

Friday 28th November 2025









Joyful Expectation

Dear Parents,

I have been thinking about this phrase as we begin to move into Advent. It comes directly from the liturgy, where Advent is described as a season of "joyful expectation," and the more I reflect on it, the more it feels like the right frame for this moment in the term. The phrase holds together the reality we live in and the hope that guides us forward.

My favourite modern theologian, Marcus Borg, described Advent through four themes: liberation, return, light in darkness, and yearning. Each one points to the human search for freedom, connection, clarity, and fulfilment. The Catholic writer Henri Nouwen added that Advent invites us to listen to our deepest longings and to see in them the signs of what truly matters.

You do not have to share a Christian faith to find meaning in this. Advent, at its heart, is about the rhythm of waiting, hoping, and acting. It asks us to pay attention to what is unfolding around us, to recognise where care and reflection are needed, and to stay open to the possibility of renewal, even in the ordinary days that make up most of our lives.

As you will see from the pages in this bulletin, Advent feels familiar in schools because it speaks to what we do each day. Education is fundamentally an act of hope. It assumes that growth is possible, that children can keep learning, and that effort and patience make a difference. Every lesson, every conversation, and every moment of support is built on the belief that tomorrow can be better than today. That is what joyful expectation looks like in practice.

Joyful expectation deals with the immediate and the hopeful. It encourages us to see the effort, creativity, and potential in the children before us and to believe in their capacity to grow. It reminds us that our work is imperfect but worthwhile, and that even the smallest gestures of understanding can leave a mark on the people we teach and guide.

Advent calls us to stay present to the children, to guide them well, and to believe in their potential. The way we meet children each day shapes their understanding of themselves and the world, and that is where real hope begins.

Have a good weekend when it comes.

Best,

Damien Walshe Headteacher

Janie Walle



Best of Luck to Ms Higgins!

We are incredibly proud of Ms Higgins, who is part of Fr. Murphy's Camogie team here in London. The team recently celebrated a fantastic achievement, winning the All-Britain Intermediate Camogie Championship, which secured their place in the All-Ireland Junior B Championship.

This weekend, they travel to Dublin for their semi-final on 29th November, and the whole school is cheering them on. It's a brilliant accomplishment to reach this stage, and we wish Ms Higgins and her teammates the very best of luck as they continue their championship journey.

Good luck Ms Higgins, we are all behind you!



SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHY – EXTENDED DISCOUNT & CHRISTMAS ORDER DEADLINES!

Pret-a-Portrait's discount for the school photos recently expired. They have extended this until **Thursday 4**th **December** so you can take advantage of the discount for longer!

Head to their website <u>www.pret-a-portrait.net</u> and enter your sitting ID, the discount will automatically be applied.

Christmas Order Deadlines - please click the link below to view the order deadlines for each product. https://info.pret-a-portrait.net/christmas-delivery/#UK.

If you've misplaced your sitting ID, please contact Pret-a-Portrait directly on **0800 021 7626** or customerservice@pret-a-portrait.net.



Parliament Week Assembly

This week, our Parliament Week Assembly was a wonderful celebration of pupil voice and democratic understanding at Saint Christina's. The children demonstrated an excellent grasp of how democracy works, from voting and elections to representing others, and made clear links to how we practise these processes within our own school community.

They also did a superb job showcasing all of our 6Cs, particularly Communication, Curiosity and Critical Thinking, as they discussed real-life examples and shared their ideas confidently.

To finish, the children took part in a whole-school vote, choosing between three thoughtful options: Eco Initiatives, Cosy Corners, and Playground Equipment. All three reflected the children's care for their environment and their well-being. The winning choice was Eco Initiatives, an area we already value highly at Saint Christina's, and one that the children are keen for us to continue developing even further.

A big well done to all involved!

Mr Hirst - Deputy Head

Science

If Father Christmas needs some extra-special elves to help make all the toys in time for Christmas Eve, then the pupils in Year 6 would be the number one choice! This week they have used their knowledge about series and parallel circuits to make electronic games. The game has a question with four possible answers. Only the right answer will make the bulb light up. The pupils demonstrated a great deal of critical thinking, creativity and resilience to create their games and it was definitely worth all of the effort as we had great fun playing each others' games!

Miss Chand - Head of Science















Nursery's Bread Journey Finale

Nursery's bread journey came to a lovely end this week as we made our focaccia. Not just any focaccia, a garden-inspired one. After two weeks of practising their bread-making skills, the children were already confident bakers and kneaders as they mixed, shaped and prepared the dough. They then chopped the vegetables and arranged them carefully to create beautiful flower and garden designs on top. This is the last edition of our bread journey as we get ready to move on to gingerbread men next week.

Ms Randle - Head of EYFS









Reception's Letters to Santa

This week in Reception, the Christmas excitement has started to build as we began thinking about what we might like for Christmas. The children decided to write a letter to Santa and send it all the way to the North Pole. We have been practising how to make letters and postcards in class, and we learned that to send a letter we need an envelope, an address, and a stamp. Using the computer, we found Santa's special address and carefully wrote it on the front of the envelope. Then, as a class, we walked to the post box, sang a festive song to help spark some Christmas magic, and posted our letters to Santa. The children were so proud to be sending them off and are now very excited to see what might happen next!

Ms Williams - Reception Class Teacher

















Year 1 History

Year 1 have been loving our History topic about toys this half term. We have been exploring how toys have changed over time and comparing old toys with the toys we play with today. The children have shown great curiosity as they learned about how materials and designs have changed over the years.

We enjoyed interviewing our parents and grandparents about the toys they had when they were younger. This gave us the chance to practise our communication skills and to think carefully about how play has changed across generations. We asked questions like "What was your favourite toy?", "How did you play with it?" and "Do you still have it today?"

We were very excited when Ms Sephton visited us with her special teddy which is over one hundred years old. The children worked together to look closely at the teddy and compare it to modern toys. They noticed how toys from the past were made and cared for and talked about how different they are from the toys we use today.

Throughout the topic the children have used all of our 6Cs. They have shown curiosity when exploring old objects. They have demonstrated communication during interviews. They have used collaboration when sharing and discussing ideas. They have shown creativity when sketching and describing toys. They have shown commitment during independent research. They have applied critical thinking when comparing past and present toys.

It has been a wonderful topic full of exciting discoveries and meaningful learning!

Ms Higgins and Ms Khalique - Year 1 Class Teachers

















Year 2 Maths

Year 2 have had a brilliant week in Maths.

The children have been developing their data-handling skills by learning how to read and create tally charts, discussing what the information shows and how it can be organised clearly. They also explored 2D shapes, looking closely at their properties and practising how to draw them carefully and accurately. To round off the week, the children investigated lines of symmetry, using examples and guided activities to test their understanding. They approached each lesson with great focus and enthusiasm.

Well done Year 2!

Ms Rock and Mr Burke - Year 2 TA and Class Teacher



Year 3 Carolling

We are delighted to share that our Year 3 children will be spreading festive cheer on **Tuesday**, **2nd December 2024**, from **9:00** am to **9:30** am.

The children will perform Christmas carols to support a fundraising collection for St John's Hospice, bringing joy to commuters while contributing to a wonderful cause.

We are very much looking forward to this exciting opportunity to showcase our wonderful Year 3 children and support such an important cause.

Mr Burke, Ms Bryant and Ms Sephton

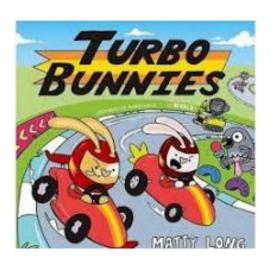


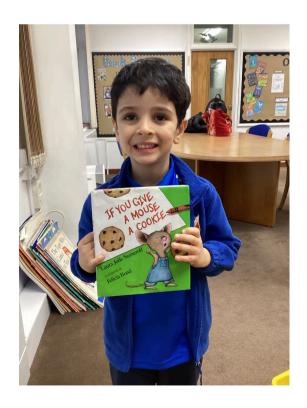




KS1 Story Club

Turbo Bunnies by Matty Long: "I like this story because they are doing a race and racing is my favourite things. I like running races and go kart races. It is a funny and happy story!"- Child in Year 1 MK





If You Give a Mouse A Cookie by Laura Numeroff: "If you give a Mouse something you need to give it a lot more. It is a silly story! When it draws a picture, it does a line at the start and then there is a picture of the whole mouse family in the woods"- Child in Year 1 OH



KS1 STEM Club

This week in STEM Club, our young engineers were inspired by the story Iggy Peck, Architect. After listening to the book, we talked about creativity and the amazing things architects design. Then, it was time to build! Using a variety of materials, Lego, wooden blocks, and sticky blocks, the children worked together to create towers, bridges, and imaginative structures. It was fantastic to see their problem-solving skills, teamwork, and big ideas come to life!

Ms Farquhar - Head of STEM









Year 3's Roman Shields

As part of their studies about the Romans in History lessons this term, Year 3 have been busy designing and making Roman shields. We also looked at some Roman army formations.

One of the most famous formations was the Tortoise (Testudo). Testudo is the Latin word for tortoise. It was used to protect the soldiers from enemy attack. The soldiers in the front and sides interlocked their shields. The soldiers in the back lines placed their shields over their heads to form a protective 'shell' over the top of them.

Another formation was the Wedge which was used to 'crack open' enemy lines. The soldiers formed a triangle, the front tip being one man who charged towards enemy lines holding their gladius.

We had lots of fun using the Roman shields we made to try out these formations in the playground.

Ms Sephton - Year 3 Class Teacher







Year 4

This week, Year 4 worked hard on their PUMA and PIRA assessments. Well done to everyone for giving your best effort! In Religion, we explored John the Baptist by comparing descriptions from Matthew and Mark, while in History we learned about Cleopatra and acted out key moments from her life. Maths focused on revising past topics and starting our new unit on area, and in English we mastered apostrophes for possession, completed our Give Nature a Voice entries, and wrote gratitude letters or Thanksgiving-inspired stories. Art was all about finishing our canopic jar casting ready for painting, and during P4C we had a lively discussion on whether the planet belongs to us. To end the week on a high, we enjoyed an exciting visit from the Pantomime!

Ms Farguhar - Year 4 Class Teacher













Year 5 Explore Sustainability: Then and Now

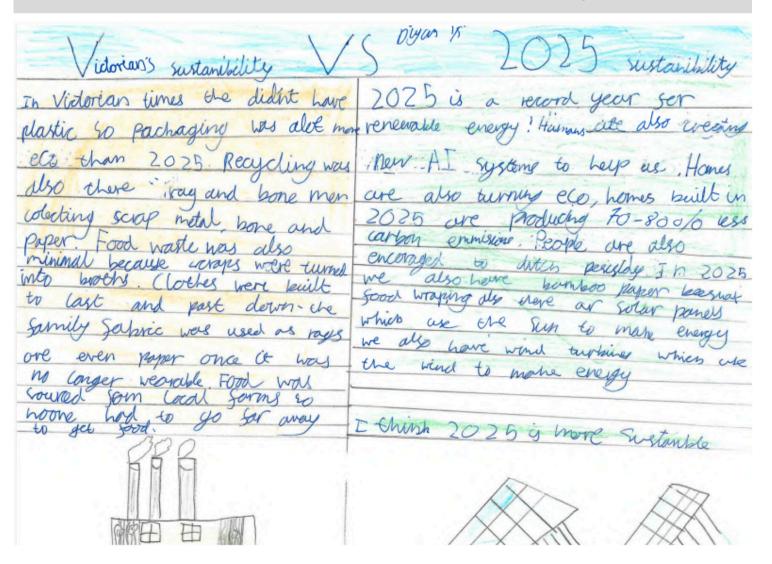
Year 5 have been investigating how sustainability has changed from the Victorian Era to 2025, and the classroom has been buzzing with thoughtful discussion. The children compared how people in Victorian times travelled, used materials, and reused everyday items with how we approach sustainability today.

They explored the differences in transport, from horse-drawn carriages and early steam trains to today's electric vehicles and public transport systems designed to reduce emissions. The class also examined the use of natural materials in Victorian homes and clothing, discussing how these compare to the synthetic and renewable materials used in modern life.

One of the most lively conversations focused on reusing and recycling, with children noticing that Victorians often reused items out of necessity, while we reuse and recycle today to protect the planet.

The children showed wonderful curiosity and insight throughout the topic, well done Year 5!

Ms O'Leary - Year 5 Class Teacher





Year 6

It has been another big week for Year 6, with many of the children sitting exams either in school or at various secondary schools. I am hugely proud of them all for navigating this period with such calmness, resilience, and genuine support for one another. As part of the 11+ process, the children will now begin preparing for interviews. To help with this, we were delighted to welcome Mr Tennant, one of our Governors, into school at the start of the week. He conducted mock interviews with each of the children, giving them an invaluable opportunity to practise in a supportive setting. The children absolutely loved the experience, and Mr Tennant's feedback was overwhelmingly positive, he thoroughly enjoyed meeting them and found them all an absolute delight: confident, thoughtful, and wonderfully engaging. The pantomime also arrived at just the right moment, offering Year 6 a much-needed afternoon of fun and downtime. With one final week of exams to go before Christmas, I could not be prouder. Keep going Year 6, you are doing brilliantly!

Mrs Ellisdon - Year 6 Class Teacher

Debate Club

Debate Club has now been running for several weeks, and it has been wonderful to see the children's commitment and enthusiasm grow week by week. This week, we aimed to take things to the next level by focusing not just on presenting reasons, but on improving the overall quality and depth of their debating skills. The children explored how to incorporate metacognitive thinking moves into their speeches, helping them to develop clearer explanations, stronger justification, and more refined critical thinking. They also worked on using persuasive language more effectively to strengthen their arguments. Our motion this week was: This house believes that everyone should be a vegetarian. I was extremely impressed with the thoughtful and well-constructed points made by each team, and it was a delight to see the children digging deeper into the issues rather than simply scratching the surface. Well done debaters, keep it going!

Mrs Ellisdon - Assistant Head (Academic)







Sport Update

On Monday, our Year 3 and 4 football teams enjoyed three very competitive, closely fought matches against lvy House School. The teams drew one game and narrowly lost the final match. All of the players put in a fantastic performance, and it was wonderful to have so many parents there to support them. Nao was exceptional in goal, making several amazing saves, and Noah scored an excellent goal that secured a 1–0 victory in the opening match. In the second game, the team played some really impressive football, with great finishes from Herb and Adrian, who was awarded Star Player for his superb passing and movement throughout. In the final game, we took the lead through a well-taken goal from Giselle, but despite the team's best efforts, we conceded two late goals. Well done to all involved for their determination and teamwork.



On Tuesday, the Year 5 and 6 girls' football teams put in a strong performance against Cavendish, winning one game and drawing the other. There were some fantastic goals from Beatrix, Alice and Isabella, contributing to a very good team performance despite the cold weather.





Date	Against	Team/ Year	Venue	Time
Monday 8 th December	Sarum Hall	Year 5 and 6 Girls Netball	Away	16.00 -17.00

Mr Raveney - Director of Sport

KS1 and Key Stage 2 Inter House Festive competition

We have had a few entries for the Inter House competition handed in this week, just as a reminder the deadline for the competition is **Monday 8th December**. Children are asked to create a small Christmas decoration, which will be used to create a Christmas display. The decorations could include your child's house colours (**Saint Cecilia-Blue**, **Saint Francis-Yellow** and **Saint Joan of Arc-Red**). It is a chance for children to earn House points for their Houses and get creative and imaginative. The children should bring the decorations they create to their classrooms and the Year 6 House captains will come around to the classes and collect.

Mr Raveney - Director of Sport



Music Update

Little Voices

We have a performance assembly scheduled for **next Wednesday (3rd December) at 9.00am**, when Little Voices will be showcasing the songs they have worked on this term. There is now a Google Classroom for Little Voices, where I have put links to the songs so they can practise at home. This will be especially important for those children in Year 1 who are newest to the group. The songs are great fun so do enjoy them with your children!

Nativity Practice

Our rehearsals for EYFS and KS1 nativity plays are going very well and the children are really enjoying learning the songs. For KS1 the songs are available on Google Classroom, so do encourage them to practise at home and show you the dance moves! EYFS also have links sent home via class teachers.





Choirs on Monday 8th December

Please note that although next week (beginning 1st December) is officially the last week of clubs for this term, there will **still be rehearsals** for Senior and Junior Choirs at the usual times on **Monday 8th December**, as it is the week of the Carol Service.



KS2 Carol Service Preparation

Learn words learn words!!

All KS2 children should now have a carol sheet at home. If any have gone missing, I do have some spares. We have talked about learning words during Music lessons. Children should prioritise the songs they are performing as a class, and the finale song; they all know what these are and it should be clear from the sheet. Then they can move on to learning carol words. There are recordings and video links on Google Classroom. Here are my top tips for learning song words:

- 1. Break the song down into **sections** and commit to learning one section or verse at a time.
- 2. Know what it's **about** this is better than trying to learn meaningless words. Can you summarise a verse in five words or less?
- 3. Read or sing the verse **out loud**, by yourself, several times looking at the words.
- 4. Cover it up and try again without looking how did you do?
- 5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 several times if needed.
- 6. Get an adult or friend to test you.
- 7. Keep at it **revise** it the next day to be sure.

Well done everyone – it's going to be a fantastic Carol Service.

Mrs Bryant - Director of Music



DINY'S SENSORY AND MESSY PLAY (FROM 10 MONTHS -TO 36 MONTHS)

FROM THE MOMENT THEY ARE BORN, BABIES BEGIN EXPLORING THE WORLD THROUGH THEIR SENSES.

TOUCH, MOVEMENT, SOUND, AND SMELL PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN THEIR DEVELOPMENT.

A CHRISTMAS SENSORY & MESSY PLAY SPECIAL A

JOIN US FOR A MAGICAL FESTIVE SESSION FILLED WITH

SPARKLY SNOW, GINGERBREAD SCENTS AND COLOURFUL

CHRISTMAS TRAYS.

LED BY EDINA, A QUALIFIED EARLY YEARS EDUCATOR WITH 10+ YEARS EXPERIENCE INCLUDING ROLES AS BABY ROOM LEADER AND DEPUTY MANAGER.

VENUE:THE ART'S HALL. <u>SAINT CHRISTINA'S SCHOOL</u>,

25 ST EDMUND'S TERRACE

NW8 7PY

29TH OF NOVEMBER-SATURDAY
TIME: 10:45AM - 11.30AM

PRICE: £10 PER CHILD CASH ONLY- OR SIBLINGS BRING A FRIEND
FOR £15

PLEASE ENSURE YOU ARE PRESENT WITH YOUR CHILD FOR THE DURATION OF THE SESSION





PLEASE BOOK YOUR SPACE VIA THE EMAIL ADDRESS BELOW:

RETESIE@GMAIL.COM











NOTICES and REMINDERS

Nut Free School

We have a number of children and staff in the School who have serious nut allergies. Please will you ensure that you do not give your child any nuts or nut products (e.g. Nutella) to bring into School.

Cold Weather Clothing

There has been a noticeable drop in temperatures. Please ensure your child comes to school with their school hat, scarf, and gloves, as well as appropriate warm layers. This will help keep all children comfortable and prepared for the colder weather.

Sunday Mass

You are warmly invited to join Sunday Mass, which is held in the Chapel at 10:00am.

Parking

We kindly ask parents and carers to please avoid parking on the zig-zag lines outside the school. Keeping this space clear helps ensure a safe and smooth arrival and departure for all our children. Thank you for your support.



Dates for your diary

Monday	1 st
Decembe	er

- Last Week of Clubs
- Judo Demo for parents of children attending Judo Club - 4.10pm in Main Hall

Tuesday 2nd December

- Year 3 Carolling 9.00am
- Year 4 History Trip

Wednesday 3rd
December

• Little Voices Assembly - 9.00am in Main Hall

Thursday 4th December

• Year 1 Trip

Friday 5th December

- EYFS Trip
- Year 2 Trip
- Year 5 Advent Mass

Monday 8th December

- No clubs this week (Wraparound care continues as usual)
- Year 5 and 6 Girls Netball (Away)

Tuesday 9th December

• EYFS Nativity - 9.00am in the Main Hall

Wednesday 10th
December

• KS1 Nativity - 9.00am in the Main Hall



Thursday	11 th
Decemb	er

- Christmas Lunch
- KS2 Carol Service

Friday 12th December SCHOOL CLOSES AT MIDDAY FOR THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY

Tuesday 6th January CHILDREN RETURN

Thursday 8th January

• Year 4 Netball Fixture (Away)

Friday 9th January

Staff led Mass

Monday 12th January

Clubs Start

Wednesday 14th January

• Year 4 Coffee Morning (Details to follow)

Friday 16th January

• Year 4 Mass

Monday 19th January

- Year 5A and B Girls Netball (Away)
- Heritage/International Week



Wednesday 21 st January	Year 3 Class Netball (Away)
Friday 23 rd January	Year 2 International Mass
Monday 26 th January	 Year 3/4 Mixed Football (Home) Year 4 Swimming (2 Weeks)
Friday 30 th January	Year 6 Mass
Monday 2 nd February	Year 5/6 Mixed Football (Home)
Wednesday 4 th February	Year 5/6 Inter House Football
Friday 6 th February	 NSPCC Workshop with Years 2, 5 and 6 Year 5 Mass
Monday 9 th February	• Year 3/4 Netball (Home)
Tuesday 10 th	Inter House Pancake Challenge

February

• Year 5A and Year 6A Netball Fixture (Home)



Thursday 12th February

- Inter House Music Competition
- KS2 Carol Service

Thursday 12th February
SCHOOL CLOSES AT USUAL TIME FOR HALF TERM

Monday 23rd February CHILDREN RETURN

ABOVE TIMES/DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Please note: Policies can be found on the School Website – please click link below:

https://www.saintchristinas.org.uk/our-school/policies/