


# Weekly Newsletter



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Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College

May God's love be our guide 



# Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College

May God's love be our guide 

8th December 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to inform you of some proposed changes to the structure of the college day here at BTHCC. They are:

8:55am	Students to be on site
9am – 9:25am	Together for Good with Form Tutor
9:25am – 10:20am	Lesson 1
10:20am – 11:35am	Lesson 2 Students will be given a 15-minute break before or after this lesson
11:35am – 12:30pm	Lesson 3
12:30pm – 1:30pm	Lunch for all students Enrichment activities will be timetable Year groups will have access to the canteen at different times to prevent long queues
1:30pm – 2:25pm	Lesson 4
2:25pm – 3:20pm	Lesson 5
3:20pm	End of School Day for all Year Groups

Should the changes be approved, they will come into force from September 2024.

This increase will ensure that we are working towards meeting the Department of Education's new minimum expectation of a 32.5-hour school week.

We believe that these changes will be beneficial to the BTHCC community and will have a positive effect on your child's education.

The information in this letter has also been sent to the local authority, the diocese, local schools, public transport, staff, parishes, and governors. We will work together so that there is minimal disruption.

I appreciate that these changes may affect you in terms of childcare or working arrangements, and you may have questions related to your child's education. For this reason, I would like to invite you to please share any feedback that you have by sending it to [structureofday@bthcc.org](mailto:structureofday@bthcc.org)

We will release the results of the consultation by 23rd January 2024 and will share the outcome in our college newsletter.

Yours sincerely,

**Mrs C S Hogg**

Tel: 0161 768 6030

Urban Road Altrincham Cheshire WA15 8HT

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[www.bthcc.org.uk](http://www.bthcc.org.uk)



# What's going on - Week 18th-22nd



## **MONDAY**

**Advent Appeal**

**Week 3: Joy**

**(18th-22nd Dec): Christmas treats (e.g. selection boxes, tins of chocolates, biscuits)**

## **WEDNESDAY**

**Room 54 at 8.30am**

**Word**

## **THURSDAY**

**Christmas Dinner Day**

**Year 10, 11, 12 and 13  
School Mass**

**BTHCC Talent Show -  
Year 7,8,9**

## **FRIDAY**

**Pupils will wear non  
uniform/Christmas Jumper Day**

**College Mass - 8.15am G3**

**Year 7, 8, 9 School Mass**

**BTHCC Talent Show -  
Year 9, 10 & 11**

**Break up for  
Christmas holidays  
- Approx. finish  
time is 12.30pm**



# Advent Service



Our Family Advent Service on Monday night was beautiful. The church was full of our BTHCC families & it was a joyful celebration of our talented students. The orchestra, singers, dancers, actors & readers were so professional. What a great night of celebration, prayer & community!

Thank you for joining us and we hope you left feeling festive.



# Mary on the Mantle

On Friday the 8th December it was the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

The Feast of the Immaculate conception celebrates the day that Mary was conceived without original sin so that she could be the Mother of Jesus. Mary accepted the role of the mother of Jesus without questioning or doubting Gods will.

So with this in mind, Mary tasked the students to celebrate someone they saw as the person who cares for them and who they know they can trust. This could have been a member of their family or someone they are close to. They were to tell the person how special they were to them, give them a hug, make them a cup of tea or something they know will make them feel special.



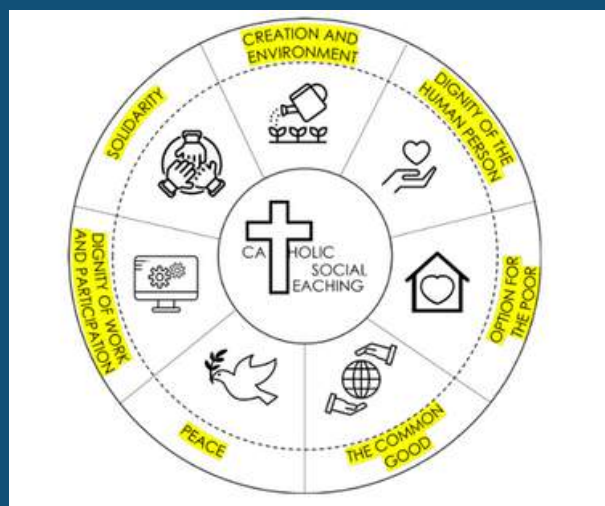
# Bus Expectations

Due to recent incidents happening on the bus services we want to remind students of our 'Bus Expectations'

Our contribution to Catholic Social Teaching and the Common Good is something we are very proud of at Blessed Thomas Holford. We hold extremely high expectations of student's behaviour when travelling to and from school, representing the BTH family and showing dignity to all. To do this, students must follow our high expectations at all times. The safety and comfort of everyone on the bus depends on a standard of behaviour and consideration for others that is expected in the classroom.

More specifically, students must be sure to:

- **Show respect to all individuals on the bus including the driver, other students and members of the public**
- **Take any litter off the bus that they have created**
- **Remain seated at all times**
- **Refrain from throwing anything on the bus, or out of the bus**
- **Avoid distracting the driver unless in an emergency**
- **Use respectful and appropriate language at all times**
- **Wear the BTH badge with pride, by being kind; together we can make a difference**





# Careers



At Blessed Thomas Holford we recognise the importance of high quality careers education and guidance in motivating and inspiring young people and helping them to make informed choices about their future pathways and careers. We understand that careers education and guidance is an integral strand of a young person's education and is crucial in raising aspirations, and helping pupils emerge from school more fully rounded and ready for the world of work. Young people want and need to be well-informed when making subject and career decisions.

# Careers

So we are asking our parents, carers, families and friends to see if you can support us in the following careers opportunities;

- **Careers Day (2nd February)**
- **Apprenticeship week (5th - 11th February)**
- **Careers week - Employer talks for subject areas (4th - 9th March)**
- **Work Experience for a group of pupils (25-50 pupils)**

If you can please fill in the google form below and we will get back to you

<https://forms.gle/xGdGURmzGpjnfRyJ8>

**BLESSED THOMAS HOLFORD**

**CAREERS DAY**  
**2024**

**DATE**  
Friday 2nd  
February 2024

**TIME**  
09:00 AM - 03:00 PM

**Blessed Thomas  
Holford Catholic College**

**For more information  
please email :**  
[Careers@bthcc.org.uk](mailto:Careers@bthcc.org.uk) OR  
[MrGoldrick@bthcc.org.uk](mailto:MrGoldrick@bthcc.org.uk)



# Personal Development Poster Competition



## Winning Entries

Thank you for all the amazing entries for our Personal Development Poster Competition. The standard was so high we could not decide on an overall winner.

Therefore, we have 2 winning posters.

Well done to Martha, Olivia, Sam and Eleanor from 7OR and Poppy, Darcey and Jack from 7TL



# Confirmation

## Sacrament of Confirmation for those in Year 8 and above

For those in the parishes of St Joseph's Sale and Holy Family, Sale Moor

### CONFIRMATION

Confirmation will take place on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2024, which will be the 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone at St. Joseph's.

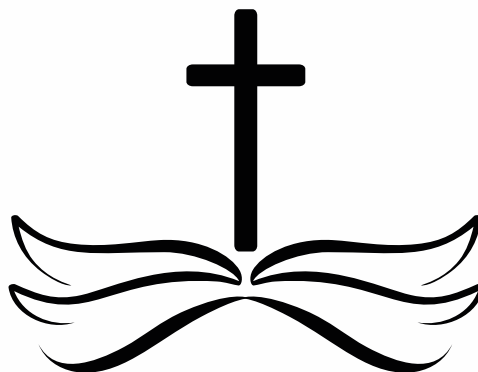
Forms are available in the sacristy for anyone in Year 8 and above wishing to be confirmed next year.

The Confirmation Programme will begin in the New Year & registration must be received before the programme begins.

For those in the parishes of All Saints, Ashton-On-Mersey, St Margaret Ward, Sale and Our Lady of Lourdes Partington

### CONFIRMATION 2024

Confirmation will take place on Wednesday 24th April at 7.00pm. Registration forms now available in both sacristy's at Our Lady of Lourdes and All Saints. Any teenager baptised from year 8 above may enter this journey. This will begin in January. So, Please take a form and return as soon as possible.



Further information please see Mr Fishwick ([MrFishwick@bthcc.org.uk](mailto:MrFishwick@bthcc.org.uk))

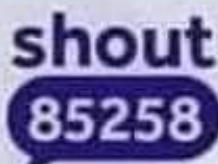
# Coping at Christmas

## COPING AT CHRISTMAS

Christmas can be tough. That's why it's important to know there's always someone you can talk to.



☎ 0300 123 3393  
📞 Helpline  
🌐 [mind.org.uk](http://mind.org.uk)



☎ Text SHOUT to 85258  
📞 24/7 text service  
🌐 [giveusashout.org](http://giveusashout.org)



☎ 116 123  
📞 24/7 helpline  
🌐 [samaritans.org](http://samaritans.org)



☎ Text YM to 85258  
📞 24/7 text service  
🌐 [youngminds.org.uk](http://youngminds.org.uk)



☎ 0800 58 58 58  
📞 Helpline for men  
🌐 [thecalmzone.net](http://thecalmzone.net)



☎ 0800 068 4141  
📞 Under 35s Helpline  
🌐 [papyrus-uk.org](http://papyrus-uk.org)



# Wellbeing



## The YoungMinds Wellbeing Calendar 2023

Looking after your wellbeing as you count down to the winter break.

**MONDAY**

**TUESDAY**

**WEDNESDAY**

**THURSDAY**

**FRIDAY**

### 27 Affirmation station

Spread some winter joy by writing positive affirmation cards, then having your teacher collect and pass them around. For example: 'I am worthy', 'I can achieve my dreams.'



### 28 Positive paper chain

Each person writes a positive message on a strip of paper. Connect the strips and form a paper chain to display in your classroom.



### 29 Stretch it out

From head to toe, give each body part a good stretch. Roll your neck, rotate your arms and flex your toes.



### 30 Gratitude snowman

Draw three circles on top of each other to create a snowman. In each circle, write something you're grateful for today.



### 1 Positive playlist

Get into the Friday spirit! Suggest your favourite, feel-good songs and create a positive playlist as a class.



### 4 Star breathing

Breathe in or out for three seconds while visualising the shape of a star. Start on the left side of the 'top arm' of the star. Going clockwise, breathe in as you move up the first line, then out as you move down the second. And so on.



### 5 In the moment

Try the 54321 grounding technique. Silently, name five things you can see. Four things you can feel. Three things you can hear. Two things you can smell. And one thing you can taste. Use this exercise whenever things feel a bit too much.

### 6 Get creative

Try to spend 30 minutes doing something creative today. That could be drawing, graphic design, dancing, or even learning a musical instrument. Whatever you like!



### 7 Alternative Christmas card

Write a kind, supportive card that you'd give to someone who might be struggling this festive season - or for someone who doesn't celebrate Christmas. Your teacher can then collect and hand them out.

### 8 Random act of kindness

Do something nice for someone else today. Doesn't it feel great?



### 11 Signs of winter

As a class, take a silent, mindful walk around the school grounds. Noticing signs of winter along the way. Such as frost, falling leaves or even robins.



### 12 Worldwide winter

Learn how other cultures and countries celebrate different things about winter.



### 13 Self-soothe session

Create your own self-soothe box to take home for whenever your emotions feel too much. For tips, check out the ['How to make a self-soothe box'](#) blog on our website.



### 14 Have a laugh

Give laughter yoga a go. It's said to boost happiness and reduce stress! There are loads of free videos on YouTube.



### 15 Your 2023

Write down your favourite school moments of 2023 and any hopes or goals you might have for 2024. Could you make them SMART goals?



For help and advice scan here





# The Vineyard

**WISHING EVERYONE  
A HAPPY AND HOLY CHRISTMAS**



Brothers and sisters, let us turn our eyes to Bethlehem, and listen to the first faint cries of the Prince of Peace. For truly Jesus is our peace. The peace that the world cannot give, the peace that God the Father has bestowed on humanity by sending his Son into the world.

Pope Francis, Urbi et Orbi, 25 December 2022

**READ MORE**

# Personal Development in Sixth Form

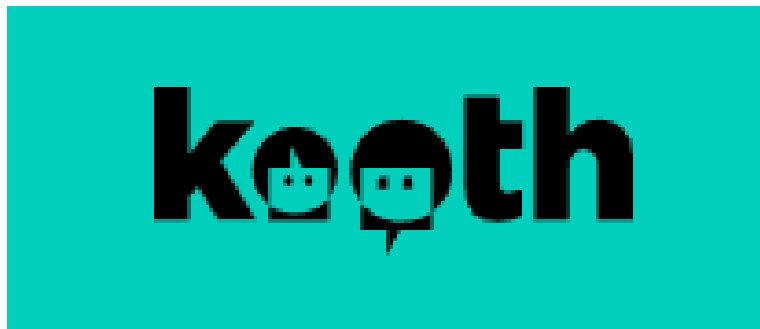


## **8/01/24- Stand against violence. – Year 12 visit**

SAV works with the age groups most at risk of being a victim or perpetrator of violence through educational establishments, youth offending teams, pupil referral units, prisons, and other youth settings.

We offer workshops covering ages 5-25 years taking a holistic and inclusive approach to violence prevention incorporating:

Violence Awareness and prevention (including weapons crime)



## **15/01/2023 - Kooth Mental Health - Year 13 visit**

Kooth is the longest established digital mental health provider in the UK and the market leader in Digital Mental health.

1 in 5 children and young people suffer from mental health illness in any given year. At Kooth, they believe every young person has the right to thrive and to access high quality mental health care.

Kooth.com is commissioned both in the UK and the US. In the UK: The NHS, Local Authorities, charities and businesses have access to anonymous and personalised mental health support for Children and Young People. With over 1.3m logins per year, they provide end to end support whatever the need.



# True Life Conference

The True Life Conference is a collaboration with Altrincham Grammar School for Girls, and we welcomed over sixty students and staff to attend the conference. It is focused on Sixth Form social science students, and it is delivered by ex offenders who explore issues such as the aims of the penal system in the UK. As the title of the conference suggests, we are presented with the actual experiences of individuals who have committed a variety of offences in the past, and the impact of these convictions on their lives. Students are invited to ask any questions they want throughout each presentation, and we were proud to witness the thoughtful reflections that our young people shared in response to the sometimes quite harrowing accounts of the presenters lives.



As a Catholic community, at the heart of what we teach are concepts of forgiveness and redemption. Today, our students were invited to consider whether in 'true life' cases, this is a reality. We will be following up in lesson to explore the key themes raised by the conference, and we sincerely appreciate the role that parents and students offered in supporting the second year that we have been able to offer this extracurricular activity.



# Important Notices

We are extremely proud of our current Year 11 cohort who have completed their Year 11 Centre Assessments over the past 2 weeks. They have been absolutely brilliant! Well done to the Year 11 cohort!

Lost Property will be on display in the hall for the final two weeks of the term. Parents can come into school any night after 4pm to look through items. Items not collected by 21st December will be donated to a local clothing collection.

On Wednesday, Year 10 had the opportunity to trial an English Language assessment in examination conditions, using our Sports Hall and Access Arrangement rooms. As a Department, we were incredibly impressed with how the pupils approached this assessment and wanted to pass on our praise for how well they conducted themselves in what was an unfamiliar situation for them. We hope you will reiterate our praise to your child for taking it so seriously and making such a strong impression at this point in their GCSE course.



# Top Tips for a TECH-FREE CHRISTMAS

It can be difficult to stay away from technology and devices, and sometimes this means that people – of any age – can find it hard to be present in the moment. As a period when families are able to spend some quality time together and enjoy each other's company, Christmas is the perfect opportunity to step away from our phones, laptops and consoles and concentrate on the things that really matter. Follow our top ten tips for a tech-free festive period and make the most of this holiday season. Merry Christmas!

## 1. BOARD GAMES CAN BE FUN (HONEST)

OK, no one wants a repeat of that incident when your youngest had to pay triple rent on Mayfair, but going back to basics with a card or board game can be a fantastic bonding experience. Choose a game that even the youngest members of your family can enjoy and have a fun tech-free time.

## 2. MAKE YOUR OWN DECORATIONS

Spending time on arts and crafts is a brilliant way to relax and spend some productive time offline. Making your own Christmas decorations as a family can become a wholesome tradition and leave you with some treasured mementos, too.

## 3. GO FOR A WINTER WALK

Not much beats wrapping up warm on a crisp December day and taking a stroll. Whether alone or with the family, a walk is a fantastic way to clear your head and relish the break from hectic normal life. As an extra festive treat, why not make a flask of hot chocolate to take with you?

## 4. BAKE SOME FESTIVE TREATS

Not all Christmas cooking has to be a stressful chore that's timed with military precision. Baking some simple festive treats like cookies doesn't have to take hours – and will make sure you're stocked up on tasty things to offer any friends or family members who pop round.

## 5. READ A FAMILY STORY TOGETHER

Turn story time into an event. Make the living room or bedroom into a tech-free space, light some candles, make some hot drinks and reach for a classic Christmas tale. It's a fantastic way to relax before bed, and the right story will help to get the whole family into the festive spirit.

## 6. TURN OFF NOTIFICATIONS

It sounds obvious, but turning off email and app notifications can give you more control of your relationship with technology. Getting into the habit of checking your phone periodically – rather than reacting every time a notification arrives – helps you to stay present in the moment.

## 7. FEED THE BIRDS

Food's hard to come by for wildlife in winter, so helping our feathered friends is a very worthwhile reason to put down those devices and reconnect with nature. Fill a bird feeder in the garden or take a snack for the ducks in your local park (but ditch the bread in favour of oats, rice or birdseed).

## 8. SET DAILY LIMITS

Many apps and devices let you set reminders to let you know how long you've used them for that day. Setting daily limits puts you firmly in charge of your time and will help to ensure you don't miss out on any family Christmas memories because you're engrossed in your phone or laptop.

## 9. GET ON YOUR BIKE

Exercise, such as going for a run or a bike ride is an excellent way to burn off some of those Yuletide calories while giving your brain and eyes a break from screen-based activity. Physical exertion also helps reduce anxiety and releases endorphins which can improve your sense of wellbeing.

## 10. MAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF

There can be a lot of pressure to meet up with friends, make video calls and check in with people at Christmas – but remember that you need time to relax as well. Don't feel guilty about not replying to messages and emails immediately – the holiday is your chance to drop down a gear or two.



 **National Online Safety**  
#WakeUpWednesday



IT'S OUR  
**FUN**  
RUN!

# CHRISTMAS FUN-RUN

**WEDNESDAY 27TH DECEMBER**  
PLEASE REGISTER FROM **10AM** FOR AN **11AM** RUN!

## RUN, WALK OR WHEEL 3K OR 5K

With family and friends at  
*Middlewood Way, Viaduct  
next to St Gregory's Church,  
Bollington, Macclesfield,  
SK10 5JR*



**CASH ACCEPTED**  
**CONTACTLESS AVAILABLE**



We rely heavily on your support to make this event a success. Please sign up and gather sponsorship to raise much needed funds by scanning the QR code below, or visit <https://cafod.org.uk/christmasfunrun> Contact [shrewsbury@cafod.org.uk](mailto:shrewsbury@cafod.org.uk) for a sponsor form. Can't make it on the day? Don't miss out, **join in virtually** wherever you are!



**CAFOD**  
Catholic Agency for  
Overseas Development



Charity number 1160384

O God of Peace, come~  
Form us into your Peace-  
makers. Enable us to  
look within ourselves, to  
make straight our  
crooked hearts, to  
patiently and lovingly  
await changes in  
ourselves and others. As  
you gather us tenderly,  
and hold us close, may  
we also show that same  
compassion to the  
world. Fill our hearts with  
your peace, and our  
lives with your love, that  
these may flow from our  
lives and into our world.

We ask this through  
Christ, our Savior and our  
peace, Amen



*Peace*