

Friday 13th February 2026

Dear parents and carers,

We have reached half term already and it's certainly been a great if busy and wet start to 2026! We were delighted to watch the Academy production, Sister Act last week, which was a roaring success. Thanks to Ms Tomlinson, Mr Mort, Mr Smith and Ms Gao for all their hard work as well as our students who excelled in their performances. Thank you as well if you attended the Year 7 Progress evening last night. Our Progress Evenings are our most important parental/ carer engagement events and we always want to see more of you attend to discuss your child's progress.

Year 13, 11 and 10 mock exams

The Year 13 mock exams begin immediately following the half term break on Tuesday 24th February and run until Monday 9th March. Year 11 students will also sit a mock exam for Science, Maths and English in the exam hall, while Year 10 will sit their GCSE RE mock exam.

Year 12 Progress evening (online)

Our Year 12 Progress evening will be held on Thursday 5th March between 4.00 - 7.30pm. The Parents Evening Booking System is now open for parents/ carers to book their virtual appointments. This is the opportunity for you to speak with subject teachers as your Y12 student has now really settled into their courses. As staff will be working late to support this event, students will once again start their day a little later the next morning - Friday 6th March. We will open for breakfast at 9:00am, and lessons will start with Period 2 at 9:30am. No student can be on site before 9am. This is in place of an earlier finish on Thursday 5th March.

Year 7 Spiritual Retreats

Our new Chaplain Anita Rolls will be leading the upcoming Year 7 Spiritual Retreat days in March. We delayed these from the autumn so we could wait until Anita had joined us. The day will involve your child's Coaching Group visiting St. Luke's Church in Redcliffe Gardens, Earls Court. Students will be taking part in team building and reflective activities to help them get to know themselves, their peers and our staff better. All Year 7 parents/ carers will receive a letter detailing the full programme for each retreat day.

Term dates 2026-27

Please be advised of a slight adjustment to our published 2026-27 term dates due to a typo - these can be found on our [website](#).

Ramadan

As we approach the holy month of Ramadan, starting next week, we want to acknowledge the significance of this time for many of our families. This year, the period of fasting and spiritual reflection coincides with our upcoming mock exam window. If you have specific concerns regarding your child's wellbeing during this period, please do not hesitate to reach out to their Head of Year. We know that our students who observe Ramadan conduct themselves with discipline and fortitude and maturely understand that it is 'business as normal'; PE lessons continue and students who receive detentions are of course expected to attend. For the second year running a community Iftar will be held at the Academy on 26th February for select year groups. Separate communications have been shared with them, their parents and carers. We send our blessings and prayers to all of you at this time.

Lent

Not only does Ramadan begin next week but so does the Christian period of Lent. Our Chaplain, Anita continues to welcome students to the Chapel space and over Lent will encourage our young people to take the time to reflect on

the meaning of Lent. That sense of readying and preparing oneself is a theme that runs across both the Muslim and Christian faiths and a reminder of the similarities of these two world faiths.

Family Film Screenings at The Garden Cinema

The Garden Cinema hosts family film screenings every Saturday and Sunday morning, and on weekdays during the school holidays. The screenings are 'Pay What You Can' which means you are free to pay as much or as little as you can afford. On Sundays the films are followed by free fun and creative activities for children. Upcoming films include Frozen, Fantasia and Mary Poppins. The full programme and further details can be found here:

<https://www.thegardencinema.co.uk/season/films-for-the-family>

Reminder: DTP (teenage booster) and Meningitis ACWY immunisations - Year 9 students

A reminder that the Schools Immunisation Team will be visiting the Academy on Monday 23rd March to administer the DTP and Meningitis ACWY vaccinations. This will be offered primarily to Year 9 students and their parents/ carers must complete the online consent form via this [link](#). For parents/ carers of Year 10 & above, **if your child missed these vaccinations in Year 9** and you would like them to receive them now, please complete the same form. These will only be administered if time permits.

Additionally the Schools Immunisation Team would like to invite parents and carers of children in Year 9 to attend a free online webinar about the important routine vaccinations offered in secondary schools on Tuesday 17th February at 7.00pm. You can join on <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/31172782676897?p=8ZSUefwMMr6vG3EK5y> using the Meeting ID: 311 727 826 768 97 and Passcode: X59rS3qt.

Chaplain's message - from Anita

As we approach the half-term break, I'm delighted to share that our Chapel life is growing with two new lunchtime sessions, both hosted by wonderful guest facilitators. On Fridays, we have launched the Big Questions Club for students in Years 9, 10, and 11. Led by Marianne Sampaio (Youth Pastor at St Barnabas), this is a relaxed, open space designed for students of all backgrounds and beliefs. Whether they have a firm faith or none at all, it's a place to voice honest opinions and explore those "big" ideas about life and the world around us. Looking ahead to after the break, we are excited to start a Christian Union (CU) session every Thursday for all year groups. Hosted by Jess Masters-Carrer (Youth Advisor from the London Diocese), this group is for anyone who already attends church, those curious about the Christian faith, or anyone simply looking for a supportive community to "wander" with.

A reminder that there is an INSET day on Monday 23rd February so the Academy will reopen to students on Tuesday 24th February at the usual time. I wish you all a pleasant half term with a welcome respite from the routine of the Academy for us all!

Yours faithfully,



Mariella Ardon
Principal

Upcoming useful dates:

Monday 16th - Friday 20th February - Half-Term

Monday 23rd February - INSET day (Academy closed to students)

Tuesday 24th February - Academy re-opens to students and start of Year 13 Mock exams

Monday 2nd - Friday 6th March - National Careers Week (to include Year 9 Enterprise day on 4th March)

Thursday 5th March - Year 12 Progress evening (online)