



Bishop Hedley Catholic High School



Headteacher: Mrs S J Hopkins BA (Hons) MA NPQH

Tel: (01685) 351860
Fax: (01685) 385292
E-mail: office@bishophedleyhigh.merthyr.sch.uk
Twitter: @BishopHedleyRC
Website: www.bishophedley.co.uk

Penydarren
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 9AN

Dear Parents and Carers,

It gives me great pleasure to write to you in my role as the new Headteacher of Bishop Hedley Catholic High School. Since I arrived at the school in 2005 as Head of RE I knew I had made a move to somewhere special and this perception has been confirmed time and time again over the years. Our school is a very special community, one where children experience real care and support and it is this ethos that is at the heart of everything that we do. I feel extremely honoured to have been chosen to continue to build upon the successes the school has already achieved under the guidance of the Governing Body and previous Leadership Team. Bishop Hedley High School is, undoubtedly, a welcoming and nurturing school with amazing children and dedicated staff who work tirelessly to achieve the best possible outcomes for all. I feel both humbled and privileged to be appointed to lead such a school.

The GCSE results of the Summer were the best in the history of the school, seeing over two thirds of the year group achieving at least 5 GCSEs A*-C grades, including English and Maths. This is a phenomenal achievement and one that we are extremely proud of. No learner left us without a qualification. I wish, along with the Governing Body, to take this opportunity to formally congratulate the staff and pupils on this triumph. These results are due to the hard work and dedication of staff and the commitment of pupils who attended revision session during and after the school day, holiday and weekend sessions and sometimes even breakfast sessions! They have been richly rewarded and I wish them every success in the next part of their journeys.

I have worked in Catholic secondary education for 21 years and during that time I have built strong relationships with children, staff, parents and carers, and Governors. I understand what is needed to take the school forward in this new era of Catholic Education, especially in light of the changes ahead and I am very much looking forward to working in partnership with you to achieve the very best for the whole community. We will hold many events through the year to which you are invited, the dates for these are below, please make every effort to attend these so that we can build a partnership to support one another in endeavouring to secure the best possible outcomes for your child.

One of our first challenges is the consultation on the 3-16 Catholic School being proposed by the Archdiocese and Merthyr Tydfil CBC. You will all have received a letter regarding this and urging you to respond. There will be a consultation meeting held here at school on the 11th September at 5.30pm where you will be given the opportunity to ask questions and to air your views, could I also urge you to attend this? This is the link to the response form which contains a link to the consultation document.

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/creationofsingle3-16catholicschool/?lang=338832>

As a school we have high expectations of all of our learners and this is coupled with high standards. We have clear guidelines of what is anticipated in the classroom, around the school and the way in which learning should continue at home. Standards also extend to uniform, again clear guidance is on our



website. Make up and jewellery should be kept to a minimum and pupils will be challenged if this is too excessive.

We also place great importance on attendance, quite simply if pupils do not attend school they cannot learn. Schools provide lasting friendships, important social skills, opportunities, improved wellbeing, choice and experiences. If our young people miss school they are less likely to achieve their full potential. In fact if just 3 days are missed each half term, attendance for the year would be less than 91%. If a young person's attendance is 80% in Years 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 then (s)he would have missed one entire year's worth of schooling; 1,170 lessons or 975 hours or a massive 58,500 minutes! Please make every effort to send your child to school each day, unless they are very unwell of course. Holidays should be booked during school holiday time to maximise the opportunities for our young people. I trust we will have your co-operation in this.

Dates for your diary

10 th September 6pm	Parent Parliament meeting (first meeting for interested parents)
11 th September 5.30pm	3-16 Consultation for parents
14 th September am	School Photographs
20 th September 4-6.30pm	Open Evening
28 th September 7pm	50 th Anniversary Ball (tickets available from school office)
18 th October 3.30-6pm	Year 7 Parents Evening
23 rd October 6pm	Autumn Concert
25 th October 3.30-6pm	Year 11 Parents Evening
29th Oct – 2nd Nov	Half Term
w/c 5 th November	GCSE Numeracy examinations and revision sessions
8 th November 2pm – 6pm	Years 7 – 10 Progress update meetings
19 th & 26 th November	Year 11 Geography Controlled Assessment
30 th November	INSET day
6 th December 6pm	Advent Service at St Illtyd's Catholic Church
w/c 10 th December	Year 11 Pre Public examinations
21 st December	Last day of Autumn term

Finally, we come to the end of our first week of term, and our first week of our Enrichment programme, Opening Minds. It has been an extremely busy time with lots of activities taking place and many new skills being learned which our pupils will be able to use throughout the year as part of the new Curriculum for Wales. Feedback from pupils, staff and visitors has been incredibly positive as always regarding engagement and participation, with pupils commenting on how valuable they have found the experiences and the attributes they have developed. We eagerly await the next week to see what unfolds for us then! Updates of events, experiences and trips will be posted regularly on our Twitter and Facebook page, be sure to like our page to receive these updates.

If you have not already done so, would you supply us with an email address so that correspondence can be sent electronically please? All letters in future will be posted on our website and a link will be placed on Facebook and Twitter, as we often find that letters do not find their way home! Trip letters will also be sent as a paper copy as signatures are required for consent.

I look forward to the year ahead, working with you and anticipate great things of our pupils.

Yours faithfully

Mrs S J Hopkins
Headteacher