

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School

Headteacher: Mrs N Oddie BA(Hons) NPQH



*Let your
light shine*

10 February 2026

Dear Parents/Carers

NEWSLETTER 6 – February 2026

As we reach the midpoint of the academic year, it is a valuable opportunity to pause and reflect on the journey so far. The spring term has begun at pace, and I would like to sincerely thank our parents and carers for your continued support, encouragement, and partnership with school life. Your commitment, whether through routines at home, communication with staff, or support for school events, plays a vital role in helping our pupils thrive. Together, we are creating a community where high expectations, care for one another, and a love of learning are nurtured each day, and this shared approach continues to strengthen our school as we move into the next part of the year.

Lent

As we return from the half term break, we enter the holy season of Lent—a time of reflection and preparation as we journey towards Easter. As a Catholic school, we approach this season with a sense of anticipation and purpose, focusing on the three pillars of Lent: Prayer, Fasting, and Giving. Ash Wednesday will take place during the half term holiday, and we encourage families to engage with services and liturgies within their local parish communities. Throughout Lent, pupils will take part in opportunities for prayer, reflection, and charitable giving in school, as we work together to live out the values of kindness, generosity, and service to others.

Parent Voice

I would like to thank all parents and carers who have taken the time to engage with recent opportunities to share their views and experiences. Your voice is an important part of shaping the ongoing development and growth of our school, and we truly value the insights you provide. In response to your feedback, we will be introducing more regular information for parents and carers about your child's learning journey, including brief information updates on assessment in school and how it supports our understanding of pupils' progress. We hope this will help strengthen communication, build confidence, and further support our shared goal of ensuring that all pupils continue to make good progress. Looking ahead to the final term, we will be inviting feedback from both parents and pupils on our Catholic life and mission, as well as on the role of artificial intelligence and how it can be used thoughtfully and responsibly to support teaching, learning, and school improvement. We are grateful for your continued engagement as we work together to develop our school further.

Artificial Intelligence

As part of our commitment to keeping pupils safe and well-informed in an increasingly digital world, the school has engaged with Safer Internet Week, focusing on the safe and responsible use of AI. A staff working party has developed an action plan to support the careful integration of AI across school and has reviewed and updated our Acceptable Use Policy accordingly. Parents and carers are encouraged to read these updates and access our [Online Safety and AI Policies on the school website](#). This work will build on existing practice through curriculum opportunities, surveys, and assessment pilots, helping pupils understand how AI can support learning rather than simply provide answers. A strong focus will be placed on ethics, reliability, and misinformation, with professional judgement and safeguarding remaining central to all decisions. We will continue to keep families informed and offer guidance on supporting safe and appropriate AI use at home, underpinned by our Catholic values of truth, responsibility, and respect. For further information, please contact [Mrs Crew, Assistant Headteacher and AI Lead](#)

Parental Communication Reminder

We would like to take this opportunity to remind parents and carers of our Parental Communications Policy, which is designed to support clear, respectful, and effective communication between home and school. We kindly ask parents to note that, in line with this policy, staff will aim to respond to communications within **three working days**, allowing time for concerns to be considered carefully and directed to the most appropriate member of staff. To avoid disappointment, meetings with staff must be arranged in advance, as colleagues will often be teaching or involved in other commitments during the school day. Arriving at school without an appointment may not result in an immediate meeting. Please be considerate of our Reception Team.

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Full details of our communication procedures can be found on the Brownedge website, and we are grateful for your continued support in working within these agreed arrangements for the benefit of all pupils and staff.

Learning for Life – Vaping Education

As a school, we continue to take a proactive approach to tackling vaping, working closely with Lancashire Police as part of our Learning for Life programme to support pupils' understanding of what vaping is, the risks involved, and the impact it can have on their health and wellbeing. Pupils have taken part in assemblies exploring the dangers of vaping, the law, and school expectations, alongside guidance on sanctions and the pastoral support available to help prevent pupils from engaging in this behaviour. As part of this work, we are running a vaping amnesty, allowing pupils to anonymously hand in vapes at designated secure drop-off points around school without sanction. These items will be tested by the police to help pupils better understand what substances can be found in vapes, reinforcing key messages around safety, informed choices and responsibility. Thank you for your continued support.

Uniform

Maintaining high standards of uniform and personal presentation remains an important part of our school expectations. As pupils return after half term on Monday 23rd February, we ask parents and carers to ensure that all uniform requirements are fully met, including the wearing of appropriate school shoes. Examples of acceptable footwear can be found on the school website to support families when checking uniform items. We would also like to clarify expectations around jewellery and appearance. Pupils are not permitted to wear piercings of any kind during the school day, including nose piercings. No form of jewellery may be worn in these piercings, and this includes clear retainers, spacers, or covering jewellery with plasters. False nails and false eyelashes are also not permitted. Although this affects only a small number of pupils, it is important that expectations are applied consistently. Where uniform requirements are not met, existing school sanctions will be used. We appreciate parents' support in ensuring pupils return after half term ready to meet school expectations and fully focused on learning. As always, if you need any support – financial or otherwise, please contact us and we will happily help.

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.

Key dates for Half Term 4

Time and Date	Event	Time and Date	Event
Monday 23 February	Return to school at 8.30am	Tuesday 17 March	Year 9 Parents' Evening
Thursday 26 February	Year 9 Pathways Evening	Tuesday 24 March	Romero Feast Day
Tuesday 3 March	Drexel Feast Day	Wednesday 25 March	Year 7, 8 Reviews home
Thursday 5 March	World Book Day/ Year 11 Information evening	Thursday 26 March	Year 8 Parents' Evening
Friday 6 March	Year 11 PPE2 Results Day	Monday 30 March	Year 10 Reports home
Monday 16 March	Year 9 Reviews home	Wednesday 1 April	Charity Afternoon/ Expressive Arts evening

Wishing you a happy half term break.

Kindest regards
Mrs N Oddie
Headteacher