



# BISHOP CHALLONER CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Year 7 October Half Term Newsletter 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Year 7 have made a really fantastic start to the new academic year at secondary school. I have been very impressed with the way in which many Year 7 students have immersed themselves fully into the wider curriculum by getting involved in one or more of the many extra-curricular activities on offer here before and after school.

## Covid 19 Test Results

If your son/daughter develops any of the Covid 19 symptoms and is therefore tested over the half term break it is very important that the school is made aware. Please inform us of the test result by emailing [result@bishopchalloner.bham.sch.uk](mailto:result@bishopchalloner.bham.sch.uk), within the email please include the date of the onset of symptoms and what the symptoms were. A team of staff will be picking up these emails and will respond accordingly. If a positive test is received, we may require some further information, in this instance a member of staff will contact you via a telephone call.

There have been many changes this year due to the pandemic which have all been put in place to best support and protect our school community. Masks are worn in all corridors and the one way system is strictly adhered to. Likewise, hand sanitising is encouraged throughout the school day. It is of vital importance that all continue to adhere to such high standards of hygiene and distancing that have been implemented for their safety. Thank you to Year 7 for complying and continuing to uphold our values and safety precautions to best support all of our health.

The last few months are going to have a continual impact. If there are any concerns that we can help with, any anxieties that need to be discussed, please do not hesitate to contact the school and we will endeavour to support you as much as possible.

## Assemblies

Assemblies this year have all been virtual, due to Covid regulations. However, this means that each form has been able to participate in assemblies within their form group setting. It has also been possible for those who were self-isolating to have access to the assemblies. The topics covered this half term have been: Teams for Home Learning, The Year of Community, The Importance of Regular School Attendance, Safety, Black History Month, Mental Health and The American Presidential Election. The theme of Black History Month was also enhanced by a fact finding scavenger hunt in the Sports hall. Each of the Year 7 form groups had the opportunity to discover some interesting facts about significant celebrities of colour, such as the fact that Mo Farrah once worked in McDonald's! Thanks to Mrs Hodges for organising this fantastic event.

Alongside the assembly themes, this is an opportunity for me to give out important messages and advice. This half term, I have spoken about politeness and good behaviour in and out of school, the importance of going straight home at the end of the school day or after a club and not loitering on the High Street. This is of utmost importance, especially as we approach the winter, with darker evenings.

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### Mobile Phones

With most students in school now owning mobile phones for use to and from school, it is important that they are also not a distraction to study. Students found with mobile phones during lessons and around the school will have them confiscated and they will be returned at the discretion of senior staff/Heads of Year. In more persistent cases, phones may only be returned to parents/carers. I have spoken about the mobile phone policy in school and the fact that students are not allowed to take photographs of other students in school (or outside of school without permission).

Open Evening - Despite the lack of a real Open Evening this year, I'd like to thank the Year 7 students who helped to make the Virtual Open Evening a great success; Indigo, Declan, Kianna, Pola, Ashton and Michael. Through joint effort and teamwork, a fantastic video was put together to demonstrate what our school has to offer. Please take a look at this video displayed on our website to see our enthusiastic students engaging in and enjoying their lessons.

### Extra-curricular

Many students have been taking part in the extra-curricular clubs on offer, which has been fantastic. Many other clubs, such as Languages Club, Art club and Science Club have attracted many Year 7s. After half term, Mrs Lynch will be running the Christmas Cookery Club for which many year 7 students have signed up. I look forward to seeing some festive treats being created.

### Physical Education

Year 7 have made a fantastic start to Physical Education and have shown enthusiasm towards the new PE curriculum. Students have started to develop their skills, techniques, knowledge and understanding across sports including Tennis, Mini Tennis, Badminton, Gymnastics, Fitness, Athletics and adapted Striking and Fielding. We are proud of all of our students for adapting so well to our new structure and curriculum in Physical Education.



### Extra-curricular PE

There has been a brilliant increase in attendance in morning and after school PE club. Students have had the opportunity to further engage in different sports and activities including tennis, badminton and table tennis. After half term, students will have the opportunity to participate in a wider range of sports and activities so we encourage all Year 7 to attend. Well done to all those students who have attended different clubs.

### Football Trials

The Year 7 Boys Football Trials concluded recently, and I am pleased to announce that more than 20 students have now been selected to take part in 1, maybe 2 matches this half term. From this, Mr Wilson hopes to select the final Squad for the 20/21 academic year. Like most events, the trials this year have been impacted by COVID-19 and as a result, have been spread across 4 weeks to limit the number in attendance to each trial. I was pleased with the attitude and performance from all students in attendance to the trials and hopefully this will be replicated in the matches planned. From the standard on show so far, I believe we will have another very competitive boys football team at the school, who will hopefully have the chance to compete for some silverware this academic year



### PE Reward Trip

A handful of students were recently invited to attend a PE reward bowling trip for achieving 'Lady of the Lesson' and 'Man of the Moment' in their Physical Education lessons. In order to achieve Man of the Moment or Lady of the Lesson, students must have a positive work ethic and put 100% effort into their PE lessons. A huge well done to those



Year 7 students who have achieved this award. Students still have the chance to achieve this award during their PE lessons so keep up the hard work and try your best to earn Lady of the Lesson or Man of the Moment.

### The Year of Community

Students at Bishop Challoner have been exploring ways in which they can make a commitment to the idea of community. For many Year 7 students, settling in well and becoming involved in the Extra- Curricular Life at Bishop Challoner has been their first commitment to the Bishop Challoner Community. In the wider community, the Christmas Shoe Box Appeal and St Chad's Sanctuary have received support from Year 7 students.



The Colm Smyth Shoebox Appeal is running until 6<sup>th</sup> November. The Shoebox appeal is our way of fulfilling our school mission of "Giving Glory to God by serving others".



This year it is in memory of **Colm Smyth**, "A true Irish gentleman who would stop and talk to friend and stranger, treating everyone as equal and would go out of his way for those in greater need. His infectious personality would lift the mood of any on the darkest day. A hardworking man, strong religious faith and in touch with reality." His passion and joy for giving to others and how much he cared for this and the school.

### BGT (Bishop's Got Talent)

This event has been running for a number of years and it is designed to showcase the hidden (or not so hidden) talents of students in school. The first filmed event took place last week. I was delighted to be present in the library to witness the absolutely outstanding musical talents displayed by Arjun S, Abigail W, Andrea O, Ilana M-S, Harriet McD, Declan W and Millie M. They were absolutely amazing and I'm looking forward to seeing other students showing off their assorted talents throughout the year.



### Year 7 Eco Club

We have a great team of Eco Warriors who, under the guidance of Mrs Goetschel have been beautifying the school grounds. The last few Thursday evening has seen these green-fingered greats planting and tidying the school. As a keen gardener myself, I'm really looking forward to their plants blossoming in the springtime.



## **Chaplaincy**

In Year 7, we have been focusing on prayer journaling and reflection. Students have the opportunity at lunchtime on Mondays to come into the chapel for a time to pause for prayer. Over this half term, Father Mario and the lay chaplains have been going into their lessons to talk about the topic of Vocation. They have had the opportunity to ask questions to Fr Mario and the lay chaplains.

Year 7 have also been given the opportunity to apply to be a part of the Chaplaincy Champion Team. We are currently looking through the applications and look forward to working with the chaplaincy champions throughout the year.

Thank you to those who helped with the St Chad's Sanctuary Collections. Your service is truly embodying the Gospel of Matthew 5:16 *"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."*

## **Rewards Scheme**

The Commit to Character rewards scheme has now been integrated into the rewards system through Class Charts. Alongside achievement points which can be earned for going the extra mile with work and effort, these are to be awarded for a number of positive character attributes. This allows students to gain points for acts linked to the key words of Compassion, Respect, Focus, Resilience, being Active and Cultured. Please look at these on Class Charts and ask your child to tell you what they have done to achieve these rewards!

## **Netbooks**

The launch of Netbooks took place much earlier this Year and this has proved a great success in supporting students' learning both in school and for those who have needed to work at home due to self-isolating. Many thanks to all who support and contribute to this scheme as it really does enhance the learning opportunities for students, particularly in these difficult times.

## **Class Charts**

Class Charts, a system introduced during lockdown, is a phenomenal resource for parents/carers to see and view how their child is performing in school. It illustrates their behaviours and positive logs as well as homework set, due dates and whether it was completed. Indeed, if homework is completed via class-charts, the feedback is also available to see here. I would encourage you to use this system. Please contact school if you need your parent/carer access code.

## **Timings of the day**

The timings of the day have altered for Year 7 whereby their lessons start, as you are aware, at 8.40am. Please be aware that this is the start of lesson and therefore it is important that students are prompt.

## **Schoolcomms**

As you are aware we operate a cashless catering system and Schoolcomms is the only system to make payments for your child's school dinners and school trips. There is only one money loading machine in operation in the school so it is imperative that Schoolcomms is used. For further information please visit our website [www.bishopchalloner.org.uk](http://www.bishopchalloner.org.uk)

## **Uniform and Appearance**

Students are required to wear the standard uniform of blazer, tie, white/blue shirt with black straight leg school trousers (not skinny or boot cut) or girls can wear a knee length black school skirt. Girls are also reminded that if they choose to wear a skirt, then they should wear plain, black, opaque tights. Students are reminded that black leather school shoes should be worn and that trainers/trainer style shoes and boots are forbidden.

Please note that school shoes must be kept completely black. There are a number of styles, particularly for girls, currently in fashion with wood style soles. These are not suitable for school. School shoes should also be leather and not patent.

In order to complement the smart school uniform we insist that students' hair is smart in appearance and that students do not have shaved/razored hair styles or lines/patterns shaved into the hair. Extreme changes of hair colour are also not permitted. The final decision as to whether a particular haircut/style is appropriate is at the discretion of senior staff.

Make up, nail varnish and jewellery are not permitted with the exception of one pair of stud earrings which may be worn by girls.

I know that you will, as always, support us in maintaining the smart appearance of your children and high standards of discipline, so that our focus in school can be on educational achievement.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

- Year 7- 96%
- Whole school- 94%

Considering the situation we find ourselves in the attendance of Year 7 this half term is very pleasing. We hope that this will continue for the remainder of the academic year. We will continue to strive to meet our attendance target of 97%.

If your child is absent from school, a notification phone call needs to be made to the school on the first day of the absence and every further day that they are absent too. Upon return to school, a written note needs to be handed in to their form tutor, stating the reason for absence. Please encourage your child to be at school by 8.30am to instil the important life skill of good punctuality.

### **Absence Reporting and Covid-19**

If your son/daughter is required to self-isolate in line with government guidance work will only be made available via Class Charts when the school is informed. Please keep school informed of any progress regarding testing. **If your son/daughter is confirmed positive please inform the school immediately.**

### **Bike Safety**

It is good to see a higher proportion of students cycling to school, we will be providing additional bike parking racks in the near future. It is essential that your son/daughter rides responsibly and they **MUST** wear a helmet. Should we have any concerns re your son/daughters road safety we will be in touch.

Lastly, I would like to thank all students for a quite brilliant start to the year. I am already excited to see what this year group can achieve. An excellent start made, keep it up!!

I hope that all students and their families can enjoy a relaxing half term before their return on **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November.**

Yours sincerely,

Mrs McGowan  
**Head of Year 7**

Miss Shirley  
**Assistant Head of Year 7**

### **Key Dates**

#### **Monday 2nd November-**

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November-  
Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November-  
Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November-  
Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November-  
Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November-  
Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November-  
Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December-  
Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December-  
Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December-

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December-  
Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December-

#### **School Open**

All Souls Day  
Year 7 Flu Immunisations  
Year 11, 12 & 13 Parent Consultation  
Year 7 retreat (Period 1-3)  
Anti-bullying week  
Sixth Form Open Evening  
Food Bank Collection starts  
KS3 Rewards, Year 7  
Christmas Fair  
Christmaths Day  
Winter Soiree  
Year 7, 9 and 10 Parent Consultation  
Christmas Show

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December-**  
**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January-**

Year 7/8 Sponsored Football  
**School Closed- Inset Day**  
**School Open**



Remember – follow our many twitter feeds for updates on what is happening at BC!

Official School Twitter:	@BishopChalloner	Science:	@BCSciDept
Science:	@BCSciDept	Maths Hub:	@CentralMathsHub
Teaching School:	@teaching_school	Performing Arts:	@BCPAmusic/@BCPAPA4
School Games:	@BCSGO	History:	@history_GCSEBC
Computing:	@BishopChalComp	Science Learning Partnership:	@CentralMidSLP
Chaplaincy:	@BC_Chaplaincy	Social Science:	@BCSocSciDept
Biology:	@BCCbio	School Games:	@BCSGO
English:	@BC_EnglishDept	Sixth Form:	@BCCSix
PE:	@BCPEDepartment	Central Maths Hub:	@CentralMathsHub
Maths:	@BCMathsDept	FOBC:	@bc_friends
Geography:	@BCGeogDept	Design:	@BCCDesign