



Bishop Walsh

Catholic School Newsletter

Parent Newsletter – Friday 15th December 2023

Follow Us on X



Not everything we do is published in our Newsletter. Follow us on X
@bishopwalsh



Forthcoming Dates

Advent Service 'Open the Doors' – Thursday 21st December

Autumn Term Ends: Friday 22nd December
(Pupils will leave school at 1.00pm)

Spring Term Starts: Monday 8th January

Year 11 Geography trip to Birmingham City Centre – Tuesday 23rd January

Year 11 Parents' Evening – Thursday 25th January

Year 13 Parents' Evening – Thursday 8th February

Ski Trip to Italy – Sunday 11th February to Saturday 17th February

Half-term - Monday 12th February to Friday 16th February

Click here - [Term Dates and INSET Dates](#)

LC Assessments

Year 8 LC3 Report – Friday 15th December

Year 12 LC1 Report – Friday 22nd December

Year 11 LC4 Window (Mock Exams) – Monday 4th December – Friday 22nd December

Year 11 LC4 Report – Friday 19th January

Year 13 LC4 Window (Mock Exams) – Wednesday 10th January – Friday 19th January

Year 13 LC4 Report – Friday 2nd February

Year 9 LC5 Window – Monday 22nd January – Friday 26th January

Year 9 LC5 Report – Friday 9th February

Important Dates in the Liturgical Calendar

The Nativity of the Lord – Monday 25th December

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph – Sunday 31st December

Mary, Mother of God – Monday 1st January

The Epiphany of the Lord – Sunday 7th January

The Baptism of the Lord – Monday 8th January





Let Us Pray



*Christ, come into our world of darkness
Light up our lives with your coming.
Fulfil all our longings with the joy of your
birth.
Strengthen our resolve to work for change
in our world.
To share the hope of your birth that each
Advent brings.
Amen.*

Christmas Message from the Principal



Dear Parents/Carers

The end of another year approaches...2024 is just around the corner...and students and staff alike are very much looking forward to the Christmas holidays.

I hope you too are all well, and are enjoying any preparations for the Christmas break ahead. As we approach the end of another busy, highly successful term, I just wanted to keep you up to date on recent events, and to confirm arrangements for the end of term and the start of the new year.

School term ends on **Friday 22nd December**. We have a morning liturgy and Christmas activities planned for the children on that day. Pupils will leave school at 1.00pm. The school office will close at 2.00pm.

School returns on **Monday 8th January** for all pupils.

Year 11 have had a busy few weeks of mock exams, helping them to prepare for 'the real thing' and we have been delighted with their maturity and motivation to do well. As you know, Bishop Walsh Catholic School achieved its best GCSE results ever in the summer. We look forward to celebrating some excellent mock results with Year 11 over the coming weeks.

I wish you all a very happy and holy Christmas.

Mrs Brodie
Principal

Catholic Life of the School



We light candles as we prepare for Christmas to remind us that Christ is the light of the world every morning in our sacred space time. We use the symbolism of the window to represent an Advent calendar, creating imagery that reminds us, as we lead up to the birth of Christ, the coming of our Saviour in symbolic ways. The colourful demonstration of celebration of the birth of Christ has been exciting to witness in every form group (see below).

Our Advent service taking place on Thursday 21st December is entitled 'Open the Doors', where we continue this symbolic representation through dance, drama, music and more. We also celebrate Year 7's successful first term at Bishop Walsh Catholic School.

Pupils took part in a liturgy led by Fr. Allen, reminding us that Advent is also a time for reconciliation. Assemblies have reflected on hope, peace, joy and love.

Our charitable activities have been prominent over the past few weeks: talent shows, fancy dress days, non-uniform days, cake sales and more mean that our pupils have raised over £1000 in the past few weeks. Thank you for the donations of warm clothes for St. Chad's Sanctuary and Crisis Appeal. Staff have also been collecting new children's toys, sent in as donations for children in our local communities. Our senior citizens will also receive a hamper; thanks to the food technology department

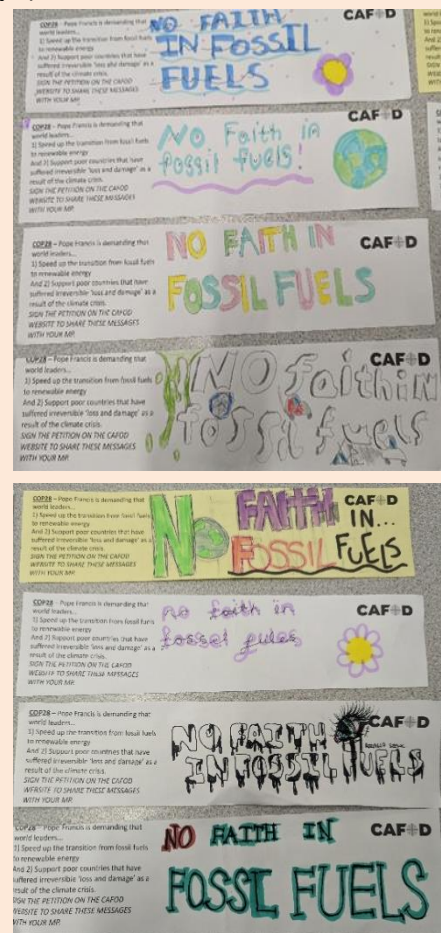
Our visit from Fr. Hudson's Care (Walk a Mile Campaign) reminds us to pray for the vulnerable in society over the Christmas period, particularly looking at the homeless in our community and also refugees. More projects to follow on this.

We invite you to celebrate Mass over the Christmas period. Please see Christmas Mass times in our local parishes.

Sixth form pupils, who are working towards their St John Paul II award, have been planning and delivering the Year 7 chaplaincy team meetings. We have been supporting CAFOD's campaign around the COP29 meeting, asking world leaders to do more to prevent climate change and support those most affected by it.

We wish you a happy, healthy and holy Christmas.

Mrs Moakes
Assistant Principal i/c Catholic Life





Staff News



At the end of this term, we say goodbye to Dr Harper who has supported the school fantastically over the last year. We wish Miss Walsh every success in her new role as we welcome Mr O'Reilly as the new teacher of History. We also welcome our new data manager, Miss Macilwraith.

Year 7 Talent Show



Over the last few weeks, Year 7 pupils have auditioned for the Year 7 Talent Show. We have heard Christmas songs, watched choreographed dances, experienced comedy shows and listened to an incredible trumpet performance. The final took place on Friday 8th December and the winner was revealed to be Harry with his rendition of Justin Bieber's 'Mistletoe'.

His winning performance will be showcased at the Christmas concert on the last day of term!

Well done to everyone for getting involved, you have shown real courage!

Miss Page
Talent Show Coordinator

Advent Service – 'Open the Doors'

We will be celebrating our Advent service, 'Open the Doors', at Bishop Walsh Catholic School on Thursday 21st December from 5.30pm.

Thank you to everyone who has responded to the recent ParentMail survey.



Sixth Form News

This half term has been very busy for our Sixth Form students. Year 12 have completed their first set of Post 16 learning cycle assessments and the vast majority Year 13 students have completed their UCAS application with offers coming through already!

Sixth Form Fancy Dress Day

On Friday 8th December, Sixth Form students came to school in fancy dress. We had a vast array of different costumes from Superheroes to Super Mario Brothers! In total the event raised nearly £200, which will go towards The Red Cross. Thank you to all parents and students who contributed.

Lord Mayor's Quiz – The University of Birmingham



On Wednesday 15th November, our Sixth Form quiz team took part in the Lord Mayor's quiz along with pupils from 60 schools across Birmingham. After answering questions set by University professors in the fields of geography, history, maths, literature and science, the team took an early lead and were placed fourth, winning £500 for our Sixth Form.

Sixth Form News

Key Stage 5 Debate - Coventry



On Friday 24th November, our KS5 debate team took part in our Catholic Partnership Schools debate. After a gruelling debate focused on whether funding for the HS2 should be continued to Manchester, our team grabbed a well-deserved win! The judges commented on the excellent arguments and articulated presentations from our debate representatives. Well done to all!

X

X

Follow us for Sixth Form news - @BWSixthFormVI
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all!

X

The Sixth Form Leadership Team

Winter Water Safety from West Midlands Fire Service



WMFS
West Midlands
Fire Service

Please click below for some important information from West Midlands Fire Service regarding Winter Water Safety.

[Water safety - West Midlands Fire Service \(wmfs.net\)](http://wmfs.net)



Lourdes Fundraising



On a very wet and rainy evening, we ventured out in the minibus to Lea Marston Hotel to provide entertainment to the Catenians. Our choir, led by the talented duo Mr and Mrs Dawson, sang a variety of traditional and new Christmas carols. This was a true highlight in the Catenians social calendar as they listened to the beautiful voices of Gladys, Abigail, Maria, Lilly, Nadia and Sonachi. After the carols, two of our brilliant Year 12s, Sam and Lizzie, put their public speaking skills to the test as they made their charitable appeal to the Catenians in support of the life-changing pilgrimage they will embark upon in May 2024 to Lourdes. A night of festive cheer and talent all round!

Miss Hickson
Lourdes Pilgrimage Trip Leader



Physical Education

PE extra-curricular attendance has been a huge success this term. We look forward to continue to offer lots of opportunities for pupils as we move into term 2B. Please see below the extra-curricular timetable and sporting events on offer next half term. Please encourage your son or daughter to attend.



**Physical Education Department
Extra- Curricular Activities
2023-24- Term 2A**

	JSC	SPORTS HALL	FIELD	LUNCH
MONDAY	Girls Football Years 7-11	Volleyball Year 7-11		Table Tennis- Gym Early lunch
TUESDAY		Badminton Year 7-9 (PE)		Table Tennis- SH Week A- Early lunch Week B-Late lunch
WEDNESDAY	Hockey Years 7-11	Badminton Year 10-13	Rugby Years 7-10	Table Tennis- Gym Week A- Late lunch Week B-Early lunch
THURSDAY	Netball Years 7-11	Basketball Years 7-11	Football Year 7	Basketball- Gym Early lunch
FRIDAY		Intra-school fixtures Years 7-13		Table Tennis- Gym Week A- Early lunch Week B-Late lunch

Term 2B- Sporting Events/Fixtures

DATE	ACTIVITY/SPORT	GENDER	AGE GROUP
10/1/24	Netball- Sutton Schools Competition	F	7
11/1/24	Badminton- Sutton Schools Competition	M	7-11
17/1/24	Netball- Sutton Schools Competition	F	7
18/1/24	Badminton- Sutton Schools Competition	F	7-11
24/1/24	Netball- Sutton Schools Competition	F	8
25/1/24	Basketball- Sutton Schools Competition	M	8-9
31/1/24	Netball- Sutton Schools Competition	F	8
31/1/24	Table tennis vs St George School	M & F	7-11
1/2/24	Basketball- Sutton Schools Competition	M	10-11
2/2/24	Rugby vs Bishop Vesey	M	9
5/2/24	Rugby vs Bishop Vesey	M	10
6/2/24	Indoor Athletics- Sutton Schools Competition	M	7-8
8/2/24	Indoor Athletics- Sutton Schools Competition	F	7-8
TBC	Football vs TBC- QF Birmingham Cup	M	9
TBC	Football vs TBC- QF Birmingham Cup	M	10
TBC	Football vs Plantsbrook– Semi-final District Cup	M	10
TBC	Football vs TBC– Final District Cup	M	10



Toiletry Amnesty

In the new year, I will be organising a toiletry amnesty for local charities in the Birmingham area. These charities accept new and used toiletries for people in need. If you have any toiletries you will no longer use for men, women and children please think about donating these. I will send out more details in the new year.

Mrs Griffiths
Science Department

Christmas Jumper Day & Christmas Dinner



This year, **Bishop Walsh Christmas Jumper Day** will be on Wednesday 20th December.

The cost is £1. Monies raised will be split between school fund and Fr. Hudson's charity, which the school is supporting this year.



Christmas lunch (including a pudding) will be served on this day at a cost of £2.41.

Pupils are encouraged to wear their festive Christmas jumper underneath their blazer on this day.

Miss Forker
Head of Year 9

Inclement weather

**In case of
Inclement
Weather**



On the rare occasion, that severe weather poses a risk to the health and safety of pupils and staff, a decision will be made about opening the school. This decision will be communicated by ParentMail at the earliest possible opportunity. Please be aware that any decision taken will be in the best interests of the pupils and staff and is never taken lightly. The school must consider factors such as the safety of the site and weather forecasts in decision making.



Should you need assistance over the Christmas period

For Parents/Carers

1. Urgent mental health help line: ring 0121 262 3555 for advice and support. This line is available 24hours, 7 days a week and can be used whether you are known to the service or not.
2. Foodbanks: https://www.findfoodbanksbrum.org.uk/project_category/food-banks
3. Domestic Violence: Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid www.bswaid.org
Helpline: 0808 800 0028. Open 7 days a week 9.15am – 5.15pm (closed bank holidays)
4. There is a lot of other early help in the city for all young people and families. Click here for see a whole range of offers: Birmingham Children's Partnership - Resources | Birmingham Children's Partnership - Resources | Birmingham City Council
5. If you are a student, or parent in need of support, Childline is available for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Calls are not recorded, and their number does not show up on any phone bills, or records. Childline - 0800 1111
6. Any child protection/safeguarding concerns can be raised with children's services in the first instance – contact number 0121-303-1888.
7. Contact the Police on 999 in the case of any emergency.

For Children and Young People

1. Kooth: www.kooth.com (Online chat, resources and direct help for 10-25yr olds)
2. Pause (Mental health and emotional wellbeing support): to register and request support online via <https://www.forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk/services/13-pause> or call the registration line 0207 841 4470.
3. Childline is available for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Calls are not recorded, and their number does not show up on any phone bills, or records. Childline - 0800 1111
4. Samaritans Whatever you're going through, a Samaritan will face it with you. We're here 24 hours a day, 365 days a year call 116 123
5. Shout – text SHOUT to 85258 Shout 85258 is a free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service for anyone who is struggling to cope.
6. HopelineUK - call 0800 068 4141 or Text 07860039967 HOPELINEUK advisers want to work with you to understand why these thoughts of suicide might be present.
7. Hub of Hope - this is a website that shows all the help that is available in your locality.
8. Check out the Well being and Mental Health Newsletter for lots of links to other help.



Links to the local parishes



As a school community we are fortunate to have links to our local parishes. The parishes provide the main connection between our families and the Catholic Church. Please click below for links to the local parish websites which includes their current service times:

[Holy Trinity & Sacred Heart RC Parishes](#)

[St Nicholas RC Parish](#)

[Holy Cross and St Francis Parish](#)

Christmas Mass Times

Holy Trinity and Sacred Heart Parishes

Christmas Eve - 5.00pm, 7.00pm & 10.00pm

Christmas Day – 9.00am & 11.00am

St. Nicholas Catholic Church

Christmas Eve – 3.00pm, 6.00pm & 9.00pm

Christmas Day – 9.00am & 11.00am

Holy Cross & St Francis

Christmas Eve – Please see Parish Website - [Holy Cross and St Francis Parish](#)

Christmas Day - Please see Parish Website - [Holy Cross and St Francis Parish](#)

The Abbey

Christmas Eve – 6.00pm & 11.30pm

Christmas Day – 10.00am & 12.00pm



Dear Parents/Carers and Students,

HAPPY CHRISTMAS – REMINDER FROM WEST MIDLANDS POLICE

With Christmas fast approaching, it is important that students are reminded what we, as a school community, expect of them in terms of behaviour during the festive break from school. Whilst we hope they will enjoy socialising with friends and family, we also want to ensure they feel confident to keep themselves safe and away from danger, crime and anti-social behaviour.

Parents/carers and students should already be aware that, as part of our safeguarding arrangements, the school has a two-way information sharing agreement in place with West Midlands Police, and we are active members of the local Police & Schools Panel. This joint approach helps us to intervene early to prevent and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour involving our students; and provide additional support and up-to-date safety messages.

In partnership with the police, we would like to remind our students about the following: -

- **Personal Safety:**
 - Be aware of your surroundings, take care of friends and family members, and keep Christmas gifts and other valuables (such as smartphones/watches/headphones) out of public view whenever possible, especially during your journey to and from school, when you return in the New Year.
 - For apple devices parents/carers can active 'Find My' which includes Activation Lock – A feature that is designed to prevent anyone else from using your iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch, if it's ever lost or stolen. Activation Lock turns on automatically when you turn on 'Find My' on your device – more details on this feature are available here: [Activation Lock for iPhone and iPad - Apple Support](#)
 - Don't drink alcohol, take illegal drugs or unknown substances; they can have a big impact on your health and safety, behaviour, and your ability to do well at school and enjoy other interests and activities. They can also be addictive and have unpredictable side effects, including sudden death! Information is available at www.talktofrank.com
- **Social Media:** Don't allow your use of social media to put you at risk of grooming, exploitation, or regret in future. Use social media positively and avoid being negative about anyone online as comments/actions may be traced back to you and you will be held accountable.
- **Weapons in public places:** Carrying a knife or other weapon will get you a criminal record which can have life-long effects on travel and job prospects. Those who carry knives are also much more likely to be injured by them. Don't take BB Guns, Gel Blasters/Guns, or any other real looking toy guns into public spaces as these can cause alarm to the public - which could receive a Police Firearms response.
- **Off-road bikes:** These can only be ridden on private land with the landowner's permission. Don't risk your life and future prospects by illegally riding these on the road.



- **E-Scooters:** In the UK, you must be at least 18 years old and hold a provisional or full driving licence to ride a hire e- scooter. A privately owned e-scooter can only be used in a private place with the landowner's permission; they are illegal to use on a road or in a public place.
- **Remember the company you keep:** If your friend breaks the law, you may also be held responsible for that crime – even if you weren't the one directly responsible.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'NM Brodie'.

Mrs Brodie
Principal
Bishop Walsh Catholic School

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'RN North'.

Richard North
Chief Superintendent - Birmingham LPA
West Midlands Police



Dear Parent or Guardian

Trespassing on the railway network is extremely dangerous and endangers not only the lives of those on the track, but also passengers, railway staff and the general public.

Many people - especially young people - fail to understand the danger they put themselves and others in, when they make the choice to stray onto the rail network. As the Christmas break approaches, we are already seeing an increase in the number of incidents being reported and incidents we're seeing involve children and young people:

- Walking along the railway lines
- Throwing stones at trains
- Placing objects on the railway lines
- Using the railway as a playground

I am sure you agree that all of the above activities are extremely dangerous.

The British Transport Police and Network Rail are seeking the support of parents, guardians and the local community to highlight the danger and implications of these activities to help us reduce the number of young people putting themselves and others at significant risk.

To assist with the conversation there are a number of online videos available and range depending on the age group of your child:

www.switchedonrailsafety.co.uk

www.networkrail.co.uk/communities/safety-in-the-community/safety-education/

www.youvstrain.co.uk

Key Messages

- ✓ Trains are **ALWAYS** running on the railway and can differ in times meaning that you can never predict when a train will pass
- ✓ The Electricity is **ALWAYS** switched on around the railway
- ✓ Always **Stop, Look and Listen** before using a Level Crossing
- ✓ **DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR CHILDREN ARE?**

Trespassing on the railway is also a **criminal offence** which can involve your child obtaining a criminal record and a fine of £1000.

If you wish to report any information to us, please call us on Freephone 0800 40 50 40 or text the information to 61016.