

# Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School

Headteacher: Mrs N Oddie BA(Hons) NPQH



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11th September 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

## Newsletter 1 2024-25

I would like to wish all our school community a very warm welcome back for the academic year of 2024-25; both existing families and new families beginning their Brownedge partnership journey. I trust you have enjoyed the limited summer sunshine available and that even with the rain and wind, you had a restful and relaxing break. I am looking forward to another incredible and productive school year. Our hardworking and dedicated staff spent two INSET days planning and preparing for your child, and I know they are looking forward to working together this year to develop your child to become the best version of themselves.

### Welcome Year 7

We have opened our doors and Christ's love to our new Year 7 intake, another full year for the fourth year running. I am impressed with the way they have settled into our family life and their enthusiasm and energy is infectious. When I asked if any would be interested in showing off their new school on Open Evening, a huge sea of hands was raised in eager support of their new community. A brilliant sight to see and great sign they feel safe and already have a sense of belonging in our family. I look forward to many years of partnership with our families and promise to make your child's high school journey an inspiring learning experience.

### Farewell Year 11

Congratulations to our Year 11 leavers. I send on behalf of all our school community our love and very best wishes for their future endeavours. They have shown their true determination and resilience over their time at Brownedge and due to hard work, from them and our staff, they have achieved the best [GCSE progress](#) ever; I believe the best in the area. I hope they move on from their success of their last year, build on talents to their true potential and go out to be good stewards and make a difference in the world.

### New Technologies

We are in for an exciting year! I'm extremely pleased that over 250 Year 7 and Year 8 pupils have signed up for our iPad scheme; our commitment to ensuring we are developing new, creative and innovative ways of learning. These will be rolled out over this half term, and I am confident they will impact in the classroom and equip our pupils in an everchanging technological world. If any parents haven't yet signed up for this scheme and would like it, please contact [Mrs Godbold](#) for more details on how to do this.

### Update on staffing and our school buildings

Each year brings positive change, in terms of additions to our teaching staff and our school site. This year we welcome new teaching members of staff; Mr Cummings joins us as Head of English, Mr Clarke-Davison as teacher of PE, Miss Farrimond as teacher of Science and Mr Braime as teacher of History. Working to support our pupils in other aspects of school life are Mr Mike Clark, our new School Chaplain, Ms Dickson, Teaching Assistant and Mrs Delaney as new School Receptionist. We wish them the very best as they join our Brownedge family. We are also developing our resources for our pupils in terms of a new library, bike shed and corridor Wall Art. We would very much like our pupils to be involved in the naming of the new library area and I know [Mrs Crew](#) has already asked parents and school community partners if they have any books they would like to donate. [Please get in touch with ideas or resources to make this learning space as fantastic as possible.](#) We would like to create a real buzz!

### Home learning

As we begin this new academic year, it is important for us to remind you of our expectations in terms of home learning. All home learning is set on MS Teams and a timetable has recently been sent out to parents on our Home/School communications portal – Firefly. [A copy can be found also on our website, click here for more details.](#) Please look at your child's timetable and support us by ensuring they have completed their home learning in preparation for lessons. Parents should receive an alert when home learning is missed. To continue our positive push for high quality home learning, we want to celebrate best effort with 'Home Learner of the Week'. Pupils recognised for going above and

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beyond will be shared on social media and our school website. If you do not receive our parent home learning update or would like more information regarding our home learning policy, please contact [Mrs Crew](#) for more information. Our Year 7 pupils have recently received information regarding their home learning journey for this first half term. Any questions or queries will be gladly answered to enable a smooth transition for them into high school expectations.

## Uniform is important

Thank you for your support in ensuring our high standards of uniform are maintained. It is essential that we continue our work on this and as the colder weather begins, we must insist that hooded tops are not used as part of the school uniform. More than a few pupils have chosen to wear a hooded top under their blazers like a jumper. This is not allowed during school hours. **Pupils are allowed to wear their PE zipped fleece under their blazer. This replaces the need for a school jumper and tries to negate the expense this can cause families.** A small minority of pupils do question our high uniform standards, citing their lack of understanding as to what impact these standards have on their learning. However, we know that we are preparing pupils for future employment and rules that they will need to adhere to. Following rules is an important element of our pupils' education –and I thank parents for their continued support on this. Can I reiterate my offer to support any parent that may require financial support in ensuring that their child's uniform meets our high standards, [please get in touch](#) and we will do all we can to support you. I would also like to ask if any families have any old school uniform, they wish to donate to children in our school who may be suffering from financial hardship. Any second-hand uniform can be handed into our Pupil reception.

## Open Evening Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October: early school closure

This takes place on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October at 5.30pm. This event is so important in our school calendar, allowing an opportunity for parents to come and experience our fantastic school and the outstanding relationships that make us so special. As in previous years, **school will close at 12.30pm on this day** to allow the school to fully prepare for this important evening. There will be no dinners served on this day but there will be more substantial snacks available in the extended mid-morning break. Pupils entitled to Free School Meals can draw down their allowance at morning break on this day. If you have a younger child in the school and this presents you with a problem, please let me know in a brief note and I will ensure your child is supervised in school until 3.00pm as normal. In the next few days, we will be asking for volunteers and do hope lots of students will come into school on the evening to show how proud they are of our school. Many students have already volunteered to help which is fantastic.

## Charity

In September we continue to live out our commitment to service in the local community through our normal fundraising activities. With this in mind, we are very happy to announce that on Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> September we will be holding our annual Cancer Awareness Coffee Morning, supporting Macmillan Cancer Support. We will also be holding a Community Coffee Morning starting at 9.30am, open to all family and friends of Brownedge. Our new Year 7 pupils will be serving coffee and cakes baked by our pupils - we would love you to join us for a cake and a chat. Please support us by helping your child bring in cakes and biscuits, sweets or snacks. Pupils will be selling cakes and drinks in their House groups to all the school and be entertained whilst they eat, drink and fund raise as a school community so an extra few pounds in their pocket on that day to purchase 'goodies' would be appreciated.

## Parent Governor Vacancy and Parent Voice

There is currently a vacancy for a Parent Governor and so, if you have a child in school, please consider serving as a Governor. It is a fantastic way to shape the direction and success of our school, and I would really appreciate any support from parents. You would attend three full governing body meetings a year and three more as part of a sub-committee. Meetings tend to be early evening and are a mixture of remote and face-to-face. I understand it is a time commitment, however, it is such an important job and such an exciting time in our school development. If you are interested in putting yourself forward for election, please send me an email: [head@st-maryshigh.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:head@st-maryshigh.lancs.sch.uk) and we can discuss further what the role entails and begin the election process.

Your voice as parents is so important to our development and improvement. To that end, we would like to develop a Parent Forum to discuss and collaborate on items such as pupil learning and assessment, reporting, behaviour,

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attendance and enrichment opportunities. If you would like to have your voice heard and be a part of a team supporting us to drive standards, then please watch out for Miss Mault's survey request.



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Having been in school since mid-August, I am very happy to have our pupils and staff back in school. It is only with them that our building becomes a school, a family community and a happy place to be. Wishing you a very good Autumn.

Kind regards

Mrs N Oddie  
Headteacher

Key Dates for your diary

Macmillan Coffee Morning	Friday, 27th September
Open Evening	Wednesday, 2nd October Pupils finish school at 12.30pm
Year 7 Mass of Welcome	Wednesday, 9th October
End of Half Term 1	Friday, 18 <sup>th</sup> October
<b>INSET 3 – Pupils not in school</b>	<b>Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> October</b> <b>Pupils return on Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> October at 8.30am</b>
Year 10 & 11 GCSE Information Evening	Thursday, 7th November
Year 11 PPE 1 start	Monday, 11th November
Year 7 Information Evening	Thursday, 14th November
Leavers' Certificate Evening	Monday, 2nd December
Christmas Markets	Friday, 6th December
Year 7 Parents' Evening	Wednesday, 11th December
Carol Service	Monday, 16th December

[All key dates for our school calendar can be found on our school website.](#)

By subscribing to this calendar, it can be added to your personal calendar.