

Friday 3rd October 2025









Dear Parents,

Children are often delighted when they get the right answer to a question. A teacher's "well done you!" for recalling a date in history or solving a maths problem can bring a smile of pride and a punch of the air. These are great moments for children and teachers yet there is another kind of joy in the classroom that feels different, and all teachers will recognise it. It is when a child asks or answers a question only to see their teacher pause and say something along the lines of, "I have never thought about it like that." In those moments you can almost see a child grow in stature because they begin to see that education is not something done to them but something they are shaping for themselves. Their faces light up because they sense that their voice has weight, that they are part of the search.

Education at its best should ignite that spark. It should not just 'give' children knowledge but show them how to seek it and how to question it. Learning is not passive; it demands effort and sometimes the struggle of staying with questions or concepts even when the answers do not come quickly. It is in that struggle that the best learning happens.

The Latin root of the word education, *educere*, means "to draw out" or "to lead out," and properly understood, true education gives children the habits of questioning, reflecting, and weighing ideas carefully so that their innate potential can be drawn out of them. This is the essence of critical thinking, one of the 6Cs we have been focusing on this week, and it is about cultivating a way of seeing the world that values curiosity and reflection. At Saint Christina's this is shaped by the Handmaids' Pedagogy of the Heart and the Ignatian tradition of discernment, both of which remind us that education is about forming the whole person.

We also know that our children are growing up in a world overflowing with information, some of it accurate, some of it not, and some of it deliberately misleading. Critical thinking equips them to pause before they accept what they read or hear, to test it, to question it, and to ask whether it stands up to scrutiny. Metacognition strengthens this further by helping them reflect on how they are thinking, whether they might be rushing to conclusions, and how they can learn from their own reasoning. These skills ensure that learning is not just about what children know, but how they think.

That is what we are working to embed at Saint Christina's. Children who love to know things, yes, but also children who have the persistence to ask sharper questions and the confidence to hold them. Children who can learn to live with the uncertainty and sometimes discomfort of not knowing until the deeper answers come. Education comes especially alive in those moments when children stand a little taller because the idea they voiced or the question they raised might just have made even their teacher stop and think.

It is in this same spirit of learning and growing together that I am delighted to share the launch of a new initiative for parents: **Belonging@SCS** (I'm not sold on the name yet!) Our community is an international one with family and support networks not always local so we want to bring our parent community together, offering opportunities to connect, learn, and share experiences that enrich both family and school life.



Following the success of the recent talks on resilience from the brilliant Andrew Bull (for which the take up was huge, thank you), we want to broaden the programme to include themes that matter deeply to us all: wellbeing, mental health, family life, and the challenges of raising children in complex times. Alongside this, we hope to create space for cultural outings and shared learning through talks and lectures. The idea is that Belonging@SCS will draw on the talents, interests, and networks within our community.

We would love to hear your thoughts and suggestions. Perhaps you would like to contribute directly or help us shape the programme. The aim here is to create a space where parents feel connected, supported, and part of something meaningful.

If you would like to get involved, please contact Michelle at headteacherspa@saintchristinas.org.uk

Have a good weekend when it comes.

Best.

Damien Walshe Headteacher

Janie Walle





FREE tickets to the Independent Schools Show next week



Plan Your Child's Future

The Independent Schools Show is the destination for parents exploring the very best education options.

NEXT EVENT:

ISS Autumn | Thursday 9 October 2025 | 09:15 – 15:30 RHS Lindley Hall, London SW1

GET YOUR FREE TICKETS

The Autumn show is your chance to plan the next steps of your child's educational journey, from early years to sixth form.

Thursday 9 October | 09:15 - 15:30

RHS Lindley Hall, Elverton Street London SW1P 2QW

To help you navigate key entry points, the show features two theatres with talks tailored to parents considering every option, from nurseries and day schools in London, to the best boarding and out-of-London choices.

This is your opportunity to have those all-important, in-depth conversations with admissions teams, headteachers and educational advisors that can make all the difference when finding the perfect school for your child.



We Are Becoming a UNICEF UK Rights Respecting School

At Saint Christina's School, we are excited to share that we have begun our journey to become a Rights Respecting School, an award given by UNICEF UK.

This award is all about placing children's rights at the heart of school life. It helps create a safe and inspiring environment where every child is respected, their talents are nurtured, and they are able to thrive. The Rights Respecting Schools Award is rooted in the values of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination, and participation, and supports children in understanding and living out these rights every day.



We're looking forward to involving our whole school community as we work towards this award and continue to develop a culture where every child can reach their full potential.

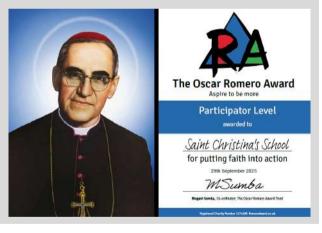
Mr Burke - Assistant Head (Pastoral)

Oscar Romero Award Success

I am delighted to share that Saint Christina's School has been awarded the Oscar Romero Award at Participator Level.

We're looking forward to involving our whole school community as we work towards this award and continue to develop a culture where every child can reach their full potential.

Mr Burke - Assistant Head (Pastoral)



Parent Talk: Helping Children Build Their Own Resilience

On Thursday, we were delighted to welcome back Andrew Bull, Director of Education and Schools at andResilience, for a second parent talk on children's mental health and wellbeing.



This session focused on practical strategies that parents can use to help children take ownership of their own resilience, with ideas around regulating emotions, handling everyday challenges, and developing confidence and independence.

It was wonderful to see so many parents join us, and we are very grateful to Andrew for leading such an engaging and valuable session.

Mr Burke - Assistant Head (Pastoral)



Academic Update

It has been a wonderful start to the new academic year, with a real buzz of excitement and motivation for learning across the school. Classrooms are alive with purposeful activity, and the children are embracing challenges with curiosity and determination. The learning environments are calm, collaborative, and reflective, where making mistakes is not only accepted but encouraged because that is where true resilience and growth are built.

One of the highlights of my week is visiting the children in their lessons. I have enjoyed seeing our new Maths Scheme in action, with children in Year 1 confidently writing number sentences and clearly explaining to me why 3+4=7 and 4+3=7, and how 7=3+4. In Year 4, the children have been breaking down word problems and articulating their reasoning with real clarity. The oracy development through Maths alone is remarkable, but this is only one example: the quality of discussion in P4C lessons and classroom debates is equally inspiring. This week, Year 6 debated the question, "What in the future is already fixed?" This led to many other thought-provoking questions, such as: Can you ever know the future for sure? Does believing something will happen make it more likely? Is the future like a story already written, or a story being made? The discussion was fascinating and showed just how deeply the children are developing as critical thinkers. Across the school, children are engaging with current affairs and persuasive debate, unknowingly becoming thoughtful global citizens.

I have also loved seeing the artwork in Year 3 this week, with self-portraits inspired by Roman emperors and empresses, as well as Roman shields created to support their history learning. Year 4 were thoroughly engaged in their Science research lessons on different animals, and I learnt some fascinating facts about flying squirrels, red pandas, and bombardier beetles! In Year 6, the children have been combining creativity with history, producing striking propaganda posters in their art lessons. Meanwhile, Year 5 have been refining their rapid recall of times tables using Times Tables Rock Stars, and it was a pleasure to see Year 2 enjoying some quiet time in the library, immersed in their reading. It was also a joy to see Reception children confidently exploring technology in their Computing lessons and Nursery reading Leaf Man and creating their own leaf people and animals from the autumn treasures that they have collected.

Children in Years 2-6 have also been completing their CATs tests this week. These are a set of multiple-choice questions designed to assess children's thinking abilities rather than their acquired knowledge. The purpose is to provide a rounded view of each child's potential, identify areas for support, and help with academic planning and setting targets.

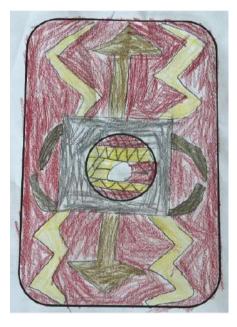
The 6Cs are in action daily and I frequently hear children proudly declare, "we are collaborating" or "we are thinking creatively." The wonderful challenges set by Mr Raveney each week are incredibly popular. Metacognition is also taking root across the curriculum, with children beginning to reflect more deeply on how they learn, not just what they learn. In Debate club, children in Years 5 and 6 explained to me that they are keen to use the "thinking moves": justify, connect, explain, and maintain. It is inspiring to see this language of learning being used so confidently.



Beyond the classroom, our sustainability initiative is thriving. Year 6 have been busy gardening, while our Eco Prefects, Raph and Sara, have led the creation of a wormery, a brilliant example of children's voices driving positive change. Some of the other Year 6 children also showed great leadership this week in preparing and leading an assembly for Years 3 - 6 about Blessed Carlo Acutis, sharing his story and inspiring others with his example of faith and service. Partnerships are also expanding, we are working with the zoo to arrange outdoor workshops and make use of their learning spaces, further enriching our children's engagement with the natural world.

Alongside subject knowledge, we remain focused on developing resilience, collaboration, and reflection. These qualities will not only support the children in their learning but also prepare them for life beyond school. As we move further into the term, I encourage you to continue sharing in your children's learning journeys, whether through talking about a favourite book, practising times tables, or discussing the wider world.

Mrs Ellisdon - Assistant Head (Academic)











6C Update

Last week in Assembly, our focus was on **critical thinking**. Children were told that they must be like minidetectives trying to work out clues to think, question, evaluate, and reason with evidence. Children were provided with some clues and had to work out from these clues which teacher they thought we were describing. We then talked about the jar of life. Children were shown a jar filled with several rocks and asked if it was full. When they said yes, we actually found space for small pieces of gravel. Is it full now? Again, their response was yes. We then added sand, and lo and behold, the jar was not full. We finished by adding water and once again, the children finally felt the jar was full. We spoke about how each of these things represented something different. The large rocks represent the important things in life, like our friends, our family, and our faith. The smaller pieces of gravel represented our hobbies, our pastimes. And the sand represented smaller, insignificant things like screen time, arguments. The water then finally represented prayer. We spoke about how if we fill our life with the sand first, then the gravel, then the rocks, we wouldn't be able to fit everything in. However, putting the important things, the things that matter the most first, followed by the smaller, less important things, and finally the really unimportant things, we still had space in our lives.



We had so many wonderful entries for our 6C launch event! Instead of choosing just one winner for each of the 6Cs, we have combined lots of fantastic ideas to create our final headings and logos, which can be seen below. The creativity shown has really impressed us, and the final pieces capture the importance of each of these six capabilities, which we are challenging the children to champion.

Mr Raveney - Director of Sport















The collaboration display is coming on really, really nicely and it's been lovely to see the children taking part in the two critical thinking challenges this week, which are displayed on the 6C notice board.



Mr Raveney - Director of Sport

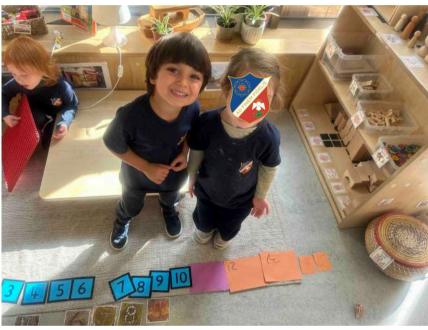


Maths in Nursery

This week we have been exploring the concepts of more, less, and the same during our maths sessions. Through play, the children compared groups of conkers and acorns and built towers to see which was taller. They also enjoyed measuring themselves with the measuring tapes, comparing who was taller or shorter. In addition, they worked on making number lines, exploring what comes after 10, and even writing out their own number cards.

Ms Randle - Nursery Class Teacher









Reception Learns to Care for the World Around Us

This week, Reception has been thinking deeply about how we can look after our world and care for the animals that live in it. After learning about the Creation Story in RE, the children talked about the many wonderful things in our world and how it is our responsibility to take care of them. Together, we shared ideas on how we can help, from feeding animals and watering plants, to cleaning up oceans and rivers, and making sure rubbish goes in the bin. We also talked about the importance of recycling and how small actions can make a big difference.

After reading Save the Scraps by Bethany Stahl, the children were inspired to start collecting fruit and vegetable scraps to turn into compost. This week, they used old plastic bottles to create their very own compost in a bottle. They learned the difference between green waste, such as fruit and vegetable peels, and brown waste, like dry leaves, cardboard, and paper, and how both are needed to make healthy compost. We also set up our brand new classroom compost bin and added a vermicomposter to our outdoor space.

In the writing area, the children read Greenpeace by Simon James and practised writing postcards with messages about helping the planet. We also made bird seed feeders to support our local birds and squirrels as they begin preparing for the colder months ahead.

Next week, we will be continuing our eco-learning by making our own recycled paper using paper scraps collected from this week's activities. We cannot wait to see how the children's interest in looking after the world continues to grow.

Ms Williams - Reception Class Teacher





















Year 1 RE The Creation Story

This week in RE, Year 1 brought the Creation story to life by acting it out and using the rhyme to remember each day: "Day 1 God made light when there was none; Day 2 God made sky and sea so blue; Day 3 God made grass, flowers and trees; Day 4 God made sun, moon and stars galore; Day 5 God made birds and fish alive; Day 6 God made animals and man that day; Day 7 God had rested in his heaven." The children used voice, movement and props to make each part memorable.

Through collaboration, critical thinking and clear communication they sequenced the events, discussed how best to represent each day and solved performance challenges together. Their enthusiasm and commitment helped them retell the story with confidence and reflect on the meaning of creation and rest.

Ms Higgins and Ms Khalique - Year 1 Class Teachers













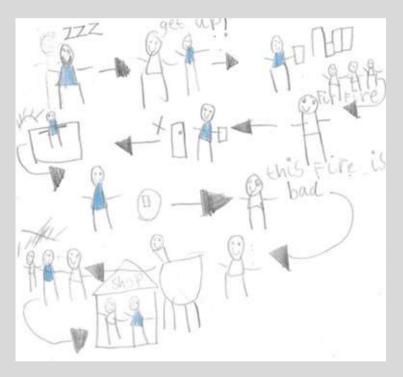


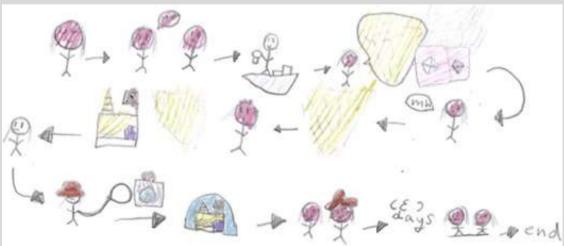


Year 2

This week in English, we continued working with our class text Toby and the Great Fire of London. We learned how to use conjunctions to join ideas and explored different sentence types to make our writing more exciting. We then planned our own versions of Toby's adventure using a story map before writing our full retellings of the story. The children worked hard to include adjectives, conjunctions and time words to bring their writing to life.

Here are two examples of our story maps:





Mr Burke - Year 2 Class Teacher



KS1 Story Club

Supertato Night of the Living Veg by Paul Linnet and Sue Hendra: This story is really funny and a little bit spooky! Things look like a robot but are really a biscuit and cereal! - Child in Year 2



Sugarlump and the Unicorn by Julia Donaldson: *I* love this story because I love unicorns so much and it is a magical unicorn! - Child in Year 1



KS1 STEM Club

This week in KS1 STEM Club, our brilliant young engineers explored the fascinating world of bridges! After learning the basics of bridge design, including how shapes and materials affect strength, they put their knowledge to the test by building their very own bridges. The challenge? Create a structure strong enough to hold a toy car... and they did it! With collaboration, creativity, and lots of enthusiasm, every bridge stood tall and proud. We're so impressed by their budding engineering skills, future architects in the making!

Ms Farquhar - Head of STEM













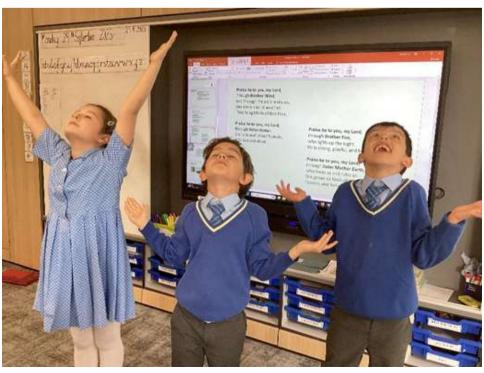


Year 3 Celebrate the Feast of Saint Francis

Considering our RE topic for this half-term is 'Creation and Covenants', Year 3 have been examining how we can be good stewards of God's creation. Who better to learn from than Saint Francis of Assisi, whose feast day we celebrate on 4th October? Saint Francis is known as the patron saint of animals and was known for addressing the inherent goodness, radiance, and beauty in all of God's creations, considering them as compassionate friends. Collaboratively, as a class, we explored the Canticle of Creation, a powerful prayer written by Saint Francis, and put it into action and drama. During this exciting task, we recognised and praised the divine in the simple aspects of life. Well done Year 3!

Ms Sephton and Ms Fernandes





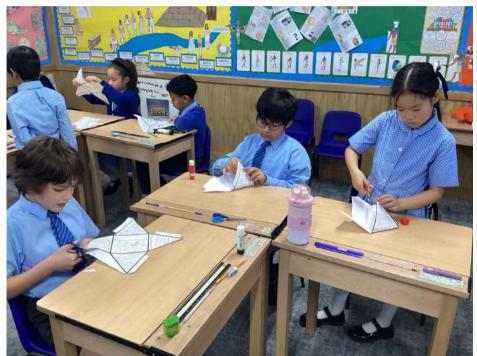


Year 4

This week in Year 4, we explored God's covenant with Abraham in Religion and reflected on virtues in both scripture and everyday life. In History, we investigated Ancient Egyptian pyramids and created our own pyramid-shaped fact files. Art was a mix of festive and historical as we began our Christmas card competition entries and aged cardboard for our Egyptian Headdress backgrounds. In Maths, we practiced column addition with exchanging and began subtraction, while in English we focused on identifying main ideas and wrote diary entries from Secrets of a Sun King. Our first Vote for Schools session sparked thoughtful discussion on fashion and Black history, and we enjoyed enrichment time with Father Rudolf. Year 4 also completed their CATs with great focus and problem-solving. Well done everyone!

Ms Farquhar - Year 4 Class Teacher









Year 5 The Industrial Revolution

This term, Year 5 have been diving into History through the lens of the 6Cs of Learning. Using communication, creativity and collaboration, children worked together to explore life before and after the Industrial Revolution. They applied critical thinking to understand the dramatic changes that shaped people's lives during this period. To showcase their learning, the children designed eye-catching posters comparing life before and after the Industrial Revolution, bringing the past to life in imaginative and thoughtful ways.

Ms O'Leary - Year 5 Class Teacher











Eco Prefects and Year 6 Gardening for Sustainability

Our Eco Prefects, Raphael and Sara, have led the way by building a new vermicomposter, which is now ready for the 2kg of compost worms we have ordered. To support this, every year group has been given a food waste bin to collect fruit and vegetable leftovers from snacks. Each Friday, these will be emptied into the vermicomposter and our new tumbling composter so that our waste can be turned into rich compost and used in our green spaces across the school.

Building on this, Year 6 have been learning more about why composting is so important as part of our whole-school focus on sustainability. They discovered that composting is a natural way to recycle garden and food waste into nutrient-rich soil, reducing landfill and helping wildlife and plants to thrive.

The project has been a brilliant chance for the children to live out our 6Cs. Their curiosity led them to ask questions about how composting works and why it matters. Through critical thinking, they explored the balance between "green" materials (such as fruit peelings and grass cuttings) and "brown" materials (like cardboard and twigs), as well as the need to keep compost moist and aerated.

They showed real collaboration by working together to set up the bins and by supporting each other while pruning and tending the Green Wall. Their creativity came through in the colourful posters they made to share their learning, and their communication skills helped spread the message of sustainability across the school. Above all, their commitment has been clear, with everyone playing their part in building a greener future.

Mrs Ellisdon (Year 6 Teacher) and Ms Randle (Sustainability Lead)













Year 6 World War II Artwork

Year 6 have been learning about the impact of World War II on life in Britain, especially the role of propaganda and rationing. During the war, propaganda posters were used everywhere to encourage people to support the war effort, from joining the army to saving food, reusing fabric, and growing vegetables in their own gardens and allotments.

Inspired by this, the children designed their own posters with messages such as "Drink More Milk," "Dig for Victory," "Don't Waste Food," "Reuse Fabric," and "Eat Potatoes." They worked hard to capture the visual, eye-catching style that made these posters so effective.

The children also explored rationing, which meant families had to use ration books filled with coupons to buy everyday essentials like sugar, butter, and meat. To bring this to life, Year 6 made their own ration books and used tea-staining to give them an authentic, old-fashioned look.

These past art lessons have been a wonderful way for the children to step into the shoes of people living at the time and discover how everyday life was shaped by the war. It has given them a deeper understanding of history and a real appreciation of what life was like on the Home Front.

Ms Bretones - Art Teacher











Sport Update

We've had another busy week of sport this week. The children have continued to impress through their efforts and determination during their PE lessons. The younger classes have enjoyed exploring space, finding different ways of travelling, and continuing to work on basic and simple ball skills and spatial awareness tasks. Key Stage 1 classes have continued to enjoy their Netball and Football lessons, and this week have focused on passing the ball over shorter and longer distances, whilst also developing their close control through dribbling.

Key Stage 2 classes this week have had a focus on shooting during their Netball lessons, working on accuracy and power, as well as passing the ball in and losing their markers in order to get a better chance of scoring. In Football, we've worked hard on passing, receiving the ball and moving into a new space. We've developed different ways to turn and have encouraged quick one-twos to try and beat an opponent. Next week, Year 5 and 6 will enjoy their inter-house Football competition on Wednesday afternoon. Next week the Year 5 class begins their 2-week intensive Swimming course, which they are very much looking forward to.

On Monday, Trevor Roberts visited us with their Year 5 and 6 Football team. They were a very strong team, and we put up a great fight, but were narrowly beaten in all three of the matches, despite our best efforts. Well done to Fabio for making several brilliant saves. Alice was the star player in the second game for her great passing and saving in goal and our third star player went to Oliver for his excellent attitude, effort and some great goals throughout the event. Next week, Year 3 and 4 will enjoy their match against Trevor Roberts on Monday.

Next week Year 5 and 6 will also take part in their Inter House Football Competition during their PE lessons which I am very much looking forward to.

| Date | Against | Team/ Year | Venue |
|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------|
| Monday 6 th October | Trevor Roberts | Year 3/4 Mixed Football | Home |
| Wednesday 15 th October | Cavendish | Year 5/6 Girls Football | Away |

Mr Raveney - Director of Sport



Harvest Mass

Hello everyone,

We are the Caritas Ambassadors. Next Friday, Year 3 will be leading our Harvest Mass. We would love it if you could bring in a can of non-perishable food. All of the donations will go to Fr Terry's Food Bank, which helps people in need in our community. Thank you so much for your kindness and support!

Caritas Ambassadors





Music Update

Year 6 Four Chords Project

Following on from our a cappella singing of songs based on the "four chord trick", Year 6 spent this week's lesson exploring the notes that belong in each chord, and building the chord sequence together.





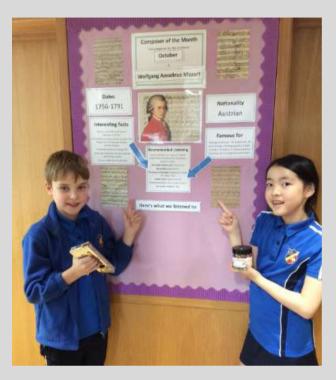


Composer of the Month

Well done to everyone who contributed to our September Composer of the Month board. Lots of children enjoyed exploring "The Planets" by Gustav Holst and it was pointed out that Holst should have written music for Earth too! An extra well done to Matthew in Year 4 who completed six listening slips describing what he heard in great detail. Well done Matthew!

For the month of October we will be exploring the music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Our music prefects Akari and Finn have already updated the board and it's ready to receive children's thoughts on music of Mozart's that they have listened to.





Here is some recommended listening for the month of October (these are also available on the KS2 Google Classrooms):

<u>Eine kleine Nachtmusik (arrangement for string quartet)</u>

Rondo alla turca (for piano)

The Queen of the Night's aria (from the opera "The Magic Flute").

Symphony No. 40 (for orchestra), first movement

<u>Clarinet Concerto, second movement</u>

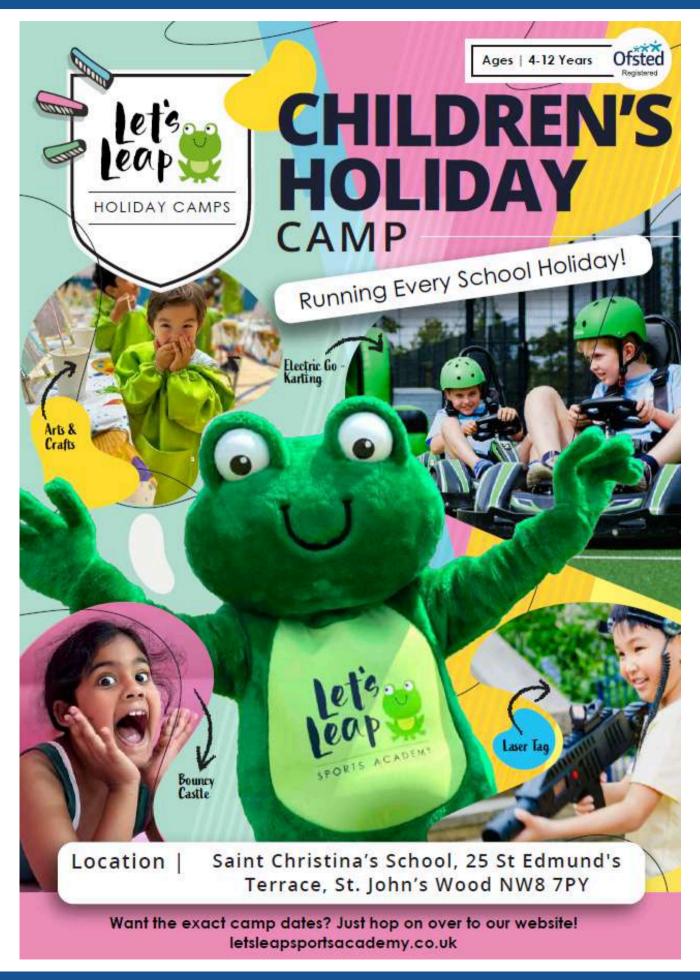
Ave verum corpus (for choir)

If you are interested in finding out more about instrumental lessons for your child, you will find information and the application form at the link below. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or would like further information.

<u>Instrumental lessons at Saint Christina's</u>

Mrs Bryant - Director of Music











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.

Please Lock Your Children's Bikes

We kindly ask all parents to please ensure that their children's bikes are securely locked when left on school grounds.

Please also remind your children to lock their bikes properly each day and avoid leaving them overnight where possible.

Sunday Mass

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

Items Left in The Front Office

Please ensure that your child has everything they need for the school day before they arrive in the morning: e.g., snacks / PE Kit / musical instruments. Items are regularly being left in the office by parents and carers throughout the day and, whilst they will do everything they can to help you, this causes disruption not only to the office staff but also to the children, Class Teachers and TAs who have to come to the office to collect the items. Thank you in advance for your support in this matter.



Dates for your diary

Monday 6th October

- · Children to wear winter uniform
- Year 5 Swimming (2 Weeks)
- Year 3 and 4 Mixed Football (Home)

Wednesday 8th October

- Reception Parent Coffee Morning (9.00 am)
- Year 5/6 Inter House Netball

Friday 10th October

Year 3 Mass (2.45 pm)

Monday 13th October

• Parent Teacher Meetings Week (Nursery - Year 5)

Wednesday 15th October

- Open Morning (9.15 am 11.30 am)
- Year 5 and 6 Girls Football (Away)

Thursday 16th October

Year 6 History Trip



Friday 17th October

- House Poetry Competition
- No Mass
- Monster Mash Disco PM

Friday 17th October SCHOOL CLOSES AT USUAL TIME FOR THE END OF HALF TERM

(Let's Leap Holiday Camp Running at Saint Christina's - see flyer for more info)

Monday 3rd November CHILDREN RETURN

Tuesday 4th November

Individual Photographs
 (children to wear full winter uniform)

Wednesday 5th November

 Year 1 Parent Coffee Morning (9.00 am) (details to follow)

Thursday 6th November

- Year 5 History Trip
- Year 3 & 4 Inter-house Netball Fixture

Friday 7th November

- Anti-Bullying Assembly led by School Council
- Year 2 Mass (2.45 pm)

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/