



# ST. AIDAN'S CATHOLIC ACADEMY

It has been a cold but wonderful return to school this year. Thank you for your support in getting our young people back into school, ready to learn. I would like to share with you a reflection by Mr J Coon who led our staff in prayer upon our return:

*"As we gather for our first week back after Christmas, we return carrying the quiet glow of the season—perhaps a little rested, perhaps still tired, but renewed. We have returned to the ordinary rhythms of school life, bringing with us all that this new term will hold. Christmas invited us to pause, to wonder, and to remember that God chooses to come close to us not in grandeur, but in simplicity—entering the everyday spaces of our lives, including our classrooms and our work together.*

*At this time, the Feast of the Epiphany reminds us that the story of Christmas does not end at the manger. The Wise Men set out on a journey, guided by a light that led them to truth, hope, and transformation. Having encountered Christ, they returned home changed, carrying that light into their own places and responsibilities. Their journey did not end when they found Jesus; in many ways, it began there.*

*As we begin a new term, we too are invited to begin again. We return to our shared mission, called to notice and follow the light God places before us. Sometimes that light is clear and steady; at other times, it is a small glow that asks us to trust and to keep going. In our patience, kindness, encouragement, and daily acts of care, we are called to be bearers of that light for our community.*

*May this new term be a continuation of the Christmas message: God with us, God among us, and God working through us in all that we do."* **Mrs Whitten Headteacher**

## >>> PUPILS OF THE WEEK

### Cycle 2 Week 2

#### Taqi Arshad (7D)

Taqi goes above and beyond in many aspects of school life. It is wonderful to see the high effort he puts into his homework each day. Additionally, Taqi is an excellent reader who has shone this last week with his use of clear intonation, especially when reading dialogue.

Well Done Taqi.

### Cycle 2 Week 3

#### Rory Hodgson (7B), Jacob Burn (7B), Shiloh Onimole (7B), Dayton Sanderson (7B)

For excellent leadership in reading fluency. Well done boys.

**Camron Baldwin (9C), Seyshan Ragulan (9C), Akorede Ayodele (9C), Lyte Annang (9C), Elwyn Ho (8C), Henry Little (7A), Blake Carr (8M), Theo Bruce (7C), Lewis Fenwick (8A), Oliver Foster (8B), Elijah Poulton (7B), Darasimi Akinola (7M), Parker Liddle (9F), Olly Malcolm (8M), and Charlie Sykes (7R).**

Nominated for being excellent musicians and singers in the rehearsals leading up to their performance of "I Believe in Father Christmas" in the Celebration of the Word.



**Cycle 2 Week 3:****Adam Whiteheart (10R) and Daniel Mooney (10M)**

Nominated for creating their own arrangement of “*Carol of the Bells*” and performing it in the Celebration of the Word.

**ACHIEVEMENT POINTS TO DATE: 32119 (AV: 34.87 PER PERSON)**

**>>> WORD OF THE WEEK****Cycle 2 Week 2:****Conformity. Con/for/mi/ty**

**Etymology:** From Latin *conformare* meaning “to shape together.”

**Definition:** Compliance with standards, rules, or laws.

**Example:** *Winston’s struggle against conformity in ‘1984’ highlights the dangers of totalitarian control.*

**Cycle 2 Week 3:****Identity (noun). i/den/ti/ty**

**Etymology:** From the Latin *"identitas"* meaning "sameness."

**Definition:** The characteristics that determine who or what a person is.

**Example:** Jeanette’s search for identity in “*Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit*” challenges societal norms.

**>>> YEAR 11 AND YEAR 13 MOCK EXAMS**

The Year 11 and Year 13 mock examinations will commence during the week beginning Monday, 12th January 2026, and will run for a two-week period. These assessments form an integral part of the academic calendar, providing students with a valuable opportunity to consolidate their learning and refine their examination techniques ahead of the summer series.

All candidates are reminded to consult the published timetable carefully and ensure punctual attendance for each scheduled paper. The feedback generated from these mocks will be instrumental in guiding further preparation and supporting academic success. We encourage all students to approach these examinations with confidence and determination, as every effort made now will contribute to future achievement.





### Cycle 2 Week 2

Be curious, learn about a new topic or an inspiring idea.

### Cycle 2 Week 3

Connect with someone from a different generation, talk to your parents and grandparents, find out something new about them and share something about you.

## >>> BOOK DONATIONS

### Thank You for Your Generosity!

We are truly grateful to everyone who has donated or purchased books for our school library. Your kindness is helping us transform our collection into a vibrant space filled with stories that spark imagination, inspire learning, and encourage personal growth.

Because of your support, our pupils will have access to books that challenge and excite them—opening doors to new worlds and ideas. Every single contribution brings us closer to ensuring that every student can experience the joy of reading.

Thank you for making a meaningful difference in the lives of our young readers. Your generosity is shaping their future, one page at a time!





St Aidan's Robotics Club are gearing up for their Vex robotics regional competition at Nissan Washington on 28th January 2026.

Well done and good luck boys!



>>> YR 13 HOLY CROSS NURSING HOME VISIT

For the third Christmas running some of the year 13 pupils have visited the Holy Cross Nursing Home to entertain the residents with their talents of singing and playing instruments eg piano, flute and violin.

The pupils really enjoyed seeing the smiles on the residents' faces and bringing joy to them. The residents look forward to our visit every year. The pupils were outstanding (as usual) and showed compassion, energy and happiness. Well done everyone!



## >>> MULTI-AGENCY DROP-IN SUPPORT



CATHOLIC LIFE

**MULTI-AGENCY  
DROP-INS  
SUNDERLAND**  
THORNEY CLOSE FAMILY HUB, THORNEY  
CLOSE, SUNDERLAND SR3 4JQ

Do you live within the Sunderland local authority?

Do you have concerns that your child, who is 0-18 years of age, is Autistic, has ADHD, Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) or Sensory Processing Differences?

Would you benefit from introductions to and support from other services and agencies?

Multi-agency drop-in's are designed so parents/carers can meet a representative from other services and agencies who may be able to support their family, child or young person.

For details on who will be attending each drop-in, please join our Facebook group or contact the team directly.

**UPCOMING DATES:**  
(TERM TIME ONLY)

Wednesday-10.00am-12.00pm

21<sup>st</sup> January  
11<sup>th</sup> February

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

[SUNDERLANDFAMILYSUPPORT@DAISYCHAINPROJECT.CO.UK](mailto:SUNDERLANDFAMILYSUPPORT@DAISYCHAINPROJECT.CO.UK)

## >>> GENERAL REMINDERS

### ABSENCE REPORTING

Parents are required to call the student absence line each day to report any absence. Please dial the main school number and select Option 1.

Please ensure that you provide your child's full name, form group and a reason for the absence.

### PASS OUT REQUESTS

Pass Out requests should be emailed to [contactus@staca.co.uk](mailto:contactus@staca.co.uk). Please include your child's full name, form, date, reason for the Pass Out and collection/leaving time.

Parents will receive an email to confirm that the Pass Out has been completed.

Students need to collect their Pass Out slips from the Student Support office prior to their appointment. They should present the slip to their class teacher at the time stated on the Pass Out and make their way to the Main Reception.





If you would like your child to be dismissed from Park Lane Metro Station upon arrival at 2.55pm on the day of the visit, please provide consent via Arbor.

The deadline for providing consent is **Monday, 12th January 2026 at 10:00am**. No consents will be processed after this time.

Any pupils who do not have consent will return to school and be dismissed from there.

### **>>> DATES FOR THE DIARY**

#### **Monday, 12th January 2026 at 10:00am**

Deadline for providing consent for Yr 7 Newcastle University visits.

#### **Week commencing Monday, 12th January 2026**

Year 7 visits to Newcastle University

#### **Tuesday, 13th January 2026**

Year 9 Parents Evening - school closes at 1.55pm for all pupils.

#### **Tuesday, 20th January 2026**

Open Door. Come along and have a look at the school in action. Arrive anytime between 8.50am and 11.45am.

#### **Wednesday, 21st January 2026**

Online Safety - Parent Information Session at 5pm.

#### **Friday, 20th February 2026**

School closes for half term holiday.

#### **Monday 23rd February 2026 to Friday 27th February 2026**

Half term holiday.

#### **Monday 2nd March 2026**

School re opens at usual time.

