

THE ABI UPDATE

ISSUE 8 FRIDAY 16TH JANUARY 2026

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER - MR CLINTON

Dear Pupils, Parents, Carers and Friends of Archbishop IIsley,

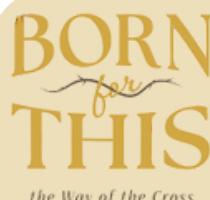
Last Sunday was the baptism of the Lord. Across Catholic Churches across the world, congregations listened to Matthew's gospel where Jesus, at the age of 30, was baptised in the River Jordan by John.

Baptism is about cleansing; it's about being freed from original sin. It symbolises purity and therefore new beginnings. The idea that 'every day is a fresh day' and 'looking forward not backwards' and not bearing grudges is a really important feature of our ethos and our behaviour policy. Also, it's never too late to start your New Year's Resolution, especially now all the left over Christmas cake and mince pies have been eaten!

We had a very well attended Year 10 Parents' Evening last night (thank you parents and carers of Year 10 for attending). There is Year 9 Parents' Evening a week on Thursday and we will experiment with making this one online. We would welcome feedback from parents about which they prefer.

If you would like to be part of our growing parent group, please email enquiry@ilsley.bham.sch.uk and give your details. We will be meeting before half term to discuss uniform but would welcome feedback about parents' evening or any other aspect of school.

Enjoy your weekend.



Is your child performing in our live performance of Born for This on Wednesday 25th March at the Symphony Hall? Have you bought your tickets yet? See inside this Update for more information or purchase tickets here: <https://bmusic.co.uk/events/born-for-this>

KEY DATES:

- Monday 19th Jan - Yr 8 HPV vaccines
- Monday 19th Jan - Yr 7 Assessment Week 1
- Monday 19th Jan - Yr 8 Assessment Week 2
- Tuesday 20th - Friday 23rd Jan - Yr 13 Mock Exams
- Monday 26th Jan - Yr 7 Assessment Week 2
- Wednesday 28th Jan - Yr 10 GCSE Drama trip
- Thursday 29th Jan - Yr 9 Parents' Evening online; 3.45pm-6.15pm
- Friday 30th Jan - MFL/Careers Day
- Thursday 12th Feb - Yr 12/13 Parents' Evening
- Friday 13th Feb - INSET DAY; school is closed for pupils and students
- Monday 16th Feb - Friday 20th Feb - HALF TERM school is closed for pupils and students
- Monday 24th February - Yr 11 Mock Exams

“...let your light shine.”

CATHOLIC LIFE

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION: LUKE 3:15-16, 21-22

At that time: As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, John answered them all, saying, 'I baptise you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.'

Now when all the people were baptised by John the Baptist and when Jesus also had been baptised and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.'

How is this relevant to us today?



This Gospel passage invites us into a moment of great expectation. The people are searching, wondering if John the Baptist might be the one God has promised. John's response is humble and clear: he points away from himself and toward Jesus. In doing so, he teaches us an important lesson for our own lives and for our children—true faith always leads us closer to Christ.

When Jesus is baptised, something extraordinary happens. As He prays, the heavens open, the Holy Spirit descends like a dove, and God the Father's voice is heard: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." This is a powerful revelation of who Jesus is—fully loved by the Father and sent to bring new life to the world. It also reminds us that Jesus begins His public ministry not with power or status, but with prayer, humility, and obedience.

This passage speaks directly to us about the meaning of Baptism. Just as Jesus is affirmed as God's beloved Son, through Baptism we are claimed as beloved sons and daughters of God. Baptism is not simply a past event or family tradition; it is the foundation of our Christian identity. We are marked by the Holy Spirit and invited to live each day as people who belong to God.

John the Baptist also speaks of being baptised, "with the Holy Spirit and fire." This reminds us that faith is meant to be alive and active. The Holy Spirit strengthens us to grow in love, courage, and service. In a Catholic school community, this call is lived out as we encourage our pupils and students to use their gifts for others, to stand up for what is right, and to grow in their relationship with God. We want them to 'let their light shine'.

As parents and carers, this Gospel invites reflection: How do we help our children recognise that they are deeply loved by God? How do we, like John the Baptist, point them toward Jesus through our words and actions? This passage reassures us that God is already at work in our families, calling each of us to listen, to trust, and to live as His beloved children.

"...He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. . ."

BORN *for* THIS

Commemorating 30 Years of the Way of the Cross



Pupils from six Catholic secondary schools in Birmingham and Solihull are working with CJM Music to put on a truly unforgettable live performance on Wednesday 25th March 2026.

Easter 2026 marks the 30th anniversary of the first ever live production of Born for This. Born for This is a moving and powerful depiction of the Stations of the Cross in words, music, and drama. As with many projects of this scale, Born for This is a work that has evolved over several years. After reading Jude Martin's powerful, poetic reflections on the Stations of the Cross in January 1994, Jo Boyce agreed to write songs to accompany them.

Around the same time, Jude Martin came across some beautiful impressions of the Stations of the Cross by the artist Peter Clare (these are part of a larger cycle of paintings called The Journey). Peter too, impressed by the music and the words, agreed to have his work included as part of the Born for This project. These creative strands have come together to produce one of the most moving re-tellings of Christ's Passion.

This moving and powerful depiction of the Stations of the Cross involving music and drama, has been performed in many prestigious venues up and down the country. On Wednesday 25th March almost 2000 people will watch it live at Symphony Hall; Symphony Hall is one of the finest concert halls in the world, the sound of a choir and cast of over 300 will be extraordinary.

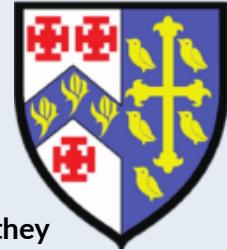
Pupils from Archbishop Ilesley Catholic School are very blessed to be one of the six participating schools. The performance will be one the cast and the audience will never forget. With the pupils, families and friends of six schools and beyond keen to witness this unique event, we anticipate tickets will be in very high demand. Ticket sales have been launched!

Book tickets before they sell out! Want to know more?

Check out the incredible Symphony Hall ... <https://bmusic.co.uk/your-visit/symphony-hall>
Find out more about history of the performance ... <https://www.cjmmusic.com/bornforthis/>

BORN
for
THIS
the Way of the Cross

PURCHASE TICKETS VIA BORN FOR THIS: [HTTPS://BMUSIC.CO.UK/EVENTS/BORN-FOR-THIS](https://BMUSIC.CO.UK/EVENTS/BORN-FOR-THIS)



We would like to remind parents and carers that our uniform drive will begin on Monday 19th January. From this date, all pupils are expected to attend school in full school uniform. Please note that leggings or flared trousers, trainers, sports jackets and Crocs are not permitted.

Any pupil who is not in the correct uniform will be required to change. If a pupil refuses to do so, they will remain in Internal Exclusion (IE) for the rest of the school day. Parents are very welcome to bring the correct uniform into school should a pupil have forgotten an item.

We would also like to remind families of our expectations around behaviour at the end of the school day. Pupils are encouraged to leave the school site calmly and go straight home. Any antisocial behaviour within the Acocks Green community will be reported and dealt with by the school and, where appropriate, the police. We are proud to be part of our local community and expect all pupils to treat others with respect and tolerance.

Finally, we ask parents to continue supporting conversations at home about being respectful to one another, both in lessons and during social times. Consistent messages between home and school are vital in maintaining a calm, respectful environment for all.

Please see below our uniform list or use the following link to see our uniform policy -
<https://www.ilsley.bham.sch.uk/parents/uniform/>

Thank you for your continued support.

Uniform for pupils identifying as male:

- Navy blue blazer with a school badge
- White shirt
- The tie for that particular year group
- Medium grey plain school trousers
- Plain navy blue V-necked pullover (optional)
- A Duke of Edinburgh fleece can be worn but this must be in addition to a shirt and tie
- Plain black shoes
- Plain grey, black or navy blue socks
- If a durag is worn, it must be navy blue or black
- Summer uniform can be worn after the Easter holidays until October half term
- If pupils wish to wear an outside jacket, they may do so, but not at the expense of a blazer (i.e. pupils must wear a shirt and tie and blazer; if is up to them if they wear a jacket, but it must be over the blazer)

Uniform for pupils identifying as female:

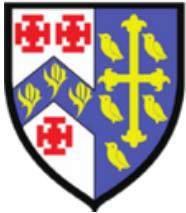
- Navy blue blazer with a school badge
- White blouse or shirt
- Navy blue pleated skirt approximately knee length or school skirt with badge.
- Pupils must wear plain black or navy tights with a skirt.
- Navy blue school full length trousers - no leggings, tight trousers, jeggings, not skinny fit.
- Plain navy blue V-necked pullover/cardigan (optional)
- A Duke of Edinburgh fleece can be worn but this must be in addition to a shirt, tie and blazer.
- Plain black shoes
- Plain black or navy socks if trousers are worn.
- If a Hijab is worn it must be navy blue or black – school tie must be visible.
- Summer uniform can be worn after the Easter holidays until October half term

Pupils identifying as non-binary, gender fluid, transgender (this list is not exhaustive) As above.

ITEMS THAT ARE NOT PERMITTED

- Trainers (defined as anything with a sports logo on or footwear that cannot be polished) are not permitted.
- Hoodies or hooded sweatshirts; Tracksuit tops / Tech Fleece; Pencil Skirts / Body con tight skirt
- Caps or bucket hats; Balaclavas
- False nails or eye lashes; Hoop Ear rings; Nose rings
- Pouches/small bags that are too small to fit a pencil case or books in

In addition, energy drinks and fizzy drinks are not permitted in the school site



PASTORAL AND SAFEGUARDING NEWS

MR CORRIGAN APPEARS ON GOOD MORNING BRITAIN TO DISCUSS SCHOOL SAFETY

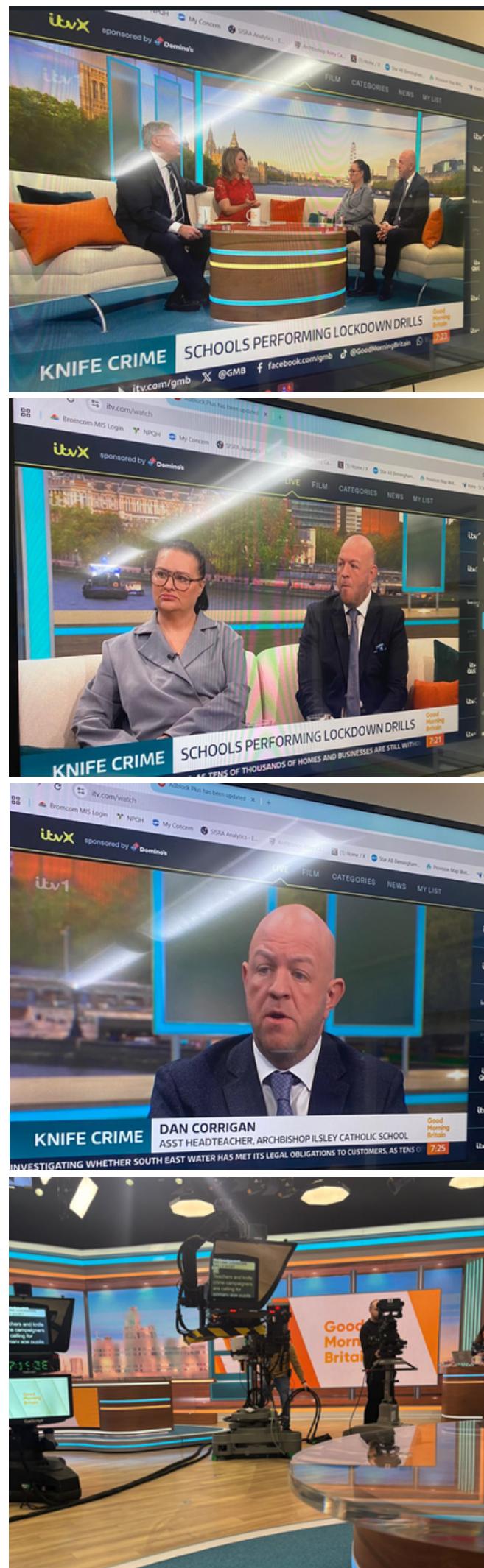
On Wednesday 14th January, our Assistant Headteacher, Mr Corrigan, appeared live on Good Morning Britain, where he was interviewed by presenters, Ed Balls and Susanna Reid as part of an important national discussion on school safety.

Mr Corrigan was joined by Caroline Willgoose, the mother of Harvey Willgoose, who tragically died following a knife attack in school. The interview focused on what schools can do to protect young people and keep them safe, with Harvey's mother courageously calling for increased knife protection measures in schools. Her determination to turn personal tragedy into meaningful change was both moving and powerful.

This appearance follows Archbishop Ilsley's recent work with ITV, during which we supported filming that showed how a lockdown procedure is conducted. Together, these opportunities have helped highlight the proactive steps schools can take to prepare pupils, students and staff for emergency situations and to educate them about staying safe.

We are extremely proud of Mr Corrigan, as well as our DSL and pastoral teams, for their excellent work in this vital area. Their commitment ensures that safeguarding remains a priority and that pupils, students and staff are supported, informed, and equipped with the knowledge they need to look after themselves and others.

This was an important message shared on a national platform, reinforcing the role schools play not only in education, but in safeguarding and care. We remain committed to working with pupils, students, staff and the wider community to promote safety, awareness, and responsibility.



As we begin a new year at Archbishop Ilesley, I want to express how delighted I am with the fantastic start Year 7 has made. Stepping into the role of Head of Year has been a privilege, and the way the pupils have welcomed me has been truly heart-warming. They have shown maturity, kindness, and enthusiasm from the very first day back, and I already feel incredibly proud to be back at Archbishop Ilesley.



Year 7 have returned with an impressive attitude towards learning. Their attendance, focus, and determination to achieve have been superb—exactly as Miss Brady described when she spoke so highly of this wonderful year group. They have settled quickly into routines and have shown a real desire to push themselves academically.

Even the snowy weather last week didn't faze them. They took it in their stride, showing resilience and good spirits throughout. I hope they enjoyed the snow as much as they enjoyed telling me all about it.

In our first assembly of the year, I shared a verse that reflects the heart of our mission as a school. We want to guide our pupils to fulfil the potential that God has placed within them: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." — Jeremiah 29:11. This message of hope, purpose, and promise is something I want every Year 7 pupil to carry with them throughout the year. Their first year of secondary school can be a real change. Pupils are learning new subjects, organising themselves, and adapting to new expectations which can feel daunting at times, but it is also a wonderful adventure.

What to Expect This Term: Over the coming weeks, pupils will begin preparing for their assessments. It is important that they have all the revision materials they need. Mr McDonald shared the learning support information earlier in the year, and I will be sending this out again next week to ensure everyone is fully equipped.

I kindly ask parents and carers to support their child by going through revision notes, practising questions, and helping them build strong study habits. A little support at home makes a huge difference to their confidence and progress.

As a school, our focus over the next fortnight is to continue striving for excellence in everything we do. This includes wearing the correct uniform, arriving punctually to lessons, and maintaining high expectations in all areas of school life. These routines help create an inclusive, calm, and purposeful environment where every child can thrive. A date for your diary is Year 7 Parents' Evening on Tuesday 12th March. Please ensure you are able to attend this important event.

Celebrating Talent and Achievement: One of the greatest joys of this role is hearing about the incredible things our pupils are doing, both in the classroom and beyond. We are blessed with a talented, driven, and enthusiastic cohort, and I want to celebrate those who are going above and beyond. A special mention goes to Dhruv R and Billy M, who have been consistently outstanding in their science lessons. Their curiosity, thoughtful answers, and constant contributions make them real assets to the class. Well done to both of you. I would also like to recognise Lena B, who is performing in the pantomime Treasure Island. This is a fantastic achievement, and we are all excited to hear how she gets on.

Moving forward, I would love to hear about any pupils involved in clubs, performances, competitions, or activities outside of school. We want to celebrate their gifts and achievements and truly let their light shine.

Staying Connected: To keep up to date with your child's progress, please continue checking the school app and visiting the school website for updates, notices, and important information. Staying connected helps us work together to support every pupil.

Thank you for your continued support. It has been a wonderful start, and I look forward to seeing Year 7 continue to grow, flourish, and shine brightly in the months ahead.

Welcome back to the start of the Spring term. We hope everyone enjoyed a restful and joyful Christmas break, and we would like to wish all our pupils and families a very happy New Year. As we begin this new term, we hope that the year ahead will be filled with happiness, good health, and success for our whole school community.



We have made a fantastic start to the term, and it has been a pleasure to see pupils return to school with such positive attitudes, enthusiasm, and readiness to learn. Despite the first week being unexpectedly shortened by a snow day, pupils settled back into routines quickly and demonstrated resilience and maturity in adapting to the change. It has been wonderful to see classrooms full of energy, focus, and smiles as everyone embraces the opportunities of a new term.

Year 8 pupils have returned straight into assessments and we recognise the effort and commitment they have shown in preparing for these. They have approached this challenge with determination and we would like to commend them for their hard work so far. We wish them every success and encourage them to continue giving their best, remembering that effort and perseverance are key to achieving their goals.

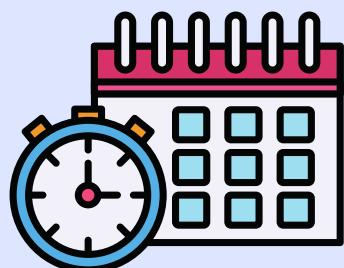
This term, there will be a strong emphasis on school uniform. It is essential that all pupils bring their blazers to school every day, as this is a required part of the school uniform. When pupils are smartly dressed, they represent themselves and the school with pride. Dressing correctly helps to foster a positive mindset towards learning and behaviour, setting high standards and expectations for all. We kindly ask for your continued support in ensuring that your child comes to school correctly dressed each day.

As we move forward into this term, we encourage pupils to approach their learning with commitment and purpose. As it says in Colossians 3:23: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters." This verse reminds us of the importance of giving our best in all that we do, both inside and outside the classroom. We look forward to a productive and successful Spring term and thank you for your ongoing support.

TERM DATES - REMINDER

SPRING TERM 1 2026

Monday 5th January 2026 - Thursday 12th February 2026.



In service training days - INSET DAYS (School closed to pupils/students)

Friday 13th February 2026 (St Teresa of Calcutta Multi Academy INSET Day)

Half-term: Monday 16th February 2026 to Friday 20th February 2026

Term ends: Friday 27th March 2026

Summer Term 2026 begins: Monday 13th April 2026

Half-term: Monday 25th May 2026 to Friday 29th May 2026

Term ends: Friday 17th July 2026

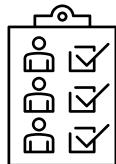
Welcome back, Year 9!

I hope you all had a restful and enjoyable Christmas holiday and found time to relax, recharge, and spend time with family and friends. It has certainly been an eventful first week back, with snow, ice, and freezing temperatures welcoming us into 2026. Despite the challenging weather, you have made a positive start to the new term, and that is something to be proud of.



This term is a particularly important one for you as Year 9 pupils. We now begin the process of thinking seriously about options and making decisions about what you would like to study as you move forward into Key Stage 4 and your GCSEs. These choices are not just about subjects, but about commitment, responsibility, and preparing yourselves for the future. You will be supported every step of the way, and we encourage you to ask questions, reflect carefully, and make choices that are right for you.

As we continue this term, let us challenge ourselves to make it the best term yet. That means focusing on the key areas that help everyone succeed:



- Attendance – being in school every day matters. Each lesson counts, and being on time to school and to every lesson helps you stay on track.



- Uniform – wearing our uniform correctly at all times shows pride in ourselves and respect for our school community.



- Attitude and effort – giving your best, even when things feel challenging, is what leads to growth and success.

As a Catholic community, we are called not only to work hard but to care for one another and to act with kindness, respect, and purpose. Pope Leo XIII reminds us of this responsibility when he said: "The world has heard enough of words; it is time to see actions."

As we begin this new year and new term, let this be our message to everyone in our community: let our actions reflect our values. Let us show commitment through attendance, respect, through our behaviour and uniform, and compassion, through how we treat one another. By working together, supporting each other, and striving to do our best, we can make 2026 a year of progress, achievement, and growth for all.

Let's move forward with confidence, determination, and faith—and make this term one we can all be proud of.

Year 9 Options

Plans for the launching of Year 9 Options are well underway. Over the coming weeks, parents and carers will receive information about the process. There will also be assemblies on the subjects we offer. Watch this space!

YEAR 10- MR BRUTON



Happy New Year! We hope that the festive break provided time for rest and reflection, as we begin a new term filled with potential for growth and achievement. In last week's assembly, we discussed a key theme for the new year: "Just and Firm of Purpose." This phrase, inspired by Edward Ilesley, emphasises the importance of setting clear goals, staying focused and committing to our purpose with determination. It ties in perfectly with the idea of renewal as we step into 2026, refreshed and ready to take on new challenges.

We also introduced the use of SMART targets – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound goals – to help guide pupils as they make progress in both their academic and personal development. It's an approach that helps keep us all on track, ensuring that we work towards tangible outcomes in a structured way.

Celebrating Successes - We are excited to announce that 167 Year 10 pupils have made it into this term's prize draw for their outstanding efforts. This recognition is based on the following impressive achievements:

- Zero Lates
- Zero Negative Behaviours
- 100% Attendance last half term
- 98% of lessons attended on time

Almost 4 out of every 5 points given in lessons have been for positive behaviour. This is an outstanding achievement, and we're proud of the pupils who have shown exceptional commitment and responsibility. Moving forward, we encourage all pupils to continue making good choices, and remember that they can earn more entries into the prize draw for the £50 prize by consistently following the school's expectations.

New Term, New Opportunities - As we begin a fresh term, we have set clear guidelines for our pupils. These are the principles that will guide them to success. Our Rules:

Be Safe

- Calm corridors
- No students out of bounds
- Phones away



Be Ready

- Correct uniform
- Correct equipment
- Know your timetable
- Be on time and walk with purpose



Be Respectful and Kind

- Put litter in the bin
- Be polite to all



What Are Our Goals? - This term, we want to keep building on the momentum from last year, with a focus on personal responsibility, positive behaviour, and academic growth. Our goal is for every pupil to:

- Set meaningful goals using SMART targets
- Take ownership of their journey, knowing that they are the author of their success
- Continue to demonstrate respect, kindness, and responsibility in all aspects of school life

We look forward to continuing this journey with your child and achieving great things together this year. Thank you for your ongoing support and your attendance to our Parents' Evening this week; it was very well attended. If you have any questions or would like to discuss your child's progress, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

As we begin a new year, I would like to wish all our Year 11 pupils and their families a very happy New Year. I hope everyone enjoyed a pleasant, restful and well-deserved Christmas break, with time to recharge and return ready for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.



The start of a new year is a natural moment for reflection and renewed focus. For our Year 11 pupils, this period marks a crucial point in their GCSE journey. Recent mock examinations have provided valuable insight into current strengths and areas for development. These results are not an end point, but a starting point—a clear guide to where effort should now be directed in order to make meaningful progress.

We encourage all pupils to reflect carefully on their mock outcomes, listen to feedback from teachers, and set clear, realistic targets for improvement. Progress between mocks and final examinations is often where the biggest gains are made, and those gains come from consistent effort, purposeful revision and a willingness to engage fully with support and intervention.

Looking ahead, the next set of mock examinations after February half term will be an important milestone. They provide another opportunity for pupils to demonstrate growth, build confidence and refine exam technique. The coming weeks are vital. Attendance, punctuality, focus in lessons and commitment to revision will all play a significant role in determining success. Every lesson counts, and every day in school matters.

We are continuing to offer a range of support, including revision sessions and targeted intervention, and we strongly encourage pupils to make full use of these opportunities. The most successful pupils are those who take ownership of their learning and actively seek help when they need it.

It has been encouraging to see many pupils return after the break with a positive mindset and a renewed determination to succeed. This attitude, combined with hard work and resilience, will be key as GCSE preparation intensifies throughout the spring term.

As we move forward into this new year, our message to Year 11 is clear: believe in your potential, trust the process, and commit fully to the journey ahead. With sustained effort and the continued support of home and school working together, we are confident our pupils can achieve outcomes they are proud of.

Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support. We look forward to working closely with you throughout the months ahead and wish all our Year 11 pupils a successful, focused and rewarding year.



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

Deadline for applications: Friday 13th February

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

- January 2026 - 'Tea and Toast' mornings in Sixth Form
- Mock Exams 2: 23rd February – 6th March 2026. Report 2 Issued: 26th March 2026
- Sixth Form applications close on Friday 13th February 2026
- March 2026 - Year 11 Sixth Form pre admission interviews
- GCSEs commence: 11th May 2026
- Monday 29th and Tuesday 30th June 2026 – Year 11 into 12 Step Up Days
- All GCSEs concluded on 24th June 2026
- Results Day and Sixth Form Enrolment: Thursday 20th August 2026



Year 13 Mock Exams – Series 2 Week commencing Monday 19th January

As our Year 13 students prepare to sit their upcoming mock examinations, we would like to take this opportunity to wish them every success. These exams represent an important milestone in their final year of schooling and a valuable opportunity to demonstrate the progress they have made so far.

Mock examinations play a crucial role in preparing students for the external exams that begin in May. They help students become familiar with exam conditions, manage their time effectively, and practise applying their knowledge under pressure. Just as importantly, mocks provide clear feedback on strengths and areas for improvement, allowing students to refine their revision strategies and build confidence well ahead of the final assessments.

Being well prepared for these exams lays a strong foundation for success later in the year. Consistent revision, good organisation, healthy routines, and a positive mindset will all contribute to helping students perform at their best. We encourage students to approach the mocks with focus and determination, seeing them not as something to fear, but as a valuable learning experience.

We are grateful for the continued support of parents and carers at this busy time, and for the dedication of our staff in guiding students through their preparation. Mock examination guidance and revision can be found on our website here: <https://www.ilsley.bham.sch.uk/sixth-form/examination-guidance/> and in the Year 13 Google Classroom. This was shared before we broke up for our Christmas break.

To our Year 13s: believe in your abilities, give your best effort, and remember that these exams are a stepping stone towards your future goals. We wish you the very best of luck.

Congratulations to Our Year 13 Students on UCAS Applications

We would like to congratulate our Year 13 students on successfully meeting their deadlines and submitting their UCAS applications. This is a significant milestone in their lives and an important step as they plan their next chapter beyond school.

This year, 49 students have applied to a wide range of universities across the country, reflecting both ambition and diversity in future pathways. Popular course choices include Criminology and Law, Teaching, Science, and Engineering, highlighting the breadth of interests and talents within our Sixth Form. Submitting a UCAS application is the result of months of careful thought, research, and hard work, and we commend students for the maturity and commitment they have shown throughout the process. We now wish them every success as they await responses from universities and consider their future options.

For students who are planning to apply for apprenticeships or move directly into employment, applications will continue over the coming months. They will be fully supported through this process with ongoing careers guidance in school from both the Sixth Form Team and our independent Careers Adviser.

Good luck to all our Year 13 students as they take these exciting and important steps towards their futures.

Year 12 Focus This Half Term: Aspiration

This half term, our focus for Year 12 is aspiration—encouraging students to think ambitiously about their futures and to make brave and courageous choices along the way. This theme was explored in this week's assembly, which challenged students to reflect on their goals, to step beyond their comfort zones, and to recognise that aspiration often begins with the confidence to say “yes” to new opportunities.

Beyond their timetabled lessons, our Sixth Form students have access to a wide range of enrichment opportunities designed to broaden horizons and support future success. One such opportunity is the Sutton Trust Programme, whose UK Summer School Programme opened this week.

The Sutton Trust is a leading social mobility charity that aims to improve access to highly selective universities and professions for young people from underrepresented backgrounds. Its Summer School Programme offers Year 12 students the chance to experience university life first-hand. Participants attend a residential programme at a leading university, where they take part in subject-specific academic sessions, lectures, and seminars, as well as social activities and guidance on university applications, personal statements, and student finance.

Students who take part in a Sutton Trust Summer School benefit greatly from the experience. They gain increased confidence, a clearer understanding of higher education, and valuable insight into what studying their chosen subject at university is really like. Many students also find that participation strengthens their UCAS applications and helps them make informed and aspirational choices about their future pathways. For the past three years, we have had increasing numbers of Year 12 students successfully participating in this programme attending universities in Central London for Engineering and Glasgow for English Literature to name but two. We are delighted to congratulate the students who have already applied this week. Their willingness to seize this opportunity shows real ambition and a readiness to embrace their future. We look forward to supporting more Year 12 students as they continue to explore opportunities, set high aspirations, and take confident steps towards their goals. For more information on the programme, follow this link: <https://summerschools.suttontrust.com/>

Congratulations to Our Year 12 Criminology Students

We would like to congratulate our Year 12 Criminology students on their excellent preparation, focus and conduct during the Unit 1 Controlled Assessment this week. They approached this important assessment with maturity and commitment and their positive attitude throughout the process was a credit to themselves.

This Controlled Assessment marks a significant point in the course. Students have now completed one of the four units in Criminology, as well as the first of two Controlled Assessments required for the qualification. Completing this stage successfully provides a strong foundation for the remaining units and future assessments.

The work produced during the assessment will be marked internally by teaching staff and the marks will then be externally verified, ensuring that national standards are met and that students' achievements are recognised fairly and accurately.

We are very proud of the way students engaged with the demands of this assessment, demonstrating resilience, organisation, and subject knowledge. Well done to all involved, and we look forward to seeing students continue to build on this success as they progress through the remainder of the course.