



BISHOP JUSTUS

Church of England School

Success Through Faith, Love and Learning

Newsletter No.107: October 2026

A Message from our Headteacher

A term of ambition, opportunity, and success!

Dear families,

It has been a pleasure to welcome everyone back to Bishop Justus for the start of a new academic year. As we reach the end of our first half term, I am delighted to reflect on the energy, enthusiasm and commitment shown by our students and staff. This newsletter captures just some of the many achievements and experiences that have made the opening weeks so positive.

Our motto, **Success through Faith, Love and Learning**, sits at the heart of everything we do. As you read through these pages, you will see it reflected in so many different ways. From the outstanding performances in our school production of *Oliver!* to sporting success, inspiring visits and opportunities to explore future careers, our students continue to discover their talents, develop their confidence and take pride in what they can achieve.

One of the highlights has been seeing our new Year 7 students settle into secondary school so positively. Their visit to White Oak gave them the chance to build friendships, work together and try new challenges. We want every student who joins Bishop Justus to feel welcome, valued and able to flourish. The welcome gifts presented to our new Year 7 students, including a book to encourage a love of reading, reflect this commitment.

Reading has been another real success story. More than 800 books were read as part of our Summer Reading Challenge, alongside an impressive 1,050 hours of online reading. These are fantastic achievements. Reading opens doors to knowledge, imagination and opportunity, and I hope we can build on this enthusiasm throughout the year.

I have also been encouraged by the way our students have embraced new opportunities beyond the classroom. Whether visiting Biggin Hill Airport to explore careers in aviation, taking part in the Inspire Youth Conference, developing their artistic skills in London or representing the school through Football Beyond Borders, they have shown curiosity, courage and a willingness to learn. These experiences help young people see what is possible and inspire them to think ambitiously about their futures.

Alongside these opportunities, we continue to focus on the strong foundations that help every student succeed: high expectations, consistent routines, good attendance and a positive attitude to learning. We are committed to creating calm, purposeful classrooms where young people feel safe, supported, and ready to do their best. As I have shared in my weekly letters, we are also a learning organisation. We listen, reflect, learn from others, and look for ways to improve. I am particularly proud of the willingness of our staff to develop their practice and work together for the benefit of our students.

What makes Bishop Justus special is that we are a **values-led school**. Our virtues of Faith, Hope, Wisdom, Courage, Kindness and Love are not simply words; they guide how we treat one another, respond to challenges and contribute to our community. We see them in the teamwork on the sports field, the courage to speak in front of an audience, the determination to keep going after a setback and the kindness shown through everyday actions.

I would like to thank our staff for their dedication, our students for their enthusiasm and hard work, and our families for the support you give at home. Our partnership matters, and your feedback helps us continue to grow as a school.

I hope you enjoy celebrating the achievements in this newsletter. We have made a positive start to the year, and I look forward to all that we will accomplish together in the months ahead.

Warm regards,
Mr Blakelock

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CELEBRATING SPORTING TALENT

Sports Day 2026 was a huge success!

On July 13th, all of our Year 7 to 10 students took part in a packed day of athletics, football, basketball and netball.

There was plenty of sun, fun and laughter along with outstanding determination as every form competed for points.

The energy and sportsmanship on show were brilliant to see. There were some memorable individual achievements and great teamwork.

The day finished with a whole-school celebration on Astro 2, with the staff relay, Sixth Form races and all-star year group races, before announcing the winners over the tannoy.

The students absolutely loved it.

A huge thank you to all the staff who gave their time, energy and enthusiasm to make the day run so smoothly, and to our students for their effort, teamwork and positive attitude.

It was a day to be proud of.

Mr Shergold





YEAR 7 DAY AT WHITE OAK

Our new Year 7 students recently enjoyed a fantastic day at White Oak, taking part in a range of activities including swimming, Tag Active and team-building challenges.

The purpose of the trip was to give our Year 7 students the opportunity to build positive relationships with their new classmates, develop teamwork and communication skills, and grow in confidence as they continue to settle into secondary school. The activities encouraged students to support one another, step outside of their comfort zones and work together to overcome challenges.

The day was a great success, with students enthusiastically getting involved and demonstrating resilience, cooperation and a willingness to try new things. It was particularly pleasing to see students encouraging and supporting each other throughout the different activities.

The trip has also been a valuable opportunity for our new Year 7 students to strengthen friendships and develop a greater sense of belonging within the school community. Since joining us, the year group have settled extremely well and have embraced the many opportunities available to them. Alongside their lessons, students have been getting involved in a variety of activities and experiences, helping them to develop new friendships, discover new interests and become confident members of our school community.

We are incredibly proud of how positively our Year 7 students have approached their first term and look forward to seeing them continue to grow and thrive throughout the year.

Miss Dervis

"The best part of the trip was Tag Active because we got to work together and encourage our friends. It was really fun and helped us get to know people better."



"I enjoyed the swimming and team-building activities. It was a great day because we got to spend time with our friends outside of the classroom and try something different."





'OLIVER': MUSICAL PERFORMANCE OF THE YEAR

At the end of the academic year our school community was wowed by our annual musical performance, which saw our amazing, talented students tread the boards with an award-winning performance of 'Oliver'.

Families, friends, students and staff enjoyed two incredible nights of superb acting, singing and dance, supported by a great production team, with outstanding performances leaving the audience wanting **MORE!**

A huge thank you to Mr Kennedy and everyone in the music and drama department for encouraging our creative talent.

“It was fantastic to see this multi-talented cast perform such a musical and dynamic show. Everyone involved worked well together, and it was such an entertaining performance. I am really proud of our students, they are doing wonders for themselves in participating in such enriching experiences here, and making friends across year groups is also invaluable for them. What a wonderful way to end the school year.”

Mrs Robertson





ART STUDENTS INSPIRED AT THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

On Friday 25 September, Year 13 A Level Art students enjoyed an inspiring day in London, visiting two major exhibitions and experiencing a diverse range of contemporary and historical art and photography.

The day began at the National Portrait Gallery, where students had the opportunity to explore the gallery's collection and engage with portraiture at close quarters. Seeing original artworks in person allowed students to appreciate the scale, materials, techniques and subtle details that can often be missed when viewing artwork through a screen or reproduction.

Following the gallery visit, students enjoyed lunch in Chinatown. The area was particularly atmospheric as the visit coincided with the Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival, providing an additional cultural experience and a lively backdrop to the day.

After lunch, students took a brisk walk across central London to The Photographers' Gallery, where they viewed *Japanese Women Photographers: From*

1950s to Now. The major exhibition reframes the history of Japanese photography through the voices and lenses of 27 women photographers working from the 1950s to the present day. The exhibition provided students with the opportunity to encounter a wide variety of photographic approaches, ideas and perspectives, while considering how artists use photography to explore identity, culture, society and personal experience.

It was a privilege for students to see such significant art and photography first-hand. Experiencing original work in a gallery setting is an invaluable part of an A Level Art education, allowing students to develop their visual literacy, broaden their artistic influences and make meaningful connections between the work they encounter and their own creative practice.

The visit was an enriching and enjoyable experience, providing plenty of inspiration for students as they continue to develop their own ideas and portfolios

Mrs Lucking





"I really enjoyed our recent trip to Biggin Hill airport - it was fantastic, educational and opened up lots of future local career opportunities for us all. We learnt about careers in engineering in the bombardier department, apprenticeships and the flying school department, which lessons can start from the age of 14.

My most enjoyable parts of the trip was being able to see the big bombardier planes, the opportunity to sit inside a working plane and listening to the live ATC (live air traffic control). We also saw previous Bishop Justus students and they told us how they got an apprenticeship at Biggin Hill and how it opened up opportunities for careers.

We watched planes take off on the landing strip, including Spitfires from the war, private jets and an impressive Boeing 737. We all had a great trip and felt inspired to think about our futures and what careers we could potentially have in the future if we continue to work hard in school and seize opportunities that are out there for young people."

Vilson, Year 10 student

FLYING HIGH AT BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT

Earlier this term some of our year 10 students were extremely fortunate to attend a career focus trip to Biggin Hill airport and meet multiple staff members from the aviation team.

Students were able to sit inside working planes, see Spitfires, private jets and an impressive Boeing 737, learn about job opportunities at Bombardier and meet previous Bishop Justus students who now work for the Bombardier department at Biggin Hill.

Thank you, Biggin Hill team, for having us and inspiring our young people.





INSPIRED YOUTH CONFERENCE

Some of our year 10 students had the privilege to be invited to the Inspire Youth Conference at The Warren in Bromley. Students heard from multiple inspirational speakers and took part in three different workshops focussing on enhancing confidence and problem solving skills.

Inspirational speakers included Emete Ogbomo, who is a lawyer and transformational advocate. Emete kindly gave students signed copies of her poem book *"Inspire for Purpose"* and additional copies for our school library. Another inspirational speaker was Andre Dwayne, a British actor recognised for his role in Netflix *Supacell*. He spoke to students about his journey from college to being an actor and how keeping in the right company can push you into the right rooms to achieve your full potential.

Three Bishop Justus students displayed courage to deliver to the conference their strengths, struggles, sparks and support speech they wrote during their workshop and we could not be prouder of our students.

Thank you to the organisers and speakers who inspired our young students to have self believe to be able to achieve their goals and ambitions.

Ms Bull



"I really enjoyed the Inspire conference in particular learning about the four S's - *strength, support, spark and struggles* with speaker Still Shadey and writing down my reflections. Although I felt slightly nervous to present my reflections in front of a large conference, I am proud that I nominated myself and that I delivered my speech to the conference audience."



FOOTBALL BEYOND BORDERS

Over the last two years Bishop Justus has partnered with the social inclusion charity Football Beyond Boundaries (FBB), which uses the power of football to help change the lives of young people. The programme has supported our students with expert football coaching along side mentoring to develop social and emotional skills.

This summer, a group of students attended a COPA residential. Stefan Sowah, FBB school programme lead shares with us his reflections of the student's journeys with FBB.

'The boys arrived on time, well prepared and represented the school brilliantly throughout the journey and residential.

While COPA centred on football, our main focus was seeing the boys apply the social and emotional skills they have developed over the past two years, while recognising the strengths each individual brings to the group.

The challenge came early. Following several last-minute drop-outs and an opening 2-0 defeat, the boys understandably felt nervous. However, rather than letting this setback define them, they responded positively. Logan, Daniel and Dion emerged as vocal leaders, helping to keep the group focused and motivated. The boys followed a goalless draw with their first win, with Daniel confidently scoring the decisive penalty.

By the second day, the group's confidence had grown. Two wins and a draw secured a place in the semi-final, where Jack produced a standout performance, saving two penalties in the shootout. Just as impressive was the team's reaction, celebrating together and recognising everyone's contribution.

The boys reached the final on merit and, despite narrowly losing on penalties, showed real maturity in how they handled the disappointment. They supported one another, stayed united and reflected positively on their achievements. Several boys even described the group as feeling like "brothers" for the first time.

Isaiah also deserves special recognition for stepping outside his comfort zone, communicating more



confidently and supporting teammates throughout the week. His efforts were recognised with the SEL Award.

Away from the football, Isaiah and Azai demonstrated tremendous courage by performing a poem they had written together in front of around 100 young people.

Experiences like COPA are valuable because they develop far more than sporting ability. Throughout the residential, we saw leadership, confidence, resilience, empathy and a stronger sense of belonging emerge across the group. The overwhelmingly positive feedback from parents highlighted just how meaningful the experience was for both the boys and their families.'



CELEBRATING SUCCESS - ENGLISH YOUTH BALLET

Over the summer, one of our Year 11 students, Katie Rideout, danced with the English Youth Ballet and performed in *Giselle* at the Churchill Theatre.

This is a fantastic accomplishment and a wonderful example of the talent and dedication of our students.

It is a delight to share Katie's success with the wider school community and congratulate her on this outstanding achievement.

The performance was also featured in *The Times*, Katie is the tall dancer on the right.

Well done Katie. We look forward to following the bright future you have ahead.



CELEBRATING SUCCESS - PLAYING FOR ENGLAND



We send huge congratulations to Grace Fisk, a former Bishop Justus student, who made her full International debut for England, on Friday 9 October.

Grace, Liverpool FC Women captain, stepped off the bench for the closing moments of the Lionesses' 3-1 victory in Greece in the first leg of a Women's World Cup play-off semi-final.

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BROMLEY Y WELLBEING ASSEMBLY

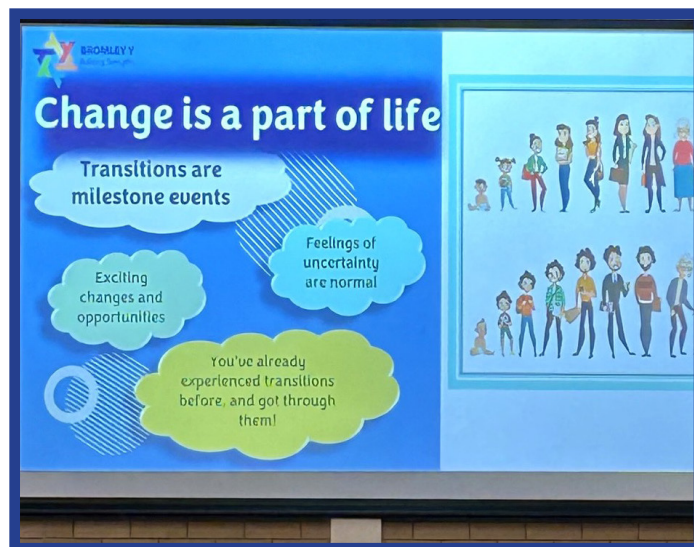
We are delighted to be working with Bromley Y, a fantastic mental health service that supports young people with their emotional wellbeing and provides a safe, confidential space to talk about the challenges they may be facing.

There is lots to look forward to, with a range of workshops planned for our students focusing on important topics such as anxiety, friendships and exam pressure. These sessions will give students practical advice, strategies and opportunities to explore their wellbeing in a supportive environment.

Bromley Y have also been joining us in assemblies throughout the week, showcasing their fantastic service and giving all students the opportunity to meet their friendly practitioners and learn more about the support available to them.

We are really excited about this partnership and the opportunities it will provide for our students throughout the year.

Ms Tullett



Spinnaker Assembly - Resilience

We were delighted to welcome the Spinnaker team for the Year 7 and 8 collective worship assembly on 24 September.

The resilience theme strongly resonated with our virtue of Hope. Students explored the act of perseverance when faced with challenges. To illustrate this students participated in building a tower, which was then knocked down unexpectedly. Yet, despite this setback they continued to rebuild.

This demonstrated resilience in action by not giving up and keep going even when things don't go the way you expect them to.

Inspired by the story of Joseph and his coat of many colours, students saw how even in the face of great injustice Joseph never gave up hope and stayed close to God.

Students felt encouraged to never give up and always have hope.



MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

This term saw our wonderful staff host a Macmillan Coffee Morning, raising an amazing donation for this fantastic cause and managing to treble what has been achieved over the last 2 years!

Parents, past colleagues and members of the Aquinas Advisory Council (AAC) came together with staff and students to enjoy delicious cakes and treats and have a chat over coffee and tea.

The amount raised will have a real impact in supporting this charity.

Thank you to everyone for their kind support and generosity.



WELCOME GIFT FOR OUR NEW YEAR 7 STUDENTS

At the beginning of term all our new Year 7 students were presented with a 'Welcome' gift bag from the Headteacher, Mr Blakelock.

Inside the bag was a copy of the book *The Girl of Ink & Stars*, by Kiran Millwood Hargrave, a sustainable water bottle, Bishop Justus Virtue cards and a book mark with a personal message from Mr Blakelock.

It was a pleasure to see the delight as the students recieved their gifts.





SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

On Friday 25th September we celebrated the end of the eight week-long Bishop Justus Summer Reading Championship. The children in the school were challenged to read at least 6 texts over the summer holiday either online on SORA (our new school library app) or in person and asked to submit a 'top trump' style card for each book they read or listened to.

I was overwhelmed by the response and over 800 books were read by the students who entered the competition.

Online the school managed a whopping 1050 hours of reading with Fidele in Year 10 topping the online leaderboard (25414 minutes) and Rachael A (also in year 10) not far behind with 22749 minutes of reading both of which will be presented with some reading championship prizes, books and goodies.

Year 10 were the winning year for the most books read and have won the Reading Championship trophy for 2026. They were followed closely by Year 8 in second place, Year 9 in third, Year 11 in forth.

The staff winner was Mrs Hamill and Creativity prizes go to Palingu in Year 8 and Leela in Year 11.

Mr Blakelock will be pulling out the lucky winning entry on the last day of half term and the video will go out very soon informing the school of the grand prize winner.

I am incredibly proud of all those who participated and invite you to join in with our online **October Reading Challenge**. Sign up on your Sora profile under 'me' and 'reading challenges' and enter the code WEX67744 to join in and be in for a chance to win an exclusive 'lunchtime Library lock in' for you and 5 friends with snacks provided. There will be other prizes up for grabs too!

Mrs Baker



BOOK FAIR!

To celebrate the last two weeks of the Summer Reading Championship Mrs Baker held the first School Book Fair which was a great success raising the school £181 to spend on new books for the Library and book clubs. Mrs Baker was incredibly thankful for the £70 of donations from parents to sponsor children to receive books from the fair ensuring that everyone who visited the fair came away with huge smiles on their faces. We look forward to the next fair that is already booked in for next September.



"What a fantastic achievement and a brilliant way to celebrate! Over 1,050 hours of reading is an incredible effort from our students, and Fidele and Rachael's reading totals are truly remarkable. Thank you for all the hard work you've put into organising and promoting the challenge."

Mr Blakelock, Headteacher



Bishop Justus Aquinas Advisory Council

Update: October 2026

Every school in the Aquinas Trust has an Aquinas Advisory Council (AAC). This group supports and advises the Headteacher and the senior leadership team. You can find out more about the AAC and what we do here: [Aquinas Church of England Education Trust - AAC](#). We want to hear what parents think about the school. You can email us at any time at: sinanil@bishopjustus.bromley.sch.uk

The new school year began for me with a slightly unexpected tear in my eye at Open Evening. My daughter has just started Year 13 and is now visiting universities, drafting a UCAS personal statement and learning to drive — all alongside a Saturday job, plenty of homework and a busy social life. Yet, sitting in the school hall, I was suddenly taken back to arriving here with a nervous Year 6 pupil, wondering how on earth we would choose a secondary school and how such a small person would cope in such a big place. I needn't have worried: she has flourished here.

So, a very warm welcome back to everyone — and especially to families who are new to Bishop Justus. Whether your child is starting Year 7 or joining another year group, I hope you have already begun to feel part of our school community. I'm Jaime and I chair the Aquinas Advisory Council (AAC). Put simply, our job is to support and advise the Headteacher and senior leadership team, while also asking constructive,

sometimes challenging questions about how the school can keep improving.

To do that well, we need to hear from you. Parents see a side of school life that staff and those in governing roles cannot, and your experiences help us understand what is working well and where things could be better. This year, as we did last year, we will hold a Parent Forum every half term, alternating between face-to-face and online sessions. Mr Blakelock will join us too, providing an opportunity to hear directly from the Headteacher and raise questions. I'll also be at parents' evenings during the year, looking slightly less nervous than I did all those years ago and very happy to chat!

Please do come and say hello. The more we hear from parents, the better we can support the school to make Bishop Justus a place where every child has the opportunity to flourish.

Jaime, AAC Chair

