



Headteacher's Letter: 12 December 2025

Upcoming Events

Fri 12 December	Family Carol Service at All Saints Church, Marlow: Live Link
Tue 16 December	Alumni Carol Service at All Saints Church, Marlow: Live Link
Wed 17 December	Term ends at 13.30
Mon 05 January	Staff INSET Day
Tue 06 January	All Students return to school, registration at 08:40



Smartphones and Social Media

It's cold and it's grey. You'd be forgiven for wishing you were in Australia right now where, you will likely have read, they have introduced a social media ban for under 16s. Ms Harper is giving assemblies to Years 7, 8 and 9 about internet safety but we need support from home too. We strongly encourage parents/carers to:

- Install downtime and screentime limits on mobile phones and devices
- Monitor your children's use of phones, including posts on social media, app usage, and internet history including on any installed VPNs.

Information and Reminders

Whole School

- **Family Carol Service on Friday 12 December:** The Live Stream Link to join the service is [HERE](#)
- **Alumni Carol Service on Tuesday 16 December:** The Live Stream Link to join the service is [HERE](#)
- **Borlasian Magazine:** Those parents/carers who ordered a copy of the Borlasian Magazine, they are now available for collection.
- Buckinghamshire Mental Health Support Team: *We have 5 more parent webinars planned for the next half of the academic term, with topics including: Exam stress, Understanding childhood and adolescent development and behaviour, Low mood, and Understanding Eating disorders.* Sign-up information is [here](#)

Year 7

What a fantastic first term the new Year 7s have had. They have amassed over 5000 house points since September and demonstrated amazing values throughout the term. As we look ahead to the spring term please see below for some general reminders and support your child to be ready for 2026 and beyond!

- **Basic equipment checklist:** please check at home - *they would make great stocking fillers...*
A fully charged laptop; Headphones; Black/blue pens; Highlighters; 30cm ruler; HB pencils; Eraser; Sharpener; Scientific calculator; Maths set with compass, protractor and set squares; Glue stick; Safety Scissors; Whiterboard pen marker; Art equipment 4B, 2B, HB graphite pencils and coloured pencils
- **Games:** all girls will be starting back with rugby and boys football. Please ensure they have **studded** boots; **girls will need mouthguards** for rugby as we will be introducing contact into the lessons.

- **Smartphones:** about a third of our Year 7 cohort do not have smartphones. A number of those that don't have smartphones have told us they are likely to get one by the end of Year 7 or into Year 8. There is a lot of information out there - [internetmatters.org](https://www.internetmatters.org) is one of the leading organisation that provides parents and carers with expert advice, resources, and tools to keep children safe and well online, helping families navigate digital risks like cyberbullying, inappropriate content, and privacy issues, while maximizing the benefits of the internet.
- **PSHE upcoming topics:** In January, Year 7s will begin a series of lessons called 'Something Not Right' The lessons focus on recognising abuse, where to go for help, and overcoming barriers to reporting.

Year 8

- **PSHE upcoming topics:** In January year 8s will soon begin a series of lessons on respect which follow on from lessons covered in Year 7. Lessons will focus on being able to understand the key concepts of human rights and their importance in our lives and relationships as well as being able to critically assess and challenge gender stereotypes and understand how these can be harmful in relationships.
- **Games:** all girls will be starting back with rugby and boys football. Please ensure they have **studded** boots; **girls will need mouthguards** for rugby as we will be introducing contact into the lessons.

Year 9

- **Year 9 Parents' Evening will be held online on Wednesday 7 January 2026:** [Letter](#)
- **Year 9 Bucks Skills Show, 4 March 2026:** [letter](#)

Year 10

- There is no specific information for Year 10 this week.

Year 11

- **NEA Subject Specific Internal Dates 2025/26:** [here](#)
- **2026 Summer Exam Series Letter:** [here](#)
- **Year 11 Study Leave:** Year 11's last day in school will be Friday 8th May
- **Year 11 Parents' Evening** - the Year 11 Parents' Evening will be held **online** on Thursday 22 January 2026 Letter: [Here](#)

Sixth Form

Summer 2026 Public Exams Letter: [here](#)

Year 12

- **Captain and Prefect Applications:** Applications for Captain and Prefect positions via Mr Hussain's Google Form close at noon on Monday 15 December. The selection process begins with applications and performing duties in the Spring Term, and is followed by a student and staff vote, selection event, and interviews with final roles announced before the Easter break.
- **Year 12 English Literature A Level Set Texts:** [letter](#)
- **Year 12 Physics in Action, 13 March 2026:** [letter](#)

Year 13

- **Financial Planning For University :** Aberystwyth University is offering a free Webinar to help Year 13 students preparing to start university in September 2026 learn essential money-management skills. The Webinar will be held at 6pm on Tuesday 16 December 2025 - click [here](#) for more information and registration.
- **Carol Service** at All Saints Church, Marlow on Wednesday 16 December 2025. Students should go straight to the Church and register by 8.40am. Following the service, staff and students will return to school around 10.00am.
- **Mock exams :** Please find attached the timetable and the Regulations Handbook for the Formal Practice Exams starting 6 January: [here](#) and [here](#)
- **University & Apprenticeship Interviews 2025/26** - Permission form to be completed by parents/carers

for all absences from school: [Letter and Permissions Form](#)

- **Interviews** : Students are now beginning to receive invitations for university interviews. If your son or daughter is invited, please ask them to inform Mrs Murgatroyd so that practice interviews can be arranged.
- **University applications** : Some students have listed fewer than five choices on their UCAS application. Please check with your son or daughter if this applies to them, and encourage them to add any remaining choices before the final deadline of 6pm on 14 January 2026.
- **Important Calendar Dates**
 - **Year 13 Mock Exams**: Tue 6 January 2026 - Monday 19 January 2026. Study leave is granted during this period. Click [here](#) to view the assessment timetable.
 - **Last teaching day**: Wednesday 6 May 2026
 - **Leavers' Chapel Assembly followed by Leavers' Celebration**: Thursday 7 May 2026
 - **Year 13 Prom: Crowne Plaza, Wed 24 June 2026** - a date for your diary

This Week at Borlase...



We have definitely been getting further into the Christmas spirit this week with the Christmas tree in Cloisters, competition brewing in the best-decorated office and Form room prizes, and the first of the school carol services at All Saints Church, Marlow, this evening. On Tuesday we had the school Christmas lunch which was very well attended and the students seemed very happy with the fare from Lewis and his team. The tip for the roasted parsnips? Cook them for a bit longer than you think that they need. Next week the festivities will continue with further carol services and our Christmas Fayre at lunchtime on Tuesday when students are invited to wear a Christmas jumper if they wish.



Chapel assemblies have picked up the festive feel too with a focus on gift giving in the festive season. I wonder what the best present you have received is. The students know mine and it's not exciting but my appreciation of it has only grown over time, so much so that after 15 years it is wearing out and a request has been made for an exact replacement. The challenge of the assembly was to consider the gifts that you might give someone else to show that they matter to you, and the importance of being grateful for what one already has.



Following up last week's assembly by representatives of the Anthony Nolan Trust, 94 students registered to be considered as Stem Cell donors with Year 12s Sophie, Mimi and Avani instrumental in spreading the positive word. In the Friday lecture, we welcomed back Dr Pedr Charlesworth (OB2013), a materials engineer and owner of OxByke, a bike recycling firm, who regaled students with his stories of recently completing his cycle around the world, covering over 50,000km!



Meanwhile, on Thursday, Year 7 enjoyed a trip to the theatre to see Disney's *Hercules*. Reports have been very positive, with many students experiencing their first trip to a London theatre. Year 11 are more seasoned theatre-goers and they took in *A Christmas Carol* as a post-mocks treat (but also as preparation for their GCSEs in the summer).

Have a lovely weekend

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Ed Goodall'.

Ed Goodall
Headteacher

HERE & NOW
ANNUAL FUND

We are indebted to the generosity of past and present members of our community, without whose financial support we could not provide the opportunities on offer at Borlase. Please click [here](#) to find out what your support helps to provide, and how you could make a donation.