through this busy term, we would like to share some important updates for our Year 10 pupils.

Remembrance Day - This week, pupils have been reflecting on the importance of Remembrance Day through assemblies and classroom discussions. We are proud of the respect and maturity shown by our Year 10 pupils during this time.

Anti-Bullying Assembly - Next week, Year 10 will take part in an Anti-Bullying Assembly as part of our ongoing commitment to creating a kind and supportive school community. Pupils will explore how we can all play a role in preventing bullying and promoting respect for others.

Year 10 Assessments - Next week, Year 10 pupils will begin their assessments. These assessments provide an important opportunity for pupils to demonstrate their progress and identify areas for improvement ahead of their GCSE studies. Pupils will receive revision materials in lessons and online. We value your support in ensuring they are prepared for these.



As we move further into this crucial year, I want to take a moment to reflect on the recent mock examinations and celebrate the fantastic effort displayed by our Year 11 pupils. Over the last two weeks, they have shown an excellent attitude, resilience, and maturity towards their studies. The way they approached each exam—with focus, determination, and positivity—was truly commendable. These mocks are an important part of the journey towards their final GCSEs, offering a real sense of what to expect, and Year 11 handled this challenge superbly.



This week also saw our annual Remembrance service, an occasion that holds deep significance within our school community. I was incredibly proud of the respectful, thoughtful way Year 11 conducted themselves throughout the event. Their behaviour demonstrated a genuine understanding of the importance of remembrance and the values it represents. They were a credit to themselves, their families, and the school.

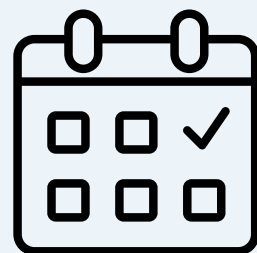
Looking ahead, I want to remind pupils of the crucial role that attendance, punctuality, and homework completion play in their success. Every lesson counts, and being in school—on time and ready to learn—makes a real difference. Regular attendance is closely linked to achievement, and arriving punctually ensures that pupils receive key information, support, and opportunities such as intervention sessions, careers guidance, and vital messages about upcoming events. Homework, too, continues to be a key part of reinforcing learning and building confidence. We encourage all pupils to maintain good habits in these areas as we move into the next phase of the year.

Finally, I'm delighted to share that the Year 11 Prom has now been set for Wednesday 1st July 2026. This is always a highlight of the school year and a wonderful way to celebrate the hard work, progress, and achievements of our pupils. Further details will be shared closer to the time, but it's fantastic to have this date in the diary.

Well done, Year 11—you continue to impress us with your dedication, behaviour, and spirit. Let's keep this momentum going as we work together towards a successful and rewarding year ahead.

WHAT NEXT... IMPORTANT DATES AHEAD FOR YEAR 11 PUPILS

- Mock Exams 1: 3rd November – 14th November.
- Report 1 Issued: 3rd December
- Year 11 'Meet the Sixth Form' events following pupils' Mock Exams
- Parents' Evening: 4th December
- Mock Exams 2: 23rd February – 6th March. Report 2 Issued: 26th March
- Year 11 Sixth Form interviews
- GCSEs commence: 11th May
- 29th and 30th June 2065 – Year 11 into 12 Step Up Days
- All GCSEs concluded on 24th June
- Results Day and Sixth Form Enrolment: Thursday 20th August



Anti-Bullying Week in Sixth Form

This week in Sixth Form, our focus for Anti-Bullying Week has been on creating a community rooted in kindness, respect, and empathy. We explored the Beatitudes from Matthew's Gospel, reflecting on how Jesus' words can guide us in the way we treat one another — especially in standing up for what is right and supporting those who need encouragement.

Students discussed practical ways to live out the Beatitudes in their daily interactions, considering how qualities such as compassion, mercy, and peacemaking can help build an inclusive and caring environment within our school.

As a visual reminder of these commitments, Sixth Form students collaborated to create a Beatitudes Wall — a display celebrating how each of us can contribute to a culture where everyone feels valued and respected. The wall will remain up throughout the term as a source of inspiration and reflection.

Together, we are striving to ensure that our community truly reflects the spirit of the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." (Matthew 5:9)

Year 12 Mock Exams Week beginning Tuesday 2nd December: Preparing for Success

As we approach the first set of Mock Exams for our Year 12 students, we want to take a moment to highlight the importance of these assessments and how parents and carers can support their children during this busy period.

Mock exams are a valuable opportunity for students to experience formal examination conditions, consolidate their learning, and identify areas for improvement before the next stage of their studies. They are not just a measure of current knowledge—they are a tool to build effective study habits and exam strategies that will benefit students throughout the year and beyond.

Regular revision is key to success. Encouraging your child to plan structured study at home, review class notes and practice past papers can make a significant difference. Short, consistent periods of revision often prove more effective than last-minute cramming, helping students retain knowledge and reduce stress.

We also encourage students to take care of their wellbeing during this period. Good sleep, healthy meals, and short breaks during study sessions are essential for concentration and performance.

Parents and carers can support by discussing revision plans, providing a quiet and well-organised study space and offering encouragement and reassurance. These first mock exams are an important stepping stone, giving students valuable feedback and a clear picture of their progress.

We wish all our Year 12 students every success in their mock exams and encourage them to approach this opportunity with focus, confidence and a positive mindset.

Individual Mock Exam timetables and revision advice and guidance will be sent out to all students shortly.

Year 12 Enrichment Trip: Embracing Their Future at the University of Birmingham

Today, our Year 12 students had the exciting opportunity to visit the University of Birmingham as part of their Sixth Form enrichment programme. The day was designed to broaden horizons, build confidence and inspire students to think ambitiously about the pathways ahead—perfectly reflecting our school's and Sixth Form's commitment to helping every young person, "let their light shine" and "embrace their future."

Throughout the visit, students were warmly welcomed by a team of student ambassadors who shared honest, engaging insights into university life. From managing studying, timetables and living independently, to joining societies and forming new friendships, our students gained a real sense of what it means to study and thrive at a leading university.

The group learned more about the courses available to them and the many opportunities higher education can offer. For many, hearing about the variety of degree choices—some familiar, some completely new—opened up exciting ideas for their own next steps.

A guided tour of the campus rounded off the visit. Our hope is that this experience will give our students a renewed motivation, a deeper understanding of their post-18 options, and a sense of excitement about the future. Experiences like this are vital in helping our students grow in aspiration, confidence, and purpose. We are proud to support them as they take the next steps toward shaping their futures with ambition and hope.



Year 13: Building Momentum for Success

Following our recent Year 13 progress report, we wanted to share some thoughts on how your child can harness this feedback as motivation and fully commit to their final year of Sixth Form.

The report shows that many students are making positive strides in their subjects—meeting deadlines, engaging in lessons, and showing strong potential. At the same time, it highlights areas where a little extra focus could make all the difference: improving consistency in attendance, submitting work on time, and increasing participation in lessons. Now more than ever, these small but crucial habits are what separate good outcomes from great outcomes.

Year 13 is a pivotal year. It's the culmination of your child's hard work so far and the launch pad for their next chapter—whether that's university, apprenticeship, employment, or another exciting path. The decisions and effort made now will shape those opportunities and open doors to future success.

We ask you, as parents and carers, to help reinforce three key messages:

- **Regular Effort = Long-Term Gain** - Encourage your child to keep on top of reading, assignments, revision and independent study. Success in Year 13 rarely comes from bursts of last-minute work—it comes from steady, sustained effort over time.
- **Be Proactive with Feedback** - The recent report gives a snapshot of where your child is now. Encourage them to use this as a launchpad—not a verdict. When a teacher gives feedback, the next step is to act on it. Improving one mark, one paragraph, one concept at a time adds up quickly.
- **Maintain Balance and Wellbeing** - Hard work is important—but so are rest and reflection. Encourage good sleep, healthy routines and short breaks. A well-looked after mind and body sustains high performance better than pure pressure.

We believe passionately in the potential of our Year 13 cohort. With your support at home, our students can harness the momentum from the report and channel their energy into meaningful progress and achievement.

All students should now have submitted their Personal Statements to their Tutors. Even if your child has decided that they are not applying for university, the Personal Statement will form the basis for their CV or application letter for jobs, apprenticeships etc, so all students are expected to submit.

Predicted grades and references - subject teachers are now writing subject references for students. These will be used withing their UCAS references. Predicted grades are the grades that we predict students will achieve, based on factors like mock exams, coursework, and performance over their two years with us. These are submitted as part of the UCAS application and are used by universities to assess potential and make conditional offers. They will be a realistic reflection of a student's ability and potential and should provide students with a realistic idea of their potential in order to help them apply for courses that are a suitable level for them.