The Douglass

Spring 2025

60
IN PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Celebrating 60 years
1963-2023

By Medina in 12L

EASTER MESSAGE

As we draw the spring term to a close, I want to extend my warmest thanks to Ms Wilkhu and the editorial team who have once again worked so hard to put together this latest edition. The dedication of staff across all departments is evident on every page, making this a publication that truly celebrates the life of our school. The artwork on display is genuinely inspiring and reveals the depth of talent among our students, while in Design Technology, pupils are making impressive strides with CADCAM projects. Languages and music continue to flourish, with pupils making excellent progress. The writing produced in English is a pleasure to read. Across the board, there is much to celebrate.

As always, our focus sharpens now for Years 11, 12 and 13 as they prepare for public examinations. Staff are doing all they can to support students at this crucial time, and I thank families for the support you are giving at home. There will be a packed Easter intervention programme for which I thank the staff in advance

The Sixth Form has recently put on taster days, interviews, and coffee mornings geared to helping students make informed choices and celebrating very good and improved results last year. We trust that parents and Year 11 students see the Sixth Form as a natural and aspirational next step. This term members of the Sixth Form enjoyed cultural and educational trips to Paris and Amsterdam, while Year 12 students visited the Emirates Stadium for a university and careers fair—a valuable early look at future pathways. Meanwhile, the Sixth Form Top Team of Head Boy, Head Girl and prefects is well underway in its preparations for the Summer 2025 graduation party, showing initiative and leadership in fundraising and event planning. Finally, our older students continue to impress not only with academic achievements but with their generosity of spirit. From guided reading and in-class support to running clubs such as Theology and Medicine for younger students, their contributions to school life embody the ethos we value so deeply.

As a Catholic school, we have been observing Lent as a time of reflection and renewal. We have been praying for Pope Francis' and our Head of RE, Ms McGuinty and the RE team are organising liturgical services for next week. Our community has responded generously, collecting Easter eggs for the Cardinal Hume Centre to help bring joy to those who would otherwise go without. In the Jubilee year, we are called to renew our trust in God, grow in mercy, and become a source of healing and peace in a troubled world. We are aspiring to solidarity with the poor and marginalised , through prayer, and our support for a number of charities.

Amidst all of this, we continue to navigate the financial pressures familiar to all schools. Nevertheless, we remain in a stable position, and have plans to purchase a new minibus, replacing our much-loved but ageing Ford, using generous PTA donations. We are also investing in technology where it will make a difference—new Windows 11 computers in Media and whiteboards to support teaching and learning across departments.

As you may be aware, changes are proposed to the Ofsted inspection framework. While details are still being finalised, we will continue to engage with these developments thoughtfully, ensuring we remain focused on the priorities that matter most—outstanding teaching, pastoral care, and the holistic development of every child.

I wish you all a Happy and Holy Easter.

Martin Tissot, Executive Headteacher

We return with a particular drive after the holidays to ensure that uniform is compliant in every aspect, that our children always behave appropriately on public transport and that punctuality in the morning to school and to playground line-up is exemplary. Thank you, as ever, for your support. I wish you and your families a restful and blessed Easter.

Michelle Henderson, Headteacher

CURRICULUM SUCCESS

Our Press Release
Top Ten Nationally

Bishop Douglass Catholic School is celebrating following a national accolade recognising excellence in diversity and inclusion.

In a world where diversity and inclusion are more important than ever, it's inspiring to see how Catholic schools across the country are leading the charge, especially at Bishop Douglass. Recently, the Trust was ranked among the top 10 nationally, not just for academic excellence, but for its commitment to fostering an inclusive environment that embraces pupils and staff from all backgrounds. This recognition from Ofsted, including praise in terms of "leaders and staff are ambitious for their pupils" speaks volumes about the positive, progressive culture that has been cultivate.

A common misconception about Catholic schools is that they are exclusively for Catholics. At Bishop Douglass, whilst the school upholds the core values of truth, honesty and compassion – these principles are universally relevant to everyone. Bishop Douglass welcomes families from all faiths and none, ensuring that its values serve as a foundation for an inclusive approach to education, so that every pupil, regardless of their religious background, feels welcomed, respected, and valued.

Bishop Douglass embraces the richness of diversity within the school. Students and staff from all faiths including Catholic, Muslim and Jewish, work and learn alongside each other making their contributions to a unique and vibrant school community. The school understands the importance of accommodating the needs of all pupils and provides prayer rooms for Muslim pupils and staff. These spaces allow for spiritual reflection and practice, ensuring that everyone feels supported in their faith journey.

The commitment to inclusion and respect for all religions and cultures is part of what makes Bishop Douglass different. In this rich melting pot, pupils learn not only the academic subjects necessary for success but also the importance of respect, understanding and community. Bishop Douglass alumni leave with the qualifications to succeed in their chosen careers and more importantly the life skills to thrive in a diverse and interconnected world.

Celebrations continue at Bishop Douglass with news of their success in closing the pupil premium gap. The school has been commended for factoring out inequality and this is a result of the relentless focus on ensuring every pupil has access to the support and resources they need to succeed. There is a first-class extra tuition programme, which includes after-school classes, Saturday sessions, and holiday interventions, and furthermore additional learning opportunities are provided to pupils who need them the most. This commitment has helped raise academic standards across the board and resulted in a positive impact on all pupils' achievements.

Mrs Henderson, Head of School, commented: "Our approach is holistic and success is evident when pupils excel; their needs are always put first in a rigorous, supportive and inclusive environment. We are proud to have been recognized not only for our academic outcomes but for the way in which we equip our students to be responsible, compassionate, and well-rounded individuals. The top 10 ranking is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our staff, leadership and pupils. It shows that when we uphold the universal values of truth, honesty and respect, all our pupils, regardless of background, can thrive. We are not just teaching them to succeed academically; we are preparing them for a future where they can contribute positively to the world around them."

Mr Tissot, Executive Principal, added: "What makes Bishop Douglass and our Trust truly special is the way we bring together diverse voices, perspectives and experiences, all united under a common goal of providing the best education possible. By upholding Catholic values and recognising the richness of the wider world, we continue to set an example of how schools can be a force for good, not only in the academic sphere but in creating a more inclusive, understanding society."

CURRICULUM SUCCESS

Art

Nathanielle 13S

Reshaniya 13O

Ruth 12S

Tomasz 12S

Medina 12L

Erin 12S

Mathematics

NSPCC Number Day - Friday 7th February 2025

The Staff versus Student quiz on NSPCC number day was an extremely fun event. It gave students a chance to go up against their form tutors and teachers in a fun, care-free match. This annual event made filled the lunch hall with laughter and enjoyment for everyone! It was a very unique occasion that let students and staff let loose and have fun for a while. Although the students had unfortunately lost in a tight tiebreaker at the end, we were able to enjoy the day while also increasing awareness of the NSPCC foundation, and their missions. It was truly a special event!
Overall, we raised a record amount of £335.22 this year.

PI Day

We celebrated Pi day on Thursday 14th March (3/14). Pi (Greek letter "π") is the symbol used in mathematics to represent a constant — the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter — which is approximately 3.14159. As well as finding the area and circumference of a circle, Pi is also used in most calculations for building and construction, quantum physics, communications, music theory, medical procedures, air travel, and space flight, to name a few! Pi Day is an annual opportunity for maths enthusiasts to recite the infinite digits of Pi and eat pie; both of which we did at Bishop Douglass!
Congratulations to Apuk in 9M, who managed to recite an impressive 90 digits of Pi from memory.

Science

Science Week at Bishop Douglass was another resounding success. Pupils from all year groups engaged with a diverse range of hands-on activities underscoring their developing passion for STEM learning. Enthusiastic pupils explored mammal anatomy by dissecting both mice and sheep hearts, whilst a thrilling element-themed treasure hunt challenged the pupils' investigative skills.

A series of engineering tasks encouraged creativity, while the KS5 pupils showed their teamwork during the interdisciplinary science contest. The highlight of the week was the KS3 showcase, where pupils proudly presented their innovative experiments, demonstrating their growing scientific knowledge.

The event sparked curiosity, collaboration and passion for discovery across the school.

CURRICULUM SUCCESS

English

To celebrate the Spring equinox and World Poetry Day the Year 13 English Literature class spent their afternoon lesson and intervention reading and studying Keats' most beautiful ode, Ode to a Nightingale on Hampstead Heath.

What better location for this poem to be studied than the exact landscape it was written in? We are incredibly lucky to have this landscape 10 minutes from our school! Students embraced the powerful images of nature in Keats' bittersweet Ode and came away with an understanding of the poet's angst when he wrote this poem.

This term years 7,8 and 9 Reading Club have taken a dive into Eight Pieces of Silva by Patrice Lawrence—an exciting mystery full of twists and turns! When Silva, a talented young artist, goes missing, her friends must unravel secrets and face challenges to bring her back. Eight Pieces of Silva has been a favourite for our club and one of our members said, "I love how the story keeps surprising me, and I can't wait to find out what happens next!"

To celebrate World Book Day, we treated our dedicated readers to a special rewards trip to the cinema! Students who had shown great commitment to the Reading Club throughout the term enjoyed a fun movie outing as a thank you for their hard work and enthusiasm. It was the perfect way to enjoy a book-themed film and celebrate their love of reading!

Additionally, members of book club were awarded a gold badges (hand picked by our devoted book club host Ms Yager) to recognise their commitment to reading for pleasure every week—earn yours and be part of the adventure!

Media Studies

Media Department Highlights: A Creative Journey Across Year Groups

The Media Studies department is buzzing with activity this term. From video games and music videos to the press and magazine industries, students are exploring the media world with creativity and curiosity.

Year 10: Levelling Up with Fortnite Year 10 students are diving into the video game industry, focusing on Fortnite as a franchise. They are exploring how games are marketed and monetised, gaining insight into the world of interactive entertainment.

Year 11: Music Videos and Representation Year 11 students are examining gender representation in music videos. Through analysing iconic visuals, they are engaging in discussions about how media shapes societal perceptions.

Year 12: Press Regulation and the Royals Year 12 students are investigating press regulation, using Prince Harry's relationship with the media as a case study. They are exploring the role of regulatory bodies and the ethical responsibilities of journalists.

Year 13: Exploring the Magazine Industry Year 13 students are analyzing the magazine industry, studying how publications target audiences and adapt to digital trends. From niche indie titles to mainstream glossies, they are gaining insights into the evolving landscape of print and online media.

Peer Support and Success Stories A former student who achieved an A* in Media Studies has returned to offer free tuition sessions to current students. This initiative highlights the importance of peer support and demonstrates how dedication to the subject can lead to academic success

We're proud of our students' enthusiasm and critical thinking. Stay tuned for more updates from our thriving Media Studies department!

CURRICULUM SUCCESS

Religious Education

Year 7 students have been focusing on the importance of the Eucharist, gaining a deeper understanding of its central role in the life of Catholics. This learning has been enriched through two opportunities for students to receive the sacrament of the Eucharist during Mass, allowing them to experience firsthand the significance of this sacred celebration.

Year 8 students have been exploring the theme of evil and suffering, examining the different types of evil and suffering present in the world. They have considered how Catholics respond to these challenges and how they reconcile their belief in a loving God with the reality of suffering on Earth. This has encouraged thoughtful discussions and reflections on faith and resilience

Year 9 students have been studying the key teachings of Jesus, delving into his messages of love, mercy, and justice. A particular focus has been on the Beatitudes, which form a fundamental part of our school virtues. This has allowed students to reflect on how Jesus' teachings influence their own values and actions in daily life.

Year 10 pupils have continued their GCSE studies with an in-depth examination of Jewish beliefs and practices. Their study has provided insight into the rich traditions of Judaism, helping them understand its significance both historically and in contemporary society. This work has laid a strong foundation for their continued success in their GCSE examinations.

Year 11 students have now completed their study for their GCSE examinations, finishing their learning on the topic of Relationships and the Family. This final topic has allowed them to explore Catholic teachings on marriage, family life, and moral decision-making, equipping them with a thorough understanding as they approach their exams.

Across all year groups, students have demonstrated enthusiasm, dedication, and a willingness to engage deeply with their faith and ethical discussions. This half term has been a valuable period of learning, reflection, and spiritual growth.

Physical Education

This term saw increased participation in all our lunch and after school clubs. This is very encouraging in our schools drive to promote and maintain active and healthy lifestyles. We aim for this to continue through the summer term as our students switch from football boots to athletics spikes and from badminton rackets to softball bats. We thank parents once again for their continued support and look forward to another action-packed term.

This year has been an excellent season for our Boys football teams. After many tough and competitive games, we have been successful in making the semi-final stages in many Cup and League play off competitions.

Year 7 Barnet Cup - Quarter Finals - To be confirmed
Year 8 League Cup - Semi-Finals
Year 9 Barnet Cup - Semi -Finals
League Cup - Finals
Year 10 Barnet Cup - Semi-Finals

A proud year 9 team after securing 1st place in the Barnet League following a 4-2 win against East Barnet.

The Early Risers Club

It was initially run every Monday and Friday, due to its popularity and high demand, both Mr Irvine and Mr O'Brien decided to run the club every morning. With an average attendance of between 16-22 pupils every morning and across all year groups, this is the most popular club in the school. The pupils can play together in either basketball or football and then still have time to have an early morning free breakfast.

ENRICHMENT

Cricket Club

This term our cricket club at Monday lunchtime has been gathering strength. We play with a softball and welcome players of all abilities. This photo is of our Year 8 players who entered a tournament at the London Academy organised by Middlesex CCC's Chance to Shine programme. The players got their first taste of match play and had to learn quickly against some much more experienced cricketers. We're hoping to organise further fixtures for our older students as well as a trip to the Army and Navy fixture at Lords in May. We woud also like to encourage more girls into the sport. Cricket will be one of the options for Wider Horizons in July for Year 8 and 9.

TFL Pioneers

This year, a group of our Year 8 students are excitingly taking part in the TfL Pioneers programme, dedicating their time and efforts to encouraging active and sustainable travel choices among both students and staff at Bishop Douglass School.

Building on last year's success, where we earned the Bronze Accreditation Award, we are thrilled to have been invited to the prestigious TfL Top Schools Award this May. This annual event celebrates and recognises the outstanding efforts of schools participating in the TfL Travel for Life programme. We are especially proud to have been nominated for the 'Best Newcomer' award—an incredible achievement, given that only 20 schools across London have been selected for this honour.

As part of their efforts, our TfL Pioneers have been actively promoting sustainable travel within our school community. At the end of the term, they delivered an assembly to Year 9 students on eco-friendly ways to travel to and from school. Despite feeling slightly anxious beforehand, they showed great bravery and spoke with confidence, inspiring their peers to consider greener travel choices.

World Book Day

Our World Book Day celebration this year was a huge success, filled with excitement and creativity! Teachers and staff went all out, dressing up as a variety of beloved book characters, adding to the fun and festive atmosphere

The highlight of the day was a special visit from author Mark Ballabon, who came to speak to our Years 7,8 and 9 students about his book Home. Home is a powerful and thought-provoking novel that explores themes of belonging, identity, and the meaning of home. The story follows a young boy named Solomon, who finds himself caught between two worlds—his family's traditional values and the modern, ever-changing society around him. As Solomon grapples with these conflicting influences, he embarks on a journey of self-discovery, struggling to understand what "home" truly means to him. The book touches on the complexities of family relationships, personal growth, and finding one's place in the world, making it a deeply relatable and emotional read for young adults.

The students were captivated by his insights, and Mark was truly impressed by how engaged they were throughout the talk. Many have shared how the book resonated with them, particularly its exploration of family dynamics and the search for identity. One student mentioned, "It really made me think about what 'home' means to me and how different it can be for everyone." Mark even mentioned how much he enjoyed his time with us and expressed his desire to return in the future! As a special treat, each student received a copy of Home, and Mark took the time to personally sign each one, making it a memorable experience for all. It was a wonderful day, celebrating both the joy of reading and the power of connecting with authors!

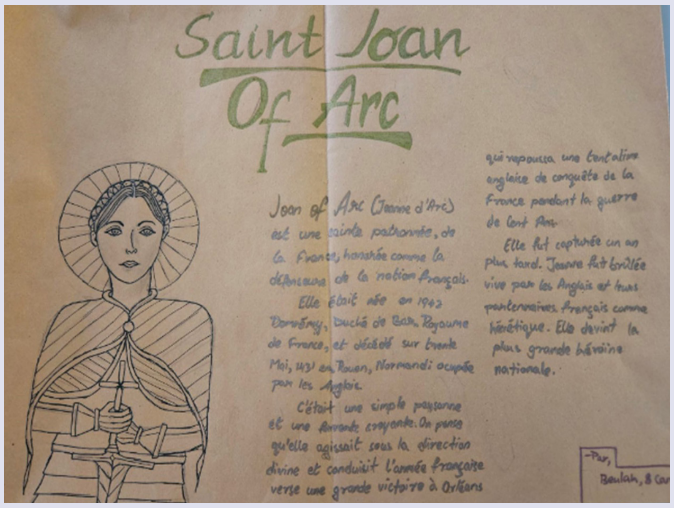
ENRICHMENT

Modern Foreign Language

This year, our students have created stunning posters to celebrate the Jubilee, focusing on two inspiring French Saints: Saint Joan of Arc and Saint Bernadette. Their work beautifully captures the lives, miracles, and legacies of these remarkable saints.

The below poster showcases Saint Joan of Arc's incredible bravery and faith. It highlights how she became a military leader at just 17 years old, leading the French to victory in the Hundred Years' War. The poster also mentions her miraculous acts, such as healing three burn victims and a woman suffering from tuberculosis. Joan's story is one of courage and divine guidance, and her legacy as a national heroine continues to inspire people around the world.

By Beulah Year 8



The students have done an incredible job bringing these stories to life through their posters. Their creativity and attention to detail are truly impressive, and the posters are a wonderful way to learn about these saints and their impact on history and faith.

Music

Trips to Hamilton and Tina Turner:
In March, students visited both Hamilton and Tina Turner. Students were able to watch and take part in a workshop before both productions. Our lucky students also heard from the whole cast and crew of both shows for a behind the scenes Q&A about theatre career.

Later on in March, we were then treated to a workshop by some of the creative team for Hamilton - West End. Students were able to show off their talents and learn about what it takes to put on a professional production.

Drama

The Year 11s then performed incredibly well yesterday in their GCSE Acting exams. And excellent presentation of their hard work & achievement.

Finally, our annual Seize the Day Campaign involved a workshop with facilitators from the company behind Hamilton. Our students performed their very own Hamilton number to them and they said it was we were the best school they had ever seen.

ENRICHMENT

Future Leaders Trip - National Army Day

17 Year 10 students attended the National Army Museum on the 19th of March.
We started off with a tour of the museum with an activity sheet that had to be completed to win a prize, the winning team was Jadan, Azariah, Liedson, Thierry and Tyron.

The students then went on to work together on a cargo drop challenge where they had an egg that needed to be securely dropped from a height and hit a target as well as not allowing the egg to break, the winners of this task was: Rheyon, Carmelle, Holly, Dwayne and Komeya - also known as Boom Shakka Lakka!

The final task was working in groups, mixed with the other school that was present and depicting 5 morse code sayings/phrases and the winners of this was again Rheyon, Carmelle, Holly, Dwayne and Komeya. Followed by Danton, Mikias and Mohamed.

Macbeth

On a very cold evening in March, 150 Year 11 students were escorted to Shakespeare's Globe for a high-energy performance of Shakespeare's seminal play "Macbeth". Having worked through 2 arduous weeks of mock exams in the run-up to this, year 11s were each treated to a free ticket to see this play. Excited students flocked to the Globe – unaware until our arrival there that we would be like Elizabethan groundlings and stand in the pit in a theatre with no roof!

Despite the cold and the 90 minutes of standing, students really engaged with this immersive performance of the play and it was a fantastic way to kick-start revision for their English Literature exams!

History

On 18th March we were very pleased to welcome Hephzibah Rudofsky back to Bishop Douglass to deliver a talk to our sixth formers. Hephzibah has been coming to Bishop Douglass for fifteen years to speak about the experiences of her mother and wider family in the Holocaust. The talk takes students on a narrative through the events of the late 1930s and the experiences of being Jewish in occupied Europe. Many of Hephzibah's families were persecuted brutally during this period but the stories of survival are just as remarkable. A great feature of the talk is that students get to hear from Hephzibah's mother in the presentation, and her message of hope, compassion and resilience at the end of her ordeal is an inspiration to us all. Many students stayed behind afterwards to look through artefacts from the period and to ask Hephzibah their own questions. We are delighted that she continues to come to Bishop Douglass to share knowledge of her family's story.

OUR CATHOLIC ETHOS

Celebrating the Jubilee

This term at Bishop Douglass, we have joyfully celebrated the Jubilee Year, a momentous occasion that has deepened our commitment to faith, tradition, and community. Across the school, departments have embraced the Jubilee's themes in meaningful ways, inspiring students to reflect on its values through their learning and creativity.

The Mathematics department raised awareness of environmental responsibility, offering practical advice on reducing CO2 emissions. This initiative linked the Jubilee's theme of stewardship to pressing global challenges, encouraging students to consider their role in caring for God's creation.

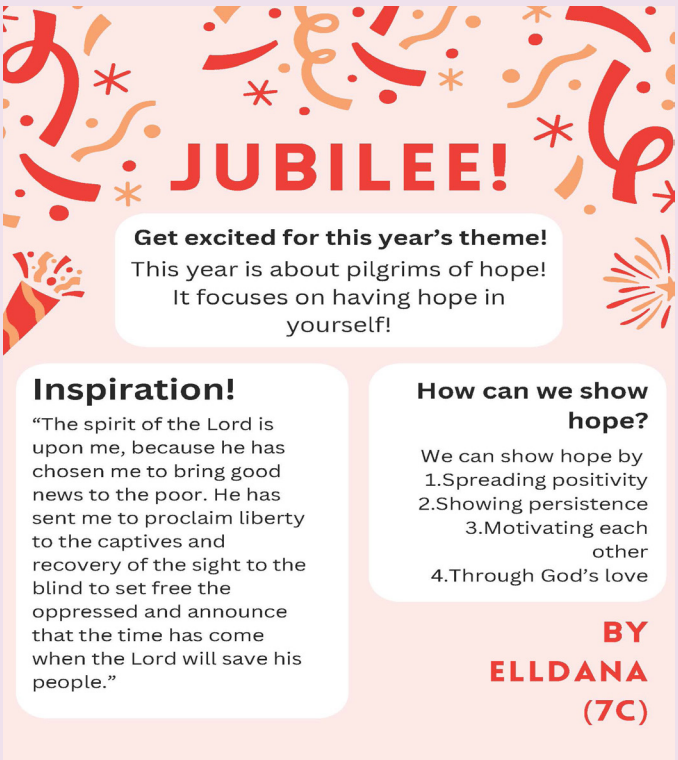
In English, students explored the Jubilee through poetry, crafting heartfelt pieces that reflected on its significance. These creative works were beautifully displayed, celebrating both literary talent and spiritual reflection across all year groups.

The Computing department also played a key role in our Jubilee celebrations. On 7th March, students created digital assets showcasing the traditions and values of the Jubilee, demonstrating both their technical abilities and understanding of faith.

A highlight of our celebrations was the Jubilee Coffee Morning, hosted by the RE Department in collaboration with St. Mary's Church, East Finchley. This event brought our school community together in the spirit of service and generosity, raising vital support for the Finchley Food Bank. Through donations and participation, we contributed to helping those most in need within our local area.

As part of the Jubilee celebrations, we also took a group of students on a pilgrimage to Corpus Christi Church, Covent Garden. This meaningful journey provided students with an opportunity to deepen their faith during this special period in the Church, allowing for reflection, prayer, and a deeper connection to the spiritual significance of the Jubilee.

As the Jubilee Year continues, Bishop Douglass remains committed to integrating faith, learning, and community, ensuring that its message resonates throughout our school life.



OUR CATHOLIC ETHOS

Catholic Life

At Bishop Douglass School, our commitment to Catholic life remains at the heart of everything we do. This term, we have come together as a school community to celebrate our faith, reflect on key issues, and extend our support to those in need. We are delighted to share some of the highlights of our recent activities with our parents and families.

Racial Justice Sunday – Friday 14th February

On Friday 14th February, we marked Racial Justice Sunday with a special focus on promoting equality and unity within our school community. Students engaged in discussions and activities aimed at raising awareness of racial justice, reflecting on how we can live out the Gospel values of love, respect, and dignity for all. It was a powerful opportunity for us to reaffirm our commitment to being an inclusive and welcoming school where everyone is valued.

Ash Wednesday – Wednesday 5th March

On Wednesday, 5th March, our Year 7 students gathered in the Main Hall for a significant moment in their faith journey—the Ash Wednesday Mass, celebrated by Father Peter. This sacred occasion marked the beginning of Lent, a time of reflection, repentance, and renewal.
During the Mass, Father Peter spoke about the importance of Lent as a period for spiritual growth and self-examination. He reminded us all that this season is not merely about giving something up, but also about giving more of ourselves—through acts of kindness, prayer, and generosity. His words inspired everyone present to consider how they could embrace the true meaning of Lent in their daily lives.
A particularly moving moment was the distribution of ashes, a powerful symbol of our faith and humility before God. As students and staff received their ashes, there was a shared sense of unity and commitment to living out the values of compassion, forgiveness, and faith throughout the Lenten season.

Easter Egg Appeal for North London Hospice and Oak Lodge School

In the spirit of giving, our students and staff came together for our annual Easter Egg Appeal. Thanks to the generosity of our school community, we were able to collect and donate Easter eggs to North London Hospice and Oak Lodge School. This initiative allowed us to bring joy to others and reminded us of the importance of compassion and service during the Lenten season.

Easter Services and Mass

As we approached Holy Week, we held special Easter services on 25th March for students in Years 9-13. These services provided a moment of prayer, reflection, and gratitude as we prepared to celebrate the resurrection of Christ. Meanwhile, our Year 7 and 8 students participated in a beautiful Easter Mass led by Father Peter. It was a moving and spiritual experience, reinforcing the significance of Easter in our faith.

We are incredibly proud of the way our students have embraced these opportunities to deepen their faith and demonstrate their commitment to Catholic values. Thank you to our parents, staff, and wider school community for your ongoing support in nurturing the spiritual development of our students.

We look forward to continuing our journey of faith together in the coming term.

TERM DATES 2025-2026

SUMMER TERM 2025

First Half: Tuesday, 22 April – Friday, 23 May

Half-term: Monday, 26 May – Friday, 30 May

Second Half: Monday, 2 June – Tuesday, 22 July

AUTUMN TERM 2025

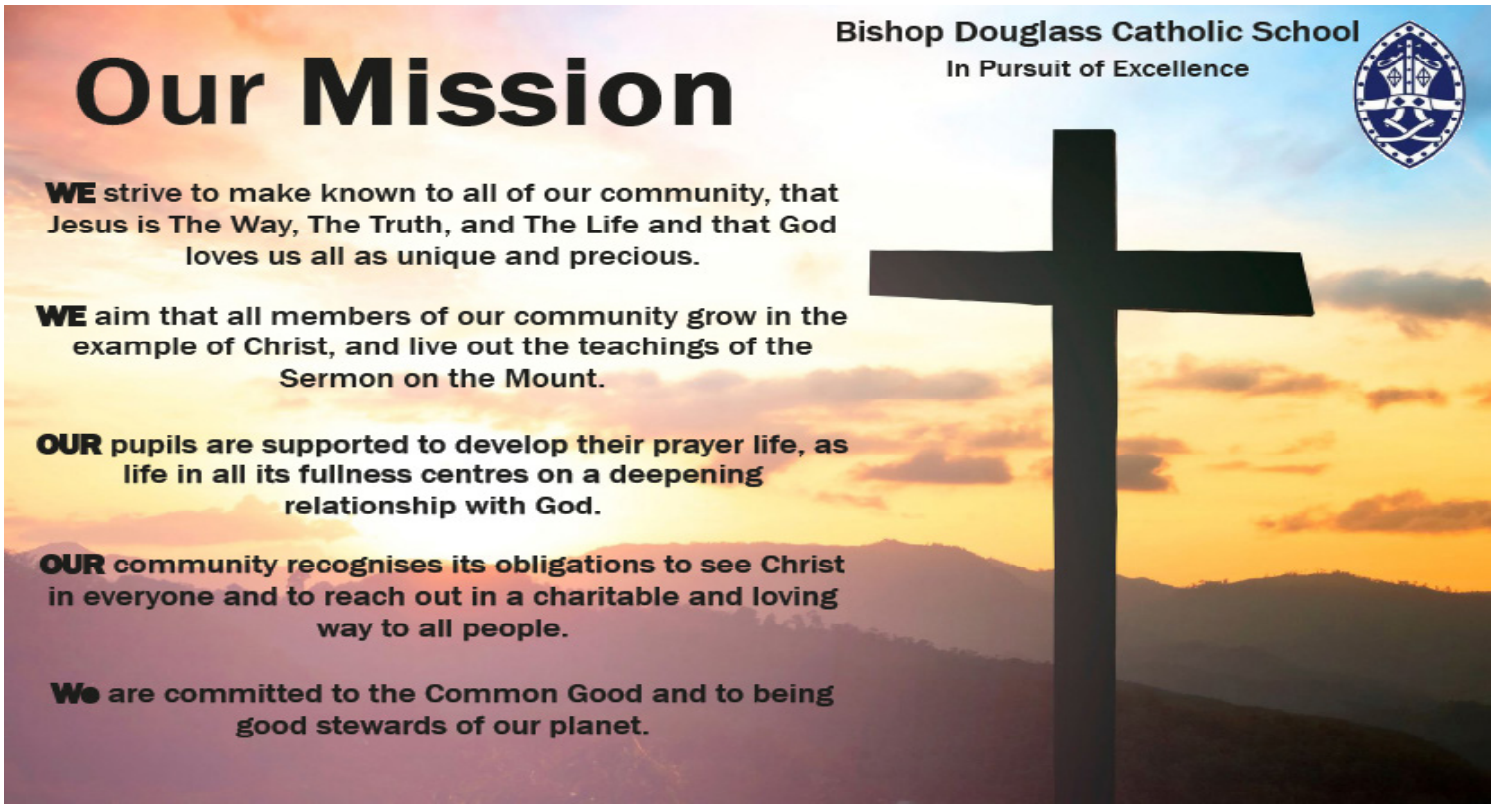
First Half: Tuesday, 2 September - Friday, 24 October

Half Term: Monday, 27 October - Friday, 31 October

Second Half: Monday, 3 November - Thursday, 18 December

SPRING TERM 2026

First Half: Monday, 5 January - Friday, 13 February

Half Term: Monday, 16 February - Friday, 20 February

Second Half: Monday, 23 February - Friday, 27 March