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

# THE ABI UPDATE

ISSUE 3 FRIDAY 9TH OCTOBER 2026

## MESSAGE FROM INTERIM PRINCIPAL - MR HEARNDEN

Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, I want to thank you for the tremendous support you are giving us in reinforcing our expectations around uniform and standards. The progress over the past few weeks has been excellent. In Week 1, more than 90 students required uniform items to bring them into line with our expectations. Last week, that average had reduced to just 4 students.

That is fantastic progress, and it demonstrates what can be achieved when school and home work together. Thank you to the vast majority of parents and carers who are checking uniform each morning and ensuring that their children arrive at school ready to learn and meeting our expectations.

There remains, however, a small minority who are still not meeting our standards. I am asking parents and carers to play their part. Please check before your child leaves home that they are wearing the correct uniform and, in particular, that they are not wearing incorrect earrings a nose stud, or socks over tights. All students MUST wear a blazer, a jumper is optional.

Our expectations are clear, consistent and apply to everyone. We will continue to work with families, but we will not compromise on the standards we have set. The partnership between home and school is critical, and your support makes an enormous difference so please work with us rather than against us.

I also want to thank the many families who are ensuring that their children are in school, on time, every day. Your commitment is making a real difference and attendance of students has improved compared to this time last year. However, we still have too many students who are absent or arriving late each day. This must improve. We have now conducted more than 170 home visits as part of our increased focus on attendance. This demonstrates the seriousness with which we are approaching this issue and our determination to work with families to remove barriers to attendance.

If your child is struggling to attend school regularly or there are circumstances making attendance difficult, please reach out to us. Support is available, and we would much rather work with you early than allow difficulties to become more entrenched.

Over the coming weeks, families will receive letters confirming the current attendance stage for their child. We are asking every family to use this as an opportunity for a real push to improve attendance and punctuality.

Every lesson missed matters. Every late arrival means lost learning. Being in school every day and being in on time is one of the most important things we can do to improve outcomes and life chances.

We have high expectations at Archbishop Ilsley. We are unapologetic about those expectations, but we also recognise that we cannot achieve them alone. Thank you for your continued support. Let us keep working together, keep raising the bar and keep moving Archbishop Ilsley forward.

**“...just and firm of purpose.”**

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in preparation for their exams

*Includes 1 blazer, 2 shirts/blouses, 1 pair of trousers or skirt, and 1 tie.

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# CATHOLIC LIFE • SCRIPTURE REFLECTION
# MATTHEW 22:1-14



Jesus spoke to them again in parables. He said, "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding feast for his son. He sent his servants to call the guests who had been invited, but they refused to come. So he sent more servants and said, 'Tell the guests: "Look, my dinner is ready. The best food has been prepared and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast!" But they ignored the invitation and went off — one to his farm, another to his business. The rest grabbed the king's servants, treated them shamefully and killed them. The king was furious. He sent his army to destroy those murderers and burn their city.

Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, but the people I invited did not deserve to come. So go out to the street corners and invite everyone you find to the wedding feast.' The servants went out into the streets and brought in everyone they could find, both bad and good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man who was not wearing wedding clothes.

'Friend,' he asked, 'how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' The man had nothing to say. Then the king told his servants, 'Tie him up hand and foot and throw him outside into the darkness, where people will cry and grind their teeth.' For many are invited, but few are chosen."

## How is this relevant today?

In this Gospel, Jesus tells the story of a king who prepares a great wedding feast for his son. The invitation is generous and joyful, yet those who are invited choose not to come. Some are too busy with their farms and businesses; others reject the invitation completely. Eventually, the invitation is extended to everyone — "both bad and good" — and the wedding hall is filled with guests. At the heart of this Gospel is an invitation: an invitation to accept the goodness, love and life that God offers us. Yet accepting that invitation requires something from us. It requires us to be willing to respond, to step forward and sometimes to leave behind what is comfortable or familiar. This connects strongly with our whole-school focus on courage. Courage is not simply about being brave in dramatic or difficult situations. Much of the courage we need in everyday life is quieter. It can mean having the courage to say yes to an opportunity, to try something we are not sure we can do, to stand up for someone who is being treated unfairly, or to admit when we have made a mistake. The people in the Gospel had an opportunity to attend the feast, but they allowed other priorities to become more important. There is a challenge here for all of us. What invitations might we be missing because we are too busy, too comfortable or too afraid? How often do we choose what is familiar rather than taking the courageous step towards something new?

For our students, courage might mean putting their hand up even when they are unsure of the answer, making a new friendship, asking for help when learning is difficult, or persevering when something does not come easily. For staff, it might mean trying a new approach, having a difficult but necessary conversation, or advocating for a student who needs someone to believe in them. For all of us, courage can mean choosing what is right even when it is not the easiest choice.

There is another important message in this Gospel. The invitation is extended to everyone. This reminds us of the importance of inclusion and belonging within our school community. God's invitation is not reserved for those who are perfect, successful or already have everything figured out. Everyone is invited. However, the story also challenges us to do something with that invitation. Being invited is not enough; we must respond. The wedding garment can be understood as a symbol of being ready to participate fully — of allowing our choices and actions to reflect the values we say we believe in. This is particularly relevant today. We are surrounded by opportunities, voices and invitations competing for our attention. Courage sometimes means stopping, listening and discerning which invitations are worth accepting. It means having the confidence to choose kindness over cruelty, truth over convenience, perseverance over giving up and hope over fear.

As a Catholic school community, we are called to respond courageously to God's invitation to live lives of love, service and faith. Perhaps this week we can ask ourselves: What am I being invited to do? Where do I need the courage to say "yes"? What might I be too afraid or too comfortable to try? How can I help someone else feel that they belong and are welcome? The Gospel reminds us that many are invited. Our task is to have the courage to respond — and to help others find the courage to do the same. May we have the courage to say yes to the opportunities God places before us, to step beyond what is comfortable, and to live our values with confidence, compassion and hope.

**"... For many are invited, but few are chosen..."**

## MAC PARENT/CARER SURVEY AUTUMN 2026

Within our Multi Academy Company we organise annual surveys to help us understand the views of our school communities and ensure that feedback continues to inform school improvement priorities. Our Autumn survey will go live from Monday 12th October 2026. We would be very grateful if you could use the QR code to complete the survey; your views are very important to us and provide valuable insight. Thank you in advance for your support.

## CELEBRATING ILSLEY TALENT – WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

At Archbishop Ilsley, we know that our students have so many talents, passions and achievements beyond the school gates- and we want to celebrate them!

Success is not only about what happens in the classroom. Whether your child is achieving in sport, music, dance, theatre, the arts, charity work, volunteering, competitions, community activities or other interests, we want to hear about it. Perhaps they are representing a local or regional sports team. Maybe they are learning an instrument, performing on stage, creating incredible artwork, volunteering in your community or raising money for a charity. Whatever their achievement, we want to showcase it and celebrate it as part of the Ilsley community. Send details, along with photographs or other information you are happy for us to share, to: enquiry@ilsley.bham.sch.uk

Let's shine a light on the incredible things our students are doing beyond the classroom and show everyone just how much talent there is at Ilsley!

## SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

We would like to ask for the support of all parents, carers and students in helping us maintain positive relationships with our neighbours and the wider community.

We have recently received concerns from local residents regarding littering, vaping in the community and vehicles obstructing driveways during student drop-off and collection times. We understand the impact these issues can have on residents and are committed to reminding students of the importance of acting responsibly both in and out of school. Please can families help us by:

- Encouraging students to dispose of litter responsibly and take pride in their local environment.
- Reinforcing our expectations regarding vaping, which is not permitted and can negatively affect both health and community relations.
- Ensuring that vehicles do not block driveways, access points, or create hazards when dropping off or collecting students.
- Promoting respectful behaviour towards local residents and their property at all times.

These messages will continue to be reinforced through assemblies and school communications. We greatly value the support of our families in helping our students make positive contributions to the community and show respect for those who live and work near the school.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. Together, we can help ensure that our school remains a positive and considerate neighbour within the local community.

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

- Wednesday 21st - Friday 23rd October - Belgium Residential
- Thursday 22nd October - Year 10 Blood Brothers theatre vocational visit
- Thursday 22nd October - Sixth Form Open Evening 5pm-7pm
- Friday 23rd October - INSET Day. School is closed to all students
- Monday 26th - Friday 30th October - HALF TERM
- Monday 2nd November - Staff and students return form Autumn Term 2

## ATTENDANCE MATTERS AT ABI - MRS BURNHAM

### Every Day Counts

We are continuing to focus on improving attendance across ABI and supporting every student to attend school regularly. Every day counts. Every lesson matters. Even a small number of days missed can quickly add up and can mean students miss important learning, explanations and opportunities to make progress.

## Our Graduated Attendance Approach

We are now using our five-stage attendance approach to identify students who are beginning to miss too much school and provide support early.

Our aim is to work with families before absence becomes a significant concern. If your child is identified as requiring additional support, our Attendance Team may contact you, arrange a Support First meeting or visit your home to understand whether there are any barriers preventing regular attendance.




### A Big Thank You!

We recently ran our 15-Day Snap Streak attendance challenge, and 693 students achieved the required attendance to be entered into the prize draw. Thank you to all the students and families who supported this.

### Coming Up: Don't Break the Spell!

We will be running our 4-Day "Don't Break the Spell" attendance challenge during the final week before October half term. We know that attendance can sometimes dip during the final week of a half term, but every lesson still matters right up to the final bell.

So let's finish the half term strong! Turn up. Stay on track. Don't break the spell!

Thank you to our parents and carers for continuing to support good attendance and punctuality. Working together, we can make sure every pupil has the opportunity to access their full education.

**Top Tutor Group- attendance**
KS5: 12BAK
KS4: 10JHN
KS3: 9COS

**Top Tutor Group- lates (LEAST)**
KS5: 12BAK
KS4: 10CAR
KS3: 7CAR

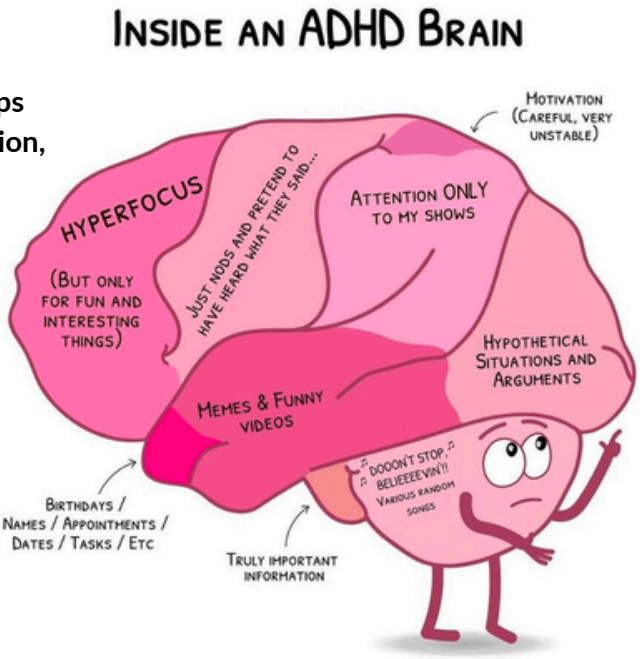
**Top Year Group- attendance**
KS5: YR12
KS4: YR11
KS3: YR7

# SEND AND INCLUSION - MRS GRANT

October is ADHD Awareness Month, an annual campaign that aims to improve understanding of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), challenge misconceptions, and share reliable information and support for children, families and professionals. This year's theme is "A Community of Support", recognising that children and young people with ADHD thrive best when schools, families and communities work together.

## What is ADHD?

ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) is a neurodevelopmental difference that affects how the brain develops and functions. It can influence a person's ability to regulate attention, manage impulses, organise tasks and regulate activity levels.




ADHD is not the same for everyone and can present differently from one child to another. Children and young people with ADHD may experience challenges with:

- Organisation and planning
- Maintaining attention on less interesting tasks
- Impulsivity
- Managing emotions
- Sitting still for extended periods
- Remembering instructions
- Completing tasks independently

ADHD is always an individual experience, and this may not always fit into accepted categories or perceptions.

It is important to remember that ADHD also brings many strengths. Individuals with ADHD are often:

- Creative
- Energetic
- Curious
- Enthusiastic problem-solvers and may demonstrate periods of hyperfocus, where they become deeply engaged in activities they find particularly interesting.

### Did You Know?

Many people think ADHD is simply a difficulty with paying attention. ADHD is not necessarily a deficit of attention, but rather a challenge in regulating an attention span. So, while mundane tasks may be difficult to focus on, others may be completely absorbing. You might, therefore, notice a striking contrast – beyond the expected level – in the focus of children and young people with ADHD, depending on the activity. A child may struggle to focus on one task but become completely absorbed in another that captures their interest. This is known as hyperfocus; the experience of deep and intense concentration in people with ADHD.

### Did You Know?

ADHD can also present differently in boys and girls. While some children show more outward signs such as high levels of activity and impulsivity, others may present with quieter difficulties such as daydreaming, inattention, anxiety or low self-esteem. For example, boys may show external symptoms of ADHD, such as running around and acting impulsively, while girls often show internal symptoms, such as struggling to pay attention and low self-esteem. This is why ADHD is often diagnosed later or left undiagnosed in women and girls.

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

# SEND AND INCLUSION - MRS GRANT

## How We Support Students with ADHD

At school, we recognise that every student's experience of ADHD is unique. Strategies that may support learners include:

- Clear routines and structures
- Visual timetables and task lists
- Breaking instructions into smaller steps
- Use of Task Management Boards
- Movement breaks where appropriate
- Positive relationships and encouragement
- Opportunities to develop self-regulation skills
- Collaborative working with families and external professionals when needed

We also provide targeted support through pastoral teams, SEND provision, and specialist advice where appropriate, helping young people to develop strategies that enable them to succeed both academically and socially.

## Further Information and Support

If you would like to learn more about ADHD, the following organisations provide reliable information and advice:

- ADHD Awareness Month: www.adhdawarenessmonth.org
- ADHD UK: www.adhduk.co.uk
- ADHD Aware: www.adhdaware.org.uk
- NHS ADHD Information: www.nhs.uk/conditions/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/



This month in particular, we are encouraging our students with ADHD to use their skills in art, stories, diary entries or memes to tell their story. The best way to change people's views about ADHD is to educate them!

# Volunteer in our SEND Department – Join Our Community of Faith

Are you interested in making a positive difference by supporting and encouraging our young people in a caring, inclusive environment?

Our SEND Department is looking for enthusiastic, compassionate volunteers to support our students and staff. Share your time, skills and compassion while helping students develop confidence, independence and a love of learning. Whether you have SEND experience or simply a passion for supporting young people, we would love to hear from you.

"Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40

All volunteering is subject to appropriate safeguarding checks, including a DBS check.

For more information, please contact: send.info@ilsley.bham.sch.uk

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

# YEAR 7 - MR FRANCIOSO

Continuing our excellent start! It has been another really positive few weeks for Year 7 and I would like to congratulate our students on the excellent start they have made to life at Archbishop Ilsley. We are beginning to see students become increasingly more confident around the school, building positive relationships with their teachers and peers and settling into the routines and expectations of secondary school. However, a good start is only the beginning. The challenge now is to maintain these high standards every single day.

## Our expectations matter

I would like to take this opportunity to reinforce some of the simple things that make such a big difference to a successful school community. Students should continue to:

- Be ready to learn, with the correct equipment.
- Be safe and follow the school rules.
- Be respectful and kind to staff and other pupils.
- Wear the correct, smart school uniform.
- Follow instructions first time.
- Take responsibility for their behaviour and their learning.
- Arrive on time to every lesson.

## Punctuality matters

As students move around a much larger secondary school, it is important that they understand that lessons begin when the bell goes. Being even a few minutes late can mean missing important instructions, falling behind with work and disrupting the learning of others. Please continue to support us by encouraging your child to move promptly between lessons and to arrive ready to learn. The standards we set now will become the habits that help our students succeed throughout their time at Archbishop Ilsley.

## Looking ahead

Early Review Evening - I will also be organising an Early Review Evening shortly after the October half-term. This will provide an opportunity to look at how students have settled into Year 7, celebrate their successes and identify any areas where we can work together to support them further. Please look out for correspondence from me with further information about the evening. Thank you, as always, for your continued support. The partnership between home and school is incredibly important, and together we can ensure that every member of Year 7 has the opportunity to thrive. Keep up the excellent work, Year 7!

## Enrichment

On Thursday, Year 7 had the fantastic opportunity to be part of a Guinness World Record attempt for the most people reading online within a 12-hour period. Our students were absolutely amazing and played their part alongside thousands of young people from across the world.



As part of the event, students listened to the renowned author Frank Cottrell-Boyce, before settling down to read their own books and enjoy the wonderful world of reading. It was fantastic to see so many of our Year 7 students getting involved with such an exciting global event.



We really hope that Archbishop Ilsley can say that we were part of a new Guinness World Record! Whatever the final result, Year 7 should be incredibly proud of the part they played.

# YEAR 8 - MR SMITH

It has been another fantastic fortnight for Year 8, with so much to celebrate across our year group. As always, I continue to be impressed by the positive attitude, enthusiasm and determination shown by our students both inside and outside the classroom.

Our assembly focus this week was the "R" in GRIT - Resilience. We explored why resilience is such an important quality in school and in life. Students reflected on the story of Joseph from the Bible, who faced many setbacks, disappointments and challenges throughout his life. Despite being betrayed by his brothers and wrongly imprisoned Joseph remained faithful, persevered and eventually became one of the most powerful men in Egypt. His story reminds us that challenges do not define us; it is how we respond to them that truly matters. I am pleased to say that I have seen examples of resilience throughout the school over the past two weeks, both in conversations with students and in lessons where students have shown determination when faced with challenging work or when things haven't gone their way.







This Friday, our entire year group attended Mass at Holy Souls Church. It was a wonderful opportunity to come together in worship and celebrate how special and unique each member of our community is. I would like to thank everyone who helped organise and lead the service, as well as our students, who represented the year group and the school brilliantly throughout the morning.

I am also incredibly proud that last week Year 8 finished as the top year group for Excellence House Points. This is a fantastic achievement and reflects the hard work and positive attitudes shown by so many students. These points contribute towards our Ilsley Standard Award, which recognises students who consistently meet our daily expectations. Students earn points through Form Time and lessons by being ready to learn, punctual, respectful and hardworking. These points build towards Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum Awards. A huge congratulations to all those who have received Star of the Week recognition recently, and don't forget to keep an eye on your letterbox as there may be a postcard arriving home soon!

Whilst there is much to celebrate, attendance continues to be an area where we need to improve as a year group. Regular attendance is one of the biggest factors affecting academic success. A student with 95% attendance misses around 10 days of learning each year, while attendance of 90% means a student misses approximately four weeks of school across the year. Every lesson matters, and every day in school provides valuable opportunities for learning, friendships and personal development. Thank you to all parents and carers who continue to support us in ensuring students attend school every day and arrive punctually.

Thank you also to those parents and carers who have responded to the email regarding our proposed theatre vocational visit to the Birmingham Rep in December to watch Peter Pan. If you have not yet registered your child's interest, please take a few moments to complete the Microsoft Form that was sent home. The level of interest has been extremely encouraging, and we hope many students will take advantage of this exciting opportunity.
I would also like to praise the students who recently visited the zoo. Their behaviour, enthusiasm and conduct throughout the visit were outstanding. They were a real credit to both Year 8 and the wider school community and it was wonderful to receive such positive feedback about them.

Finally, I would like to thank all parents and carers for your continued support. The success of our young people comes from a strong partnership between school, home and the students themselves. When we work together, we create the best possible environment for our children to flourish, grow and achieve their potential.
May God bless you and your family.

## HEAD OF YEAR UPDATES

## YEAR 9 - MRS WAFI

It has been inspiring to witness the enthusiasm, commitment, and determination shown by our students across a wide range of opportunities and experiences this half term.

We are particularly delighted to see so many students eager to take part in the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award this academic year. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is a truly transformative programme that combines structured personal development with adventure and challenge. Through volunteering, developing new skills, physical activity, and completing an expedition, students grow in confidence, resilience, independence, and teamwork. The experiences gained through the award help to develop qualities that will serve them well throughout their lives, both inside and outside the classroom.

Several Year 9 students have also been selected to participate in the Envision programme. This exciting initiative empowers young people to identify an issue within their school or local community and create a social action project to address it. By working collaboratively to make a positive difference, students develop leadership skills, creativity, communication, and a strong sense of social responsibility. We are excited to see the impact their projects will have and the valuable lessons they will learn through serving others.

Our Year 9 students recently gathered to celebrate Mass, providing a meaningful opportunity to come together in faith, prayer, and reflection. The celebration reminded us of the importance of community and our shared mission to live out Gospel values in our daily lives. Through worship, students were encouraged to reflect on how they can use their gifts and talents in service of others and contribute positively to our school community.

The values demonstrated through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Envision, and our celebration of Mass reflect our commitment to forming young people who are not only academically successful but also compassionate, courageous, and committed to making a difference in the world around them. As St Paul reminds us: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters." Colossians 3:23. This verse beautifully captures the spirit we see in so many of our students as they embrace new challenges, serve their communities, and strive to become the very best versions of themselves.

## YEAR 10 - MR KENYON

It has been really encouraging to see Year 10 continue their positive start to the academic year. The strong foundations established during the first few weeks are beginning to develop into consistent habits, and I have been pleased to see students responding well to the expectations and responsibilities that we have set out for them.

I continue to receive positive feedback from teachers about the attitude and behaviour of the year group. Students are approaching their lessons with maturity, working hard and showing a real willingness to improve. It is important that these positive attitudes are maintained and that students continue to recognise the link between the choices they make each day and the progress they will ultimately achieve.

I would like to thank parents and carers for the continued support that you are providing at home. Supporting good routines around attendance, uniform, organisation, and homework will help students to develop the discipline they need to succeed at school and later in life.

I want every student to make the most of their opportunities this year and continue to develop a stronger character. Our Catholic ethos encourages students to recognise their responsibilities, make wise choices, and have the resilience to persevere through any challenges they may face. I look forward to seeing Year 10 continue to rise to these expectations.

Silver Duke of Edinburgh - Applications for the Silver Duke of Edinburgh award are still open.
I would encourage Year 10 to take advantage of this great opportunity. Students can get an application form from student services and return their form there once completed. If they have any questions, they can ask me, Mrs Jones, or Dr Regan.

## YEAR 11 - MS RUCK




Year 11 have done us proud in this last fortnight. 6 o clock club is proving to be a wonderful success. I am delighted with how our students are making the most of every opportunity to achieve their best outcomes. These habits become routine and we thank you as parents and carers for working in partnership with us.

A huge number of Year 11s have consistently met the Ilsley Standard this year. It is very easy for our student not to receive a detention. Following school rules is a basic expectation and prepares them also for life after school. For those students who are receiving detentions; Lunchtime detentions run from 1.40-2pm every day and provision is made for students to collect lunch in the canteen after this. All C3s and upscaled detentions take place for an hour after school on a Friday.

Talking about life after GCSEs-all Year 11s have this week received an invitation from Mrs McMahon to complete an Expression of Interest Form for our Sixth Form. They have also had an introduction to our Sixth Form in assembly and we look forward to our upcoming Sixth Form Open Evening. You will shortly receive an invitation to this event through the post or on BromCom. Students will be learning more about the subjects we offer and all of the wonderful reasons to stay on with us as well as some little tasters of our Sixth Form with some "tea and toast" mornings.

As we head into the last couple of weeks of our first half term, we express our gratitude for your support. This Year 11 have huge potential, and we will work tirelessly to help them unlock this. A reminder that attending school every day, on time, and meeting school rules will go a long way in helping them to be successful.

## STANDARDS FOR LEARNING - MR FOLEY

Last week was a superb week for behaviour in lessons. Our students earned 10,258 Ilsley Standard Awards, which are given at the end of every lesson for arriving on time, wearing the correct uniform and working well. More than 1,000 students received at least one award, and for every consequence given in lessons, 31 positives were recorded. Congratulations to 8MAX, the top tutor group in the whole school with 402 awards.

Top tutor group for awards in each year group:
Year 7: 7THE
Year 8: 8MAX
Year 9: 9JHN
Year 10: 10BAK
Year 11: 11BAK
Year 12: 12BAK
Year 13: 13BER

Star students in each year group:
Year 7: Ivy B. and Lily-Mae S
Year 8: Hamdaan A
Year 9: Zenayah D
Year 10: Safiya R
Year 11: Ryan N
Year 12: Mary M
Year 13: Claudia E

Thank you to every student who is showing, lesson after lesson, what the Ilsley Standard looks like, and to the families supporting them at home.

### Faith and community

Our faith life has been just as rich. Year 9 and Year 8 have each gathered for Mass, a precious chance for each year group to come together in prayer as one community. On CAFOD's Family Fast Day, our students responded to the Gospel parable of the vineyard by choosing to "bear fruit" for others. They raised nearly £200 to provide safe water and nutritious food for children like Tayla in Zimbabwe. Thank you for your generosity.

This week, the forms of St Thérèse of Lisieux house led our form assemblies, focusing on Black History Month. They reflected on the life and influence of our very own Benjamin Zephaniah, the Handsworth-born poet who had the courage to use his voice and his gifts even when it was difficult. Next week, assemblies will be led by the forms of St Carlo Acutis house.  Our theme this week has been Courage. Our school prayer asks God for "the courage to defend the dignity of all". In tutor time, students are exploring what courage looks like day to day: staying focused when others are messing about, speaking up when someone is being put down, and owning a mistake so they can make a fresh start. We would love you to ask your child at home where they have shown courage this week.

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 and incredibly busy two weeks in our Sixth Form, with so much to celebrate. From fundraising and international opportunities to mathematical challenges and preparations for our Sixth Form Open Evening, our students have continued to impress us with their enthusiasm, generosity and willingness to get involved. Alongside all of this, Year 12 and Year 13 are working incredibly hard in their studies and beginning to prepare for important assessments and their next steps.

One of the highlights of the past fortnight was our Macmillan Coffee Morning, which was a wonderful success. Thanks to the generosity of our students, staff and wider school community, we raised an impressive £181 for a very important and worthwhile cause. Events such as this are about much more than raising money. They bring our community together and give our young people the opportunity to make a positive difference to the lives of others. A huge thank you to everyone who donated, bought something or supported the event.

## Global Links

There was also great excitement as our Global Links group held its inaugural meeting on Monday 5th October. Mr Botwright was delighted to welcome more than 30 students, demonstrating just how keen our Sixth Form students are to learn more about the wider world. The first session focused on a thought-provoking question: How well do we really know the world around us?

For 22 members of the Global Links group, that exploration will eventually take them far beyond the classroom. In July 2027, they will have the amazing opportunity to participate in a two-week trip to Uganda, working with Challenges Abroad, the Uganda Global Citizenship Programme and the Future Sense Foundation. This promises to be an unforgettable opportunity for our students to learn from other communities, develop their understanding of global citizenship and build their confidence, independence and leadership skills. We are incredibly excited to follow their journey as they prepare for this fantastic experience.

## A Level Mathematics



Students have been putting their skills to the test. On Thursday 8th October, Year 12 and Year 13 mathematicians participated in the prestigious UK Maths Trust Mathematical Challenge, a national competition designed to challenge and engage students through mathematical problem-solving. Our younger mathematicians will already be familiar with UK Maths Trust competitions, with our top sets in Years 7 and 8 also taking part at their respective level. However, this is only the second time we have entered the competition at Senior level.

Last year's results were extremely pleasing, with most of our then-Year 12 students, now in Year 13, earning a much-coveted certificate. We are keeping our fingers crossed for another excellent set of results this year! Whatever the outcome, taking part is a fantastic opportunity and achievement. A huge thank you to our Maths department for giving our students the chance to challenge themselves and showcase their mathematical talents.

## Mock Examinations and Assessments

Year 13 mock examinations will take place week beginning Monday 16th November, while Year 12 assessments will take place week beginning Monday 30th November. We would be very grateful for the continued support of parents and carers. Please talk to your son or daughter about their upcoming assessments and encourage them to begin their revision and preparation early. Support and encouragement from home really can make a difference.