

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School

Headteacher: Mrs N Oddie BA(Hons) NPQH

16 June 2023



*Let your
light shine*

Dear Parents/Carers

Newsletter 11

As the beautiful sun shines on us, the last half term of the year is already well underway. All half terms are busy, although none more so than this one! I've outlined some school matters below to update you on.

Summer Examinations

Our summer examinations begin this week for Year 10. Years 7 to 9 will be sitting their summer examinations starting on Monday next week (19th June). These examinations are very important as they assess what your child knows and understands from their work this year. A revision booklet was published for each separate year group to support you and your son/daughter with their revision. With GCSEs now more demanding, this is an important way of preparing them for their futures. Please support us by ensuring your child brings revision materials to school to use during their identified revision sessions. Your child has been issued with a timetable for the week.

Refugee Week

At the end of the week of our end of year examinations, we have decided to take some time to celebrate our School of Sanctuary Award and continue the great work we do to raise awareness of the plight of refugees and the importance to us of supporting the associated Catholic Social Teachings this work brings. There will be various activities taking place in faculty areas and in lessons. Furthermore, to raise funds for Caritas, a charity that has accompanied migrants, refugees and asylum seekers along their journey, pupils who are interested in following in the footsteps of those moved from their homes, can take part in a walk of solidarity and pay £1 to come in their own clothes. This will take place on Friday 23rd June. More information will be issued to pupils later this week.

Prize Giving

Congratulations to those pupils who have been recognised for their hard work and achievements in Form time and in their subject areas. We will celebrate our Prize Night on Wednesday, 5th July at our beautiful parish church of St Mary's, Brownedge at 7pm. Please note this change to date advertised in previous newsletters. We look forward to seeing our pupils and their parents at this joyous event. It is important to recognise that many pupils may not be recognised; we could double the length of this evening if we awarded prizes to all who are eligible. We do, however, award prizes all through the year and hope we catch every deserving case. I am sorry for any we have missed.

Prefects

In keeping with an established tradition, Year 10 students have applied and now have been selected to be our main school leaders. Our first round of naming prefects will begin next week and those selected can wear a white shirt week beginning 26th June, signalling their new status as the senior student group in school. If parents and pupils wish to wait until September to purchase a shirt, this is more than acceptable and please do so if preferred. As they start their apprenticeships as prefects, many of them will be awarded Senior Prefects status at Prize Night on the 5th July. Congratulations to those selected and good luck in your new role in school. Those who have not yet been named, please do not be disheartened. There will be numerous opportunities throughout Year 11 to be awarded the honour and if any pupil has any questions, please contact Mrs Boardman or Mr Wilson for further guidance.

Change of the School Day

In January, I started the process of looking at changing the school day to be in line with Government recommendations on the delivery of the 32.5 hours per school week. Our school week is currently 31 hours and 15 minutes, far below the DfE's stated requirement. The school's Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body has given this matter careful consideration, consulting with staff, parents and pupils. The view expressed by the majority of parents, pupils and staff was that the school day should begin at 8.30am and finish at 3.00pm. **This will be therefore our new school day timings from September 2023 – 8.30am to 3.00pm.** These views have been balanced with addressing priorities for improvement and learning outcomes for students, the needs for some students involved in after school childcare and supporting safe transportation home for students. We will

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now move forward and begin to look at the timetable of the school day within these parameters. We will communicate this change to pupils but please support us in ensuring they understand the need for the change and impact on them.

Holidays in Term Time

I still receive too many requests for holidays in term time and hope you understand why I cannot approve the vast majority of them. With a huge amount of time missed due to Covid and the local authority tightening their grip, Governors have asked me to be more rigorous with this, so I am afraid it is unlikely that any request will be granted.

Uniform

Due to the excess heat this week I have allowed pupils to wear their school uniform and I know they have appreciated it hugely. With the forecast drop in temperature next week we will return to full school uniform. This must include their blazer. In warm weather we allow students to take blazers off and put them in their bags. Even in the summer, however, the blazer is a part of the uniform and must be brought to school. Thank you for your support in ensuring your child wears their full uniform properly and smartly. We keep a bank of school shoes in school and will issue these to pupils who come in wearing inappropriate footwear. Before we break for the summer in July, I will write to you again illustrating which shoes are allowed, including rules on hair and jewellery.

Many thanks for your continuing support. I wish you a restful, and hopefully not too muggy, weekend.

Yours sincerely

Mrs N Oddie
Headteacher