Head of Year 8 February Half Term Newsletter

Miss Hunter, Head of Year Miss Manning, Assistant Head of Year

In our first newsletter of 2025, both Miss Hunter & I would like to wish all Year 8 students, parents and carers and all those reading a Happy New Year! As we approach February half term and the halfway point of the year, we would like to take the time to celebrate the progress Year 8 have made and the wonderful range of events they have been involved in. As ever, it has been a jam-packed term, with a variety of trips, ongoing charity work and extra-curricular activities. We have been particularly impressed with the attitude and focus of students throughout their KAP3 revision and assessment period.

Charity Work and The Year of Hope

"We must restore hope to young people, help the old, be open to the future, spread love. Be poor among the poor. We need to include the excluded and preach peace."

Pope Francis

As a community, we wish to give glory to God by our service to others. In the Year of Hope at Bishop Challoner, our focus school charity is Father Hudson's Care: a charity that endeavors to protect and care for those vulnerable in society, such as children, families, the elderly, the disabled and the displaced, such as refugees. It has been wonderful to witness Year 8 students readily and eagerly engage in the charity work that has happened so far



this year. Over the Christmas period, 8LUK & 8SEB did a fantastic job of raising £145.65 for our school charity through their candy cane sales and Christmas Hamper raffle! Our next charity event is taking place in March, with 8CEC selling raffle tickets to win a Mother's Day Hamper.

A 'Tree of Life' display is currently being created by the whole school, and Year 8 students have been involved in writing some beautiful messages of hope to hang on its branches as a reminder that hope can be found everywhere. Alongside this, two representatives from each year group have been picked as 'Pilgrims of Hope'. Our representatives are Reuben T & Elsie H. They joined Fr. Toby on Wednesday 29th January for a commissioning ceremony, who blessed our jubilee artwork and representatives, sending them out to be pilgrims of hope in our school community.

Assessments

Over the course of the last three weeks, Year 8 students have been completing KS3 Midpoint assessments across a range of subjects. They have shown commendable focus and dedication towards their revision, with many attending revision clubs before and after school. The results of the assessment may result in some group changes to ensure that students are best placed to continue the Key Stage 3 Curriculum. There will be a chance to discuss the outcome of these assessments alongside students' general progress with class teachers and the pastoral team at our Year 8 Parent Consultation Afternoon later in the Spring Term.

Assemblies

Year 8 continue to attend a weekly assembly in the sports hall. Each week they start the assembly in collective worship, before receiving important messages about topics linked to our PSHE curriculum. This term, assemblies have been on themes such as World Religion Day, Holocaust Memorial Day, Safer Internet Day and Anti-Bullying/Children's Mental Health week to name a few. Over the Christmas period, we spent time discussing the importance of Advent, with some assemblies being brilliantly presented by older students in our school community. Students have also continued to finish assemblies with a going fort message of worship, and we have been very impressed with the confidence and eloquence of those who have volunteered for this role – Well Done!

PSHE and Form Time Worship

Another part of our mission as a school is about developing our potential. This has been a theme throughout the year within our assemblies, Religious Studies and PSHE Education looking at growth, and aspirations. Year 8 students have spent time thinking about their goals for the new year and also had plenty of opportunity to come together in collective worship. It was a delight to see the reverence and respect demonstrated by the year group during mass, and we hope they will continue to uphold this attitude within collective worship around school and during form times. This year, students have been able to volunteer for different roles within their form groups, such as faithful ambassadors, form angels, school council reps and eco reps. The willingness and eagerness of students to be involved in these roles has been beyond impressive, and it is wonderful to see how keen students are to want to make a change for the better and be helpful and faith-filled wherever they can.

FAITHFUL Character Virtues

This academic year, our students have had a particular focus on the FAITHFUL virtues (being Faith-Filled, Attentive, Intentional, Truthful, Helpful, Forgiving, Understanding and Learned). In this newsletter, we would like to take the opportunity to praise our year group for their outstanding efforts working towards these different virtues every week. Our top form for positive logs this half-term, is 8TER, closely followed by 8BER and 8CEC. Alongside this, we wanted to give a specific well done to the following students on their accumulation of positive logs this half term: Sophia T, Ethan L, Luke C, Harris K, Leighton-Blake F, Munana D, Giovanni AEE, Daniel B-G, Jacob T, Kaiden G, Kyron H, Ednah ST, Lily B, Kayven R, Amnah N, Alexander S, Henry K, Noah P, Yunis H, Mesuna R, Mariam H. Keep up the great work!

Extra-Currciular

Extra-curricular activities are an important part of life at Bishop Challoner, and it has been amazing to see so many activities being attended by Year 8, from STEM club and Science club to Art Club, Cookery Club and Book Club to name a few! We hope Year 8 continue to get involved in these fantastic opportunities that foster and facilitate their holistic personal growth! Here's a few example of the extra curricular event students have take part in over the past term.

Girls Cyber Competition

In November, a group of Year 8 girls attended the CyberFirst Girls Competition run by Aston University. This is an exciting and prestigious STEM event which the girls showed excellent dedication to, staying in at break times and after school to prepare. Their hard work, teamwork and determination paid off, with the team making it to the final of the competition! Well done on such a remarkable achievement! We hope that the girls who participated might now consider pursuing future careers in technology.

Benjamin Zephaniah Spoken Poetry

As part of the English 'Bishop's Got Talent' event, which celebrated the life and poetry of Benjamin Zephaniah, all Year 8 students were tasked with writing poems based of Zephaniah's 'People Need People'. Some of our Year 8 students also bravely performed their poems to the rest of our school community. They read beautifully, and the poems (which were themed around people who are important to the students and the community around them) were truly inspiring! Well done to Taysharne S & Jacob N, Brooke W, Idris C, Maximillian S and Preston M!

Eco Club

Many of our Year 8 students, along with students in Year 7, currently attend our Bishop Challoner Eco Club, which has had a very busy start to 2025. The club has started its Eco School application and hopes to achieve Gold Eco School status by the summer term. Students have also been selected as Active Travel Ambassadors and are working hard on initiatives to encourage our school community to travel to school in a sustainable and active way. Students have collected data about how our school community travels to school to direct future campaigns.

Manga Workshop

In December, 14 members of Year 8, alongside students from 6 other visiting schools, took part in an exciting Manga Drawing workshop ran by the Literature Festival and hosted by the brilliant and charismatic author Sonia Leong. The work they produced was excellent!





my bad by Idris

Waiting, standing, thinking where he is
White I drink a Radnor fiza
My dad, a curious smart person
Trying to drop someone off at school, his son (sigh)
A thing stands in the doorway, my dad (sigh)
Caring but never smiling and looking mad

He says, 'Are you ready to go?'
I say, 'I was ready to go.. 15 MINUTES AGO!'
Taxi driver (dad) gets in the car
Caring but never smiling and chucks me out of the car

We're walking today, 'said dad Great (not), I liked dad's car but we're not in it and that's sad Out pops my little brother, cheerful, energetic and all-inspiring 'Come on,' he said 'it's good to do a spot of walking.'

We arrive at school with 10 minutes until form Amazing walk with my dad Smart and ingenious, has a plan always in the moment I thank him and I say, 'You're an absolute seviour to me, dad' Dad reglies. You know it's good to be grateful for things you have -And appreciate the things people do for you If you follow in my path, you will have a fruitful life, You will have greater knowledge of many subjects And travel to the four corners of the world. I've had a good life but I want yours to be better I will do anything for you to make you the best you can be And you are the thing in my life which makes me the most happy. Dad walks off to his car and drives to work And I walk off to form, very thoughtful of my dad The best thing in the world Could not have been better He's a changed man and a new beginning for both of us He's caring and always smiling always looking glad

Community by Taysharine

In the heart of are local community, Where laughter echoes and sorrows shown, We gather together, hand in hand, Each soul a piece of a greater plan. Friends lift us high when the world feels thugh. Their laughter, a balm when times are Bough Through joys and heartaches, they Stand firm and near.

In the tapestry of life, they simple are Fear. Fámily, our shelter, steadfast and warm, In their loons employed are weather the

in their loving erobinace, we weather the Storm.

Through shared stories, hugs and Dreams we weave

A bond to profound, it helps us believe Poets are our partners, united we strive, in learning and laughter, we budy thrive for mastrooms and partners, our spetts stight.

Through each shared experience, are hearts intertwine.

in despuis shacow, which hope seems to fade,

Its our peoples love that becomes are aid.

Together we journey, through thick is all through then,

With every connection, a new strength within.

So lets celebrate the bonds that we find, in the heart of our lives, they're lovingly signed.

For in this year world, one truth shines bright

People need people, our guiding light

Trips

This term has seen some very exciting trips take place for Year 8 students! There are many opportunities upcoming for students to engage with in out-of-classroom learning whilst having an amazing time, such as the History trip to the Black Country Museum on 20th March. We encourage all parents to keep an eye out for the different opportunities that come up!

Alton Castle

At the end of November, over 40 Year 7 and 8 students set off for their Alton Castle residential, where they experienced fun, faith and friendship in action. Students took part in biking, trekking, crate stacking, archery and a climbing course. Amongst the time of fun there were also opportunities to be reflective with morning and night prayers, Grace before and after meals and the Holy Mass celebrated together as a community. Throughout the retreat, staff looked out for students to display our FAITHFUL virtues. Well done to the following Year 8 students, who were named as fantastic examples of the following virtues: Intentional: Luke B & Markas M, Helpful: Mark L. Staff spoke exceptionally highly of all students' resilience, positive attitude and behaviour – well done to all those involved! You were a credit to the school!









Trip to the BBC

In December, a group of our Year 8 students got the opportunity to visit the BBC studios and take part in the soundscape interviews as part of the anniversary commemorations of the Birmingham Pub Bombings. Students were able to sit in the Radio WM studios and explore how sessions were run and recorded. They were then treated to the special experience of being in the tense atmosphere of the live gallery for the lunchtime news and weather, before heading to the studio to try the famous sofa for themselves! The students all showed great maturity before their years in producing such a brilliant audio piece to commemorate the Birmingham pub Bombings!













Reading

As an English teacher as well as Assistant Head of Year, I cannot state enough the importance of continuing to read with your children. Reading is a research-driven method of improving one's grades, mental health and future prospects in life. As such, all students in Year 8 have an English lesson in the library once a fortnight to make excellent use of the resources available in the school. Likewise, we fully encourage reading from home and I must mention the Reading club and advise children attend it. Over the course of the year so far, Mrs Newton our librarian has also helped facilitate a paired reading scheme in which some of our Year 8 students have the opportunity to read with Yr12 mentors and discuss their thoughts and opinions about the stories they are reading together. This is a fantastic opportunity, with such engagement and a focused atmosphere that is important to celebrate!



Sport

As well as extra-curricular clubs, it has been a pleasure to see many of our Year 8 students participating in sports clubs run by our incredible PE department, such as Netball, Football, Basketball and Dance. We encourage more students to take a look at the extra-curricular timetable and get involved or try something new! We have seen success in recent fixtures, such as girls' netball and boys basketball. Students have also had opportunities to attend sports trips, such as the heavily anticipated trip to Etiad to watch Man City vs Real Madrid Champions League Match on Tuesday 11th February. Many of our students are also looking forward to attending the international residential football trip to Valencia in March!

Ball Crew

As a school, Bishop Challoner have been selected to supply a Ball Crew for the ITF 50k Challenger tennis event which reaches Birmingham this February. 25 students have been selected for this magnificent opportunity with integral participants coming from Year 8. Testament to all involved for their hard work and dedication over the training period.

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.

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

Any such information will always be treated confidentially.

5 Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice

You will be aware that we have adopted the 5 Foundations framework to manage and monitor attendance. There have been two monitoring letters now sent and you can expect further communication in early March. Please continue to ensure your child is in school every day and on time. Thank you for your ongoing support.





Foundation 1
Whole School Thinking
Culture & Climate



Foundation 2 Supportive Policies, Systems and Processes



Professional Learning Staff Development



Foundation 4 Implement Targeted Programmes And Intervention



Foundation 5
Connect Appropriately With
Approaches To
Behaviour Management

Reporting Student 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 childs 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.

Mobile phones

Please be reminded of the rules regarding mobile phones in school as detailed below.

- Mobile phones must never be used, seen or heard in school. Information from our behaviour policy is detailed below-
- Students are not allowed to have mobile phones out on the school premises
- Students must turn their phones off when on the school premises
- Mobile phones seen on the school premises may be confiscated
- The school reserves the right to instruct students to hand in their mobile phone
- Confiscated mobile phones will be returned at the discretion of Head of Year/Senior Staff
- In some circumstances, a confiscated mobile phone may only be returned to parents/carers
- School does not accept any responsibility for the loss or theft of any mobile device

Library Reminders

We have 359 overdue items oustanding from our school library.

Please remind your child to return any overdue library books asap.

Our school library is very popular throughout the school day but especially between lessons.

Do you have any unwanted puzzles and games our Students can use as part of our break and lunchtime activities?



Attendance Champions League

Played

Club

7SEB

7BOS

9LUK

Position

League Table Week ending Friday 14th February

Results

	1 .055	TOBER				
29	8CE	8CEC		19		
30	11TE	11TER		19		
7BER	97.58	VS	92.35		8TER	
9BER	93.87	VS	88.48		8SEB	
9BOS	96.36	VS	93.71		8LUK	
9CEC	88.75	VS	87.43		8CEC	
9LUK	92.94	VS	91.21		8BOS	
9SEB	96.36	VS	96.06		8BER	
9TER	96.67	VS	93.75		7TER	
10BER	82.58	VS	97.27		7SEB	
10BOS	93.79	VS	93.53		7LUK	
10CEC	93.14	VS	93.94		7CEC	
10LUK	85.16	VS	96.18		7BOS	
10SEB	90.80	VS	88.55		11TER	
10TER	90.63	VS	93.33		11SEB	
11BER	88.44	VS	94.23		11LUK	
11BOS	93.23	VS	90.32		11CEC	
	·				·	

Fixtures

ek beginning Monday 24th Februar

8SEB	VS	7BER
8LUK	VS	8TER
8CEC	VS	9BER
8BOS	VS	9BOS
8BER	VS	9CEC
7TER	VS	9LUK
7SEB	VS	9SEB
7LUK	VS	9TER
7CEC	VS	1 OBER
7BOS	VS	10BOS
11TER	VS	10CEC
11SEB	VS	10LUK
11LUK	VS	10SEB
11CEC	VS	10TER

VS

11BER

11BOS

9BER 8LUK 8BOS 7TER 7LUK 7CEC 11SEB 11BOS 8SEB 11CEC 10BOS 8BER 10CEC 9TER 9SEB 9CEC 10TER 10SEB 10LUK 8TER 9BOS 7BER 11LUK 11BER 10BER

Wins

Draws

Losses

Points

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 completely black and boots of any kind are not allowed.

Our uniform requirements are complemented by a smart appearance and as such, hair styles 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.

Piercinas

Please be reminded that students are permitted to wear a pair of gold or silver studs in the lobe of the ear. Any other piercings, including nose piercings, are not allowed.

Blazers

Blazers are a compulsory part of the school uniform and must be worn at all timnes. Jumpers are optional.

Canteen

All students must enter the canteen to purchase food no later than 10 minutes before the end of lunchtime. Access may be denied after this time.

Attendance Updates

Attendance Percentage

Year 7 - 95.3% Year 8 - 93.5%

Year 9 - 93.5%

Year 10 - 91.8%

Year 11 - 90.3%

Whole School - 93.0%

First Aid Reminders Medication

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

Allergies

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

Hvdration

Please provide students with a drinking vessel to refill at our water stations provided or they can purchase a drink from the school canteen.

Contact Details

It is parents/carers responsibility to keep the school updated with correct emergency contact details and new medical conditions or concerns and investigations. This is extremely important.

Liquid Paracetamol

We do not provide liquid paracetamol such as Calpol please provide this to school first aid if your child can not take tablets and you wish to do so, this will be kept safe in first aid for your child only. We can only provide in tablet form.

Illness

If you assess your child in the morning and they are not well enough for school you must contact our pastoral teem to report their absence.

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 Pastoral 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 cooperation.

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.

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 the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy DSL. Mrs Peckover is the Senior DSL.

Bishop Challoner Training School paid Summer Internship

- · Online interviews for Summer 2025!
- Experience the teaching profession
- Start from June 2025
- · 3 week placement
- Be paid £425 per week
- · Boost your CV skills

If you're an undergraduate in any year or studying for a Masters and interested in teaching secondary Chemistry, Computing, Maths, Languages (French, German or Spanish) or Physics, you may be eligible to apply.

If you know someone who is at Uni at the moment who would like to have a 3 week, paid internship - trying out teaching as a possible future career.

Some previous interns have gone on to be teachers with us and other schools around the country. Others just enjoyed the internship and gained some great new skills ready for other careers.

Please spread the word. A simple application form is on our website here:

https://www.bctsa.org/605/teaching-internship-programme

Job Vacancies in the Archdiocese

The Archdiocese would appreciate your support in advertising the positions below in your weekly newsletters (the jobs will be on the Diocesan jobs page on Friday):

- · Operations Director
- IT Manager
- · Finance Manager
- · Gift Aid Officer

Full details and closing dates can be found at **www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/jobs**. If you know of anyone suitable, please do pass on the details and encourage them to apply!

Weapon ScreeningYou will be aware of sad events nationally involving young people and weapons.

As part of our ongoing safeguarding procedures we regularly highlight the iportance of personal safety.

We will once again be working in partnership with the police during the next half term and there will be a weapon screening exercise undertaken.

Monday 24th February Tuesday 25th February Every Tuesday Every Tuesday Every Thursday Tuesday 25th February Every Thursday Tuesday 25th February Wednesday 26th February Wednesday 26th February Thursday 27th February Friday 28th February Friday 28th February Friday 28th February Cake Sale W/c Monday 3rd March Saturday 8th March Monday 10th March Wednesday 12th March Tueday 11th March Wednesday 12th March Wednesday 12th March Wednesday 12th March Friday 13 Student Finance Talk Key Stage 5 Debate Newman University are 9 Mass Tea Party Thursday 13th March Pementia Cafe - St Anne's Year 9 Options Evening Friday 14th March Year 10 Longbridge Fieldwork St Patrick's Day Hamper Thursday 20th March Year 10 Marks Feast Year 8 Black Country Museum Trip Sunday 23rd March Year 9 Doff Bronze Practice Walk		
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Year 8 Black Country Museum Trip		
Sunday 23rd March Year 9 DofE Bronze Practice Walk		
Tuesday 25th March Bishop's Got Talent		
Wednesday 26th March Tea Party		
Year 10 Cyber Competition	n	
Year 10 University of Birmingham Tri	þ	
Friday 28th March Cake Sale Mother's Day Hamper		
Tuesday 1st April Year 8 Parent/Carer Consultation After	ernoon	
Year 13 Parent/Carer Consultation Ev		
Wednesday 2nd April Tea Party		
Thursday 3rd April Year 10 Mock Interviews		
Sunday 6th April - Tuesday 8th April Year 10 Silver DofE Practice		
Tuesday 8th April Bishop's Got Talent		
Wednesday 9th April Spring Soiree		
Year 12 Easter Fair		
Thursday 10th April Bake Off Competition		
History - Alexandra Theatre Trip		
Friday 11th April Easter Service		
Easter Hamper		
Monday 14th April - Friday 25th April Easter Holiday		
Monday 28th April School open		





FEBRUARY HALF TERM WEEK FREE SESSIONS

King Edwards School of Grammar, Aston, Birmingham, B6 6DJ

DW .	CTME	TITLE STREET, SALES	
MONDAY 17th Feb	10 am - 3pm	Welthern & Spect for Females (\$ - 54) Afternation & Vellbeing Sussains Fing Football	
TUESDAY 18th Feb	10 am - 3pm	Wellering & Soort for Adults & Young People (12 - 15) History County & Drevocciental Action Westerhop Physical Activity & Featons Because	
WEDNESDAY 19th Feb	10 am - 3pm	MvIII Sport Activities Sir Young People (II - 11) PE Session & MvIII Sport Activities Backetter & Dynamo Croxel Sessions	

FREE Lunch provided by Kerbside Cobs



THURSDAY

20th Feb





10 am - 2pm







Interactive Play for Young People with \$650.18 : 14) Play immediate Session











