

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School

Headteacher: Mrs N Oddie BA(Hons) NPQH



17 December 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

Christmas Newsletter 2025

As we come to the end of this term, we do so in the spirit of Advent—a season of waiting, hope and joyful expectation. Guided by our Catholic faith, this has been a time to pause, reflect and prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ, even amid the busy life of our school. This newsletter offers a snapshot of moments where learning, service and compassion have shone brightly, as students and staff have worked together to live out our faith. We give thanks for all that has been shared and achieved this term, and we look ahead with hope to the joy and peace of Christmas and a well-earned time of rest. Find out all about our community's achievements in our latest edition of Shining Lights – our termly newsletter. [To access editions of Shining Lights or Headteacher newsletters please click here](#)

Alongside the sense of anticipation for Christmas, we also begin to look forward to the New Year. As we prepare for 2026 and the start of the Spring term, there are a number of important updates and dates to share with you. These will help ensure a smooth and positive return after the Christmas break, as we continue our shared journey of learning and faith together.

Rewards Trips

It has been wonderful to see so many pupils recognised for their hard work, dedication and positive commitment to school life. Over 400 pupils have earned the opportunity to take part in reward trips to LeVel, the Trafford Centre, the Manchester Christmas Markets, Team Sport and "Nights Inn @ Brownedge"—an excellent achievement. Well done to everyone involved. For those who were not able to access a reward trip on this occasion, there will be fresh opportunities next term, as the criteria count resets after Christmas. Further information on how pupils can work towards reward trips in 2026 will be shared in due course.

We would also like to remind parents and pupils that attendance remains a key part of the rewards criteria. Please remind your child: **any pupil who is absent today or Friday this week without an authorised reason will automatically forfeit the opportunity to access the next reward trip in the Spring or Summer term.** Attendance on these days is crucial, and we appreciate your continued support in ensuring pupils are in school and engaging with all school has to offer.

Sacrament of Confirmation

We are delighted to invite our Year 8 and 9 pupils to prepare for receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation, which begins next term. This is an important step for our young people, in their journey of faith. Over the course of this week pupils have had an assembly, introducing them to the preparation process and what it entails. It is an exciting programme which will be led by our school chaplain, John, and supported in partnership with our local parish. Confirmation offers pupils the opportunity to deepen their relationship with God, strengthen their understanding of the Church, and grow in confidence as active members of our faith community. If you would like to register your child, please visit our [website](#) and complete the relevant form.

Parent Voice

At Brownedge, our partnership with parents and carers is essential to the success and strategic development of our school. Therefore, we are going to be gathering your 'voice' through our online Challenge Survey. Our intention is to give you the opportunity to share your thoughts and ideas in relation to how we challenge your child/ren in different aspects of school life. Your responses will help inform our understanding, future planning and decision-making. This survey is part of our ongoing commitment to collaborate with parents and carers, to help refine the provision for our pupils. Over the coming months, we will continue to invite you to take part in further parent voice surveys, ensuring your views remain central to the way our school moves forward.

Year 11

As we move into a crucial phase of the academic year, our Year 11 pupils are now preparing in earnest for their upcoming examinations (PPE2s) in February. This is a key moment to further embed knowledge, build confidence, strengthen study habits, and focus on revision. With Parents' Evening approaching on Wednesday 14th January 4pm-6:30pm, we look forward to working closely with you to discuss progress and next steps. By continuing to work in partnership, we can best support your child to achieve their full potential and take confident steps towards realising their dreams.

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Charity Work this half term

Operation Christmas Child: We were delighted to once again support *Operation Christmas Child*, run by **Samaritan's Purse**. Thank you to all families for your incredible generosity. Thanks to your support, we proudly sent over 60 shoeboxes filled with gifts to children in greatest need around the world — a truly wonderful act of kindness that reflects our school values.

Brownedge Christmas Markets: A huge thank you to everyone who supported our Annual Christmas Markets, which were filled with festive cheer and community spirit. With over 40 stalls offering beautiful gifts and delicious food, the school hall was alive with celebration and merriment. A special visit from Father Christmas and his team of cheerful elves added to the magic! We are proud to share that an amazing **£1,604.33** was raised in support of **St Catherine's Hospice** — a fantastic achievement for our school community.

Christmas Jumper Day: Our Christmas Jumper Day was the most successful yet, with over 200 pupils getting into the festive spirit by wearing their Christmas jumpers. Thank you to everyone who donated a tin to support our **local food bank at St Aidan's Church**. Together, we collected and donated over 10 boxes of food, making a significant difference to families in our local community.

Christmas Karaoke: Thursday will see staff members taking part in our annual Christmas Karaoke concert in aid of **St Catherine's Hospice**. Tickets have now sold out but watch our social media for clips of the fun and festivities.

Santa Dash: During PE lessons this week, pupils have taken part in a sponsored Santa Dash around school grounds. An amazing £434 was raised throughout the week for St Catherine's Hospice, a fantastic show of pupil generosity and kindness. A special note must go to Lilly in Year 8 who raised £145 and Abby in Year 8 who raised £105 in sponsorship — what an achievement!

Christmas Reading Challenge

Pupils in Year 7, 8 and 9 have been invited to take part in our *Christmas Reading Challenges*. As we venture closer to the National Year of Reading in 2026, we wish to offer a final opportunity for your child to widen their scope for reading, which is why we are offering this exciting opportunity. From the 'Cosy Challenge' to the 'Snowflake Task,' we hope your child really tries to be a part of this over the festive season. This sheet will be sent out via PDF on Firefly and paper copies have also been shared with form groups. Happy reading!

Christmas 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 2026-27

[The details of school holidays for 2026-27 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. With the new Government directives regarding fines for those taking consecutive holidays, please make sure you are aware of our published dates before booking for next year.

End of School Arrangements

School finishes for Christmas on **Friday 19th December at 1.30pm** approximately. 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. **School will reopen on Monday 5th January at 8.30am as normal**. We will publish this on the website at the start of January to help remember timings.

As we bring this term to a close, I wish you and your families a blessed, peaceful and joyful Christmas. May the coming weeks be a time of rest, renewal and togetherness, filled with the hope and light of Christ. I look forward to all that the New Year will bring, as we continue our journey together with faith, courage and optimism.

Kindest regards

Mrs Nicola Oddie
Head Teacher

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This year our Christmas Card winner was **Saffie in Year 10**.

Congratulations to her and a huge thanks to all pupils who entered this interhouse competition. The quality was amazing and kept our Senior Leadership Team debating the final winner for a long time.

