



Carmel College

MONDAY 9TH FEBRUARY- FRIDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2026  
WE ARE IN THE SEASON OF ORDINARY TIME

# LIFE TO THE FULL FORTNIGHTLY UPDATE

Click [here](#) for the College calendar  
Click [here](#) for more information on the importance of good attendance  
Please remind your children that chewing gum is prohibited at Carmel College.

## CATHOLIC LIFE



**Week commencing Monday 9th February 2026 – Fifth Week in Ordinary Time (Year A)**

**Theme: Light**

This week, our pastoral focus is Light, inspired by Jesus' words in Matthew 5:14-16: "You are the light of the world... Let your light shine before others." Jesus invites his followers to live visibly radiant lives, like light shining in darkness, so that goodness is seen and God is glorified. Across our schools, students are encouraged to let their light shine through everyday actions by showing integrity, kindness, compassion and service to others. In small choices and quiet acts of goodness, our young people are invited to reflect Christ's love and be a positive presence within their communities.

**Week commencing Monday 16th February 2026 – Sixth Week in Ordinary Time (Year A)**

**Theme: Integrity (Beginning of Lent)**

As Lent begins this week, our pastoral focus turns to Integrity, rooted in Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:17-37: "You have heard that it was said... but I say to you..." Jesus challenges us to go deeper than surface-level rule keeping, calling us instead to allow God's Word to shape our hearts, relationships and actions. Throughout the Trust, students will be encouraged to live with authenticity by speaking truthfully, resolving conflict honestly, and acting with consistency even when no one is watching. Lent invites us all to reflect, renew and commit ourselves to living with integrity as part of our shared journey of faith.

**Weekly Mass at Carmel**

Holy Mass is offered every Wednesday at 12:30pm in our College Chapel.

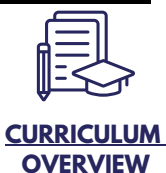
All students, staff, parents and visitors are welcome to join us for this peaceful moment of prayer as we gather around the altar and place our week before the Lord.

## KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY SAFE AT PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF TIMES

To protect everyone, please follow our [Carmel Parking Pledge](#):

The safety of our students and wider community is always a priority at Carmel College. To help reduce congestion on The Headlands and Clare Avenue and to improve safety at the start and end of the school day, we ask all families to support our Carmel College Parking Pledge, developed in partnership with Darlington Borough Council and local councillors, highways and police colleagues. Where possible, we encourage families to walk or cycle, or to park a short distance away and walk the final few minutes. Even parking five minutes away makes a real difference to safety, traffic flow and wellbeing.

For families who do need to drive, please follow the one-way drop-off system and avoid stopping on School Keep Clear markings, the College driveway, pavements or verges. Please note that vehicles are not permitted onto the school site between 3:15pm and 3:45pm unless you have a pre-arranged appointment. Illegal parking may result in penalty notices issued by the Borough Council. By working together, we can create a calmer, safer environment for children walking and cycling, ensure access for emergency vehicles, and show respect for our neighbours. Thank you for your continued support in keeping our community safe



## KEY DATES AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Event	Date
Maths Challenge FINAL	Monday 9th February 2026
KS3 Spring Assessments	Tuesday 9th – Friday 13th February 2026
Years 12 & 13 Parents' Evening	Tuesday 10th February 2026
Year 7 & 8 Halloween Disco	Wednesday 11th February 2026
Carmel College Culture Festival	Friday 13th February 2026
Ash Wednesday – Lent Begins	Wednesday 18th February 2026
WWI Battlefields Trip (Departs)	Friday 20th February 2026
Break for Half Term	Friday 20th February 2026
New York Trip (Departs)	Saturday 21st February 2026
Ski Trip (Departs)	Sunday 22nd February 2026
Return to College	Monday 2nd March 2026
MCAS Closes (10:00pm)	Monday 2nd March 2026
World Book Day	Thursday 5th March 2026
Carmel Reading Festival	Friday 6th March 2026
Arbor Goes Live (from 8:00am)	Monday 9th March 2026
Year 7 & 8 Retreat	Monday 23rd – Wednesday 25th March 2026
Holy Week Begins	Monday 30th March 2026
Sacrament of Reconciliation Offered	Wednesday 1st April 2026
Maundy Thursday – Lenten Liturgies (all year groups)	Thursday 2nd April 2026
Good Friday (Bank Holiday)	Friday 3rd April 2026
Lourdes HCPT Pilgrimage (Departs)	Saturday 4th April 2026
Paris Trip	Tuesday 14th April 2026
Return to College After Easter Break	Monday 20th April 2026
Year 8 Parents' Evening	Tuesday 28th April 2026
Year 10 Parents' Evening	Tuesday 19th May 2026





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# ACADEMIC

**KS3 Spring Assessment Window**- From Monday 9th February to Friday 20th February, students in Key Stage 3 will complete their Spring Assessments. These assessments help teachers identify strengths, address gaps, and plan next steps in learning.

Year 11 second Mock assessments and Y12 assessments will take place week commencing 16<sup>th</sup> February. Year 13 second Mock assessments will take place week commencing Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March.

Students will be told the date of each assessment in advance and will receive targeted revision and preparation in lessons.

Families can support at home by reviewing curriculum content [here](#):

**Exam Preparation: Year 11 and Year 13** - As we journey towards the summer exam season, our Year 11 and Year 13 students are fully engaged in structured revision and intervention. We continue to be impressed by the maturity and commitment shown as students build confidence and momentum 🌟

## **Year 11 Revision and Intervention Schedule**

### **Week commencing Monday 9th February**

• Exam Preparation Lunchtime: Monday to Friday (all subjects)/ After-school revision: Monday, Wednesday and Thursday/ Maths, English and Science

### **Week commencing Monday 16th February**

• Exam Preparation Lunchtime: Monday to Friday (all subjects)/ After-school revision: Monday, Wednesday and Thursday/ Maths, English and Science

**Families are encouraged to check MCAS daily for the 'Five-a-Day' revision questions supporting GCSE subjects.**

## **Revision Advice for All Students**

Effective revision is about working smart and staying consistent.

- Plan short, regular revision sessions
- Work in focused 30-45 minute blocks
- Take brief breaks to stay fresh
- Choose a quiet, organised workspace
- Tackle harder topics little and often
- Limit distractions and refocus quickly when they arise

Small, steady steps make a big difference 🌟

- Revision resources: [carmel.bhcet.org.uk/carmel-curriculum-intent/revision](http://carmel.bhcet.org.uk/carmel-curriculum-intent/revision)
- Curriculum information: [carmel.bhcet.org.uk/carmel-curriculum-intent](http://carmel.bhcet.org.uk/carmel-curriculum-intent)

# FRATELLI TUTTI - BROTHERS, SISTERS ALL!

This week, our Trust Pastoral Theme focuses on "Let Your Light Shine", inspired by the Gospel and rooted in Fratelli Tutti, Pope Francis' encyclical on human fraternity and social friendship. In Fratelli Tutti, Pope Francis reminds us that "we are all brothers and sisters" and calls us to recognise the dignity of every person, to build bridges rather than barriers, and to celebrate our differences as a source of strength. Throughout the week, each day will focus on a different theme linked to diversity, dignity, encounter and solidarity, explored through PSHE and explicitly connected to our school virtues, British Values and Catholic Social Teaching principles. The week culminates on Friday with the Carmel Culture Festival, a much-loved highlight of the Carmel calendar, created by students for students. Every year group will have the opportunity to visit stalls, taste food from around the world, enjoy music and dance, and celebrate the rich tapestry of cultures that make up the Carmel family. It is a joyful celebration of belonging, where every culture is valued, every voice matters, and every student is encouraged to let their light shine.

# SIXTH FORM UPDATES

**New York Trip (Half Term!)**- We are excited that 46 students will be travelling to New York at half term for a once-in-a-lifetime experience. The itinerary includes:

🏀 an NBA match 🎭 a Broadway show 🗽 iconic landmarks including the Empire State Building, Central Park and Grand Central Station What an incredible opportunity to build memories, broaden horizons and live life to the full.

## **Sixth Form Parents' Evening - Reminder**

A reminder that Sixth Form Parents' Evening takes place on Tuesday 10th February, 4:00pm-6:30pm.

Arrival information:

- Year 12 parents/carers: Sign in at Main Reception and collect a map
- Year 13 parents/carers: Sign in at the Atrium, where a map and a copy of your child's mock results will be available

This evening provides an important opportunity to meet subject teachers and discuss strengths and next steps.

We look forward to welcoming you into college and continuing our strong partnership of support.



# PASTORAL



**Attendance Challenge: Keep Your Streak Going!**- This half term, we are continuing our 7-week Attendance Streak Challenge for students in Years 7-11. Every full day in school builds a streak and if it breaks, students start again and aim higher, just like levelling up in a game 🎯

To celebrate great attendance:

- Weekly sweets draw
- One £20 voucher winner per year group
- One raffle entry for every full week of 100% attendance, with bonus entries for perfect streaks

Every day really does count ✨

A gentle reminder:

- Holidays must not be taken during term time
- Medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside school hours where possible
- Arriving on time helps students start the day calmly and positively

If your child is experiencing difficulties with attendance, wellbeing or engagement, please contact their Pastoral Learning Manager via [admin@carmel.bhcet.org.uk](mailto:admin@carmel.bhcet.org.uk) so we can work together to offer support.



**Uniform Expectations Reminder-** Thank you for your continued support in maintaining our high uniform standards. A reminder that:

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

Your support helps ensure consistency and a strong sense of belonging for all students.



**Safeguarding- 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 Shop: Donations Needed-** We are grateful for continued support of our Renew Shop, which helps ensure all students have access to essential uniform items. We are currently in need of donations, particularly:

- School ties and other clean, good-quality uniform items

Thank you for supporting this important initiative that promotes inclusion, dignity and care for all.



**Children's Mental Health Week (9th-15th February)-** As part of Children's Mental Health Week, we are highlighting the support available to students and families and celebrating the partnerships that help us care for young people.

We are proud to work with the Mental Health Support Team (MHST) in Darlington, who provide early intervention for students experiencing mild to moderate emotional or mental health difficulties, support school staff, and help connect families with the right services at the right time.

We also continue to work closely with Darlington Mind, who offer safe, supportive spaces for young people aged 11-18 to talk, build confidence and develop coping strategies. Their friendly, trained team listens without judgement and supports young people who may be feeling anxious, overwhelmed or unsure where to turn.

Together, we are committed to ensuring that no young person feels alone and that support is always available when it is needed 💙



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# CARMEL ARE SWITCHING TO ARBOR!

**📢 Important Update for Parents and Carers: We're moving to Arbor-** We're pleased to share that over half term, Carmel College will be moving to a new Management Information System (MIS) called Arbor. This upgrade will help us run key school systems more efficiently and improve how we communicate with you about attendance, payments, trips and important updates.

Please read the information below carefully so you're ready for the change.

**★ Most important information-** 🖱️ You cannot do anything in Arbor until ***you receive your Arbor welcome email from us after half term.***

That email is essential. It contains the link you must use to set your password for the first time.

Without this email, you will not be able to log in to the Parent Portal or the Parent App.

So for now, there is nothing you need to do until that welcome email arrives.

## **📅 Key dates and actions**

🕒 Continue using My Child At School (MCAS) until 10:00pm on Monday 2nd March 2026

🚫 Temporary pause on online payments and meal top-ups

There will be no online facility between:

🕒 10:00pm Monday 2nd March and 8:00am Monday 9th March

Please ensure meal balances are topped up and any trips or payments are completed before 10:00pm on Monday 2nd March. 🚀 **Arbor goes live at 8:00am on Monday 9th March**

📱 **After half term: how to get started-** Once Arbor is live, you will receive your welcome email from us.

**Step 1** 📧 Open the email and follow the link to set your password. (This must be done first.)

**Step 2** After setting your password, you can: 💻 Log in to the Arbor Parent Portal on a laptop or computer 📱 Download the Arbor Parent App on your phone or tablet and sign in using the same email and password

If you have more than one child at Carmel, you'll be able to switch between them once logged in.

You can also turn on app notifications so you do not miss messages from school.

👉 **Please remember: none of this is possible until you have received and used your welcome email.**

📱 **Downloading the Arbor Parent App-** Once you have set your password, you can download the Arbor Parent App from: 🍏 Apple App Store (iPhone/iPad) or 🤖 Google Play Store (Android devices)

Simply search for "Arbor Parent App", download it, then log in using the details you created from your welcome email.

📖 **Getting Started Guide (please use this link)** Arbor has a helpful step-by-step guide explaining how to log in and use the Parent Portal and App. [Click here.](#)

This guide covers: First-time login/ Using the Parent Portal and App/ Accessing information for more than one child/ Troubleshooting common issues

📞 Need support? If you have any questions, please contact us on 01325 254525 or email [admin@carmel.bhcet.org](mailto:admin@carmel.bhcet.org) and we will be happy to help. Thank you for your patience and support as we make this positive change together. ❤️

# LIFE TO THE FULL AT CARMEL!

💬 **Heart to Heart – Student Wellbeing Space-** Our Heart to Heart wellbeing space has now been running for two weeks and is already having a really positive impact.

- Every Wednesday at break time/ Seminar Room/ Open to all year groups/ Led by Sixth Form students, supported by the Mental Health and Wellbeing Team/ Around 20 students attending each week

Heart to Heart is a calm, welcoming space where students can pause, talk, listen or simply sit with a hot chocolate. There is no pressure to speak. Students can just come and be.

As we enter Lent, Heart to Heart also links directly with the St Vincent de Paul Society Heart to Heart Campaign, supporting those who experience loneliness or isolation.

💜 **Lent 2025, Ramadan and Walking Together in Faith-** This year, Lent and Ramadan begin at the same time, offering a powerful opportunity for shared reflection and solidarity. As a Catholic community, we recognise and honour our Muslim brothers and sisters as they begin the holy month of Ramadan, a time of prayer, fasting, charity and spiritual renewal. Across both traditions, we are reminded of shared values: reflection, self-discipline, generosity, care for the poor and attentiveness to God and to one another. At Carmel, this will be marked through prayer and worship:

- Students in Years 8-13 will take part in a Celebration of the Word with the Imposition of Ashes
- All Year 7 students will attend Mass with the Imposition of Ashes, celebrated by Father Barrie





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## LIFE TO THE FULL AT CARMEL!

💬❤️ **Lent 2025 and the SVP Heart to Heart Appeal-** Our Lenten Appeal 2025 will focus on the SVP Heart to Heart Campaign, raising funds to support the work of the St Vincent de Paul Society, particularly with those who are lonely or living on the margins. Students will be encouraged to reflect on how simple acts of kindness, generosity and time can make a real difference.

🍀 **St Patrick's Day Celebration-** We are really looking forward to a St Patrick's Day celebration on Monday 17th March at St Augustine's Parish Centre.

- The afternoon will begin in church with the Youth SVP leading the Stations of the Cross
- This will be followed by a celebration and party for parishioners, with a special focus on our elderly community
- We would be very grateful for donations of cakes and financial contributions to help us provide refreshments and create a joyful afternoon full of warmth and great craic

Further details about donations will follow shortly.

💖 **Valentine's Events at Carmel- Send Flowers for Valentine's - Peru Project**

- £2 per flower
- Students can add their own special message
- Flowers will be delivered on Friday 13th February
- Available to purchase in the Atrium from Thursday 5th February
- Sweet treats also on sale from Monday 9th February
- All funds raised support the Peru Project

**Year 7 & 8 Valentine's Disco**

- Wednesday 11th February 2026
- 3:40pm - 6:00pm
- JC Hall
- £5 entry
- DJ, dancing, fun and games
- Payment via MCAS

🌍 **Fratelli Tutti and Culture Festival-** As part of our Fratelli Tutti focus on dignity, encounter and solidarity, we are looking forward to Culture Day and the Lunchtime show!:

- Friday 13th February
- 12:45pm in the JC Hall
- £1 wristband for dances and music at lunchtime
- A day of celebration, joy, music and shared culture
- Culminates our wider Culture Festival celebrations

🧐 **Fun House Friday - The Traitors-** Fun House Friday has been a real highlight this half term. Carmel Does The Traitors has been a huge success

- A well-earned reward for students, particularly our Sixth Form, recognising their hard work and commitment
- A brilliant example of joy, laughter and community spirit at Carmel
- We look forward to Culture Festival next week and Heart to Heart Bingo in the final week of this half term!

💛 **Children's Mental Health Awareness Week- Week commencing 9th February:**

- Carmel is supporting Children's Mental Health Awareness Week
- Listening Post lollies are being sold to raise awareness and support wellbeing initiatives
- A reminder to all students that support is always available and that talking really does help

**Enrichment at Carmel: A Key Expectation** 🌟 - At Carmel, we believe life to the full includes opportunities beyond the classroom. We are proud to offer over 80 enrichment activities, and our expectation is that every student is involved in at least one enrichment activity each week. Whether it's sport, music, academic clubs, leadership, service or creativity, enrichment helps students build confidence, discover talents, make friendships and flourish as individuals. [Find our Enrichment Timetable here.](#)

**Support Carmel Through The Parents Lottery** 💎 - We are grateful for the ongoing support of families and the wider community through The Parents Lottery. This is a simple but powerful way for parents, grandparents, friends and neighbours to come together and invest in the future of our young people.

Each £1 ticket gives you the chance to win £25,000 every Friday, along with a range of other prizes, while also helping fund important projects that benefit our students. Contributions support essential resources such as library books, classroom technology and wider enrichment opportunities, helping our school community to continue to thrive. [Join here:](#)