



SAINT CHRISTINA'S BULLETIN

Friday 30th January 2026



Where Kindness Meets Ambition



SAINT CHRISTINA'S BULLETIN

Dear Parents,

Bí Cineálta. Gaelic for 'be kind'.

These words can be found everywhere at Saint Raphaela's in Dublin and need no explanation. At Saint Christina's, we speak about our Golden Thread, the same value expressed differently. Jo Reilly and I have been here since Wednesday, spending time at Saint Raphaela's, one of our sister schools, and a shared understanding has been felt throughout our visit. The educational thinking is unmistakably Handmaids. Open, warm, and child-centred.

What you notice within minutes is that relationships sit at the heart of everything. The adults know the children well and work hard to maintain those connections. The trust built as a result then does something important: it allows children to show up as themselves. There wasn't a whiff of performance for the 'visitors from London'; it was all very natural and authentic.

Beyond time spent in the schools themselves, the visit has been shaped by rich conversations with Headteachers, with Sister Mary Corr, Superior of the community and a former Headteacher of Saint Christina's, and with Handmaids and colleagues from Portugal. The children led the tour of the school and they spoke with pride and affection about their community and about what a Handmaids education has given them. As I often say, Saint Christina's is a school you 'feel'. Saint Raphaela's is the same.



There was an openness and honesty in our discussions with colleagues from Dublin and Portugal, and a shared willingness to speak plainly about what matters and what is difficult. We talked about childhood in a digital age and the responsibility schools carry to protect it. Character formation and academic ambition were discussed at length, and there was a shared understanding that they are more effective when they work together. Children who are grounded and secure are better placed to think hard, work hard and aim high.

As we discussed the next decade of education, with all its pressures and uncertainties, what gave me confidence was the same thing that always does, and that is the children themselves. At Saint Christina's and at Saint Raphaela's, they are thoughtful, decent human beings. Bí Cineálta. That feels like a strong place to start.

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The visit has reinforced a sense of being part of something wider, something meaningful, and something grounded firmly in the pedagogy of the heart. Seeing that reflected so clearly beyond London has been a pleasure to witness.

Have a good weekend when it comes.

Best,

Damien Walshe
Headteacher

Small Actions, Big Impact – The Power of Words

In this week's assembly, we reflected on how our everyday actions and words can have a powerful impact on others and on our school community.

We talked about how small choices, such as including others, showing good manners, trying our best, and helping those around us, all contribute to making Saint Christina's a kind, happy, and supportive place to learn.

We also explored the importance of choosing our words carefully, both in person and online. The children were introduced to the helpful **THINK** reminder before speaking:

- T – Is it True?
- H – Is it Helpful?
- I – Is it Important?
- N – Is it Necessary?
- K – Is it Kind?



Using this simple guide encourages children to communicate thoughtfully and respectfully, and to consider how their words may affect others.

During our discussions, many children shared thoughtful and mature ideas. In particular, Arlo made an excellent contribution when he reminded us that "the kindness of a smile can create a ripple effect and spread to others." This simple but powerful message captured perfectly how small actions can have a far-reaching impact.

Through talk partner discussions and reflection, the children shared practical ways they can show kindness and encouragement in school each day. We were impressed by the maturity of their responses and their commitment to supporting one another.

We continue to be proud of how our children live out our school values and the 6Cs through their actions and attitudes. By making positive choices each day, even in small ways, they truly make a big difference.

Mr Hirst - Deputy Head



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Eco Prefects' Food Waste Challenge – Starting Next Week

From Monday next week, our Eco Prefects will be launching a new House Challenge to reduce food waste at lunchtime.

KS2 pupils will take part first, with younger year groups having the opportunity to join in during future weeks. The challenge will see Blue, Red and Yellow Houses working to create the least amount of food waste by only taking what they know they will eat.

We will be monitoring waste levels carefully, and there may even be a small treat for the winning house! This initiative supports our commitment to caring for the environment and developing responsible, sustainable habits.

Let's work together to reduce waste and protect our planet.

Year 6 Eco Prefects

Digital Wellbeing: Talking to Children About Smartphones

Following up on our ongoing commitment to digital wellbeing at Saint Christina's, I wanted to share a website that some families may find helpful when thinking about children and smartphones.

One of the articles on the site focuses on how parents might talk to their child about smartphones. A few of the key suggestions include:

- Acknowledge your child's feelings if they are asking for a phone.
- Be clear and calm about your reasons for waiting, explaining that this is about care and wellbeing rather than punishment.
- Reassure children that different families make different choices.
- Focus on what children gain by waiting, such as time for play, friendships, creativity and confidence away from screens.



The website is run by Smartphone Free Childhood, a UK-based, parent-led movement that encourages families to support one another in delaying smartphones and social media, particularly through the primary years. Many parents find that shared approaches can help reduce pressure and make these conversations easier.

I'm sharing this simply to support families who are navigating these conversations, and to continue the dialogue around digital wellbeing that we already value as a school.

To find out more, visit:

<https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/>

Mr Burke - Assistant Head (Pastoral)



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Spanish Update

This term, children across the school are enjoying a wide range of exciting Spanish lessons, building their language skills through stories, songs, topics, and conversation.

- **Nursery** are learning Spanish numbers through the Eric Carle book 1,2,3... Vamos al Zoo, as well as traditional Spanish nursery rhymes such as Los pollitos, Los elefantes se balanceaban and La granja de mi tío.
- **Reception** are revisiting colours and action words through a very exciting topic called “Los Superhéroes”, using movement and imagination to support learning.
- **Year 1** are focusing on transport vocabulary while recapping shapes in Spanish.
- **Year 2** are learning about winter and cold weather, the clothes we wear to keep warm, and the parts of the body where we wear them.
- **Year 3** continue working on the topic of pets, developing their confidence with descriptive sentences.
- **Year 4** are learning how to talk about illnesses and pains, including how to visit the doctor and explain where it hurts.
- **Year 5** are practising how to tell the time in Spanish, learning vocabulary and structures related to food, likes and dislikes, and developing accuracy with gender and number in sentences.
- **Year 6** are learning about family members, creating their own family trees, and describing people's physical appearance.

It has been lovely to see how enthusiastic the children are in their Spanish lessons this term. They are learning through songs, stories, games and conversation, and growing in confidence each week as they explore the language and culture.

Ms Bretones - Head of Spanish, Art & DT



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Little Engineers at work in Nursery

Our focus story this week was The Three Billy Goats Gruff, which led to lots of bridge building in the creative area. The children were absorbed in testing different materials, sharing ideas and working out how to make their bridges stronger. We focus on teaching children how to manage risk rather than removing it, so it felt like the right moment to introduce the hand saws. Some of our 3 and 4 year olds used a real hand saw with care and focus, learning how to do this safely. It was great to see the problem solving, perseverance and confidence as children adapted their designs and took pride in what they had made.

Ms Randle - Head of EYFS





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Fairytale Fun in Reception

This week, Reception has been exploring the magical world of fairytales while continuing to develop their storytelling skills. Building on last term's story words like once upon a time, one day, finally and the end, the children have now been using new sequencing words such as first, next and after that to create their own stories using our class story maps. We have enjoyed reading a variety of fairytales and talking about different characters, settings and storylines, which have inspired the children's own imaginative tales. In the classroom, the role play area was transformed into a castle where children dressed up in princess dresses, crowns, knight armour and more. In the creative area, they designed and built castles using junk modelling materials, while in small construction they created detailed fairytale scenes and towers. At the easel, children painted their own shields, and in the playdough area, they made sparkling gems to add a magical touch. It has been a wonderfully creative week filled with storytelling, role play and imagination.

Ms Williams - Reception Class Teacher





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Year 1

Over the last few weeks in Humanities, Year 1 have been learning about Mapping the World, with a focus on locating and naming the seven continents and the five oceans. The children explored the difference between 3D globes and 2D maps, learning that although the Earth is round, maps are flat and can represent the world in different ways.

The children learned that Earth is made up of seven continents and five oceans, the Pacific, Atlantic, Indian, Southern and Arctic Oceans, and practised identifying and naming them using maps and globes. We also talked about where the UK is located, learning that it is part of Europe and that it is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean, helping children make links to places that are familiar to them.

Throughout this learning, the children showed great curiosity, asking thoughtful questions about why continents look different and how some are connected. They demonstrated strong communication and collaboration as they shared ideas with partners and worked together to locate continents and oceans, as well as critical thinking when comparing maps and globes.

Ms Higgins and Ms Khalique - Year 1 Class Teachers





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Year 2

Last week, Year 2 led a beautiful International Day Mass. The children approached it with such confidence and joy, and it was a lovely celebration of our diverse community and the idea that we are all part of God's family.

We have continued our international-themed learning this week by finishing our Van Gogh-inspired artwork. The children have enjoyed exploring colour and texture, taking inspiration from his distinctive style, and linking this to our wider learning about different countries and cultures.

They have worked thoughtfully and creatively, and the finished pieces are something they should be very proud of.

Mr Burke - Year 2 Class Teacher

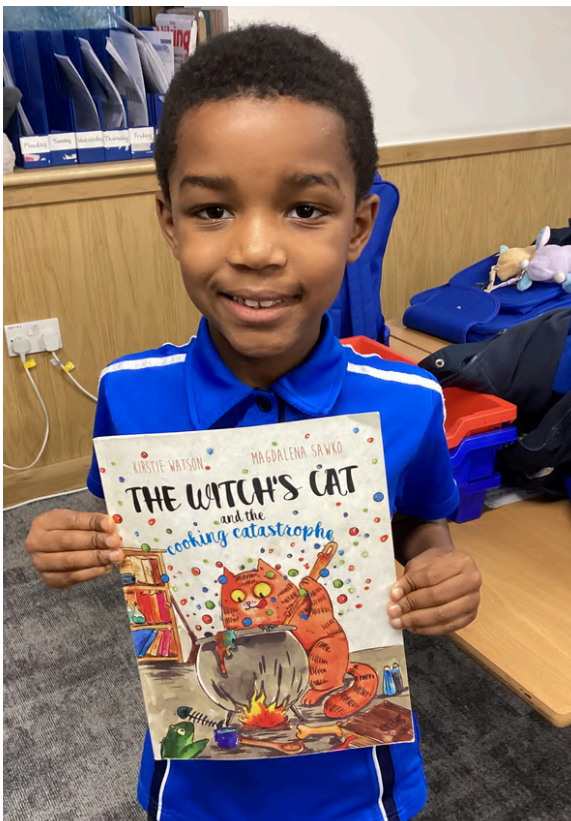
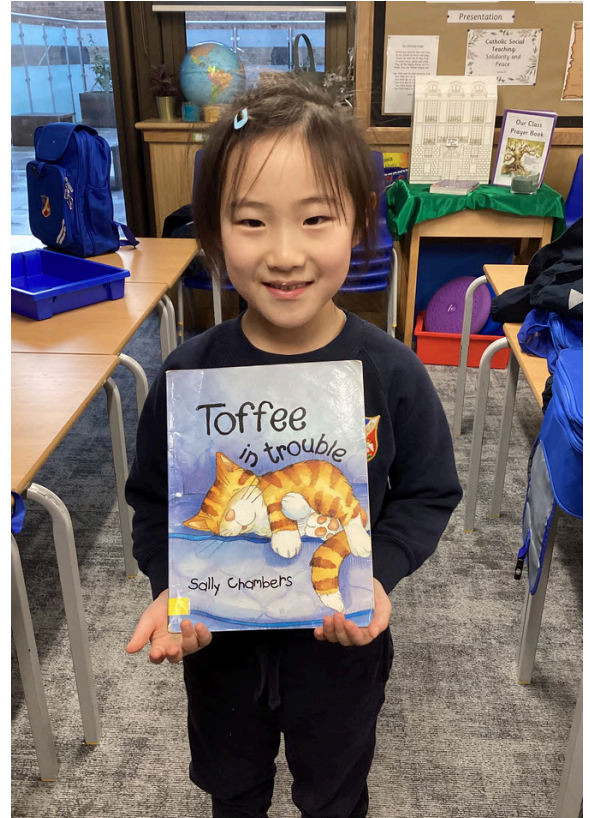




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KS1 Story Club

Toffee in Trouble - *I like this book because it is silly. The birds ran away and it was funny. He left so many footprints behind and he was sleeping in the bed.* - **Child in Year 1 MK**



The Witch's Cat and the Cooking Catastrophe - *I like this book has disasters in it because the witch turns into the frog and the dog.* - **Child in Year 1 MK**



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Year 3

Year 3 have had a busy and enjoyable week of learning across the curriculum. We particularly enjoyed an enrichment session with Fr Rudolf, where the children explored a series of coloured pictures of animals.

They worked out the colours and animals in Latin, and even had a go at translating simple phrases from Latin into English and from English into Latin.

In Maths, we have been learning how to measure length using millimetres, centimetres and metres, practising choosing the most appropriate unit and measuring instrument for different objects.

In RE, we have been learning about the story of Jesus and the Centurion, focusing on the words spoken by the Centurion and how these are used today in the Eucharistic liturgy of the Mass.

In Geography, the children have been developing their research skills by using information books, atlases and iPads to investigate different European countries, creating informative and interesting fact files.

Well done, Year 3, for another fantastic week of learning!

Ms Sephton - Year 3 Class Teacher





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Year 4

This week has been a busy and exciting one for us in Year 4! We've started each morning with swimming, and it's been wonderful to see everyone growing more confident in the water. In Religion, we explored Jesus healing Peter's mother-in-law and reflected on Peter's Declaration. In Geography, we learned about climate zones and compared rainfall and temperature throughout the year. In Maths, we continued our work on fractions, including mixed numbers, improper fractions, and equivalent fractions. In English, we read about insect camouflage, answered questions on Journey to the River Sea, and wrote letters as if we were Maia on her journey to the Amazon. In Art, we explored the colour wheel and mixed paints to create our own versions. Finally, in PSHE, we took part in the Vote for Schools debate on whether social media should be banned for under-16s.

Ms Farquhar - Year 4 Class Teacher





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Year 5

This week, Year 5 have been creating beautiful artwork inspired by Monet's Water Lilies. They used the painting and colour-blending techniques learnt in previous lessons to carefully build up the background of their pieces, focusing on tone, texture and atmosphere. The results so far look fantastic! Next week, we will continue our work by adding 3D elements to our bridge, bringing the artwork to life even more.

Ms O'Leary - Year 5 Class Teacher





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Year 6

Year 6 led our Mass beautifully this week, focusing on the theme "Will you follow Jesus?" The children reminded us that Jesus is our friend, teacher and leader, and that we are called to follow him in our words and actions each day.

During the Mass, the children presented meaningful symbols including the Bible, footprints and a candle, helping us to reflect on God's Word, walking in Jesus' ways and letting our light shine. The readings and prayers encouraged us to stay close to Jesus, especially when life is challenging, and to live with kindness and love.

The children read their parts clearly and confidently throughout, and their singing was beautiful.

Mrs Ellisdon - Year 6 Class Teacher





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Sport Update

It has been a very busy and positive week in PE across the school. On Monday, the Year 3 and 4 football team played three fantastic matches, all in excellent spirits and very closely contested. The first game ended in a 1–1 draw thanks to a late equaliser from Sadra, with a special mention to Mani for his excellent defending. The second match finished 2–2, with great goals from Herb and star player Adrian, who played extremely well as part of a fantastic team effort. The final game resulted in a 2–1 victory, thanks to two excellent goals from Giselle. Well done to all who played! The teams battled hard and should be proud of their efforts. A big thank you to all the parents and staff who came along to support. Your support is greatly appreciated, and it is great for us all to see how well the football performances are improving.



The younger classes have continued to enjoy their ball skills and gymnastics sessions, exploring a variety of jumps and different ways of travelling on, off and across equipment, and it has been lovely to see their creativity developing. Year 1 continue to impress in tag rugby and bench ball and are beginning to develop their understanding of simple rules and techniques within games.

Years 3, 5 and 6 have begun preparations for the inter-house cross-country competition, braving muddy conditions in the park this week as they develop tactics, familiarise themselves with the course and build stamina ahead of the competition taking place next week.





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Year 4 have completed their first week of swimming and have made fantastic progress, representing the school really well during lessons and on the walk to the leisure centre. They will continue the course next week, refining and developing their swimming techniques and spending some time learning key water safety skills.



Date	Against	Team/YR	Venue	Time
Monday 2 nd February	Trevor Roberts	YR 5/6 Mixed Football	Home	15.45-16.45
Monday 9 th February	Ivy House	YR 3/4 Netball	Home	15.40-16.30
Tuesday 10 th February	Ivy House	YR 5A and 6A Netball	Home	15.00-16.00

Mr Raveney - Director of Sport



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Music Update

Music Assemblies

There are two more music assemblies coming up - on the **3rd February and the 11th February**. If your child is performing you will have been sent a letter telling you which assembly they are taking part in - please check to make sure you have the correct date! All assemblies are now full and we are looking forward to hearing some fantastic performances.

Music Lessons

We have spaces for flute, violin, guitar, trumpet and trombone lessons at the moment. If you are interested in lessons for your child, you can find information and the application form [here](#). If you have any questions, please contact me via email - ebryant@saintchristinas.org.uk

Mrs Bryant - Director of Music

Intermediate Mathematics Challenge 2026

As a school, Saint Christina's first had children participate in the Intermediate Mathematics Challenge in 2017. This is a national competition aimed primarily at children who are in KS4 (i.e. children aged from 13 to 16 years old).

Each year, a group of children in Year Six tries out the paper and realises that although the paper is tough, many of the questions are well within their reach.

Six children tried out this year's Intermediate Mathematics Challenge this week, and their answer sheets have since been scanned and sent to the UKMT (United Kingdom Mathematics Trust) as the answers will not yet have been made publicly available.

Examples of questions that were posed this year include:

Q2: What time will it be 2026 minutes after 20:26 on Monday?

Q25: Zoe has an unusual method of choosing when to go swimming. At the beginning of the year she randomly chooses three different days of the week, then always has a swim on those days only. Using this method, what is the probability her schedule will include at least three days in a row without a swim?

Once all the entries to this year's contest have been scanned and sent into the UKMT, it will be three weeks or so before we know how well our children have performed. I shall of course keep you posted on that account.

Fr Rudolf - Teacher in charge of Enrichment



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



SENSORY AND MESSY PLAY GIVES BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN THE FREEDOM TO EXPLORE THE WORLD THROUGH THEIR SENSES-TOUCH,SIGHT,SOUND,SMELL AND MOVEMENT. THROUGH ACTIVITIES AND EXPLORING DIFFERENT TEXTURES,CHILDREN BUILD CONFIDENCE, CURIOSITY, AND ESSENTIAL EARLY SKILLS.

OUR NEXT SESSIONS WILL HAVE A FUN ANIMAL THEME RELATED ACTIVITIES AND VALENTINE DAY TUFF 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. SAINT CHRISTINA'S SCHOOL,

25 ST EDMUND'S TERRACE
NW8 7PY

7TH AND THE 21ST OF FEBRUARY-
SATURDAY

TIME: 10:30AM - 11:30AM

PRICE: £10 PER CHILD CASH ONLY

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





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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.

Mass – Reminder to Parents and Carers

We kindly remind parents and carers that, in line with our safeguarding policies and school guidelines, photographs and videos must not be taken of children during Mass.

We also ask that this time is respected as a moment for reflection and prayer. We would therefore be grateful if parents and carers could refrain from using mobile phones during Mass.

Thank you for your understanding and support.



Online Safety Reminder for Parents & Carers

As children spend more time online playing games, watching content, and chatting with friends, it is important that we work together to help them stay safe in digital spaces.

Parents and carers are encouraged to take an active interest in the games, apps, and websites their child uses, ensure content is age-appropriate, and make use of parental controls and privacy settings. Children should be reminded never to share personal information online and encouraged to speak to a trusted adult if anything they experience online makes them feel uncomfortable or worried.

Regular conversations at home about online behaviour, kindness, screen time, and safety can make a real difference. With Online Safety Day taking place on 10 February 2026, a range of free, age-specific resources are available to support families, including guidance on online gaming, social media, cyberbullying, and digital wellbeing, found here: [Internet Matters](#)

For further support, please see the [Padlet Resource](#) and the [Safety by Age Resource](#)



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Dates for your diary

Monday 2nd
February

- Year 5/6 Mixed Football (Home)

Tuesday 3rd
February

- **Music Assembly (9.05am)**
- Year 2 Art Trip

Wednesday 4th
February

- Year 5/6 Inter House Football
- **Parent Child Learning Review (Rec - Year 6 from 8.10 - 8.30am)**

Thursday 5th
February

- **Parent Child Learning Review (Rec - Year 6 from 8.10 - 8.30am)**
- Mr Walshe attending the CISC Conference (2 Days)

Friday 6th
February

- NSPCC Workshop with Years 2, 5 and 6
- Year 5 Mass (2.45pm)
- **Year 5 & 6 PL Movie Night**

Monday 9th
February

- Year 3/4 Netball (Home)
- EYFS & KS1 House Pancake Challenge (Throughout the week)

Tuesday 10th
February

- KS2 6C Challenge Day
- Year 5A and Year 6A Netball Fixture (Home)

Wednesday 11th
February

- **Music Assembly (9.05am)**
- No Forest School



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Thursday 12th
February

- Inter House Music Competition

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

Monday 23rd February
CHILDREN RETURN

Monday 23rd
February

- **Children Return**

Wednesday 25th
February

- Year 5 Netball Tournament (Away)

Thursday 26th
February

- **11+ Information Evening (Year 3 - 5) (Details to Follow)**

Friday 27th
February

- Year 4 Mass (2.45pm)

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/>