



THE ABI UPDATE

ISSUE 14 FRIDAY 22ND MAY 2026

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER - MR CLINTON

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

Today was a hugely emotional day as we bade farewell to our lovely Year 11s. The day began where their journey at Archbishop Ilsley first started five years ago: in the beautiful and ornate Holy Souls Church. It was poignant to be united in prayer and thanksgiving as we celebrated a fantastic five years together. My thanks, as always, go to Father Toby and Deacon Martin for celebrating Mass with us.

In his homily, Father Toby reminded Year 11 that they would always be welcome at church where they give thanks and pray for help. Huge thanks must also go to the Year 11 team – Mr McDonald, Mr Francioso, Ms Kilroy and Ms Wroblecka – who gave them a wonderful send-off with a fantastic assembly. In true Ilsley tradition, the whole school gathered to give them a walk of honour.

By now, you will have received communication from the St Teresa of Calcutta Multi Academy Company that we will be raising standards from 1st June. The fact that you are reading this newsletter shows how supportive you are, and I am 'preaching to the converted'. You may therefore find it reassuring that we will be holding a 'uniform drive' during the first week back. If your child wears the correct uniform, as outlined in our policy and in my two letters (both of which can be found on our website), thank you for your support. We will insist on consistency and complete uniformity for every Ilsley pupil going forward.

I will sign off in the same way that I signed off my speech to Year 11 this morning: whatever you do, and wherever you choose to go, remember the words of St Matthew's Gospel and "let your light shine". Enjoy your half term.

KEY DATES:

- Monday 25th May - Friday 29th May - Half Term. School is closed to pupils and students
- Week beginning Monday 1st June - Uniform Reset
- Week commencing Monday 1st June - Year 12 Mock Exams Series 2
- 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

“...let your light shine.”

CATHOLIC LIFE

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION: JOHN 17:1-11

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said: 'Father, the hour has come: glorify your Son so that your Son may glorify you; and, through the power over all mankind that you have given him, let him give eternal life to all those you have entrusted to him.



And eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I have glorified you on earth and finished the work that you gave me to do. Now, Father, it is time for you to glorify me with that glory I had with you before ever the world was.

I have made your name known to the men you took from the world to give me. They were yours and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now at last they know that all you have given me comes indeed from you; for I have given them the teaching you gave to me, and they have truly accepted this, that I came from you, and have believed that it was you who sent me.

I pray for them; I am not praying for the world but for those you have given me, because they belong to you: all I have is yours and all you have is mine, and in them I am glorified. I am not in the world any longer, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you.'

How is this relevant today?

In this Gospel passage from Gospel of John, we hear Jesus praying to His Father just before His Passion. He speaks of glorifying God through love, obedience, and faithfulness to His mission. Jesus reminds us that eternal life is not simply something promised for the future, but begins now through knowing God and living in relationship with Him.

This passage is especially relevant for us today in our school community. Like the disciples, we are entrusted with the responsibility of living out God's word in our daily lives. In a world often filled with distractions, pressure, and uncertainty, Jesus' prayer calls us to keep our focus on what truly matters: knowing God, growing in faith, and reflecting His love through our actions.

For us and our pupils and students, this means striving to glorify God through kindness, honesty, perseverance and respect for one another. For staff and families, it is a reminder that our shared mission is to guide our young people not only in academic success but also in growing as people of faith and compassion.

Jesus also prays for those entrusted to Him, showing His deep care and protection for His followers. This is a comforting reminder that we are never alone. Christ continues to pray for us, to guide us, and to strengthen us as we face the challenges of each day.

As we reflect on this Gospel, may we ask ourselves: How can I glorify God in the way I learn, work, and treat others this week? Through small acts of faith and love, we continue the mission that Jesus entrusted to His disciples – and to each one of us today.

...“eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent...”



ARCHBISHOP
ILSLEY
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

UNIFORM RESET

STARTS 1ST JUNE

✓ READY

↓ BE SAFE

♥ BE KIND

1 UNIFORM CHECKS

Uniform checks will be carried out each day to ensure all pupils are in the correct uniform.



2 INTERVENTION

Pupils with uniform infringements will be taken by Pastoral Lead & HOY to change their uniform.



3 CHANGE UNIFORM

Pupil changes into correct uniform. Rejoin lessons.

RESET COMPLETE!

4 REFUSAL TO CHANGE

Pupil refuses to change their uniform.



5 NEXT STEPS

Pupil placed in ISO. Refusal to go into ISO will result in **SUSPENSION.**

★ OUR UNIFORM EXPECTATIONS ★

FOOTWEAR

Shoes only. Non branded pump style shoe.

TROUSERS

Blue trousers for girls must have a zip and button. No leggings or flares.

SKIRTS

No tight pencil / body con skirt of any colour. Skirt has pleats or the school drop waist uniform shop style.

SHIRT & TIE

Shirts tucked in. Ties on and tied appropriately.

BLAZER, JUMPER OR D OF E FLEECE

Pupils can wear a blazer, navy jumper or D of E fleece.

WEAR IT RIGHT. EVERY DAY.
Be proud. Be smart. Be you.

“let your light shine...”



Celebrating Success, Staying Curious, and Looking Ahead

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing this end-of-term message to you in incredibly high spirits. I have just got home from watching Aston Villa win the Europa Conference League at the Utilita Arena alongside my friends and family. By complete chance, I bumped into several past students during the celebrations. Reflecting on that moment reminded me so much of our Year 7 community and the shared journey we are on together to succeed.

It has taken Aston Villa years of hard work, clear vision, and dedication to transform from a struggling side into one of the country's top clubs. Like school, there will undoubtedly be tough times along the way, but by working together with a common goal, you can achieve truly great things. Our Year 7 pupils are on that exact same journey. As I watch our current Year 11 and Year 13 pupils and students working so hard to complete their GCSE and A-Level exams, it hits home that our Year 7 pupils will be doing the same in just a few short years and with the right foundation now, their future success is guaranteed.

Leading the Way

This term, our focus has been on becoming more curious and understanding that God has a unique plan for every single one of us. Part of that journey is celebrating our wins along the way, and Year 7 has given us so much to celebrate:

- **House Points:** I am immensely proud to share that Year 7 has led the way across the entire school this term, achieving the highest level of positive house points of any year group!
- **Attendance:** We continue to lead the school in attendance, which is fantastic. Our school target remains 95%. I know we can consistently hit this as a whole year group, especially since four of our tutor groups successfully achieved or exceeded this target during this half term alone. Let's keep pushing!

Academic and Sporting Highlights

Our pupils have been shining brightly across all areas of school life. In the classroom, our pupils have been leading the way in their lessons, particularly in Mathematics, where several pupils achieved exceptional results in a recent competition.

On the sports field, the PE staff have continually updated me on the incredible sporting prowess of our year group in after-school activities. I have personally seen both the girls' football and boys' cricket teams working exceptionally hard and demonstrating great teamwork.

Inspiring Assemblies & An Exciting Opportunity

It has been a thoroughly busy term, and we have welcomed several external speakers to inspire our pupils. Just this week, Connect Futures delivered a powerful and important message regarding online safety. They will be working closely with Archbishop Ilsey School next term to create a video that will be shared online and delivered directly to politicians. We will be looking for a team of pupil volunteers to work alongside Birmingham City University on this project next term. If your child is interested in being part of this fantastic opportunity, please ask them to get their name to me at the very start of next term.

Looking Ahead to Next Term

When we return, we have another jam-packed term to look forward to with End-of-year assessments, School Sports Day and a Year 7 Talent Show / celebration assembly.



To achieve their absolute best, pupils must remember that careful planning and consistent hard work will deliver excellent results.

We will also be having a real push next term on uniform and standards. Wearing our uniform correctly is vital because it gives us a common identity as a community one that we should all be deeply proud of.

A Final Reflection and Blessing

As we head into the break I want us to reflect on our journey with one of my favorite scriptures that reminds us that we are all cared for:

"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

Thank you for your continued partnership, support, and dedication to our school community. I hope all of our families have a wonderful, safe, and restful half-term break. Please ensure the pupils come back refreshed, re-energised and ready to go so that we can continue to let everybody's light shine to its absolute fullest. I would also like to remind parents and pupils to continue to send in any achievements outside of school that they are involved in and proud of.

One special mention I would like to end this message with is a big congratulations to Prosper who is training with Aston Villa's youth team. Maybe in a few years we will be seeing him grace the pitch at Villa park!

Year 8 pupils have been completing their final assessments this week and we are incredibly proud of the maturity, determination, and resilience they have shown throughout this important period. Many pupils have approached their assessments with focus and dedication, revising carefully and striving to do their very best. Their hard work and positive attitude have been a credit to both themselves and the school community. We encourage pupils to continue maintaining these excellent habits as they move forward in their learning journey.



As we prepare for the return after half term, this is also a reminder that all pupils are expected to wear full school uniform every day. Wearing uniform correctly demonstrates pride, responsibility, and readiness to learn, helping to maintain the high standards of our school community.

A fitting reminder from Scripture is: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord." – Colossians 3:23

We wish all Year 8 pupils and their families a restful and enjoyable half term break.



As we break up for the last break of this academic year, it is important that we take time to reflect on all that we have achieved and what we are proud of. This term has been full of progress and preparation for the exciting challenges ahead. We have finalised our option choices and worked through any issues that may have arisen, helping everyone feel more confident about the future. In many subjects, we have already begun GCSE work, giving us a real opportunity to make a positive and successful start in September. Alongside this, we have also spent time thinking carefully about the focus, determination, and organisation that will be needed as we move into Year 10.

Last Tuesday's Bench ball Final was a fantastic way to end the half term. I would like to thank all tutors and pupils who helped make the event such a wonderful occasion. Over the last few weeks, it has been incredible to watch pupils come together, support one another, encourage their peers, and in many cases step outside of their comfort zones. The teamwork, resilience, and positive spirit shown across the year group has been amazing to see. You should all be incredibly proud of yourselves because I certainly am. Finally, a huge congratulations must go to OR and Mr. Lakin, who were crowned Bench ball champions and lifted the cup – a brilliant achievement and a fantastic way to finish the competition!

Our uniform represents our school community and shows pride, respect, and readiness to learn. Wearing it correctly sets high standards not only for ourselves but also for those around us. It helps create a focused atmosphere where everyone is prepared to succeed. As the weather becomes warmer, it is still important that expectations are followed and that uniform remains smart and appropriate throughout the school day. Punctuality is equally important. Arriving to lessons on time ensures that we are ready to begin learning immediately and do not miss valuable instructions, knowledge, or opportunities. Every lesson matters, especially as GCSE content has already begun in many subjects. Being late can disrupt not only your own learning but also the learning of others. Developing good habits now will help prepare you for the expectations and responsibilities of Year 10 and beyond.

Enjoy your well deserved break over half term - let us recharge spending time with family and friends and be ready for a great last half term before we leave. "Let us not grow tired of doing good, even in the small things, because kindness, faith, and courage change the world one step at a time."

Pope Leo encourages us to make positive choices every day – through hard work, kindness to others, resilience, and supporting one another as a community.

Over the last two weeks, assemblies have focused on preparing pupils for the upcoming Year 10 exams, which will take place from Monday 15th June to Friday 26th June 2026. Pupils have been encouraged to begin revising early, stay organised, and make positive choices both in and outside of school to help them achieve their best possible results.



During assemblies, pupils were reminded of the importance of good attendance, punctuality, healthy routines, and effective revision strategies in the lead-up to the examination period. Parents and pupils have now received the full exam timetable alongside guidance and support materials to help pupils prepare confidently at home.

Some effective revision strategies include:

- Create a revision timetable – Breaking revision into manageable chunks and planning subjects across the week can help pupils stay organised and avoid last-minute cramming. Short, focused revision sessions are often more effective than long periods of study.
- Use active revision techniques – Reading notes repeatedly is rarely enough. Pupils should test themselves regularly using flashcards, quizzes, mind maps, practice questions and retrieval activities to strengthen memory and understanding.
- Practise exam questions – Completing past paper questions helps pupils become familiar with exam wording, timings and mark schemes. This is one of the most effective ways to prepare for assessments.
- Focus on weaker areas – Pupils should identify topics they find more challenging and dedicate extra time to revising these areas, while still maintaining confidence in their stronger subjects.
- Revise little and often – Regular revision over time is far more effective than trying to learn everything at once. Revisiting topics frequently helps information move into long-term memory.
- Reduce distractions – Creating a quiet study space and limiting distractions from phones or social media can greatly improve concentration and productivity.
- Look after wellbeing – Good sleep, regular breaks, healthy eating and exercise are all important during revision periods. Pupils perform best when they are physically and mentally well rested.
- Ask for help – Pupils should speak to teachers if they are unsure about a topic or need guidance on how to improve.

As we return after the half-term break, we would also like to remind all pupils that they are expected to attend school in full and correct uniform from Monday 1st June. Please ensure that shoes, skirts/ trousers, blazers, jewellery and PE kit all meet the school expectations. Your support in maintaining high standards is appreciated.

Pupils were also reminded about work experience placements and the importance of returning completed work experience forms as soon as possible. Work experience provides an excellent opportunity for pupils to develop confidence, workplace skills, and independence ahead of Year 11 and future career choices.

We are also looking forward to upcoming activities and trips taking place this term. Pupils participating in the Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition should continue attending preparation sessions and ensure that all equipment and consent forms are ready in advance of the expedition. The Silver DofE programme provides pupils with valuable opportunities to build resilience, teamwork, leadership, and outdoor skills.

In addition, we are excited for the upcoming Berlin trip. Students attending have received key information regarding travel arrangements, behaviour expectations, packing requirements, and itinerary details. Educational visits such as this provide students with valuable cultural experiences and opportunities to broaden their understanding beyond the classroom. Pupils are reminded to represent the school positively at all times while travelling and participating in activities abroad.

Thank you to parents and carers for your continued support during this busy half term period.

We have started our exam season in a really positive way, and I could not be prouder of how Year 11 have approached these first papers. The focus, maturity, and determination shown have set the tone for what we hope will be a very successful exam period.



Alongside the exams, we have also taken time to come together as a year group. Our recent Mass was a truly special occasion, giving us the opportunity to reflect, give thanks, and wish one another well for the weeks ahead. This was followed by a fantastic celebration assembly, where it was wonderful to recognise the journey this year group has been on.

Of course, no Year 11 experience would be complete without the traditions that make this time so memorable – shirt signings, cupcakes, and plenty of laughter (and some very funny memes!). These moments matter. They remind us that, alongside the hard work, there is joy, friendship, and a real sense of community.

As we head into half term, I hope all students take the opportunity to rest and recharge. However, this is also a key time to continue with revision and preparation. Keep doing the right things – staying focused, using your time wisely, and supporting one another.

We are nearly there. Let's come back after the break ready to give that final push and finish these exams as strongly as we have started.

Have a wonderful and well-deserved half term.



Year 11 into 12 Step Up Days

Monday 29th June and Tuesday 30th June will hold our Welcome to Sixth Form Step Up Days and Masterclass sessions. On these days, Year 11 pupils will be given a wealth of information about our Sixth Form. They will also learn about how to be a post 16 student and what is expected of them over the course of their two years with us in Sixth Form. Pupils will also meet the Sixth Form team and sample a range of A Level and Level 3 lessons. On these days we expect the following from Year 11 pupils:

- Full attendance across the two days. The day will start at 9.00am and finish at approximately 3.00pm on Monday and 1pm on Tuesday
- Pupils can wear their own clothes on both days but they are reminded be to dress appropriately for the school environment



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Sixth Form**
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Year 12 Opportunities

As our Year 12 students begin to look ahead to their final year in Sixth Form, there are exciting opportunities for them to start shaping their role within the school community. Applications for Senior Student Leader positions are now open, offering students a valuable chance to have a real voice in school life while developing confidence, responsibility and important leadership skills.

There are a wide range of roles available, from Head Boy and Head Girl to positions in Sports Leadership, Wellbeing, and Media and Communications. Application information has been emailed to all students and can also be accessed via the Year 12 Google Classroom. Successful applicants will be invited to prepare and deliver a presentation to Sixth Form staff and fellow students as part of the hustings and voting process. We look forward to receiving lots of applications and to seeing our future student leaders step forward. The closing date for applications is Monday 1st June.

The Sixth Form Mindset - VESPAR

Our Sixth Form pastoral programme, VESPAR, continues to provide students with valuable opportunities for reflection, personal development and preparation for life beyond school. Each half term focuses on a different facet of our 'Sixth Form Mindset' and is designed to support students academically, socially and emotionally as they progress through Sixth Form.

This half term, our focus has been on 'Attitude'. Attitude is an umbrella term which covers many important elements of a student's approach to learning and personal growth. When we talk about attitude, we mean a student's mindset towards learning, their positivity and buoyancy, their response to challenge and difficulty and the resilience and grit they show when things become demanding. Students with a strong 'Sixth Form attitude' demonstrate determination, commitment and a willingness to embrace challenge in their studies and wider school life. Subject 'Attitude' winners were recognised in our Recognition Assembly today along with our Tutees of the Term, our Mini Heroes and our Rising Stars. We also rewarded one of our many students with 100% attendance this half term; every half term we have a 100% Attendance draw - the lucky winner receiving a £10 voucher. Well done to all our winners today!

Next half term, the VESPAR focus will move to Resilience. Students will be encouraged to reflect on how they respond to challenge or setbacks and to consider the importance of resilience and grit in achieving long-term success. Resilience not only supports personal achievement, but also enables students to better support and serve those around them. Through tutor time activities and discussions, students will have opportunities to reflect on their mindset and prepare themselves for the transition into Year 13 with confidence and maturity.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

- Monday 1st June: Mock Exam Week Series 2
- Monday 22nd June - UCAS Discovery Birmingham 2026 Conference, NEC 10am
- Wednesday 24th June - Year 13 Celebration Dinner, The Village Hotel, Shirely, Solihull
- Monday 29 June to Friday 3 July 2026: Year 12 Work Experience
- Wednesday 15th July - Year 12 Assessment Report sent out via email
- Thursday 13th August - A Level Results Day



Next Steps

As our Year 12 students begin preparing for the transition into Year 13, we will also be starting important conversations around post-Sixth Form pathways and future aspirations. Over the coming weeks, students will be introduced to the UCAS process and encouraged to explore the wide range of opportunities available after Sixth Form, including university, apprenticeships, higher education courses, gap years and the world of work.

As part of this preparation, we strongly encourage all students to complete a UCAS application form and draft a personal statement. Even for students who may ultimately choose a different pathway, this process provides valuable opportunities to reflect on future goals, develop application-writing skills and begin preparing CVs and supporting documents for employment or further study.

A key part of this programme is the Year 12 visit to the UCAS Discovery Conference, Birmingham at the National Exhibition Centre on Monday 22nd June. This is one of the UK's largest university and careers events and offers students an excellent opportunity to meet representatives from over 150 universities, speak with major apprenticeship providers and employers, and receive expert advice on applications, careers and next steps. Whether students are already certain about their future plans or are still exploring their options, the conference provides invaluable guidance, useful contacts and information all under one roof. Attendance at the conference is compulsory, and all student tickets have already been booked free of charge. Students will make their own way to the NEC via bus or train, and the Sixth Form Team will support and prepare students ahead of the event to ensure they make the most of this exciting opportunity. Please use the link here to see more information:
<https://www.ucas.com/events/ucas-discovery-birmingham-2026-470276>

Reminders - Attendance and Punctuality

As we move towards the final half term of the academic year, we would like to thank parents and carers for their continued support in reinforcing the everyday expectations that help our Sixth Form students succeed. The basics matter greatly and strong routines around attendance, punctuality and presentation play a vital role in students' progress and preparation for life beyond school.

We continue to aim for a minimum of 97% attendance for every student and expect all students to arrive punctually each day. Students should beep in and sign in by 8.40am and be in tutor time by 8.45am. Tutor time and assemblies are a non-negotiable part of the Sixth Form day, providing important opportunities for communication, pastoral support and personal development.

Students are also reminded that lanyards must be worn at all times whilst on site, and no student should leave the school site during the school day. Parents and carers are asked to please refer to the most recent communication regarding Year 12 Relaxed Registration privileges for Summer Term 2, along with the reminder of our attendance protocols and expectations. Thank you once again for your ongoing partnership and support in maintaining the high standards of our Sixth Form community.

Year 13 Leavers

On Friday 15th, we were delighted to celebrate our Year 13 Leavers as they marked the end of their time with us. It was a lovely occasion, culminating in a beautiful Mass of Thanksgiving, where students, staff and a number of parents and friends of the school came together to give thanks and reflect on their journey through school. We extend our sincere thanks to all staff and parents who were part of this special celebration and helped make it such a memorable event. We wish our Year 13 students every success as they begin their examination period. Students are permitted to attend Sixth Form to revise or attend booster classes with their teachers over the coming weeks; details of these sessions will be communicated directly by subject teachers via Google Classroom.



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Follow us on @ABllsley6thform to see all of our pictures and our latest news!

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



*Today is where your book begins
The rest is still unwritten...*