

Head of Year 8

May Half Term Newsletter



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

As we enter the final (and hopefully sunniest!) term of the year, Miss Hunter & I would like to wish all Yr8 students, parents, carers and all those reading a warm welcome back after what was hopefully an enjoyable, relaxing and reflective Easter break. As we swiftly approach May half-term, we would like to take the time to celebrate the progress Year 8 have continued to make 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 examination period; their positive reflections and the attentiveness with which they have received feedback from these assessments is also commendable.

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 International Women's Day, St Patrick's Day, Gratitude, Fair Trade, British Values and Mental Health Awareness week to name a few. Over the Easter period, we spent time discussing the importance of Lent, with some assemblies being brilliantly presented by older students in our school community. Pupils have also continued to finish assemblies with a going forth message of worship, and we have been very impressed with the confidence and eloquence of those who have volunteered for this role – Well Done!



We began the first assembly of the summer term thinking about our own Easter reflections, as well as taking time to reflect and remember the sad passing of Pope Francis. We paid tribute to the reverent and charitable life he led, and thought about how we can continue to give glory to God through following in his footsteps.

We had another special assembly on Thursday 8th May in commemoration of the 80th Anniversary of VE Day. On this day, students came dressed in an item/accessory of red, white or blue and donated to our school charity. Beautiful war-time music was played in the quad during breaktime, and in the afternoon during assembly students took time to consider not only the importance of celebrating peace, but also the importance of remembering those for whom fighting is not over.

Charity Work & 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 Easter period, 8CEC did a great job of raising money for our school charity through their Mother's Day Hamper raffle! Our next charity event is taking place in June, with 8BOS selling raffle tickets to win a Father's Day Hamper.

Readathon

During the month of March, Yr 7 & 8 English students took part in a sponsored Readathon, in which they were challenged to read a book of their choice throughout the whole school day, completing mini quizzes, activities and book reviews in the meantime. This was a huge success, with the two year groups raising over £3000 for Father Hudson's Care!



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 discussing prayer & liturgy, recognising World Day of Prayer on March 7th, and had plenty of opportunity to come together in collective worship. It continues to fill our Year 8 Team with pride as we witness the reverence and respect demonstrated by the year group, as seen during the Ash Wednesday mass. We hope they will continue to uphold this attitude within collective worship around school and during form times. During the season of Lent, many students have also taken up the opportunity to participate in reconciliation. 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 pupils to be involved in these roles has been beyond impressive, and it is wonderful to see how keen pupils 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 8BER, closely followed by 8TER and 8LUK. 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, Munana D, Lily B, Amnah N, Mesuna R, Raveen I.R, Markas M & Mariam H. Keep up the great work!

Extra-Curricular Activities

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 examples of the extra curricular events students have taken part in over the past term:



Tolkien Workshops

Our Tolkien workshops have continued through March & April, theming around 'Pilgrims of Hope'. Students from Yr7 & 8 led games at St Dunstan's primary, and it was great to see them encouraging younger children to get stuck in with the activities! Recently Pio Shaji (8BER) led the whole group in making origami boats, in which the children wrote prayers for Jesus to take care of. The group have been focusing on Ephesians 2:10: "We are God's masterpiece, made new in Christ Jesus!"



Personal Development Day

Thursday 3rd April was Year 8 Personal Development Day; a day in which lessons are dedicated to the PSHE curriculum. In the morning, students listened to interesting talks from members of the police force, along with speakers from the charity Aquarius, around topics relating to youth crime, substance abuse and anti-social behaviour. Students were eager to ask questions and get involved with the interactive activities provided. In the afternoon, students had time to reflect on what they had learnt from the morning's activities, and their feedback suggested they had found the day engaging and useful.

National Careers Week

During the first week of March, year groups across the school took part in a range of activities led by our Careers Officers to celebrate National Careers Week. Year 8 students enjoyed a "Guess My Job" morning, where external visitors from a variety of different work background delivered presentations on what their daily working life looked like. Students guessed what they thought their career was, and then had the opportunity to ask questions and think about what their own future careers might look like. Overall, this was a great opportunity for our Year 8 students, who were exposed to new and exciting job prospects they hadn't seen before, and experience and learn from real-life scenarios from the working world. As students move into Year 9, these opportunities to discuss careers will continue, with a Careers Fair to look forward to; a chance to again speak to individuals from a range of employment backgrounds.

Science Club

During British Science Week in March, the Science Department put on an incredibly Bishop's Got Talent event in the library. Year 8 members of the science club were involved in demonstrating a range of practical activities, which were a huge success! The same members, led by Ms Bibi, were also recently involved in the Royal Society Young People Book Prize. They were tasked with reviewing a range of science-based books for KS1 - KS3, and were all given certificates today from the Royal Society for their excellent reviews. Well done!

Rewards Trip to Airtation

A group of KS3 students had the opportunity to spend the afternoon in Airtation as a reward for all the positive logs they accrued across this term! Keep up the great work!



History Competition: Women's History Month

Some of our budding Year 8 historians took part in a competition during Women's History Month. They were tasked with creating a project based on famous female role models from throughout history, and we're delighted that Angelina Omoregie has been shortlisted, and Zofia Garbarska & Ksenija Nikolaicuka were overall winners!



Active Travel Ambassadors

Earlier in the term, Mrs Rogers and the following Yr8 Active Travel Ambassadors attended the Active Travel Campaign Junction, where they presented their project Walking Wednesdays to encourage more students to walk instead of drive to school: Isla Kinnaird, Brooke Weston, Luke Ball, Luke Coffey, Maisie Aston, Angel Sharma, Amyrha Salarda & Faye Gordon. The group were about to win £200 for Bishop Challoner, to use in promoting more active, eco-friendly ways for our students to get to school.



Trips

This term has more exciting trips take place for Year 8 students, led by various departments including PE, Computing, History and Science!

Valencia Football Trip

At the beginning of March, 50 KS3 students travelled to Valencia for a week of football! While away, students had the opportunity to train at Valencia CF Training Ground with the coaches, visited a stadium tour at the Mestalla and even see a La Liga Game (Valencia vs Real Valladolid)! They also enjoyed afternoons at the beach, and a final day exploring Valencia City Centre! We were particularly impressed with the resilience and determination shown by students both on and off the playing field. We even got to meet Valencia (and ex Norwich/Bournemouth) player Max Aarons!



Trip to the Black Country Museum

At the end of March, the History department took a group budding Year 8 Historians to the Black Country Museum, where they went down the mines, into wartime shops and even got taught a school lesson from 1912!



Jubilee pilgrimage to shrine of Blessed Carlo Acutis

15 students went on pilgrimage earlier this term to the shrine of Blessed Carlo Acutis in Wolverhampton, making history through being very first Pilgrim group to make a pilgrimage to this new shrine! The students had a fantastic day, and learned lots about this new, soon to be canonised Saint! It's a designated holy door for this jubilee year, so they will also gain a plenary indulgence!



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!



Attendance Updates

Attendance Percentage

Year 7 - 95.4%

Year 8 - 93.7%

Year 9 - 93.8%

Year 10 - 91.3%

Year 11 - 90.7%

Whole School - 93.1%

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 pupils 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.

School Year 2025 to 2026

Autumn Term 2025

Term starts:

Year 7, 11 & 13 - Wednesday 3rd September 2025

All year groups- Thursday 4th September 2025

Half-term

Monday 27 October 2025 to Friday 31 October 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

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.

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.



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.

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.

PATHWAY TO THE FINAL



Summer Uniform

In light of the weather forecast summer uniform can be worn.

Students **DO NOT** have to wear a-
Tie
Blazer
Jumper

Students **MUST** wear-
Shirts tucked in
Shoes not trainers

If a 2nd layer is worn, this **MUST** be a blazer **NOT** a jumper or other outer wear, any item other than a blazer will be confiscated.

Girls must wear natural or black 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 in the lobe of the ear.

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.

Piercings

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.

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.

First Aid Information and Procedures

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.**

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 they can re-fill at our water stations provided or they can purchase a drink from the school canteen.

Students with Asthma must carry with them their own personal inhalers. 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.

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.

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.

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

SVP

**St Vincent
de Paul Society**

Unit 10, Clarendon, 100, Ashton
Road, Birmingham, B4 7DQ

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are writing to you today about the charity that represents the school community. The St Vincent de Paul Society is an international Christian voluntary organisation dedicated to tackling poverty and disadvantage.

We provide food banks to assist people in need, in England and Wales there are currently 19,000 voluntary members who visit the food banks to help someone in a difficult period in their lives who are experiencing difficulty. Our national SVDOL project was started over 17 months ago. We were the only community to regularly attract the highest levels.

We offer food banks, practical help and provide mental health services when it makes the most difference. This can be an overwhelming experience for the people who need it. Our group shared the responsibility.

The SVP would like to offer the support and assistance when needed to be a family who are finding it challenging due to the current financial crisis. We have provided support to people living in the area of Clarendon. Our details should you need help, who would benefit from our support.

We are available on phone number 07548854348 by email or via. Alternatively, you can contact St Vincent de Paul Office on 0121 444 4166. This will give us the opportunity to talk to you about your current situation and please be assured they will be able to help and support you.

Please visit our website for further information of the work carried out by the organisation.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks

SVP

Mastermind Success

We are proud to celebrate a very special achievement at Bishop Challoner Catholic College.

Our English teacher, Mr John Robinson, has been crowned the 2025 BBC Mastermind Champion following a dramatic and closely contested final.

John's exceptional performance – including a perfect score in his specialist subject, The Empire State Building – was a joy to watch and a wonderful reminder of the talent and dedication that exists within our teaching community.

This achievement follows his previous success on Who Wants to Be a Millionaire, and once again he has demonstrated the value of commitment, calm under pressure, and a love of learning – qualities he models daily in the classroom.

Mr Robinson said: "I constantly tell the students that if you put effort into your revision, you'll get a reward at the end of it. Hopefully, the pupils can look at me and be inspired by the hard work I've put in as well."

We know our students and staff have been cheering him on throughout his Mastermind journey, and we are all absolutely delighted for him.

A huge congratulations to Mr Robinson from everyone at Bishop Challoner — we are already preparing a space in the trophy cabinet for the famous glass bowl!

Read the full article on the BBC News website here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c07119dvzmpo>



SummerTerm 2	
Every Tuesday	Rosary
Every Thursday	Community Mass - 11.30am
Saturday 31st May - Sunday 8th June	Ball Crew
Monday 2nd June	School Open Year 9 Barber Art Workshop
Tuesday 3rd June	Bishop's Got Talent Year 9 Mass
Wednesday 4th June	Tea Party
Sunday 8th June - Monday 9th June	Year 9 DofE Bronze
Monday 9th June - Wednesday 11th June	Year 10 French Speaking Mocks
Thursday 12th June - Friday 13th June	Wheelbarrow Food Competition
Friday 13th June	Fathers Day Hamper KS3 DT Trip
Friday 13th June - Sunday 29th June	Sixth Form Trip to Peru
Monday 16th June - Friday 20th June	Creativity and Refugee Week Year 10 Spoken English Exams
Monday 16th June - Wednesday 18th June	Year 9 Soli House
Tuesday 17th June	Bishop's Got Talent
Wednesday 18th June	Tea Party Year 7 and 8 Computing Trip - Big Bang NEC
Thursday 19th June	Year 10 UOB Chemistry Lessons
Sunday 22nd June - Tuesday 24th June	Year 10 and Year 12 DofE Silver Qualifying Expedition
Monday 23rd June - Friday 27th June	Science Week
Tuesday 24th June	Year 7 CSI Day
Wednesday 25th June - Friday 27th June	Year 10 Carding Mill Valley Trip
Wednesday 25th June	Year 10 and Year 12 Mass
Thursday 26th June	Year 10 UOB Chemistry Lesson
Friday 27th June	Cake Sale TBC Catholic Competition - Summer Games
Monday 30th June - Friday 4th July	Year 10 Work Experience
Monday 30th June	Sports Day Year 11 Prom
Tuesday 1st July	Bishop's Got Talent Culture Day
Wednesday 2nd July	Year 6 Induction Day 1 Year Parent Consultation Evening
Thursday 3rd July	Year 6 Induction Day 2 Year 6 Induction Day Mass Year 6 Parent/Carer Evening Year 13 Prom
Sunday 6th July - Thursday 10th July	Year 10 and Year 11 Trip to Rome
Monday 7th July	Year 10 Work Experience De-brief Year 7 and Year 8 Lickey Hills Trip
Monday 7th July - Friday 11th July	Year 12 Work Experience
Wednesday 9th July	Primary Concert Sixth Form Taster Day
Thursday 10th July	Battle of the Bands Year 10 Art Trip to Liverpool
Friday 11th July	Year 7 and Year 10 Parent Consultation Day
Tuesday 15th July	Year 9 and Year 10 end of year Mass
Wednesday 16th July	Awards Evening Tea Party
Thursday 17th July	Cake Sale TBC Year 7 and Year 8 end of year Mass
Friday 18th July	Last day of the academic year
Monday 21st July	INSET - School Closed