



SAINT CHRISTINA'S BULLETIN

Friday 9th October 2026



Where Kindness Meets Ambition



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Dear Parents,

The influence of a good teacher can never be erased...

Given that I left formal schooling sometime in the mid 1990's, I don't remember much of the content I was taught at school, but I have never forgotten many of the people who taught me.

I remember a few teachers whom I feared; I remember those who, looking back, were almost certainly in the wrong profession, and I remember the ones who saw something in me, took an interest and made the effort to build a relationship with me. One of those was Mr Finlay, my English teacher. I do not remember everything we studied, but I do remember him. I remember how he taught us and how he made our opinions feel important.

Monday was World Teachers' Day which gives us a chance to pause and say thank you, but it also made me think about what teaching really depends on. At the business end we often talk about education in terms of curriculum, assessment, outcomes, and data. All of those things are central, but fundamentally, children learn from the people standing in front of them.

There is a line attributed to Aristotle: "If you have their hearts, you have their minds". For me, that gets to the heart of good teaching. A child who trusts a teacher, respects them, knows that they are interested in them and believes that the teacher wants them to do well is in a much stronger position to learn. At its core, teaching is relational. It also asks for an extraordinary amount from those who do it.

Teachers are subject specialists, planners, assessors, mentors, coaches, public speakers, organisers, performers, problem-solvers, mediators and data analysts. At different points during the same day, they may also find themselves acting as counsellors, referees, nurses, technicians, event organisers and sometimes detectives. They have to know their subject, know the curriculum, understand assessment, track progress, adapt work, communicate with families, manage a room, spot when a child is struggling, challenge those who need stretching and support those who need help. They also have to do most of that while teaching a class full of different children.

Teaching is less 'job' and more 'way of life'. During term time, you live and breathe it. There is always another lesson to plan, another piece of work to look at, a child you are thinking about, a conversation you need to have, something that needs preparing for the next morning or something that happened during the day that stays with you into the evening. Like any profession, you have to be immersed in it to understand it fully.

That is one of the reasons why I think it is important to stop and recognise what teachers do. We are fortunate at Saint Christina's to have colleagues who know their subjects, have high expectations of the children, and understand the importance of the relationships they build with them. I see every day how much energy and commitment goes into doing the job well, and my colleagues continue to inspire me.



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So, following World Teachers' Day, I have a simple request for families this weekend. Ask your child which teacher has helped them this year, and why, then tell them about a teacher you still remember yourself. Mine was Mr Finlay.

Have a good weekend when it comes.

Best,

Damien Walshe
Headteacher



St Francis House Mass

Well done and thank you to everyone in St Francis House who took part in our lovely House Mass last Friday. It is one of my favourite Masses of the year, and it is always a delight to see the wonderful variety of cuddly animals coming through the school gates in the morning!

It was lovely to see the children bringing in their animal toys in honour of St Francis, the patron saint of animals, who taught us to care for those in need and to recognise God's goodness in all of creation.

A big thank you to all the children who read, sang, prayed and helped to make the Mass such a special celebration.

Mr Hirst - Deputy Headteacher



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[Book Your Tickets Here!](#)



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The Case of the Pesky Squirrel (or was it?!)

Nursery arrived on Monday morning to discover there had been a break in! Our home corner was a complete mess, the fruit basket had been tipped over, an apple had been eaten, there were bites out of the crunchy bread and things were scattered all over the floor!

Nursery have loved investigating the mystery throughout the week, collecting clues, searching for evidence and following a trail outside, with lots of very busy police officers on the case! After some excellent detective work, Nursery concluded that the culprit was the pesky squirrel, who has also been digging up our newly planted daffodil bulbs! A very exciting mystery for Nursery and some brilliant detective work from everyone!

Ms Randle - Head of EYFS and Nursery Class Teacher





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Celebrating Our Differences in Reception

This week, Reception began our Black History Month celebrations by exploring what makes us unique and why our differences are something to celebrate. We read 'Mixed by Arree Chung', a story about red, blue and yellow characters who discover that wonderful things can happen when we come together. Inspired by the story, the children enjoyed mixing different colours of playdough and talking about what makes each of us special. We also read 'Mega Hair Swap' by Rachel Suzanne, which inspired the children to create self-portraits, carefully choosing colours and details to show their own special features. We also read 'The All-Together Quilt' by Lizzy Rockwell, a true story about a community coming together to create a beautiful quilt. Inspired by the story, the children designed their own colourful hexagons, each with a unique pattern, which we will join together to make our own class quilt. We are looking forward to seeing all the children's designs come together next week!

Ms Williams and Ms Koci - Reception Class Teachers





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Year 1 - Maths Fun!

This week, Year 1 have been working hard in Maths, focusing on part-whole models. We started by exploring the part-whole model and understanding how a whole can be split into different parts. The children then used this knowledge to split and make numbers, exploring different ways that numbers can be represented. We also used our class of 21 to explore real-life examples, such as splitting the class into boys and girls, and children who have pets and those who do not. The children have enjoyed finding different ways to split the whole into parts and have been developing their mathematical vocabulary by explaining their thinking. We are very proud of their enthusiasm and hard work this week!

Ms Khalique - Year 1 Class Teacher



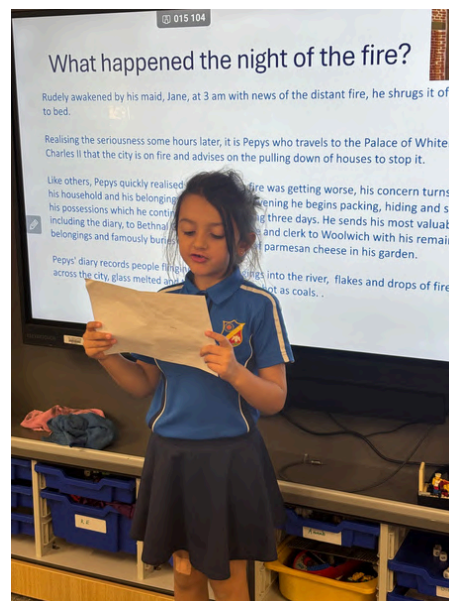


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Year 2 History - Great Fire of London Diaries

In History this week, we stepped back in time to 1666 and explored the Great Fire of London through the eyes of Samuel Pepys. We used our knowledge of the events of the fire to write diary entries in role as Pepys. We thought carefully about what he might have seen, heard and felt as the fire spread across London. We used our creativity to bring his experiences to life while ensuring our writing included accurate historical details. We also demonstrated critical thinking as we considered the events from Pepys' perspective and selected important information from our learning to include. We explored some of Pepys' famous actions during the fire, including burying his valuable possessions to keep them safe. This was a wonderful opportunity to bring together our learning from across the topic!

Ms Higgins, Mr Burke and Ms Mackley - Year 2 & 3 Class Teachers





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KS1 Story Club

Finn's Little Fibs:

I like this story because it has feelings in it and it has a happy ending! It also tells the truth and he is confident. - Child in Year 2 OH



School Council

Our School Council met today to review the exciting new playground equipment purchased following feedback from both the School Council and our pupil voice surveys. The children enjoyed exploring the new resources and had thoughtful discussions about how to care for the equipment, share it fairly and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy it. It was wonderful to see pupil voice leading to positive changes in our playground!

Mr Hirst - Deputy Hedteacher





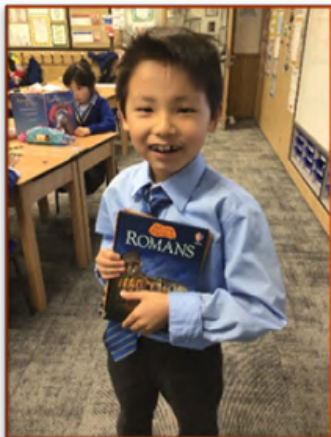
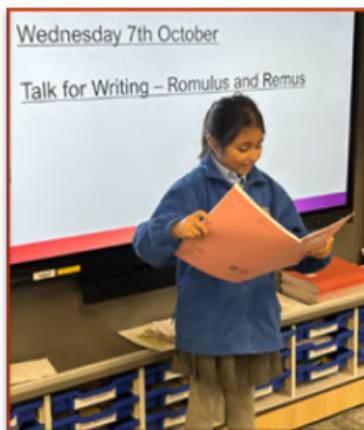
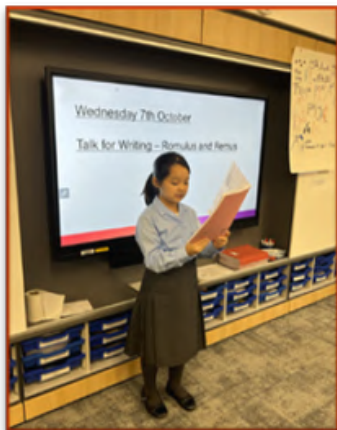
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Year 3

The Romans have officially invaded Year 3 this week, inspiring some superb work across the curriculum! In English, the class took on the challenge of transforming a simply told legend into exciting retellings of Romulus and Remus. We aimed to include adventurous vocabulary, drama and even some speech! Some of the class were even brave enough to stand up and share their stories aloud. We explored the Roman Army's weapons and armour in History and created some excellent soldier illustrations. We were treated to seeing some wonderful Roman items brought in from home, showing that learning doesn't just happen in the classroom!

Year 3 debated whether real life can be stranger than fiction in Philosophy as they explored the unbelievable tale of 'Unsinkable Sam' and add in meeting our buddies, it has been a fantastic, action-packed week - just one more to go before a well-deserved break!

Ms Mackley - Year 3 Class Teacher





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Year 4

This week in Year 4, we have been busy with our daily swimming lessons, and it has been wonderful to see the children growing in confidence and improving their skills in the water. In RE, we explored the theological virtues of faith, hope and love, considering how Abraham demonstrated these qualities and how we can show them in our own lives. In History, we discovered how the Ancient Egyptians spent their leisure time, investigating historical evidence and even trying out the board game 'Senet' for ourselves. In Maths, we completed our addition and subtraction unit by mastering column addition and subtraction with exchanging. In English, we revised clauses and phrases, practised identifying the main idea in a text, continued reading 'Secrets of a Sun King', and wrote diary entries from Grandad's perspective after Lil's hospital visit. We also made great progress on our Egyptian headdresses in Art and reflected on how to care for our bodies as gifts from God in PSHE. Finally, the children were fantastic ambassadors for the school during Wednesday's Open Morning, proudly sharing their computing learning and Space Day experiences with visitors.

Ms Farquhar - Year 4 Class Teacher



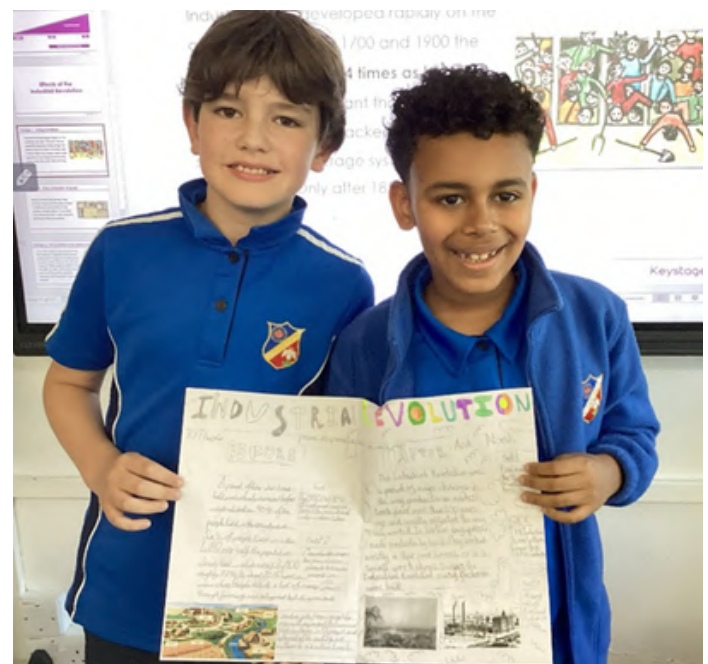
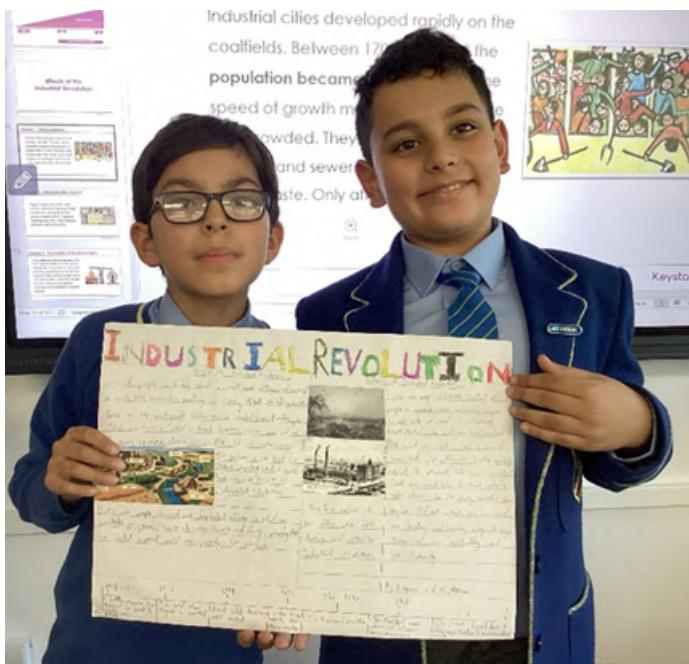
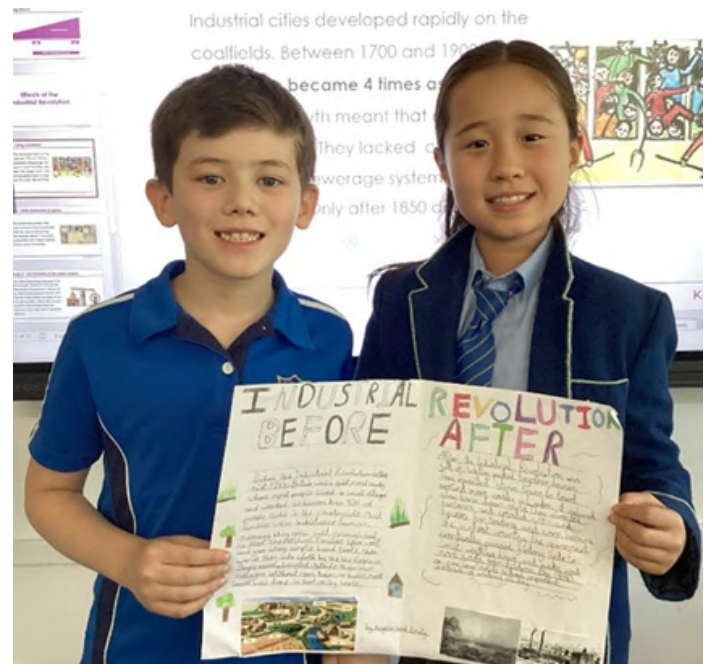
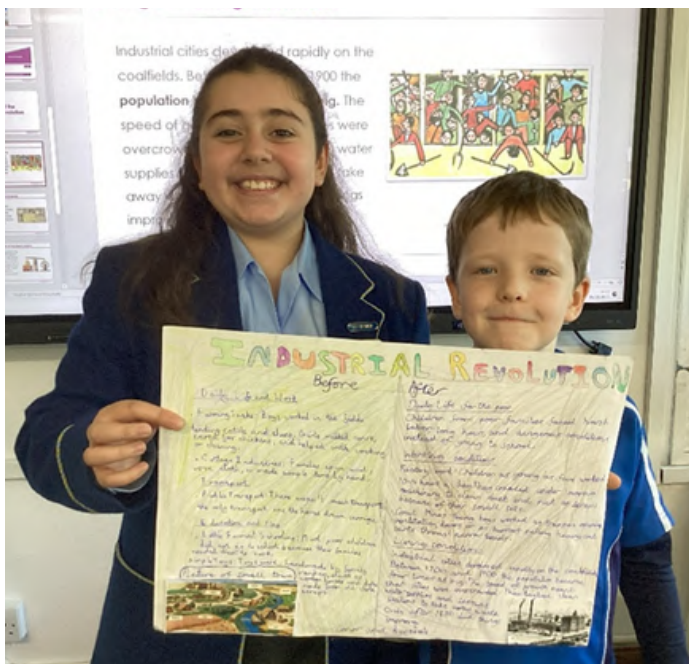


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Year 5

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 Septon - Year 5 Class Teacher





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Year 6

Year 6 have had another focused and productive week as they continue with their 11+ preparation. In English, the children have been further developing their reading and comprehension skills, focusing on retrieving information, making inferences and explaining their ideas clearly. In Maths, they have been working on the order of operations and applying their understanding to increasingly challenging questions. Mock tests have taken place this week, giving the children valuable experience of working under timed conditions and helping them to identify areas to focus on over the coming weeks.

In History, we have been learning about the Battle of Britain. The children are carrying out a deep dive project exploring airfields, planes, pilots and radar, thinking about which element was the most significant in Britain's success.

Away from their exam preparation, the class enjoyed leading tours for prospective parents at our Open Morning.

Mrs Ellisdon - Assistant Head (Academic) and Year 6 Class Teacher





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The UK Bebras Challenge



Preparing for Bebras

Calling all parents and children from Years 3-6!

The UK Bebras Challenge exposes children to a new way of thinking. You can get a feel for the style of the problems by viewing previous challenges. Please have a practice during the break, as the Challenge will be after half term, weeks commencing 9th - 20th November.

Please visit www.bebas.uk and hit Challenges, select your age group and try out some questions. You will be told straight away whether you are correct, and an explanation of the answer is given.

Learn about computational thinking skills with BBC Bitesize

The BBC have produced some excellent resources for children wishing to learn about computational thinking. Please try this one at home!

▶ Jessica is making burgers according to the rules below.

Buns	Meat	Sauce	Pickles	Lettuce	Onions	Cheese
						

Rules:

- ▶ 1. The sauce should be right above the meat.
- ▶ 2. Meat and cheese should be below the pickles, lettuce and onions.
- ▶ 3. Onions should not be in contact with the buns.

Question:

- ▶ Which burger is correctly made according to the rules?



Ms Overing - Head of Computing



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Spanish, Art & History: Learning, Creating and Reflecting

This week, we have fused Spanish, Art and History to dive into the important topic of racism, representation and equality.

We had some fantastic conversations and really thoughtful reflections with our Year 2 and Year 6 children. We talked about how important it is for everyone to feel represented, heard, respected, treated fairly and valued, no matter where our roots come from.

We learnt about Faith Ringgold, a wonderful Black American artist and activist, and discovered her amazing story quilts. Her quilts tell stories and share messages about family, identity, history and society through colourful artwork.

Inspired by Faith Ringgold, we created our very own story "quilts"! We also brought Spanish into our artwork. Year 6 linked their quilts to hobbies and interests in Spanish, while Year 2 focused on members of their families, using their Spanish vocabulary to create something personal and meaningful.

We have also been reflecting on how we talk about Black history and achievements in our school. Rather than seeing Black history as something that belongs to just one particular month, we believe that Black voices, stories, contributions and achievements should be recognised, celebrated and woven into our learning throughout the year. Black history is an integral part of history, and we want our children to encounter it naturally and meaningfully as part of their education all year round.

We are incredibly proud of the thoughtful conversations, meaningful reflections and wonderful creativity shown by our children this week.



Ms Bretones - Head of Spanish, Art & Design Technology



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Year 6 Explores Pencil Shading

The children have been learning how to create different shades and textures using pencils and blending sticks. They have explored a variety of different line and shading techniques, including hatching, cross-hatching, circle shading, blending, scribbling, pressure control, patches and dots.

As a challenge, the children had a go at completing the other half of these soldiers' faces, carefully observing the shading, lines and details on the original half. This was a very tricky task, requiring patience, concentration and careful control, but the children rose to the challenge and completed their portraits successfully!

I am very proud of the detail, effort and perseverance they have shown in their artwork.

Ms Bretones - Head of Spanish, Art & Design Technology



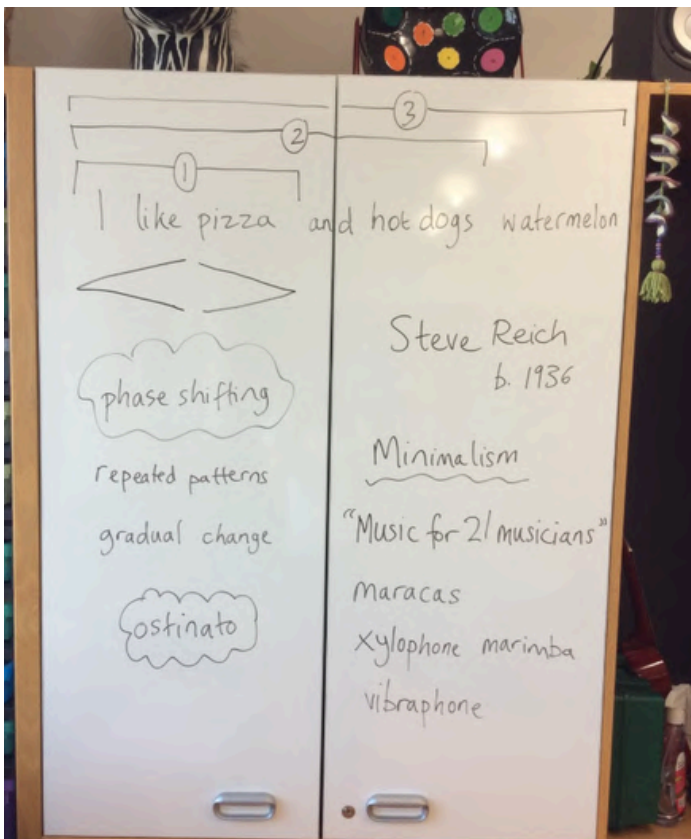


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Music Update

Music – Composer of the Month

KS2 have continued to enjoy exploring the unusual soundscapes created in Steve Reich's minimalist piece "Music for 18 Musicians" this week. Here is a flavour of what Year 4 achieved – sadly, we weren't able to record the mesmerising sound!



Music Lessons

We now have spaces for all instruments available – piano, guitar, ukulele, flute, violin, cello, trumpet, trombone and singing. If you are interested in lessons for your child, please click on the link [here](https://www.saintchristinas.org.uk) to access information about lessons and the online application form. Please note that we recommend singing and trumpet/trombone for Year 3 upwards.

Please feel free to contact me (ebryant@saintchristinas.org.uk) if you would like to discuss any aspect of music lessons.

Mrs Bryant - Director of Music



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Sport Update

On Monday, the Year 5 and 6 boys' football team put in a pleasing performance against a strong Southbank team. Although we lost all three matches, the children played really well and demonstrated excellent teamwork and team spirit throughout. The opposition goalkeepers made some excellent saves, restricting us to just one goal, which was well converted by Oliver. Well done to all the children involved, with special mentions going to our star players, Imad, Sadra and Mani, for their outstanding contributions.



This week, Year 4 began their two-week intensive swimming course, with the children swimming for one hour each day. The children have shown a mature and positive approach to the sessions and are making pleasing progress as they learn and refine their technique across all four strokes. It has been particularly encouraging to see how well the children have been listening and responding to the feedback provided by their swimming teacher. The sessions will continue next week, with the children also spending some time developing important lifesaving techniques and water safety skills.





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Next week the Year 5 and 6 classes will take part in their Inter House football competition, which should be an enjoyable event for everyone.

Upcoming Fixtures

Date	Against	Team/Yr	Venue
Monday 12th October	Cavendish	Y5/6 Girls Netball	Away
HALF - TERM			
Monday 9th October	Channing	Y5/6 Netball Girls	Home
Tuesday 10th October	Cavendish	Y3/4 Netball Girls	Home
Monday 16th November	Sarum Hall	Y5/6 Football Girls	Home
Monday 23rd November	Trevor Roberts	Y5/6 Football Mixed	Home
Monday 30th November	Trevor Roberts	Y3/4 Football Mixed	Home
Wednesday 2nd December	Ivy House	Y3/4 Football Mixed	Home
Monday 7th December	Devonshire House	Y6A Netball Girls	Away

Co-Curricular Update

Parent and Staff Netball Event

Last Friday's Parent and Staff Netball Event was a huge success! Thank you to everyone who took part and, in particular, to all the parents who were able to come along and support the event. It was a hugely enjoyable afternoon and a fantastic opportunity to bring the school and parent community together. The positive feedback we have received has been greatly appreciated, and it was wonderful to see so many people getting involved and enjoying the event.





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Our next Parent and Staff event will be **Football on Thursday 20th November**. I will be writing to you shortly with further details and information about how to get involved. Hopefully, this event will be just as successful!

Inter-House Poetry Competition

The House Captains have been working hard in preparation for the Inter-House Poetry Competition next Friday. They have been leading their groups in learning a whole-house poem linked to this year's theme of Wonder. In addition to the whole-house performances, several children have volunteered to represent their Houses by performing individual or group poems. I am very excited to see how the competition develops and to see the children showcase their confidence, creativity, and performance skills.

This year, we also have a few special performances from some of our younger children, which will be a lovely addition to the event. I am very much looking forward to seeing everyone perform and celebrating the children's hard work and enthusiasm.

Getting to know our Year 6 Prefects

Each week we will find out about some of our new Year 6 prefects. This week is the turn of Imad and Amelia our Saint Joan of Arc House Captains

Hi, it's Imad, the Red House Captain. I am very much looking forward to the House netball and football competitions. I enjoy playing all sports, and my aim is to encourage everyone in Red House to do their best and work together to win this year. My name is Amelia, and I am the Red House Captain. I am excited about the Inter-House football competition next week. We have also been working hard in our House meetings, preparing for the poetry competition.

Together, Imad and I will make Saint Joan of Arc bloom! We are looking forward to an exciting year filled with teamwork, enthusiasm and success for Red House!

Mr Raveney - Director of Sport and Head of Co-Curricular



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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.

Collection Reminders

To help collection run smoothly and efficiently, we kindly ask that you move away from the school gate once you have collected your child, as this helps us to avoid congestion and maintain a clear flow for other families.

We would also be grateful if conversations with staff at collection could be kept to a brief exchange. If you need a longer conversation, please arrange a suitable time with your child's teacher so that staff can remain fully focused on dismissing the children.

Thank you for your support and cooperation.

Parking and Neighbours

We kindly ask all parents and carers to avoid parking in or blocking neighbouring residents' driveways during drop-off and pick-up times. Please be considerate of our neighbours by only stopping in designated or permitted areas.

Your cooperation helps us maintain a safe and respectful environment for both our community and the families we serve.

Thank you for your understanding and support!



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Dates for your Diary

Monday 12 th October	• Parent Teacher Meetings (Nursery to Year 5) (All Week) • Year 5 and 6 Girls Netball Fixture (Away)
Wednesday 14 th October	• Year 5 and 6 Inter House Football (Home) • Pumpkins may be dropped off today
Thursday 15 th October	• Year 6 History Trip
Friday 16 th October	• KS2 Inter House Poetry Competition • No Mass • Monster Mash ◦ 17:30 - 20:00 - EYFS + Year 1 ◦ 18:30 - 20:00 - Year 2 - Year 6
Friday 16th October SCHOOL CLOSING AT USUAL TIME FOR HALF TERM	
Monday 2nd November CHILDREN RETURN	
Monday 2 nd November	• Children Return • Year 3 and 4 Mixed Football Fixture (Home)
Wednesday 4 th November	• Year 1 Parent Coffee Morning (Details to Follow) • Try something New day • Holroyd Howe Nutritionist Visit • First Holy Communion Enrolment Meeting (16.00)



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Thursday 5 th November	• Year 5 Trip (Details to follow) • Buddies Event - Firework Art
Friday 6 th November	• Online Safety Workshops (Details to Follow) • Year 2 OH Class Mass (14.45)
Tuesday 10 th November	• Year 3 and 4 Netball Fixture (Home)
Wednesday 11 th November	• Year 2 Parent Coffee Morning (Details to Follow) • KS1 and KS2 Fun Run (Postponed to the Spring Term)
Thursday 12 th November	• Year 3 and 4 Interhouse Netball Fixture (During PE)
Friday 13 th November	• Year 2 DB Class Mass (14.45)

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/>