

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School

Headteacher: Mrs N Oddie BA(Hons) NPQH



*Let your
light shine*

09 February 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

NEWSLETTER 6 – February 2024

I can't believe we are already past the halfway mark for this academic year! As usual, we have had a very busy start to this second term, and I would like to thank you for your continued support. I am extremely proud of our pupils and their attitude to learning but also the way they conduct themselves in and around school.

New Staff

This half term we welcomed three new members of staff to the Brownedge family. They have already made a wonderful contribution to our vibrant school community. One key member of staff is our new Assistant Headteacher and SENDCo, Miss Oldham, and she will be writing to our relevant parents to introduce herself in the very near future. Please contact school if you have any questions about Special Educational Needs, if you do not hear from her directly.

Lent

During half term, we will enter into the holy season of Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday, 14th February. Lent is the season of reflection and preparation before Easter. As a Catholic school we approach the Lenten season with great anticipation. It is a special time in our school, as part of the whole Catholic Church community, where we focus on the three pillars of Lent: Prayer, Fasting and Giving. There are numerous activities taking place throughout this joyous season including a weekly Mass every Tuesday after school, a 'lent bingo' Interhouse competition, Thursday Chaplaincy Club after school, Form Prayer Partners, where each Form group will be given another Form group to pray for/show kindness to and year group Reconciliation Days held at church. More information will be provided on these and how we will use this time to support the various charities close to our heart, accumulating in our Lenten Charity Afternoon.

Careers

Thank you to everyone who attended our recent Careers Fair in school. The evening was a huge success with over 25 stall holders and keynote speakers on the night. Parents, pupils and families attended in their droves and the feedback we have received has been wonderful. Mr Richardson and the Careers team in school did a fantastic job at organising the event and we hope you found it enjoyable and informative. We have excellent Careers provision in school, supported by Career North, helping young people through one-to-one coaching, guidance meetings, college and training applications. If you feel your child would benefit from a one-to-one career meeting, please contact [Mr Richardson](#) in the first instance. If you would like to find out more, visit our website or the Career North website at www.careernorth.co.uk. Year 11 will continue with their college and future pathway planning with interviews taking place with Cardinal Newman College, Runshaw College and Preston College over the next two weeks.

Ski Trip America

Yesterday we waved off 34 of our pupils and 4 staff as they set off on their Ski Trip to America. They will spend 5 days skiing in New Hampshire and undertake other activities such as snow tubing and ice skating. They will then visit New York and have a 48-hour whistle stop tour of all the sights and sounds of the Big Apple. The itinerary includes a trip up the Empire State Building, a visit to Times Square, the 9/11 memorial fountains and a ferry around the Statue of Liberty. Take a look at our social media pages for updates on their American adventures!

Uniform

We continue in our high expectations of pupils conduct and presentation, and as we reach half term, please can I remind you about the uniform expectations for pupils returning on **Tuesday 20th February**. School shoes must be worn, and there are images on the school website if you are unsure of what is allowed. There are also no piercings, false nails and/or false eyelashes allowed. Year 11 are allowed to wear one single ear stud but all other pupils must not wear any jewellery. After half term pupils will not be allowed to wear coats in school. The weather will be warming up and unless in exceptional circumstances, coats will not be allowed in school during the school day. Pupils will be expected to put them in their lockers or leave them in their form rooms to be picked up at the end of the day for travelling home. This is important to ensure that our high standards of uniform are at the forefront of the work we do in school.

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Half Term Food Vouchers

We can confirm that approval has been granted for schools to utilise the LCC Edenred account to order February 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.

Pupil Voice

This week and continuing after half term, we are conducting a survey of all pupils about their safety and wellbeing. This is such an important part of our work to ensure that our pupils are happy and safe and therefore are able to 'let their light shine' with confidence and joy. Please engage in conversation with your child about this and encourage them to use their voice to make our school an even better place to live and learn in. This work sits alongside our thriving School Council and Senior School Council who have also met this week. Their focus has been on safety and wellbeing as well as challenge in their learning, rewards and enrichment opportunities. We will report back as always our findings and share how we listened to these important viewpoints.

Attendance

We are delighted at the significant number of pupils who have maintained a 100% attendance, with many winning the weekly 5 attendance positive points, in addition to the 5 positive points pupils received for excellent punctuality. Many are on course to achieve their Silver 100% badge at Easter; this high standard of attendance is truly commendable. There is a clear and proven link between high levels of attendance and pupil attainment, truly allowing pupils to let their light shine. There is no substitute to learning than being in front of a subject specialist. Attending school also allows your child to develop social skills and leadership which will help them thrive in the future. If your child is unable to attend school, please report their absence to our attendance team on the morning of the absence, otherwise it will be categorised as unauthorised. We appreciate sometimes children are too unwell to come into school but even authorised absences count against your child's attendance figures. As we move forward, it is essential to follow the recent government publication on good attendance. If your child has a cough or a cold, cold sores, conjunctivitis, mild COVID-19 symptoms, an ear infection, or a sore throat to name a few common reasons given for pupils being absent it is fine to send them into school.

Key dates for Half Term 4

Event	Time and Date
INSET DAY	Monday 19 February
Return to school at 8.30am	Tuesday 20 February
Year 9 Pathways Evening	Wednesday 21 February 7pm
Drexel Feast Day	Monday 4 March
Year 9 Reviews sent home	Tuesday 5 March
Year 9 Parents' Evening	Wednesday 6 March 4pm - 6.30pm
Year 7 New Technologies Evening	Thursday 7 March 7pm
Year 11 PPE2 Results Day	Friday 8 March
Year 10 Reports sent home	Monday 11 March
Year 11 Parents' Evening	Thursday 14 March 4pm – 6.30pm
Year 11 GCSE Preparation evening	Thursday 21 March 7pm - 8.30pm
Year 7 & 8 Reviews sent home	Friday 22 March
Romero Feast Day	Monday 25 March
Rewards Day	Tuesday 26 March
Charity Afternoon	Wednesday 27 March
Year 8 Parents' Evening	Wednesday 17 April 4pm - 6.30pm

Wishing you a happy half term break.

Kindest regards

Mrs N Oddie, Headteacher

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