



# Our Lady's Catholic High School



A National Teaching School

Friday, 23 October 2020

The Theme for Monday, 2 November is **THE BEATITUDES (MATTHEW 5:1-12)**

On Sunday, 1 November we celebrate All Saints Day. Not only do we celebrate those who loved and served God and have gone before us, but also those 'ordinary' people who walk amongst us today, who show small acts of kindness. We give thanks for these people, and if this is you, then feel blessed to be part of a great crowd.

**Dear Father**

**Let us remember those who have loved You and gone before us, and guide each of us to be Your people, the saints.**

**Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer**

All of us are called to be saints...it is by living with love and offering Christian witness in our daily tasks that we are called to become saints... Pope Francis

## **FACE MASKS**

Thank you for ensuring that your child attends school with a face mask. They have been worn in an exemplary manner, especially since the clarification about ensuring that both mouth and nose are covered when walking through school.

As we approach the end of the first half term, I ask that everyone **reviews the condition of their child's face mask**. Some are becoming rather worn and some are dirty. We recommend a washable, reusable mask and ask that every child carries a spare with them in case of loss or damage.

## **CLOSE OF HALF TERM**

We arrive at the close of the most unusual half term ever in my many years in education. I believe that, through working closely together, we have achieved our opening aim for our school in September: to keep everyone safe while trying to ensure our provision was as close to normal as possible. This has only been possible through the consistent and unswerving support of our parents and carers. You will have been very anxious back in September; numerous enquiries were welcomed about safety matters and support for individuals; new routines were explained to pupils and staff and had to be implemented; Ofsted called and were very supportive of our approach. Very importantly, approximately 8000 separate lessons have been taught in as safe and supportive an environment as we could create.

We have had two positive cases among our pupils to date and no cases among our staff. We have experimented with various approaches to 'blended learning' where work is provided for pupils in the actual lesson and is also available at home for pupils who must isolate. The technique that we use depends on the situation and this can be very different across subjects and year groups, but we have delivered several live lessons where this was the optimum method of delivery. Where not, pre-recorded lessons have been available and lessons from Google Classrooms. This does place a very clear additional strain on teachers and can feel like planning two lessons for the one 'blended' lesson. I am grateful to our wonderful staff who have risen to the challenges placed before them and have done so with such good grace and determination to provide the best for our pupils.

Have a good half term break and let us hope and pray that the next half term goes equally as well.

## **GOVERNING BODY**

Our Full Governing Body met last Thursday with the support of Zoom. Mr Philip Rydeard had already indicated his wish to step down as the Chair of the Governing Body, following 20 years of quite outstanding service. His relationship with our school goes back even further as his three children all attended our school. Seventeen years ago, he was instrumental in appointing me to serve as headteacher and throughout all of that time he has been steadfast in support of our school, our staff and of course our pupils.

His service as Chair has seen many evolutions for our school: in 2004 we became a specialist school in Mathematics and Computing; in 2007 Ofsted raised our school to 'Good' and then raised it further in 2012 to 'Outstanding'; in 2013 and again in 2018 the Diocese of Lancaster also assessed our school to be Outstanding; in 2014 we formed the Catholic Teaching Alliance and became a National Teaching School and in 2019 we became the joint lead school, with Cardinal Newman College, for the Abacus North West Mathematics Hub. Mr Rydeard is a man of complete integrity, imbued with the calling to serve for the good of the church and thankfully, our school community. To use his expression, 'I am not leaving the governing body; rather I am going to sit on the back benches'. We are delighted that he will remain with us as a Foundation Governor and we thank him sincerely for his wonderful contribution to the ongoing success of our school.

We also extend our thanks and congratulations to Mr Mark Murray whom governors elected unanimously as our new Chair of Governors with immediate effect. We wish him every success as he leads our Governing body into our next stages of development.

### **PSHE DAY 1**

Personal, Social, Health and Economic [PSHE] education is a school subject through which pupils develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to manage their lives now and in the future. It helps children and young people to stay healthy and safe, while preparing them to make the most of life and work. There are three core themes: Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World. On Friday, 6 November pupils will engage in their first PSHE Day. Year 7 will be covering the theme of 'Be Healthy' looking at physical health and fitness, healthy eating and the changing adolescent body. Year 8 will be covering 'Faith and Justice' with an opportunity to put their 'Faith into Action'. Year 9 will focus upon 'Mental Wellbeing' including spotting the signs, self-esteem, emotions, anxiety, self-harm and eating disorders, covering a range of coping strategies. Year 10 will focus upon 'Relationships' covering topics such as being safe, intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health, equality and diversity including LGBT. Year 11 will be covering 'Achieving Future Success' which will include planning for the next steps, career pathways and economic wellbeing.

Many of these topics may also trigger discussions at home. If you would like any further information please do not hesitate to get in touch with Mr. Gormally via email [ago@olchs.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:ago@olchs.lancs.sch.uk)

### **DRAMA CLUB**

Drama Club will begin for Year 7 pupils who are interested on Monday, 2 November from 3.30 - 4.30pm. All pupils are welcome, and no booking is needed. Make sure you bring your trainers!

### **READING FOR PLEASURE AT HOME.**

All pupils now have free access to an e-book library to use outside school. It is easy to find under the Quick Links at the bottom of the school website home page. To sign in, pupils should use their school computer username (in lowercase) and the password olchs1. It works just like the school library where pupils borrow up to two books for two weeks at a time. Please encourage your child to make the most of this great resource.

### **SPORTS RESULTS**

The much anticipated Year 8 rounders tournament took place on Wednesday. It was a great turnout from every form. The competition was really close and there were two forms tied on total points, so it had to go down to rounders scored. The results are as follows: 1st place 8L, 2nd place 8O, joint 3rd place 8U and 8R, 4th place 8D and 5th Place 8A. Congratulations to everyone who represented their form.

### **ANIMAL CARE**

As the Animal Care clubs gets up and running again, we are in need of a rabbit hutch. If any families have one that they no longer need, please contact Mrs Howard [eho@olchs.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:eho@olchs.lancs.sch.uk) or Mrs Ardern [jar@olchs.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:jar@olchs.lancs.sch.uk)

#### **Dates to remember**

Monday, 2 November – School opens  
Friday, 18 December – School closes for Christmas at 12.45 pm  
Monday, 4 January – School opens for the Spring Term  
Friday, 12 February 2021 – School closes for half-term  
Monday, 22 February INSET day school closed for all pupils  
Tuesday, 23 February – school opens