

Part of the Holy Family Catholic Academy Trust and a specialist Performing Arts College



Saint Benedict  
A Catholic Voluntary Academy

Saint  
Benedict

Prospectus 2015/16

A Catholic Voluntary Academy



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The ethos of the academy is based on shared values and leads to very good relationships between teachers and students. This means that behaviour in lessons is good and students' attitudes to their learning are positive.

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## Welcome to Saint Benedict

**At Saint Benedict every child is seen as an individual, nurturing the gifts and talents of each of our children is central to our missions. We achieve this by offering the highest quality of education possible, which includes a broad range of experiences aimed at developing the whole child and enabling all to grow in their faith in a safe and happy environment.**

Saint Benedict is a Catholic academy of around 1,400 students aged between 11 and 18. We are located in the very beautiful Darley Abbey area in the North of Derby and as the only Catholic secondary school in the city, our children travel to us from far and wide.

The school has enjoyed a sustained period of improvement over recent years gaining our most successful results ever in 2014, placing us among the highest achieving schools in Derby. Our most recent Ofsted inspection graded the school as Good in every category with the care and support we offer students seen as Outstanding and since this time our results have improved further.

All staff are highly ambitious for every student and work tirelessly to ensure that each child is equipped with the skills and qualities they need to go on and live happy and successful lives. We have excellent facilities which include an all-weather sports pitch used by Derby County, a state-of-the-art Theatre and Dance Studio and Elmwood, our dedicated Sixth Form Centre. We are also proud to have our own Enhanced Resource Base which supports up to 36 visually impaired and physically impaired children.

My own children attend this school and I am truly privileged to have been given the opportunity to lead this vibrant, aspirational and very caring community.

I sincerely hope that you choose to become part of it.

Kevin Gritton



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**Top  
 10%**  
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The percentage of students in GCSE English who made the progress expected of them in 2014, at 82%, put the school in the top 10 percent of schools nationally

## Our Vision and Ethos

**At Saint Benedict Catholic Voluntary Academy we believe in inspiring our young people to be the best that they can be.**

We achieve this by building up a faithful and loving community with Christ at its centre. We strive for academic excellence and develop potential while respecting the needs and abilities of all our students.

An education at Saint Benedict means quality learning first and foremost with high expectations of every young person. Our highly trained and dedicated team of over 190 teaching and associate staff care passionately about every child achieving. We base our students in House communities which enables them to grow and learn in small families while experiencing a whole range of opportunities that a larger school can offer.

## Saint Benedict A Track Record of Success

As a Catholic school it is a vital part of our mission to be there for the whole of our community and we are very proud of this fact. This enables us to be very diverse which gives rise to a great sense of ambition and the belief that, in life, anything is possible for our students.

It is our aim for every one of our students to go on to happy, fulfilling and meaningful lives. Many go on to great things. Here are just a few of them:



**Richard Hammond (Blackman)**  
 Actor

Richard trained at Birmingham School of Acting for three years and played the lead role in a new musical at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre before touring in an original improvisational comedy.

He also performed in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice in Derby and was due to be taking to the stage in Macbeth and The Merry Wives of Windsor at the Cambridge Shakespeare Festival.



**Natalie Jinks**  
 Doctor

Natalie has graduated from Birmingham Medical School and is now a doctor.

As part of her studies she travelled to Kenya to practise rural medicine, to Australia to practise emergency medicine and she was an expedition medic in Borneo.

She is working in acute medicine at Northampton General Hospital and has also become a member of the Royal College of Physicians.



**Josh Vause**  
 Reconnaissance Platoon Commander

Josh graduated top of his class from university before joining the Army.

He has been deployed on exercises or operations in Afghanistan, Northern Ireland, Kenya, Cyprus, France, USA, Canada, Egypt, Italy, Belize, Morocco and Peru.

He is a qualified Reconnaissance Platoon Commander and has commanded the elite Recce and Sniper Platoons. He has also been deployed on a UN peacekeeping mission.



**Molly Allen**  
 Teacher

Molly took A-levels in Media, English Literature, Drama and Performing Arts at Saint Benedict Catholic Voluntary Academy.

She went on to study Primary Education at Birmingham City University and has now fulfilled her ambition to become a teacher.

She works in the primary department at Derby High School, where she is also an English co-ordinator.



**Peter Wickerson**  
 Cambridge student

Peter is studying Mathematics at The University of Cambridge.

He achieved an A\* in Maths, an A\* in Further Maths, an A in Physics and a B in Chemistry in his A-levels at Saint Benedict Catholic Voluntary Academy.

Peter also had to take an entrance exam for Cambridge, called the Sixth Term Examination Paper Mathematics, in which he achieved top marks.

# Striving for Excellence and Enabling All to Achieve

**Great learning and teaching, having high expectations and never giving up characterise our approach.**

We believe that every child is capable of achieving above and beyond the national expectation of them and we work tirelessly, staff and students alike, to ensure that this happens.

As a result of this ambition, the school achieves well above the local and national averages in terms of the qualifications our students leave us with and we have been improving consistently over the past five years.

The percentage of students in GCSE English who made the progress expected of them in 2014, at 82%, put the school in the top 10 percent of schools nationally. The percentage of our students achieving expected progress in Maths and those achieving five or more passes including English and Maths is also now well above average.

We believe in being ambitious for all students, from the most able to those who require additional support, ensuring the learning needs of all of our children are met.

Setting challenging targets and instilling a sense of belief that anything is possible results in students who continually strive for success and who understand that achievement is far more about hard work, persistence and learning from failure than it is about pure ability.

Our curriculum is designed to ensure all can achieve and having undergone a full review we will be launching a new curriculum in September 2015, which will give the best possible preparation for the challenges of new qualifications in Years 11 and 13.

In Years 7-9 students will have more time to focus on the core areas of English, Maths and Science with more time also given to RE, Humanities, Languages and the Arts. In Year 9 students will begin to follow their GCSE courses.

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In Years 10 and 11 we offer a very wide choice ensuring that all students follow a range of courses which will support their progression to higher learning beyond 16.

#### Current qualifications include:

Art
Child Development
Computing
Dance
Drama
English as a Second Language
Food Technology
French
Geography
Health & Social Care
History
Music
Physical Education
Product Design
Sociology
Spanish
Textiles
Vocational Construction
Vocational Hairdressing
Vocational ICT
Prince's Trust

In Years 12 and 13 we offer a wide range of AS and A- Level courses as well as a programme of level 2 courses (GCSE equivalent) for students who need more time to prepare for the demands of level 3 (A Level or equivalent).

Throughout the year groups there is also a strong focus on developing an understanding of the world of work and of developing self through our Careers and Personal Health and Social Education curriculum.



# Caring for your Child

**As a larger school we have the capacity to offer a wide range of experiences to our children, but by dividing our school into six Houses students feel part of a much smaller 'family' with their personal tutor and team of staff on hand to help.**

In addition to this we have a wide range of support for our students from our full-time lay Chaplain, full-time nurse, Nurture Provision, Gifted and Talented Provision and Enhanced Resource Base. This means that the needs of every child can be catered for.

Each student remains within the same House and form throughout their time here and tutors stay in the same tutor groups, building strong relationships with the children they care for.

In addition to House Leaders, who are senior staff, and Deputy House Leaders, each House has its own full-time member of non-teaching staff who is there for all children.

Whether a young person needs additional work, help with organisation or support through a difficult time in their lives, all children benefit from having a caring and dedicated team around them.

“ Saint Benedict is a great school where pupils are encouraged to aim high, to show care and respect for all and to value themselves as individuals. ”  
Margaret Kirkham - Parent

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## Developing the Whole Child

**We believe that access to a broad range of experiences outside of the curriculum is a key part of developing the qualities which will help our students to lead fulfilling and happy lives.**

The school has a very active faith life with prayer and liturgy part of the everyday routine. Opportunities to experience life-changing retreats and visits such as residential experiences at the Briars Diocesan Youth Centre, pilgrimages, our trip to Lourdes and our link with Arusha in Tanzania give young people opportunities to develop not only their faith, but their understanding of the world and the part they play in it.

An awareness of the need to be there to care for and support the poor in society also plays a vital part in the mission of our school. Students here are very aware of this fact and tirelessly raise funds for a number of charities. Our students also visit care homes and perform active service in the community.

We offer an extremely wide range of extra-curricular opportunities including an outstanding school show and many other musical and dramatic productions and we achieve a high level of success in sporting events. Well-established schemes like the Duke of Edinburgh Award are now being followed by over 150 students in the school, giving young people the opportunity to really challenge themselves and to develop new skills and independence.

“ I’ve had so many great opportunities at Saint Benedict including Duke of Edinburgh, Expressive Arts which is my favourite subject, a trip to The Briars and I’ve been in three school shows. I’ve made so many amazing friends and the teachers are really helpful and welcoming.

Grainne Fleming  
Year 10

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All students in the school's House system are known personally by House Leaders who provide the good care, guidance and support needed.

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I have really enjoyed my time so far at Saint Benedict. It's a very welcoming school and everyone is treated equally.

Niall O'Donovan  
Year 8

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## Admissions

**The governors of Saint Benedict Catholic Voluntary Academy are responsible for determining their admission arrangements.**

As a Catholic academy our first priority in considering new pupils is those who are Catholic although we welcome children from different faiths, ensuring every child feels fully included in our work and prayer life. When the academy is oversubscribed, published criteria are applied to determine eligibility.

The academy serves the Catholic population of the City of Derby and surrounding areas. A comprehensive list of those parishes the academy takes from along with the admissions policy and other relevant information can be found on the academy website.

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## A Smooth and Happy Transition to Saint Benedict

**Moving from a relatively small school to a much larger one can be both an exciting and daunting challenge.**

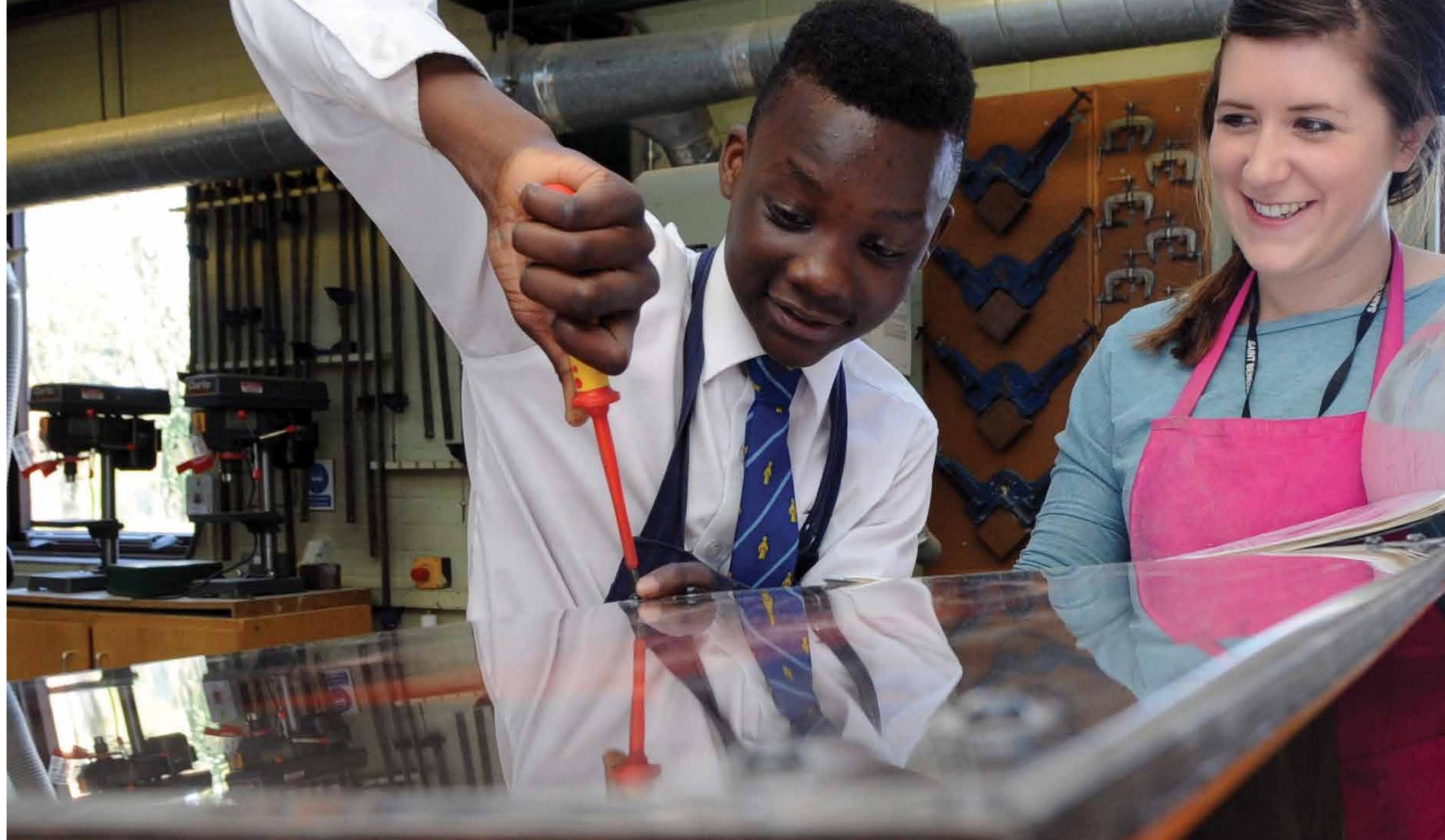
With this in mind we have a close relationship with our partner schools which sees primary pupils come to Saint Benedict to participate in a wide range of experiences including our Annual Poetry Event, Sports and Science activities.

Our Year 5 annual open evening is held in June. It gives an opportunity for parents and students to familiarise themselves with our academy, and with our staff, by taking part in a range of interactive activities within the different curriculum areas. Further opportunities are provided with our open day tours in September and October where pupils and parents can take a guided tour of the academy and see lessons in action.

As part of our induction process, staff from Saint Benedict visit our prospective Year 6 pupils (and their teachers) at their school, all pupils come together at Saint Benedict for an Induction Day filled with fun and getting to know you activities and there are meetings for parents.

All of these opportunities help to ensure that all potential questions are answered and concerns addressed before pupils join us in Year 7. Also, since it is only our new students who join us for the first two days of the September term they have plenty of opportunities to find their feet before the rest of school is present.

Once new pupils join our community they continue to be supported through our highly effective House system and within their personal tutor group. Since our tutor groups consist of pupils all the way from Year 7 to Year 13 there is always an older pupil who can help the younger ones settle in.



**“ We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. ”**

**“Students and staff come and go. School names and logos change but one thing remains constant – Catholic education in Derby and the surrounding area. For 200 years there has been Catholic education in our city, offering an education that can liberate from poverty, inspire participation and community cohesion, develop a culture of success, while always being proud of our Catholic heritage and often leading the way that many others in education will follow. We are proud to be nurturing and developing the young hearts and minds of our children so that they can be our community leaders and inspirational figures of the future.”**



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There are very good relationships between teachers and students and high expectations of what students will achieve.

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## Listening to our Students and Developing Leadership Potential

At Saint Benedict we believe strongly that by being listened to and having a key role to play in terms of how their school is run, all students gain a strong sense of ownership and pride in their school.

We achieve this in a number of ways:

- Our **School Council** meets regularly and has representatives of all ages. This group plays a key part in whole-school decision-making and is one of the first groups we consult with on new ideas. This group has been responsible for a number of initiatives including our Curriculum Review, the purchase of additional outdoor seating and the planning of our non-uniform fundraising day.
- Led by our **Head Boy and Girl**, our **Sixth Form Student Leadership Team** also meet during the year to share their ideas for improving the experience of all children in the school. Running the school for the day on National Takeover Day in 2014 gave this group of students an invaluable experience of leadership.
- As a **Year 11 Prefect**, your child would take on the responsibility of supporting staff on a day to day basis in the running of the school. Over 120 Prefects in Year 11 this year gained the opportunity to lead and to be ambassadors for the school at a whole range of events.
- **Listening to our children and working with them** permeates all that we do. Students are involved in the decisions made on every staff appointment and regularly have the opportunity to share their ideas and views. Giving young people a voice also gives them a sense of responsibility, helping them to learn how to have a voice in society when they leave us and a belief that they can change the world to make it a better place.

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## Working in Partnership with our Parents and Carers

As parents and carers you continue to play a vital role in the education of your child throughout their secondary education.

We will work in partnership with you, our parents and carers, and keep you well informed about your children's progress so that you are clear in the ways you can support them:

- We will regularly report your child's progress to you, setting ambitious targets for them but supporting them closely in achieving these.
- We will organise additional information events for you at important stages throughout their time at school, assisting you to make vital decisions with them. We will help you understand what kind of work they will be set and how you can support your child. We will also help you to support your child through important times of transition from primary to secondary and from secondary to Post 16 education.
- We will keep you regularly updated through newsletters, our website, Twitter (@StBenedictDerby), text and email to ensure you have a good sense of what's happening in school and how you can get involved.

We will enable you to have your say and contribute through our very active Parent Forum which supports us with fundraising events and decision making in school.

“ The commitment of staff to students' successes and well-being is exceptional as is the high quality of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. ”

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## Term Dates 2015/2016

### Autumn Term 2015

Monday 7 September	INSET DAY
Tuesday 8 September	Term starts (Years 7 and 12)
Wednesday 9 September	Term starts (Years 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13)
Monday 26 October - Friday 30 October	Half term holiday
Friday 18 December	Last day of term for students
Monday 21 December - Friday 1 January 2016	Christmas Holiday

### Spring Term 2016

Monday 4 January	Term starts
Monday 15 February - Friday 19 February	Half term holiday
Thursday 24 March	Last day of term
Friday 25 March - Friday 8 April	Easter Holiday

### Summer Term 2016

Monday 11 April	Term starts
Monday 2 May	School Closed—May Day Bank Holiday
Monday 30 May - Friday 3 June	Half term holiday
Tuesday 26 July	Last day of term

### Public Holidays

December 25th, 2015	Christmas Day
December 26th, 2015	Boxing Day
December 28th, 2015	Substitute day (for Boxing Day)
January 1st, 2016	New Year's Day
March 25th, 2016	Good Friday
March 28th, 2016	Easter Monday
May 2nd, 2016	May Day
May 30th, 2016	Bank Holiday

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There are a wide range of clubs to get involved with at Saint Benedict, there is something for everyone, whatever you like to do.

Rosena Finnegan  
Year 8

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