



Life to the Full

FORTNIGHTLY UPDATES & NEWS

Life to the Full – A Community of Hope, Faith and Opportunity

IN THIS ISSUE: DATES FOR
YOUR DIARY, LEARNING
UPDATES, WELLBEING AND
LIFE AT CARMEL

MONDAY 23RD MARCH- FRIDAY 3RD
APRIL 2026

WE ARE IN THE SEASON OF LENT

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Dates for your Diary

Date	Event
Monday 23rd – Wednesday 25th March 2026	Year 7 & Year 8 Retreat
Monday 30th March 2026	Holy Week Begins
Tuesday 31st March 2026	Sacrament of Reconciliation Offered
Tuesday 31st March 2026	Year 11 Parents' Evening 5:30pm-6:30pm
Thursday 2nd April 2026	Maundy Thursday – Lenten Liturgies (All Year Groups)
Friday 3rd April 2026	Good Friday (Bank Holiday)
Saturday 4th April 2026	Lourdes HCPT Pilgrimage Departs
Tuesday 14th April 2026	Paris Trip
Monday 20th April 2026	Students Return After Easter Break
Wednesday 22nd April – Tuesday 5th May 2026	Year 10 End of Year Assessments
Tuesday 28th April 2026	Year 8 Parents' Evening
Monday 4th May 2026	Bank Holiday – College Closed
Saturday 9th – Sunday 10th May 2026	Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Expedition
Week Commencing Monday 11th May 2026	Year 10 Work Experience
Monday 11th – Friday 22nd May 2026	Year 7 & Year 8 End of Year Assessments
Tuesday 19th May 2026	Year 10 Parents' Evening
Monday 25th – Friday 29th May 2026	May Half Term Break – College Closed
Monday 1st June 2026	Students Return to College
Monday 8th – Thursday 11th June 2026	Rome Trip
Week Commencing Monday 8th – Friday 19th June 2026	Year 12 End of Year Assessments
Tuesday 9th June 2026	Year 7 Parents' Evening
Monday 15th – Monday 22nd June 2026	Year 9 End of Key Stage 3 Assessments
Monday 15th June 2026	Year 7 Information Evening
Monday 22nd – Friday 26th June 2026	Year 12 Work Experience
Thursday 25th – Friday 26th June 2026	Year 7 Transition Days

Week Commencing:
Monday 23rd March 2026
Week 5 Lent Year A

LINKED CST PRINCIPLE

LINKED BH CET VIRTUE

LINKED BRITISH VALUE



Compassion



Mutual Respect

THEME FOR THE WEEK:
'I am the Resurrection and the Life!' John 11:1-45

"THEME- 'I am the Resurrection and the Life!' John 11:1-45-
Jesus brings Lazarus back to life—a profound prefiguration of His own Resurrection and an invitation into new, abundant life beyond suffering and sin. As Lent deepens, our school community is called to trust this promise, choosing life—letting go of what binds us and embracing the transformative power of Christ who raises us from spiritual death.

WORLD RELIGIONS AND CULTURAL EVENTS:

23 Mar - Ash Wednesday: Beginning of Lenten season of prayer, fasting, and reflection. Many communities observe this through various practices, including the use of ashes.

24 Mar - Maundy Thursday: Commemoration of Jesus' Last Supper and His arrest. Many churches observe this with special liturgies, including the washing of feet.

25 Mar - Good Friday: Commemoration of Jesus' crucifixion and burial. Many churches observe this with solemn services, including the reading of the Passion.

26 Mar - Holy Saturday: A day of quiet reflection and prayer, often marked by the lighting of the Paschal Candle.



FEAST DAYS AND MEMORIALS THIS WEEK:
The Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord (25th)

Week Commencing:
Monday 30th March 2026
THIS IS HOLY WEEK - YEAR A

LINKED CST PRINCIPLE

LINKED BH CET VIRTUE

LINKED BRITISH VALUE



Compassion



Mutual Respect

THEME FOR THE WEEK:
Rejoice Luke 15:32

"THEME- THIS IS HOLY WEEK- "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' – Matthew 27:46-
Holy Week recounts Jesus's journey of supreme sacrificial love—from the joy of Palm Sunday to His suffering, death, and burial—as He perfectly fulfills the Father's will for our salvation. During this sacred week, our school community is called to accompany Christ in prayer and reflection, embracing compassion, forgiveness, and self-giving service in light of His boundless love.

WORLD RELIGIONS AND CULTURAL EVENTS:

Passover (Pesach) Begins at sundown (Wednesday) April, ending Thursday 9 April for diaspora Jews as part of Passover observance. Both Passover and the Easter Triduum point to liberation through sacrifice—a powerful link between Jewish tradition and the Paschal Mystery.

Theravada New Year - 2 April 2026 (Observed in Theravada Buddhist countries (Thailand, Sri Lanka, Cambodia) at the first full moon in April)

New beginnings, purification, and renewal—resonating with the cleansing grace of Baptism and Holy Week liturgies.



FEAST DAYS AND MEMORIALS THIS WEEK:
THIS IS HOLY WEEK.

Week Commencing Monday 23rd March 2026 – Fifth Week of Lent (Passiontide Begins)

Theme: "I am the Resurrection and the Life" – John 11:1-45

As Lent deepens, we enter Passiontide, a time of greater reflection on the suffering and saving power of Christ. In the raising of Lazarus, Jesus reveals Himself as the source of life and hope, even in the face of death.

Across our school community, we are invited to trust in this promise, choosing life by letting go of what holds us back and allowing Christ to renew us. This Gospel reminds us that through faith, we are called to embrace the transforming power of God's love and the hope of new life.

Week Commencing Monday 30th March 2026 – Holy Week

Theme: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" – Matthew 27:46

Holy Week is the most sacred time in the Church's year, as we journey with Christ from the joy of Palm Sunday through His suffering, death and burial. In His sacrifice, Jesus reveals the depth of God's love and fulfils the promise of salvation.

As a school community, we are invited to accompany Christ through prayer and reflection, responding with compassion, forgiveness and self-giving love. In doing so, we prepare our hearts to share in the hope and joy of the Resurrection.

[Follow the readings at Mass here.](#)



A message from the Principal

As we move into Passiontide, the final two weeks of Lent, we enter a more reflective and prayerful time in the life of the Church. This is a period that invites us to pause, to look inward, and to prepare our hearts for the great celebration of Easter.

There are also signs of renewal all around us. With the arrival of spring, the days grow longer, the clocks move forward this weekend, and we begin to see new life emerging in the world around us. These small but powerful changes remind us of the hope at the heart of our faith – that even after the darkness of winter, light and life return.

Here at Carmel, this sense of renewal is reflected in the many aspects of College life you will read about in this edition. From the dedication of our students preparing for examinations, to the generosity shown through our Lenten fundraising, to the wide range of opportunities in sport, the arts and enrichment, it is clear that our young people continue to grow, achieve and contribute in so many positive ways.

As we approach Holy Week, we will journey together as a school community through the final days of Lent, taking time for prayer, reflection and worship. This is always a special and meaningful time at Carmel, as we focus on the life, sacrifice and love of Christ.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of our College. I wish you and your families a happy and holy Easter when it arrives.

Melanie Kane

PREPARING FOR PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

Our Year 11 and Year 13 students continue to work with focus and determination as they prepare for the start of their public examinations.

The first Year 11 GCSE examination begins on Friday 1st May, with the final exam on Tuesday 16th June. For Year 13 students, the first A Level examination begins on Monday 11th May, with the final exam on Thursday 18th June.

This is a significant period for our students, and we are proud of the resilience, commitment and maturity they are demonstrating as they approach these important milestones.

Year 11 GCSE Timetable – [Click here](#)
Year 13 A Level Timetable – [Click here](#)

YEAR 11 PARENTS' INFORMATION EVENING

We warmly invite parents and carers to attend our Year 11 Parents' Information Evening:

Tuesday 31st March
5:30–6:30pm

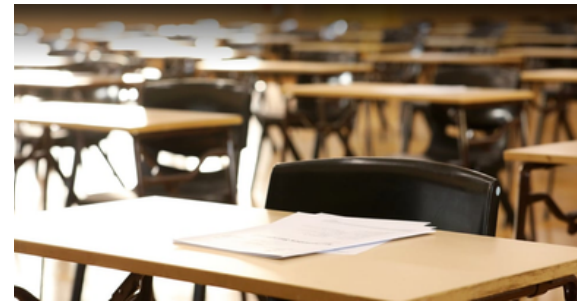
This is an important opportunity to ensure students are fully supported in the final weeks before exams. On the evening, you will be able to:

- Collect your child's final report and mock examination data
- Receive key information about the GCSE exam process and expectations
- Learn about our Easter revision programme

These final weeks can make a significant difference, and working together we can help every student achieve their very best.



We are pleased to confirm that ClassCharts is now fully operational. The platform continues to be used to set homework and recognise students who demonstrate our Trust virtues in lessons and across the College.



END OF YEAR ASSESSMENTS

Across the College, students are preparing for their end of year assessments.

Our Year 10 students will complete mock examinations in the exam hall, beginning Monday 20th April, providing valuable preparation for their final GCSE year. Students should now be actively revising and preparing.

Other key assessment periods include:

- Year 7 and Year 8: Week commencing 11th May – 22nd May
- Year 9: 15th – 22nd June
- Year 12: Week commencing 8th June – 19th June

These assessments support progress tracking and help prepare students for the next stage of their learning.



EASTER REVISION PROGRAMME

Details of our Easter revision sessions for Year 11 and Year 13 will be shared shortly. These sessions provide valuable additional support during the holiday period. These will be a mixture of face to face and online sessions.

We are very grateful to staff who generously give their time to support students in reaching their full potential.

WORK EXPERIENCE 2026

YEAR 10: 11TH-15TH MAY

YEAR 12: 22ND-26TH JUNE



CAN YOU HELP CARMEL
STUDENTS STEP INTO
THE WORLD OF WORK?

SHAPE FUTURES. FULFIL DREAMS.

HANNAHTEASDALE@CARMEL.BHCET.ORG.UK

#LifeToTheFull



YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE – CAN YOU SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS?

Our Year 10 students will take part in work experience during the week commencing Monday 11th May. This is a valuable opportunity to explore career pathways, develop workplace skills and gain first-hand experience of the world of work.

Students should now be securing placements and updating details on Unifrog so arrangements can be approved in good time. Any student requiring support should contact the school careers team.

Can you help?

We welcome support from parents, carers and members of the community who may be able to offer a work experience placement. Opportunities across all sectors are greatly appreciated and can have a lasting impact on our students' future aspirations.

hteasdale@carmel.bhcet.org.uk

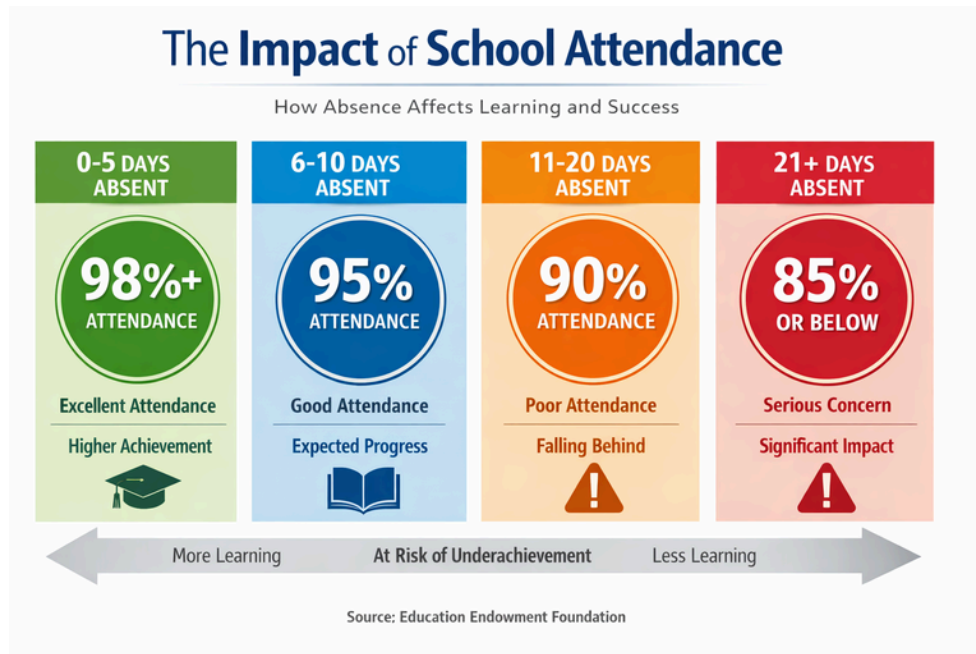
ARBOR – HOME SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Thank you to all parents and carers who have now downloaded and are actively using the Arbor App. We are pleased to share that 92% of families are now connected.



Arbor is now our main platform for all school communication, including messages, trips, meals and key updates. It is vital that all parents and carers are using the app so that we can communicate important information quickly and effectively.

If you have not yet activated your account, we strongly encourage you to do so as soon as possible.



ATTENDANCE MATTERS – EASTER ATTENDANCE CHALLENGE

Good attendance remains one of the most important factors in helping students succeed and thrive. We continue to promote excellent attendance through our Attendance Streak Challenge, where each full day in school builds a positive attendance streak.

This half term, we are also running our Easter Attendance Challenge, with students rewarded through prize draws and incentives for strong attendance. This helps students finish the term positively and stay fully engaged in their learning.

A gentle reminder:

- Holidays must not be taken during term time
- Medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside school hours where possible
- Punctuality supports a calm and focused start to the day

If your child requires support with attendance or wellbeing, please contact their Pastoral Learning Manager via admin@carmel.bhcet.org.uk.

UNIFORM EXPECTATIONS

Thank you for your continued support in maintaining our high standards of uniform and presentation.

A reminder that:

- Students must wear plain black shoes
- Only one pair of stud earrings is permitted
- Acrylic nails, nail polish and false eyelashes are not permitted

These expectations help promote consistency, pride and a strong sense of belonging.



MRS S THORNTON



Mr K McCann



Mrs L Parnaby



SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

- Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Thornton, Vice Principal (Pastoral)
- Deputy DSLs: Mr McCann and Mrs Parnaby

If you have any concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing, please contact the safeguarding team through the main school office.

ReNew

BY DONATING AND PURCHASING GENTLY USED UNIFORMS, SCIENTIFIC CALCULATORS AND BOOKS, WE REDUCE WASTE AND OFFER AFFORDABLE OPTIONS, PRACTICALLY EXPRESSING OUR FAITH AND COMMITMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

AFFORDABLE AND INCLUSIVE: ALL CLOTHING ITEMS ARE CAPPED AT £5 ENSURING ALL FAMILIES HAVE ACCESS, REFLECTING OUR BELIEF IN DIGNITY AND EQUALITY FOR ALL.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: WE INVITE PARENT/CARER VOLUNTEERS TO JOIN US IN THIS ENDEAVOUR. YOUR INVOLVEMENT IS KEY TO THE SUCCESS OF THE RE-NEW SHOP AND IS A GREAT WAY TO ACTIVELY PRACTICE STEWARDSHIP WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY.

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS AND PURCHASES SUPPORT NOT ONLY ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP BUT ALSO OUR GOAL OF FUNDING OUR NEW COLLEGE MINIBUS.

ALL CLOTHING ITEMS WILL BE LAUNDERED, IRONED AND AVAILABLE VIA OUR PASTORAL LEARNING MANAGERS

"BEHOLD, I AM MAKING ALL THINGS NEW."
REVELATION 21:5



Sporting excellence- A remarkable Run for Team Carmel

It has been an exceptional fortnight for Team Carmel, with students demonstrating outstanding talent, resilience and teamwork across a range of competitions.

Our Year 7 boys delivered one of the most memorable performances of the season in a dramatic Town Cup semi-final victory, securing their place in the final with a last-minute winner in a game full of quality and determination. Meanwhile, our U16 girls' football team progressed to the County Cup Final following a superb semi-final performance, and our Year 8 boys' futsal team were crowned runners-up at the County Finals – an incredible achievement at such a high level of competition.

Further success came in netball, where our Year 8 team were crowned Town Champions, winning every match in the tournament, while across all fixtures our students have continued to represent the College with pride, sportsmanship and ambition.





Leadership, Service and Community Impact

Carmel students continue to lead with confidence and purpose, making a meaningful impact both within and beyond the school community.

Our Stewardship Group delivered an outstanding presentation at Darlington Town Hall, successfully securing funding to launch their Ride & Stride campaign, promoting active travel and environmental responsibility. This initiative reflects our commitment to caring for our common home and developing student leadership.

Equally inspiring was the work of our Year 10 Sports Leaders, who supported the Darlington Primary Swimming Gala with professionalism and enthusiasm, acting as role models for younger pupils.

We were also incredibly proud to hear of students who supported a member of the public following an accident, showing compassion and kindness in a moment that truly reflects the values of Carmel. These quiet acts of service are at the heart of what it means to live Life to the Full.





Faith in Action – Living Lent Together

Lent has been a powerful and visible time across the College, with students actively living out their faith through prayer, service and community engagement.

Our St Patrick's Day celebration brought together students, staff, parishioners and families for a joyful afternoon of prayer, Mass and community, followed by a celebration in the parish centre. It was a wonderful example of the strength of our wider faith community.

Across the College, the SVP Heart to Heart campaign continues to grow, with students organising creative fundraising initiatives including bake sales and charity events. With hundreds of pounds already raised, students are demonstrating generosity, compassion and a real commitment to supporting those in need within our local community.

In addition, students have continued to lead and participate in Mass and liturgy, showing reverence, confidence and a deepening understanding of their faith as we journey through Lent together.





Culture, Creativity and Enrichment

We celebrated Francophonie Day with a vibrant programme of activities, including a whole-school treasure hunt, creative projects and a themed lunch experience, bringing language learning to life in an engaging and memorable way.

Our musicians also had the extraordinary opportunity to perform at the Darlington Hippodrome, taking part in the world premiere of a newly composed piece alongside professional musicians from the Royal Northern Sinfonia. This unique experience allowed students to collaborate, compose and perform at a professional level.

Meanwhile, our Year 12 students have been developing valuable communication skills through their British Sign Language course, demonstrating confidence, teamwork and a commitment to inclusion.



Achievement & Aspiration

We are incredibly proud of the individual achievements of our students, who continue to excel across a wide range of areas, both within and beyond the College. These moments of success reflect not only talent, but also the dedication, resilience and character we seek to nurture in every young person at Carmel.

A special congratulations goes to Rosie Watts (Year 12), who has been appointed as a Lord-Lieutenant's Cadet for County Durham. This prestigious role recognises outstanding commitment, leadership and service, and will see Rosie represent the county at a range of important civic and ceremonial events. It is a remarkable achievement and a reflection of the positive impact she continues to make within our school community.



We also celebrate the success of Danny Thompson, who showed exceptional determination and courage in his recent boxing bout, securing a well-earned victory against a taller opponent. His performance demonstrated not only physical skill but also resilience, discipline and confidence – qualities that inspire others across the College.

These individual successes sit alongside a wider culture of aspiration at Carmel, where students are continually encouraged to develop their talents, pursue their interests and step beyond their comfort zones. Opportunities such as our Peru fundraising initiative, supporting the building of schools and communities abroad, and our upcoming “Bless Our Show” concert, raising funds for our production of Sister Act, highlight the ambition, creativity and strong sense of community that define life at Carmel.

Together, these achievements remind us that success at Carmel is not measured by outcomes alone, but by the character, leadership and generosity our students show as they grow and contribute to the world around them.