



Bishop Challoner
Catholic Secondary School

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NEWSLETTER

No. 166 – September 2015

Dear Student, Parent, Carer, Friends of the School,

You are all very welcome back to our new school year. I hope you had a restful summer holiday, are refreshed and looking forward to the new year.

It has been a real pleasure to welcome our new year 7 students into our community and they have settled in well. Year 7 and 11 joined the parish community of St Joseph's on the first Thursday for Mass and again, many year 7's and their families joined us on the evening of the 7th for our Welcome Mass celebrated by Father Mark and Father Benjamin. We wish Father Benjamin well in his new parish and thank him for his time with us.

Many thanks too for all your prayers and good wishes as I take up my new post. Teaching is a wonderfully creative and privileged vocation. Leading this community is like finding "the pearl of great price".

Bishop Challoner is a community where individuals are loved and given the opportunity to love God, neighbour and self. We have an inspiring tradition of hard work, great achievement and generous hearts. I wish for nothing less as our story unfolds.

In our fortieth anniversary year, declared a "Holy Year of Mercy" by Pope Francis, I would ask you to pray for us and to remember two things. Firstly, as Micah writes so simply, "be just, love mercy and walk humbly with your God". Secondly, as encouraged by our patron "do ordinary things extraordinarily well"

With best wishes and prayers

J P Wright
Headteacher

Forthcoming Dates

22 September 2015	Y8 Trip to Hillingdon
23 September 2015	Y7 Trip to Hillingdon
24 September 2015	6-8:30pm Open Evening for Year 5/6 students and parents
25 September 2015	Patronal Feast Day – Early closure – Buses booked for 1:30pm departure
28 September 2015	6pm Sports Awards Evening (invitation only)
7/8 October 2015	Y7 Pilgrimage
12/13 October 2015	Y11 Mock Interview Evening
19 – 23 October 2015	Berlin/Krakow Trip
26 – 30 October 2015	HALF TERM
6 November 2015	INSET Day

Year 11 Student Leaders Visit Ufton Court

On Tuesday 8th September, Year 11's 90 student leaders travelled to Ufton Court for a day of leadership training. The day began at 10:00 am with each student leader filling in a questionnaire to determine their leadership type. Following on from this, they were informed of the qualities and characteristics of each category, before organising themselves into small groups consisting of different types of leader.



They remained in these groups for the course of the day, completing tasks such as building trebuchets, and team games. They were encouraged to take turns in different roles to assess their skills and weaknesses, and had time to evaluate the performance and success of the team after each task, identifying the skills they needed and used.



Overall, the day was a great success and saw the team of student leaders bonding as a group as well as discovering more about themselves as leaders, helping them to improve and adjust for their new roles.

Eden Kartar (Head Boy)

Geography News

Y8 Geography day trip to the Hartford Stream in the New Forest is being planned for November 10th, 12th and 13th (2 tutor groups per day). A letter will be sent home shortly, the cost will be £23.50. Likewise, a guest company, Zoolab will be in school this term to speak with Y9, price to be arranged. Both enrichment activities greatly add to the students learning and enjoyment of the subject as well as being great experiences.

The Y10 Geography residential to the Isle of Wight next May is being organised, Ms Revitt will send a letter to Y10 geographers soon.

PE News

Mr Sheers took 15 Year 8 pupils who represented the school at rugby last year to watch the Rugby World Cup warm up game, England V Ireland at Twickenham on Saturday 5th September. England were victorious winning 21-13. A great time was had by all and it was a fitting tribute to the Year 8 boys' rugby team who performed so well last season.



Aiming for Excellence Evenings

Following the success of our recent Aiming for Excellence evenings for Years 7-11, please find a summary of the key messages, advice and guidance. (Mrs Smith has already sent a letter home to our newest students in Y7).

Pastoral Care

Your child's form tutor is always the first point of contact for any concerns – our approach to supporting your child's all round development is summarised by the expression 'Walk With Me' and we believe that 'if we know about it, we can deal with it effectively together'.

A wider team of individuals will support your child's personal, social and academic progress and this may include Mrs Cottam (SENCO), Mrs Morley (Emotional Literacy Support Advisor), Mary (School Chaplain), Mr Howe and Mrs Darling (Careers' Advice and Guidance), as well as the respective Heads of Year, Heads of Departments and subject staff.

Attendance

As always, any absence MUST be reported to school immediately – this is more critical than ever with the advent of the Department for Education's directive to Local Authorities and Head teachers to redress unauthorised absences.

Where a child has 10 ½ day sessions of unauthorised absence, the Local Authority will automatically issue a fixed penalty notice of £60 to be paid within 21 days. We do NOT intend to get to this point and will schedule attendance meetings before this happens where there is a need – with an overall attendance rate of 97% for the last academic year we do not anticipate this being an issue but feel it important to have informed you of the changes in the law. More details available via this link <http://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/HTLCWorkforceDevelopment/BEAT0815-InformationonPenaltyNoticesfornon-attendanceatschool-advicetoparentsandcarersleaflet-July2015revised-final.pdf>

Curriculum

A broad and balanced offer in Y7-9 following the new national curriculum guidelines we believe prepares our students for their GCSE studies and their pathway choices.

With the demise of modular exams, we are building learning habits from Y7 that we believe prepare our students for the demands of Linear GCSE exams – where everything is assessed at the end of the course (some of the more practical subjects at GCSE will retain an element of Controlled Assessment).

To support this '5 Year curriculum', our Home Learning approach has been streamlined and students and parents will be able to take advantage of a new partnership we have developed with the online company 'Show My Homework'. Via a login (details to students and parents to follow later this half-term) what has been set, when it is due, (and if it has been submitted on time or not), resources to be used and links to other materials to support the tasks can be seen at a click of a button. (See paragraph below about PM registration and Home Learning)

Parents can look for 3 distinctive 'types' or 'styles of homework' being set by subject staff: preparatory, consolidation or learning. Each is different and will be helping to build the skills, knowledge and application of each to enable students to meet success criteria.

Some parents asked if it was possible that Home Learning could be completed during PM registration – this is unlikely as PM sessions are designed for silent reading (students who do not read regularly are statistically proven to have an 81% chance of not achieving 5 good passes at GCSE level compared with those who do read for at least 20 minutes 3 times a week). Where Home Learning is being undertaken, please bear in mind that a PM session is only 30 minutes in length so it is highly improbable that everything is being completed to even a satisfactory standard!

For students in Y7-10, awareness to the change in GCSE grading and subject content was made. Nationally, the current Y10 have begun new GCSEs this September in English and Mathematics (graded on a 1-9 scale) and content is much, much broader and more challenging: there are no longer tiers of entry for English - one paper is sat by all students, whereas Maths retains a Foundation and Higher tier. All other subjects at GCSE levels are graded at A*- U for the current Y10 – this will change for students in lower years as they progress through the school.

Support on Offer

A range of opportunities to support students to achieve their 'personal best' exists. This includes, to name but a few, 1:1 or small group work in Literacy and Numeracy for targeted students; homework club; mentoring of GCSE students; peer-mentoring of Reading for KS3 students; revision workshops and masterclasses for Y10 and Y11, with Saturday school for Y11 nearer to final exams.

Helping you to help us to help them

It was mooted that if there were enough parents interested, we could put on a workshop(s) to look at 'Learning Habits and Revision Techniques'. If this is something you would be interested in, please contact adminoffice@bcs.hants.sch.uk and express your interest/availability, marking the email for the attention of Mr A Bazen, Deputy Head. Replies are appreciated by the end of this half-term, 20th October 2015, please.

If there is enough interest, the session(s) would most probably run on either a Saturday morning or during a scheduled parents' evening.