



Message from Mrs Choudhury Assistant Principal

In ten days' time, we will enter the sacred and joy-filled liturgical season of Advent. Many in our school community will be eagerly anticipating the moment they can open the first door of their Advent calendars on 1st December—an act that, although simple, steadily builds the sense of wonder as Christmas Day approaches. The word Advent comes from the Latin *Adventus*, meaning “arrival,” and Christians around the world will mark this season with candlelight, contemplation, and hopeful expectation—a time of preparing our hearts for the celebration of Jesus Christ’s birth.

Many of you may take a trip to the City Centre in the run up to Christmas, enjoying the festive displays and the unique sights, sounds, and scents that belong only to this time of year. You may have your own special family traditions, of putting up the Christmas tree or visiting Father Christmas with little ones; whatever it is you enjoy doing during the festive season, I hope it affords you and your families some quality time together, cherishing each other and the many blessings you share.

As a community, we also recognise that Christmas is not an easy or joyful time for everyone. With the ever-rising cost of living, many families face difficult challenges and may struggle to afford gifts while they focus on essentials—keeping their homes warm, putting food on the table, and caring for their loved ones. For many years, Bishop Challoner has supported the Christmas Shoe Box Appeal, helping ensure that children across the world receive a present on Christmas morning. For the fifth consecutive year, we have also partnered with the Birmingham Irish Association to support families here in our own city who find it hard to provide Christmas gifts for their children. Alongside donating toys, students from Bishop Challoner and our feeder primary schools will be raising funds to purchase additional gifts. Thanks to efforts like this, our foyer Christmas tree is currently being prepared so that it can be abundantly surrounded by gifts in the coming weeks!

Throughout December, we will celebrate the festive season with a special Christmas service. We have planned a reverent and enchanting occasion and parents of our Year 7 students, along with members of our wider community, will be invited to join us. The service will feature traditional carols, Christmas songs, choral readings, and seasonal poetry, performed by dedicated soloists from across the school. Our Year 7 students have already begun practising enthusiastically during assemblies to prepare for this joyful event.

As Advent approaches, I would like to wish you and your families a truly blessed season. May the light and love of this special time be with you all.

Father in heaven, may the faith you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel. May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of Evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope, a yearning for the treasures of heaven. May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth. To you our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise for ever. Amen



**Bishop Challoner
Sixth Form College**

APPLY NOW

PRIORITY DEADLINE
Friday 5th December 2025

MEET THE SIXTH FORM
Thursday 19th March, 4pm-5.30pm

SCAN TO APPLY





SIXTH FORM NEWS

ODD SOCKS DAY

The Sixth Form championed anti bullying week by wearing odd socks to school. A great initiative to celebrate our inclusive ethos and to ensure we all stand up against any form of bullying or discrimination.

RED WEDNESDAY

A group of Year 12 Sixth Form students last week walked all the way from Bishop Challoner to St Thomas Aquinas catholic School to raise awareness of Red Wednesday. An initiative that supports persecuted Christians around the world. A brilliant effort by our students.



PERU PRESENTATION

Well done to the following Year 13 students for delivering an excellent presentation to our school governors about their mission to Peru last summer. They were excellent ambassadors of our school. Well done Torus A, Maisie Mae S, Rafael LF, Katie D, Kate S, Annie F.

KS5 DEBATE TEAM

Our KS5 Debaters were brilliant this week at St Peter's. While we didn't come away with the trophy this time, they did come a very respectable third, just a few points behind the winners, Archbishop Ilsley.

This group of debaters have been the most enthusiastic and dedicated team, starting since Year 7. It was a pleasure to see them perform a final time for Bishop Challoner, having done numerous Debate Mate competitions, an online international schools' competition, as well as the Catholic schools' events throughout the years.



RUDOLPH RUN

On Wednesday 3rd December Sixth Form students will be carrying out the Rudolf Run. A brilliant Christmas fundraiser for our local charity the Birmingham Hospice. Any donations will be greatly received in support of the students and this brilliant charity.

https://www.justgiving.com/page/bishop-challoner-sixth-form-2025?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL



★ SIXTH FORM REWARDS

REWARD	YEAR 12	YEAR 13
AMBITION	Martha McA Kaitlyn McG Katie R	Shae K
SERVICE TO OTHERS	Sofia H	Toru A
PROGRESSION	Delano P	Orlagh L
INDEPENDENCE	Kian P Lloyd N Roya	Samuel P
ROLE MODEL	Grace B Regen K	Maisie Mae S
EXCELLENCE	Beatrice M Cara McC	Rafael LF Annie F Kate S Katie D

FOLLOW US ON TIK TOK

Our Social Media producers have been doing a great job on Tik Tok promoting our Sixth Form. Follow the link to view our videos.

<https://www.tiktok.com/@bishopchallonersixth?r=1&t=ZN-91Aj4tKgIXj>



CATHOLIC LIFE

TOLKIEN SCHOOLS CELEBRATING THE JUBILEE YEAR OF HOPE

Over the past two months, Ellen and our chaplaincy students have visited all 11 Tolkien primary schools to lead inspiring workshops. These sessions focused on how the children have put their faith into action during the Jubilee Year of Hope. Guided by the example of St Carlo Acutis, the students embraced technology to document their efforts, creating a video compilation of the wonderful work across the schools—a huge achievement thanks to the dedication of many, many people! On Tuesday, the schools came together for a beautiful Mass to celebrate this collective effort. The occasion was made even more special by the uplifting music from the primary school children and our choir, under the direction of Miss Hughes. It was a joyful and faith-filled event that truly reflected the spirit of hope and collaboration.



YEAR 11

Last week during form time, students gathered to listen to the Gospel of John: "My Father has many rooms." They reflected on its powerful message—that there is a place for each of us in God's kingdom when we are ready to meet Him face to face. Students demonstrated love and compassion by offering prayer intentions for loved ones and for those who may have no one to pray for them. All prayer intentions for the deceased have been reverently offered at St Dunstan's weekly parish Mass.



Year 11 also attended Mass last week and were blessed with a beautiful homily by Fr John, who explained the meaning of purgatory and why Catholics believe it helps us prepare for our final resting place with God.

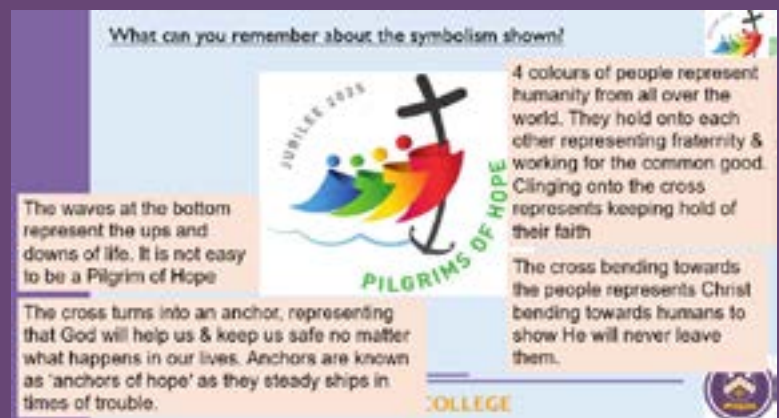
FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING AND WORLD YOUTH DAY

This Sunday, we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King, which also marks World Youth Day. We warmly invite students and their families to join us at St Dunstan's on Sunday, 23rd November at 5:30 pm for this special Mass.

Students attending the Alton Castle retreat will also be present, as this beautiful celebration is the perfect way to begin their retreat journey.

FORM TIME REFLECTION

As we countdown the days for the Diocesan finale event for the Jubilee Year, we have reflected on readings from Jeremiah, reminding us that God's plans for each of us are never for harm, but for hope and prosperity. Form groups discussed the many ways they have used their God-given talents to bring hope to those they encounter and how they will continue to do so beyond the end of the Jubilee Year. The logo of this special Jubilee Year, "Pilgrims of Hope," has been a powerful reminder that God walks with us through all of life's ups and downs. It has been inspiring to see our students being bearers of hope in their communities.



We encourage families to continue this journey at home by reading and reflecting on the Sunday Gospels together. The Wednesday Word is a weekly resource that helps connect home, school, and parish through the Sunday Gospel. It offers a simple way for families to share scripture and prayer each week.

You can access the resources at: www.wednesdayword.org

CLOSING OF THE JUBILEE YEAR OF PILGRIMS

We will be taking part in the Birmingham Diocesan Education Service special live-streamed event to mark the end of the Jubilee Year on Friday 21st November. We will update you in the next issue!



THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

We are so grateful to everyone who donated so many clothes and rucksacks during the first half term. We have now delivered a whopping 20 big bags of donations to St Chad's Sanctuary and Fr Hudon's Caritas, where they will be distributed to the most needy. Our school community is living out Jesus' teaching of 'when I was naked, you clothed me'.



SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION AND TEACHING MASS

We were blessed this week as Fr Toby, and Fr John celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation with our Year 8 students, giving them the opportunity to prepare spiritually for Christmas. It was inspiring to see so many students take this opportunity without hesitation. Confessions will continue throughout the remainder of the term.

Fr Toby also visited us to celebrate the first of our Teaching Masses this year with Year 8. This was a perfect chance for students and staff to pause and reflect on the meaning behind each part of the Mass. Year 8 have been invited to share their thoughts on what they learned and what they would still like to know—Fr Toby will have plenty to read!



BORN FOR THIS – MUSICAL PRODUCTION OF THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

You will have seen the recent communications about our involvement in the Born for This musical production—a powerful and moving portrayal of the Stations of the Cross. We are thrilled to be collaborating with our neighbouring Catholic secondary schools, a talented production team, and gifted musicians to bring this special event to life. We are very proud of the students who auditioned and got roles last week, there was lots of competition! We are still recruiting members for the. If you would like to get involved, please check the email and letter available on the school website for full details on how students can participate.



RED WEDNESDAY—STANDING IN SOLIDARITY

It was wonderful to see so many of our school community wearing red on Wednesday in solidarity with persecuted Christians around the world, and those of other faiths who suffer for their beliefs. Our Year 7 chaplaincy team worked hard preparing red bracelets for the occasion, while Year 12 students joined St Thomas Aquinas in a walk last week for a meaningful Walk of Witness. In addition, a group of students attended Mass with Archbishop Bernard Longley at St Chad's Cathedral. The day was a powerful reminder that our students take their responsibility seriously—not only to pray for social justice but to act for it too.



UPCOMING EVENTS

FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING AND WORLD YOUTH DAY

This Sunday, we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King, which also marks World Youth Day. We warmly invite students and their families to join us at St Dunstan's on Sunday, 23rd November at 5:30 pm for this special Mass.

Students attending the Alton Castle retreat will also be present, as this beautiful celebration is the perfect way to begin their retreat journey.

Follow us on X – @BC_chaplaincy
Instagram - @bc_catholiclife

FAITH FORMATION IN THE FAMILY

Below is a list that reminds us of when and where Mass is celebrated in our local parishes.

You may wish to consider using this information to help direct your family to participate frequently in the celebration of Mass throughout the year.

Church	Postcode	Parish Priest	Sunday Mass Times	Saturday Vigil Mass Time
St. Dunstan's	B14 7JN	Fr John Peyton	11.30am, 5.30pm	4pm
St. Jude's	B14 5PE	Fr John Peyton	10am	-
Our Lady Of Lourdes	B13 0EU	Canon Sean Grady	9am, 11.30am	6pm
St Catherine Of Sienna	B5 7BE	Fr. Jagadishmario Kurapati (Fr. Mario)	11am	5.30pm
St Edward's	B29 7DB	Fr Denis McGillycuddy	10.15am	6pm
St Mary's	B17 0DN	Fr John Reid	11am, 5pm	6pm
Sacred Heart and Holy Souls	B27 6RG	Canon Jonathan Veasey	8.30am, 10am, 12noon	5pm
English Martyrs	B11 3JN	Fr Robert Murphy	8.15am, 10.30am	6pm
St Chads Cathedral,	B4 6EX	Bishop Tim Menezes	9.30am, 11.30am	4.30pm
Our Lady And St Brigid	B31 5AD	Fr Cecil Rogerson	10am, 5.30pm	5pm
Our Lady Of Fatima	B32 1LL	Fr Philip Long Nguyen	11am	6pm
St Ambrose Barlow	B28 8QU	Fr Paul Johnson	10am, 5.30pm	5.30pm
The Oratory Of Saint Philip Neri	B16 8UE	Fr Anton Guziel	7.30am, 8.30am, 10.30am, 12.15pm, 5.30pm	5.30pm
St Peters	B32 3QG	Fr Gary Buckby	8.45am	-
Our Lady And St Rose Of Lima	B29 5DY	Fr Gary Buckby	11.30am	-
St John and Martin's	B12 9RG	Fr Baburao Pureti	9.30am	4pm

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Last week, our school community came together to observe Remembrance Day, taking time to reflect on its deep meaning and purpose as we honour the bravery, service, and sacrifice of all those who have been affected by war and conflict. In the days leading up to the occasion, students supported the annual Poppy Appeal by diligently selling poppies in the foyer, showing both respect and a genuine commitment to helping others remember. On Remembrance Day itself, the entire school paused for a two-minute silence, accompanied by a recorded performance of The Last Post, creating a solemn and unifying moment of reflection that was felt throughout the building. In addition to this, our Art Department prepared an impressive installation of oversized, handcrafted poppies and soldiers which were displayed outside the school; this striking artwork served as a powerful visual tribute and a poignant reminder of the importance of remembrance for our school and wider community.

SAFEGUARDING AND WELLBEING

ONLINE SAFETY - BEING KIND ONLINE

It is easy to forget there's a real person on the other side of a screen. Encourage your child to treat others online with the same kindness and respect they would show face-to-face. Talk about how tone can be misread in messages and how quickly words or pictures can spread. Remind them not to join in if others are being teased or excluded, and to report or block bullying behaviour when they see it. Encourage open conversations at home so your child feels comfortable talking to you if something online upsets them. A positive digital environment starts with kindness and empathy.

GET IN TOUCH

In order for us work together, to best support our young people, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have information to share regarding the safeguarding or wellbeing of your child.

This is particularly important if there has been a change in circumstances for the young person.

Please contact Mrs K Peckover, Mrs M Nutt or any DSL or a member of the Wellbeing Team.

TIASS TRAINING SUCCESS

You may remember that last year we started our 3 year journey of TIAAS training (Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware Schools), completing our initial whole school staff training over the course of the last academic year. The great thing about this programme is that is all about prioritising relationships, and is in no way only suitable for adults working with young people who have experienced some sort of trauma.



We were delighted to hear last week that we have already been recognised with a national Bronze Award for our work in this area, and will certainly be 'going for gold' in the years to come!

We will be sharing aspects of our learning with parents/carers in the coming months and encourage you to get in touch if there is any aspect of wellbeing/emotional support for young people that you would like to know more about.

This week the focus is on the teenage brain. There is a short article below which explains why it might be that our young people may, at times, seem irrational or even unreasonable.

Below is a link which will take you to a short NHS video guide about understanding teenagers.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qcPyAXpqaU>

YEAR 11 MOCKS

Please follow the links below for subject information and guidance on the Year 11 Mocks.



Year 11 - <https://bishopchalloner.org.uk/examinations-information/year-11-mocks>

YEAR 7, 9 AND 10 PARENT CONSULTATION DAY

Monday 15th December is Parent Consultation Day for Year 7, 9 and 10 students. School will be closed to accommodate the event.

A letter with details on how to make your appointment will be shared early next week.

THE TEENAGE BRAIN

The teenage brain is undergoing a major "rewiring" process, making it more impulsive and emotional as it prioritises new experiences and social connections. This is because the emotional centre (amygdala) is very active, while the rational, decision-making part (prefrontal cortex) is still developing, and the connections between the two are still being strengthened. Understanding this can help explain behaviours like mood swings and risk-taking, and highlights the need for patient, two-way communication and support.



Key aspects of the teenage brain

- **Emotional and rational disconnect:** Teenagers often react based on emotions because the amygdala is highly active, while the prefrontal cortex isn't fully equipped for rational thought and impulse control yet.
- **Pruning and connection:** The brain is becoming more efficient by getting rid of unused connections and strengthening those that are used most often. This process happens during sleep, which is why teenagers need 8-9 hours of sleep.
- **Heightened emotions:** High levels of the neurotransmitter dopamine can increase the intensity of emotions and the desire for new experiences, but this can also lead to more impulsive behaviour.
- **Brain development timeline:** This period of significant brain development continues into the mid-twenties, impacting decision-making, planning, and problem-solving skills throughout the teen years.

How parents/carers can help

- **Prioritise communication:** Encourage open, two-way conversations to help your teen develop the language to express their feelings. This is crucial for their emotional development.
- **Be a trusted adult:** Even when it seems they don't need it, ensure your teen has at least one trusted adult they can turn to for help. Encourage other positive relationships in their life too.
- **Encourage good decision-making skills:** Help them practise by involving them in the decision-making process and encouraging them to think before acting.
- **Reinforce positive behaviour:** Teenagers are often more motivated by immediate rewards than punishments. Use positive reinforcement to help guide their behaviour.
- **Understand sleep needs:** Remember that their need for more sleep is largely due to brain development and not just laziness. It is a critical time for their brain to do its important "rewiring" work.



YEAR GROUP UPDATES

YEAR 9 FOCUS

As a Year 9 Pastoral Team, we would like to wish all parents, carers and students a warm welcome to the second half of our Autumn term, and already we have so much to commend and celebrate both in and out of the classroom!

The beginning of this half term brought the KAP4 assessment window, which can be a stressful period for many of our students. However, we are so proud of the commendable focus and dedication students have shown towards their revision, with many attending revision clubs before and after school. Well done!

As KAP feedback is now underway in lessons, we urge students to respond to this with equal concentration, in order to promote positive progress and improvement ahead of the second assessment window in the summer term. The results of these assessments will help staff build a picture of academic progress & achievement ahead of KS4 setting later in 2026, and will also give students guidelines of their strengths and motivation in particular subjects ahead of the Year 9 Pathways process that will take place in February and March. You will have an opportunity to discuss the progress your child is currently making during our Parent Consultation Day on Monday 15th December.

Outside of assessments, we are delighted at the vast number of Year 9 students who continue to go above and beyond. This was particularly evident in our recent celebration of Kindness Day, as part of Anti-Bullying Week. Lots of our Year 9 students were nominated for excellent examples of demonstrating kind and helpful behaviour towards others, which makes us so proud as a year group team!

Each week, we have a whole school focus on a particular aspect of our FAITHFUL virtues, and it is a joy to see so many of our Year 9 praised for demonstrating these positive behaviours. As ever, these students' names are celebrated in our weekly assemblies, along with our ongoing form competition for positive logs.

Keep your eyes peeled for an upcoming Christmassy rewards event to celebrate the ongoing hard work of our Year 9 students who continue to be the best versions of themselves and help make our school community shine!

YEAR 7 BIKEABILITY

We were incredibly pleased to restart our provision of Bikeability Level 1 and 2 training this term. 54 Year 7 students signed up to take part during the week beginning Monday 17 November.

Bikeability is the government-recognised cycle training programme that equips young people with the skills and confidence to ride safely on the road. The training is designed to help students develop independence and make cycling to school a more realistic option.

Each day, four qualified instructors worked with a group of 12 students, offering safe and effective small-group instruction. The course, which was completely free of charge to students, took place over one full day for each student.

Students started by practising for an hour on the playground before moving to local roads, accompanied by their instructor. We hope that these students will consider the possibility of cycling to school in future – perhaps in slightly warmer weather!

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

To celebrate and recognise Black History Month, in October the History department ran a competition for students from KS3 to produce a creative piece of work to celebrate Black History and culture. The theme for this year was 'Standing Firm in Power and Pride' which meant students were instructed to create something to do with Black excellence in a particular field or of a person who has 'broken barriers'. We received an array of truly outstanding work. From Minecraft museums to models of buses and battle scenes and many more.



Dr Coughlan had the very difficult task of selecting three winners from the wonderful selection of work on display. He chose Ava-Mary H from Year 7 who produced a wonderful piece looking at a range of leading figures from Black History. Moses N, also from Year 7, who produced a piece on Bobby Wine, displaying a brilliantly researched a creative piece. Our final winner was Mary O'C, from Year 9, who made a superb piece on Clarence Clemons with a very creative project of a very striking saxophone. Well done to our three winners and everyone who submitted an entry, you are a credit to yourselves and the wider school!

Well done also goes to Sixth Former Dalton S for winning the Sixth Form BHM Creative Writing Competition. His winning entry is below:

*Day and night
We must speak out
Past not put to light
Thoughts in a drought
History left in the ruins*

*Society no longer just
A voice for those since
Unity in one human race
Diversity is ours to embrace*

ASSEMBLIES

The assembly programme has been engaging over the past fortnight with Anti Bullying Week at the forefront. We launched the month with a whole-school assembly centred on this year's Anti-Bullying Week theme, "Power for Good." The message highlighted how every individual—regardless of age—can influence others positively and contribute to a culture of respect both in person and online. Through assemblies and form-time activities, students learned how to use their voices for positive change and to stand united against bullying. A key focus has been on reporting any incidents to any member of staff and highlighting to students who are DSL team are. This week students have taken part in a special 'Oracy' assembly. It focused on what oracy is; the ability to articulate ideas, develop understanding and engage with others through spoken language, listening and communication and why it is an essential life skill. Opportunities to develop oracy are embedded in lessons across the school, encouraging students to be active and start to embrace the opportunities to talk and project ideas and thoughts with eloquence and confidence.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Our School Council continues to play an essential role in representing student voice. Representatives have already attended both year-group council meetings with their Heads of Year and a whole-school council meeting with Dr Coughlan. Students conducted themselves with maturity and professionalism, raising thoughtful suggestions on topics such as charity, revision and daily school life. Council members expressed that they feel safe and respected in school and enjoy their lessons. They also proposed reintroducing a one-way system to the top corridor and planting new trees to replace one recently removed. Their input has supported our focus on the Year of Hope and helped shape upcoming charity events for Father Hudson's Caritas.

FORM RESOURCES

Our first focus was on World Kindness Day. Students discussed the meaning of kindness and contributed to form-group activities. On Thursday 13th November, we recognised students who demonstrated exceptional kindness throughout the week. These nominations celebrated thoughtful actions that reflected our theme of using one's power for good. Students had the opportunity to explore how kindness can impact others and create their own form poems which are on display in the foyer. This week, students have looked at Disability Awareness and explored the Equality Act of 2010. Different disabilities have been spoken about, creating an awareness for students of what a disability may be like. We have also looked at some famous people who have disabilities and asked students to always be considerate of others, in line with our school Faithful Virtues.

KINDNESS DAY

There is no act of kindness that is too small.

On Thursday 13th November we celebrated Kindness Day. Mrs Jethwa loved every minute of going into classes and giving out the kindness nominations. Here are just a few photographs!



SCHOOL LIBRARY - RAINY DAY

The school library is always open to students during break and lunchtime. It was lovely to see so many students making use of this space during a very rainy lunchtime recently. They all enjoyed a showing of Muppet Treasure Island!



8CEC CHOCOLATE HAMPER RAFFLE

Thank you to everyone that supported 8CEC and bought a raffle ticket for the chocolate hamper.

Well done to our winner is Miss Lynch and a big thank you to Mrs Bassett and her team for helping sell the tickets with the students.



★ STUDENT REWARDS

MOST POSITIVE LOGS

WEEK	YEAR 7	YEAR 8	YEAR 9	YEAR 10	YEAR 11
Week commencing Monday 3rd November	Cecilia T Cassidy R Freddie H Orlaith K Courtnee-Jay K Moses N Jamie P Alexander N Iyla D Emily B	Waleed M Anenyasha N Ogochim A-I Grace G Rosie C Cairo H	Luke C Jacob T Daniel B-G Sophia T Gabe DC	Samuel H Sean B Jonathon R Patrick N Esther C-S Antoni M	Christelle B Sophie L Luis-Soler F Iona H Bella FV
Week commencing Monday 10th November	Eliza C Orlaith K Nyola M-A Eliza B Freddie H Moses N Arlo C Nicola M	Aydin K Milaan L Alexander M Freddie K Zachary G	Sophia T Annedrea L Munana D Annabella S Destiny H	Antoni M Lacy O Archie B Imogen K Luke D Harry M Stanley P	Aron D'S Hawerra S Ilarnah B Daniel S Isaac P Megan N Gracie O Ciaragh M Zephan M

SUBJECT FOCUS - SCIENCE



SCIENCE CLUB

This term, our KS3 Science Club has been full of laughter, learning, and a little bit of mess (the best kind!). It's a space where students roll up their sleeves, ask big questions, and discover that science isn't just in textbooks, it's something you can touch, see, and create.

We've had a blast with activities like egg parachutes, grew beautiful blue crystals, and made colourful sparklers. Watching chemicals burn into brilliant colours and sparks was a real "wow" moment for everyone.

Science Club isn't just about experiments, it's about confidence, teamwork, and the joy of figuring things out. The students' smiles say it all: learning is fun when you can get hands-on!

We can't wait to see what exciting challenges and discoveries await us next term!



CATHOLIC GAMES KS4 STEM EVENT

Year 10 students recently competed in a STEM competition held at St Peter's school. Throughout the event, the students were tasked with completing four exciting challenges including creating a wind turbine model and constructing a bionic hand.

They demonstrated exemplary behaviour, teamwork and resilience as they tackled each challenge with determination and enthusiasm.



KS4 BIOLOGY HIGHLIGHTS

Students in year 10 began the school year studying Topic 2 of the GCSE which looks at growth and development as well as the nervous system. There have been opportunities for specific oracy activities within lessons on the ethical issues surrounding stem cells. One activity included students being given sentence starters to use to articulate their views on the uses of stem cells in medicine. Year 10 will be assessed shortly on the GCSE content they have covered so far and have now moved onto the genetics topic where practical's include extracting DNA from strawberries and modelling DNA structure using sweets.



KEY STAGE 5 BIOLOGY

Year 13 had an exciting start to the academic year with a three-day field trip to Slapton Sands in Devon. This included sampling of an ecosystem to look at succession on a shingle ridge, the effect of biotic and abiotic factors on biodiversity on a rocky shore which both contribute their required practical's. They also went on a bat walk through the wildlife reserve, went pond dipping in the Ley and had a lot of fun paddleboarding. The final night included star gazing in the clear unpolluted skies and a beach bonfire with marshmallow. Thank you to Miss Mayor, Dr Jameson, Mr Ebrahim, Mrs Dane and Miss Rehman.



PHYSICS

Year 9 students have been debating the cost of space research as part of their preparation for a trip to the National Space Centre later in the academic year. They have been developing skills in building persuasive arguments, evaluating evidence, and considering both scientific and societal impacts. This activity ties into the school's wider focus on developing oracy skills. Across other year groups, the Physics Department is proud to celebrate students' growing confidence in explaining scientific concepts.

Year 11 excelled in peer-reviewed explanations of the dangers and uses of EM radiation, bringing scientific concepts to life with clear examples and diagrams. Year 12 showcased advanced discussions on wave-particle duality, balancing precision with accessibility for non-specialist audiences.



CHEMISTRY

It's been an exciting and dynamic term for our KS4 and KS5 chemists! Our GCSE classes have been busy mastering core practical's — from investigating reaction rates using magnesium and acids to exploring the mysteries of electrolysis and the reactivity series. Students have impressed staff with their teamwork and precision in the lab, developing both their practical skills and scientific curiosity.

Meanwhile, our A-Level students have delved into the complexities of organic synthesis and enthalpy changes, honing their analytical techniques with titration and chromatography experiments. A particular highlight for our Year 12 and 13 students was a fascinating guest lecture from a visiting researcher, who shared insights into cutting-edge chemistry research in the development of new cancer treatments. The session gave students an inspiring glimpse into how the chemistry they study in class is being applied to tackle real-world challenges. It's been fantastic to see such enthusiasm, collaboration, and a real passion for discovery across all year groups!



YEAR 7

During this term, Year 7 students have been introduced to key foundational topics in science that build the groundwork for their progress throughout Key Stage 3. Their learning has been a balance of theory and hands-on practical activities, helping them develop not only scientific knowledge but also important investigative skills.

Throughout the term, Year 7 students have been encouraged to think like scientists—making predictions, identifying variables, recording results accurately, and evaluating their methods. They have also gained confidence working collaboratively, using specialist equipment, and following laboratory safety routines. Staff have been impressed with their curiosity, enthusiasm and growing independence in practical science.

YEAR 8

Year 8 students have studied three major science units so far: Ecosystems, Atoms/Elements/Molecules, and Sound. Students developed their scientific knowledge alongside key practical and investigative skills. Practical's have included making string telephones and investigating sound insulating materials. Students showed strong engagement with practical work, improved use of scientific vocabulary, and good development of enquiry and analytical skills. Great progress shown by Year 8 students.



SPORTS NEWS

FIXTURES

Year 10/11 Girls Football

A fantastic performance saw a 6-0 win against Walsall Academy with two hat tricks from Maisy H and Lottie M. This win takes the girls through to the semi-finals of the West Midlands Cup which will be played after Christmas.

Player of the Match was awarded to Lottie M

Y9/10 Girls Football

An excellent result for our girls team on Wednesday 19th November. They beat University of Birmingham School 0-15 they are now top of the Kings Norton & South Birmingham U15 Girls league. Goalscorers - Tarli-Monae T x 2, Maisy H x 6, Megan S x 6, Lottie M x 1

Player of the match - Tarli-Monae T

Year 7 Boys Football

A great win for our Year 7 team beating Shenley Academy 2-8. The team are now top of the Kings Norton & South Birmingham U12 league. Goalscorers - Archie Y x 2, Mason M x 2, Malachi D x 2, Oliver S x 1, Jacob L x1.]

Player of the match - Archie Y & Jacob L

Year 10 Boys Football

Well done to the Year 10 Boys team for beating University of Birmingham 0-10. Challoner now go top of the Kings Norton & South Birmingham League.

[Click here for extra-curricular timetables.](#)



YEAR 9

Year 9 students completed key units in Breathing & Respiration, Chemical Reactivity, and Energy Transfers, with an emphasis on practical scientific enquiry. Within the breathing and respiration topics, students have learned how the respiratory system functions, the role of gas exchange, aerobic and anaerobic respiration, and the impact of exercise and lifestyle on lung function.

In Chemistry, students have investigated patterns of reactivity, reactions of metals and acids, displacement reactions, and the reactivity series. Students also analysed how the particle models explain reaction rates. This topic allows students to investigate lots of practical's including reacting different metals with acids and recording rates of reaction and observing displacement reactions between metals and metal salts. In Physics, students have explored energy stores, transfer pathways, efficiency, conduction, convection and radiation. They applied these ideas to real-life contexts such as insulation and energy use.

Across the key stages students demonstrated strong engagement in practical work, developing essential skills in planning, measuring, analysing and evaluating. Hands-on investigations boosted understanding and supported progress across biology, chemistry and physics.

EVENTS

Events to come this year include the animal man experience for Year 7 on 27th November! We have many other enrichment opportunities for Key Stage 3 next year including Leicester Space Centre trip for Year 9 and the London Science Museum trip for Year 8.



Netball

Year 10/11

A brilliant display saw a 21-0 win against St Thomas Aquinas. Player of the Match was Roisina, congratulations!



Year 9

Lost 6-3 against St Thomas Aquinas but a fantastic effort despite the result!



Year 7

Beat King Edward Five Ways 3-2, well done to all! Player of the Match was Effie.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Last week, our school community came together to observe Remembrance Day, taking time to reflect on its deep meaning and purpose as we honour the bravery, service, and sacrifice of all those who have been affected by war and conflict. In the days leading up to the occasion, students supported the annual Poppy Appeal by diligently selling poppies in the foyer, showing both respect and a genuine commitment to helping others remember. On Remembrance Day itself, the entire school paused for a two-minute silence, accompanied by a recorded performance of The Last Post, creating a solemn and unifying moment of reflection that was felt throughout the building. In addition to this, our Art Department prepared an impressive installation of oversized, handcrafted poppies and soldiers which were displayed outside the school; this striking artwork served as a powerful visual tribute and a poignant reminder of the importance of remembrance for our school and wider community.

+ FIRST AID INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES

Medication; All medication should be handed into first aid and not carried by the students. Exception EpiPen, Asthma inhalers and insulin as well as Tranexamic acid in special circumstances.

Please make sure we have the correct medical information and emergency contact details. If you have changed your phone number or there is any change in medical conditions or concerns, please contact first aid using the enquiries email or the main school phone number.

Please send children into school with a water bottle which they can re-fill at our water stations provided. Alternatively, they can purchase a drink from the school canteen.

Students with Asthma must carry their own personal inhalers with them. This includes offsite activities and school trips to ensure they can participate safely.

Parents/Carers of students with a known allergy must provide school first aid with antihistamine; this also applies to those with anaphylaxis in addition to their EpiPen.

We do not provide liquid paracetamol such as Calpol. If your child cannot take tablets and you would prefer them to have liquid Calpol, please send this in to the school first aider with your child's name on it. This will be kept safe in first aid for your child only.

SIXTH FORM PROMOTIONAL VIDEO

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW ONLINE](#)

APPLY NOW



FIRST AID AND MOBILE PHONES

Students should not be contacting parents/carers when they feel unwell and requesting to be collected from school. If a student is unwell, they **MUST** go to the First Aider who will deal with them. If a student is not well enough to stay in school, the First Aider will contact parents/carers to arrange collection.

Students who contact their parents/carer directly and do not follow the procedures in place will be sanctioned, this may result in their mobile phone having to be handed in to the student services office each day. The use of anyone else's mobile phone risks that person being sanctioned also.

Please do not arrive at school to collect your child unless school have contacted you to do so. We do not have school staff readily available to collect children. Thank you for your support and co-operation.

Any questions or concerns please email them using the main enquiry email for the attention of first aid or call to speak with first aid on the main school number 0121 444 4161.

FACILITIES HIRE

We offer a wide range of classes for the local community and our facilities are also available for private hire. For session bookings and all other enquiries please feel free to contact one of the team.

Bishop Challoner Sports Centre is an exciting and innovative sports complex, comprising:-

A full sized Sports Hall

Olympic sized Dojo specifically designed for Martial Arts
Meeting Conference Room

<https://widget.bookteq.com/bishopchallonersportscentre/43f86d02-be0c-4249-ba4a-637f57cfbea0/book-online/b1be746a-fcf8-4de0-a44e-2497d3876911/activity>



UNIFORM STANDARDS

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 pleated 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 are forbidden.

Please note that school shoes must be kept completely black and boots of any kind are not allowed.

Our uniform requirements are complemented by a smart appearance and as such, hair styles that should not have a distinct contrast in length. Hair that is dyed must be of a natural hair colour and may not contain more than one colour. To avoid a health and safety risk, long hair must not impede vision or cover the face, except for a fringe which must not cover the eyes. Long hair must be tied up for practical lessons. Religious head coverings must be black and securely tied for practical lessons. Hair bands or accessories must be for functional use to secure the hair. Where hairbands are worn they must be black. Headwear that has religious or cultural purpose should be black. 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 plain stud earrings which may be worn.

Students found to be wearing an inappropriate item of uniform may be asked to change this or, in some cases, parents/carers will be contacted and requested to bring replacement uniform to school.

We appreciate your support in ensuring that standards of uniform and appearance are maintained.



REPORTING AN ABSENCE

All students are required to attend school/college on time every day. If for any reason your child is unable to attend, please ensure that the school attendance policy is followed, and their absence is reported before the START of the school day (8.40am) and on each day of absence. Please provide a reason for their absence and the likely length of absence, if known.

To report an absence, please call the main school number 0121 444 4161 and select the correct option for your child's year group.

If you receive a text message or phone call from school/college because you have not reported your child's absence, please contact us on the most appropriate number as detailed above as soon as you can.

Thank you for your co-operation.

SCHOOL REMINDERS



CONTACTING SCHOOL

Communication between home and school is very important, in the event that you need to contact school please be reminded of the following procedures.

School telephone number- 0121 444 4161

Option 1- To report an absence

Option 2- Head of Year/Pastoral concerns/enquiries

Option 3- Sixth Form enquiries

HEAD OF YEAR CONTACT

All Heads of Year and Assistant Heads of Year have teaching commitments; therefore, any Head of Year/Pastoral enquiries should be directed through Option 2 for students in Year 7-11 or option 3 for students in Year 12 or 13.

If student services staff are not available to answer your call in person, please leave a message with the nature of your enquiry/concern and you will get a call back from the most appropriate member of staff at their earliest convenience. We aim to respond to all contact by the end of the next working day.

SENIOR STAFF CONTACT

Contact with Head of Year and/or Head of Department is expected to have been made before issues are escalated to Senior staff. Should you need to speak to a Senior member of staff, please contact school by phone and select Option 2 or 3, depending on the year group of your child and request a call and the most appropriate Senior member of staff will contact you at their earliest convenience.

MEETING STAFF

Any requests for a face to face meeting with staff should be made using the same contact details as above. Please ensure that the purpose of any meeting request is made clear. A member of staff may contact you before a meeting is arranged if more information is required.

Please do not attend school without an appointment unless there is a safeguarding emergency.

SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

If you have any safeguarding concerns please contact school and ask to speak to a DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)). Mrs Peckover is the Senior DSL.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

This December, Bishop Challoner will once again be running our **Holiday Activity & Food (HAF) Programme** to support students and families throughout the Christmas break.

The programme offers:

- A range of sports and physical activity sessions
- Fun, inclusive games and team challenges
- Daily healthy meals provided
- A safe, active and supportive environment
- Fully trained and friendly staff

The holiday club is open to eligible students and provides a fantastic opportunity to stay active, social and energised during the Christmas period — while continuing to build confidence, fitness and friendships.

Dates: Monday 22nd December, Tuesday 23rd December, Monday 29th December, Tuesday 30th December

Location: Bishop Challoner Catholic College

How to Register: Scan the QR Code



Autumn Term 2	
Every Wednesday	Rosary
Every Thursday	Community Mass - 11.30am
Monday 24th November - Wednesday 27th November	Year 7 Alton Castle Trip
Thursday 27th November	Catholic Secondary School Chess Event Year 7 Animal Experience
Friday 28th November	Bishop's Got Talent
Monday 1st December	Scholastic Book Fair
Wednesday 3rd December	Sixth Form Rudolph Run
Thursday 4th December	Year 7 Christmas Disco Christmas Disco Shop
Monday 8th December	Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception Sixth Form London Art Trip
Wednesday 10th December - Friday 12th December	Year 12 Soli House Trip
Thursday 11th December	Christmaths Day
Monday 15th December	School closed Year 7, 8 & 9 Parent Consultation Day
Tuesday 16th December	Year 7 & 8 Christmas Mass
Wednesday 17th December	Sixth Form Bishop's Got Talent Year 9, 10 & 11 Christmas Mass
Thursday 18th December	Christmas Cake Raffle Musical Dementia Trip Christmas Hamper Raffle - 9BER Sixth Form Christmas Service
Friday 19th December	Staff INSET - School Closed

SCHOOL YEAR 2025 TO 2026



AUTUMN TERM 2025

Term ends: Thursday 18th December 2025

SPRING TERM 2026

Term starts: Monday 5 January 2026

Half-term: Monday 16 February 2026 to Friday 20 February 2026

Term ends: Friday 27 March 2026

SUMMER TERM 2026

Term starts: Monday 13 April 2026

Half-term: Monday 25 May 2026 to Friday 29 May 2026

Term ends: Friday 17th July 2026

INSET DAYS

Friday 24th October 2025

Friday 19th December 2025

Wednesday 4th February 2026

Monday 13th April 2026

Monday 20th July 2026

Toy Appeal

Christmas 2025

Please give NEW toys (unwrapped) for our local children in Birmingham for all age groups ranging from 1-15 years.

Irish TV will be at Bishop Challoner on Friday 28th November.

COLLECTION DATES:
Monday 3rd November - Friday 12th December

BISHOP CHALLONER CATHOLIC COLLEGE



Birmingham Irish Association

Toy Appeal

Competitions

BISHOP CHALLONER CATHOLIC COLLEGE

FORM GROUP REWARDS TRIP
The form group that donates the most gifts to the appeal will be awarded with an afternoon rewards trip.

AMAZON VOUCHER PRIZE DRAW
Every student that brings in a gift will be entered into a prize draw to win an Amazon voucher.

1st prize: £50, 2nd & 3rd prize: £30, 4th & 5th prize: £15, 6th prize £10



Birmingham Irish Association

SPARKBROOK Children's Zone

You're Invited!

Come join our Family Health Day!

Green Square Accord

NHS

Saturday 29th November
Birmingham Central Mosque
1pm - 4pm



Health • Fun • Food • Wellbeing

Family Health Day

FREE

Saturday 29th November 2025
1pm - 4pm
Birmingham Central Mosque,
180 Belgrave Middleway, B12 0XS

Health Checks for the Whole Family

Health Checks for Children and Young People (aged 2 - 16 years) include
measuring height, weight, and checking teeth

Health Checks for Adults include
having blood pressure measured and health advice

For more information visit our website: www.sparkbrookchildrenszone.co.uk
or email us at scz@greensquareaccord.co.uk

