



ST JAMES'

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

6th January 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Spring Term Week 1 Headteacher Update

I hope you enjoyed a wonderful Christmas surrounded by friends and family, and I would like to wish you all a very happy New Year. Unfortunately, the school has been closed today due to extensive flooding caused by the heavy snow. We sincerely apologise for any inconvenience this may cause. Our dedicated site team have been working incredibly hard throughout the day and continue to work to ensure the site is safe for everyone, and we are expecting to re-open as normal tomorrow. Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

As we begin this half term, we look forward to lighter mornings, longer days, and the opportunities they bring. This is an essential period for all our children, regardless of year group, to ensure their learning remains effective, productive, and focused on enhancing progress. In our lessons, we will continue delivering a broad, balanced, and diverse curriculum that develops our students into global Catholic citizens.

This January marks the beginning of the *Year of Hope Jubilee* in Catholic schools across the country, including within our own St James' community. This is a special time in the Catholic Church to reflect on and embrace the gift of hope in our lives. Throughout the year, we will celebrate this Jubilee with a range of activities, charity events, prayers, and reflections, beginning with dedicated Jubilee workshops in the coming weeks.

We are also delighted to share that last term we were awarded the *Fischer Family Trust (FFT) Attendance Award*. This prestigious recognition is given to schools whose attendance rates for 2023/24 rank in the top 10% of all FFT secondary schools nationally. This achievement reflects the collective effort of our staff, who consistently promote the importance of good attendance, the support of our parents/carers in reinforcing this message at home, and, most importantly, our children, who feel safe, happy, and motivated to attend school.

As we look ahead to the spring term, there are several key events on the horizon:

- Year 9, 11, and 7 Parents' Evenings
- Year 9 Options Evening
- Termly Data Collection 2 for all year groups
- Reports for Years 11, 8, and 7

Further details for these events will be sent out this week, so please look out for the relevant information.

The new year also offers an opportunity for a fresh start. Form Tutors and Heads of Year will be reinforcing our high expectations around behaviour, uniform, attendance, and punctuality to ensure our school standards remain consistently high. It will be fantastic to see our staff continuing to reward students who meet these expectations. Our rewards system includes value points, breakfast celebrations, 'skip the queue' passes, and other incentives that recognise students who exemplify our school values. Well done to all our children for their continued efforts.

We are looking forward to our Year 11 Prefect Leadership Training with Ashley Boroda, focusing on peer leadership and difficult conversations. Students will also be completing the teenage version of the personality colours questionnaire to discover and understand their peers' preferred communication styles. This mirrors the staff training from last September, and we are excited to see strengthened collaboration and student leadership in the coming months.





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As we step into this new year, I look forward to all that we will achieve together as a school family. Should you need any support, please do not hesitate to get in touch at headteacherpa@stjameschadle.co.uk.

Yours faithfully

Mr A Pontifex
Headteacher

