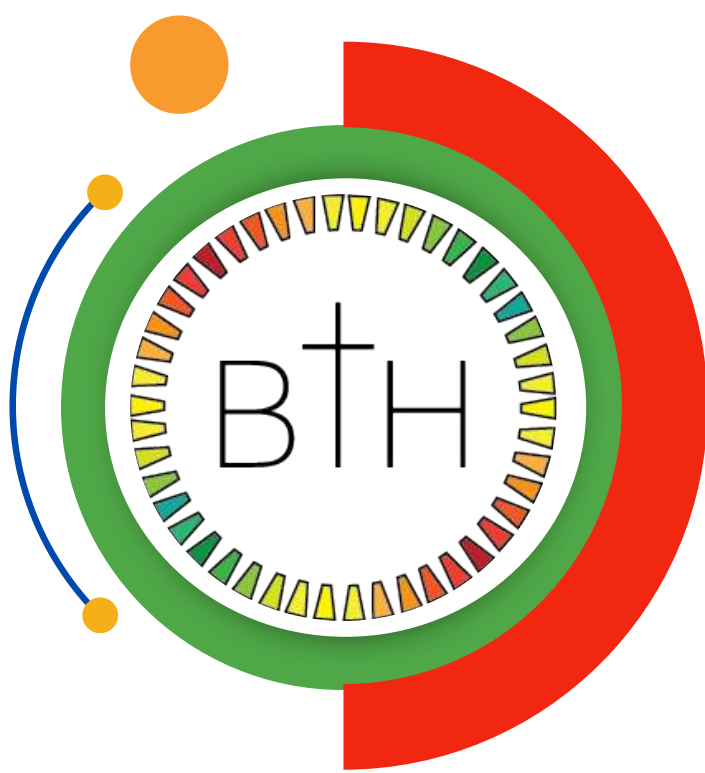




Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College

May God's love be our guide 

Weekly Newsletter





Lent Walk



28th March 2025

Dear parents/carers,

We are writing to inform you about the last day of the spring term, Friday 4th April. On this day, we are excited to be participating in the Big Lent Walk for CAFOD, as well as exploring the Jubilee Year of Hope 2025. Students will engage in special sessions reflecting on how we, as Catholics, can bring hope to others in our daily lives.

The Jubilee Year of Hope is a significant celebration within the Catholic Church, offering an opportunity for renewal, reflection, and unity. It invites us to embrace the message of hope, strengthen our faith, and make a positive impact in our communities and beyond. Through our participation, we aim to deepen our understanding of hope as a guiding principle in our lives.

The Big Lent Walk is an initiative led by CAFOD (the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development), encouraging communities to come together in solidarity to raise funds for those in need. The mission of the walk is to support vulnerable communities around the world, providing essential resources such as clean water, nutritious food, and education. By taking part, we aim to promote awareness of global challenges and live out our faith by supporting the common good.

As part of the Big Lent Walk, students will take part in a community walk within the local area. Further details regarding the route can be found in this week's newsletter.

THE BIG LENT WALK





Lent Walk



28th March 2025

Students should wear their BTHCC PE kit for the day. If they do not have a full PE kit, they should come in their school uniform. It is essential that students wear sensible footwear, as the walk may involve muddy or wet paths. In the event of sunny weather, students are encouraged to bring a hat, apply suncream, and carry a refillable water bottle to stay hydrated.

We would be grateful if students could collect sponsorship money to support CAFOD's vital work. Friends and family can donate using our school's fundraising link or the attached sponsorship form:

<https://schools.walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/bth-big-lent-walk-2025>

Throughout the walk, there will be six prayer stations where students will pause to reflect on significant Catholic pilgrimage sites. These moments will offer a chance to consider the connections between physical and spiritual journeys, aligning with the themes of the Jubilee Year of Hope.

To celebrate the completion of the walk, students will receive an Easter treat from the school. The day will conclude with dismissal at 12:30 pm.



C S Hogg

Mrs C S Hogg



Below are some useful dates for the diary;

Wednesday 2nd April - Classics Year 13 trip

Thursday 3rd April - Football trip meeting

Friday 4th April - Big Lent Walk

Friday 4th April - Break up for Easter holidays

Tuesday 22nd April - Return to college

Tuesday 22nd April (2 weeks) - Assessment week for Year 8

Wednesday 23rd April - Fundraising charity evening for Hannah Quigley

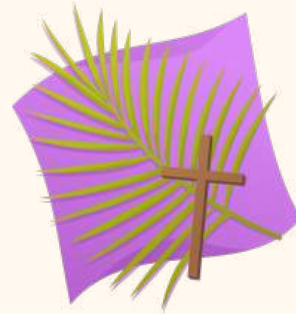
Thursday 24th April - GCSE PE moderation

Thursday 24th April - Review evening for Year 8

Friday 25th April - Whole college Mass for Easter

Sunday 27th April - Manchester Marathon

Tuesday 6th & 7th May - Year 10 Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Expedition

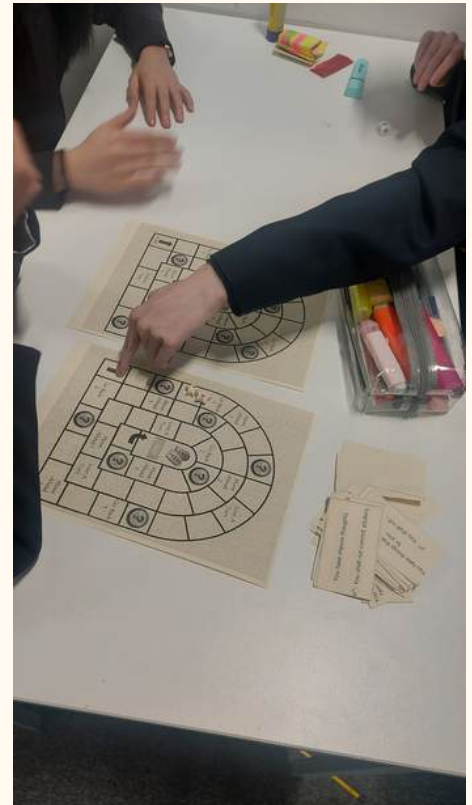


This week, Year 8 students have been deepening their understanding of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, exploring not only its importance in the life of a Catholic but also how it connects to their everyday choices.

During their double lesson, 8TC put their knowledge into action in a creative and engaging way—through a board game challenge! Using their prior understanding of the Ten Commandments alongside their new learning on Active and Passive Mortification, students navigated real-life moral dilemmas, making choices that reflected the process of confession, penance, and forgiveness. The game encouraged them to think critically about the nature of sin, the importance of making amends, and how personal sacrifice can strengthen their faith.

Laughter, debate, and some fiercely competitive gameplay filled the room as students worked in teams, using their moral reasoning skills to advance through the game. This hands-on approach not only reinforced their understanding of Reconciliation but also helped them see how faith is lived out in daily decisions especially during this Lenten Period.

It was a fantastic way to bring theology to life, ensuring that learning went beyond the textbook and into meaningful reflection. Well done, 8TC!





Year 12 & 13 Religious Studies Students Explore the Problem of Evil with Dr. Peter Vardy. On Wednesday 12th March, our Year 12 and Year 13 Religious Studies students had the incredible opportunity to attend a thought-provoking conference led by renowned theologian Dr. Peter Vardy at Methodist Central Hall.

The session delved into the Problem of Evil, challenging students to consider how we define both God and evil, and whether the coexistence of the two presents logical or evidential issues. Dr. Vardy, with his trademark wit and insight, broke down complex philosophical arguments while also equipping students with practical tips for essay writing—highlighting the essential do's and don'ts of crafting a top-level Philosophy response.

Our students were thoroughly engaged throughout, gaining a first-hand experience of a university-style lecture. The conference concluded with an exciting debate, where students put their newfound knowledge to the test. A standout moment came from Veron, who confidently articulated his perspective on the Problem of Evil with clarity and conviction—don't miss his contribution in the video attached!

A truly enriching and inspiring day for all involved.





**Newly
elected
SVP members!**



Novice crocheter Ysabella Cooley in Year 11 completed her first make just a few sessions after joining us in Random Acts of Crafted Kindness– a friendly lunchtime enrichment group that meets every Thursday from 1.45 in Rome 3 (near the library).

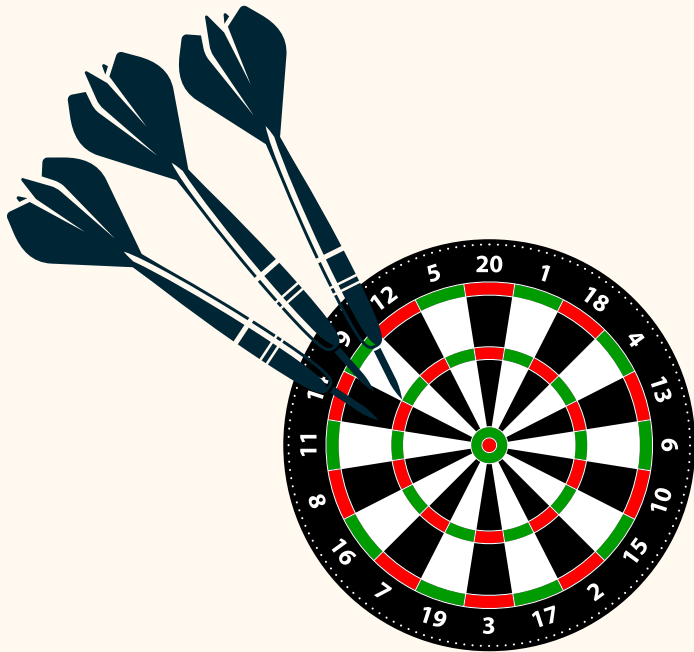
We make all sorts of things, from crochet, knitting and even macrame and sewing can be accommodated if you bring along a kit. We also have a Google Classroom group with lots of links to YouTube tutorials from complete beginner to intermediate level.

Well done, Ysabella for making your lovely warm scarf...
I look forward to seeing your next make!





SCIENCE *Club*



Oliver Ramsden in Year 11 got our first 180 in darts. Well done Oliver!

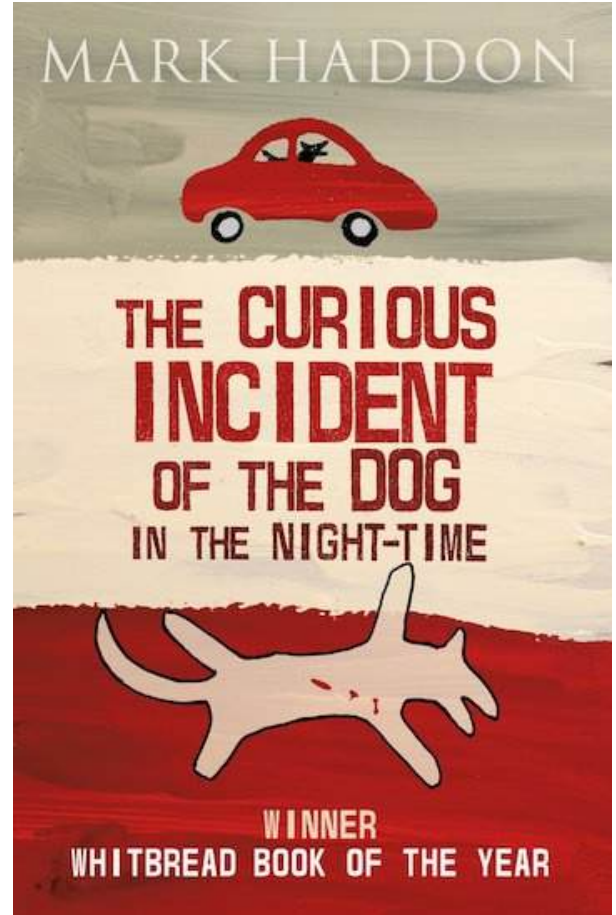




Book of the Week

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time is a murder mystery novel like no other. The detective, and narrator, is Christopher Boone. Christopher is fifteen and has Asperger's Syndrome. He knows a very great deal about maths and very little about human beings. He loves lists, patterns and the truth. He hates the colours yellow and brown and being touched. He has never gone further than the end of the road on his own, but when he finds a neighbour's dog murdered he sets out on a terrifying journey which will turn his whole world upside down.

A great novel to pick up for Autism Awareness Week!



This week's Book of the Week will be displayed in the Library until Friday, but available for the rest of the year.

transgress
- verb, go beyond the limits, infringe, violate, contravene, flout

English: In 'Blood Brothers', Mickey is sent to prison for his transgressions.
RE: Christians are not supposed to transgress the moral laws of God set out in the Ten Commandments.

transgressing
transgressed
transgression

trans-gress

Latin: trans (across, beyond) Latin: -gradi (go)

Who might use this word? police officer, barrister, human rights campaigner

Sp Adobe Spark



Reading
eggs



A huge well do to Paola who completed 5 hours and 41 minutes on 'Reading Eggs'. She was very happy with her chocolate as a reward. Keep up the good work Paola!

SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING

WORKING TOGETHER TO KEEP OUR YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE



Secondary | April 2025

In this issue:

- The dangers of vaping
- Concerning dark material

What is vaping?

Vaping involves inhaling an aerosol (commonly known as vapour) produced by an electronic cigarette or vape device. These devices often contain nicotine, flavourings and other chemicals. Many vapes are marketed with appealing flavours, making them attractive to young people.

Vaping among young people, including those aged 11-16, has become a growing concern. While e-cigarettes were initially designed as an alternative for adult smokers, they have become increasingly popular among teenagers. The appeal of flavoured vapes, the influence of social media and peer pressure all contribute to this rise in use.

The risks of vaping for young people

- **Laced vapes:** some vapes have been found to contain illegal substances such as THC (the psychoactive component in cannabis) or synthetic drugs. These pose serious health risks, including severe anxiety, hallucinations, and hospitalisation. It is crucial to educate young people about the dangers of accepting vapes from others or purchasing them from unverified sources.
- **Nicotine addiction:** many vapes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive and can affect brain development in teenagers.
- **Health concerns:** research suggests vaping may cause respiratory issues and expose users to harmful chemicals.
- **Unknown long-term effects:** vaping is a relatively new trend, and scientists are still studying its long-term impact.
- **Illegal sales to under-18s:** it is illegal to sell vapes to anyone under 18, yet many young people still access them through social media, shops or peers.
- **Peer pressure and social media influence:** vaping is often glamorised online, leading to increased experimentation.

How can parents support their children?



If you need further advice and support, here are some helpful resources:

NHS Vaping Information: www.nhs.uk Action on Smoking and Health (ASH): www.ash.org.uk

SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING

Protecting our children from harmful social media content

In today's digital world, social media platforms play a huge role in shaping our children's lives. While these platforms offer entertainment and social connection, they can also expose young people to disturbing and dangerous content.

One of the most alarming trends is the way algorithms push self-harm and suicide-related content to vulnerable users, often without them actively searching for it. As parents, it is crucial to understand these risks and take steps to protect our children.

How social media algorithms work

Social media platforms use complex algorithms to keep users engaged for as long as possible. These algorithms track a user's activity—what they watch, like and interact with—and then recommend similar content. Unfortunately, for children and teenagers who show any interest in mental health topics, this can lead to a harmful cycle where they are repeatedly exposed to content related to self-harm, suicide and other distressing themes. Research has shown that prolonged exposure to such content can increase anxiety, depression and even suicidal thoughts.

SPOTTING THE SIGNS

It is not always easy to know if your child is consuming harmful content but here are some warning signs to watch for:

- Sudden changes in mood, including increased sadness or withdrawal
- Increased secrecy about their online activity
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness or despair
- Talking about self-harm, suicide or excessive discussions about death
- Changes in sleeping or eating patterns.

@the_enlightened_parent

How parents can help

Protecting children from harmful online content requires a proactive approach. Here are some steps you can take:

01 Open conversations

Encourage your children to discuss online content openly and assure them they can approach you if anything bothers them.



02 Monitor and set limits

Use parental controls on social media to filter inappropriate content. Set screen time limits to avoid excessive use.



03 Encourage healthy digital habits

Encourage your child to engage with positive online content while promoting offline activities.



04 Be aware of the platforms your child uses

Stay informed about your child's app usage and research their safety features.



05 Seek help when needed

If you suspect your child is struggling with mental health issues, seek professional help from a counsellor or therapist.



A balanced approach to technology

Social media should be used in a way that promotes well-being rather than harm. By staying informed, setting boundaries and fostering open communication, parents can help their children navigate the digital world safely.

If you have concerns or need additional resources, do not hesitate to reach out to safeguarding or pastoral staff at school.

Important Reminder – Parking and Road Safety

We would like to remind all parents and carers about the importance of parking safely and responsibly around the college site.

Recently, we have noticed an increasing number of vehicles parking on yellow lines, blocking driveways and junctions, and stopping in the middle of the road to drop off or collect children. This creates serious safety risks for our students, their families, and the wider community. It also causes unnecessary congestion and frustration for other road users.

Please remember:

- Do not park on yellow lines, zig-zag lines, or block driveways.
- Do not stop in the middle of the road to drop off or pick up children.
- Do not park in a way that blocks access for emergency vehicles.

The safety of our children is our absolute priority. We kindly ask all parents and carers to be patient, considerate, and follow the parking rules at all times. We also encourage you to park a little further away and walk the last part of your journey where possible.

Thank you for your cooperation and support in keeping our college community safe.



Paracetamol

We have recently noticed that some students have been frequently requesting paracetamol during the college day. While we understand that occasional headaches or minor discomforts can occur, we are concerned about the number of requests and want to ensure that all students are in good health.



If your child has a recurring need for pain relief, we kindly ask that you monitor their health closely and seek medical advice if necessary. If they require medication during college hours due to a diagnosed condition, please ensure that you provide written consent and appropriate instructions to student services.

As part of our duty of care, we want to ensure that all students receive the right support while also preventing unnecessary medication use. If your child has mentioned frequent discomfort at home, we encourage you to discuss any underlying causes with them and consult a healthcare professional if needed.

This then leads us onto water bottles.

We would like to remind you of the importance of students bringing a water bottle to college each day. Staying hydrated is essential for concentration, overall well-being, and maintaining energy levels throughout the college day.

A water bottle is considered an essential piece of equipment, just like a pen or notebook. Having one allows students to drink water regularly without disrupting lessons. While we do have water fountains available, bringing a personal bottle ensures that each child has easy access to water throughout the day.

Please ensure that your child brings a reusable water bottle to college each morning, clearly labeled with their name. We appreciate your support in helping us promote healthy habits and a positive learning environment.





In 31 days 16 staff members are going to be doing the Manchester Marathon on the Sunday 27th April 2025 to raise money to invest in the necessary resources to provide exceptional care for families, students and staff to support them with their grief, loss and bereavement.

It would be amazing if you could come down and support us on the day -

[See route map here](#)

If you could sponsor us we would really appreciate it. Every donation, no matter how small, will help us provide vital resources and care for those in need during these difficult times. If you could take a moment to donate or share the link, it would mean so much to our community.

Thank you!

[Sponsor here](#)



Leo Fleetwood is in year 12 here at BTH

Story

As many of you know, our son Leo was diagnosed with a brain tumour when he was just 4 years old. He had major 12 hour surgery which, due to the location of the tumour (resting on the top of his brain stem) resulted in a very minimal removal.

He went on to have a very gruelling regime of chemo, 84 weeks of Carboplatin & Vincristine which had great results but didn't get rid of the tumour completely. Following 2 years of stability, it started to grow again, so he then had 70 weeks of another chemo, Vinblastin. This regime stabilised the tumour, but didn't reduce it.

He has had 5 years of "stable" scans now. He is a happy, thriving 17 year old, currently studying for A-Levels. BUT, the tumour is still there, and the worry never goes away. The scanxiety is real. Research for brain tumours is vital. Who knows, children in the future may receive the right/best treatment immediately. Much of today's treatment is trial and error. Many children cannot withstand 84 weeks of chemotherapy regimes such as Carboplatin, with the majority developing an allergy within 6 months. It is common that some children can go through several chemotherapy treatments, before finding one which reduces tumours or keeps the tumour stable. Others go on to have Radiotherapy and Proton Beam Therapy, which, in a child is usually a last resort.

We NEED new treatments, constant research & a better understanding of brain tumours, with over 300,000 cases reported yearly worldwide and at least 88,000 children and adults estimated to be living with a brain tumour in the UK.

I am therefore, along with my friend Rachel, taking on this amazing challenge, the Great Wall of China Trek, on 11th October 2025 to raise funds for the Brain Tumour Charity.

The trek will involve daily "tough" and "challenging" treks of between 5 and 13km, with altitudes ranging from 310m to 780m, tackling the "Heavenly Ladder" (eek - need lots of steps/stairs training).

Thank you for reading our story, and sponsoring me!!!

[DONATE HERE](#)

COMPUTER SCIENCE NEWSLETTER



Byte into the Future – One Week at a Time!

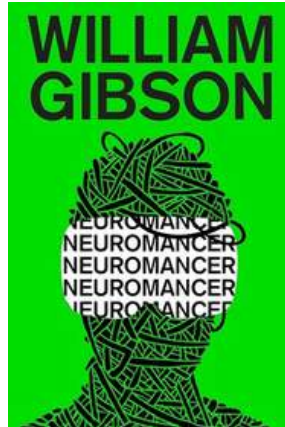
ISSUE 18

Hello!



Welcome to the Computer Science department's newsletter! In every issue we will keep you up to date with everything going on in Computer Science at BTHCC as well as things you can watch/listen/read and see that are all brimming with technology!

Book of the Week



IN THE NEWS

Signal is a secure messaging app with end-to-end encryption, meaning only the sender and receiver can read messages. It collects minimal data and is run by a non-profit. However, it may not be suitable for government use, as messages can be accessed if a phone is compromised. Despite its security, it can't prevent human mistakes—like adding the wrong person to a secret chat!

More on the [BBC News Website](#)



What are we currently LEARNING?



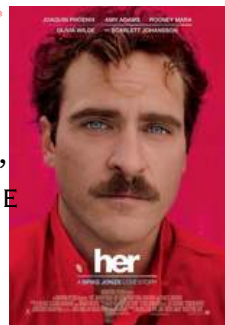
Year 7	Year 7 have been introduced to the scratch module.
Year 8	Year 8 have been introduced to the world wide web and the internet.
Year 9	Year 9 have been looking at cybersecurity and the threats in the real world.
Year 10	Year 10 have been looking at logic gates and iteration in programming.
Year 11	Year 11 have been recapping the CPU and engaged in a Crystal Maze themed recap quiz!
Year 12	Year 12 have been looking at Functional Programming.
Year 13	Year 13 are recapping their paper 2 theory knowledge.

Career of the Week

Quantum Computing Developers work on creating new computers that use quantum mechanics to solve problems too complex for traditional computers, opening up possibilities in fields like cryptography and material science!

WHAT TO WATCH

HER (2013) - A MAN FALLS IN LOVE WITH AN AI OPERATING SYSTEM. IT EXPLORES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, MACHINE LEARNING, AND THE FUTURE OF HUMAN-TECHNOLOGY RELATIONSHIPS.



weekly

"Blockchain": A decentralised digital ledger that securely records transactions across multiple computers, ensuring transparency and preventing tampering.

Question Time

What was the name of the first search engine created in 1990, which laid the foundation for the modern web search tools we use today?
Last weeks answer: **Electronic**

BLETCHLEY PARK & THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF COMPUTING: A JOURNEY THROUGH COMPUTING HISTORY

BLETCHLEY PARK



On **Thursday, March 20th**, our Computer Science students embarked on an exciting educational trip to **Bletchley Park and The National Museum of Computing**, two of the most significant sites in computing history. The visit provided an incredible opportunity to explore the birthplace of modern computing, gain insights into the world of cyber security, and see first-hand the machines that laid the foundation for today's digital world.

The day began at **Bletchley Park**, the top-secret home of World War II codebreakers. Students took part in a **cyber security workshop**, where they learned about protecting personal and sensitive data in an age of increasing digital threats. They then enjoyed a **guided tour** of Bletchley, visiting **Alan Turing's office**, seeing the famous teddy bear "**Porgy**", and exploring the huts where some of the most brilliant minds of the 20th century worked tirelessly to crack the **Enigma and Lorenz ciphers**. Learning about the impact of codebreaking on the war and the early development of computing was truly eye-opening.

After lunch, we continued to **The National Museum of Computing**, home to some of the world's most iconic computers. Students were amazed to see **Colossus**, the first programmable electronic computer, which was used to break the Lorenz cipher during the war. They also saw the **Bombe machine**, designed by Alan Turing and his team to help crack Enigma, as well as the **WITCH computer**, the world's oldest working digital computer. One of the highlights of the visit was the **vintage video games section**, where students had the chance to play early arcade games and experience how gaming has evolved over the decades.

This trip was an unforgettable experience for our students, bringing history and technology together in a way that textbooks simply cannot. By walking in the footsteps of computing pioneers, they gained a deeper appreciation for the foundations of modern computing, cryptography, and cyber security. We hope this visit has inspired them to think about the future of technology and maybe even pursue careers in computing, cyber security, or AI!





Catholic Agency for Overseas Development

Putting Faith into Action: CAFOD's Global Work

The CAFOD/Justice and Peace group at St Vincent's, in collaboration with CAFOD in the Diocese of Shrewsbury, warmly invites you to a special talk on CAFOD's international work and the Catholic Social Teaching that underpins it.

We are delighted to welcome Francis Stewart, a member of CAFOD's Theology team, and Diana Trimino, CAFOD's Head of Latin America and the Caribbean Region, as our speakers.

Event Details

Location: Westleigh Parish Hall, St Vincent's RC Church, Altrincham*

Date: Thursday, 3 April 2025

Time: 7:30 – 9:00 PM

Contact: alisonrsharrock@gmail.com

The postal address for St Vincent's is Bentinck Road (WA14 2BP), but the entrance to Westleigh is on Groby Road. A small car park is available at Westleigh, and Groby Road offers free evening parking. However, spaces are limited, so alternative transport is encouraged.

