

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School

Headteacher: Mrs N Oddie BA(Hons) NPQH



*Let your
light shine*

13 December 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

Christmas Newsletter 2023

Following an extremely rewarding first term of the 2023-24 academic year, I am delighted to be writing to all parents to celebrate the significant number of combined achievements of our school community. These have been showcased in our termly newsletter Shining Lights; I sincerely hope you have a look when it is published next week. In it we have attempted to capture some of the fantastic work our school community does; not all is often easily seen and we could have written pages upon pages. [To access editions of Shining Lights or Headteacher newsletters, please click here.](#)

We are halfway through the season of Advent and we celebrate a moment of Christmas anticipation. This week we light our second candle in our wreath that represents peace. Indeed, we hope we find some inner peace and peace with others around us as we look forward to seeing our loved ones and families at Christmas. As we look forward to 2024, I wish to update you on several points in time for the New Year and the start of our Spring term.

School Carol Service

This Monday, we celebrate our Annual Carol Service. This beautiful event takes place in our Parish Church, St Mary's Brownedge at 7pm. All our families and school community are invited to join us in worship at this special time of year. There will be mince pies, stollen and mulled wine after the event. [Please look at our website for more details.](#)

Staffing Update

We say farewell and good luck to three members of staff this term. Mrs Watson, who has been our legendary Intervention Manager moves on to a promoted position in a local special school, as does Mrs Boardman, Assistant Headteacher and SENDCo. We also send our love and best wishes to Mrs Hardwick, who has retired as teacher of Science. All have been instrumental in supporting the Brownedge values and ethos. On behalf of the Brownedge family we wish them every success in their future endeavours. Next term, we will be joined by Miss Oldham, Assistant Headteacher and SENCo, Mr Haughton, Second in RE, Mr Wilcock, teacher of Science and Mrs Polito, teacher of English. I look forward to welcoming them to our team.

Reviews

I hope you found your child's Progress Review sent home this week helpful and supports you in engaging in your child's academic journey. Please remember your child's review is a simple snapshot on how your child is doing on the key measures of attendance, home learning, behaviour, progress, and attitude to learning. Year 11 have received their final school report based on PPE 1 achievements. For the first time this year, in Year 7, 8 and 9, we have included what your child has been assessed on and their progress towards this curriculum area. All reviews report your child's CURRENT progress with indicators signalling if they are above, at expected, below or significantly below progress at this reporting point. Pupils will always be shown how to improve and if you would like to support that, please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teachers.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

The last years have been a challenging time and I believe it is absolutely essential that we continue to do all we can to support students, staff and their families. At the beginning of this academic year, we launched our commitment to students and colleagues' mental health and emotional wellbeing. Our Mental Health Ambassadors have also been busy visiting all form groups to introduce who they are and to highlight how pupils can access support in school for themselves or their friends. We look forward to 2024 with many more activities planned, including fund raising for YoungMinds UK and Papyrus and events during Mental Health week to celebrate My Voice Matters.

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School

Headteacher: Mrs N Oddie BA(Hons) NPQH



*Let your
light shine*

E-Safety

I cannot stress more highly the important role you play as parents in monitoring your child's use of social media networks such as Tik Tok, Instagram and Snapchat. Some children, even after our repeated educational messages, are putting themselves in danger by sharing information with strangers posing as "friends". On top of this, some pupils still use social media to talk inappropriately to each other, spread malicious gossip about others or to post offensive images and videos. When this happens, the fallout always spills into school leaving staff to pick up the pieces. When this happens, it becomes a school matter and school sanctions will be used to address it. As I often say to our pupils, "if you are going to post anything about anybody on social media, use it to say something good." We are having an E-safety week in school at the beginning of February as another way of doing all we can to keep our children safe.

Charity Work this half term

Operation Christmas Child - Parents will be aware that we supported Operation Christmas Child, run by Samaritan's Purse again this year. Thank you for all items that were sent into school. We sent over 20 shoe boxes this year to support those children in most need.

Christmas Jumper Day - This year we are holding our annual Christmas Jumper Day tomorrow, Thursday 14th December. On this day, pupils are invited to wear a Christmas jumper in place of their blazer to mark the festive period. All other uniform articles are required to be worn. We ask pupils to make a donation in order to wear their Christmas garment. This year, as opposed to asking for a monetary donation, we would like pupils to donate a tinned food item, which will be donated to the local foodbank. This could be items such as: tinned fruit, vegetables, meat, pastas and fish. In order to support the cost of living crisis, we feel a small donation of a tinned item is more appropriate for both our wider community and our pupils. We ask that all tinned donations are given in to your child's form tutor who will pass them on to be delivered to the local food bank depot.

Caritas – This advent we will be supporting the charity Caritas, who are appealing for donations to help people in our Diocese this Christmas. If you can, please donate items of clothing, shoes, mince pies, chocolate, Christmas decorations or toiletries. These items can be brought to Rachael in the Cosy Room. Please ensure that any items donated are in a good condition for people to use.

Half Term Food Vouchers

We can confirm that approval has been granted for schools to utilise the LCC Edenred account to order Christmas vouchers for benefits-eligible FSM pupils. Each eligible pupil will be issued with a £30 voucher to cover the two-week holiday period. Please contact [Mr Burrows](#), our school Business Manager if you have any questions.

Holiday Pattern 2024-25

[The details of school holidays for 2024-25 have now been published on the school website.](#) With children from many feeder primary schools, it is not always easy to ensure our holiday pattern fits in with all other schools. However, we have followed closely the Lancashire pattern. I hope this will help reduce the number of requests for holidays to be taken in term time, which as you will know, I can only approve in exceptional circumstances.

End of School Arrangements

School finishes for Christmas on **Friday 22nd December at 1pm** approximately. This is the latest finish yet! But it does mean we have an extended period after Christmas. We hope to celebrate Advent by holding a liturgy at St Mary's Church. There will be no school dinners served on this day, but there will be an extended break, with our usual food being served. We reopen on **Monday 8th January at 8.30am** as normal. We will publish this on the website at the start of January to help remember timings.

Wishing you a peaceful and joy-filled Christmas

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School

Headteacher: Mrs N Oddie BA(Hons) NPQH

Mrs Nicola Oddie
Head Teacher



*Let your
light shine*

