



Voice

Saint Bernard's

July 2026



St Bernard's
**School Direct
Training**



Saint Bernard's
Catholic High School



Mid-Year Newsletter

Newsletter Introduction

Welcome to our Summer 2026 school newsletter which showcases some of the wonderful activities that our pupils have participated in over the 2025 - 2026 academic year.

Each school year seems to become faster and faster - it only seems a few weeks ago that we were welcoming our 'new' year 7's into our school community and now they are moving into Year 8! At the other end of the age groups, we have been extremely proud of our Year 11 pupils and how they have approached their recent GCSE examinations. We had a wonderful Leaver's Day celebration with them which ended with a Mass which was attended by the pupils, our staff and parents of our Year 11 pupils. It was a truly special way to end their time with us here at St Bernard's, even though they will always be part of our school community.

Our pupils have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of enrichment opportunities and that is an aspect of our school that I am really proud of. Our staff genuinely care about our pupils and that leads to them organising opportunities for our pupils to access extra curricular clubs and school trips. For example, we have a large number of after school clubs running from Tuesday to Friday including the opportunity to undertake The 'Duke of Edinburgh Award,' and we have overseas trips to various destinations in Europe and South Africa. We hope to build on this each year, and hopefully this newsletter will give you an insight into some of the daily activities that your child is able to experience at St Bernard's.

I hope you enjoy reading through this newsletter and if there is anything you want to find out more about, please contact the school or access our Facebook page.

Thanks

Andy Riding

Headteacher

St Bernard's Catholic High School

Catholic Life

Year 7 Confirmation

We are delighted to share some wonderful news from our school community! On Wednesday 17th June, four of our wonderful Year 7 pupils took a beautiful step in their faith journey by receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation at St Joseph's Church in Dinnington.

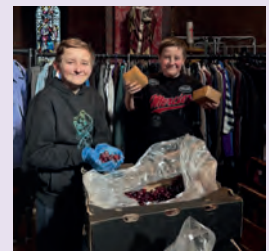
It was a truly special service, and we are incredibly proud of the commitment, maturity, and reverence these students showed. Please join us in congratulating them as they continue to grow in their faith.

"May the Holy Spirit guide them and inspire them always."



Faith in Action Gussie's Pantry

A group of Year 8 pupils who are currently enrolled on the Faith in Action Award travelled to Gussie's Pantry in Chesterfield where they helped pack food and toiletries. They are working alongside Year 8 pupils from the other Catholic secondary schools in the Diocese of Hallam, so are forging great friendships as well as putting their faith into action.



Savio

Some of our Year 8 Faith in Action Leaders attended a retreat at Savio House Salesian Retreat Centre.

They were there with other Hallam Diocese Catholic Secondary Schools as the students have worked together over the last year to achieve the award. They used this retreat as an opportunity to come together to reflect on what they have learned and achieved throughout the year.

Cross Making Workshop

A huge thank you to the clients at St Wilfred's Centre Sheffield who made these wonderful holding crosses for our pupils to take to Lesotho when we visit Makhetheng Catholic Primary School later this year.



Lantern Workshop

In March, we welcomed Karen Hall, a textile and visual artist, working alongside Zoe and Mia from the Children's Capital of Culture, to lead a lantern workshop as part of the Rotherham West Heritage Project.

These lanterns were used in a Mass at St Bedes Church to commemorate the Masbrough boat disaster of 1841.



Our Lady of Guadalupe

On Friday, 5th June, three of our students, accompanied by school staff and governors, had the wonderful opportunity to visit the Mother of God Church in Sheffield. This special event brought together secondary schools from across the entire diocese for a day of shared faith and learning.

The day began with a beautiful celebration of Mass, uniting students and staff from across the diocese in prayer. Following the service, everyone learned about the fascinating history and spiritual significance of the relic image of **Our Lady of Guadalupe**, exploring its deep historical roots and meaning.

Afterwards, our students joined peers from the other visiting schools for a lively community lunch, sharing experiences and making new connections across the diocese. To wrap up the afternoon, we headed to a local cafe to continue our reflections and discussions over a cool drink. It was a fantastic day of faith, learning, and fellowship, and our students represented the school brilliantly!



Annual Procession of Mary

In May, some of our pupils had a wonderful time attending St Mary's Catholic Primary School with their annual procession of Mary around the school grounds and in the local community.



Whole School Easter Mass

Father John led a breathtaking whole school Mass today to celebrate Easter, the 'Party Season' of the Church's calendar!

Thank you to the governors who attended, Fr John for leading the Mass and for our wonderful pupils who sang so beautifully.

It was a wonderful occasion and the last whole school Mass that our Year 11 pupils participated in!



Year 9 Feast Day

Year 9 Feast Day celebrations were a huge success.

Thank you to the staff who supported the wonderful pupils who fully embraced the day!



Oakes



Praying the Rosary



Teen Ranch



Careers

Careers Fair

In March we had another very successful careers fair in school which was attended by the Mayor of Rotherham.

All students spent time with over **40** employers and post-16 providers. It was great to welcome so many employers and post-16 providers to school, we really do appreciate their time and support.

Below is a summary of the feedback from students:

- 94% of students enjoyed the careers fair
- 68% of students said that the fair had helped them with ideas about future careers
- 98% said that they are now more aware about different careers and opportunities
- 87% feel more confident in talking to employers/training providers
- 90% feel more motivated and inspired about their future

When we asked the employers to summarise the event in three words they said:

- Interesting, Encouraging & fulfilling
- Promising, Enlightening and Inspirational
- Informing, Interesting, Exciting



If you would like to support any of our careers events next year then please do get in contact with Jayne Collins, jcollins@sbch.org.uk. Thank you!

Y10 Mock Interviews

Our Year 10 students completed their mock interviews on the 24th and 25th of June. All the employers were so impressed by our students.

The students spent time preparing their CVs prior to the interview to share with the employers. Students had researched the company the employer was from so they could ask informed questions during their interviews. It was great to see so many proud faces as the students left the room.

Well done Y10, you did yourselves and the school proud!



Y10 Work Experience

Our Year 10 students successfully completed a two week work placement in January. The feedback from students, staff, and employers was extremely positive. Below is a summary of how our students felt about the experience:

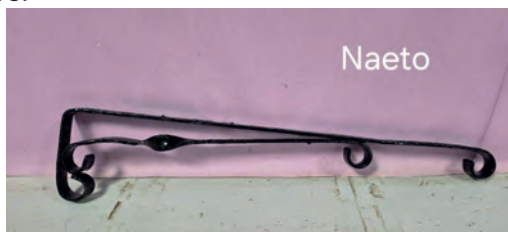
- Students found work experience really valuable and would recommend that other students participate in the future
- Students felt their confidence had increased when meeting and speaking with people they don't know.
- Students felt supported throughout the whole process.
- The three highest skills students felt they developed were Speaking, Problem Solving and Listening

Design & Technology

Some of our Year 7 and 9 pupils have been displaying their Talent in Design & Technology. Our Year 7s made money boxes, while the Year 9s designed and brazed their own hanging basket holders.



Lewis G



Naeto



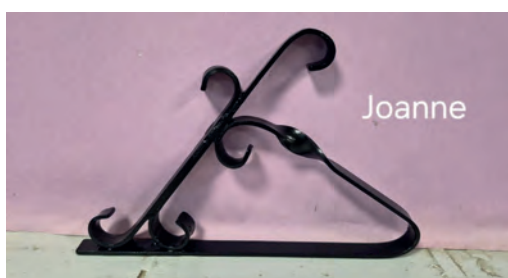
Esme J and Nevaeh



Sully



Kajus



Joanne



Ajay

English

Author Visit

On the 22nd April we were visited by the author David Webb, who delivered a workshop with some of our Year 7 students. We spent the morning hearing about David's experiences and inspiration, along with some of his top tips on how to get writing.



Then, together with a group of students visiting from St Pius school, we started work on our own creative ideas. Using the prompt of a treasure chest and an ancient key the students were tasked with creating their own stories around these items.

The students were enthusiastic, hard-working and inspiring. They developed some superb stories that they should all be proud of.



Poetry Awards

On the 10th March we took 8 budding poets to the Poetry society's "Imagining a greener future - young poets showcase" hosted at AESSEAL.

This showcase was to celebrate the work of young poets from schools across Rotherham. At this event Idrees Ali received the runner's up prize with his poem 'Time to dream, time to change'. Maddison Lunn and Mia Yates each received the prize of highly commended for their poems 'Blazing sparrow' and 'Place I left my heart' respectively. Each prize winner shared their poem with the group and received a gift bag of goodies.

We also had another opportunity to see local poet Matt Abbott perform and speak to the group, followed by a 'Tree walk' round the grounds afterwards.

We had a lovely afternoon and look forward to seeing our prize winners' work in print.



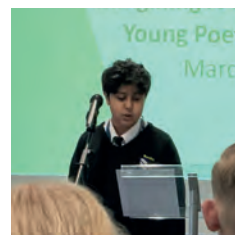
Poet Matt Abbott



Maddison Lunn



Mia Yates



Idrees Ali

Geography

Hornsea

Year 10 swapped the classroom for the coastline recently on a fieldwork trip to Hornsea!

Students put their geography skills to the test, analysing vital coastal management systems like sea walls, groynes, and rock armour along the Holderness coast.

They did a fantastic job collecting data and wrapped up a highly successful day the traditional British way—with delicious fish, chips, and ice cream!



Iceland

In February, Geography students travelled to Iceland. On their first day they undertook a Golden Circle day, which is a famous tourist route that features locations such as the Secret Lagoon, Gulfloss Waterfall, Geysir Geothermal Park, and Thingvellir National Park. The students said it was a cold day, but worth it to see all the beautiful scenery.

Later in the trip they visited the Lava Centre to learn about Iceland's tectonic history. They even hiked on Sólheimajökull Glacier, which in Icelandic means home of the sun. In the evening, they got a chance to see the Northern Lights!

On their last day, they took a trip to Hallgrímskirkja, which is the tallest church in Iceland. They also got to spend some free time in Reykjavík, and visit the Gunnuhver Hot Springs. They finished the trip at the bridge between continents.



Music & Performing Arts

Battle of the Bands

Some of our pupils attended Rotherham Schools' Battle of the Bands in February. We are proud of all students who participated, especially our Year 11 girls who were crowned Key Stage 4 Winners!



Jesus Christ OUR Superstar

For one night only our Music and Performing Arts students took to the stage to put on an exceptionally executed performance of our take on Jesus Christ Our Superstar. From the singing, dancing and acting the show was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Students really pulled this out of the bag putting on a production that would normally take 6 months and doing it in 3. They gave up multiple after school sessions for rehearsals as well as lunch times and weekends. They showed immense resilience and commitment to the rehearsals with students working together from Y7-10 including school leavers. We can't thank you enough for your hard work and dedication. A huge thank you goes to our wider community for the sell out show and for your continued support. We look forward to the next one - watch this space.



Legally Blonde

In March, 26 students and 3 staff visited Sheffield Lyceum theatre on Tuesday night to watch Legally Blonde the Musical. They enjoyed the performance very much!



Physical Education

Girls Netball

Year 7: The Rising Stars

Our Year 7 netballers have made a brilliant start to their secondary school sports journey! Their dedication has been incredible, with a fantastic turnout at enrichment every single week to practice skills and play matches. This consistent hard work has clearly shown in their rapid development, with their spatial awareness and teamwork improving massively from week to week.

Year 8: The Skill Sharpeners

Consistency is the key to progress, and our Year 8 squad proved exactly that this season. By showing up to enrichment week in and week out, these girls have taken their game to the next level. We have seen a massive leap in their tactical awareness, sharper passing, and confident court movement during our weekly games. It has been a pleasure to watch their confidence grow as a unit. Fantastic job!

Year 9: The Game Changers

Year 9 brought fantastic energy, resilience, and a competitive edge to the court this season. They have really started to master the tactical demands of the game, showing great composure during tight matches. Their ability to read the play and support one another under pressure has been a real highlight of the year. They are turning into incredibly versatile, formidable players.

Year 10: The Courtside Leaders

As the senior players of this cohort, our Year 10 netballers have shown brilliant maturity and leadership. Their tactical understanding of the game reached new heights this term, resulting in some beautifully executed plays and outstanding defensive intercepts. More importantly, their sportsmanship and encouragement of each other have set a wonderful example for the younger year groups.

Going for Gold! St Bernard's Achieves School Games Mark

We are thrilled to share some fantastic news with our school community: **St Bernard's Catholic High School has officially been awarded the Gold School Games Mark!** The School Games Mark is a government-led award scheme launched to reward and celebrate schools for their commitment to the development of competition across their school and into the wider community. Achieving the **Gold** standard is a massive milestone that highlights our dedication to keeping our pupils active, engaged, and thriving in competitive sport.

A major contributing factor to this success is the incredible range and frequency of **enrichment activities** available to our pupils. Our students have stepped up, stayed active, and embraced the spirit of the School Games. This achievement would not have been possible without a massive team effort. A huge thank you goes out to all the staff members who have given up their time to lead enrichment sessions or take charge of our various sports teams. Your dedication is deeply appreciated by the PE department, but most importantly, by the students themselves.

Please join us in celebrating this wonderful achievement. Let's keep this momentum going into the next academic year! **Go Team SBCH!**



Plate Day Finals

A successful Plate Finals Day at St Bernard's as our Year 8 boy's team won 7-0 in their final.



Champions! Y10/11 Girls Clinch the Rotherham Cup

We have some absolutely fantastic news to share from the PE department! Our Year 10 and 11 girls' football team have officially been crowned the **Rotherham Schools Champions** after an incredible performance back in April.

The team faced off against a formidable Wales High School side, putting on a masterclass of determination, teamwork, and grit to secure a spectacular **3-1 victory**. Second half goals from Keira Buchanan and Lily Mae Timmins sealed the win.

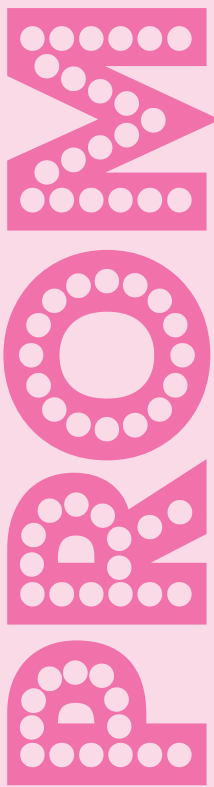
It was a hard-fought match from the first whistle to the last. The girls truly battled for one another on the pitch, proving that hard work and unity win championships. The girls were absolutely over the moon, and they totally deserve to be. They dug deep and played their hearts out for the team.



PROM 2026

Thank you to our Year 11 leavers for attending Prom. You all danced the night away, watched England play in the World Cup, and made memories to last a lifetime.

You were all so well behaved and a credit to the school, as you always have been. It was the perfect way to celebrate all your hard work and close this amazing chapter together.



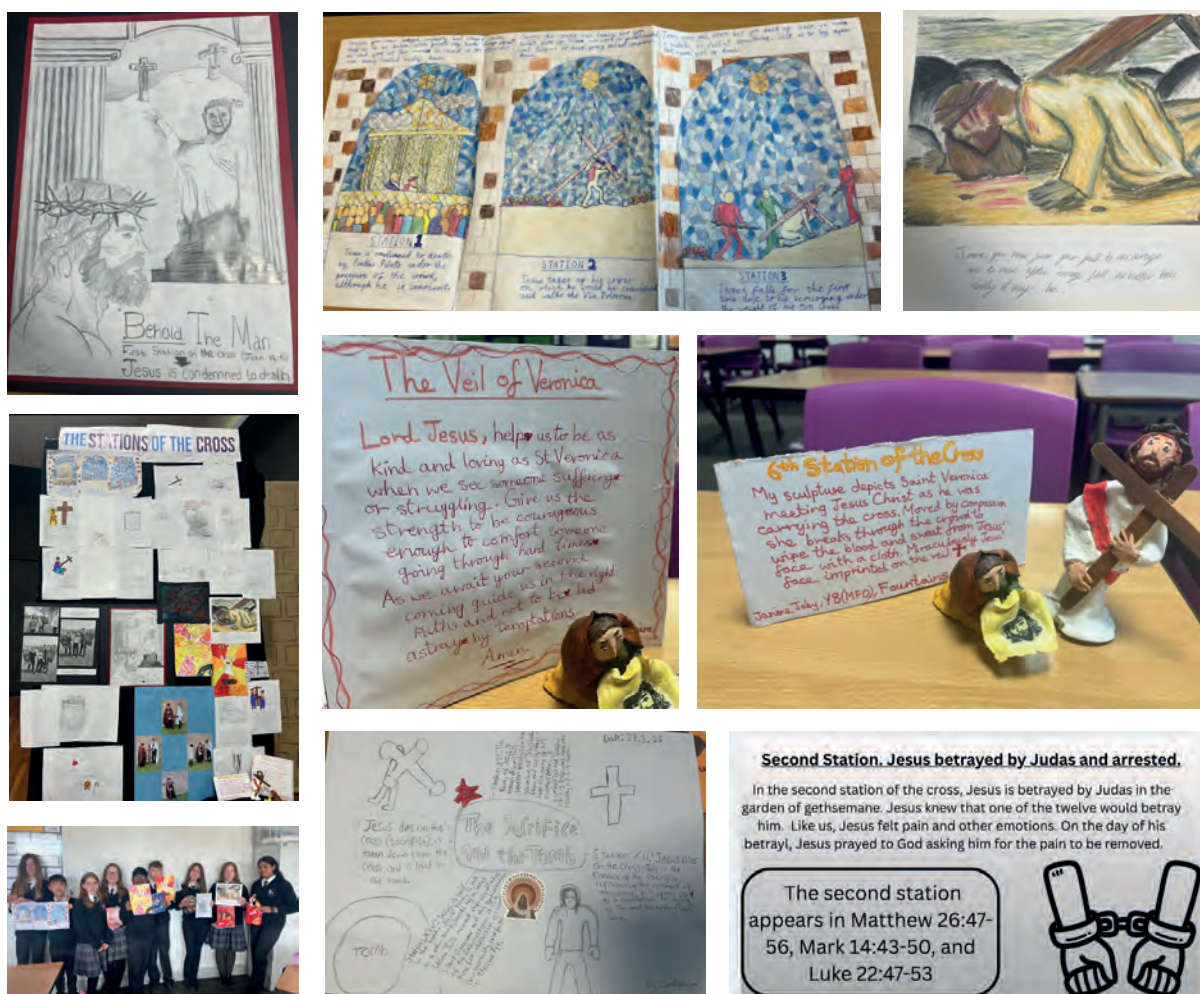
RE

Stations of the Cross Competition

During Lent, our students showcased incredible talent and deep reflection in our Stations of the Cross competition. We received a magnificent variety of entries, spanning traditional drawings, paintings, and sculptures, alongside modern podcasts, Google Slides presentations, and short films.

Crucially, students didn't just create art; they deeply reflected on their chosen Stations, writing moving prayers to accompany their pieces. These beautiful creations were proudly displayed in our school hall throughout Eastertide.

Competition was fierce, and we are thrilled to announce we had winners from every House, plus one exceptional overall winner! All winners received well-deserved chocolate and Easter eggs.



Making Challa Bread

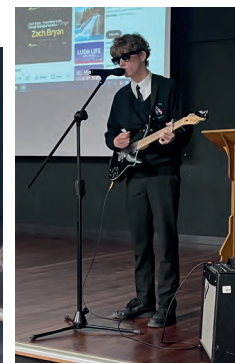
Year 9 students made Challa bread in RE. They did amazing!



Year 11 Leavers Day

Congratulations to our incredible Year 11 leavers on reaching this fantastic milestone! Your hard work, resilience, and unforgettable memories have shaped our school community, and we are so proud of everything you have achieved.

It was a wonderful day, finished off with an amazing Mass celebrating your wonderful time at St Bernard's.



Science

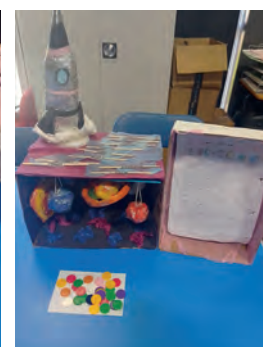
Budding Scientists Explore the Big Bang Fair!

In June, a group of our fantastic Year 7 and Year 8 students traded the classroom for a day of cutting-edge discovery at the Big Bang Fayre in Birmingham—and what a brilliant day it was!



The UK's biggest celebration of science, technology, engineering, and maths (STEM) did not disappoint. Our students dove headfirst into the action, getting hands-on with virtual reality, coding challenges, and mind-boggling live science experiments. From chatting with real-world engineers about the future of green energy to testing out flight simulators, the energy and curiosity our students showed was fantastic to see.

A great time was had by all, and it's safe to say we have some inspired future scientists and innovators in our midst. A huge well done to all the attendees for representing our school so brilliantly!



Enrichment

European Cookery Club

Bon appétit! This year, our fantastic **Year 7 and Year 8 students** have been taking their taste buds on a tour across the continent in the **European Cookery Enrichment club**. Gathering every Thursday after school, these talented young chefs have been working hard under the expert guidance of Mrs Winter and Mrs Ridgway.

The kitchen has been a whirlwind of creativity, with students tackling some incredibly ambitious recipes. Among other things, our budding culinary masters have successfully whipped up:

- **Mini quiches** (France)
- **Churros** (Spain)
- **Crêpes** (France)
- **Homemade pizzas & Pasta carbonara** (Italy)
- **Frikadellen** (traditional German meatballs)
- **Lebkuchen** (deliciously spiced German biscuits)

(Take a look at the accompanying photos to see our chefs and their masterpieces in action!)

Our students have been absolutely brilliant this year. Beyond creating mouth-watering dishes, they have mastered essential kitchen skills, learning how to **chop, boil, and fry safely and confidently**.

Whether their fabulous creations made it all the way home to share with proud family and friends, or were "test-tasted" and entirely devoured on the walk home, the standard has been exceptionally high.

A huge well done to everyone involved! We **warmly welcome new participants to join us next year** for more delicious discoveries.



Enrichment

STEAM Club: Stepping into the Shoes of STEM Technicians!

During the Summer term, our brilliant STEAM Club students have been busy exploring the fascinating—and often hidden—world of STEM technicians. Through a series of brilliant hands-on activities, they've been discovering just how many incredible careers rely on science, art, and engineering.

Here is a glimpse of what they've been up to:

- **Dental Technicians:** Students put their precision skills to the test, learning how dental professionals design and craft everything from braces to prosthetics to keep our smiles healthy.
- **Colour Dye Experts:** Mixing science with creativity, the club explored the chemistry of colour, investigating how dyes interact with different materials and how industries create the vibrant shades we see every day.
- **Concrete Technicians:** Getting hands-on with material science, students looked at the secret recipes behind building the modern world, testing mixes for strength and durability.

It has been fantastic to see the students approach each challenge with such curiosity and teamwork. They've not only learned new practical skills but also opened their eyes to some amazing, unique career paths!

Tabletop Club

Dungeons & Dragons was back again by popular demand this term at Tabletop Club. We started out the term by delving deeper into character creation, and had a creative session making backstories and drawing appearances for our characters. Year 7 student Jonathan and Year 9 student Will ran campaigns for their peers.



Kindness Club

Students from our Kindness Club visited Rotherham Hospice and dropped off some prayer cushions made by students from St Joseph's Dinnington.



School Life

350 Club Spring Celebration

Over 400 students came together in the Sports Hall for the Spring term's hugely successful 350 Club Celebration – and what an afternoon it was!

The highlight of the event was the debut of **Bernard's Bingo**, inspired by the popular Bongo's Bingo format. Students enjoyed an action-packed experience filled with music, dancing, laughter and the chance to win some fantastic prizes. Giveaways included vouchers, karaoke machines, speakers, crates of pop, chocolate and much, much more.

A huge thank you goes to DJ Clement for keeping the energy levels high with a fantastic soundtrack throughout the event, while Mr Clark and Mr Geoghegan expertly hosted the bingo and ensured the fun never stopped.

The atmosphere in the hall was electric from start to finish. Students had an amazing time, with many already asking when Bernard's Bingo will return. Some described it as the "best ever" 350 Club event and were desperate for the afternoon not to end. It was a high-energy celebration that brought students together for an unforgettable experience.



Bronze Project Awards Day

Congratulations to Year 10 pupils Archie, Ibby, Caleb, Oscar, Fintan, Alfie and Oliver who designed a concept for a zero waste world and a climate change proof building, and then presented their ideals to STEM industry experts against 9 other schools from South Yorkshire at Sheffield Hallam University on June 15th.

They were awarded the Teamwork Award for their excellent presentation and delivery!



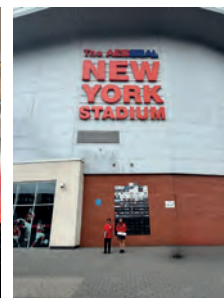
Rotherham Day Representatives

A team of local business people are working with local schools to promote Rotherham with the view to holding an annual 'Rotherham Day.'

There are over 70 primaries already on board to support and promote the event, but we are the only secondary school.

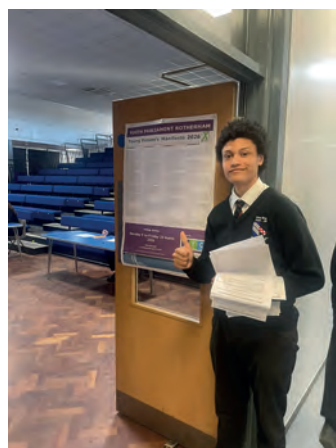
Kieran and Harriet in Year 9 attended an event to talk to business leaders about what we're doing as a school to support Rotherham Day which takes place on 18th September 2026.

They are the first two Rotherham Day children representatives and we are incredibly proud of how they spoke in front of so many people!



Rotherham Youth Parliament Polls

The whole school took part in voting for their Rotherham Youth Parliament representative in March. Each pupil had the opportunity to read through the candidate's manifesto before deciding who to vote for.



Miss Leckey and the Head Boy/Girl Team ensured the smooth running of the event.



Spring Term SPIRIT Award

Each term, a pupil from each year group is awarded with the St Bernard's SPIRIT Award.

Pupils are nominated by their teachers who then pass this onto the Head of Year who makes the final decision on who is given the award.

All pupils who win the award are given a 'Headteacher's Tie' to wear for the rest of their time at St Bernard's, displaying them as role models to other members of our school community.

Congratulations to the Spring Term recipients of the SPIRIT Award!



Student Council

Our new Head Boy/Head Girl Team has been decided - they are now known as 'The Twelve.'

Thank you to everyone who presented to the staff panel as part of the process, and congratulations to those who were selected.



Message Trust

In March we hosted the fabulous Message Trust who spoke about their powerful 'No More Knives' Tour. They presented their wonderful performance to every year group and the amazing OTC band also performed for our pupils.

We cannot wait to have them back again next year (Tammy is especially excited!)

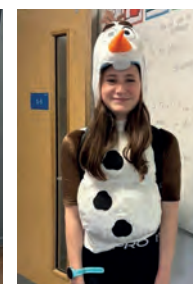
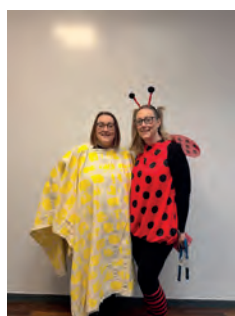


World Book Day

In March, we celebrated World Book Day. We saw some fantastic costumes from both staff and students. Mrs Marshall won best staff costume for her amazing depiction of Medusa, whilst Year 11 student Jen's solar system outfit won best student costume.

Students got to enjoy reading in the library, which had been transformed into a cosy & chill reading space. There was also a costume scavenger hunt, where students matched staff in costume to their respective books.

A charity book drive culminated in over 50 children's books donated to charitable reading organisations. Thank you to anyone who donated!



Valentine's Day Eve



Y5 Give It A Go Day



Ski Trip Success: An Unforgettable Adventure in the Pyrenees

This year, 45 students from Year 9 and Year 10 embarked on an incredible ski trip to Cerler, nestled high in the breathtaking Pyrenees. It was a week packed with challenge, achievement, and unforgettable memories – one that will be talked about for years to come.

From the moment we arrived, students threw themselves into the experience with enthusiasm. Each day included five hours of ski instruction, where beginners and improvers alike worked hard to develop their skills. Under the guidance of expert instructors, students learned essential techniques such as snow ploughing, parallel turning, and even carving, while improving their balance and coordination on the slopes.

What stood out most was the resilience and determination shown by every student. Learning to ski is no easy task, but our group rose to the challenge brilliantly. Many students progressed rapidly; some moved from beginner green runs all the way up to blue, red, and even black runs by the end of the trip. A particularly impressive achievement saw a few students successfully complete a black diamond run!

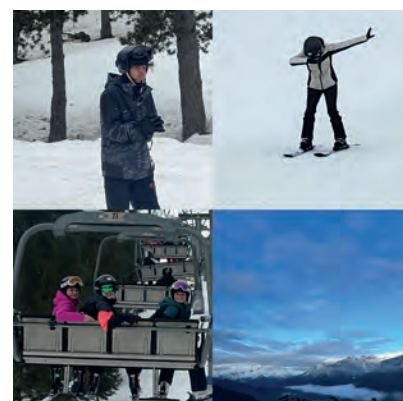
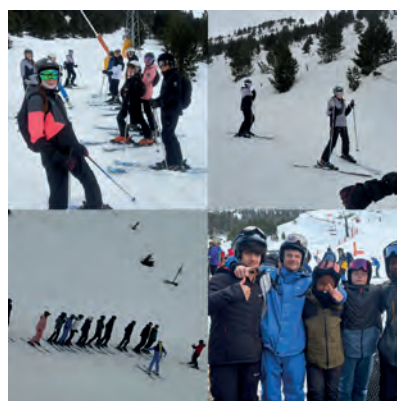
The excitement didn't stop on the slopes. Evenings were filled with fun and laughter, helping to build friendships and create lifelong memories. Highlights included karaoke nights, energetic *Just Dance* sessions, lively parties, and a much-loved pizza night at Planet 81.

Students also had the opportunity to take part in slalom races and explore the snow park, adding an extra layer of excitement and friendly competition. Alongside all the action, they were treated to some of the most stunning mountain views imaginable – an experience that truly captured the magic of the Pyrenees.

The trip was supported by a fantastic team of staff: Mrs Green, Mrs Bashforth, Mrs Smith, Mrs Valance, and Mr Lovell. They were incredibly proud to witness the students' progress, teamwork, and positive attitudes throughout the week. Each staff member fondly referred to their groups as "*la mia famiglia*" – a reflection of the strong bonds formed during the trip.

Overall, the students represented the school exceptionally well, giving 100% effort in everything they did. Their behaviour, perseverance, and willingness to step outside their comfort zones made this trip a huge success.

We are already looking ahead with excitement – **look out for Ski Trip 2028!**





Ski Trip Success: