



## Headteacher's Message

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the start of another term at St. John Fisher.

September is always a wonderful time of year at our school. Outside, there is the last warmth of summer while the leaves on the trees change from green to a glorious range of oranges and reds, the last blaze of colour before winter descends on us.

Inside the building, much is new. All students have moved up a year; we have a new cohort of Year 7s; there are fresh books to write in, new teachers to meet, and new aspirations for the year ahead.

However, September is also a moment to look back at what we have achieved, and this newsletter is a very good opportunity to do so. Inside its pages, you will read about our fantastic exam results, celebratory events such as the Year 11 and 13 Proms, and Sports Day and St. John Fisher Day, two important moments for our community's calendar. There is also a review of the Chaplaincy events from the last term, which for me helps to emphasise the uniquely Catholic nature of our wonderful school.

If you are a parent or carer of a Year 6 student interested in becoming part of our community from September 2026, please do make sure to book up for one of our Open Mornings. These events involve a small group meeting with me and a tour of the school, and more information can be found online at <https://stjohnfisher.school/about/admissions/year-7-open-morning-events/>.

For everyone else, welcome back. I pray that you have a year blessed with joy and the love of learning.

Mrs Lennon

### Mission Statement:

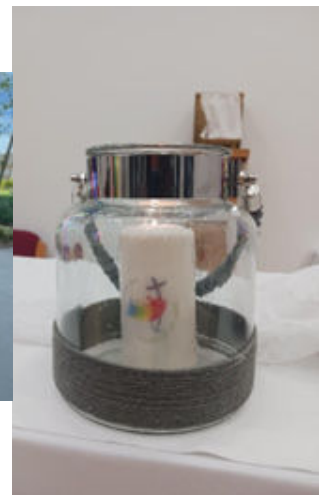
'St. John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School inspires students, spiritually and educationally forming them through Faith so that they can achieve their aspirations and contribute to their community'  
St John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School, City Way, Rochester, ME1 2FA  
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## Chaplaincy

Chaplaincy was as busy as ever during the Summer Term! It is impossible to describe everything that went on, but in this article we outline a few of the most important moments that we celebrated.

Tuesday 22nd April saw all staff return to school for our **Deanery Retreat**, where we were joined by all staff from our local Catholic primary schools for a day of prayer and reflection. Central to this event was a Mass celebrated by Father Dermott O’Gorman. He reminded us in his homily that Jesus is our Hope and is calling us to be Pilgrims of Hope for the young people in our care. Following the Mass, staff were able to take part in a variety of retreat workshops, including lectio divina, prayer and reflection, faith, pilgrimage and wellbeing. It was a pleasure to work in solidarity with one another in Catholic education.



On Friday 23rd May, we celebrated our 2025 Leavers’ Mass followed by shirt signing and cakes. Father Peter Murphy was our celebrant, and it was a joyful occasion reflecting on prayer, calling and mission, as our students move on to the next stage of their education.

“You did not choose me, but I chose you”, from John 15:16, was central to the service.

We continue to pray for our young people on their journey. Each of our leavers was presented with a prayercard including a message from Mrs. Lennon and the whole SJF community.



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### Chaplaincy (continued)

Friday 20th June saw our annual celebration of **St. John Fisher Day**. Celebrating the feast day of our patron saint is one of the highlights of our school calendar! Normal lessons are suspended and everyone in school is involved in activities on the day.

We began the day in our courtyard with a whole-school Mass, celebrated by Bishop Paul Hendricks, who said; "We can all be like the saints, making time for Jesus in our lives, finding out what we are called to be."

This year's events were particularly spectacular as they formed part of our 60th anniversary year celebrations.



Following the outdoor service, students chose from a variety of activities celebrating their gifts and talents. These included sporting activities, arts and crafts, games, prayer and charity fundraising stalls.

One of the most anticipated aspects of the day is the 'St John Fisher's God Talent' show. Thanks to the many God-given talents of our students, there was a wide range of acts, and it was a joy to see the students celebrate the abilities of everyone in our school family.

Following the festivities, we finished the day with a donation to our local community charity, The Street Angels. It was a memorable day for all involved and we look forward with hope to everything we will achieve in our community over the next sixty years.

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### Chaplaincy (continued)

On Wednesday 25th June, some of our Year 12 students had the privilege of supporting primary school students with the **Diocesan Jubilee Festival of Hope at Aylesford Priory**. It was a day of sunshine and shared experiences, including a liturgy celebrated by all the primary schools who attended.



As reported in last term's newsletter, celebrations for the continuation of the Year of Jubilee, 'Pilgrims of Hope', are ongoing. On the last day of the summer term we were delighted to welcome **Ann-Marie Whittle and Joanne Burford from the Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership to our special service in receiving the Jubilee Candle**. Students led and participated in a Liturgy of the Word Service, which included prayers of the faithful written by our current students, as well as others by some of our new Year 7 students who had attended the recent primary transition day. We were treated to musical accompaniment by a selection of student pianists. It was a truly joyful celebration, and students were also able to make our School Jubilee Pledge for the Year of Pilgrimage.



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### Chaplaincy (continued)

During this celebration, our students, as agents of change, have pledged to live out Catholic Social Teachings.

The St John Fisher Community has pledged to:

- Hold more charitable events
- Fundraise globally, nationally, and locally
- Continue to work with Medway and Gillingham Street Angels
- Uphold the dignity of life by campaigning about mental health
- Focus on stewardship by raising awareness about upcycling and caring for our environment

Making this pledge is a way for our students to live out our Faith in action. Just as the Jubilee Year calls us to deepen our Faith, shine a light on hope and take a pledge to build a better world together, our pledge helps us to think about what we can do to make a difference.



As the year drew to a close, we held a final **staff service** to celebrate the achievements of the year and to pause and reflect in prayer, giving thanks to God and offering best wishes to staff leavers. The Gospel message of the service reflected on the openness of children to hear and act on the Gospel and its values.



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### Chaplaincy (continued)

To begin our new academic year, we welcomed back staff on Monday 1st September with a **Mass celebrated by Canon Luke Smith**. We prayed for new beginnings and the joys and challenges of the upcoming year. We also prayed for our new staff members, who have been warmly received into our school community. In his homily, Canon Luke thanked us for our service in Catholic education and hoped that we might be Christ-like in our approach. Pertinently, the Gospel of the day was the scripture passage from the Jubilee Year. We wish all our staff and students a fruitful academic year ahead and look forward to sharing this with you.

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives  
and recovering of sight to the blind,  
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.” Luke 4.



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## Religious Education

Welcome back to a new school year! We as a department are very excited to start a new school year, as summer exam results were very positive for our Year 11 classes. Six students were able to achieve grade 9 and many others achieve or exceeded their target grades.

To recap the events from term 6, Years 7 and 8 spent the term completing a unit called Dialogue and Encounter. Students had the opportunity to discuss the importance of learning about other faiths which enables them to be curious and develop tolerance for people who have different views from their own. The focus of the term was on Sikhism. Sikhism is one of the younger world religions that has key teachings about equality, selfless service and social justice. Students considered key beliefs from the Guru Granth Sahib, festivals like Diwali and the Khalsa.

Year 9 spent term 6 preparing for their PPE. The exam included topics from how Catholics express their faith by using art, music and drama, as well as how Catholics practise their faith through prayer, sacraments and pilgrimage. Year 10 moved on from Judaism to studying the importance of Catholic marriage and relationships in the 21st century. As the new Year 11, they have one more chapter to study and they will have completed the learning part of the GCSE. They will be sitting Paper 1 as their PPE for the term. Intervention began in the summer; students will be receiving a revision guide and also have access to the online textbook and tasks posted on Seneca Learning to assist them in their preparation for all exams this year.

The Religious Education department collaborated with the Well Being group to present a retreat day in early July. Not only did the students have the opportunity to do physical activities like badminton and line dancing, they also had a presentation from CAFOD making them aware of the importance of serving others and helping the poor. The volunteer from CAFOD thanked us for our generous donation and explained where and how we are helping the poor in countries around the world. Miss Turner and Miss Lewis delivered a session on the Jubilee. As it is a year where we are supposed to be Pilgrims of Hope, they explained how people in developing nations are helping each other and improving their own lives spiritually and physically.

There are several trips coming up, including our annual retreat to Aylesford with Year 7, a pilgrimage to Knock for sixth form, visits to a gurdwara and a synagogue. There are also some in-house retreats for students with CAFOD and Aid to the Church in need – it should be a very interesting and spiritual year!

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## Work Experience - Years 10 and 12

The summer term was an exciting and valuable period for our Year 10 and Year 12 students as they took part in their work experience placements. Over the course of the programme, students had the opportunity to step outside the classroom and gain a real insight into the world of work.

Placements were secured across a wide range of sectors including healthcare, education, business, engineering, IT, law, and the creative industries. Many of our students experienced professional environments for the very first time, giving them the chance to develop practical skills, build confidence, and explore potential career paths. We are proud to share that employers praised our students for their enthusiasm, professionalism, and willingness to learn.

Students themselves reported how much they valued the chance to:

- Develop key skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem solving
- Experience the expectations and responsibilities of a workplace
- Gain a clearer understanding of the pathways available after school and sixth form

Here is what some of our students had to say about their placements:

- "I learned how important time management is in the workplace."
- "My placement helped me see that I would like to work in healthcare in the future."
- "I enjoyed working as part of a team and meeting new people."
- "The experience gave me more confidence about what I want to study in future."

This programme was only possible thanks to the combined effort of students, families, employers, and staff. Our staff played a vital role in supporting students by ensuring that both students and employers were contacted through phone calls and emails in the lead-up to and during placements. Their commitment and encouragement helped to make the process smooth and successful for everyone involved.

We would like to thank all the employers and community partners who supported our programme and welcomed our students into their workplaces. We are also grateful to parents and carers for their encouragement throughout the process, and to our dedicated staff for their outstanding support. Finally, a huge well done to our Year 10 and Year 12 students for embracing this opportunity and representing the school so positively. We look forward to building on this success and continuing to strengthen our work-related learning opportunities in the coming year.

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## GCSE Results Day

We are delighted to announce our 2025 GCSE examination results!

The average grade across all subjects and students was a 4 (equivalent to an old C grade)  
33% of students achieved a grade 5 in both English and Maths  
51% of students achieved a grade 4 in both English and Maths

These results, which represent a significant improvement on last year's results, are a testament to our students' dedication and hard work. Top achievers include:

Felix (six Grade 9s, five Grade 8s, one Grade 7)

Jacqueline (four Grade 9s, four Grade 8s, three Grade 7s)

Daniel (four Grade 9s, three Grade 8s, two Grade 7s, three Grade 6s)

Chloe (four Grade 9s, one Grade 8, two Grade 7s, three Grade 5s)

Anisha (two Grade 9s, two Grade 8s, three Grade 7s, two Grade 6s, two Grade 5s)

We congratulate them and all our students on their achievements.

Mrs. Lennon said that 'These results show the culture of excellence we are building at St. John Fisher. We are a comprehensive school and, while we have some outstanding individual results, students of all abilities have performed well. I would also like to thank our staff for all of their efforts. I am proud of what our students have achieved and look forward to welcoming those who have met our entry requirements back to the sixth form in September. I wish the very best to all who are leaving our SJF family and look forward to hearing about their achievements.'

Head of Year Mr. Oni said 'Congratulations to all of our wonderful students. I would also like to thank all of our parents and carers for working with us to support their children over the past five years.'

While most of our students have achieved the grades to stay on at SJF in the sixth form, others are going on to local colleges and apprenticeships. We will keep all students in our thoughts and prayers as they take their next steps in the world.



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## A-Level Results Day

A-level results day on Thursday 14th August was nothing short of incredible!

The average grade for technical qualifications was a Distinction-

The average grade for a vocational qualification was a Merit

The average grade for A Levels was a D+

These grades reflect the hard work and commitment that our students have put in over their time with us. Many of our students have achieved excellent results, including:

Daniel (A\*, A\*, A\*)

Ivan (A\*, A, A, B)

Cyril (A, B, B)

Josh (A\*, A, B)

Philip (A, A, B)

Priscott (A, A, C)

Maja (A, B, C, D)

Nicole (B, C, C, D)

We congratulate them and all our students on their achievements. Many students have been accepted to university, including those who will be studying the following subjects at these fantastic destinations:

Aerospace Engineering at the University of Sheffield

Chemical Engineering at the University of Manchester

Diagnostic Radiography and Imaging at the University of Portsmouth

History at Canterbury Christ Church University

Law at the University of Surrey

Economics at the University of Kent

Primary Education at the University of Brighton

We are so proud of every student — whether moving on to university, apprenticeships, or exciting new opportunities, their hard work has truly paid off.

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### A-Level Results Day (continued)

Mrs. Lennon said that 'It is wonderful to have students achieving three A\*s with us, but as Headteacher of a proudly comprehensive school, I also want to celebrate the achievements of the students of all abilities who are receiving their results today. I would also like to express my thanks to the staff, parents and carers who have supported our students during their studies. Our students will go on to excellent universities and apprenticeships, and I look forward to hearing about the positive contributions they make to our world in the coming years.'

Our students achieved outstanding results that are a testament to their perseverance, commitment, and ambition. The Sixth Form area was filled with smiles, laughter, and a few happy tears as families, friends, and staff came together to celebrate these achievements.

This was a day of joy, pride, and celebration — and one we will remember for a long time!"

***If you would like to learn more about how SJF's sixth form can help you to reach your potential, please visit our website, <https://stjohnfisher.school/about/admissions/6th-form/>, for further information. Our Open Evening for September 2026 entry will be on Wednesday 12th November.***



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## Sports Day

On 23rd June 2025 at Medway Park, Gillingham, St. John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School hosted its annual Sports Day, an event filled with excitement, competition, and community spirit.

From the very start, the day reflected how seriously we take our events at SJF. A complex timetable of events, administered by over thirty members of staff, allowed students to show off their sporting talents across a variety of disciplines. The high standards of the facilities at Medway Park gave students the chance to experience competition in a truly professional environment, adding to the sense of pride and achievement felt across the school.

One of the highlights for many was the inflatable obstacle course, which provided endless fun and laughter. Students from Years 7-12 all joined in, enjoying the challenge as much as the entertainment, and it became a firm favourite of the day.

Meanwhile, the track and field events showcased incredible talent and determination. The level of competition was inspiring, with students pushing themselves to achieve personal bests in sprinting, long jump, javelin, and other events. The spirit of friendly rivalry was alive throughout, as houses and individuals gave their all for victory.

Of course, no summer sports day would be complete without some well-deserved treats. The ice cream van was a major hit, with students lining up eagerly to cool down and enjoy a sweet reward after their efforts on the field.

What stood out most, however, were the smiles on the faces of both staff and students. Staff cheered enthusiastically from the side-lines, students celebrated each other's achievements, and the whole community came together in a celebration of sport, teamwork, and joy.

By the end of the day, an impressive 300 medals — bronze, silver, and gold — had been awarded to students for their successes. Each medal symbolised not only athletic ability but also the commitment, determination, and school spirit that made the day such a resounding success.

The 2025 St. John Fisher Sports Day was not only a celebration of sporting achievement but also a reminder of the strength of the school community. With memories made and medals proudly worn, the event will be remembered as one of the highlights of the year!

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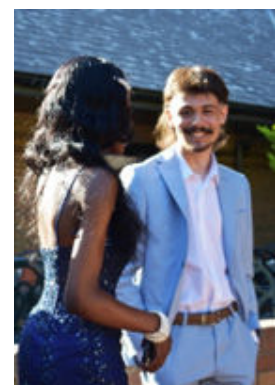
## Year 13 Prom: A Night to Remember at Bridgewood Manor

On Friday 11th July, the Year 13 cohort came together for their much-anticipated prom, held at the elegant Bridgewood Manor Hotel. The event marked the perfect finale to their school journey, celebrating years of hard work, dedication, and achievement.

The evening was filled with laughter, joy, and a touch of glamour as students arrived in style, ready to make the most of their special night. The venue provided the perfect backdrop for the celebration, with a warm and welcoming atmosphere that matched the excitement of the occasion.

From the moment students arrived, it was clear that this would be an evening to remember. Students and staff alike enjoyed a night of music, dancing, and reflection on the many successes of the year group. The prom was not only a chance to celebrate academic accomplishments but also an opportunity to recognise the friendships, resilience, and personal growth that have defined the Year 13 experience.

The event was a wonderful celebration of everything the students have achieved and a fitting way to mark the end of their time at school. As the night drew to a close, the sense of pride and accomplishment was evident among all who attended, with many already looking forward to the exciting new chapters ahead.



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## Year 11 Prom: Celebrating the Past, Looking Forward to the Future

On Friday 27th June, Year 11 returned to SJF for the first time since their exams finished to celebrate the end of their GCSEs.

The sun was shining, the music was sizzling, and students and staff had dressed to impress! We laughed, we danced, and we celebrated everything that the cohort had achieved up to this moment.

Most students knew that they would be returning to us in the Sixth Form in September. However, for the few who were moving onto college places, it was a bittersweet moment to say goodbye to the school, their friends, and the staff who had supported them over the last five years.

It was a wonderful night, and as it ended, everyone left feeling hopeful for their futures.



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### Term Dates for Academic Year 2025-2026

	START	TO	FINISH
TERM 1	Monday 1st September	to	Friday 17th October
Autumn Break	Monday 20th October	to	Friday 24th October
TERM 2	Monday 27th October	to	Friday 19th December
Christmas Break	Monday 22nd December	to	Friday 2nd January
TERM 3	Monday 5th January	to	Friday 13th February
February Break	Monday 16th February	to	Friday 20th February
TERM 4	Monday 23rd February	to	Thursday 2nd April
Easter Break	Friday 3rd April	to	Friday 17th April
Good Friday – Bank Holiday	Friday 3rd April		
Easter Monday – Bank Holiday	Monday 6th April		
TERM 5	Monday 20th April	to	Friday 22nd May
Bank Holidays	Monday 4th May and and Monday 25th May		
May Break	Monday 25th May	to	Friday 29th May
TERM 6	Monday 1st June	to	Friday 17th July
<b>Please note that in accordance with the local and national guidelines, St John Fisher <u>do not</u> authorise holidays during term time.</b>			

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