

V E R I T A S

NEWSLETTER

A message from the Headteacher

As we come to the end of another successful term at Cardinal Heenan, I would like to pay tribute to the incredible staff and students that we work with every day. The hard work, commitment and positivity that all members of our school community have demonstrated every day is remarkable.

Our Year 7 students have settled into Cardinal Heenan well and are already making significant contributions to the wider school life. Our older students have continued to impress me with their resilience, ambition and kindness. Our Year 11 students made a great start to their mock examinations with their English Language papers. This was their first opportunity to experience the process of examinations in the sports hall and will be replicated in January with their remaining mock examinations. Year 11 students and their families engaged well with their Consultation Evening and Exam Preparation Evening. With this in mind, I would like to remind them all that results do not define the person that you are – your actions and effort are a true reflection of your character. If you work hard and trust the advice that you are given, you will achieve everything that you deserve.

The staff at Cardinal Heenan continue to impress me with their dedication and talent – it is such a privilege to walk around school and see their commitment to our students every single day. Seeing our new members of staff build such positive relationships with their students and colleagues has been lovely and I am excited about how the school will continue to develop in the new year. Special thanks also to our Governing Body who give up their time to support our school community. Look out for upcoming opportunities to volunteer to become a parent governor.

As always at the end of a term, we give thanks for the blessings we have received, the support that we have been given and the friendships that we have made. We say a collective goodbye to staff who are moving on to new adventures, namely Mrs Corcoran, Ms Frost, Mr Panesar and Mr Hart who have contributed so much across the school. In November, Alice Bowler joined us as Assistant Business Manager in the Admin office. After Christmas, we welcome Mrs Messa who will be joining our Geography department, Mrs O'Grady who will work as a Learning Facilitator in the PLC and Mrs Butteriss who joins us as Assistant Curriculum Leader for Mathematics.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge our parents, carers and wider family networks. Thank you for the ongoing support that you give to the school throughout the year and for the sacrifices that you make on a daily basis to give your children so many opportunities.

Thank you to everyone who attended our Advent Service on Wednesday and to Fr Yemane and trainee priest Stephen who joined us to celebrate Mass this morning. I wish everyone in our community a safe, happy and Holy Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year and I look forward to welcoming you all back on Monday 6 January 2025.

Mr Kelly, Headteacher



ADVENT DONATIONS

Students, staff and governors have been donating hamper and food bank items to be distributed by SVP and the Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal. Led by our Chaplaincy team, our annual Advent appeal is a great way to live our mission, as we "build on the best traditions we have inherited" by strengthening links with our community partners. Everyone who donated has helped in some way to support the most vulnerable in our local communities this Christmas. In doing so, our entire school community has put Catholic Social Teaching into action by finding a practical way of displaying Jesus' teaching to "love your neighbour." Thank you for your support with this appeal.







CANDY CANES

Alongside coordinating the collection of items for the Advent hampers, the Faith in Action and Chaplaincy groups have found time to sell and deliver candy canes throughout December to raise money for St Gemma's hospice. Students have spread festive cheer and messages of faith, hope and love while raising money.





CELEBRATING SUCCESS

CLASS OF 2024 PRESENTATION EVENING

It was great to see our class of 2024 back in school for their Presentation Evening in December. Certificates and prizes were presented by Kieron Flood, Director of Education at the Diocese of Leeds, who spoke to students and their families about the unique nature of Catholic education.

There were also presentations by Mr Kelly, Mrs Tiffany, Mrs Millington and past and present head students Jayden, Lois, Daniel and Sophie. It was lovely to see the student leadership team building on the best traditions they have inherited and demonstrating the ways in which we remember and celebrate all past members of our school community. The evening was a beautiful celebration of the many academic, social and spiritual achievements of our class of 2024, a year group who overcame a great many obstacles to become one of our most successful year groups.















CHAPLAINCY

LECTIONARY

We are very grateful to a member of one of our local parishes who gifted the new edition of the Lectionary to school for use in the celebration of Mass. These were used for the first time

during our Advent celebrations.

These beautiful books are now in pride of place in our school chapel and we are really looking forward to using them in our year group and wholeschool celebrations of Mass.





DEANERY MEETING

We were delighted to welcome parish priests from across the Diocese for their deanery meeting in November. It was great to be able to provide a space for prayer and reflection, as well as sharing the vibrant Catholic life of our school with them.





LAUDATO SI

As part of Year 7's study of Genesis and the encyclical Laudato Si in the Creation and Covenant unit, some students produced posters informing our school community of the importance of caring for our world. They reflected on the damage of single-use plastic and renewable energy. Some of the artwork has now taken pride of place in the main reception.



CATHEDRAL CHOIR

As well as performing in school, many of our students are involved with the choir at Leeds Cathedral. This year, they were involved with the Cathedral's Carol Concert, an event which formed part of Leeds International Concert Season. Well done to all involved.

LEADERSHIP IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Congratulations to Mr Mangan, who has recently completed the National Catholic Leadership Programme. He is part of the first cohort of aspiring Catholic leaders to complete this programme in the Diocese, demonstrating our ongoing commitment to a distinctive Catholic education with Christ at its centre.



PRAYING TOGETHER

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ADVENT SERVICE

On Wednesday evening, we held our annual Advent Service. A team of students led us in reflections on the themes of peace and love in our world. After the service, our music department presented a Christmas showcase from a wide variety of genres. It was great to see so many parents. governors and members of our school community in school to celebrate the joy and hopefulness of advent through songs, prayers and drama. Our Common Good Leaders served refreshments and raised money for St Gemma's Hospice. Well done everyone!













PRAYING THE ROSARY

We were very grateful to receive the gift of enough rosaries for every student from the Catenians last year. Pictured are some of the Year 9 students learning about Our Lady and how we show devotion to her. As part of the Prophecy and Promise unit in Year 9, students have been reflecting on Mary and the annunciation, the Magnificat, the Rosary and the life and work of St Josephine Bakhita.



ADVENT MASS

This morning, we celebrated our whole school Advent mass in the sports hall. This is a particularly special school tradition, offering the chance to come together as a school community in prayer and reflection. A team of students supported Fr Yemane and trainee priest Stephen who led the mass for us.







CAREERS GUIDANCE

GREEN CAREERS WEEK

We celebrated Green Careers Week (4-8 November) in school. This event offers students the opportunity to explore careers which contribute towards sustainability and preserving or restoring the environment and our planet. These roles may be in any sector, not just those traditionally seen as 'green'.



Across all subjects, students looked at careers related to the curriculum which work to support sustainability and environmental protection.

We also invited a number of speakers from employers and other organisations. We kicked off the week with two visiting speakers. Stephen Bennett from Recycle Me Up spoke to a group of Year 8 students about the importance of sustainability, drawing particular links with the skills and interests developed in their Geography lessons. At the same time, a group of Year 7 students took part in a

On Tuesday, Leeds Trinity University joined us to speak to Year 10 students about different options available in Higher Education. Students learned about the wide range of courses available at Leeds Trinity University and about a range of different careers which require or highly value a degree in a specific subject or area. They also gained an insight into the lifestyle of students on campus, from

workshop delivered by Leeds University exploring alternative materials for engineering projects.

On Friday, Mott Macdonald worked with a group of 90 Year 7 students leading an engineering workshop linked to sustainable careers.



study areas to social groups and societies.













YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE

Our Year 10 students continue to apply for work experience placements for 14-18 July 2025. Alongside events in school, such as Year 10's Green Careers Week presentation from Leeds Trinity University, work experience provides an excellent opportunity for students to experience the process of applying for a job, as well as gaining a unique insight into the workplace. Last year, pupils gained valuable employment skills with placements at local primary schools, restaurants and sports clubs. Many also went on to gain part time employment or internships through their work experience placement. If any local businesses or employers would be able to support a Year 10 work experience placement, please contact Mr Gaffey on kgy@cardinalheenan.com.





PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PASSPORTS

Students in all year groups continue to use their Personal Development Passports to celebrate their successes both in school and outside. The passports offer an invaluable opportunity for each student to reflect on the person God calls them to be. Students are encouraged to consider the ways in which they have lived the virtues of faith, hope, love, justice, solidarity, courage and practical wisdom.

LEEDS CREATIVE SKILLS FAIR

A group of Year 10 Art students visited the Royal Armouries Museum for a careers fair focussed on jobs requiring creative skills. Students spoke to colleges, employers and apprenticeship providers about a wide range of careers which would allow them to develop their creative and artistic skills.



VISIT TO LEEDS UNIVERSITY

Year 7 students followed up their Green Careers Week workshop with a visit to Leeds University, where they explored the facilities available on campus and gained further insight into the options for further study linked to sustainability in construction and engineering.



MAP - MUSIC AND ARTS PRODUCTION

We have a small number of students who attend external provisions for specific subjects or interests. Well done to one of our students who hosted an exhibition showcasing his music and artwork from this term.





COMMUNITY ACTION

Advent is a time of hopeful waiting. Throughout this period, various student groups have come together to support our local community through fundraising or by giving up their time to support those in need in school and in our wider community.



YEAR 7 DISCO

Our Year 7 disco was a roaring success. Students danced the night away to music provided by our resident DJ, Mrs Craven while raising money to support St Gemma's Hospice.

Year 10 and 11 students organised a tuck shop and dance off, raising over £100 for our Duke of Edinburgh kit fund. Well done everyone!









READING LEADERS

Our Year 10 reading leaders have completed their training and have started supporting their Year 7 buddies. They work with them in a mentoring capacity twice a week, supporting their decoding and comprehension skills and recommending books to them. These sessions help younger students to

gain confidence and have a more positive attitude towards reading. For the Year 10 students, this is a great opportunity to develop leadership skills and communication skills. Many of our Year 10 students were supported by older students when they were in Year 7 and see the reading buddies scheme as a great way to build on the best traditions they have inherited.



CHAPLAINCY GROUP POPPY APPEAL

Members of our Faith in Action and Chaplaincy groups sold poppies to support the Royal British Legion throughout October and November. We also shared our annual Remembrance Day services with prayer, music and reflection.





WORKING WITH OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

CHRISTMAS CARD DESIGN

Cardinal Heenan students have worked with a group of pupils from St Urban's Primary School to create Christmas cards to send to the residents at Brandon House Care Home. This is another opportunity for us to strengthen our links with our neighbours and share our faith and love with them during Advent.





COMMON GOOD LEADERS

Our Common Good Leaders have returned to Breary Marshes to continue the conservation work started last year. They supported conservation rangers with dead hedging. They have also visited Penny Fields School and Brandon House Care Home every Wednesday and Thursday lunchtime to participate in sing and sign, story time and board games with the students and residents.



LEEDS IRISH HEATH AND HOMES FESTIVE AFTERNOON TEA

Last week we held a festive afternoon tea in conjunction with Leeds Irish Health and Homes. Students in food technology lessons and after school clubs worked together with the Common Good Leaders to prepare a menu of tasty treats and students served our visitors as they enjoyed festive entertainment from a group of Year 10 students.





YEAR 6 SCIENCE WORKSHOPS

In November, we were joined by Year 6 pupils from Holy Name Primary School for one of Mrs Whitelaw's regular science workshops. The pupils explored reflection and refraction using some of the specialist equipment in our science labs. Each half term, students from our local primary schools come into school to learn more about a different aspect of scientific discovery and investigation. This forms an important part of our transition work and allows primary school pupils to gain an insight into some of the different aspects of life at secondary school.



DEVELOPING CREATIVITY

DRAMA

Rehearsals for our production of Lionel Bart's Oliver! are ongoing. Students will be showcasing their acting, singing and musical talents in March and we are really looking forward to sharing it with all members of our school community.



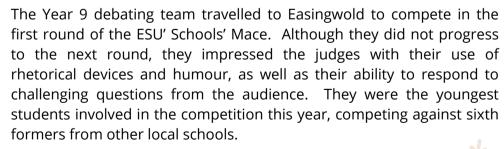


Two of our talented actors have also progressed to the next stage of the ESU's Performing Shakespeare competition. Abrham (Year 9) and Bramwell (Year 8) will compete against other students from across the region in January. Abrham will be performing a heartfelt monologue from Romeo and Juliet, while Bramwell will present his energetic interpretation of Puck from A Midsummer Night's Dream. We are very grateful to the drama department from Notre Dame Catholic Sixth Form College who had the unenviable task of judging the preliminary round in school.

DEBATING AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

Our debating society is increasingly popular with students in Years 9-11. This term, they have discussed topics ranging from vaping to the benefits and drawbacks of a four day school week.

Both of our Public Speaking teams were delighted to progress to the second round of the English Speaking Union's Public Speaking competition. Lydia and Cynthia spoke passionately about mental health in schools and the rise of AI, while Nicholas, Maks, Isobel and Emeka hosted students from other schools and offered questions to help them to explore their topics in more depth.











LIVING THE VIRTUES



Our virtue in focus for this half term is SOLIDARITY

Definition:



The commitment to the common good, and the belief that everyone should work together and care for each other.

The winners of the tutor group virtues prizes for this half term are:

Orlaith Cayla-May Elijah Finn Isaac Evie Zoe Abrham Nicholas Jessica Isla Loretta Mary Leyla Emilia	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Grace Phoebe Mary Setty Johanna Thomas Robbie Maria Milo Olivia Arthur Lea Sam Mylo Rian Dylan Francis Atlanta Nikola Ryan	Evie Isla Grace Thomas Arthur	Zoe Loretta Phoebe Robbie	Abrham Mary Mary Maria Sam	Nicholas Leyla Setty Milo Mylo Atlanta	Jessica Emilia Johanna Olivia Rian

Students from all year groups have demonstrated solidarity by supporting their friends and members of our wider community. Every lunchtime, you will find groups of students in the Library and Homework Club helping each other with revision. After school, Duke of Edinburgh participants support younger students in PE clubs.

The Chaplaincy group have also worked to support a number of charities, including collecting food bank and hamper items to be distributed by SVP and the Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal. Thank you to all students, staff, parents and governors who have donated.

Many students have participated in activities organised by the Common Good Leaders, ranging from collecting crisp packets to be recycled into blankets for homeless charities, to environmental conservation work at Breary Marsh and our regular visits to our friends and neighbours at Penny Field School and Brandon House Care Home. Through these events, our staff and students have built strong ties with our local community.



SERVE ONE ANOTHER WITH WHATEVER GIFT EACH OF YOU HAS RECEIVED.



PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

CROSS COUNTRY

We hosted a Leeds School Sport Association Cross Country meet in November, with visitors from primary and secondary schools across the city. Students from a range of extracurricular activities sold refreshments to raise money to buy updated sports equipment and Duke of Edinburgh kit.



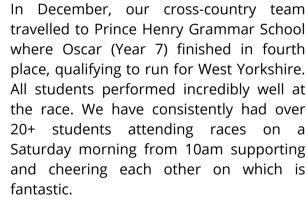


















GIRLS FOOTBALL

Our girls football teams celebrated a successful week at the start of December. The Under 14s won the County Cup on Thursday 5 December, with the Under 13s winning the same competition in their age category on Friday. The Under 12s completed our County Cup hat-trick with a close 1-0 win over Halifax Trinity.





All teams are still involved in the Leeds Schools Cup as well as performing strongly in the League. The Under 14s have also progressed to the last 32 of the National Cup, beating a very strong St John Fisher's team in the last round. Congratulations to everyone involved!



BOYS FOOTBALL

The Year 10 boys reached the final of the County Cup, losing out 2-0 to Shelley FC. Their cup run has featured goals from Finn, Sam, Aidan, Luke, Kieran, Wayne, David and Hussein. This is testament to the team spirit in the squad and great leadership from the captain, Sam.





This year, we have fielded boys teams in the league and cup in all year groups, supported by staff volunteers from across the school. On Tuesday and Thursday evenings, over 100 students from all year groups attend training sessions led by our team of dedicated staff.



NETBALL



Netball remains a popular sport throughout school, with Year 10 and 11 students training together every Tuesday after school. Both KS4 teams have consistently supported each other in games and training and can always be relied upon to support with fundraising and community events in school.





CRICKET

A team of Year 7 girls took part in a Year 7 and 8 cricket tournament in December. They played 4 games, won 3 and came top of the group. Qualified for finals in January at Woodhouse Grove. An excellent achievement, especially when playing against older opposition.



INDIVIDUAL SPORTING SUCCESS

- Rosie (Year 8) was part of the City of Leeds swimming team who won the Grand Final of the National Junior League in November.
 Alongside contributing to the team's success, Rosie was also awarded the title of top girl in the competition.
- As well as being school's top scorer in all competitions, Markluv (Year 8) has signed a 2 year contract with Bradford City FC after impressing on his recent 8 week trial.
- Alex and Ethan (Year 10) are part of Yorkshire Rugby's player development pathway.
- Amelia (Year 8) participated in the British Championship Final for trampolining. She won the 13-14 age category and finished second in the 13-16 age category. She then went on to represent Great Britain in the 17th International 'Loulé Cup' in Portugal, where she finished third out of 50 competitors in the 13-16 age category. She also performed as part of the squad which won Gold in the team final.
- Former pupil Issy Stewart made her debut for Sheffield United Women, coming off the bench in their 2-0 Conti Cup defeat against Blackburn Rovers in December. This is an incredible achievement playing senior football at the age of just 17.

We are always delighted to hear about our students' sporting successes outside of school. If you have any sports news stories about current or former pupils, please email them to newsletter@cardinalheenan.com and we will share them with our school community.













SPORTS JOURNALISTS: MATCH REPORTS YEAR 7 NETBALL: CHCHS VS MORLEY ACADEMY



The match began with a speedy start from Cardinal Heenan, who managed to move fast yet remained able to create space for great passes from player to player. This resulted in CHCHS scoring three times in the first quarter, limiting Morley Academy to just one goal. The second quarter continued with the ball going back and forth between the two teams and some excellent interceptions from both sides. Into the third quarter and CHCHS scored an incredible eleven times as they were able to take their time with their passes and defended resolutely. In the final quarter, CHCHS managed to score a further four times, bringing the score to an impressive 20-1. Well done to the squad for their excellent teamwork and brave interceptions. Star player was Gracie, who scored 10 of our 20 goals! Thanks to our reporters, Vanesa and Ruby, for covering this fixture.

Y7 NETBALL: CHCHS VS GARFORTH

This week, our netballers faced off against Garforth in an exciting match that held everyone on the edge of their seats. Our players showed incredible team with another stand-out performance from Gracie, who scored multiple goals and made some valuable interceptions. Team captain Eva also helped drive the team forward with her strategic plays through the centre.

The match began with both sides showing strong defensive strategies, but it was Cardinal Heenan who quickly gained the upper hand with crucial goals scored at the right time to turn the game in our favour.

The opposing team found hard but, despite their best efforts, CHCHS held a steady lead. The combination of pacy play, excellent shooting and seamless teamwork ensured a well-rounded performance. With this victory, Cardinal Heenan continues to build momentum for the season, with the team making an excellent start to their sport careers in school.

Thanks to our reporter, Mimi, for this match report.

BECOME A SPORTS JOURNALIST

The articles above were written by students who have volunteered to become sport journalists and are now covering sports fixtures in the newsletter and on X, formerly known as Twitter. This involves attending fixtures with a school team and submitting a report after the match. This role offers invaluable experience for students who may wish to pursue a career in the media. If you would like more information about becoming a sports journalist, please speak to Mr Wynne or Miss Burns.

SPORTS CAPTAINS

Our team of dedicated Sports Captains work hard to support the PE department with fixtures and training across a variety of sports. Sports Captains work with staff to distribute team sheets, ensure kit is ready for fixtures and plan training sessions. These students act as role models to the other members of their sports teams and encourage other students to get involved with school sport.



















CONVERSATIONS WITH OUR COMMUNITY AN INTERVIEW WITH FR YEMANE



In the first of a series of interviews with members of our school community, Year 11 student Cynthia caught up with Fr Yemane.

Thank you for agreeing to talk to us today. Please can you tell us a bit about your role in school?

First of all, I would like to thank you for having me. So – my role at school is first as a priest. I work for God and that is my full time job and my duty or I will say my mission is just to be present for the students here. It is not just about all of the sacraments, although of course that is very important. We do all of the sacraments in school - we give students an opportunity to be involved, for example when we have a Mass or the Sacrament of Reconciliation going on in school - but mostly I just spend time with the students. I have lunch with them every Thursday and that is the most important part of my duty here – being with the students and being there for them.

What is your favourite thing about your role, either in or out of school?

Well, let's just talk about my role in school - my favourite thing is when I visit Cardinal Heenan every Thursday and get to sit with the students and listen to them or have lunch with them. That's very important to me and I really do enjoy it - the staff there are absolutely fantastic! It's lovely food and I don't need to pay – all I say is just charge Mr Kelly!

What made you decide to become a priest?

When I lived in Eritrea, even when I was very little I saw a priest do a very great job. For example I saw him just playing football with us and I was attracted to that and I said to myself, 'I think this is very cool!' So I remember one day when my older neighbour came and he asked me if I would like to become a priest. I think I was sixteen or seventeen at the time, I don't remember, but I said to him, "Well yes, I would like to become a priest but I am not a Catholic" and he replied, "No problem, I will help you with that." I was an orthodox Christian so the first question brought to me was if I would like to become a priest. My answer was just, "Yes" and then - it's a long story - but I became a Catholic. Then I joined seminary back home and that's another long, long story my friends

Can you tell us a bit about your journey to Leeds?

I was a seminary back home in Eritrea and life in general became very complicated to us and this is regarding the government interfering with the church. I don't want to talk about politics here but in general, life was very hard for us to live securely. Then I made a decision to leave Eritrea so then I had to walk from Eritrea to Sudan which took us 3 days and then in Sudan life became very complicated and I knew I had to move forward to Libya and Libya again was not secure for everyone and life was very hard. Then I said, "OK Lord, now I have to move forward" and then I had to cross the Mediterranean sea from Libya to Italy and when we arrived safely in Italy I saw people like me just sleeping on the streets and I realised that this is still not the right place for me so I had to shout to God. I said, "Lord, I am not happy here. What should I do?" His answer was to go to France. I was in France then and I spent 24 days in the Jungle in Calais – in the woods and the trees. Finally, I made it to England on the 19 August 2014.

So, you've been in England for 10 years?

10 years, yes – and I am so happy just to work for God. I am so delighted because I feel safe and above all, I have Jesus.

And we are very happy to have you here with us, Father. Thank you for giving up your time to speak to us.



STAFF AND STUDENT WELLBEING **BOOK RECOMMENDATION - MATILDA (YEAR 8)**

Matilda recommends Find Me After by A. Connors. After suffering from an epileptic seizure, Kyle finds himself trapped between life and death in an eerie place called 'The Stillness', here, he is reunited with his real-life crush, Farah, who is also unconscious and close to death. Matilda enjoyed the book as she wanted to find out what would happen to both characters. Her favourite character was Kyle as she admired his positivity and calm demeanour in the face of such hardships.



STAFF WELLBEING COMMITTEE

we are committed to supporting all staff and our staff wellbeing committee meet on a termly basis to plan and promote activities to support staff mental health and wellbeing. This term, staff have participated in a 'Secret Buddy' scheme and raised money for charity through raffles, guizzes and games in the staffroom. We have also hosted 'Hygge Thursdays' and 'Cake Fridays' in the staffroom to give all staff the chance to sit and chat with colleagues during this busy time of year.



NATIONAL SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AWARD

We have been awarded the National School Attendance Award for the second year in a row. This award recognises the fact that our attendance was in the top 10% of secondary schools nationally for the academic year 2023-24. This award reflects the hard work of all staff and students and is testament to the fact that our students really enjoy coming to school and feel supported here.



KEEP IN TOUCH

We love hearing good news stories from our former staff and students. If you have any news stories related to current or past members of our school community, please send them to newsletter@cardinalheenan.com.

UPCOMING DATES:

Friday 20 December: Last day of term, students finish at 1pm

Monday 6 January - 17 January: Year 11 Mock Exams

Wednesday 8 January: Year 9 Reports issued Wednesday 22 January: Year 7 Reports issued

Wednesday 29 January: Year 9-10 Options Evening

Monday 3 February - 14 February: Year 9 Options Guidance Meetings

Wednesday 5 February: Year 11 Reports issued

Friday 7 - Sunday 9 February: Year 8 Computing Trip to London

Tuesday 11 February: Year 8-9 Options Evening



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