Contact us: 0121 706 4200 @ABIlsley www.ilsley.bham.sch.uk

THE ABI UPDATE

ISSUE 2 FRIDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2026

MESSAGE FROM INTERIM PRINCIPAL - MR HEARNDEN

On the Rise Again

Our Open Evening was an outstanding success, and I want to begin by saying a very sincere thank you to everyone who played their part. In my address to prospective families, I spoke about "On the Rise Again." Those words are more than a theme. They capture where we are as a school and, more importantly, where we are going. We are a school with ambition. We are a school with purpose. And we are a school that is determined to rise.

The energy across the building on Open Evening was palpable. Visitors saw students who were proud to represent their school, staff who are passionate about their subjects and their students, and a community that is absolutely committed to providing the very best education and opportunities for the young people in our care.

Thank you to our Head Boy and Girl, Hasaan and Ruby and our Sixth Form and Year 11 guides. Our student helpers from across all year groups were superb ambassadors for Archbishop Ilsley: confident, courteous, enthusiastic and proud. They showed our visitors exactly what we see every day: young people with enormous potential who, when given the right opportunities and held to the right standards, can achieve remarkable things.

Many thanks to every member of staff who contributed to the evening. Open Evening takes an enormous amount of preparation, energy and commitment, and the quality of the evening was a direct reflection of the pride and professionalism of our staff.

To all the parents, carers and prospective students who joined us: thank you for spending your evening with us and for taking the time to see what Archbishop Ilsley is becoming. I hope you saw the ambition we have for this school and the determination with which we are pursuing it.

We know there is still work to do. I make no apology for that. Our standards will remain high, our expectations will remain high, and our ambition will remain high. We will continue to challenge ourselves, continue to improve and continue to put the life chances of our young people at the heart of everything we do. If you know a parent or carer who was unable to attend Open Evening but would still like to visit the school, please encourage them to contact enquiry@ilsley.bham.sch.uk and we will look to arrange a visit. The momentum is building, the ambition is clear, the future is ours to shape. Archbishop Ilsley is on the rise again.

"...just and firm of purpose."

CATHOLIC LIFE • SCRIPTURE REFLECTION
MATTHEW 21:28-32



But what think you? A certain man had two sons; and coming to the first, he said: Son, go work to day in my vineyard. And he answering, said: I will not. But afterwards, being moved with repentance, he went.

And coming to the other, he said in like manner. And he answering, said: I go, Sir; and he went not.

Which of the two did the father's will? They say to him: The first. Jesus saith to them: Amen I say to you, that the publicans and the harlots shall go into the kingdom of God before you.

For John came to you in the way of justice, and you did not believe him. But the publicans and the harlots believed him: but you, seeing it, did not even afterwards repent, that you might believe him.

How is this relevant today?

In this reading, Jesus asks the simple but challenging question: "Which of the two did the father's will?" The answer is clear: the first son. Here we are reminded that what we do matters more than what we say. It is easy to say the right thing, to make promises, or to give the answer that others want to hear. But integrity asks something deeper of us: Do our actions match our words?

Integrity means being honest, trustworthy and true to our values, even when nobody is watching. It is about having the courage to do what is right rather than simply saying what is expected. The first son made a mistake in his response, but he recognised this, changed direction and acted. His willingness to acknowledge that he was wrong and put things right is an important part of integrity too.

This message is particularly relevant today. We live in a world where words can be shared instantly and where appearances can sometimes seem more important than reality. Social media, advertising and even everyday conversations can make it easy to present ourselves in a particular way. Yet Jesus reminds us that our true character is revealed not simply by what we say about ourselves, but by the choices we make and the way we treat others.

For our school community, integrity means doing the right thing even when it is difficult. It means speaking truthfully, keeping our promises, taking responsibility when we make mistakes and treating others with dignity and respect. It also means recognising that we will not always get things right. Like the first son, we can change our minds, seek forgiveness and choose a better path.

There is also an important challenge in the final part of the Gospel. Jesus reminds those listening that some people whom society had judged or rejected, were able to recognise the truth and change their lives. This challenges us not to judge people simply by their past mistakes or by how they appear on the outside. Integrity includes humility, compassion and a willingness to recognise the goodness and potential in others.

As we continue our whole-school focus on integrity, perhaps we can ask ourselves:
Do my actions match my words?
Do I take responsibility when I get things wrong?
Do I do what is right even when no one is watching?
Do my choices reflect the values I say I believe in?

The Gospel reminds us that integrity is not about being perfect. It is about being honest enough to recognise when we have gone the wrong way, courageous enough to change, and committed enough to put our values into action. May we, as a school community, strive not only to say what is right, but to live it — allowing our actions to speak of our faith, our values and our commitment to one another.

…"Amen I say to you, that the publicans and the harlots shall go into the kingdom of God before you."

STANDARDS FOR LEARNING - MR FOLEY

Our Ilsley Spirit theme this week has been Integrity — being honest, being accountable, and building trust in everything we do — and it's been genuinely encouraging to see pupils living this out, with over 11,000 examples of positive recognition logged for effort, kindness and following our routines.

We are also pleased to see behaviour incidents continuing to fall week on week, a real sign that the calm, consistent approach we are all taking together is paying off. Integrity matters at home too and there are small things you can do that make a big difference at school:

- helping your child lay out their uniform and pack their bag the night before
- making sure they arrive on the yard in good time each morning
- being honest with staff early if homework or a deadline is becoming a struggle, rather than letting it build up.

These habits, backed up at home, are exactly what help our students arrive ready to learn and show that same integrity each day — thank you, as always, for your partnership in this.

More Than Lessons: Our Extra-Curricular Offer

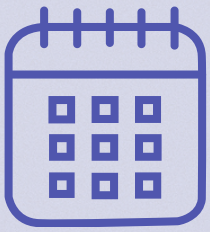
At Archbishop Ilsley, courage is one of our core values, and sometimes the bravest thing we can do is simply walk through a new door. That is why we are delighted to share our updated extra-curricular programme, which has grown since our last ABI Update; there are now even more opportunities for students to discover, develop in and belong to.

Sports fans can choose from football, netball, basketball, badminton, dance and Mindful Movement, while those with a creative or curious streak, might try Coding Club, Chess Club, Maths Club, Book Club, Craft Club, Board Game Club or our new Journaling Club. Students who enjoy a good argument, can find their voice at Debate Club and our Choir meets every day during form time. Our Catholic Life offer gives students space for stillness and prayer each lunchtime in the Chapel, through Quiet Colouring, Sayings of the Saints, Lectio Divina, the Rosary and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. For older students, GCSE Keep Up sessions in Art and intervention sessions in PE provide valuable extra support ahead of exams.

It takes courage to try something unfamiliar, to join a room full of new faces, or to stand up and sing or speak. Those small brave steps are where confidence, friendships and talents grow. Parents, please encourage your child to look at the full timetable and be courageous enough to give something a go.

A brighter you really does start here!

DATES FOR THE DIARY



- Monday 28th September - Year 7 and 10 photos
- Wednesday 30th September - Year 7 and 8 Girls' Rugby Festival
- Thursday 22nd October - Sixth Form Open Evening
- Thursday 8th October - Year 8 Twycross Zoo Vocational Visit
- Friday 9th October - Year 9 Twycross Zoo Vocational Visit
- Friday 23rd October - INSET Day. School is closed to all students

ARCHBISHOP ILSLEY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

WISDOM • COURAGE • DIGNITY • INTEGRITY

More Than Lessons

DISCOVER
DEVELOP
BELONG
MAKE A DIFFERENCE

EXTRA-CURRICULAR CLUBS

BE INVOLVED | MAKE FRIENDS | TRY SOMETHING NEW

ART

Club	Year Group	Day	Time	Venue
GCSE Keep Up	KS4	Tuesday	Lunchtime	A1
GCSE Keep Up	KS4	Wednesday	Lunchtime	A2
GCSE Keep Up	KS4	Thursday	Lunchtime	A3

MUSIC

Club	Year Group	Day	Time	Venue
Choir Practice	All Years	Mon - Fri	Form Time	PA1

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Club	Year Group	Day	Time	Venue
Coding Club	All Years	Monday	Afterschool	CS04

GEOGRAPHY

Club	Year Group	Day	Time	Venue
KS3 Homework Club	Years 7, 8 & 9	Monday (Week 2)	Afterschool	HU5

MATHS

Club	Year Group	Day	Time	Venue
Maths Club	All Years	Tuesday	Afterschool	S10
Chess Club	KS3	Tuesday	Afterschool	2.1

MEET NEW PEOPLE
DEVELOP YOUR SKILLS
TRY SOMETHING NEW
BE PART OF OUR COMMUNITY

A Brighter You Starts Here

PE

Club	Year Group	Day	Time	Venue
Mindful Movement	All Years	Monday	Afterschool	Fitness Suite
Netball	Years 8 & 9	Monday	Afterschool	Sportshall
Netball	Years 7	Monday	Afterschool	Sportshall
Year 8 Football	Year 8	Monday	Afterschool	Astro
Year 9 Football	Year 9	Tuesday	Afterschool	Astro
Dance	KS3	Wednesday	Lunchtime	Hall
OCR Intervention	Yr 11	Wednesday (Week 2)	Afterschool	TBC
GCSE PE Intervention	Yr 10	Wednesday (Week 1)	Afterschool	TBC
Badminton	All Years	Wednesday	Afterschool	Sportshall
Girls Football	KS3	Wednesday	Afterschool	Astro
Badminton	All Years	Thursday	Before school	Sportshall
Basketball	All Years	Thursday	Afterschool	Sportshall
Year 7 Football	Year 7	Thursday	Afterschool	Astro

RS & CATHOLIC LIFE

Club	Year Group	Day	Time	Venue
Debate Club	All Years	Thursday	Afterschool	V2
Catholic Life				
Quiet Colouring: Find time to quieten the mind and let God speak to you.	All Years	Monday	Lunchtime	Chapel
Sayings of the Saints: Take some time to reflect on the wisdom of those who have gone before us to heaven.	All Years	Tuesday	Lunchtime	Chapel
Lectio Divina: Learn to pray with the Scriptures and see what they mean for us today.	All Years	Wednesday	Lunchtime	Chapel
Rosary: Reflect on the life and teaching of Jesus Christ with this meditative prayer to Our Lady.	All Years	Thursday	Lunchtime	Chapel
Adoration: Spend some quiet time with the Lord in Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.	All Years	Friday	Lunchtime	Chapel

LIBRARY

Club	Year Group	Day	Time	Venue
Book Club	All Years	Monday	Afterschool	Library
Craft Club	All Years	Tuesday	Afterschool	Library
Board Game Club	All Years	Wednesday	Afterschool	Library
Homework Club	All Years	Thursday	Afterschool	Library

JOURNALING CLUB

Club	Year Group	Day	Time	Venue
Journaling Club	All Years	Friday	Lunchtime	Hub

Opportunities Inside and Beyond the Classroom

LEARN | GROW | BELONG | THRIVE

FAITH | OPPORTUNITY | EXCELLENCE | FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

ATTENDANCE MATTERS AT ABI - MRS BURNHAM

As outlined in my letter to parents on 11th September, during October we will be sharing further information with all parents and carers about our Stages of Attendance. The Stages provide a clear, supportive pathway for responding to attendance concerns. They help us to identify concerns early, understand the reasons behind absence and put appropriate support in place. As attendance concerns increase, the level of support and intervention will also increase. Please see our staged approach below:



ATTENDANCE MATTERS AT ABI - MRS BURNHAM

PASTORAL

Our approach is support first. We want to work in partnership with families to remove barriers to attendance and help every pupil attend school regularly. Please also see the information regarding support and helpful hints to families:



GOOD ATTENDANCE MATTERS!



Every school day counts



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

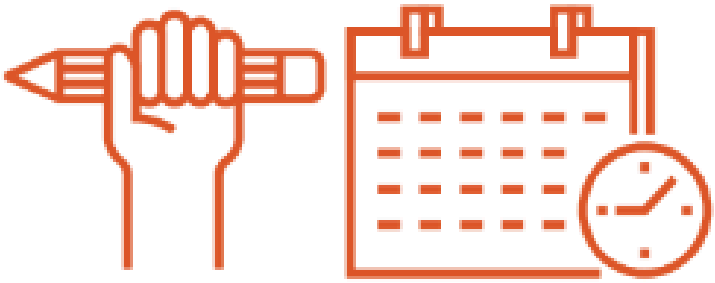
Why is regular school attendance and good punctuality so important for my child?

Regular attendance at school means that your child can make the most of their education and improve their chances in adult life. School can also help your child's social skills such as making and developing friendships.

The link between attendance and attainment in school is clear. The more a child is in school the more they increase their opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Good punctuality is important. For example, if a child arrives 15 minutes late at school each day, they lose almost 2 weeks of education over the year. Good punctuality also helps your child get into good habits for when they enter the world of work.

Lateness can cause your child embarrassment and, in some circumstances, can count as unauthorised absence.



How can I help my child enjoy school and attend regularly?

Be organised, have a plan, be consistent and involve your child!

You should:

- ensure they have an appropriate bedtime routine
- create good routines for mornings at home so that your child can arrive punctually and are properly equipped;
- avoid absence from school wherever possible – try to make doctors and dental appointments out of school hours
- make time to encourage and show interest in school work, friendships etc.
- attend school open evenings and functions
- Create a calm space for them to do homework, check they understand the homework and that it has been completed.
- share any education concerns your child or you may have with the school staff as soon as possible
- set realistic boundaries

SEND AND INCLUSION - MRS GRANT

Lexia Reading Intervention: Supporting Reading and Vocabulary Development

- Helping every learner to become a confident, independent reader

We are pleased to share that Lexia Reading Interventions have now begun in school for identified students in Years 7–11. This is part of our commitment to removing barriers to learning through adaptive teaching and ensuring that every student has the opportunity to develop the literacy skills they need to succeed across the curriculum.

WHAT IS LEXIA?

Lexia is a computer-based, adaptive literacy programme that provides students with personalised activities to develop their reading and vocabulary skills. Rather than giving every student the same programme, Lexia identifies the specific skills an individual student needs to develop — for example, decoding, vocabulary, comprehension or grammar — and provides appropriately targeted practice. The programme adapts as students work, meaning that activities are matched to their current level and gradually become more challenging as their skills develop.

Importantly, Lexia complements, rather than replaces, high-quality classroom teaching. The information generated by the programme also helps teachers to identify gaps, monitor progress and plan appropriate support.

WHY ARE WE USING LEXIA?

Some students arrive in secondary school having missed important foundations in reading. These gaps can affect their ability to access increasingly complex texts, understand subject-specific vocabulary and demonstrate their knowledge in writing. Lexia can help by:

- Identifying specific gaps in reading and vocabulary skills.
- Providing personalised practice at an appropriate level.
- Strengthening foundational literacy skills that may not yet be secure.
- Helping teachers monitor progress and identify areas requiring further support.
- Providing consistent intervention through short, regular sessions.

Students will be supported in school by the English Department, Librarian, Teaching Assistants and SENCO, with progress monitored as part of our wider provision.

HOW CAN PARENTS AND CARERS HELP AT HOME?

The most powerful support for developing readers is often found in small, regular opportunities to read, talk and learn new words together. You do not need to be a literacy specialist to make a difference!

1. Read regularly — and talk about what you read

Encourage your child to read for a short period each day. This might be a story, newspaper article, magazine, online article or information linked to their interests. Do not worry if they are reluctant to read independently. Reading together, taking turns to read, or discussing something they have read can all be valuable. Ask questions such as:

- What do you think will happen next?
- Why do you think the character did that?
- What was the main idea?



...“Supporting every learner to belong, achieve and flourish.”

SEND AND INCLUSION - MRS GRANT

2. Talk about new vocabulary

When your child encounters an unfamiliar word, pause and explore it together rather than simply moving past it. Try asking:

- What do you think this word means?
- Can you find a clue in the sentence?
- Have you heard a similar word before?
- Can you use the word in your own sentence?

The more often students hear and use new vocabulary, the more securely those words become part of their working vocabulary.



3. Break unfamiliar words into parts

- Encourage your child to look inside a difficult word for clues. Explore prefixes, suffixes and root words. For example:
- un + helpful → not helpful
- care + less → without care
- biology → bio (life) + -logy (the study of)

This helps students develop strategies for working out unfamiliar words rather than immediately relying on someone else to tell them the answer.



4. Revisit important words

Learning a new word once is rarely enough. Choose a few interesting or important words from your child's reading or schoolwork and come back to them regularly. Ask your child to explain the word, use it in a sentence or identify an example.

For example, if they learn the word "significant", you might ask:

- What does significant mean?
- Can you give me something that is significant?
- Can you use significant in a sentence?
- What is the opposite of significant?

Repeated exposure helps vocabulary become more secure and usable.



5. Build confidence — praise effort and strategies

Reading difficulties can sometimes affect a young person's confidence. Try to focus on progress, persistence and the strategies they use, rather than simply whether they got an answer right. Praise comments such as:

- "You used the sentence to work that word out."
- "You went back and checked the text — that's a really good reading strategy."
- "That word was difficult, but you didn't give up."

A positive attitude towards reading can be just as important as the reading practice itself.



..."Supporting every learner to belong, achieve and flourish."

YEAR 7 - MR FRANCIOSO

It has been another fantastic couple of weeks for Year 7 and I would like to begin by reflecting on the wonderful Welcome Mass we shared two weeks ago.

It was a really important opportunity for us to come together as a year group and celebrate the beginning of your journey at Archbishop Ilsley. Thank you to all of the students who represented the year group so well and contributed to what was a very special occasion.

The Ilsley Standard Award

I have been particularly impressed by the number of students who are still on track to achieve the Platinum Ilsley Standard Award. This is a superb display of excellence and consistency. Platinum is not about having one or two exceptional days; it is about making the right choices day after day and showing that you can consistently meet the standards we expect at Ilsley.

Remember, every lesson and every form time is another opportunity to demonstrate the Ilsley Standard. That means:

- Be ready – arrive on time with the correct equipment.
- Be safe – make sensible choices and follow our school expectations.
- Be respectful and kind – treat staff and fellow pupils with dignity.
- Work hard – give your very best effort in every lesson.

These simple expectations, followed consistently, will make a huge difference to your success.

Why does it matter?

The Ilsley Standard Award is about much more than collecting points and earning a badge. It is about recognising students who demonstrate the habits and attitudes that will help them succeed throughout their time at Archbishop Ilsley.

As the year progresses, your Ilsley Standard achievements will also open up additional rewards and opportunities. These will include incentives such as access to vocational visits and other special experiences, alongside rewards organised by the school and your Head of Year.

So, keep going! Every point counts and every lesson is another opportunity to show what you can do. Keep it up, Year 7!

You have made an excellent start to life at Archbishop Ilsley, and I have been incredibly pleased with the way so many of you have responded to the expectations we have set.

The challenge now is simple:

- Don't just have a good start — make it a consistent one.
- Keep working hard.
- Keep making good choices.
- Keep looking after one another.

Keep up the good work, Year 7.



HEAD OF YEAR UPDATES

YEAR 8 - MR SMITH

It has been another busy and positive fortnight for Year 8, with students continuing to demonstrate many of the values that make our year group such a wonderful community.

Our assembly focus this week was being safe. Mr Corrigan delivered an important message about staying safe in school, within the local community, and online. Students were encouraged to think about the choices they make and how we can all look out for one another. This built upon our previous assembly on Greatness, where we explored the importance of giving everyone dignity and using our own strengths to support those around us.

I have had the opportunity to visit a number of lessons over the past fortnight and have been incredibly impressed with the engagement and participation of our students. It was fantastic to see students in Maths lessons tackling challenging problems and confidently sharing their ideas and answers. The same enthusiasm and commitment to learning has been evident in Computing and French, where students have been working hard and showing great resilience when faced with challenging tasks.

Outside the classroom, I have thoroughly enjoyed leading training sessions with the Year 8 boys' football team. The passion, effort and positive attitude shown by everyone attending has been outstanding. Fixtures are just around the corner and we are excited to see the progress all our teams have made, put into action. I would encourage all students to get involved in the wide range of extra-curricular activities available across the school. These opportunities help students develop new skills, make friendships and enrich their school experience. I do encourage parents and carers to discuss with their children the clubs and activities that they may wish to join.

It has also been wonderful to see so many students signing up for the vocational visits that have already been announced. Last week I had the privilege to attend, "The Curious incident of the dog in the nighttime!" at the Birmingham Rep with a wonderful set of Year 8 and 11 students. I want to personally thank the Drama and Music department for organising this great experience for our students. Vocational visits such as these provide invaluable learning experiences beyond the classroom and there are many more exciting opportunities to come throughout the year. I know some students have missed out but be assured there is more to come so keep gaining positive house points!

I am pleased to see the rewards continue to increase across the year group. More students are being recognised for their hard work, positive conduct and contribution to school life. It is fantastic to see students earning rewards for consistently demonstrating our expectations and values.

Whilst there are many positives to celebrate, attendance remains an area of focus for the year group. Attendance has a significant impact on both academic progress and enjoyment of school life. Our target remains 95% attendance, and currently we are not reaching this consistently as a year group. Every day in school matters, and we appreciate the continued support of parents and carers in helping students attend regularly and punctually.

As a school, we recognise that adapting to our detention system can take a little time. I would like to thank parents and carers for their continued support in helping students understand the importance of meeting expectations. All behaviour information is logged on ClassCharts, and all students, parents and carers have been provided with login details. If you experience any difficulties accessing the platform, please contact the school office. We have also now moved fully to Microsoft Teams for the setting and submission of work. Students should be regularly accessing Teams both in school and at home. We would encourage parents and carers to check that their child can access their account successfully and is familiar with how to use the platform.

Finally, I would like to thank all parents and carers for your continued support. The partnership between home and school is vital in helping our young people flourish, and we greatly appreciate all that you do to support your child and the wider Year 8 community. "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." (Ephesians 2:10) This verse reminds us that each of us has been created with purpose and unique gifts, and that we are called to use those gifts to support, encourage and build up those around us.

YEAR 9 - MRS WAFI

As we reach the halfway point of the first half term, it has been pleasing to see calm classrooms and a positive start from Year 9. A particular thank you goes to the many students who supported our Open Evening. They represented Archbishop Ilsley brilliantly and demonstrated great maturity, enthusiasm, and pride in our school.

We are delighted to launch the Ilsley Standard Award, which celebrates consistency in meeting our daily expectations. Students can earn points during Form Time and lessons by being ready, punctual, respectful and hardworking. These points build towards Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum awards, which will be recognised through badges, certificates and reward assemblies.

This links closely to our new Pupil Leadership Programme, which gives students opportunities to develop as leaders and role models.

Students can first work towards the Commit Award by maintaining high attendance and punctuality, achieving a Bronze Behaviour Award and receiving a positive tutor recommendation. They can then progress to the Contribute Award, recognising students who consistently meet expectations and make a positive contribution through enrichment, leadership or service activities such as Form Captain, Catholic Life Representative, Pupil Parliament, Open Evening Guide or charity work.

The final stage is the Inspire Award, recognising students who lead by example, inspire others and demonstrate the highest standards of commitment and service. Achieving this award will also place students in a strong position for future leadership opportunities, including prefect roles.

We look forward to celebrating the many Year 9 students who demonstrate these qualities and continue to make a positive contribution to our school community.

YEAR 11 - MS RUCK

Year 11 have had a fantastic fortnight as we have launched our period 6 sessions. It is wonderful to see how quickly pupils have established this as a new habit and their positive attitudes and strong commitment to success are commendable.

Last Friday saw our first year 11 mass in church. Their reverence and respect were outstanding. We do hope that you received our text home praising them for this.

We were incredibly proud of the pupils who volunteered to represent our school as tour guides at our Open Evening this week. We received lots of feedback on their friendliness, positivity and professionalism. Well done and thank you!

We thank you for your continued support with enabling all of year 11 to meet our Ilsley Standard. A reminder that pupils must be in line up by 8.40am. Reminders of uniform expectations are available via our online videos.

The week ahead:

We are really excited to launch our new 6 o clock club initiative from Monday. We have had overwhelming parental support already for which we are really thankful. We will be relentless in our commitment to securing the best outcomes for year 11 and we really value your support with this.

Prom date has been confirmed: Wednesday 7th July 2027. Please note that Prom is a privilege and tickets will be available to those pupils who consistently meet the Ilsley Standard.

Our PGL Revision weekend trip is March 19-21st 2027. Letters will be going out for this next week.

HEAD OF YEAR UPDATES

YEAR 10 - MR KENYON

It has been fantastic to see Year 10 continue to settle into the new academic year over the past few weeks. I have been really encouraged by the positive start that the year group has made. They are embracing the expectations and responsibilities that come with this important stage of their education. Behaviour in lessons has been excellent, with so many teachers letting me know how impressed they have been with their attitude and work ethic.

It is vital our students recognise that the habits they establish now will have a significant impact on their future success. I have continued to remind them of just how important their attendance and punctuality is. Every school day and every lesson provides an opportunity to learn, develop understanding, and make progress. Arriving on time, being prepared, and actively engaging in lessons are simple but essential habits that will help students to achieve strong GCSE results.

I would also like to thank parents and carers for their continued support in maintaining high standards of school uniform. Your cooperation is helping us to create a school ethos where students take pride in their appearance and the badge on their blazer.

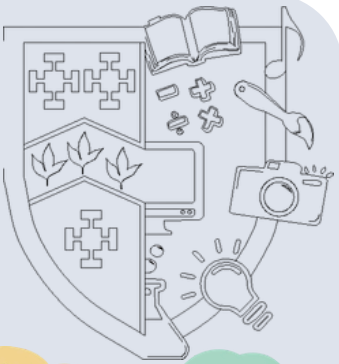
There is huge potential within this year group. Together, through high expectations, we will help them to achieve that potential.

Silver Duke of Edinburgh

This week in assembly, Dr Regan talked about the Silver Duke of Edinburgh programme on offer this year. I would strongly encourage Year 10 to take advantage of this. It is an opportunity to develop new skills, spend time in our beautiful countryside, make lasting memories, and work as part of a team to achieve a shared goal. It is a challenge, but one that gives children a real sense of achievement that stays with them forever.

Duke of Edinburgh is open to everyone. They do not need to have completed the Bronze award in Year 9. Last year, 25% of our Silver cohort were new entrants. We will provide training in school to get them caught up. All students need to do is ask their tutor for an application form. If students have any questions about Duke of Edinburgh, they can speak to me, Dr Regan, or Mrs Jones in student services.

Work Experience 2027: The Search Starts Now!



We are excited to announce the launch of Work Experience 2027 for our Year 10 and Year 12 students.

Work Experience will take place for one week, beginning Monday 5th July 2027, giving students a fantastic opportunity to experience the world of work, develop new skills and explore possible future careers. What do students need to do now?

- ✅ Ask a parent/carer to complete the consent form as soon as possible.
- ✅ Start searching for a work experience placement now.
- ✅ Speak to family, friends and local employers about possible opportunities.



We strongly encourage students to begin their search early. Work experience placements are extremely competitive, with students from many other secondary schools also looking for opportunities at a similar time.

Don't leave it until the last minute. Start your search now and secure a placement that interests and inspires you!

Archbishop Ilsley Catholic Sixth Form

Embrace your future

Follow us on @ABIlsley6thform 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/

SIXTH FORM - MRS MCMAHON

It has been a fantastic start to the year in Sixth Form, and we are incredibly proud of how enthusiastically our students have embraced all aspects of Sixth Form life. From supporting school events and welcoming prospective students to getting involved in exciting enrichment opportunities, our students have already demonstrated an impressive sense of responsibility, confidence and community spirit.

One of the highlights has been seeing so many of our Sixth Form students volunteering their time to support key events across the school. Students have played an important role at our GCSE Information Evening, helping to welcome families and share their experiences of life at the school. They have also been fantastic ambassadors at our Year 6 Open Evening, where their enthusiasm and confidence really helped to create a warm welcome for our prospective pupils and their families.

A particular mention must go to Ruby and Hasaan, who did a fabulous job delivering a welcome speech at the Year 6 Open Evening. They spoke with confidence and maturity, providing an excellent introduction to our school and giving our visitors a real insight into the opportunities and experiences available to our students. Their contribution was a wonderful example of the positive role our Sixth Form students play within the wider school community.

Our Senior Student Leaders are also making their mark and are currently busy preparing for our annual Sixth Form Macmillan Coffee Morning. This is always a much-anticipated event in the Sixth Form calendar and provides students with a fantastic opportunity to work together, demonstrate their leadership skills and support an important charitable cause. We are looking forward to seeing their plans come together and to enjoying what promises to be another successful event.

Beyond the classroom, students have shown immense interest in the wide range of enrichment opportunities available to them. There has been particular excitement around the Global Links opportunity to spend two weeks in Uganda, which will provide students with an unforgettable experience of cultural exchange, personal development and global learning. Opportunities such as this encourage our students to step outside their comfort zones, broaden their horizons and develop skills that will stay with them long beyond their time in Sixth Form.

Students have also been offered the opportunity to complete their Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award, an exciting challenge that encourages resilience, independence, teamwork and perseverance. We are delighted to see such strong interest in this prestigious programme and look forward to supporting our students as they take on the challenge.

Overall, it has been an incredibly positive start to the year. Our Sixth Form students are showing that they are not only committed to their academic studies, but are also keen to contribute, lead, support others and make the most of every opportunity available to them. We are immensely proud of their enthusiasm, generosity and willingness to get involved, and we cannot wait to see what they achieve as the year progresses.

ARCHBISHOP ILSLEY CATHOLIC

SIXTH FORM

EMBRACE YOUR FUTURE

OPEN EVENING

THURSDAY 22ND OCTOBER 2026

6.00pm – 8.00pm

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Meet our Sixth Form team, talk to current students, find out about our courses and see what the next two years could look like for your child.

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