

SAINT JOHN HOUGHTON CATHOLIC ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

COMPASSION – ASPIRATION – RESPECT – EXCELLENCE – DETERMINATION – FAITHFULNESS – OPTIMISM – RECONCILIATION

FROM THE HEADTEACHER



Friday 7th
November 2025

Dear Readers,

A very warm welcome back to you all after the half term break and thank you for joining us for the latest edition of our newsletter. The half term break really did fly by for me and it was good to take some time out of school and to focus on my first family, not my second! I hope you were able to relax and take a break, if indeed you had the opportunity. Our calm and orderly start to the school year has continued this week, it has been a lovely week in school and there is a terrific feeling about the place. We have seen a significant fall in incidents of low-level disruption in school and the figures are excellent in comparison to previous academic years. We are so proud of our students for this and all that they are achieving in our school. They are striving for excellence!

Our Year 11 Food and Nutrition exams have gone well this week, and our Year 11s are, of course, "looking forward" to their first set of Mock Exams, which will take place later this month.

Earlier this week, Mr Warden led a terrific Celebration of the word on Making Decisions, where he challenged our students to think about their future and the impact their decisions are making on that future. I am extremely glad to say, that the vast majority of students in our school are making Good decisions every single day! More next week...

Garde ta Foi! Guard your Faith!
Mr S Brogan, Headteacher

Important Dates:

- Inset day – Monday 1st December
- Christmas break - Monday 22nd December 2025 – Friday 2nd January 2026

'Inspiring ambition and
excellence,
guided by Christ'

Telephone:
0115 9322896

Email:

schooloffice@sjh.srscmat.co.uk

NEWSLETTER

SCHOOL NEWS

Nut Allergies:

We have several students within school who have severe nut allergies. We aim to be a nut free school and kindly remind parents/carers and students that nuts and food containing nuts must not be brought into school.



Respectful Communication Reminder:

We kindly remind all parents and carers of the importance of treating our staff with courtesy and respect, be that on the phone or in person. Our team is dedicated to supporting the learning, wellbeing and safety of every single student, and positive, respectful communication helps us work together effectively.

Inset day – Monday 1 December 2025:

School will be closed to all students on Monday 1 December 2025 as it is Inset day. School will re-open on Tuesday 2 December 2025.

Last day of term – Friday 19 December 2025:

School will be closing at 1.30pm on Friday 19 December 2025, lunch will be early on this day. The school buses will be collecting students at 1.30pm, apart from the No.11 bus which will not be running that day, apologies for any inconvenience caused.

No. 11 bus – Monday 15 – Friday 19 December 2025 & Monday 5 January 2026:

As Kirk Hallam Community Academy is closed Monday 15 – Friday 19 December 2025 and Monday 5 January 2026, the No. 11 bus will not be running during that time, therefore students will need alternative transport during that time. Apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Lunch accounts:

We kindly ask that parents/carers regularly check their children's lunch accounts to ensure they have sufficient funds. A reminder that the kitchen are only able to offer 1 lunch of £3.55, if the account has not been topped up, food will unfortunately not be able to be offered from day 2.

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SCHOOL NEWS

Attendance Matters:

Welcome back

As we begin a new term, we want to remind families how important regular school attendance is — not just for academic progress, but for emotional wellbeing, confidence, and connection.

Every day in school is a chance for your child to learn something new, build friendships, and feel part of a community. When children miss school, even for a short time, it can be harder for them to keep up with learning and feel settled in their routines.

We understand that mornings can be tough, and sometimes life throws up challenges that make getting to school feel overwhelming. If you're finding things difficult, please reach out — we're here to help. Whether it's support with routines, transport, or emotional wellbeing, we want to work with you to make school a positive and consistent part of your child's life.



Quote of the Week

“It always seems impossible until it's done.” – Nelson Mandela

Wellbeing Tip - Name the feeling.

Helping children put words to how they feel — even just saying “I feel tired” or “I’m nervous” — can reduce overwhelm and build emotional awareness. It’s a small step that makes a big difference.

Student Fundraising:

Elize J recently held a tombola at her caravan site in support of a local dementia charity. Thanks to the generous donations from the community, she raised an impressive £172. Elize aims to run these events twice a year and has raised around £800 over the past few years—an inspiring effort that continues to make a meaningful difference!



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Attendance is vital for academic success, fostering strong social skills, building crucial life skills like responsibility and punctuality, and preparing individuals for better future opportunities in higher education and employment:

At SJH, pupils must arrive in school by **8:45 am** each school day. Coming late is disruptive to the pupil who is late, and other students in the school. For some pupils, this can cause embarrassment and anxiety.

Registration takes place at 08:45am, and is kept open until 9:10am.
The second session is taken at **2:15 pm**.
Leave of absence is only granted by the headteacher in certain circumstances.

TERM TIME ABSENCES:

Circumstances allowed:

- Taking part in a regulated performance
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- Visit to a prospective new school/college
- Bereavement
- Religious observance

Not Considered "Exceptional circumstances":

- Family holidays if families are unable to afford in school time
- To visit family abroad
- To spend time with family visiting from abroad
- Parents/carers unable to get time off work during school holidays
- Family traditions of holidays at a certain time of year
- Going away for birthdays, including the students birthday
- Flight delays unless evidence supplied
- Illness after a school holiday or trip

ILLNESS:

Unauthorised attendance:

All absences will be marked as unauthorised on day 4 and onwards unless medical advice is sought/given. Arriving after the register has closed will affect students attendance. Medical appointments without evidence are also unauthorised.

Reasons that will be unauthorised:

- | | |
|---|---|
| - Period pains / cramps unless under medical care with evidence | - Missed bus |
| - Common colds | - Family or own birthdays |
| - Headaches unless under medical care with evidence | - "Unwell" - you must give an explanation |
| - Headlice | - Oversleeping |
| | - Parent too unwell / unable to bring student to school |

Please try and make medical appointments out of school time, and daily contact is required for absences if more than 1 day is required.

If no contact is made, absences will be marked as unauthorised.

Is my child too ill for school? - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

PLEASE BE AWARE: due to the advice of the local authority we have to send a letter to each person with parental responsibility regarding attendance, and not a joint letter.

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NEWSLETTER

SCHOOL NEWS



Reading Recommendations

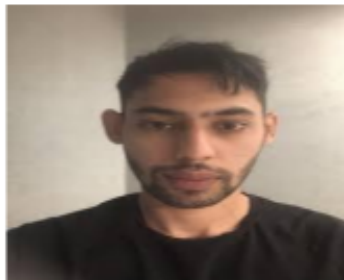


November 2025

Welcome to our termly reading newsletter. Each term, we will recommend books from a range of genres and styles.

Don't forget to check out our reading lists aimed at specific year groups. All are available from our website.

The English Department



King of Nothing

Growing up

Humour

Friendship

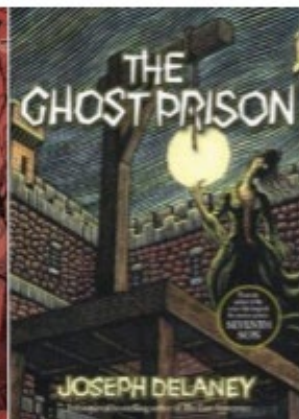
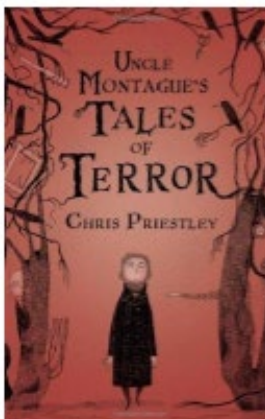


They're used to ruling the school and Anton wears the crown. The other kids run away when he's about but that's the way he wants it - he's got a reputation to live up to after all.

So when he gets into serious trouble at school, he doesn't really care, but his mum most definitely does. She decides it's time for Anton to make some new friends and join the Happy Campers, a local activity group. Anton would quite literally rather do anything else, especially when he finds out Matthew, the biggest loser in school, is also a member.

But after Matthew unexpectedly saves Anton's life, Anton figures maybe this kid is worth a shot. Teaching him some game is the least Anton can do to repay the debt.

As the boys strike up an unlikely friendship, Anton finds himself questioning everything he thought was important. Does he want ruling the school to be his crowning glory or should he set his sights on better things?



Fancy a bit of ghostly? Why not try one of these books

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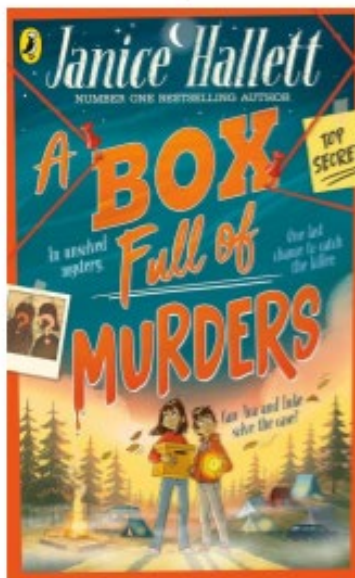
SCHOOL NEWS



Reading Recommendations



November 2025



When siblings Ava and Luke discover a mysterious notebook in their dad's attic they are instantly intrigued. And, as they read through letters, diary entries, newspaper cuttings and notarised secret recordings, they realise that a decades-old, still unsolved, murder case is unfolding right in front of them...

Determined to discover what really happened, Ava and Luke turn detective to try and crack the case. But soon they realise that the killer might still be out there - and might be closer than they think...

YOU know the facts. YOU have all the clues. Can YOU solve the mystery before they do?



A Box Full of Murders

Mystery

Murder

Thriller



The Clockwork Conspiracy

Thriller

Mystery

Adventure

A locked-room mystery packed with rooftop chases, hidden codes and mind-bending science, *The Clockwork Conspiracy* is a must for fans of the *Adventures on Trains* series and Sharna Jackson's *High Rise* mysteries.

Aspiring inventor Isaac Turner lives with his dad, the Chief Horologist in charge of Big Ben. But when his father vanishes from the belfry on the night the clocks go back, leaving behind only a smashed pocket watch and a cryptic message, Isaac determines to find him.

Hunting a trail of clues through London's landmarks, Isaac uncovers a sinister plot in the gears of government and embarks on a race against time to save his father - and time itself.



Our summaries are taken from the Goodreads website:

<https://www.goodreads.com/>

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SCHOOL NEWS



Reading Recommendations



November 2025



Salama Kassab was a pharmacy student when the cries for freedom broke out in Syria. She still had her parents and her big brother; she still had her home. She had a normal teenager's life.

Now Salama volunteers at a hospital in Homs, helping the wounded who flood through the doors daily. Secretly, though, she is desperate to find a way out of her beloved country before her sister-in-law, Layla, gives birth. So desperate, that she has manifested a physical embodiment of her fear in the form of her imagined companion, Khawf, who haunts her every move in an effort to keep her safe.



As Long As The Lemon Tree Grows

War

Syria

Mature readers



We love hearing about books you have read so let us know what book you think everyone should read!



A student who reads is a student who succeeds.

SAINT JOHN HOUGHTON CATHOLIC ACADEMY

NEWSLETTER

CHAPLAINCY

Holy Mary Altar in Reception:

Our Mary Altar will remain in our Reception because we want our families to have a relationship, heart to heart, with Mary, the Mother of God. You are invited to place your prayers, petitions and thoughts on our gold tray. You are invited to bring in fresh flowers for a loved one or a special intention. Could you make a flower arrangement and bring it in to give glory back to God?

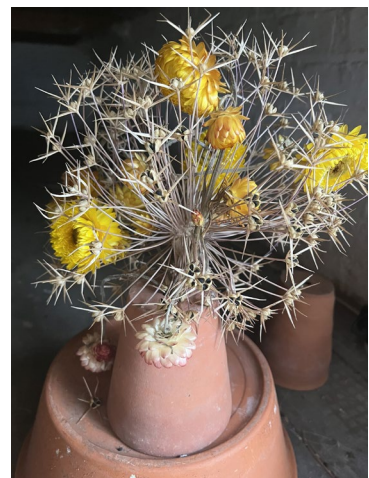
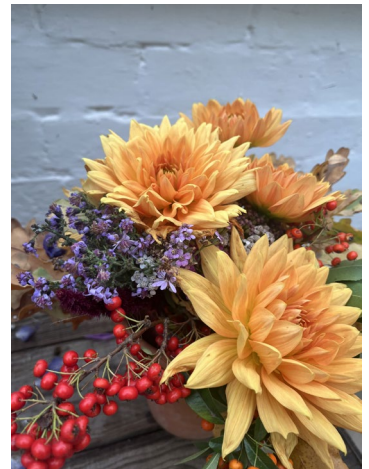
Why would you accept the invitation to travel on Pilgrimage to Lourdes or Walsingham if you don't know Mary? We have launched our trip to Walsingham and we always offer the diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes to our students.

Mary Mother of Mercy will change your life. My prayer for you is: May the sweetness of her countenance watch over us in this Holy Year, so that all of us may rediscover the joy of God's tenderness. (Pope Francis).

Rachel and our SJH Rosary Team are always ready to talk to you about Mary and how to pray the Holy Rosary.

The Joyful Mysteries: The Annunciation, The Visitation, The Nativity, The Presentation in the Temple, The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple.

Please email Rachel your favourite mystery and get a Virtue point!
rrose@sjh.srscmat.co.uk



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CHAPLAINCY

Amazing SJH Students:

Well done and thank you to Ava L, Matilda G, Hanna D, Evie-mae M, Jasmine J-O, Thayonita R and Lucy S who have given service before self and have committed to supporting the First Holy Communion programme by preparing the space, welcoming the families, leading the welcome and running the creche. We are blessed to have you.

A special shout out to Ava, Matilda, and Thayonita who go the extra mile by staying from 3.15pm, your hard work and effort is noted!



Ukraine Support:

Thank you to all who donated to our latest Ukraine Appeal. A special thank you to our Parish Ambassadors. If you can name the lady in the jeans, green coat and long fair hair you could get yourself some Virtue points!! Email your answers to rose@sjh.srscmat.co.uk

Ukraine Support:

Calling all Knitters and Crafters! We have been asked to make 20 of these Christmas knitted squares which will be handed out during the Eastwood turning on the Christmas lights. Please can you support. Deadline date November 20th.

2.5 ins square

DK yarn and 4mm (uk size 8) needles.

14 stitches by 20 rows.

Turn into a diamond shape .

We have the doves to sew on.

Stitch the sides and stuffing and ribbon to complete.

THANK YOU



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CHAPLAINCY

Chaplaincy Competition:

Can you design a Christmas Card for 2025? Closing Date 2nd December 2025.

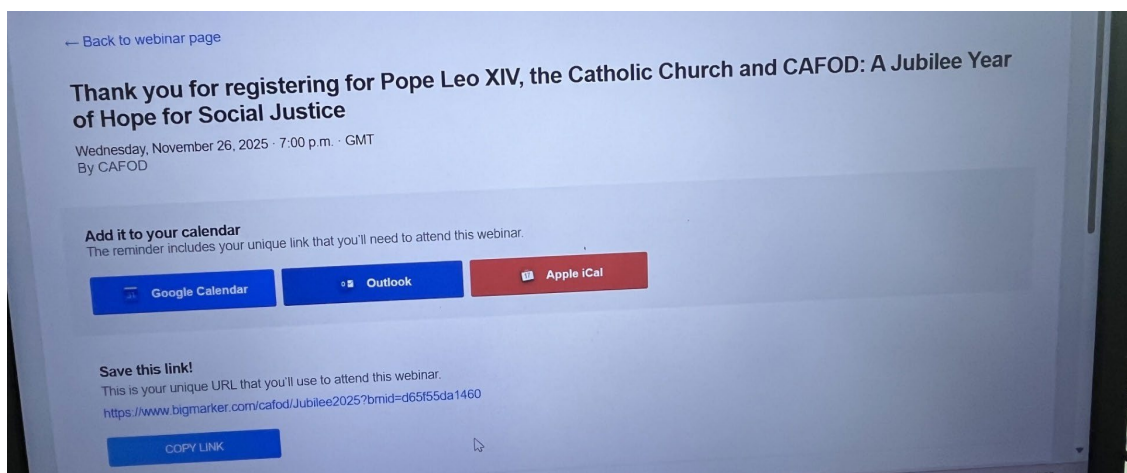
You must include a picture, a piece of Scripture and a Christmas rhyme on the inside of the card. Good Luck!

rrrose@sjh.srscmat.co.uk



CAFOD news:

SJH have signed up for the link - have you? Please let Rachel know if you will be attending.



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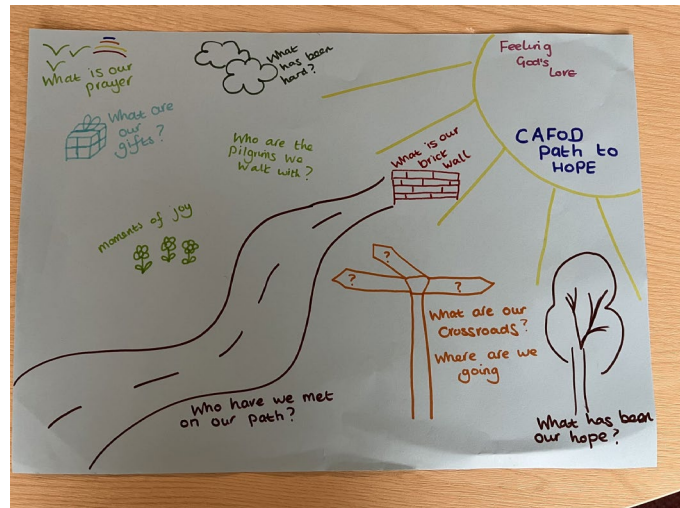
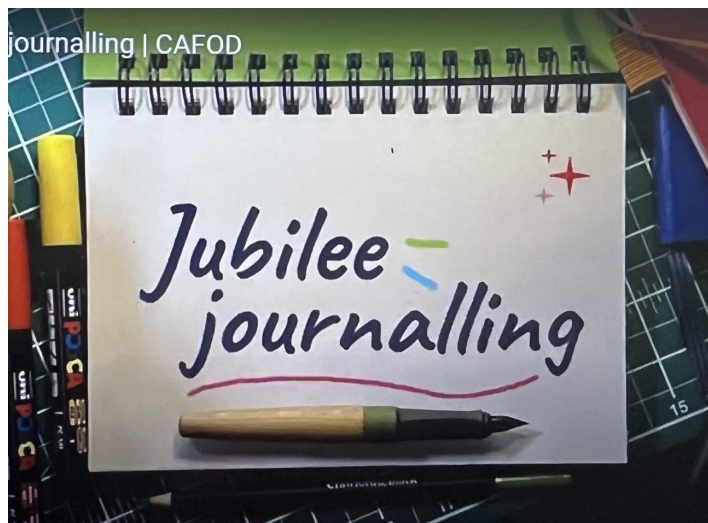
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CHAPLAINCY

CAFOD:

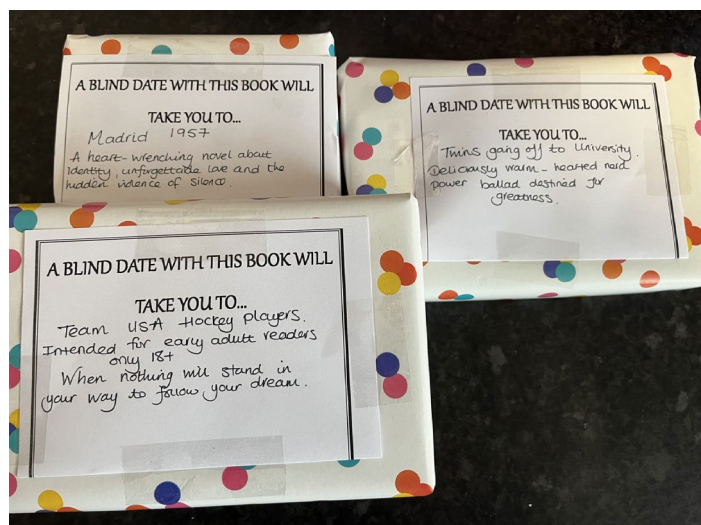
Why not join us at CAFOD club on Monday lunchtimes? We have followed the CAFOD video and learnt how to journal our Jubilee Path.



Faith in Action:

A reminder of next Faith in Action Session is on Wednesday 12th November 2025.

We saw this idea in a bookshop 'A blind date with a book...' and the National Trust are doing the same for £2.50 per book, and we are selling a 'Blind Date with a Book for just 20p. All money raised goes to Charity. Why not purchase one for your Secret Santa? With thanks to all the Faith in Action Students who are working on this Charity project.



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NEWSLETTER

CHAPLAINCY

**Friends of Saint John Houghton Catholic
Academy**

"Be still and know that I am God."

Psalm 46:10

We would love for you to join us for coffee and
conversation on:

~~Date: 19.09.25 Time: 11.30am-12.30pm~~

Date: 21.11.25 Time: 11.30am-12.30pm

Date: 18.12.25 Time: 11.30am-12.30pm

Date: 24.04.26 Time: 11.30am-12.30pm

Date: 25.06.26 Time: 11.30am-12.30pm

This is taking place at **Saint John Houghton
Catholic Academy, Abbot Road, Kirk Hallam,
Ilkeston DE7 4HX**

Contact – schooloffice@sjh.srscmat.co.uk



**St Ralph
Sherwin**
Catholic Multi Academy Trust

NEWSLETTER

CHAPLAINCY

Friends of Saint John Houghton Catholic Academy

"Be still and know that I am God."

Psalm 46:10

Mass in SJH for staff and students.

~~Date: 05.09.25 Yr 7 - 2.15pm~~

~~Date: 25.09.25 All welcome - 8.45am~~

~~Date: 01.10.25 Yr 8 - 9.10am~~

~~Date: 24.10.25 Whole School 8.45am~~

Date: 14.11.25 Bereavement, all
welcome - 8.45am

Mass in Advent - SJH will join St
Thomas CVA

Date: 09.12.25 Yr 11. Reconciliation

Date: 06.01.26 School Captains to St
Thomas CVA

Date: 27.02.26 Mass in Lent, all
welcome - 8.45am

Date: 18.03.26 Yr 9 - 9.10am

Date: 22.04.26 All welcome - 8.45am

Date: 8.05.26 Yr 11 - 9.10am

Date: 17.06.26 Yr 10 - 9.10am

Blessing

Blessing of the Eco Garden 25.06.26

This is taking place at **Saint John
Houghton Catholic Academy**, Abbot
Road, Kirk Hallam, Ilkeston DE7 4HX

Contact –
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CHAPLAINCY

CAFOD

Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

CAFOD is a whole school Charity.

CAFOD Club meet each Monday lunchtime.

~~4th October 2025 CAFOD National Activity Day – SJH
Chaplain leading.~~

~~10th October 2025 CAFOD Harvest Fast~~

**19th December 2025 CAFOD national Christmas
Video with SJH family**

**23rd January 2026 CAFOD and vocations with
CAFOD raffle**

**27th February 2026 Mass for CAFOD & Family Fast
in SJH**

**7th March 2026 SJH lead the Diocese in The Big Lent
Walk**



**St Ralph
Sherwin**
Catholic Multi Academy Trust

NEWSLETTER

CHAPLAINCY

Saint John Houghton Catholic Academy

“Love means doing what God has commanded...2 John 1:6...and He has commanded us to love one another.

Missio Charity Work

~~—Date: 18.09.25 Collecting small—
—change.~~

~~—Date: 07.10.25 Yr 7 Cake Sale—~~

Date: 28.11.25 Yr 8 Sponsored silence

Date: 16.04.26 Whole School Bake Off

Date: 12.05.26 Yr 9 Rosary for missio

Date: 02.06.26 Yr 10 Sweet sale for missio

This is taking place at **Saint John Houghton Catholic Academy, Abbot Road, Kirk Hallam, Ilkeston DE7 4HX**

Contact –

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**St Ralph
Sherwin**
Catholic Multi Academy Trust

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USEFUL LINKS

Safeguarding concerns please email safeguarding@sjh.srscmat.co.uk

Homework :

<https://www.stjohnhoughtonilkeston.srscmat.co.uk/curriculum/homework/>

School lunch menus:

<https://www.stjohnhoughtonilkeston.srscmat.co.uk/students/school-meals/>

Free School Meals: Derbyshire -

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/schools/your-child-atschool/meals/school-meals/free-school-meals.aspx>

Link to School Calendar:

<https://www.stjohnhoughtonilkeston.srscmat.co.uk/news/calendar>

NEWSLETTER

DATES FOR THE DIARY

2025-2026 School holidays and Inset days:

Inset day 3	Monday 1 December 2025
Christmas holidays	Monday 22 December 2025 – Friday 2 January 2026
February half term	Monday 16 – Friday 20 February 2026
Inset Day (Trust) 4	Monday 23 February 2026
Easter holidays	Monday 30 March – Friday 10 April 2026
May half term	Monday 25 – Friday 29 May 2026
Inset Day 5	Friday 3 July 2026
Last day of term	Thursday 23 July 2026

NEWSLETTER

DATES FOR THE DIARY

2026-2027 School holidays and Inset Days (3 Inset days to be confirmed):

Inset day 1	Friday 4 September 2026
Inset day 2	Monday 7 September 2026
Years 7 & 11 return to school	Tuesday 8 September 2026
All years return to school	Wednesday 9 September 2026
October half term	Monday 26 - Friday 30 October 2026
Inset day 3	TBC
Christmas holidays	Monday 21 December 2026 – Friday 1 January 2027
February half term	Monday 15 – Friday 19 February 2027
Inset Day 4	TBC
Easter holidays	Friday 26 March – Friday 9 April 2027
May half term	Monday 31 May – Friday 4 June 2027
Inset Day 5	TBC
Last day of term	Monday 26 July 2027