

# Love & Justice

#allsaintsfamily

June 2026 Newsletter



## Welcome to

# New ★ ★ York

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"THERE IS SO MUCH FOR  
US TO BE PROUD OF"

*says Mr McGuinness*



All Saints Catholic High School



*Thank you, sincerely, for allowing me to be part of your lives, and for trusting me with what matters most—your children.*



## *Dear Parents, Carers & Friends of All Saints,*

As I sit down to write this final letter for our newsletter, I find it hard to put into words just how much these past 36 years in education—and especially the last 11 years as Headteacher of All Saints—have meant to me.

Serving this school and the wider Kirkby community has been one of the greatest privileges of my life. Kirkby is a very special place. It is a community defined by its care, its resilience and its willingness to stand by one another. From my very first day as Headteacher, I felt that support, and I have continued to feel it every single day since. What I will treasure most are the relationships. The warmth, honesty and trust that exists between school and home here at All Saints are truly unique. Your support, whether in the playground, at events, or simply in the way you champion your children, has made an enormous difference—not just to the school, but to me personally.

There is so much to be proud of. Of course, we have celebrated successes in Ofsted and examination results, but what has always mattered most to me are the opportunities we create for our pupils. Seeing children grow in confidence, discover new talents, and develop as kind, thoughtful young people has been the real measure of success. I leave All Saints knowing it is in a very strong position. The fact that the school is oversubscribed in every year group speaks for itself. It reflects the trust you have placed in us and the belief you have in what we do. That trust has meant everything to me.

Being a public servant has always been at the heart of who I am. I have tried, every day, to serve this community with honesty and integrity, and to always do what is right for our children. I hope that I have done that to the very best of my ability. Having grown up in this community, I have seen Kirkby change in many ways over the years. To have been able to play a part in shaping the educational experiences of its young people has been a true honour. I hope that, in some way, I have helped to make a positive difference to the life chances of the children we serve.

As I come to the end of this chapter, it is not easy to say goodbye. All Saints has been far more than a school to me—it has been a family, a purpose, and a constant in my life. I will miss the daily moments: the smiles at the gate, the conversations with parents, the energy and laughter of the children. These are the memories I will carry with me.

Thank you, sincerely, for allowing me to be part of your lives, and for trusting me with what matters most—your children. That is a responsibility I have never taken lightly. Although I may be stepping away from my role, I will always feel connected to this community. All Saints will forever hold a place in my heart, and I will look on with pride as it continues to grow and flourish.

With heartfelt thanks and very best wishes,

**Tony McGuinness**  
Headteacher

# Thank you



The journey would be 11 years long; appoint a leader to take the school out of "special measures" (imposed by OFSTED Dec 2014), someone to inspire and lift a deflated staff, a leader to ensure our children receive the quality education they deserve. Job done and thank you Mr McGuinness. If you must retire, know we are stronger because of you.

Born and raised in Southdene, Mr McGuinness's faith is very important to him, and the move to All Saints was absolutely vocational. The opportunity to provide a quality Catholic education for the children of Kirkby was the calling, and our improvement has been the journey.

It can be difficult to attract quality staff to a school in "special measures", but Tony McGuinness was relentless in recruitment and brought about a dedicated team. If you happened to be an Evertonian, that might work to your advantage! He has a gift for getting the best from people, because he knows his staff and values everyone.

He also recognises the importance of the Kirkby community, and strength in cohesion. He made frequent and personal visits to primary schools, churches, community centres, homes of pupils and the town centre (like John Murphy before him). He has fostered essential links the school has made with further education providers, employers and apprenticeship providers, which have changed the nature and culture of our school. No child leaves us without having been given every opportunity to achieve their goals and follow their dreams. Mr McGuinness is behind it all. He is the presence that leads by example.

We find it difficult to summarise the difference Mr McGuinness has made to thousands of children's lives in his eleven years as our headteacher. Outcomes continue to improve, pupil's wellbeing and the love they get from us is immeasurable, and that comes from the top down.

***Thank you for everything, Tony McGuinness. You might not be driving the bus anymore, but you kept your word and you will have a place in our hearts forever.***



This summer we are also saying thank you and farewell to our Deputy Headteacher, Mr Brendan Chorley.

As a student at Holy Family School (Crosby) he found a passion for languages, and Spanish became a catalyst for early travel. After completing his A levels, he went on to study Modern Languages and Economics at Newcastle Polytechnic. As a vocational teacher, Brendan chose to inspire children to develop within the growth and opportunity the study of languages can bring. On completion of his PGCE at Manchester Polytechnic, his career moved through a series of successful roles in various schools, where he led with dedication and vision on behalf of the children.

He joined All Saints as our Deputy Head in 2007, and throughout his 19 year tenure has dealt with significant challenge and change. When the school was brought to "special measures" in 2014, his commitment never wavered. Where others faltered and chose to leave, Mr Chorley stayed and kept staff morale high. That commitment was noted by our new Head, Mr McGuinness, who recognised Mr Chorley as the right person to stand with him and move All Saints forward.

In the 19 years he has been here, Mr Chorley has had a lasting impact on the lives of so many Kirkby children. He will be missed by his colleagues, and a staff who have always appreciated his guidance and support. We know it comes from a place of integrity and drive to make us better.

It is left for us to wish Brendan Chorley a fruitful and replenishing retirement. As our friend and colleague he leaves with our faith, support and very best wishes.



# All in the Name of... Pancreatic CANCER UK

Our biggest charity drive of the academic year invariably falls around the end week of April. In some cases there will be events running through the week and the whole school will be with the effort in some way.

This year was no different, and all our energies were focused on raising money for 'Pancreatic Cancer UK'. Mrs Towler holds the charity dearly, and she launched the week by completing the 2026 TCS London Marathon on Sunday 26th of April. What a great effort, and something like her seventh time completing the distance!

Meanwhile back in school, we were busy ordering in purple charity based tee shirts, baking multi-various cakes and fashioning bracelets for sale.

Then Friday brought the biggest single day of events - with the staff gathering along the Hellerup for the purple tee shirt collaboration photo shoot; while the sixth formers took to organising day long cake sales across the atrium and beyond; as **Missy** and **Eliza** from Year 8s set up their 'Bedazzled Trinkets' stall in front of crowds of pupils gathering for the for the annual "Staff vs. Year 11 Charity Football Match 2026".

Our very own Head of RE and resident "DJ Disciple", Mr Hayes, was on hand with the music and PA commentary as both sides took to the 4G. The school cheered as the teams eyed each other up. Nobody wanted to lose this one. But the Year 11s played in gold and they were fast! 2-0 to them at half time and the teachers left licking their wounds and trying to find a way back in. 2-1 became 4-2, and when JJs header (teachers) was cleared off the line the ball was swept up the other end, and converted for 5-2 as CJ Smith slotted the goal of the game. The crowd went wild; the kids were 20 minutes from victory with a seemingly 'unassailable' lead...

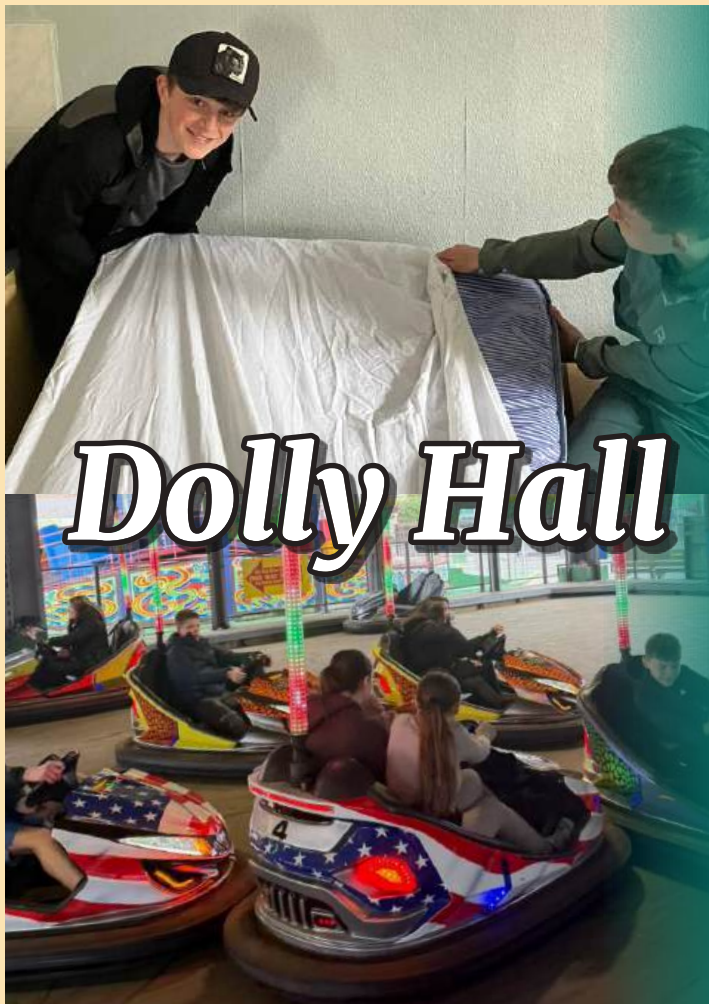
Some said "The fightback was legendary!"; others simply held their breath as the teachers pushed forward. 5-3, 5-4, time running out... backs to the wall; surely, the final whistle? But then, Mr Brennan (Head of Maths) broke down the right as scenes of 'chaos and pandemonium' greeted the equaliser and last kick of the game!

What an amazing and impassioned match, score, event, charity occasion, school, finale, spirit and representation of what we are as a family at All Saints!

There would be no losers today, either on or off the pitch, as over £3000 was raised by us all collectively for 'Pancreatic Cancer UK'.

Same time, same place next year, Mrs O'Neill?





# Dolly Hall

For over 50 years Dolcorllwyn Hall in Powys has held a special place in the hearts of many children and adults from Knowsley. Obviously we call it "Dolly Hall" and would usually expect Mr Bob Downing to be on hand to show us the ropes.

Our own Deacon Michael Bennett has somewhat revitalised the event more recently, and today we use Dolly Hall as something of a pilgrimage and retreat for our children at All Saints.

It is a beautiful old mansion house on the banks of the River Dovey in Wales, and the places amongst our lot go fast!

The 'holiday' can involve a whole range of activities, from outdoor pursuits (climbing, kayaking, hill walking, pony trekking), to football games and geography fieldwork.

Our Year 8s were the latest to take up the offer in April and enjoyed themselves immensely within the Christian spirit.

They also soon realised Dolly Hall is as much about learning lessons on self discipline and reliance, as further activities included bed making, dish scrubbing and simply taking the mop to a grubby floor! Oh, and smiles and darts and snooker and fairground dodgem cars to keep it real!

As Mr McGuinness will so often say - "The pictures tell the story!"

Since returning to All Saints in 2021, Deacon Bennett has also re-established our annual pilgrimage to Lourdes. The children really enjoy their time at the Grotto of Massabielle, but we have to get there first.

The fundraising is a year long effort. You might see the children outside Morrisons with their donation buckets (though infrequently), or you might have attended one of our "Race Nights" at St Joseph's The Worker Parish Centre. Wherever you have shown an interest or fallen across the children we feel and thank the community for your involvement.

More recently we would like to extend a huge thank you to all who supported our "Band Night" event. Our Year 9 & 10 students performed their first live gig in front of a packed audience, and raised over £1000 towards the All Saints Lourdes Pilgrimage 2027.

**We would also like to thank: Radcliffe Taxis, Morrisons Kirkby, The Knights of St Columba Netherton, SVP Bootle, The Parish of St Joseph the Worker & St Laurence, The Mersey Rats, Kirkby Christian Fellowship**

Since 2021 we have raised over £40,000 with the support of the community.



# Lourdes Fundraiser



# DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

## *Performing Arts*

*Why is “Music, Drama & Dance” so vibrant in our school in recent years?*

“We have a very practical and contemporary approach to music and the performing arts at All Saints,” says Miss Evie Wright, our HoD. “Social media is also very important for us, because the kids love to watch themselves in performance, and we want to reach out to the community as much as possible. I see music as a very community based subject. We want to get out and perform like we did at the St Lawrence’s Church event recently (over 100 children). Then it’s also great to take the choir into places like the Maples Extra Care home when they reach out to us. The kids can transport their energy anywhere, and they are simply all about enjoyment and performance.”

Drama and dance are just as dynamic under Miss Fenlon and Mrs Glover. For example the GCSE drama cohort recently devised and performed “Girls Like That”, a small audience piece inspired by Brecht, where they delivered a thoughtful visual narrative on the British social class system. Similarly, our dancers are currently finishing on the choreography for an ‘Everton in the Community’ event where they will present a tribute to Hillsborough on the pitch at Goodison Park.

“Music, drama, dance at All Saints?” continues Miss Wright, “We are one! That’s our motto - We are one. We keep it fresh and go with what the kids like; the spirituality is there, but we also let the children do the research, and we perform songs they choose, with meaning! Also, our kids come in already gifted and talented so they are just great to work with.”

## *What’s next for the department and the pupils?*

“We have been invited to perform for the first time at the ‘All Liverpool Catholic Choir Competition’, 21st May in the Lutyens Crypt at the Catholic Cathedral. It is a great achievement for our choir (23 children) to have finished within the top five places across the region. It is also an honour for the school to be invited to compete at such a prestigious event.

There is also an end of summer showcase for the 75 children taking musical instrument lessons with our five regular peripatetic support staff. So that will be guitar, drums, bass, piano, voice, violin, and just another opportunity for us to sing out loud, and have you join us!”





# Guinness Book of Records event

In late March several of our school dancers took part in a successful Guinness World Records breaking event. As part of a twelve hundred strong dancer troupe, they appeared alongside chart topping DJ Sigala at the Bartercard Odesal Stadium in Yorkshire. The girls were also broadcast live by Sky Sports+ who were covering the event and the Bradford Bulls home game that evening.

## event



# Passion Celebration

Before our Easter break, drama, music and dance students combined to perform "The Passion" in front of a packed atrium and whole school audience. Jesus' story was conveyed through song, drama and movement, with the choir and school band finishing with an excellent rendition of "My Life" by The Beatles. A special mention should go to **Isla Cooper**, **Indi Cooper** and **Ellie Day** for their soulful harmony and voices.

# The Gondoliers theatre trip

To round off a wonderful musical term, a group of our performers and musicians enjoyed a theatre trip to see the revival of "The Gondoliers", a Gilbert & Sullivan operetta staged at "The Little Theatre" in Southport. Of course, we had the best of seats for the performance because our very own Mr Goulden was the conductor of the show!



# It's up to you, New York, New York...

The first full day is always hectic! It's all about reaching for the heights as we race through the avenues towards the skyscrapers - "Top of the Rock" (Rockerfeller) is great, but the Empire State is always the favourite because of its iconic standing and hugely impressive panoramic views. Once reunited with the ground floor, we all moved on to (Jamie) Carragher's Bar for food. Which was "A little surprise for Mr McGuinness!" according to Mrs O'Neill, knowing he is a staunch Blue! The evening was then rounded on Broadway with a performance of MJ the Musical!

## Day 1



## Day 2



The following day was a little more sombre. Once finished with the striking Grand Central Station, we were off to pay our respects at the 9/11 Memorial and Museum. The cascading memorial waters are powerful, but the museum itself is absolutely silent. The mood was then lifted with a little ice skating in Central Park, before finishing the day on a march across the Brooklyn Bridge.



## Day 3/4



Sunday was a morning at Macy's and Times Square, then a virtual flight around the whole of the city with a visit to "Edge NYC". The evening meal was a Chinese banquet just across from Wall Street, bringing thoughts of our final morning on The Hudson (Statue of Liberty), and our journey home the following afternoon!

According to Mrs O'Neill, the annual All Saints trip to NYC is not just about the iconic landmarks, "It's five days of real world learning and immersion, with an itinerary of memories that will stay with us long after leaving All Saints."



# Berlin & Krakow



Meanwhile, our historians were visiting Germany and Poland.

Whilst in Berlin, the kids visited the Berlin Wall, the 'Topography of Terror' and the final bunker of Adolph Hitler. They moved on to the Brandenburg Gate, Checkpoint Charlie and the imposing Reichstag Bundestag.

Then two days in Poland took them to Krakow Castle and Auschwitz, before a personal guide accompanied them around the Jewish quarter, where they visited the Krakow Ghetto and the Jewish Memorial.

The sobriety of the final day gave way to something lighter as the pupils were taken to the bowling alley and arcade, before finishing another memorable visit with snowball fights around the streets of the historic city.



With the February half term behind us, it was time to look further north and head out to Iceland for the annual Easter half term school geography trip. Again, the children were able to visit and enjoy so many inspiring places and events.

Top of the agenda on arrival was a trip to the famous "Blue Lagoon", which is a world-renowned geothermal spa in southwestern Iceland, located in a 2,000-year-old lava field on the Reykjanes Peninsula.

The second day of chilly adventure included visits to the Golden Circle tour, the Gullfoss Waterfall, the Great Geysir, the Pingvellir National Park, and of course a little laser tag and arcade fun for light relief.

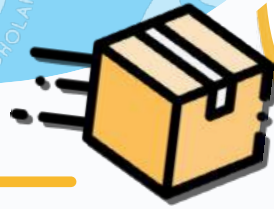
The remainder of the journey took in the southern shores of the country, visiting amazing scenery and geography at places like - the Skogafoss waterfall, the Reynishverfi black sand beach, the Myrdalsjokull Glacier, and finally Seljalandsfoss waterfall.

With the natural geography done, it was back to the food and fun of the capital city and a brisk walk through Reykjavik. The final pictures and memories were snapped in front of the very unique Hallgrímskirkja Cathedral.

# Iceland



# ALL SAINTS' MATTERS... Scholars



## Year 10

Also in February our Year 10 Scholars took part in a fact finding "Business visit to Amazon". They wanted to get under the roof and explore the workings of Amazon's huge new 'fulfilment centre' located on Derby Lane (Kirkby). It was a big opportunity to experience a major regional employer engaging in day to day action and activity. The pupils came away from the tour with a valuable insight into big business functionality.



*All in all, it has been a busy term for the All Saints pupils on the Scholars programme.*

## Year 7

This Year's Year 7 Scholars Programme was launched to parents and pupils on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February. Our ex head girl **Poppy Jones** returned for the evening, and presented on the personal impact of the programme felt during her time at All Saints.



It was lovely to see you returning to talk with our younger pupils, Poppy, and please keep us up to date with your continuing achievements.



## Year 9

Our Year 9 Scholars also recently visited the Fact Cinema in Liverpool to watch *Forest Gump*, followed by a "Philosophy for Children" session entitled "Forest Gump and the Obstacles in the Way".



Scholars have also recently visited the Liverpool Philharmonic Theatre to connect with music from composers including Vivaldi and Tchaikovsky.



# Sixth Form & Careers



## MJ Quinn Visit



On 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 42 selected Year 11 candidates met in the school library for this year's apprenticeship launch with MJ Quinn. They met with the recruitment team from the company and explored the option of taking up a place on leaving in the summer. They also met with ex-pupil Allicia Rowlands who took up an offer with the company in the summer of 2024. She was able to talk to the success of these ongoing relationships, and how effective we are in moving students straight into industry.



*Did you know? Last year, over 10% of our Year 11s found apprenticeships with companies friendly to the school.*



## Forshaw Group Launch

Similarly, our relationship with the Forshaw Group was updated with the 24<sup>th</sup> April session, where prospective apprentices from our Year 11s attended an inspirational launch morning delivered by another of our key business partners.

We are grateful for their continuing interest in All Saints Catholic High School. Also, it is brilliant for us to be able to keep in touch with ex-pupils now flourishing in the workplace.

*It is very important we maintain these connections and opportunities.*





## "AND VICTORY FELL ON US!"

The last time any Knowsley/Huyton Boys district football team had won the National Cup Final was in 1971, with Peter Reid in midfield and Alan Bleasdale as manager! 55 years later, three of our Year 8 boys turned out for Knowsley St Helens U13s at the Stoke City Bet 365 Arena, to take on an impressive district team from Kent.

**Harry Riley, Isaac Taylor and Isaac Hickman** stood strong and played their part in an outstanding 'never say die' display by all the boys. They forced a 1-1 draw on the final whistle and took the victory confidently in the penalty shootout.

**Tony James, Chair of the English Schools' Football Association and Chair of the Knowsley St Helens Schools' Football Association, said:** "This is an outstanding achievement for a group of young players who have shown composure, resilience and real quality when it mattered most."

Congratulations boys, you represented your school, your families and your district with courage and respect, and you will always be 2026 National Cup Champions!

## THE MANCHESTER CITY EXPERIENCE!

Our KS3 girls seem to be establishing quite a connection with Manchester City and the Etihad facilities. In May they visited the City Academy, as used by Pep's first team, and took part in a regional tournament where they finished runners up. Well done girls, a fantastic footballing achievement.



## TAEKWONDO CHAMPIONS

We are also proud of our Apex taekwondo champions who recently competed in Manchester. **Lilia** won the gold medal and **Sophia** walked away with silver - "We may encounter many defeats but we must not be defeated".

## SURVIVING LORD DERBY'S

The PE department is also quite busy closer to home, as every Year 8 form group (220 children) takes its turn on the team building and survival course offered on the grounds of the local Lord Derby's estate. This time around the activities were mainly water based, with canoe and kayak races along the lake. Feedback from the kids spoke of losing shoes and getting stuck in life jackets, and fighting off underwater grasses and "algae like snakes!". But there was no 'real danger to life', and well done to the PE team and all our little survivalists who got to go and 'jump in the lake!'