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AQUINAS

CATHOLIC MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST



MARCH 2026

De Lisle College

Parent / Carer Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our fourth newsletter of this academic year.

As we are about to break up for Easter, I wanted to thank you again for your support. Easter is a special time of year where we come together to remember the sacrifice that Jesus made for us all. We have reflected and used as our themes during Lent the following words, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, sacrifice and journey. These words are the themes for our prayers during standing assembly, prep time and our celebrations of the word. Easter is a time for us all to pause and rest and hopefully spend some time with our loved ones.

Below is an example of one of the prayers written by a Year 9 student for a Standing Assembly.

Let us pray,

Lord, guide us to live by your values and our school values. Help us to do what is right and not what is easy. As we journey, shape us through lent together, shape our hearts so that we put others before ourselves and live in a way that reflects your teachings.

Amen.

As you can see from the size of our newsletter although this has been a short half-term, a lot has happened. We are particularly proud that a former De Lisle student Amelia Coltman represented Great Britain in the recent Winter Olympics in the Skeleton event. She is certainly someone for our current students to aspire to in terms of her sporting achievements. The school show of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory last half term was spectacular and it really highlighted the talents of our students. Thank you to the Performing Arts department for all their hard work in producing such a wonderful show.

For our Years 11 and 13 students, this is a really important time as they prepare for their summer exams. The Easter holidays are an important time for revision, and we are really looking forward to welcoming Year 11 students to our Easter revision school. We will be doing everything we can to support them during the next few months.

I would like to wish you all a very happy and holy Easter and I look forward to welcoming our children back on **Monday 13 April 2026.**

Best wishes,
Mr Maher
Headteacher

NEWSLETTER
MARCH 2026



Newsletter Highlights

Headteacher Message
Mr Chris Maher

World Book Day 2026

Students Achievements

Parliament Trip to London

Sport and Team Spirit at
De Lisle

GCSE Geography
Fieldtrip to Norfolk

Chinese New Year event

Performing Art in De Lisle

Year 9 Workplace Visits

Catholic Life in Lent Term



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World Book Day 2026

World Book Day '26 proved to be a great opportunity to celebrate and promote reading for pleasure at De Lisle. Staff looked fantastic in their book character costumes.

There was a high chance of bumping into a dinosaur or two from Jurassic Park in the Science corridor, teaching staff in Humanities were different ends of the literary scale representing Lord of the Rings and Little Miss and Mr Men characters and the English department dressed as characters from Animal Farm by George Orwell.



Meanwhile in the Maths department, staff celebrated the Dr Seuss books; Learning Support were all Funny Bones and the staff in Performing Arts were the three witches from Macbeth.



There were many more members of staff who looked amazing in their costumes, including Miss Allsobrook as a character from Anita and Me, Miss Ball from The Great Gatsby, Mr Connor as a fantastic Bilbo Baggins, and, in the library, Mrs Badock as Puck from A Midsummer Night's Dream. All the photos have been uploaded to [World Book Day 2026 - De Lisle College](https://www.delisle.org.uk/world-book-day-2026)

There were quizzes and activities in the library all week, including a Whodunit Quiz, and Guess Who's Reading Quiz.



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Interhouse Chess Tournament ♔♚♜

After a great competition, Fisher House were the winners of this year's Interhouse Chess Tournament.

The individual winners were:

YEAR 7 – Miles - FISHER

YEAR 8 – Milo - CLITHEROW

YEAR 9 – Daniel - FISHER

YEAR 10 – Keshav - FISHER

YEAR 11 – Michael - FISHER

Mrs A Badock



UK Maths Trust Competition

The UK Maths Trust (UKMT) have recently run the next set of maths challenges and this term it was the turn for our year 9 and 10 students. The intermediate maths challenge took place at the end of January with 60 of our students taking part. A bronze award was achieved by 15 students, silver was awarded to 11 students, and 10 students achieved the gold award. Nationally only 8% of students achieve a gold award and this year our De Lisle students doubled that so a big well done to all who took part.



UK Maths Trust

Congratulations to Nathaniel for receiving the best in year award and Alicja for receiving the best in school. Nine of the students qualified for follow-on rounds of the challenge which took place in mid-March for which we are awaiting results.

The UKMT are also holding regional Team Maths Challenge events (for Y8 and Y9) across the country this term. At the beginning of March, De Lisle's team of Isla, Jonathan, Ebiolade and Victoria headed to Leicester Grammar School to compete against some of the best schools in the Midlands. While their result wasn't as good as they'd hoped for, they did get mentioned for their top score in the cross-number round which is a massive achievement for the team. They worked well together and were a credit to De Lisle in what was a lovely day out doing maths.



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Catenian Public Speaking Competition



On Sunday 8th March, Amara represented De Lisle in the Catenian Public Speaking Competition. This is a prestigious competition with representatives from Catholic Schools across the East Midlands competing in the presence of The Bishop of Nottingham, The Bishop of Hallam, three esteemed judges, as well as the Catenians, and the families and friends of the contestants. It was a wonderful afternoon, showcasing the talents of so many young people.

Amara did exceptionally well amongst a very talented field and spoke on the topic of "If I could invent anything it would be...". We were exceptionally proud of Amara, her performance and the work she did in preparation.

We would like to thank the Catenians for hosting this wonderful event.



Columban Competition



We are delighted to announce that following Year 9 students participating in the Columban School Media Competition, we have had three students, Beba, Isla and Loshna shortlisted and named for outstanding entries. Two students were noted for excellent writing and one student for their artwork. The theme this year was 'becoming a refugee is never a choice'.



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Ethics Cup Regional Competition



Students have been presented with their certificates from the University of Nottingham for participating in the regional final of the Ethics Cup earlier this year. Students debated a diverse range of ethical issues including the ethics of cruise holidays and whether the voting age should have a lower limit. Our thanks go to the University of Nottingham for hosting the event and providing our young people with such a positive experience.



International Philosophy Olympiad



INTERNATIONAL
PHILOSOPHY
OLYMPIAD

We are delighted to have had another student taking part in the International Philosophy Olympiad again this year. The first round was to write a philosophical essay on an unseen topic and successful students then progressed to the UK final. In the final, students had to again write a philosophical essay but this time in French. Well done to our competitors for taking part in this gruelling academic challenge. Our thanks go to Eton College for kindly organising and hosting the UK finals and best of luck to the winners who will be going to Warsaw on the 14th of May.



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Parliament Trip to London



On the 11th February we took 64 history and politics A-level students to visit parliament. The day started with a short tour of the National Portrait Gallery where students saw the portraits of key protagonists in their courses such as the infamous Duke of Buckingham and the early feminist Mary Wollstonecraft. A short walk through Whitehall allowed students to see the Banqueting house where Charles I was executed and Downing Street.

At parliament students were given a guided tour including Westminster Hall, the site of Charles I trial and the site of St Stephens chapel. As well as visiting the public galleries of the House of Commons and Lords, watching debates in both, students enjoyed trying to spot well known politicians, including Rachel Reeves in the Commons, David Cameron in the Lords and Jeremy Corbyn in the education centre. Students took part in a mock election workshop and demonstrated how some of them may become the politicians of the future.



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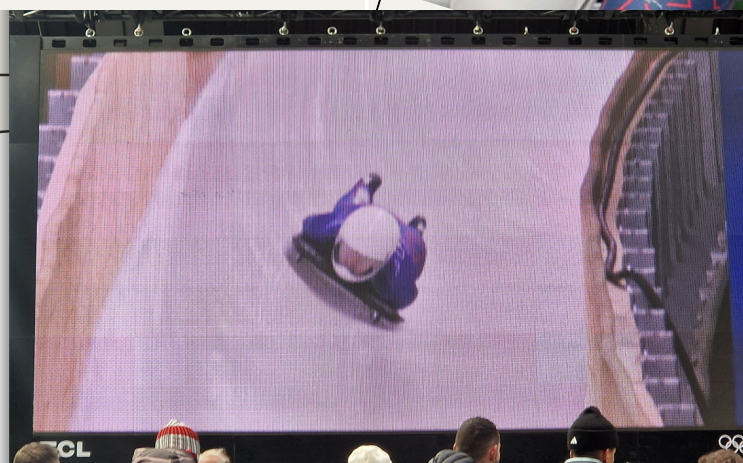
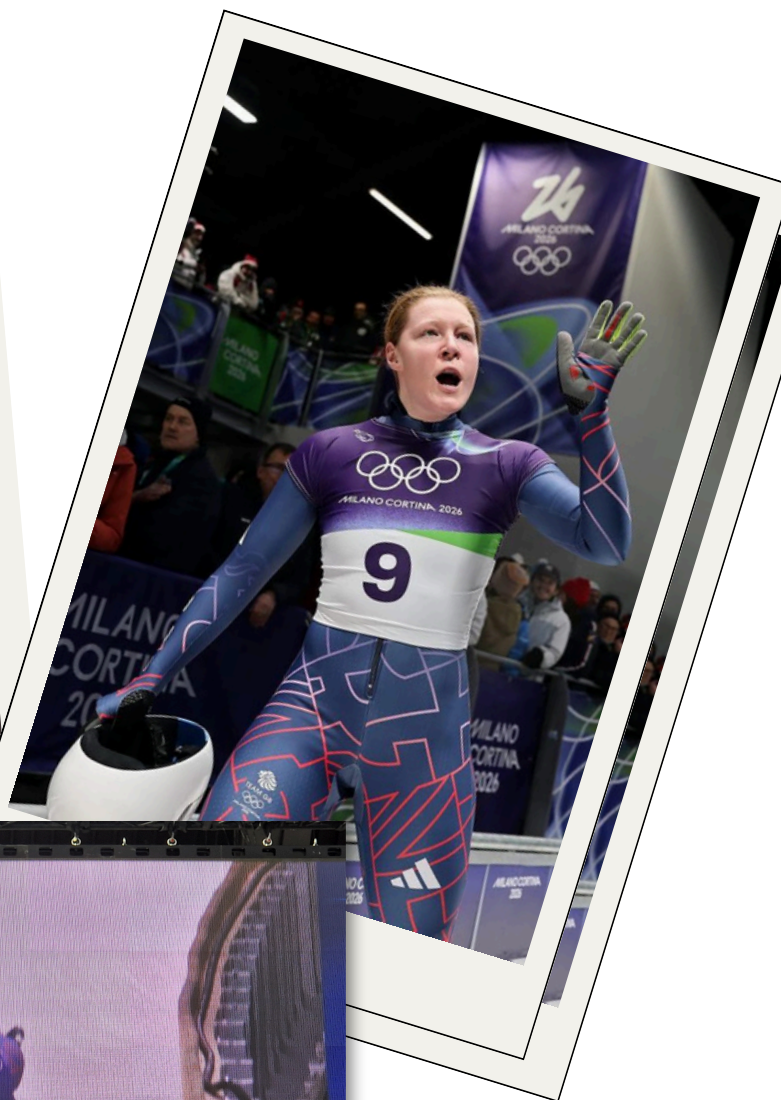


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Winter Olympics: Amelia's Incredible Achievement

Former De Lisle student Amelia Coltman represented Team GB at the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milano-Cortina. The skeleton competition took place at the Sliding Centre in Cortina where the luge, bobsleigh and monobob events also took place.

The skeleton event consists of two runs on one day and then runs 3 and 4 before the medals are awarded. Amelia achieved a brilliant 9th place in the competition, and her final run was completed in an incredible 57.60 seconds which was the 4th fastest of all the competitors. After the race Amelia has said that, "No one can take away the fact that I am an Olympian" - something she can justifiably be proud of, just as we are proud of her and her achievements.



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GB U18 Dragon Boat Team Selection



Holly has been selected to represent the GB U18 Dragon Boat Team for the second year in a row, this time competing at the upcoming European Championships in Munich from 8–12 July.

We are incredibly proud of her achievement and wish her the very best of luck in the competition!



"After gaining experience as a dragon boat helm with the Soaring Dragons over the last year, including helming the ladies' team to victory in both the 200m and 500m events at the Nationals, I'm proud to have been selected as the helm for the under 18's team representing Great Britain at the European Dragon Boat Championships in Germany this July. Having paddled with the team at the World Championships last year, I understand what the paddlers will be going through, and I'm excited to see how we perform this year."



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Year 9 triumph over local rivals



On the hottest day in March, with highs of 18, the Year 9 boys took to the pitch for the first time since October. With a strong line up, and returning former Notts County Academy player Marco, the team were raring for the game against local rivals.

Captained by Joseph and Riley, the team started out strong – with an early goal from star striker Alistair. Keeping the pressure up against Charnwood College, combined pressing from the front three, forced an awkward back pass from Charnwood, which led to an own goal to make it 2-0.

However, as noted from the bench by Mr. Green – two nil is the most dangerous lead. Charnwood answered back following a period of pressure, due to a shift in formation, making the score 2-1.

With heads switched on, Harry in goal made a number of vital saves and interceptions, keeping the score as it was, before a third goal was put in (courtesy of Caleb – swooping up the spilled ball). The half time whistle blew.

A quick half time talk ensued, and with some final words from captains Joseph and Riley – the boys stepped in for a tight 2nd half. The next goal would be vital.

De Lisle rose to the challenge and answered with a thunderous strike from Alistair again, widening the gap between the teams. Time ticked on, and the backline held well.

There was a change of goal keeper, with George between the sticks, who made a tremendous save, following a break from the Charnwood players, keeping the score at 4-1.

Finally, in the last 15 minutes, De Lisle truly showed the talent they had. With Marco coming back onto the pitch, he helped orchestrate another 3 goals, setting up Alistair for his hattrick, and Joseph gaining a brace before the whistle. The final score ending in a 7-1 victory for the Year 9 boys.

With a score like that, it's no wonder that a large number of the players involved will be attending the annual De Lisle Prize-Giving as recipients of a Sports Tie. Their skill and commitment to De Lisle really shone through in the game.





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Year 10 GCSE Geography Fieldtrip to Norfolk

Our Year 10 GCSE Geography students enjoyed a fantastic fieldtrip to Norfolk, where they developed their understanding of coastal processes through a range of engaging activities and hands-on fieldwork.

Students began by exploring key fieldwork theory and practising techniques used to investigate erosion and longshore drift. This knowledge was then applied in real-world settings along the Norfolk coastline, including visits to Salthouse, Weybourne, and Sheringham. Working alongside instructors and later independently, students carried out a variety of data collection methods, from wave counts to beach profiling, building both their confidence and practical skills.

Beyond the fieldwork, students took part in a variety of outdoor and team-building activities, including archery, the Leap of Faith, and a sensory course that required communication and trust. These experiences provided valuable opportunities for students to step outside their comfort zones, support one another, and develop resilience.

Evenings were equally enjoyable, with students taking part in social activities such as a lively silent disco, helping to build friendships and create lasting memories.

Throughout the trip, students represented the school with maturity and enthusiasm. It was particularly pleasing to see many grow in confidence, with some quieter students thriving in the practical environment. Overall, the trip was a rewarding and memorable experience, bringing classroom learning to life in an engaging and meaningful way.





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Chinese New Year event at De Lisle 2026

In order to mark the beginning of the Chinese Year of the Fire Horse, we held an afternoon of festivities at De Lisle on Wednesday 4th March for the Year 7 Mandarin Excellence Programme class. The Year 7 students were joined by Year 6 classes from both St Mary's and Sacred Heart primary schools, along with their teachers.

As well as enjoying a carousel of activities, including calligraphy, crafts and the traditional Chinese game of 'kick the shuttlecock' (踢毽子), the Year 6 students were treated to a performance of an ancient Tang Dynasty poem by Li Bai, which the Year 7 class had learnt by heart. Caleb and Silas, from the Year 7 Mandarin class, also performed a dialogue in Chinese, showcasing what they have already learnt in their Mandarin lessons.



The afternoon concluded with a feast of spring rolls, fortune cookies and prawn crackers. We would like to thank the kitchen staff for their hard work in preparing the food for the event, in addition to providing a sumptuous Chinese lunch for the whole school on the same day to mark the occasion. Mrs Aird would also like to thank Mr Lewis, Miss Huang and Miss Zhang for their support in running the event.

We hope that the students from our feeder primary schools who attended the festivities were inspired to learn more about languages and cultures from around the world when they join us at De Lisle in September, whether that be French, Spanish or Mandarin.

We would also like to take this opportunity to wish everyone in the De Lisle community a Happy Chinese New Year: 新年快乐 (xīn nián kuài lè), 恭喜發財 (gong hei faat choy).



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A Thrilling Theatre Experience: The Woman in Black

Recently, our Drama students had the exciting opportunity to visit Nottingham Theatre Royal to see *The Woman in Black*. This gripping stage adaptation of Susan Hill's novel provided a masterclass in atmospheric storytelling and minimalist theatre.

Students were captivated by the innovative use of lighting, sound, and staging to create tension and suspense throughout the performance. The production demonstrated how just two actors, combined with clever theatrical techniques, can create a truly immersive and chilling experience.

The trip not only enriched students' understanding of live theatre but also provided valuable inspiration for their own practical work. Many were particularly struck by how effective storytelling can be achieved through simplicity and strong performance skills.

It was a fantastic opportunity for students to engage with professional theatre and deepen their appreciation for the dramatic arts.



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A Magical Triumph: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

Our recent whole-school production of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory was nothing short of spectacular, showcasing the incredible talent and dedication of students from Year 7 right through to Year 13. This ambitious production brought Roald Dahl's beloved story to life with vibrant energy, imaginative staging, and unforgettable performances.

From the moment the curtain rose, audiences were transported into Willy Wonka's whimsical world. Our senior students took on leading roles with confidence and flair, while our younger performers brought enthusiasm and charm to the ensemble scenes. The production was a true celebration of collaboration across year groups, with students working tirelessly both on stage and behind the scenes.

We were especially delighted to welcome guest performers from Year 5 at Holy Cross, St Winefride's and Sacred Heart, whose participation added an extra layer of joy and community spirit to the show. Their professionalism and excitement were a credit to their schools, and they were a pleasure to work with throughout the rehearsal process.

The production was supported by stunning costumes, creative set design, and a live band that enhanced the overall theatrical experience. It was a proud moment for our Performing Arts department and a testament to the hard work of everyone involved.

Bravo to all!





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Inspiring Excellence: Orchestra Workshop with Philharmonia Performers

Our music students recently had the privilege of taking part in a specialist workshop led by professional performers from the Philharmonia orchestra who are based in London, with a residency at De Montfort Hall in Leicester. This unique experience offered our senior ensemble valuable insight into high-level musicianship and performance techniques.

Throughout the workshop, students worked closely with the visiting musicians, refining their skills in areas such as tone production, ensemble balance, and musical interpretation. The professionals shared their expertise, offering practical advice and encouragement that inspired students to push their performance to the next level.

The session also included live demonstrations, allowing students to experience the precision and artistry required in professional orchestral playing. It was an incredibly motivating experience, leaving our musicians feeling both inspired and challenged.

We are extremely grateful to our visiting performers for their time and expertise, and we look forward to building on this experience in future months.



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Year 9 Workplace Visits

Year 9 students had the opportunity to visit a range of workplaces, including employers from the logistics sector and to City Hall, Leicester. The visits were to show the range of careers on offer in the local area, as well as to promote employability skills. The workplaces set students a challenge: to work in groups to create presentations based on their experiences. These presentations were then given to an audience of students and business volunteers from the companies. Students appreciated the opportunity to spend time in a workplace, as well as to receive feedback on their presentations from the companies they visited.

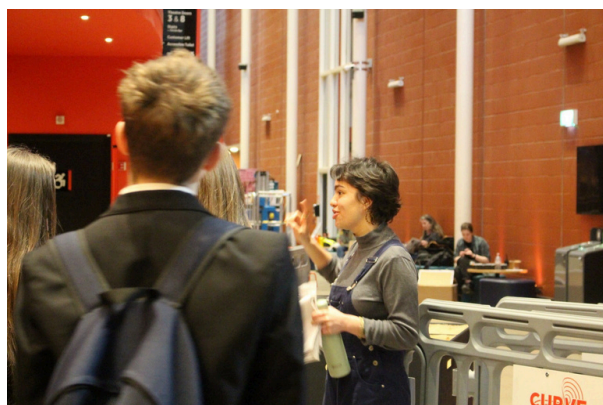




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We are grateful to staff from Maersk, GXO, Mediq, ASDA, Kuehne+Nagel, as well as City Hall, Leicester and the Curve Theatre and Richard III and Jewry Wall visitor centres. We are also grateful to the Generation Logistics project for supporting this event, as well as staff from the Leicester and Leicestershire Business and Skills Partnership (LLBSP), who supported with the organisation of these visits.

Students can find out more about employability skills and careers via:
[National Careers Service](#)



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Catholic Life in Lent Term

This Lent, our school community has been prayerfully journeying through the Stations of the Cross in a variety of meaningful and reflective ways. Key Stage 3 students have been taking part in the Stations of the Cross during their RE lessons, using this powerful devotion to deepen their understanding of Christ's Passion and to reflect on themes of sacrifice, love, and hope.

In addition, students in Key Stages 4 and 5 have also been given the opportunity to engage with the Stations of the Cross during dedicated preparation time in the Lenten period, allowing them to reflect more independently and personally on the significance of Christ's journey to the Cross.

We are blessed to have both our beautifully presented indoor Stations in the chapel, as well as outdoor Stations, which provide a peaceful and reflective space for prayer and contemplation. The outdoor Stations were kindly funded by the Loughborough Circle of Catenians, and we are very grateful for their generous support in helping to enrich the spiritual life of our school.



As part of our Lenten journey, students have been taking part in our CAFOD Soup Lunches, which offer a simple yet powerful opportunity to live out the values of almsgiving and solidarity. These lunches encourage our community to reflect on those who experience poverty and food insecurity around the world, while supporting the work of CAFOD through their Lent Family Fast Day appeal.

Students and staff have been invited to enjoy a soup and bread roll, served by members of our Mission Team's Serve strand. After making a donation at the tills and receiving a CAFOD sticker, students are given a ticket for their soup. This initiative provides a meaningful way for students to come together in community while responding to the Lenten call to prayer, fasting, and giving.



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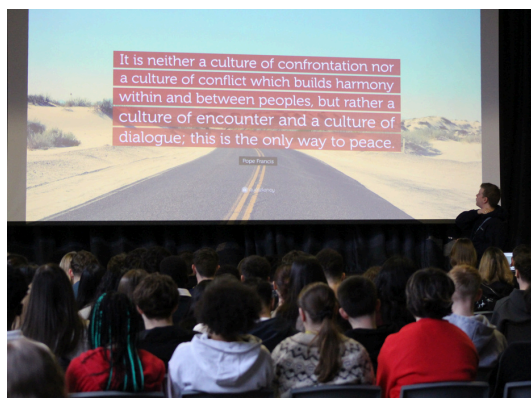
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We are especially grateful to the Serve strand of the Mission Team, who have provided excellent leadership in organising the student rota and ensuring the smooth and consistent running of the Lent soup lunches throughout the season.

CAFOD
Catholic Agency for
Overseas Development



Alongside this, our Year 10 students took part in a retreat day centred on the theme of Fratelli Tutti (Brothers and Sisters All), reflecting on the call to friendship, unity, and social responsibility in today's world. The day was enriched by the presence of guest speakers from Baca, Loughborough Town of Sanctuary, and Nottingham Diocesan Caritas. Their insights helped students to connect the message of Fratelli Tutti with real-life experiences of solidarity, service, and accompaniment, encouraging them to consider how they can live out their faith in practical ways within their own communities.



As we continue our Lenten journey, these experiences help us to pray, reflect, and act with greater compassion, preparing our hearts for the celebration of Easter.



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EASTER HOLIDAYS 2026

The Easter break is nearly upon us and we wanted to send our usual information sheet out to you with some ideas to keep costs down.

Discounted meals

At Frankie and Benny's, you can get a free kids' meal, including a main, two sides, a drink and dessert (per adult main that you buy). The offer runs from Monday 30 March to Friday 10 April. Or you can Download ASK Italian's rewards app and dine in at ASK Italian from 27 March to 19 April to get up to two free kids' meals when you buy one adult main. Your child will be able to choose between the 'happy face pizza' and pasta with their choice of sauce. Click on the pizza to see more offers!



Things to do

Click on the Easter egg below to see a range of activities across North West Leicestershire during the Easter holidays. Events include Easter Crafts, a Family Disco and an Easter Food & Craft Fair.



More things to do

Leicester City Museums and Galleries have a range of activities taking place across Easter. Get involved in Easter Mosaic making at Jewry Wall, a city-wide art trail across Leicester and a K-Pop inspired fun day at the Guildhall. Click on the chick to see all the activities.



Fun at home

Looking to keep Easter costs down without sacrificing fun? This guide is packed with free and low-cost ideas, from getting outdoors on nature walks, bike rides and scavenger hunts to visiting child-friendly museums and galleries. It also includes simple at-home activities like crafts, baking and creative play, making it easy to mix days out with relaxed time at home – whatever the British weather brings. Click on the bunny for some ideas!



Rutland

Looking for an Easter holiday activity with a real wow factor? The Rutland Sea Dragon experience brings one of the UK's most exciting fossil discoveries to life, giving curious kids the chance to step into the world of a real prehistoric sea creature found in Rutland. Click on the dragon for more information!

