



THE ABI UPDATE

ISSUE 13 FRIDAY 8TH MAY 2026

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER - MR CLINTON

Dear parents, pupils, carers, students and friends of Archbishop Illesley,

Monday marks the beginning of the exam season. On behalf of all the staff, governors and colleagues at St Teresa of Calcutta MAC, I wish every Year 11 and Year 13 student the very best of luck.

Mr McDonald (GCSE pupils) and Mrs Grant (Sixth Form students) have written to parents over the last couple of weeks. Here are some tips as we enter this important period:

- Keep your exam timetable safe and share it with family and friends. Add it to your calendar or display it in a prominent place in your home.
- Exams can be a stressful time, so ensure you prioritise wellbeing and exercise during the examination period.
- Revise in short, 30-minute bursts, away from your phone and other distractions.
- Transform what you have read and listened to into flashcards, mind maps and essay plans.
- Practise past papers and ask your teacher to mark them.
- Ensure you take breaks and reward yourself for all your hard work.

In terms of lower school pupils, you will have read my letter about the uniform drive that will commence after half term. Uniform is important for many reasons, including fostering pride in Archbishop Illesley and removing pressure to wear the latest fashions. Most importantly, it helps to imbue a sense of belonging. The word "uniform" obviously means "the same", and this is such an important feature of schools. If parents have any concerns regarding finances or necessary adjustments, please contact the school. Finally, I wish everyone an enjoyable and revision-filled weekend. In the words of St Matthew's Gospel, "Let your Light Shine" and make yourselves and your families proud.

"...let your light shine."

KEY DATES:

- 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



WATER SAFETY ON HOLIDAY

An average of 82 UK citizens drown each year whilst abroad. Whether holidaying abroad, or at home in the UK and Ireland, follow these basic principles to help ensure your family stays safe whilst having fun in, on or around water.

<https://www.rlss.org.uk/safety-on-holiday>

CATHOLIC LIFE

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION: JOHN 14:1-7

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still, and trust in me. There are many rooms in my Father's house; if there were not, I should have told you. I am going now to prepare a place for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you with me; so that where I am you may be too. You know the way to the place where I am going.'

Thomas said, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus said:

'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you know me, you know my Father too. From this moment you know him and have seen him.'

How is this relevant today?

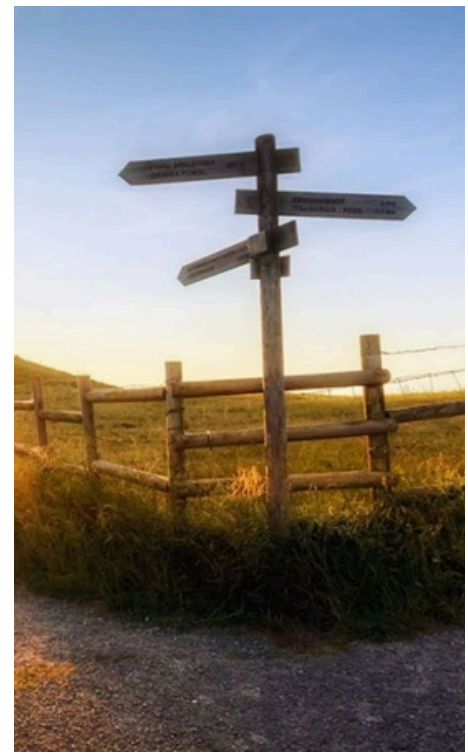
In a world that can often feel fast-moving and uncertain, Jesus' words offer both comfort and direction: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still, and trust in me." Spoken at a moment when his disciples felt anxious and unsure, this message continues to resonate—especially for our pupils and students as they face the pressures of school life and important milestones.

This week, as we reflect on our theme of integrity, this Gospel passage invites us to consider what it means to live truthfully and authentically. When Jesus says, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life," he is not only revealing who he is, but also showing us how we are called to live. Integrity is about aligning our actions with truth—choosing honesty, even when it is difficult and doing what is right, even when no one is watching.

For our pupils and students preparing for external examinations, this message is particularly important. Exams can bring pressure, temptation, and self-doubt. In these moments, integrity means trusting in their own efforts, using their gifts honestly, and resisting the urge to take shortcuts. It also means recognising that their worth is not defined by results alone, but by who they are becoming as young people of character and faith.

Jesus' reassurance that there are "many rooms" in the Father's house reminds us that each child has a unique place and purpose. Success looks different for everyone, and each journey is valued by God. As a school community, we are committed to supporting every pupil and student—not only in achieving their best academically, but in growing into individuals of integrity, resilience, and compassion.

For parents and carers, this is an opportunity to encourage calm, confidence, and perspective at home. Simple reminders—to do their best, to stay honest, and to trust in God—can make a lasting difference. Creating a supportive environment where effort is valued over perfection helps children approach their exams with both courage and peace. As we move through this important time in the school year, may we hold onto Jesus' words. In moments of stress or uncertainty, we are invited to trust, to act with integrity, and to walk in the truth. In doing so, we not only navigate challenges more faithfully—we also grow closer to the One who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.



...**“Do not let your hearts be troubled.
Trust in God still, and trust in me...”**

BEHAVIOUR AND STANDARDS - MRS BURNHAM

PASTORAL



At the heart of our school is a strong focus on high expectations, consistency, and respect. We continue to work closely with pupils to ensure our routines and standards are understood and followed by all.

A key priority is punctuality. Arriving on time to school and to every lesson is essential so that pupils can make the most of their learning. Being ready from the very start of the lesson sets the tone for success. We are also reinforcing our expectations around uniform. Wearing the correct uniform helps pupils feel part of our school community and ensures they are prepared and ready to learn each day.

In lessons, we expect all pupils to focus, engage, and give their best effort. Positive learning behaviours allow all students to succeed and help create calm, purposeful classrooms.

Equally important is how we treat one another. We continue to promote a culture where pupils are kind, respectful, and considerate towards both staff and their peers. Working together in a positive way helps build a safe and supportive environment for everyone.

We appreciate your continued support in reinforcing these values at home. By working together, we can ensure all pupils thrive both academically and personally.

YEAR 8 - MRS WAFI

HEAD OF YEAR UPDATES

We hope you all had a wonderful and restful long weekend, and that you were able to enjoy some meaningful time with friends and family. These moments of rest and connection are so important in supporting our wellbeing, especially during a busy term.



As we move closer to the upcoming exam period, we would like to wish all of Year 8 every success. Pupils have been working diligently in their lessons, demonstrating increasing focus, resilience, and maturity in their approach to learning. We are very proud of the commitment they have shown so far. We encourage them to continue building on this by maintaining a consistent revision routine at home, staying organised, and making time for rest and balance. As it says in Proverbs 16:3, "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans." This is a timely reminder for students to approach their studies with purpose and confidence, knowing that their hard work will help lay strong foundations for success.

Alongside their academic efforts, it has been a pleasure to see pupils enjoying the final stages of the football tournaments. The interform competitions have provided a wonderful opportunity for Year 8 to come together, show teamwork, and demonstrate excellent sportsmanship. It has been lovely to witness such enthusiasm, encouragement, and school spirit from all involved.

A gentle reminder regarding our school uniform expectations: skirts should be pleated and worn appropriately at all times. As the weather continues to improve, we also ask that pupils come to school each day with a water bottle to ensure they stay hydrated and ready to learn.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.



As we move further into the summer term, I am pleased to share our latest news and updates from across the year group. It has been a busy fortnight, and as always, my goal is to ensure that our Year 7 pupils continue to lead by example.

Since I became Head of Year 7, I have been incredibly proud of how this group has led the way in effort, behaviour, and kindness. We want to ensure we maintain that momentum as the weather warms up!

Upholding Our High Standards

To keep our school a safe and focused environment, I would like to remind families of our core expectations. As the sun begins to shine, please ensure the following:

- **Prohibited Items:** Items such as squishies, balloons, and water pistols are not permitted in school. These will be confiscated if seen, as they can be a distraction from learning.
- **Be Ready:** Pupils must have their timetables on them at all times. This is especially important as we move into next week, which marks the final Create Rotation of the academic year.
- **Uniform & Equipment:** Please ensure your child is in full school uniform and has the correct equipment for their daily lessons.

Extra-Curricular Opportunities

There are still so many ways for pupils to "let their light shine" outside of the classroom. Whether it is cricket with Mr. Hemmings or netball with Ms. Harley, getting involved builds character and community. Please refer to the timetable attached to my previous email for a full list of clubs available to Year 7.

Safeguarding & Support: Tootoot.co.uk

This Friday, Miss McLaughlin delivered an important assembly regarding tootoot.co.uk. This is a safeguarding software that allows pupils to report any incidents or concerns they may have in a secure and confidential way. All pupils should have now received their individual logins from their form tutors. We encourage pupils to use this tool to ensure everyone feels safe and supported within our school.

Faith and Community

Next week, our spiritual focus turns to the Parable of the Good Samaritan. We will be encouraging pupils to think deeply about what it means to be a "neighbour" and the importance of being kind to everyone, especially those who may be different from us.

As we focus on building a great community, let us keep this verse at the heart of our actions: "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together... but encouraging one another." Hebrews 10:24-25

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and support. I hope you all have a restful weekend.

Please continue to pray for our Year 7 pupils as they enter this final rotation of the year.



I hope you all had a wonderful long weekend, spending time making special memories with family and friends.

We have now completed the first round of bench ball, finishing the week with some fantastic semi-finals. This means we are all set for an exciting final next week! It has been brilliant to see pupils coming together in their form groups each morning, showing teamwork, encouragement and a real sense of community through friendly competition. I'm still not quite sure who enjoyed it more—the pupils or the form tutors!

We are also coming close to the final stages of our Envision programme. It has been truly inspiring to witness the growth in these pupils over the past weeks. They have developed not only in confidence, but also in their ability to communicate their ideas clearly, work collaboratively, and take initiative. Many have stepped outside of their comfort zones—leading discussions, presenting to others, and showing resilience when faced with challenges. Their maturity and self-belief have noticeably increased, and they are beginning to recognise the impact they can have, both within school and beyond. It has been a real privilege to watch them grow into more confident, capable and reflective young people.

We look forward to celebrating both the benchball champions and the achievements of our Envision pupils in the coming days/ weeks.

As the warmer summer weather continues, a reminder that full school uniform is still expected. Pupils should be wearing either a jumper or blazer at all times; jackets should not be worn instead of uniform items or over shirts in place of a blazer. Maintaining high standards in uniform helps set the tone for a focused and respectful learning environment.

Punctuality to lessons is also key to success. With five lessons each day, every minute of learning counts. Arriving on time ensures pupils are settled, ready to learn, and do not miss important instructions or key knowledge at the start of lessons. Consistently being punctual builds good habits, supports academic progress, and shows respect for both staff and fellow pupils' learning.

Maintaining good behaviour in lessons is essential for everyone's success. When pupils are focused, respectful, and ready to learn, it creates a positive environment where everyone can achieve their best. This means listening carefully to instructions, contributing appropriately, and allowing others the opportunity to learn without disruption.

Good behaviour also shows respect—for teachers, classmates, and pupils' own education. Small actions, such as staying on task, being organised, and following classroom expectations, make a big difference over time. When everyone plays their part, lessons run smoothly, learning time is maximised, and outcomes improve for all.

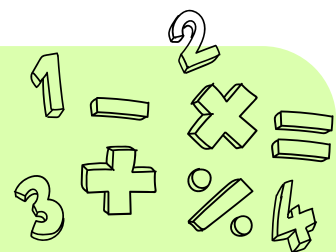
Let's continue to take pride in our behaviour and make every lesson count.

SUBJECT ENRICHMENT NEWS - SUCCESS IN MATHS!

Last week some of our mathematicians in Year 7 and 8 took part in the Junior Maths Challenge, a national competition run by the UK Maths Trust. The competition is designed to promote mathematical reasoning, precision, and creative problem-solving.

Not only did pupils achieve 26 bronze and 13 silver certificates, but one pupil achieved a phenomenal gold award! To top it off this gold award was high enough to see them get through to the next round of the competition taking place in June! Well done to all the award winners and all those who took part!

Mr Blair and the Maths Department



YEAR 10- MR BRUTON

HEAD OF YEAR UPDATES

As we move further into the summer term, we would like to take this opportunity to remind all Year 10 pupils about the importance of maintaining high standards in preparation for the transition into their final GCSE year.



Firstly, we would appreciate your support in ensuring that pupils attend school in the correct uniform each day. Wearing the correct uniform helps pupils feel part of our school community and reflects the pride we have in our school. High standards of presentation contribute positively to the learning environment and help students develop a professional attitude towards school and future responsibilities.

We would also like to emphasise the importance of punctuality. Arriving on time to school and lessons ensures pupils are ready to learn from the beginning of each lesson and helps establish positive routines that will be essential as they prepare for their GCSE examinations next year.

Next week, Year 10 students will attend an assembly focused on the importance of effective revision and preparation for their upcoming Year 10 examinations. During the assembly, students will be given guidance on revision strategies and how to organise their time successfully.

Students will also receive their examination timetable next week. We encourage parents and carers to discuss the timetable with their child and help them begin planning a structured revision schedule at home.

Thank you for your continued support in helping our students achieve their full potential.

YEAR 11 - MR FRANCIOSO

As we continue through this important examination period, I would like to take a moment to recognise the excellent start Year 11 have made. We have already completed our first two GCSE exams in Art and Health and Social Care, and I have been incredibly impressed with the calm, mature and focused approach shown by our pupils.



These early exams set the tone for what lies ahead, and it is vital that we now maintain that momentum. This is the final push – the weeks where all the hard work, revision, and preparation truly come together. Every lesson, every revision session, and every small effort counts.

Our message remains simple: keep doing the right things - Be on time. Be present in every lesson. Stay focused. Continue revising consistently. Success at this stage is not about sudden changes, but about maintaining the high standards that have already been established. The pupils who continue to attend well, arrive punctually, and fully engage in their lessons are the ones who will give themselves the very best chance of achieving their potential. We also remind our pupils to look after themselves during this busy time – ensuring they get enough rest, stay organised, and approach each day with a positive mindset.

As we move forward, we take strength from our Catholic values. In moments of pressure and challenge, we are reminded of the importance of perseverance, resilience, and faith. Through prayer, reflection, and support for one another, we continue to grow not only academically, but as young people of character and compassion. May we approach each day with determination, trusting in the gifts we have been given and striving to use them to the very best of our ability.

Finally, a reminder that our Year 11 Prom will take place on 1st July. This will be a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the end of this journey together, and further details regarding tickets will be shared shortly.

We are incredibly proud of the way Year 11 have approached the start of their exams, and we look forward to seeing them continue this strong, focused effort in the weeks ahead. Let us keep going – together – with determination and purpose.

Year 13 Leavers

As our Year 13 students approach their final week in school next week, we would like to remind all parents and carers that attendance remains extremely important during this crucial period. Students should continue to attend all lessons and revision sessions punctually in order for them to be fully prepared to begin their external examinations.

As outlined in our letter dated 29th April, written examinations commence from Monday 11th May. Timetabled lessons will finish on Thursday 14th May, with students beginning Study Leave from Monday 18th May. During Study Leave, students will only be required to attend school for examinations and any additional revision sessions arranged by staff.

We are also looking forward to celebrating our Year 13 students and reflecting on their time with us during our Leavers' Celebrations on Friday 15th May. A Celebration Assembly will take place in the Common Room at 12:00pm, followed by a Thanksgiving Mass at Holy Souls Church at 2:00pm. Parents and carers are warmly invited to join us for the Mass as we celebrate this important milestone together.

Students are reminded that:

- They should continue to attend school in business dress when attending examinations or revision sessions.
- Lanyards must be worn at all times on site.
- Students should use the Victoria Road entrance when attending school during the examination period.
- Morning examinations begin at 9:00am, with students required to arrive by 8:40am and line up at 8:45am.
- Afternoon examinations begin at 1:00pm, with students lined up by 12:45pm.

We are also pleased to remind families that the Year 13 Celebration Dinner will take place on Wednesday 24th June at The Village Hotel, Solihull – a wonderful opportunity for students and staff to celebrate together at the end of their school journey.

The full Summer Examination timetable is available on the school website and through students' Google Classroom accounts. We encourage all parents and carers to continue supporting students with revision and preparation during this important time.

Finally, we would like to thank our Year 13 students for their contribution to school life over the years. We wish them every success in their examinations and look forward to celebrating their achievements in the weeks ahead.

Year 12 Mock Examinations

As we approach the end of the academic year, we would like to remind Year 12 students and parents/carers that Year 12 Mock Examinations will begin on Monday 1st June. These examinations are an important part of students' academic progress and entry into Year 13.

Students should now be beginning a structured programme of revision in preparation for their examinations. To support this process, all students will receive Mock Examination Guidance that provides valuable revision advice, including key topics to focus on as well as recommended websites and resources to support independent study.

We would like to stress the importance of these examinations. Results from the mock examinations, alongside class-based assessments completed throughout Year 12 and into Year 13, will be used to support discussions with students regarding future pathways after Sixth Form. They will also help to inform, although not solely determine, UCAS predicted grades issued during Year 13.

Students studying Criminology, IT, Core Mathematics and Health and Social Care will not sit examinations during this mock examination series, as they will instead be completing their external examinations in these subjects in the coming weeks.

We encourage all students to make the most of the support available to them, maintain strong attendance and begin revising early to ensure they are fully prepared.

We wish all Year 12 students every success as they prepare for this important examination period.

YEAR 12 DATES FOR THE DIARY

- Monday 1st June: Mock Exam Week Series 2
- Monday 29 June to Friday 3 July 2026: Year 12 Work Experience Week. This will be a valuable opportunity for Year 12 students to secure in-person placements with local employers, giving them firsthand insight into the world of work and helping them build essential workplace skills.
- Wednesday 15th July - Year 12 Assessment Report sent out via email

Year 12 Post Sixth Form Options

As Year 13 students prepare to leave Sixth Form and move on to their next destinations, our Year 12 students will soon begin a real focus on their own post-Sixth Form plans. Over the coming weeks, all Year 12 students will begin working UCAS Personal Statements; these form a part of the university application process. While we recognise that university is not the chosen pathway for every student, completing the UCAS application process in practice provides valuable experience for all. It gives students the opportunity to practice filling in formal application forms, researching future options, and developing the important skill of writing a personal statement. These skills are highly transferable and will support students in future applications for apprenticeships, employment, and other post-18 opportunities. By engaging with the process now, students will be better prepared to make informed decisions about the pathway that is right for them.