

END OF HALF TERM
FEBRUARY - 2024

NEWSLETTER



THE
BRIAN CLARKE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY



A Message From Allison

I hope our newsletter finds you well. The students and staff have had another fantastic half term. I am delighted to share with you just a selection of all the wonderful opportunities and events that have been provided. Thank you as always to the staff and parents/carers for supporting with all the events and opportunities.

It is lovely to report that in lessons students are working hard and are thriving in their learning and the high expectations we and you as parents/carers set for them.

If you follow us on social media, you will see that we have been very busy recruiting teaching staff for Year 3 – there will also be a number of support staff vacancies that are released throughout the next half term. Please do share these across your own networks. The school's success will rest on ensuring we recruit excellent staff who are committed to our mission statement and serving young people.

The numerous visitors in school over the past half term, whether attending for interviews or other events have universally commented on how polite and well-mannered the students are; and how warm the atmosphere around school feels.



Attendance

Attendance – Every Day Counts

For a student to achieve their full academic potential, a high level of attendance is essential. High attendance is also vital in helping students to maintain friendships and for their overall social development and wellbeing.

Studies have shown that students who attend less than 95% of the time are less likely to achieve five grade 4s and above at GCSE, opportunities for progression are reduced, and future life chances restricted. Every day your child is in school means that they are safe, learning and achieving.

One of the best ways to help your child meet their potential, is by ensuring that they attend school 100% of the time. If you would like to check your child's current attendance, please use the MCAS app. As a very important reminder, please ensure that family holidays are not taken in term-time.

0 days off school in a year 0 lessons missed	100%	Perfect attendance
2 days off school in a year 10 lessons missed	99%	Excellent attendance
5 days off school in a year 25 lessons missed	97%	Good attendance
10 days off school in a year 50 lessons missed	95%	Slightly below average attendance
14 days off school in a year 70 lessons missed	93%	Poor attendance
20 days off school in a year 100 lessons missed	90%	Very poor attendance

Anti-Bullying Ambassadors

A selection of our wonderful Year 7's applied to join our team of Anti-Bullying Ambassadors over this half term. There were some wonderful applications submitted and fifteen students were chosen to be interviewed by our Year 8 Ambassadors. Students were thoughtful, empathetic and understanding in their responses and we are very pleased to announce our Year 7 Anti-Bullying Ambassadors. They will join our growing team in continuing to create a kind, warm and respectful community here at Brian Clarke, role modelling the behaviour we expect and supporting others that may have experienced bullying.



Wellbeing updates

Year 7 Wellbeing update from Mr Ahmed

This half term students have been looking at having an online presence, exploring how being online has many advantages and disadvantages. They looked at how they can reduce their screen time, how to maintain online safety and learnt about social media legislation. Students also looked at how social media now offers opportunities and influences job prospects. The final topic this half term was looking at the use of E-cigarettes (vapes) and its effects. Students have understood what the research tells us about the implications of vaping.

Looking forward into next half term, focusing on our core British Values we explore what is a hate crime and why do they take place. We look at the different protected characteristics and the legislation around equality. Students also describe reasons why hate crimes sometimes take place and use case studies from the media to discuss what could be done to prevent them from taking place. Finally students end the term exploring gender stereotypes, the students look at how roles have evolved over time and the extent to which society may or may not be moving to a more egalitarian one.

Year 8 Wellbeing from Miss Robinson

Next half term in Wellbeing we will be moving on to look at our mental health and how to manage looking after ourselves. We will be continuing the work we started during mental health awareness week looking at what to do if we feel our mental health isn't as good. We will look at strategies and coping mechanisms. We will then be moving on to look at looking after ourselves and people within our community and what to do to challenge bullying / raise awareness. We will then move on to look at equality and protected characteristics, we have covered this slightly in Year 7 but we will be going into more depth looking at specific case studies and examples with a focus on racism and homophobia.

Festival of Theatre

Year 7 Brian Clarke students were kindly invited to The Blue Coat School on Thursday 7th February to watch the amazing Festive of Theatre show. BCS students from Year 7 through to the 6th form put on wonderful performances from musicals such as Hamilton and Wicked. All acts were professionally choreographed and performed brilliantly. Our students thoroughly enjoyed the experience- especially the half time interval treat!



Careers Encounter Events

This half term all students in year 7 and 8 have been starting to consider future pathways and options open to them after their journey with us at Brian Clarke Academy. Students had an online presentation from two apprenticeship providers in Greater Manchester: Lightcroft Lighting and The Juice Academy. Presenters talked about their educational journeys and what life is like as an apprentice.

Year 8 students were invited to an Employer Event at Oldham College, where they met several employers such as the Police, Council and Armed Forces. They were also given a tour around the college and given guidance around T levels and apprenticeship courses.

We also had Andrew Thompson- an Architect from Faulkner Browns Architects deliver an engaging and inspiring talk to a group of Year 8 students interested in potentially pursuing a career in this field

Students will continue to experience different careers opportunities and encounters throughout next half term, particularly over Careers Week in March. We hope that students continue to broaden their aspirations as well as inform them on all of the options available to them at post 16.



Faith and Worship at Brian Clarke

The themes of our Collective Worship this term have been resilience, prejudice, and joy. Students are encouraged to look for opportunities throughout each week to nominate someone demonstrating the theme of the week. The Year 7 and Year 8 nomination boxes are kept in the library along with a selection of books linked to the weekly theme. Students have taken part in leading Collective Worship reading poetry, bible stories and playing the piano.



We were extremely honoured to welcome The Bishop Of Manchester and members of the clergy for the Clergy Chapter Meeting of Diocese of Manchester. They had a lovely school tour visit meeting the staff and students.

Religious Studies

This term in RS, students have been working hard in their journey as theologians to explore the influence of scripture on the lives of individuals and communities in contemporary British society. Year 7 have been looking at the prophecies around the Messiah which has led them nicely into exploring the concepts of trinity, incarnation, salvation and an in-depth study of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.

Year 8 will have finished their topic on Creationism, students have explored religious and non-religious accounts on the origins of the universe and humans. Students have explored their role as stewards who protect and preserve the planet for future generations in comparison to the idea of dominion which gives them the power and control. Having examined scripture we really focused on the concept of exegesis.

Assessments

Both Year 7 and 8 will have assessments taking place on the first week back. The students have been preparing for these assessments in recent weeks by creating flash cards and mind-maps. We have issued all students with a revision list to hone their revision on key topics.

Competitions

WELL DONE!

Currently we have two competitions taking place and we are impressed with the quality of engagement seen in some of the work received.

RS and Citizenship have jointly ran a competition on 'should animals have rights?' All students have submitted entries for the Cambridge Society of Animal Rights competition to their RS teacher. Mr Ahmed and Miss Robinson will announce the 3 Year 7 winners and 3 Year 8 winners in the assemblies. We are truly amazed with the responses received and thank all students for their hard work and creativity.

Also currently English and RS are working together to welcome entries for the Institute of Philosophy 'Think Fast' competition, students are encouraged to engage with one of the following questions

- Could a machine think?
- Is it morally wrong to eat meat?
- Can I know that the world I experience is real?

Please speak to Mr Ahmed or Mrs Dickinson for more details.



Library News



Our library is a welcoming, calm space for all.

Homework club:

Our library is open Monday – Thursday 2.40–3.30 pm. Students can complete paper based homework or take the opportunity to continue reading their favourite book.



Our student librarians enjoy helping in the library during break and lunchtimes. They are learning how to use the library management system to issue, renew and return books. We issue around 50 books per day. There are always plenty of books to shelve.

Mental Health Week



This term, we have added to our Wellbeing books including friendships, social media, exam stress, body image, eating well and life skills. These books are growing in popularity.

Overdue books

We have a number of overdue books. Please check if there are any library books at home that need to be returned.

Thank you :)

History



This term in History, students have been developing their skills as historians!

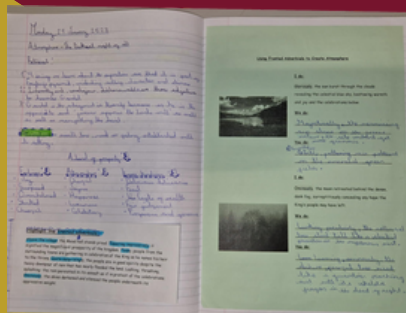
Year 7 have been finishing off their topic on looking at how power was challenged in Medieval England and have now moved onto looking at the Islamic Golden Age and the Crusades.

Year 8 have finished their topic on the British Empire and have now moved onto looking at the causes of World War One. Throughout all topics, Miss Bezer and Mr Bradley have been impressed with students' interest, curiosity and dedication to the subject.



English

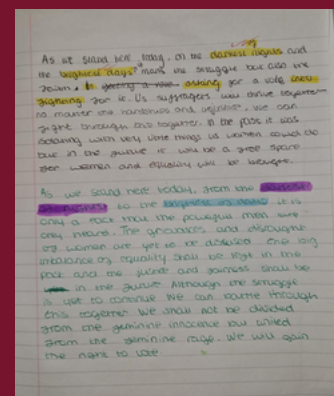
The English team have been in awe of our students this half term as they continue to work like literary critics. In Year 7, the students have been crafting medieval inspired narrative expositions. Creatively has come in in the form of superlatives when creating and introducing characters to the use of pathetic fallacy when creating atmosphere.



It is a pleasure to see our students taking advantage of Mrs Hughes's Poetry club, working hard, and getting creative and Mrs Dickinson's Debaters have been pondering some very philosophical questions, such as: is the world we live in reality? All in preparation for the essay entries...

A massive congratulations to all our students who entered The Young Writers competition, The Glitch, in which many have been selected for publication!

In Year 8, students have developed an understanding of the art of rhetoric by composing speeches, taking inspiration from the suffrage movement. We have excellent persuaders in our community!



Mrs Rizvi is running a Sparx Reader competition in Year 8, encouraging everyone to get reading and Miss Hamlin has everyone excited about the BBC Young Reporters Competition, encourage those budding journalists amongst us to participate.



We have had another great half term in Science!

Year 7 have been learning about the particle model of matter, including changes of state. We have been carrying out different experiments, including measuring the temperature of stearic acid as it changed state from a liquid to a solid. It was quite tricky as the temperature has to be measured every 10 seconds, but the pupils did extremely well. The pictures below show how well everyone concentrated!

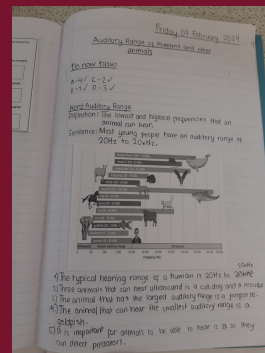
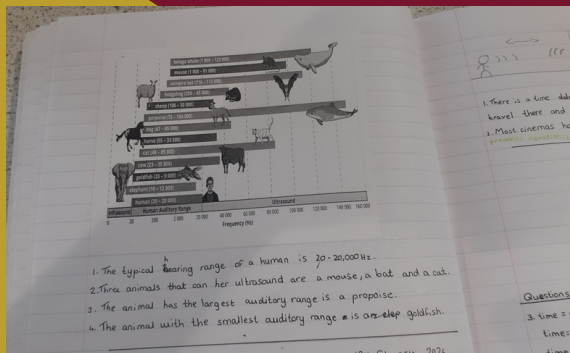


Year 8 have been learning about sound waves this term, making links with our previous learning on particles, wave properties and energy stores. We have been really impressed with how well the pupils have been able to make links between the different topics and recall information from Year 7!

Pupils have particularly enjoyed learning about the auditory range of animals – did you know that a porpoise has a hearing range of 75Hz to 150000Hz! We also used our listening skills to test out our own hearing ranges!

Echoes has been another area of great interest when we have learnt about the uses of echo such as ultrasound scanning and echolocation.

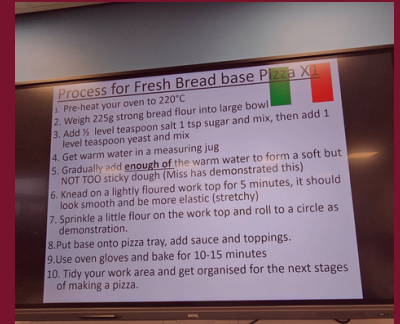
Some of the work pupils have done is shown below and demonstrates the effort our pupils make in lessons – well done everybody!



We are looking forward to next half term when Year 7 will move on to learning about the human skeleton and Year 8 will learn about respiration and photosynthesis. We are also very excited about STEM week – we will share our experiences in the next newsletter!

Food Technology At BCA

This half term students have really stepped up their culinary skills. Year 8 students have been learning about the science of bread and have made an array of spectacular Italian pizzas- including wholemeal bread bases! In year 7 students have made plant-based Buddha bowls, topped with toasted seeds (containing essential fats) in line with mental health week. The Co-curricular students made chocolate lollies for the number's day prizes. The food department is really bringing a buzz.



F1 Trip - Design Technology

A group of year 8 pupils had their race debut in the F1 For School Challenge over at Bolton University. Being nominated for two awards, whilst competing against more than 30 schools from around the northwest was an amazing achievement. They look forward to guiding our current year 7 pupils through it next year, and beyond.



Maths

Friday 2nd February was NSPCC Number Day. Students enjoyed a team challenge, a number hunt with staff and number related starters in every subject. We also raised some money to help the NSPCC fund their work with Childline as well.



All pupils have been given the opportunity to take part in a February Half-Term Maths Challenge, run by the University of Liverpool.

Our keen mathematicians have been challenged to complete 8 puzzles around the theme of 'Constellations'. Work can be completed independently over the holiday and pupils should submit their entries to Mr Stringer by Thursday 29th February. Paper copies have been handed out in lessons but the challenge can also be accessed here:

<https://mathsmerseyside.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/24ch-questions.pdf>.

Last year we had some fantastic entries and one superstar pupil achieved a second-place prize out of over 2000 entries nationally. Good luck to all pupils wishing to take part this year!



MATHEMATICAL EDUCATION
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Challenge '24
Year 8 or below

Physical Education

Netball

Our Year 7 netballers have come on leaps and bounds since September and Mrs Hargreaves is overwhelmed with the students' brilliant attitudes, hard work and commitment. We have 3 fantastic squads Hawks, Ravens and Owls and we have continued to build a community where our students can be apart of something really special.

Our Year 8 netballers have been utterly amazing this season. They are real life role models for our Year 7's and have shown that hard work really does pay off.

Team Hawks, Ravens and Owls have all placed 1st in their leagues. Both Ravens and Owls will now be promoted to the higher division. The results speak for themselves but what Mrs Hargreaves is most proud of is the commitment these girls have shown. The number of girls that train week in and week out is brilliant and for a school netball team is very impressive.



Gymnastics Taster Event

In January 10 lucky students experienced a gymnastics taster event at Eclipse Gym in Oldham.

Our students absolutely loved the event and couldn't wait to share what they have learnt. Numerous students showed an interest in continuing gymnastics outside of school. Well done to all involved you were as always wonderful ambassadors for our school.



Physical Education

Sports Leader Event

Our sports leaders hosted another fantastic event in January. Our young leaders hosted a values Dodgeball event for local primary schools and from the feedback we have received from both the students who participated and the Oldham School Games organisers we couldn't be more thrilled with our students. They are truly showing ambition and excellence beyond their years and these students are a pleasure to work with. We can't thank them enough for the wonderful work they are doing.



Swimming

In January we took a team of Year 8 Girls to the Senior School Swimming Gala. Our girls did us really proud and had a fantastic evening. Mrs Hargreaves was immensely proud of their teamwork and determination during the event. Well done Girls!

The PE team are always on the lookout for more swimmers, if there are any students who swim for a swimming Club, please make sure Mrs Hargreaves has this information. We currently only have one boy in Year 7 and one boy in Year 8 that swims for a competitive club and would love to make a boys' team if possible.



Physical Education

Boys football

This half term the Year 7 boys football team have played exceptionally well and stuck together all term. Although we lost both matches the team can take serious pride with their efforts and resilience. Numbers and attitudes at training continue to impress me and we will get more wins in the future. Well done boys.

Year 8 have got upcoming fixtures after half-term starting with Royton and Crompton.

Girls Football

Our Year 7 girls have been back in action after a very rocky start with terrible weather back in January. Year 7's took on Oasis Leesbrook and had a super win of 3 – 2. This group of girls are a pleasure to work with, their enthusiasm and amazing attitudes are a joy, and we look forward to more training and games after the half term.



Year 8's have also participated in a number of fantastic games this term. The games have been highly competitive, and we have some amazing teamwork and individual performances. A special mention to Coral and Alyshea who contribute so highly to this team. These girls are truly flying the flag for girls' football and we are lucky to have such fantastic role models in our community.



Drama

This half term in Drama has seen Year 7 look back to the very beginning of theatre as we know it today, exploring ancient Greece. Students have learnt a range of techniques used in ancient Greek theatre, Canon, Unison and repetition. These have been applied to different texts with students working in small groups to create a Greek chorus.

Year 8 have also gone back in time, exploring Shakespeare's most famous play 'Macbeth'. We have explored the play to gain an understanding of the story and the emotions of the different characters throughout the play and have then gone on to look at specific scenes in more detail, exploring modern adaptations and considering why directors may want to create versions that are more up to date.

We also have an exciting opportunity for students in the coming months, with a professional film company coming into school to deliver an acting for TV workshop to students who take co-curricular drama. In the workshop students will be working with industry professionals, performing script whilst operating professional film equipment. This will give students an insight of what it is like to work on a professional set, replicating conditions in the television industry for both actors and production roles.



Vocal Gala

Brian Clarke hosted the Oldham Secondary Network Vocal Gala on 14th February. Our choir participated in three vocal workshops and performed their own song for parents and carers in the evening. Students were an absolute credit to the school and sang their hearts out.



Celebration Assembly and Key Calendar Dates

Here are a few highlights from the last Celebration Assembly of the year. We are so proud of all our students this term, well done for all their successes they have achieved this year.



Key Calendar Dates For Next Term

Friday 16th February	School Closes for Half Term
Monday 26th February	Start of Term - School Re-Opens
Wednesday 27th March	Y7 Reports Home to Parents
Thursday 28th March	School Closes For Easter
Monday 15th April	Start of Term - School Re-Opens
Wednesday 24th April	Y7 & Y8 Online Parents Evening
Friday 3rd May	EBACC Assessment Week Y7
Monday 6th May	May Day Bank Holiday

