

# Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School

Headteacher: Mrs N Oddie BA(Hons) NPQH



*Let your  
light shine*

19<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

## NEWSLETTER 10

As we reach the final week before the May half-term break, there is much to celebrate and be thankful for across our school community. This half term has been filled with moments of growth, kindness, perseverance and success, and it has been wonderful to see our students continue to “let their light shine” in so many different ways. Half term offers an important opportunity to pause, rest and spend time with family and friends. After a busy and productive few weeks, we hope this break brings everyone a chance to recharge and return refreshed for the final stretch of the academic year. I hope to briefly share updates on the many activities taking place across school life and help families to prepare for key dates and events coming up next half term and beyond.

### **Mary Day - Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2026**

We celebrate our patron saint Mary on 22<sup>nd</sup> May. Mary was chosen by God to be the mother of Jesus and is a model of faith, love, humility and service for us all. As a school community, Mary Day gives us the opportunity to reflect on her example and consider how we can live out these values in our own lives. Throughout the day, pupils in Years 7 to 10 will take part in a series of House-based activities centred on this year's theme, 'Filled with Spirit, Sent to Serve'. Pupils will reflect on the example of Mary, and how the Holy Spirit filled her with resilience, strength and hope. The day will include opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively, take part in team-building activities and spend time reflecting on their own spiritual journey. We look forward to what promises to be a meaningful and enjoyable day for all involved. **On Mary Day, school will finish at 2pm**; should this time be an issue or if any pupil has difficulty in getting home at that time, please inform school and we can make arrangements for them to stay in school until the end of the normal school day. **Pupils can choose to wear their own clothes for a donation of £1 and payment should be made via ParentPay.** All donations will be made to [www.marysmeals.org.uk/](http://www.marysmeals.org.uk/)

### **Whole School Exams – commencing 15<sup>th</sup> June**

Whole school summer examinations will begin on 15<sup>th</sup> June. These examinations provide an important opportunity for pupils to demonstrate the knowledge, understanding and skills they have developed throughout the academic year. They are designed not only to assess what pupils have learned, but also to encourage them to reflect on the progress they have made across all subjects and recognise the value of consistent effort and study. Effective revision is an essential part of preparing for examinations and developing the independent study habits that will support pupils throughout their education. To help pupils prepare fully, and to support parents and carers in guiding revision at home, a revision booklet has been produced for each year group. A copy of the booklet will be emailed home and pupils will also receive a paper copy next week. These booklets include subject topic lists, the examination timetable and a range of revision tips and strategies to help pupils revise in a focused and effective way. To allow pupils time to concentrate on revision and consolidate their learning, regular written homework will cease after half term. We encourage all pupils to use this time wisely to prepare thoroughly and approach their examinations with confidence and determination.

### **Rewards and Prize Night**

Heads of House are currently planning the Rewards Day for the end of the summer term to ensure that pupils are rewarded for their hard work. Heads of Faculty and Subject Teachers are also deciding who will receive prizes at our annual Prize Night. This event will be held in **Church on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June** and will celebrate those pupils who have shown resilience, determination and commitment. There will be more about this in my next Newsletter.

### **Call recording**

From half term, all telephone calls to and from school will be recorded. This is being introduced to help us continue to provide a high-quality service, support staff training, ensure the safety and wellbeing of both staff and families, and provide an accurate record of conversations where needed. All recordings will be managed securely and in line with data protection legislation and the school's Call Recording Policy. If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact the School Business Manager.

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## **Uniform 2026-27**

Following updated government guidance regarding school uniform and branded items, we have reviewed our uniform expectations to ensure that they continue to support families while maintaining the high standards that are such an important part of life at Brownedge. From September 2026, the only compulsory branded items will be the school blazer, school tie, girls' skirt and PE t-shirt. Other items, including the PE ¼ zip fleece, shorts, skirt and leggings, will continue to be available for families who wish to purchase them, but these items will be optional. We hope that these changes will provide greater flexibility and affordability for parents and carers, while still ensuring that pupils take pride in their appearance and represent the school positively. High standards of uniform remain an important part of our identity as a school, reflecting our values, culture and expectations around behaviour, respect and belonging. We are proud of the way our pupils present themselves and are confident that these adjustments will allow us to maintain the strong sense of community and professionalism that Brownedge is known for.

As we approach the final term of the academic year, we recognise that many pupils continue to grow and that uniform items may need replacing or adjusting. However, this should not impact upon the high standards and expectations we have around school uniform. Experience shows that standards can sometimes begin to slip during the summer term, and we remain committed to ensuring consistency and pride in presentation right through to the end of the school year. We will continue to support pupils by providing uniform items where needed if incorrect uniform is worn. If any parent or carer is experiencing financial difficulties in meeting our uniform expectations, please do not hesitate to contact school. We are always keen to support families wherever possible and will do all we can to help. Thank you for your continued partnership in maintaining the high standards, strong culture and sense of pride that define our school community.

## **FSM Vouchers – No longer available**

We are aware that many families have previously accessed Free School Meal holiday vouchers during school breaks. Lancashire County Council has now confirmed that these vouchers are no longer being routinely issued in the same way as in previous years due to changes in government funding arrangements. Instead, support is now being provided through the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme, which offers eligible pupils access to free holiday clubs, activities and meals during school holidays. Families may also be able to access additional support through local welfare and Household Support Fund schemes where available. Further information about eligibility and available support can be found on the [Lancashire County Council website](#) and the [Household Support Fund pages](#).

## **Mobile Phones in School**

As a school, we are increasingly aware of the growing national concerns surrounding young people's use of mobile phones and social media, particularly the impact this can have on wellbeing, concentration, relationships and online safety. Recent government guidance, alongside the growing number of schools introducing tighter mobile phone restrictions, has highlighted the positive impact such approaches can have on behaviour, focus, social interaction and pupil wellbeing. In response, we are currently reviewing our mobile phone expectations and exploring the introduction of tighter policies and procedures around phone use in school, including the possible use of secure phone pouches during the school day. Interestingly, many pupils who have discussed the idea with staff have responded positively and recognise the potential benefits this could bring to learning, social interaction and wellbeing. Before any decisions are made, it is important that we gather the views of both pupils and parents/carers. After half term, a short survey will be shared to allow families to provide their thoughts and feedback as we continue to develop an approach that supports pupils' wellbeing, promotes healthy habits and strengthens the calm, purposeful culture we strive to maintain across the school.

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## Sacramental Confirmation Programme

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who has been involved in this year's Confirmation programme. In particular, we congratulate all of the pupils who were confirmed and thank them for the commitment, dedication and maturity they have shown throughout their preparation journey. Their attendance, engagement and willingness to deepen their faith has been wonderful to see. We also thank parents, carers and families for the support and encouragement they have given throughout the programme and for joining us for such a special and prayerful celebration. It was a beautiful evening for our whole school and parish community, and we were especially honoured to welcome the Bishop of Salford to school to lead the service. His presence made the occasion even more memorable and significant for all involved. A special thank you must also go to John, our Lay Chaplain, and Mrs Bland, our Lead for Catholic Life, for the care, time and dedication they invested in preparing and leading the programme. Their work created a truly meaningful experience for our pupils and families, and the programme has been greatly appreciated by our whole school community.

## Dates for Your Diary

Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May	Mary Day – school finishes at 2pm
Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> June	Year 11 Leavers' Mass
15 <sup>th</sup> – 17 <sup>th</sup> June	Whole School Exam Week
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> June	Prize Night
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> June	Refugee Awareness
Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> June	Valedictory Dinner
Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> June	St Peter and St Paul Mass
Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> & Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Year 6 Induction Days and Evening
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> July	Year 10 Parents' Evening
Wednesday 8 July – Friday 10 July	School Production – Sister Act
w/c Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> July	Year 10 Work experience week
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July	School breaks for Summer

Have a lovely half term break – pupils return to school on **Monday 1 June at 8.30am**

As always, many thanks for your ongoing support.

Mrs N Oddie  
Headteacher