



**The Barlow RC High School
& Specialist Science College**

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Headteacher:
Claire McCarron BSc (Hons) MA, NPQH

Dear Parents/ Carers,

As we come to the end of Advent and the Autumn Term 2016 and we commence our final preparations for Christmas and the celebration of the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ we can all reflect and be glad for the many blessings and opportunities we have been afforded in what has been a very challenging year globally.

School Events:

- A fantastic time was enjoyed by our new Year 7 pupils who joined Mr Grimes and other staff at a residential visit to Condover Hall in Shropshire in October as part of their transition programme.
- In November Geography students visited Altrincham Town Centre as part of their Key Stage 4 GCSE coursework to study retail change.
- Sports students had the opportunity to visit Water World Water Park in December as a reward for consistently representing the school and participating in sporting activities.

Thank you to our Parents:

- We are delighted with the increasing number of parents who attend our annual Parents Evenings when you meet with your child's subject teachers and discuss their academic progress towards their targets. This is undoubtedly having a very positive impact on your child's progress.
- Thank you to all parents for supporting us with the introduction of our "black school shoe only policy" which we introduced in September. Students look extremely smart and this has been commented on by many of our visitors.
- We are always very keen to hear parent's views about the quality of education and support we provide here at school. We always listen to parents views and endeavour to act on any suggestions that will have a positive impact on our provision. Thank you to all parents who take the time to complete our parents questionnaire during Parents' Evenings.
- Many thanks to our parents who take the time to attend our Parents Forum Group held once a term at school with senior members of staff. This is another way that



parents can find out more about the school and changes within the education system and offer views and suggestions. All parents are very welcome to attend. You can find out about the Spring and Summer Term meetings at the end of this letter and by viewing our school website.

- Thanks must also go to our Parent Governors who represent parents on the Governing Body. Mrs Catherine Redford and Mrs Fiona Donald.

Year 11 Examination Revision and Intervention Program-Spring/Summer Term:

- All parents of Year 11 students should have received notification that as of the beginning of the Spring Term the Year 11 school day is extended to incorporate examination preparation opportunities. These extra school sessions are designed to help your child to prepare effectively for their forthcoming GCSE examinations. I would ask that you support us in helping your child to achieve their best by encouraging their regular attendance at all sessions pertinent to their individual curriculum.

This year the school is supporting the following charities:

- Cornerstone
- Bolivian orphanage
- Francis House
- Declan's Decathlon.

A very important aspect of our work as a Catholic high school is our charity work. Over the last few weeks staff and students have been actively engaged in activities and events that allow them to raise as much money as possible for our chosen charities and provide groceries for the needy in our community at a time of great austerity. Thank you to parents who have sent in groceries or baked cakes long into the weekend and evenings to support this work. It is very much appreciated.

- **Staff and students organised a non-uniform day/Christmas jumper day** - on Wed 21st December pupils paid £1 for the privilege of coming to school in their own clothes. Everyone looked very festive in their Christmas clothing!
- **The annual Barlow Christmas Liturgy and Carol Concert** - took place on Thursday 9th December in our school lecture theatre. It was a really enjoyable and festive event. Our very talented students entertained us to an evening packed with music, drama and dance surrounded by a beautiful Christmas liturgy.
- **Senior Citizens Party** - this annual event took place on Thursday 14th December, when we were joined by about 50 local senior residents. Our pupils hosted the whole event and treated our citizens to a lovely afternoon of entertainment and fun!
- **Joint Secondary School and associate primary school Carol concert** - Monday 19th December was held this year at St Cuthbert's Parish Church in Withington. Students from all schools came together as a Catholic community and participated in this Christmas event.



School Inspections:

This year students have had two fantastic opportunities to shine and show off their talents and their school when we were joined in September by Diocesan Section 48 inspectors and late in November by Section 5 inspectors. Both sets of visitors cited our pupils as a real strength of the school stating:

“Pupils are articulate and charming. Their behaviour is good. They are proud of their school and they are happy to be there. This is also the view of the vast majority of parents.”

“The principles and values of being British are aligned to the Catholic ethos of the school which is tangible and clearly permeates every aspect of school life.”

- Please note we anticipate both reports will be available for parents within the next week. They can be seen by viewing our school website.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of either report please do not hesitate to contact the school Administration Officer who will make appropriate arrangements.

PE Kits

The Student Council has requested that some optional additions be made to the school current PE Kit:

- Girls black Barlow sports leggings which can be worn during PE lessons, activities or events.
- Barlow sports showerproof jacket.
- Barlow sports jumper for school sports team representatives.

These items will be available in the New Year from school uniform suppliers.

Reminders

- **Pupils must attend school regularly and on time** if they are to achieve their full potential. Attendance & punctuality information is requested in the references from the school on all college applications.
- **Make up and jewellery is forbidden.**
- **Parents and visitor protocols** - While we welcome parental engagement and communication please be aware that it is not possible for parents to see teachers on demand. If you wish to see a member of staff please phone the school office and make a pre-arranged appointment to avoid disappointment. During all such meetings and telephone conversations we ask that you treat staff with the courtesy and respect that you would expect to receive.



Staff leavers and joiners

Leavers	New Arrivals
Mrs S Leese – SENCO	Mrs S Collins - Deputy Faculty Leader Maths
Mr C Dalton – Teacher of Science	Mr J Tapster – Teacher of PE (FTE contract until 31 st August 2017)

We also wish Mrs J Smith our very best wishes as she starts her maternity leave.

Mrs Staniforth will take over as Senior Leader/SENCO from January 2017 and Mr James Bower has also been appointed as Science Teacher from January 2017.

Important dates

Date	Event
Thursday, 19 th January 2017	Year 10 Parents' Evening
Tuesday, 31 st January 2017	Headteacher's Surgery
Wednesday, 15 th March 2017	Parents' Forum
Friday, 17 th February 2017	MANCEP Inset Day – pupils not in school

Arrangements for end of Autumn Term and start of Spring Term

School will close for Christmas on **Thursday 22nd December 2016 at NOON**. Pupils will be allowed to remain in school to eat lunch if required. The 750 and 787 bus services have been informed of the early finish and will collect the children at 12.00 noon. School will re-open on **Monday 9th January 2017 at 8.20am**.

Finally can I take this opportunity to thank you once again for your continued loyalty and ongoing support for the school and wish you all a Joyful and Peaceful Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Yours sincerely



Mrs C McCarron
Headteacher

