

# St. Gregory's Catholic High School

Cromwell Avenue, Westbrook, Warrington, Cheshire, WA5 1HG.  
Telephone: 01925 574888



**Headteacher**  
**Mr E McGlinchey BSc (Hons) NPQH & NPQEL**

13<sup>th</sup> December 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

## **End of Autumn Term Letter – December 2024**

I write to you whilst we are well into the season of Advent and approach the end of the autumn term. In this letter, I want to cover some of the highlights of the term and provide other useful key information about the spring term ahead.

Advent is the time when we prepare for the birth of Jesus, the true meaning of Christmas. Advent allows us to take stock of the year we have left behind, to celebrate what we have achieved and to reflect on the service we have provided to others. Advent is a time of repentance and a time to move into a new year with hope for what we can do better going forwards. A reflection period is always welcome. Having taken time to reflect on this term, I am incredibly thankful for what the St Gregory's community has achieved.

**Record Breakers:** The DfE has just published school performance data for all schools and I am very proud to report that our record breaking class of 2024 are the highest performing school in West Warrington, the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest performing school in the whole of Warrington and the fourth highest school in the entire Archdiocese of Liverpool. To be ranked **fourth out of 50** high schools is a remarkable achievement for all of our staff, pupils and parents. Ofsted recognised the high achievements of the school and were complimentary about how children of all abilities achieve very well at our school.

Attendance continues to be outstanding at St Gregory's, even during this period of adverse weather, and I thank you, our parents and carers, for your support and work at home with this. The local authority have recently introduced financial penalties for attendance issues and it is our hope at St Gregory's that our high levels of attendance means that families are hopefully not affected by the penalties. We have been praised for excellent standards of behaviour in school by all visitors and of course Ofsted, and again I thank you as parents for supporting the upholding of our policies and procedures to ensure we maintain our high standards.

These positive achievements at St Gregory's would not be possible without you, our partners and parents' body and we should not underestimate the journey that we have been on to arrive at this successful position.

Our pupils have been enjoying plenty of cultural capital this term with many trips taking place, most notably the Year 7 retreats to Lowe House, theatre trips to see Blood Brothers and Warhorse, exploration visits to Jodrell Bank and urban surveys in Liverpool, art trips to the Tate on Albert Dock. Our sports teams have been competing on all fronts and bringing an array of medals back to school and our pupil leaders were delighted to meet the Deputy Prime Minister, Angela Rayner.

This term we welcomed our wonderful new Year 7 cohort to the school and formally welcomed all of our families during our Year 7 Welcome Mass. We look forward to welcoming you and all of our families to many events going forward. Masses to celebrate the class of 2024, remembrance services and our Advent mass have also been wonderful community occasions.

During the week of 25<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> November, St Gregory's was delighted to present our drama production of '39 steps'. The Drama department worked tirelessly for months with a huge cast to put on a show that will live long in the memory. The spirit of togetherness that this has fostered for all involved is a credit to the 'one family' approach to the show. 800 people, including our partner primary schools, watched the production. I pay special tribute to Mrs Chappel, Miss O'Connor and Mr Hill for making this happen.



**Pupil leadership:** Our pupil council have devised some excellent ideas to take the school forward once again during this term. Ideas successfully presented include the development of our prayer garden, which will be a place for our students to have time out, reflect, and pray when they are experiencing difficulties, a wellbeing package for nominated staff and a review of how we can be more environmentally friendly as a community.

I would like to offer a huge thank you to our parents, carers and pupils for your contributions to our charity campaigns this term. The school community has supported many campaigns, including Wear it Pink, Macmillan, the Poppy Appeal, St Joseph's Family Centre, Elderly in the Community and the Council with local community projects. Our children really care and see it as a duty to serve others and make a difference.

**School drop off and pick up developments** - in my end of Summer term letter, I noted that we were in discussions with Warrington Borough Council about their plans to redevelop the Peace Centre into a specialist SEND centre for Warrington. The latest development is that we have been informed that the Peace Centre will close over Christmas and work on the new development will begin in April / May 2025. We anticipate significant issues with parent pick up and drop off whilst the works are completed outside of the school with the most difficult period being the summer term which lasts for 12 weeks. We ask that to alleviate pressure on the roads at this time that if your child can walk, cycle or get the bus to school; they do so as there will be very limited room for cars unfortunately.

**End of term arrangements:** School will close for the Christmas holidays to all pupils on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December at 12.25pm. We have informed the bus companies of the earlier finish and the canteen will ensure a lunch 'grab bag' for any child that is entitled to a free school meal, that will be provided during 'brunch'.

**New Term:** School will reopen to all pupils at the normal time of **8.10am on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025.** We understand that over the festive period, children will be in party mode and may change haircuts and add piercings etc; however, we do expect all pupils to return to school with the usual correct uniform standards and without any of the items that are not permitted in our policies.

As always, I want to acknowledge the outstanding work of my entire staff team over this busy term and whole year. Every member of staff continues to do so much above and beyond for our pupils, making personal sacrifices to ensure that our school community is successful.

Finally, I would like to wish you and your loved ones a very holy Christmas and positive journey through advent that brings you hope for 2025. I very much look forward to the St Gregory's family being able to rest in anticipation of a great start to 2025.

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Ed McGlinchey.

Ed McGlinchey  
**Headteacher**