

# Our Lady's Catholic High School



Newsletter No. 11  
28th November 2025



## The Theme Next Week: The First Week of Advent (Matthew 24:37-44)

***Stay awake so that you may be ready.***

As we light the first candle of Advent, we focus on the theme of hope. Advent reminds us that even in busy or challenging times, hope can be found in small but meaningful moments - kind words from a friend, a helping hand, or the joy of learning together. This week invites us to slow down, look for signs of hope in our community, and become signs of hope for others. May this season encourage us to keep our hearts open and our spirits bright.

**Loving God, fill our hearts with hope as Advent begins. Help us to notice the goodness around us and to share kindness and peace with one another. May your light guide our school community throughout this season.**

**Amen.**

## BOOO Virtues

Congratulations go to:

Year 7: Hope Wilson - compassionate and loving

Year 8: PJ Dickinson - compassionate and loving

Year 9: Chloe Blundell - compassionate and loving

Year 10: Annette Joseph - compassionate and loving

Year 11: Oliver Mower - compassionate and loving



*Being One of Ours*



## Celebration Morning

Last Friday our school community came together for a joyful Celebration Morning to honour the outstanding academic achievements of our pupils. We were joined by Nick Burnham, Principal of Cardinal Newman College, and Jane Barnes, Headteacher of St. Anthony's Primary School. It was a wonderful opportunity to recognise the hard work and dedication shown by our pupils throughout the previous academic year. Guided by our Being One of Our Virtues, we celebrated the gifts and talents each child brings to our community and their commitment to learning. We extend our warmest congratulations to all pupils who were recognised, and we look forward to seeing their continued success at Our Lady's.



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## The Great Lancashire Debate 2025

Our fabulous Year 9 pupils have participated in the finals of **The Great Lancashire Debate 2025** at County Hall in Preston. They have walked in the steps of a privileged few pupils, especially selected from a breadth of talent from across Lancashire. They debated spiritedly and with conviction as they spoke in the historic Council Chamber in front of judges, County Councillors and five other secondary schools from the Lancashire area.

The judges thought that their debate, titled 'A Bigger and Better Guild Wheel', was a fabulous concept which would "benefit the wider Lancashire area".

The pupils impressed the judges so much that they walked away with the title of **Secondary School Local Area Winner**.

This is a fantastic and unprecedented achievement for Our Lady's Catholic High School and we hope that their participation will inspire other pupils in the school to grow in their own confidence and potential.

Well done Year 9 - you truly embody what it means to be **One of Ours** and we congratulate you on your success.



## The Gift of Books at Christmas

Giving the gift of books and reading at Christmas is a beautiful way to open doors into new worlds and spark the imagination, filling the season with a special kind of warmth that lingers forever. A well-chosen book offers adventure, comfort, and curiosity wrapped in a single timeless present—whether it invites someone to journey across Middle Earth in 'The Hobbit', step through the foggy streets to 221B Baker Street alongside Sherlock Holmes, or wander the haunting ruins of Whitby Abbey with 'Dracula'. Enjoy the joy of giving a book this Christmas to a loved one, and share in the warmth, love, and laughter of the pages together.

# DRAMA: News

## A Wicked Night at the Arc Cinema!

On Monday evening, 57 excited pupils enjoyed a special trip to the Arc Cinema in Preston to see Wicked: Part Two. The students were an absolute credit to the school—enthusiastic, well-mannered and fully immersed in the magic of the performance. From breathtaking vocals to stunning visuals, the film captivated everyone and sparked plenty of lively discussion on the way home. It was a fantastic cultural experience that many described as the highlight of their term.



## CHRISTMAS VARIETY SHOW AUDITIONS

This term saw the exciting auditions for our Christmas Variety Show, and what a spectacular turnout it was! Over 40 acts—featuring nearly 70 pupils—took to the stage to showcase their incredible range of talents. From singers and dancers to comedians, musicians, and everything in between, the standard was truly outstanding.

Choosing the final performers was incredibly difficult, but with limited space we were able to select 15 acts to feature in the show. We want to say a huge well done to every single pupil who auditioned. Your courage, creativity, and commitment made the event a joy to watch.

If you didn't make the final lineup this time, please don't give up—you were fantastic, and we can't wait to see you audition again in future events.

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# Information

## ONE STOP SHOP

Monthly Drop In - Families can access free this is open to everyone advice & support **No appointments needed just turn up!**

**The Barnardo's MyTime to Thrive Service offers short-term therapy for children and young people struggling with their mental health and wellbeing.**  
We support ages 5-18 and up to the age of 25 for those with additional needs.

**Pathway Navigator-ASD Autism Pathway Navigator**

Learn about the School Age Autism pathway processes, ask for advice about referrals and other mechanisms of support. Receive signposting support from someone with lived experience of a child/young person with autism.

**ADHD North West Learn ADHD Northwest** is committed to providing a free, unique support service to empower and improve the wellbeing of individuals and families affected by an attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and associated conditions.

### Talking Therapies

We are a psychological therapy service offering a range of free talking therapies to people aged 16 and over in Lancashire and 18 and over in South Cumbria.

Talking Therapies offer a range of brief psychological interventions to support people's differing emotional needs (such as generalised anxiety, panic, depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), this includes online, telephone and face-to-face treatment and therapy options.

**Work Well Coach**—Through the WorkWell project we can help you take positive steps forward.

**School Nurse - Bed wetting Sleep Hygiene & More**

**Compass Bloom YP Mental Health support**

**Housing - Preston City Council - Gateway**

**Citizen Advice**

**Benefit Advice - DWP**

**Debt Advice/Support**

**Employment advice - DWP**

**Home safety - Lancs Fire & Rescue**

**Free Funded Nursery Places**

**Runshaw College Apprenticeships**

**Lancashire Women Support for ladies**

**Domestic Abuse Support**

**Community Education Sexual Health**

**Youth Worker EmPower - Contextual Safeguarding Team**

**Front Door, Assessment & Adolescent Services**

**Lancashire County Council**

**Parenting Worker EmPower - Contextual Safeguarding Team**

**Front Door, Assessment & Adolescent Services**

**Lancashire County Council**

Private  
meeting rooms  
available

No need to  
book,  
just turn up

Last  
Tuesday of  
the month  
2pm - 4pm

26.08.2025  
30.09.2025  
28.10.2025  
25.11.2025  
27.01.2026  
24.02.2026

Ribbleton Family Hub,  
Ribbleton Hall Drive,  
Ribbleton,  
Preston,  
PR2 6EE

**RIBBLETON  
FAMILY  
HUB  
PRESTON**

At The National College, our **WakeUpWednesday** guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, facts and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.gov.uk](https://nationalcollege.gov.uk).

## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about TIKTOK

Online videos are often associated with apps such as YouTube, but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a potentially addictive, never-ending stream of short clips tailored to users' interests based on their viewing habits. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while most content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where young people are 'most likely to encounter a potential harm'.

**WHAT ARE THE RISKS?**

**AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT**  
TikTok's 'Following' feed shows videos from known creators, while the 'For You' feed serves videos algorithmically on viewing history, account interests, and interactive content (e.g. likes, shares, and watching for long enough signals interest to the algorithm). Although TikTok bans illegal or inappropriate uploads, the volume of posts means some slip through. Increasing the chance that children encounter age-inappropriate material before it is detected or removed.

**CONTACT WITH STRANGERS**  
Between 1.6 and 1.8 billion people use TikTok, meaning there's a high risk of unwanted attention from strangers. Accounts created by users for young people using a fake date of birth are set to public view by default. This means that not only is someone's profile visible to everyone else on the app, but it also suggests their videos are relevant and allows anyone to download or comment on them.

**MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION**  
TikTok's short videos may appear lightweight, but they can expose young people to harmful ideas. Misinformation is common, and Ofcom reports that nearly one third of 15-17-year-olds use TikTok as a news source. Increasing the chance of seeing racist, misogynistic, extremist or conspiracy material. Even brief clips can influence impressionable users and shape their worldview, making discussions about critical thinking, propaganda and online influence especially important for parents and educators.

**ADDICTIVE DESIGN**  
TikTok's fast-paced stream of eye-catching videos can be potentially addictive for young users. In 2024, for children spent an average of 127 minutes per day on the platform, double the time recorded in 2020. Excessive use can disrupt sleep, increase anxiety, and distract from healthier activities. Constantly slipping between short clips may also affect attention span, making it harder to focus on longer tasks such as homework or reading.

**ADVICE FOR PARENTS & EDUCATORS**

**ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING**  
Family Pairing allows parents to link their child's account to theirs, giving them control over their child's privacy settings, screen time, and content restrictions. Parents can then turn on Restricted Mode, reducing the chance of a child seeing inappropriate content, set screen time limits, make accounts private and manage whether their child can send messages - and if they can, to whom. Children control other these settings without parental approval.

**BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING**  
Parents can restrict in-app purchases on iPhone and Android devices to prevent accidental or impulsive in-app spending. Young people can easily spend large amounts on TikTok coins or live gifts, which can be converted into real money. If a disappointing purchase occurs, turn into a discussion about impulse spending and how online purchases can be misleading.

**DISCUSS THE DANGERS**  
If a child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's good practice to discuss the potential risks. A key tip: don't share any identifying personal information or respond to dangerous trends, and that they know to talk to a trusted adult if they're worried by interactions on the app. With more teens using TikTok for news, it's important to talk about misinformation and propaganda.

**READ THE SIGNS**  
If you're concerned that a child is spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the signs: increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as is failing to complete homework or skipping meals. Remember, the parents' control are there for a reason, and it's never too late to introduce limits.

**Meet Our Expert**  
Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of BBC, The Guardian, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.

Useful resources for parents/educators:  
@wake\_up\_weds | www.thenationalcollege | @wake.up.wednesday  
Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Release date: 25.11.2024.

**CLICK HERE!**

....to read

## USEFUL RESOURCES

**November Online Safety  
Newsletter**

**Community Support  
Information**



## WE ARE HIRING

join our team



**CLICK  
HERE!**

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# Information



OLCHS



Coming Soon to the LRC

# BOOK FAIR

Read the books everyone's talking about!



**AND EARN FREE BOOKS FOR OUR SCHOOL\***

\*Free books are subject to terms and conditions.

## Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> November to Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December

(Payments by cash only please)



## 2025 Diary Dates

**Monday 8 December**  
PSHE Day 2

**Thursday 18 December**  
Christmas Variety Show

**Friday 19 December**  
End of term. School closes at 12.35pm

## SCHOOL TIMES

Arrive at school / Go to waiting areas	8.40- 8.45
Pupils go to Form rooms / Locker time	8.45- 8.55
Form Time	8.55-9.15
School finishes	3pm

**Except Tuesdays (ONLY)**  
Pupils finish at 2.30pm

## OLCHS SOCIAL MEDIA



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## HANDBALL

The Year 9 handball team took part in a series of games at Eden Boys' School as part of a Preston district competition on Thursday 20th November. Our opponents were Christ the King Catholic High School and Eden Boys' School. The boys had been focusing on handball in their curriculum PE lessons and this was an excellent way for some of them to demonstrate the skills they had been mastering. Zac B, Callum T, Jayden R-C and Christian B scored plenty of goals while Olivier R was excellent as the goalkeeper, saving many shots from the opponents. Other members of the team included Jacob S, Michael O, Calym H and Jonah H. Our Lady's were unbeaten in their games on this occasion and all the boys had a fantastic time representing Our Lady's.



The Year 9 team travelled to West Lancashire in the second round of the LSFA County Cup competition where they faced St Bede's of Ormskirk. Our opponents had managed to secure the fantastic facilities of Burscough Football Club and the team were thrilled to be able to play on an excellent surface on Monday 24th November. Our Lady's took the lead soon into the game after Bobbie B-C intelligently lobbed the to goalkeeper once he had turned his defender from a long kick off goalkeeper Oliver K. St Bede's had soon equalised after a close header from a free kick. The game was particularly close with Our Lady's counter-attacking down both wings, making St Bede's defend very often. In the second half our opponents began to string some good passing combinations together and took the lead early in the half.

## FOOTBALL



Although Our Lady's pressed and looked to create chances as the half progressed, we eventually left a little too much space in defence and within the last couple of minutes St Bede's managed to score another goal, finishing the game as winners, 3-1. We congratulate St Bede's and wish them luck in the next round as the Year 10 team wait to see who they play in the Preston district league final.



Huge congratulations to the U14 girls who have been crowned Preston League winners following fixtures before half term.

Outstanding goals came from Amelia B, Charlotte B and Rio A, with equally wonderful defending from Scarlett A, Izzy W and Eden P.

## NETBALL

### YEAR 10

On Thursday 20th November Our Lady's Year 10 netball team, captained by Naomi L, played at home against Christ the King. Showcasing the impressive depth of the squad, the team fielded a slightly different lineup than usual and quickly established dominance.

Despite the extremely cold conditions, Our Lady's produced an excellent first half and led 7-1 at the break. They continued to build on this momentum in the second half, maintaining control throughout and finishing with a commanding 14-2 victory.

Player of the Match went to Amy R for her accurate and composed shooting which was key to the team's success.

Overall, the Year 10 team demonstrated outstanding teamwork, resilience, and skill. With contributions from across the squad, Our Lady's once again highlighted the strength of their netball programme in a confident and well-deserved win.

Our Lady's Year 10 netball team, led by captain Romy L, delivered an impressive performance in their away fixture against Corpus Christi. Despite challenging weather conditions that disrupted passing in the opening minutes, the team settled quickly and soon found their rhythm.

By half-time, Our Lady's had established a commanding 8-0 lead through composed play, strong defensive pressure, and sharp movement in the attacking third. The second half saw them build on this momentum, maintaining control of the game and extending their lead to a final score of 17-0.

A standout defensive display earned Zuzanna R the well-deserved Player of the Match award. Her excellent interceptions consistently broke down Corpus's attempts to move the ball forward, preventing them from registering a single goal.





**BAE SYSTEMS**

## Apprenticeships

■ APPRENTICESHIPS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Start something extraordinary.  
Find your purpose.



LEARN MORE



**CARDINAL  
NEWMAN  
COLLEGE**

### Year 11 Application Update

If your child has applied to Cardinal Newman College already, they will have had an early offer come through to their email.



**PRESTON**  
COLLEGE

Mrs Lin would like to thank Preston College for attending OLCBS to do some one-to-one drop ins.

This gave pupils the opportunity to ask about courses, deadlines and the college scholarship programme.

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## BEHIND THE CAMO: WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

RECRUITING

Episode 2 of **Behind the Camo** series is coming up on Wednesday, 3 December at 6:00pm. If you haven't registered yet, there's still time to do so!

Behind the Camo is a four-part virtual event series that gives a real, honest look at life in the British Army. Each episode features serving soldiers answering questions people don't usually ask - covering different topics like career options, daily life, and common myths. It's a great opportunity to hear personal stories, explore the wide range of roles available, and see how Army life can be more supportive and rewarding than you might expect. Get insider knowledge, hear directly from those living Army life, and have your unanswered questions tackled.

In Episode 2, we dive into the career opportunities and qualifications available in the Army, showing how you can shape your own path, gain new skills, and even earn a degree while you serve. You'll hear from soldiers who've taken unexpected routes, embraced professional development, and discovered that the Army offers far more flexibility than most people realise.

**REGISTER  
NOW!**

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