



THE ABI UPDATE

ISSUE 12 FRIDAY 24TH APRIL 2026

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER - MR CLINTON

Dear Parents, Pupils, Staff, Governors and Friends of ABI,
It's hard to believe we are already two weeks into the new term – it has absolutely flown by! I hope you had the opportunity to spend some quality time with your family and friends over the Easter break. If you are Catholic, I hope you enjoyed your celebrations and didn't overdo the chocolate—there's still quite a bit left at my house!

I had the pleasure of attending the blessing of the eggs with the Polish community on Easter Saturday at Holy Souls Church. Many pupils have also told me, with great excitement, how they gathered in large numbers to celebrate Eid. Whatever you were doing, and whatever your faith, I hope you enjoyed yourselves.

Enrichment continues to be a strength at Archbishop Ilsley. You'll be able to see all the sports your children can enjoy with our highly qualified and passionate PE team on page 6. I must also thank Dr Regan, Ms Jones and Mr Nunes for their superb commitment in offering the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award to our Sixth Formers.

Finally, although St Andrew's may not be to everyone's taste, if you can look beyond that, you can read about a great opportunity Mrs Rose provided for our IT and Business classes during a visit to Small Heath.

A couple of dates for you to be aware of:

- Friday 1st May is a staff training day (INSET).
- Monday 4th May is a bank holiday.

So, all pupils and students can enjoy a four-day weekend—let's hope it stays sunny!



THE ARCHDIOCESE of BIRMINGHAM

Job & Volunteering Opportunities, we are seeking to appoint an Administration Support Officer to work within the safeguarding team - [Jobs & Volunteering Opportunities | Birmingham Diocesan Trust](#)

KEY DATES:

- Friday 1st May - INSET Day. School is closed to pupils and students
- Monday 4th May - May Bank Holiday Monday. School is closed to pupils and students
- Monday 11th May - GCSE and A Level examinations begin
- Week commencing Monday 18th May and Monday 1st June - Assessment Weeks 1 and 2: Year 8
- Week commencing Monday 1st June and Monday 8th June - Assessment Weeks 1 and 2: Year 9
- Week commencing Monday 8th June and Monday 15th June - Assessment Weeks 1 and 2: Year 7
- Week commencing Monday 15th June and Monday 22nd June - Assessment Weeks 1 and 2: Year 10
- Monday 25th May - Friday 29th May - Half Term. School is closed to pupils and students

“...let your light shine.”

CATHOLIC LIFE

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION: LUKE 24:13-35

Two of the disciples of Jesus were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. Now as they talked this over, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but something prevented them from recognising him. He said to them, 'What matters are you discussing as you walk along?' They stopped short, their faces downcast.



Then one of them, called Cleopas, answered him, 'You must be the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have been happening there these last few days.' 'What things?' he asked. 'All about Jesus of Nazareth' they answered 'who proved he was a great prophet by the things he said and did in the sight of God and of the whole people; and how our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him crucified. Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free.

And this is not all: two whole days have gone by since it all happened; and some women from our group have astounded us: they went to the tomb in the early morning, and when they did not find the body, they came back to tell us they had seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive. Some of our friends went to the tomb and found everything exactly as the women had reported, but of him they saw nothing.'

Then he said to them, 'You foolish men! So slow to believe the full message of the prophets! Was it not ordained that the Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory?' Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself.

When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on; but they pressed him to stay with them. 'It is nearly evening' they said 'and the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them. Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?'

They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions, who said to them, 'Yes, it is true. The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

How is this relevant today?

In this Gospel, two disciples walk away from Jerusalem feeling confused and disappointed. As they talk, Jesus joins them—but they do not recognise him. Only later, in the breaking of bread, are their eyes opened. This speaks to us today and we can certainly relate this message to our pupils and students who are preparing for external exams in May; it's natural to feel pressure, uncertainty, or even self-doubt when things don't go as planned. Like the disciples, we can sometimes feel overwhelmed, yet this passage reminds us that Jesus is always with us—walking beside us in those moments of revision, worry and challenge, even if we don't always recognise it. The disciples come to recognise Jesus in a simple moment, reminding us that God is present in the ordinary—through quiet perseverance, support from others, and moments of stillness. Their "hearts burning" shows that faith can bring encouragement and hope when we need it most.

Finally, once they recognise Jesus, they go and share the good news. In the same way, we are called to move forward with confidence, supporting one another with kindness and encouragement. May all our pupils and students know that they do not face their exams alone, and may they find strength, peace, and quiet confidence in the knowledge that God walks with them every step of the way.

"... their eyes were opened and they recognised him."

BEHAVIOUR AND STANDARDS - MRS BURNHAM

PASTORAL



Uniform remains a key whole-school focus. Please note trainers and tight/short black skirts – these are not part of our uniform. Summer shirts may now be worn; however, pupils must still wear either a blazer or blue knitted jumper to maintain standards. Consistency from all pupils is essential in getting this right.

Respect and tolerance remain at the heart of our school culture. We are continuing to reinforce the importance of speaking to one another respectfully, following staff instructions first time and showing consideration for others. This extends beyond the classroom – pupils represent Archbishop Ilsley Catholic School in the community, particularly when travelling to and from school, and should conduct themselves accordingly.

We are also maintaining a strong focus on corridor conduct, punctuality and readiness to learn. Every lesson should start with pupils calm, equipped and ready to engage.

The “Every Minute Matters” initiative continues to be highly successful. Pupils who arrive on time to school and lessons receive zero negatives are rewarded with early lunch on Thursdays, and the number of pupils achieving this is increasing each week. This is a great example of how positive choices are recognised and rewarded.

Thank you for your continued support in maintaining high standards

ENRICHMENT AT ARCHBISHOP ILSLEY

SUMMER 2026 PE EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMME				
Monday Before School 8.00am - 8.30am	Tuesday Before School 8.00am - 8.30am	Wednesday Before School 8.00am - 8.30am	Thursday Before School 8.00am - 8.30am	Friday Before School 8.00am - 8.30am
	Badminton & Table Tennis: KH (Sports Hall)		Badminton & Table Tennis: KH (Sports Hall)	
Monday After School 3.20pm - 4.15pm	Tuesday After School 3.20pm - 4.15pm	Wednesday After School 3.20pm - 4.15pm	Thursday After School 3.20pm - 4.15pm	Friday After School 3.20pm - 4.15pm
Mindful Movement: SO (Gym) Cricket: KH (Astro)	Netball: ZH (Muga/Gym)		Rugby Moseley RC (KH) Girls Football ZH (Astro)	Dance Jade (Gym)



I hope you and your families had a restful and joyful Easter break. It has been wonderful to have the pupils back with us, and I am delighted to see how quickly they have settled back into their studies.

A Record-Breaking Start

I want to begin by thanking you for your continued support. Once again, Year 7 has the best attendance in the school, with a huge well done to 7BL who currently hold the top spot for the entire school! Furthermore, we achieved the most positive house points this week. This is a testament to the pupils' hard work and the positive attitudes they have brought back with them.



Summer Term: Getting Involved

As we move into the summer term, I am keen to see Year 7 get even more involved in our extra-curricular clubs. We have Maths, Chess, Science, Mindful Movement which involves art, yoga, games, debating. We also have summer sports and Mr. Hemmings has already commented on how well the year group has been performing during Cricket in PE; Ms. Harley continues to update me on the fantastic progress the girls are making on the netball court. We would love to see that talent translate to our after-school clubs.

Please remember that all pupils partaking in extra-curricular activities will be awarded house points for their dedication and commitment to the school.

Upcoming Highlights and Standards

The summer term is always a highlight of the school year, with events like Sports Day and our trip to Carding Mill Valley to look forward to. However, it is vital that pupils maintain high standards of academic work and behaviour to ensure they don't miss out on these opportunities. This does include wearing a blazer!

Inspiration and Faith

We were incredibly blessed this week to host Tobi Sho-Silva, a professional footballer from Solihull Moors. He spoke powerfully about the discipline required for professional sports and shared his personal journey of faith as a Christian. We are so grateful to him for inspiring our pupils to chase their dreams while staying grounded in their values.



This term, our Catholic focus is on Solidarity. To reflect this, I would like us to keep this verse in mind: "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labour: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up." Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

Supporting Our Families

Over the Easter break, I had the privilege of meeting with the charity Care for the Family. This wonderful organisation supports families through the transitions of life. They have recently released an app that I highly encourage parents to download. It offers excellent advice on navigating the teenage years and provides support for those who may be struggling. The founder of the organization also wrote a very moving book called "A Knock at the Door," which I found to be an incredibly inspiring read.



Final thought

Thank you for your ongoing partnership. Let's work together this term to ensure every pupil in Year 7 continues to let their light shine in everything they do. Have a great weekend and God bless.

Welcome back to the final term for Year 8. We hope you all had a restful and enjoyable break and were able to spend quality time with your loved ones. As we begin this final stretch of the academic year, we look forward to a term filled with continued growth, achievement, and positive experiences for all pupils.



We would like to remind all parents and carers to ensure that pupils arrive at school in the correct uniform each day. Pupils look smart and presentable when fully dressed in their school uniform, and this helps to foster a sense of pride and belonging within the school community. Being properly dressed also supports a positive mindset, ensuring pupils are ready to learn, focused, and prepared to do their very best. Please also ensure that pupils do not bring squishy toys into school. There have been several incidents where these have burst, causing damage to books, equipment, and school uniform. If a pupil requires a fidget aid, this must be recorded on their pupil passport. Suitable alternatives include a small piece of ribbon or Blu Tack, which are less likely to cause disruption or damage.

Year 8 pupils will be attending a weekly church service every Tuesday during form time. This will provide a valuable opportunity for reflection, quiet thought, and spiritual development. Taking time out of a busy week to pause and reflect can have a meaningful impact on pupils' wellbeing, helping them to feel grounded and supported. As it says in the Bible, "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10), reminding us of the importance of moments of calm and reflection in our daily lives. Interform competitions have begun this week, and it has been wonderful to see such enthusiasm and participation from our pupils. Well done to the forms who have already progressed to the next round. These events are a great way to build teamwork, resilience and a sense of community and we encourage all pupils to get involved and support one another.

As the term progresses, Year 8 pupils will also be continuing to build on the knowledge and skills developed throughout the year. This is an important time to remain focused, complete all homework to a high standard and prepare for any upcoming assessments. We encourage pupils to take pride in their work, ask for help when needed, and make the most of every learning opportunity.

We also encourage pupils to continue demonstrating our school values in all that they do, showing respect, kindness, and responsibility both in and out of the classroom. Small actions can make a big difference in creating a positive and supportive environment for everyone. We are confident that this will be a productive and rewarding term for Year 8, and we look forward to celebrating their achievements along the way. Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We hope Year 8 have a successful, enjoyable, and fulfilling final term.

YEAR 10- MR BRUTON

As we move through this crucial stage of Year 10, I want to remind pupils and parents of the high standards we uphold at Archbishop Ilsey – standards rooted in our Catholic mission to become the best version of ourselves. Uniform and PE kit must be correct every day. How we present ourselves reflects the respect we hold for our community and the God-given dignity of every person we meet. Please check that shirts are tucked in, ties are worn properly, and PE kit is packed on the right days.



Punctuality and attendance matter enormously. Arriving on time to every lesson is an act of service to classmates and teachers – it echoes the Gospel call to be faithful in the small things. Every missed lesson is a missed opportunity. Equipment should also be ready each morning: pen, pencil, ruler, planner, and reading book. Preparation is a form of stewardship, taking responsibility for what we have been given.

Finally, mock exams are just two months away. Now is the time to build strong revision routines at home. With perseverance, prayer, and the steady support of staff and families, our Year 10s will flourish in this vital year.



Welcome back to everyone - I hope you all had a well deserved rest spending time with families and friends.

Year 9 had a fantastic last term, one that was full of important choices and significant decisions about their future. The options they selected will now shape their journey through Years 10 and 11, making this both an exciting and pivotal time. They showed themselves to be hardworking, focused, and consistent in their approach to learning, which was very encouraging to see. As they continue to approach the end of Key Stage 3, it is clear that they are building on this momentum and striving to be the very best they can be.

Year 9 had been reverently spending time in church with Deacon Martin each week, taking the opportunity to pause, reflect, and engage more deeply with the season of Lent. These moments provided a calm and meaningful space for pupils to consider their actions, reflect on the importance of prayer, and think about how they could grow spiritually during this important time in the Church's year.

We also celebrated our Praise Assembly before the Easter break, where pupils were recognised for their commitment to learning, determination to succeed, and positive attitudes. It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate achievements across the year group, including subject awards as well as pastoral and attendance recognition. It was particularly pleasing to see so many pupils acknowledged for their efforts and dedication.

As the new term began, Year 9 returned well rested and ready to embrace the challenges ahead. With the transition into Key Stage 4 approaching, they continued to develop their independence, take ownership of their learning, and demonstrate the maturity and dedication needed for the next stage of their education.

Developing effective revision habits at this stage is also essential. Encouraging your child to regularly review what they have learned, using techniques such as retrieval practice, flashcards, and self-quizzing, will help to strengthen their knowledge and build confidence over time.

Attendance and punctuality continue to play a vital role in success. Every lesson contributes to the knowledge and skills required for GCSE and consistent attendance ensures that no learning is missed. Organisation is another key factor. Having the correct equipment each day, keeping notes organised, and revisiting work regularly can make a significant difference to both progress and confidence.

We also launched our benchball competition this week, and it has already proven to be a fantastic success. The matches were highly competitive, with plenty of energy and enthusiasm on display from all involved. Adding to the excitement, tutors joined in this time, which brought an extra level of competition and enjoyment for the pupils.

It was great to see such positive engagement, teamwork, and school spirit throughout, with everyone fully embracing the opportunity to take part. We are looking forward to seeing how the competition develops over the coming weeks.



As we move further into this crucial term, I would like to begin by recognising a significant milestone for our Year 11 pupils – they have now sat their first official exam. This is an important moment, marking the transition from preparation to performance. I have been incredibly impressed with the maturity, focus, and resilience shown by so many students as they approached this first challenge. It sets a strong tone for what lies ahead and I encourage all students to reflect positively on this experience and use it to build confidence for the exams still to come.

With the exam period now underway, it is vital that students maintain momentum. Every lesson, revision session, and independent study opportunity counts. Success at this stage is built on consistency – the small, daily efforts that accumulate over time. We continue to offer a range of support in school, and I strongly urge students to make the most of these opportunities. The final weeks ahead represent the culmination of five years of hard work, and there is still so much to gain.

As a Catholic school community, this time of year also invites us to reflect on the values that guide us. In moments of pressure and challenge, we are reminded of the importance of perseverance, integrity, and hope. We encourage our students to approach each day with a sense of purpose, to support one another, and to trust in their own God-given talents. Through commitment and faith, even the most difficult challenges can be overcome. You are all capable of achieving great things, and we are here to support you every step of the way.

While this is a time of hard work and determination, there are also key moments to look forward to. We are delighted to remind you that the Year 11 Prom will take place on 1st July 2026. This promises to be a fantastic evening and a well-earned celebration of the students' journey through school. Further details regarding tickets will be shared shortly, and we encourage students to secure their place as soon as tickets become available so that they do not miss out on this special occasion.

As always, I want to reinforce that our high standards remain unchanged. Expectations around attendance, punctuality, behaviour, and commitment to learning are as important now as they have ever been. These final weeks are not a time to ease off – they are a time to rise to the challenge, show pride in your work, and finish strongly. Being present, on time, and fully engaged gives every student the best possible chance of success.

We are incredibly proud of how far Year 11 have come already – not just in their academic progress, but in the way they have matured into responsible and determined young people. The journey is not quite over yet, but the finish line is now in sight. Let us continue to work together, support one another, and approach each day with determination and positivity.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support and partnership. You remain in our thoughts and prayers during this important time.

Important dates for Year 11:

- Monday 11th May - External examinations begin
- Year 11 into 12 Step Up Days - Monday 29th June and Tuesday 30th June 2026
- Year 11 Results Day - Thursday 20th August 2026
- Year 12 Enrolment Day - Thursday 20th August 2026

Glad to be back!

We have been delighted to welcome our Year 12 and Year 13 students back after the Easter break. It has been wonderful to see them return refreshed and ready for what promises to be a busy and exciting summer term. For our Year 12 students, preparations are well underway for Work Experience, taking place in the week beginning Monday 29th June. It is essential that students now secure their placements if they have not already done so. We would like to commend those students who have already arranged their placements—well done. This is a valuable opportunity to gain insight into the world of work and to develop important skills that will support future education and career pathways.

Later in the term we are looking to arrange a Duke of Edinburgh experience for those Year 12 students who have signed up for the Gold Award, and we look forward to sharing further details soon. In addition, students who applied for the Sutton Trust Summer School will now be hearing the outcome of their applications. We are particularly pleased to celebrate the success of Raaina Z, who has secured a place on the Medicine and Medical Sciences strand at the University of Nottingham this July. This is a fantastic achievement and an excellent opportunity—congratulations to her.

Year 12 Mock Exam Week (Series 2) will take place in the week commencing Monday 1st June. Students should now be organising their revision materials and ensuring that notes for all completed topics are thorough, clear, and well-structured. Further guidance on mock examinations will be shared with students nearer the time.

A reminder to all students about our expectations regarding smart business dress, the wearing of lanyards, and punctuality. These are important in maintaining a professional and purposeful learning environment. Students who take part in 'Dress Down' Friday are also reminded to dress appropriately for a school and workplace setting. Strappy vest tops, shorts, and clothing that exposes the midriff are not permitted. Students may be sent home to change if their outfit is deemed unsuitable.

We would also like to remind parents and carers that only students with attendance above 94% are eligible for 'Relaxed Reg', allowing them to go home at lunchtime if they do not have a timetabled lesson in Period 5. Strong attendance is essential to success, and all students are expected to attend every timetabled lesson, including their CoRE lesson. CoRE is a valuable part of our curriculum and an important element of our ethos as a Catholic Sixth Form.

Year 12 Enrichment Subjects

We would like to take this opportunity to commend our Year 12 students for successfully meeting their EPQ deadlines and for the excellent standard of presentations delivered over the last two weeks. This marks a significant milestone in their Sixth Form journey, and students should be proud of the commitment and independence they have demonstrated. The Extended Project Qualification is a highly valuable enrichment subject, equivalent to an AS Level qualification, and enables students to gain additional UCAS points. More importantly, it equips students with a range of essential skills that are highly regarded by universities and employers alike. Through the EPQ process, students develop their ability to conduct independent research, communicate effectively in extended writing, evaluate source reliability and bias, and present confidently through oracy. They also learn the importance of organisation and meeting deadlines—skills that will support them well beyond Sixth Form. EPQ teachers are now in the process of marking and grading students' work, and we look forward to sharing outcomes in due course.

For those students studying Core Maths, we would also like to highlight the upcoming external examination dates. Paper 1 will take place on Thursday 14th May at 1:00pm, and Paper 2 on Friday 22nd May at 1:00pm. We wish all students the very best as they prepare for these assessments.

Enrichment - Gold DofE Experience

In the last week before the Easter holidays, Terrence E, Catalina M, Daniel H, Tum D, Michael W, Andrei A, Rayyan T and Ayaan H completed their Gold practice expedition in Bannau Brycheiniog (Brecon Beacons). During the expedition they summited Rhos Dirion (713 m) in snow flurries and camped under clear skies, which took the temperature down to 1.5 degrees one night!

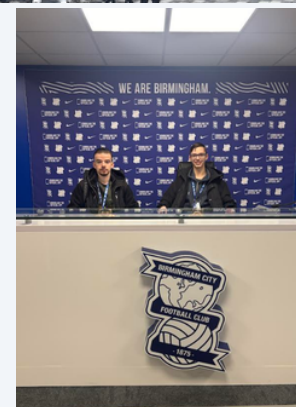
During the holiday period, Terrence and Mr Mendes travelled by train to north Wales to complete their 4-day Residential section. They both loved the experience, Terrence being particularly pleased with his construction of a stud wall. Well done to everyone involved and thank you to Dr Regan, Mrs Jones and Mr Mendes for their planning, organisation and support of our students.



BCFC Enrichment Experience

Students from the IT and Business classes recently enjoyed an inspiring trip to Birmingham City Football Club, gaining a fascinating insight into how a major sports organisation operates behind the scenes. The visit included a behind-the-scenes stadium tour of St. Andrew's, where students explored key areas of the ground and learned about the logistics, technology and planning involved in running a professional football club. A particular highlight was the opportunity to sit in the executive seats, the very same seats used by high-profile figures such as Tom Brady, Tom Wagner, Robbie Williams, David Beckham and Ryan Reynolds, which made the experience even more memorable.

The highlight of the trip was an interactive and engaging talk led by Jon Grimes, Chief Commercial Officer, who shared invaluable real-world insight into the commercial operations of BCFC. Students learned about marketing, sponsorship, digital strategy and revenue generation, and how these areas link directly to their studies in Business and IT. It was a truly insightful experience, helping students understand how a professional football club is run as a business and how classroom learning connects to real-world careers. Thank you to Mrs Rose for organising this memorable aspirational experience.



Year 13 Key Information

As Year 13 students approach their final weeks before study leave, attendance remains absolutely crucial to their success. While it can be tempting to begin independent revision early, time in school continues to offer significant advantages that are difficult to replicate at home. In lessons, students are engaging in carefully planned revision activities designed to maximise their performance. Teachers are focusing on active revision strategies, including working through past examination questions, refining exam technique, and addressing common misconceptions. These sessions provide immediate feedback and targeted support, helping students to understand exactly what examiners are looking for and how to improve their responses.

Importantly, lessons also revisit key content from earlier in the course. This structured review ensures that gaps in knowledge are identified and addressed, giving students greater confidence across the full specification. Being present allows students to ask questions, participate in discussion, and benefit from the expertise of their teachers at a critical stage in their preparation. It is encouraging to see the commitment and determination shown by so many students. We would like to extend our congratulations to all those who attended the Easter Revision sessions, as well as the ongoing intervention sessions taking place throughout the week. These opportunities provide valuable support and are making a positive difference to students' preparation. Our sincere thanks also go to staff for their continued dedication and excellent support during this period. Their guidance and encouragement are instrumental in helping students feel confident and well-prepared.

Earlier this week, Year 12 and 13 students attended an assembly focused on examination protocols and regulations with Mrs Grant and Ms O'Donnell, our Exams Officer. This served as an important reminder of expectations and procedures, ensuring that all students are fully informed as they approach the examination season. This guidance will also be shared with parents and carers. It will also be shared with Year 12 students and their parents and carers; there are a number of students in Year 12 who will also sit external examinations in May/June.

Year 13's last day of teaching will be Thursday 14th May, with their Leavers' Mass and Celebrations taking place on the afternoon of Friday 15th May. Timings and arrangements will be finalised in due course and shared with parents and carers. Students will officially begin Study Leave on Monday 18th May.

In the meantime, we are also delighted to invite students to the Leavers' Celebration Dinner on Wednesday 24th June at 7:00pm, held at the Village Hotel, Shirley, Solihull. This is always a wonderful occasion—an opportunity to celebrate students' time with us and the end of examinations with friends and staff. Tickets are priced at £25 and can be purchased via ParentPay or by cash to the Sixth Form office. Please ensure tickets are purchased by Thursday 30th April.

Please see the following important dates and information for students applying to university:

- 6th May 2026: Decline by Default (DBD) deadline—university offers not replied to are automatically declined.
- 13th May 2026: Deadline for universities to respond to applications submitted by 14 January.
- 3rd June 2026: Deadline to reply to offers (students must select their firm/insurance offer) if all decisions were received by 13th May.
- 2nd July 2026: Clearing opens
- 13th August 2026: A-level results day and Clearing deadline

Key Advice for Year 13

- **Student Finance:** Applications are now open and guidance has been sent to students, parents and carers
- **University accommodation:** Check individual university deadlines, often around June 2026.