

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School

Headteacher: Mrs N Oddie BA(Hons) NPQH



*Let your
light shine*

24 October 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

October 2022 – Newsletter 2

I can't quite believe that the last seven weeks have gone so quickly, yet, as we look forward to the second half term of the year, we find the darker nights and increasingly colder weather upon us. Although it has been brief, it has been a very busy time in school and much of this will be reported on in our December issue of our Shining Lights Newsletter. Please make sure you read a copy, it's always full of examples of how our pupils live out our Gospel Values in school and put their faith into action in the wider Brownedge community and beyond.

As we end this first half, I would like to update you on key information since the start of term.

Laudato Si' Project

We are continuing to develop our school as a Laudato Si School of excellence through our continued collaboration with the Laudato Si centre at Wardley Hall and the wider community within the Diocese. On Monday 31st October, 10am, our INSET day, we are delighted to be joined by Sr Margaret Atkins, a Canoness of St Augustine and Steve Burrowes, Environment Officer for the Laudato Si Centre. Sr Margaret is a lecturer and author in Theology with special interest, amongst other things, in the ethics of the environment. Sr Margaret will deliver an hour session on why Laudato Si interconnects with the mission and ethos of our community and how we can continue to put our faith into action. As parents you are an integral part of our community and so, if you would like to join us and learn more about Laudato Si you would be warmly welcomed. This project has many dimensions, but one significant one is the development of our natural spaces in school and improving our pupil's engagement and connection with the natural environment. If you would like to attend, please contact Mrs Godbold. (godbold@st-maryshigh.lancs.sch.uk)

Carnegie Mental Health Bronze Award

We are very proud to announce that we have been formally recognised for the amazing work school does in supporting our pupils and staff mental health. This award acknowledges our use of evidence-based approaches that align to professional and government guidelines. We have worked hard to create a culture of awareness of mental health, tolerance and acceptance, promoting positive mental health strategies. We know this in turn improves pupil and staff self-confidence, resilience and mental health and we are committed to making mental health a whole school strategic priority. For more details please visit our website or contact Mrs Watson ([watsons@st-maryshigh.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:watson@st-maryshigh.lancs.sch.uk)) for any support and guidance in this matter. We are always here to listen.

Parent Governors

Our vacancy for Parent Governor has been filled by Mrs Catterall. Many thanks to her for presenting our parents views in this important role. Many thanks also to Mr Joy, a fellow parent, who will be joining us as a co-opted member of the Governing body. We look forward to working with them on your behalf over the coming years and to gain their insights in helping shape the direction and success of our school.

Mobile Phones

As the darker nights do draw in, I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate again our mobile phone rules in school. Our school rule states that mobile phones, if brought into school, MUST be handed into the Form Tutor in morning registration to be locked in the mobile phone safe. Pupils caught with phones (whether they are on or off) will receive sanctions. We fully appreciate that parents need the reassurance that their child has access to a mobile phone when travelling to and from school, especially in the winter months. However, our issue is how phones are sometimes used by pupils in school e.g. distraction to learning, cyber bullying and inappropriate use of texting and social networking apps during lesson time, break and lunch times. In order to ensure that pupils can follow this rule we changed the school day and provided a secure cabinet for pupils' phones to be stored during the day to ensure pupils can pick up their phones before making their journey home. If your child brings a phone into school, they MUST use this facility.

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Attendance and Punctuality

This half term we will continue with our push on attendance and punctuality. We have high expectations and make no apology for this as we know the large impact attendance has on improving pupil progress. Whilst we would like every student to achieve 100% attendance, we aim for all our students to be at 97% or over. Once pupils drop below this figure, we need to act quickly to ensure that this is improved. To put it into context, 97% attendance means no more than 5 days absence in one year, 95% attendance means no more than 10 days. Mr Bolton, our newly appointed Assistant Headteacher is leading on this key school priority and if you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact him. Our terms dates for 2022-23 and 2023-24, as always, can be found on our school website.

Charity Work

Pupils have been busy this half term in their charity work, showing their commitment to love, service and justice in the local and global community. Numerous charities have been close to our hearts; Macmillan Cancer Support, Papyrus and CAFOD, with monies raised to date already reaching in excess of £600. We will continue this work for St Catherine's Hospice and the Samaritan Shoebox Appeal in the lead up to Christmas celebrations.

Uniform

Good uniform standards are important and I thank you for your continued support in ensuring our high standards of uniform are maintained. As I outlined in my last newsletter, hooded tops are not permitted as part of the school uniform. **Pupils are allowed to wear their PE zipped fleece under their blazer, but not hooded tops like a jumper.** I would like to 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. Any second-hand uniform can be handed into our Pupil reception.

Key Dates over the next half term

Year 7 Information Evening	Thursday 3 rd November	7pm
Year 9 Humanutopia – Motivation and Confidence	Wednesday 9 th November	
Year 11 GCSE Information Evening	Thursday 10 th November	7pm
Year 11 Pre Public Examinations start	Monday 14 th November	
Annual Careers Fair --- all years	Thursday 17 th November	
Year 10 Information Evening	Thursday 24 th November	7pm
Leavers GCSE Certificate Evening	Monday 5 th December	7pm
Review 1 to parents – all years	Tuesday 6 th December	
Year 7 Parents` Evening	Wednesday 7 th December	4.00pm – 6.30pm
Carol Service	Monday 12 th December	7pm
Rewards afternoon	Wednesday 14 th December	

Wishing you a good half term, rich in autumnal colours. We return on Tuesday 1st November at 8.50am. This day is a Holy Day of Obligation and we will celebrate the Solemnity of All Saints' with a Mass after school at 3.30pm to which all parents are warmly invited.

Kindest regards

Mrs Nicola Oddie
Head Teacher