



How are we already at the end of our third week? The time really is flying by! It has been another busy and exciting couple of weeks at BTHCC, with lots happening across the college.



Last week, we held our Success Evenings for Years 11, 12 and 13. I always think these evenings are such a valuable opportunity for students and parents to come together, reflect on the year ahead and think about how they can make the most of every opportunity. We look forward to welcoming our Year 8 families next week for their Success Evening.

Our Greece trip has also taken place this week and it looks as though our students and staff have had a wonderful time! We have all been very jealous watching the photographs come through while we have been sitting here in the rain! It sounds like they have had some fantastic experiences and made some wonderful memories.

Yesterday morning, we celebrated our first whole college Mass of the academic year with Father John Rafferty, on the Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham. It was particularly lovely to celebrate this feast day together, especially as Walsingham is the name of one of our college buildings. It was a beautiful way for our whole college community to come together in prayer at the beginning of the new academic year and it was just wonderful to see everyone gathered together.

Last night, we welcomed families to our Open Evening and it was amazing to see so many people. There were lots of familiar faces, including a number of our former students who are now bringing their own children to BTHCC to look around something which is always particularly special to see.

All of our departments were filled with excited prospective pupils and their families and I would like to say a huge thank you to all of the students who helped during the evening. You represented our college beautifully. We have already received so much positive feedback from parents about how welcoming, friendly and helpful our students were and you should be incredibly proud of yourselves.

This coming Wednesday, we will also be remembering Brenda Shaughnessy, as her funeral takes place at St Vincent's Church. Our thoughts and prayers are very much with Brenda's family and loved ones at this difficult time.

As always, we have a busy few weeks ahead, so please do take a moment to look through the dates for the diary below and make a note of any important events.

For now, I hope you all have a lovely and restful weekend.

Mrs Hogg



Remembering Brenda Shaughnessy

In September, the school received the very sad news that former member of staff Brenda Shaughnessy had passed away on Sunday, 20 August.



Brenda, as she was known to staff and students, worked at our school as a dinner lady for 45 years, beginning in 1976 and continuing until her retirement in 2021. This was four and a half decades of loyal service to our school.

During this time, Brenda was the heart of BTH every lunchtime.

She was an incredible member of the BTH family – so kind, friendly and loved by all. Brenda chatted to students throughout lunchtime and took a genuine interest in their lives. She was affectionately referred to as “Nana” by many students. She was a celebrity and such an influential presence in our school. Multiple generations of the same families adored her, and Brenda remembered everyone's names.

She sang “Happy Birthday” to students every lunchtime, sometimes several times in the same day when students shared birthdays.

Brenda brought so much joy to lunchtime. She never had any issues with behaviour because everyone loved and respected her. She ran the canteen, and when Brenda spoke, the students and staff listened.

Brenda loved watching football and was a huge Manchester United fan. She also worked at The Railway pub in Hale for many years.

Brenda's contribution to BTH went far beyond the canteen.

She raised thousands of pounds for the school by running BTH Bingo every Thursday for over 30 years. Brenda was also heavily involved in the PTA. Over the years, she helped to raise more than £100,000 for facilities and resources in our school.

The electronic scoreboard in the sports hall was her final fundraising donation to the school, made shortly after her retirement. She also helped to fund the reading vending machine in the library, which is affectionately known throughout school as “Brenda the Vendor.”

For her 80th birthday in 2016, Brenda wanted to celebrate in a place she loved, so she hired the school hall and had a wonderful party attended by hundreds of family members, friends and BTH staff.

She asked for no cards or presents, but instead asked for donations to The Christie Hospital. An incredible £2,000 was raised.

Brenda also wanted to ensure that the occasion was a learning experience for our students. She invited the charity into school to lead an assembly, where students presented the money that had been raised.

On her last day at BTH in December 2021, we had film crews from BBC North West Tonight, ITV and the Manchester Evening News, who all came to celebrate her contribution to our school family. Her story even made the national news.

[Read the ITV Granada story about Brenda's retirement](#)

Brenda's legacy is phenomenal and lives on in the thousands of staff and students who adored her.

BTH simply would not have been the same without Brenda.

Brenda's funeral will take place on Wednesday, 30 September 2026, at St Vincent's, Altrincham, at 12 noon. Year 13 students and many members of staff will be attending to represent the school.

We pray for Brenda, her family and her friends at this difficult time.

Eternal rest grant unto her,

O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her.

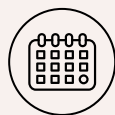
May she rest in peace.

Amen.

May her soul and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Amen.





Dates for the diary

We understand how important it is for families to have key dates in advance so that you can plan ahead and support your child's busy school life. To help with this, we have included a schedule of the main events and activities planned for the Autumn Term. Please note that, whilst every effort is made to keep to these dates, they are subject to change. Occasionally, circumstances beyond the college's control may require us to amend, postpone or rearrange events at short notice. We therefore ask that families regularly check college communications, including newsletters, emails, the website and social media channels, for any updates.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support as we work together to provide the best possible opportunities for our students.

Please note: all dates are correct at the time of publication but may be subject to change.

Autumn Term 1 (September - October)

Tuesday 29th of September - Science trip for Year 13

Tuesday 29th of September - Success in Year 8 evening 5pm-6pm (Main Hall)

Tuesday 29th of September - French trip meeting (Year 8)

Thursday 1st of October - Success in Year 10 evening (Main Hall)

Monday 5th of October - Year 8 Centre Assessments (2 weeks)

Monday 5th of October - Year 7 Savio House Retreat (2 forms)

Tuesday 6th of October - Year 7 Savio House Retreat (2 forms)

Wednesday 7th of October - Success in Year 7 evening (Main Hall)

Monday 12th of October - Year 13 Centre Assessments (2 weeks)

Monday 12th of October - Year 7 Savio House Retreat (2 forms)

Tuesday 13th of October - Year 7 Savio House Retreat (2 forms)

Wednesday 14th of October - Success in Year 9 evening (Main Hall)

Thursday 15th of October - Shakespeare Schools Workshop (Year 8)

Friday 16th of October - Sixth Form Alton Towers Trip

Monday 19th of October - Year 8 trip to France (MFL)

Monday 19th of October - Year 7 Savio House Retreat (2 forms)

Tuesday 20th of October - Year 7 Savio House Retreat (2 forms)

Thursday 22nd of October - Sixth Form Open Evening 6pm-8pm

Friday 23rd of October - BREAK UP October half term (1 week)

Autumn Term 2 (November-December))

Monday 2nd of November - Year 11 Centre Assessments (2 weeks)

Wednesday 4th of November - Year 7 Welcome Mass and Bingo

Monday 9th of November - Year 8 residential trip to Savio House

Thursday 12th of November - Year 10 parents evening ONLINE

Thursday 19th of November - Year 8 parents evening ONLINE

Monday 23rd of November - Year 9 Centre Assessments (2 weeks)

Tuesday 24th of November - Year 10 and Year 11 Flu immunisations

Thursday 26th of November - Year 7 and Year 8 Flu immunisations

Friday 27th of November - INSET DAY (college closed to students)

Monday 30th of November - Year 12 Centre Assessments (2 weeks)

Thursday 3rd of December - Year 13 parents evening - Hybrid (online and in person)

Monday 7th of December - 2026 Year 11 cohort Certificate Evening (more information to follow)

Tuesday 15th of December - Advent Service at St Vincents 5.30pm

Thursday 17th of December - Whole College Mass

Thursday 17th of December - 2026 Year 13 cohort Certificate Evening (more information to follow)

Friday 18th of December - BREAK UP (return to college on the 4th of January 2027)



Prayer for Our Lady of Walsingham

O Mary, recall the solemn moment
when Jesus, your divine Son, dying on the cross,
confided us to your maternal care.

You are our Mother,
we desire ever to remain your devout children.

Let us therefore feel the effects
of your powerful intercession with Jesus Christ.

Make your name again glorious in this place,
once renowned throughout our land
by your visits, favours and miracles.

Pray, O holy Mother of God, for the conversion of England,
restoration of the sick, consolation for the afflicted,
repentance of sinners, peace to the departed.

O Blessed Mary, Mother of God, Our Lady of Walsingham,
intercede for us. Amen.



Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College

May God's love be our guide