

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am delighted to let you know that this term your child will be given the opportunity to sign up to NCS with The Challenge, a government-funded programme for 15-17 year olds. Working through physical, personal and creative challenges, this once-in-a-lifetime experience empowers young people to build skills and confidence to get ahead in work and life, whilst engaging with their local area. Fourteen Balshaw's CE High School students from last year's Year 11 went on the programme in the summer. The feedback we have received from our former students on their experiences of taking part in The Challenge have been nothing but positive, with all those involved saying that they would highly recommend it.

The Challenge, the country's largest provider of NCS, is delivering 1680 places across Lancashire in Summer 2015. It is a part-residential programme which begins with 3 parts that take place over fourteen days in the summer, with breaks. The first two parts are residential, with all meals, kit and accommodation provided. First, teams develop their leadership and teamwork skills by working with some of the best outdoor instructors in the UK, enabling them to create friendships and build confidence. After a short break, young people return for part two where they stay in university style accommodation and gain new skills in an area they are passionate about. Finally, teams have the unique opportunity to design, pitch and deliver their own social action project. Then they graduate, receive a signed certificate from the Prime Minister and join the graduate programme, The Challenge Society.

Programmes begin on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015 and run every subsequent Monday until the final programmes beginning on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> August. Each programme lasts for 3-4 weeks with weekend breaks and meeting points would be across Preston, Chorley, Blackburn and beyond. Parents and students can choose whichever programme dates and locations best suit their summer plans. Places are allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Delivering the programme costs hundreds of pounds per head, but they only ask for a maximum of £50 with many discounts and financial assistance available. The application fee covers all accommodation, food, transport, and specialist kit for the residential parts of the programme.

Representatives from NCS with The Challenge are speaking at a Year 11 presentation on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January, during which your child will have the opportunity to express their interest in the programme.

For more information, visit [www.ncsthechallenge.org](http://www.ncsthechallenge.org). *You are able to book a place on the website now.*

We highly recommend this unique and valuable opportunity and hope you will encourage your child to take part.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. C. Haycocks', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr S C Haycocks  
Head teacher