

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School

Headteacher: Mrs N Oddie BA(Hons) NPQH



Let your
light shine

18 October 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

It has been what I can only describe as a delight to see the pupils engaging in their learning and enrichment activities taking place across school in this first half term of 2021. We are nearly back to some sort of normality! As I walk around school, during and after school, I can see pupils engaging in clubs and interhouse activities and the smiles on pupils' faces show what a positive impact the activity has had on them. Now more than ever, it's really important for us to provide as many opportunities as possible for pupils to take part and lead in. We know that the pandemic has had a huge impact on the mental health of our young people and this is why I'm particularly pleased to see the positive uptake of after school clubs, interhouse events and leadership opportunities. A large part of this is our pupils' engagement in charity work and serving others. We have had a very successful Cancer Awareness morning, a CAFOD Fast "Dance Off" and a Year 7 Welcome Mass. I would like to thank you for your support in these events. Over the course of two weeks, we have raised over £1000 for local charities. I wish to also thank all our hard working staff for all they do to develop our young people. They go above and beyond and serve our pupils with unwavering commitment.

Open Evening 2021

A huge thanks to all the pupils who helped make our annual Open Evening such a success in late September. Using controlled measures throughout the evening, we had over 800 prospective pupils and parents visit our wonderful community. As I say repeatedly, it is the pupils who are our school not the building and, on the evening, they were wonderful. We have had such positive praise and comments from visiting parents. The pupils did so well sharing and engaging primary pupils in their experiences of Brownedge across all our different subject areas and our tour guides, from Year 7 to 11, were eager to show our school off to prospective families as they stood by ready to guide visitors around their school. There were numerous exciting and fun interactive activities running across the school for children to get involved in and enjoy. Activities included battle trenches role play in History, Pope or nope in RE, ghosts and Halloween activities in Technology and Art, experiments and explosions in Science, trampolining and table tennis in PE and so much more. If you have younger children wanting to join us in September 2022, please submit your applications as soon as possible. I anticipate we will be full!

Black History Month

Across the United Kingdom during the month of October, people will be celebrating the contributions made by Black Britons in our history. Here at Brownedge it will be no different! We will be joining in to celebrate the work done to develop our unique history. Our Equalities and Diversity group led an assembly on the theme last week and pupils have an opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills in an interhouse activity and to support awareness of this important topic. Please encourage your child to get involved.

Safety over the half term break

The bonfire and fireworks period will soon be upon us and this year we will be delivering training from Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service using their Bright Sparx programme. This will be delivered on our return from the half term holiday. However, I am aware that pupils do partake before the event and focussing on how to stay safe during the bonfire period should a priority. Please talk to your children to make them aware of the dangers and we will share resources with you in the week beginning 1st November.

Covid Testing

Last week, [a joint letter to parents from the Secretaries of State for Education and for Health and Social Care Staff was published](#). The letter addressed Covid19 testing and vaccines. In it, they encouraged pupils and staff to continue to test twice weekly over half-term and preferably take an LFD test the night before they return to school after the break. If you need any more LFD tests for use over the holidays and in preparation for our return to school on 1st November, please ask your child to go to the Pupil Reception area where they are readily available. If you have any Covid related questions, please don't hesitate to contact [Mr McCreech](#) or [myself](#).

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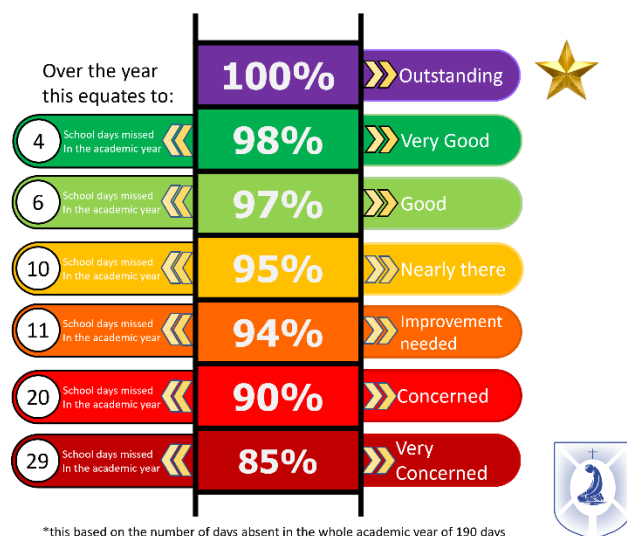
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South Ribble Borough Council

South Ribble Borough Council are currently offering some exciting opportunities for our community to engage in shaping the area around us. Year 10 and 11 pupils can apply to become members of the South Ribble Youth Council. Local Youth Councils are forums that represent the views of young people at a local level. Run by young people for young people, they offer a voice and enable them to make their views heard in the decision-making process. Contact [Mrs McDonagh](#) for more information. For parents, there will be an informal Community Hub with local councillors and police from Lostock Hall, Bamber Bridge and Walton Le Dale on Tuesday 19th October, 5-6.30pm at Lostock Hall Library. If any parents/guardians have any questions, suggestions and ideas about their local area, this is your opportunity to bring it up with your elected members.

Attendance Matters

As we reach the end of a busy half term, I would like to reiterate the importance of your child's attendance at school. We know that regular attendance at school is the single most important factor in a child/children making appropriate progress and achieving success. When children have a lot of absences, they have gaps in their knowledge. Good, regular and punctual attendance means doing well academically, developing better relationships with other children and positive behaviour. It also sets up good habits for when young people enter into work and life. To help put days absent into context, we regularly use this image with our pupils. Please remember that unless unavoidable, do not arrange medical or dental appointments during school hours and that habits are formed early. It is much more difficult to get your child to school regularly if they stay at home 'just this once'. Please use the first day absence reporting procedure and failure to do so may result in the absence being unauthorised. Please contact your child's Head of House or Form Tutor in the first instance with any attendance concerns, or Mrs Doherty/Mrs Godbold if it is a specific attendance query.



Half Term Food Vouchers

The Department for Works and Pensions announced details last week on the new Household Support Fund (HSF) grant which is being made available to County Councils and Unitary Authorities in England to support those most in need this winter. We can confirm that initial approval has been granted for schools to utilise the LCC funded Edenred account to order October half term vouchers for benefits-eligible FSM pupils. Each eligible pupil will be issued with a £15 voucher to cover the one week holiday period. Please contact [Mr Burrows](#), our school Business Manager if you have any questions regarding this.

INSET DAY Friday 21st October

Please be reminded that school will be closed to pupils on Friday 21st October. This is a calendared INSET day and therefore a holiday for pupils. We hope they enjoy their extended half term break. We restart school on Monday 1st November at 8.50am as normal.

Kind regards

Mrs N Oddie
Headteacher