



Saint Christina's

Pre-Prep and Prep School
for boys & girls aged 3-11

Bulletin

Friday 10th January 2025

Dear Parents,

As I reflect on my first week as Headteacher at Saint Christina's, I want to thank you for the warm welcome I've received from this wonderful community. It has been a privilege to spend time with your children - visiting classrooms daily to see their learning in action, hearing their thoughts and ideas, and just being present with them. Their curiosity, enthusiasm, and most of all, their kindness is a credit to the School and a reflection of the values you hold dear.

We began the week with an INSET day, where my colleagues and I took time to reflect on who we are as a School - our vision, values, and purpose. It was a powerful reminder of the shared commitment at the heart of Saint Christina's: to nurture not only academic excellence but also character, resilience, and curiosity.

I shared this focus with the children during my assembly, where I introduced the idea of the three bones: a wishbone to encourage them to be ambitious - to dream big, a funny bone to remind them to find joy and laughter, and a backbone to inspire the courage to persevere. These qualities reflect my belief that education, when properly understood, is about much more than knowledge. It "draws out" the potential within every child, helping them flourish in every sense of the word. This idea of flourishing, or as Aristotle called it, eudaemonia, speaks to a life of purpose, agency, and wellbeing, a life we hope to nurture in all our pupils.

The "teacher" part of my new title is incredibly important to me, and one of the highlights of my week was teaching philosophy to Years 5 and 6. Philosophy is a wonderful way to help children think critically, challenge assumptions, and explore big ideas, skills that will serve them well in the future. In service of this, your child may come home with a question literally "stuck" to them today. These questions are designed to spark curiosity and meaningful conversations at home, and I hope you enjoy exploring them together.

Looking ahead, critical thinking initiatives like these will form part of our strategic vision which we are calling **Approaching 2030**. This five-year plan will focus on four foundations: **knowledge, skills, character formation, and a culture of thinking**. A key part of this vision is metacognition, or helping children think about their thinking. Extensive research shows that when children take ownership of their learning, they develop resilience, creativity, and independence - all qualities that are vital in a rapidly changing world. To support this, we will soon begin working with a leading metacognition practitioner and author to embed these practices across our School. He is working with some of the most prominent independent schools in the UK to embed a culture of thinking, and we are fortunate to have secured his services. I will share details with you as our journey unfolds.

You will also notice in the Bulletin a piece from Mr. Burke about our new **Wellbeing Hub**, an exciting addition designed to ensure that no hand goes unseen and no voice unheard. Over the coming months, this hub will evolve as we continue to enhance the way we support the social and emotional needs of all our children, helping them flourish as individuals.

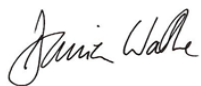
Finally, you will shortly receive a parent questionnaire, and I would be grateful if you might find some time to complete it. This is not just about feedback; it's the start of a conversation. Teachers and pupils are completing similar

questionnaires, and together they will help us “see again” who we are as a School and identify where we can grow. These reflections will guide the development of the **Approaching 2030** plan, which we aim to launch in September 2025.

Thank you for making my first week so enjoyable, and for making me feel welcome. I am excited to work with you, my colleagues, and your children to build on this School’s many strengths and ensure it continues to thrive. I look forward to meeting more of you in the coming weeks and working together to shape the next chapter for Saint Christina’s.

Have a good weekend when it comes.

Best,



Damien Walshe
Headteacher

Saint Christina’s Wellbeing Hub

We are excited to announce the launch of our new Saint Christina’s Wellbeing Hub - an initiative designed to support the emotional wellbeing of pupils from Years 1 to 6.

Starting this term, the Hub will be open during lunchtimes, providing a calm and welcoming space for children to talk about their feelings, learn coping strategies, and seek support from trained peers.

Year 6 pupils will play a key role as Wellbeing Ambassadors in the Hub, having received training to develop their listening and leadership skills. These Ambassadors will help create a positive and inclusive atmosphere by supporting younger pupils in managing their emotions.

This initiative reflects our ongoing commitment to fostering empathy, responsibility, and a strong sense of community among our pupils.

We look forward to seeing the positive impact of the Wellbeing Hub in the coming weeks!

Mr Burke - Head of Key Stage 1

Early Years and Key Stage 1 Assembly

On Wednesday 8th January, Reception and Key Stage 1 came together for their first assembly of the new year. We started by reflecting on the New Year’s resolutions we’ve made so far, with a commitment to being kind shining through.

We shared the story, “The Smartest Giant in Town,” and some of the children acted out different scenes, bringing the characters to life and helping everyone understand the power of kindness.

We finished the assembly with a prayer, reminding us all those small acts of generosity can make a real difference.

Mr Burke



Year 1 Class

It has been a wonderful first week back to School!

We have enjoyed catching up with our friends and there has been lots of excitement sharing and writing about what we did over the holidays.

In Geography we have started to enquire about continents, and have loved learning the 'Seven Continents Song'. We are able to name the seven continents in order of size and can locate them all in an atlas. See if your child can remember them!



We have started reading our topic story 'The Proudest Blue' and we have been learning about the author Ibtihaj Muhammad. We started our brainstorming thinking about as many things that are blue and things that make us proud.

Ms Higgins – Year 1 Teacher

Year 3 Class

Year 3 have had a fantastic start to the new year. We have been busy in our Science lessons, carrying out some exciting experiments investigating light. We discovered that we need light to be able to see and that it travels in straight lines. We also explored the way light can sometimes be split into the colours of the visible light spectrum by shining torches through a glass prism and a CD (Compact Disc).

In our English lessons, we have been reflecting on our work and we carried out some self and peer assessment on a report about Hadrian's Wall which we wrote at the end of last term. We have also been using a 'Descriptosaurus' to find ideas to describe a forest setting for a story we are going to start to write next week.

We are learning about Europe in Geography this term, so we started the topic by thinking about what we already know and what we would like to find out. We thought of some great enquiry questions such as: 'How many countries are there in Europe?' and 'Why does Europe have so many visitors each year?'

Ms Sephton - Year 3 Teacher



Year 4

Year 4 has started the new term strong, with lots of exciting learning coming up. We started our new Geography topic, which is all about the continent of South America. We also started our new class novel 'Journey to the River Sea' which is also set in South America!

We created realistic drawings of toucans in Art, and practised calculating square numbers in Maths. In addition, we also learned about the exciting things people did over the break through their amazing recounts.

Ms Farquhar – Year 4 Teacher

Mr Walshe Introduces Year 5 to Philosophy

This week, our Year 5 students had a fascinating lesson with Mr Walshe, who introduced them to the world of Philosophy!

Mr Walshe explained that the word *Philosophy* comes from two Greek words: *philo* (meaning love) and *sophia* (meaning wisdom), so Philosophy is literally the "love of wisdom." The class explored what it means to think deeply about the world and how philosophy encourages us to ask questions, think critically, and share ideas with others.

Mr Walshe challenged students to think about some unique questions such as 'Who would make a better shopkeeper, a gorilla or a tiger?' The children were encouraged to share their own ideas and discuss them in groups, helping them understand that Philosophy is all about open-mindedness and respectful debate. It was a wonderful way to get Year 5 thinking about the world in new and exciting ways!



We're looking forward to more thought-provoking lessons in the future!

Ms O'Leary – Year 5 Teacher

Year 6

The final exams of the 11+ process have taken place this week, marking an important milestone for the children, and interviews are now underway. I am extremely proud of all of the children for the way they have held themselves during the last couple of months.

Year 6 were thrilled to start their journey in the F1 in Schools Challenge, a competition designed to ignite creativity, teamwork, and STEM skills. After learning about the process of designing, engineering, and racing miniature F1 cars, the children were placed into their teams. They began by carefully allocating roles such as Team Manager, Manufacturing Engineer, Design Manufacturer and Graphic Designer, ensuring that everyone's strengths will be put to best use. The teams then got to work brainstorming innovative team names and designing eye-catching logos. This marks the beginning of an exciting project that combines real-world skills with a competitive edge—stay tuned throughout the half term for updates as their ideas take shape and their cars hit the track!

Another exciting part of the week was the first philosophy lesson with Mr Walshe. The children enjoyed, diving into thought-provoking questions that encouraged critical thinking and debate. The session explored the difference between knowledge and wisdom, as well as the distinctions between truth and fact. The children also learned about the life and teachings of Socrates, whose ideas still inspire philosophical discussions today. The lesson challenged the

children to think deeply, share their perspectives, and develop their reasoning skills, sparking lively and insightful discussions.

In PSHE, the children have been exploring the concept of global citizenship—what it means, why it matters, and how we all play a role in our communities and beyond. The children discussed the importance of being responsible, compassionate global citizens and mapped out their own connections across the world. This activity helped them appreciate how their actions can have a positive impact locally and globally, creating a deeper understanding of their place in the wider world.

Mrs Ellisdon - Year 6 Teacher

KS2 Collective Worship

...they saw the child...and they fell down and worshipped Him.... they offered Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Matthew 2:11

KS2 gathered for their first collective worship of the year, led by the KS2 teachers, to celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. This special occasion marks the Wise Men's journey to discover Jesus, bringing gifts to honour Him and rejoicing in His revelation. Together, we sang *We Three Kings* before concluding with a beautiful and thoughtful reflection.

Mrs Ellisdon - Head of KS2

PE Update

Despite the freezing temperatures, we've had a very active week, and the children have thrown themselves into all activities with enthusiasm. This term, EYFS will be focusing on gymnastics, along with coordination and ball skills activities. The Key Stage 1 classes will spend time working on football, tag rugby and gymnastics and the Key Stage 2 classes will continue their work on netball and football. Year 4 will start their 2-week intensive swimming course at the end of January.

On Thursday, the Year 6 netball team played against Sarum Hall in two exciting matches. The A-Team faced a strong opposition and, despite a heavy defeat, demonstrated incredible resilience and determination throughout the game. The B-Team, however, put in a fantastic team performance, securing an impressive 8-0 victory. There was excellent, accurate shooting from Alexander and Beatrix, and the whole team delivered a strong performance. Well, done to Alexander and Alice M who were nominated star players from the matches.



Next week Year 3 and 4 are looking forward to their football rematch against Trevor Roberts on Monday and we have been very fortunate to be invited to take part in the Utilita Kids' Cup, which promises to be an exciting day of football!

As we continue through this cold time of year, please ensure your children are dressed in multiple layers to stay warm. We will, as always, keep them active and moving as much as possible during lessons to keep them warm but many of our lessons particularly for Key Stage 2 will be taking pace outside.

Upcoming fixtures

Date	Opposition	Team	Time
Monday 13 th January	Trevor Roberts Home	Year 3 and 4 Football Mixed	15.45-16.45
Friday 17 th January	Football Tournament	Year 5 and 6 Football Mixed	0945-14.00
Monday 20 th January	St Mary's Away	Yr5A and B Netball Girls	16.00-17.00
Wednesday 22 nd January	Sarum Hall Away	Yr3 Netball Whole class	11.00-12.00
Wednesday 22 nd January	Sarum Hall Away	Yr5A and B Girls Netball	16.00-17.00
Monday 27 th January	Ivy House Home	Yr3 and 4 Netball Mixed	15.30-16.30
Monday 3 rd February	Village Prep Away	Yr5 and 6 Team Netball	16.00-17.00
Wednesday 5 th February	St Margaret's Away	Yr6 A and Year 5 A Girls Netball	15.15-16.15
Monday 10 th February	Ivy House Home	Yr5 and 6 Football Mixed	15.30-16.30

Mr Raveney - Director of Sport

Catholic Social Teaching at Saint Christina's

Catholic Social Teaching is an expression of the Catholic faith, which touches on many aspects of life. Writings by Popes and Catholic leaders show how the Catholic faith can guide our response to different issues.

There are seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching, we are called to uphold them.

- **Sharing God's world, protecting the poor** - How do pupils share at home and at School? What are the kinds of things that are shared? Should everyone get exactly the same? Should some people get more? Why? For example, families with more children might need more resources, or someone with a disability might need extra help.
- **Human Dignity** - 'What makes me special?' 'What makes people special?' 'How should we treat each other?'
- **Caring for Creation** - How do I show respect for Creation? The earth and all life on it are part of God's creation. We are called to respect this gift. We are responsible for taking care of the world we live in and for sharing all the wonders and resources the earth gives us.



- **The Common Good** - What is 'true community'? The Common Good is reached when we work together to improve the wellbeing of people in our society and the wider world.
- **Solidarity** - Who are our leaders? How do we stand with others? How did Jesus show service and justice?
- **Family, community and participation** - This means all people have the right to participate in society and to seek the Common good, which means the good for all.
- **Dignity in work** - All people work in some way because work is more than making a living, it is participating. Therefore, jobs and pay should be fair for everyone.

We will be looking at each of these principles throughout the academic year. The principle we will be focussing on this half term is Solidarity and Peace.

Solidarity is a word which can be overused and little understood. However, it is fundamental to the way in which we treat one another. If we truly believe that we are all sisters and brothers of one another, made in God's image and likeness as seen in the guideline of human dignity, then seeking the good of one another cannot be ignored. The quotation from St John Paul II is an ongoing challenge. Solidarity is not just feeling sorry for those who suffer. It is a commitment to action. "We are all really responsible for all" – all of us. Wherever we are. Whatever our age. Whatever our circumstances. We are all responsible for one another, those close by, and those far away. All of our actions have consequences locally and globally. From how we treat people we meet in the street, to the coffee we buy in the supermarket. It is how we live out Caritas - love in action.

Mr Burke

Fr Terry's Food Bank

At Saint Christina's we believe that we are called to serve those around us throughout the year. We were so touched by your generosity towards Fr Terry's Food Bank last term, and we will continue to collect non-perishable food to celebrate his legacy. All donations will be distributed to the homeless and local families in need.

We would be delighted if you would support us with this initiative – even the smallest donation can make a big difference. If you would like to donate any non-perishable goods to this cause, please ask your child to leave their donation on the designated tables underneath the stairs next to the Arts Hall.

We kindly ask that all donations for this half term are brought into School by Monday 10th February. Thank you for your support with this cause.

Mr Burke, Charity Prefects and Caritas Ambassadors

Saint Christina's Food Collection



Drama Club

There are still places available for the Morning Drama Club, commencing next week. Join us to explore creativity, develop acting skills, and engage in an inspiring experience.

To secure your place, please contact Mr MacInnes at drama@saintchristinas.org.uk

NOTICES and REMINDERS

PARENT PARKING AT COLLECTION and DROP OFF: The School has received a number of complaints from residents about their driveways and gates being blocked by members of our community. In our mind we might think that we will only be a few minutes, but the reality is, residents should be able to expect access to and from their properties whenever they need it. In one instance, someone who has had medical need has been delayed by a car that has been parked inconsiderately.

Please be aware that enforcement on the Terrace is increasingly vigilant and please park safely and with consideration for our neighbours within areas where stopping is permitted.

Drop off and Collection Reminder

Please see the times below for the normal School day:

Year Group	Drop off time	Collection time
Nursery	8.50 - 8.55am	3.25pm
Reception	8.50 - 8.55am	3.25 pm
Years 1 to 2	8.45 am	3.40 pm
Years 3 to 6	8.40 am	3.45 pm

Siblings – when dropping off siblings, the younger sibling may go in with the older child and will be supervised in the main hall until usual drop-off time.

Children attending Breakfast Club may be dropped at them main entrance from 8.00am.

EYFS siblings may be collected with the older sibling at their later pick up time.

Lates – when children arrive late, after the front gate has closed, they must be signed in by a parent.

NUT FREE SCHOOL

We have a number of pupils 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.

MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

Please do not send your child into School with any medication on their person. Medication can only be administered by qualified personnel. The only medication that we can administer, therefore, is prescribed medication e.g., Antibiotics, Inhalers, EpiPens. Children should not be sent into School with any other type of medication e.g., Cold and Flu medicines / Calpol / Lozenges etc. If your child is unwell and in need of medication, they should remain at home until they feel better.

If your child does have any medication, please contact Miss Georgia, and she will ask you to fill in the relevant forms and keep the medication safely in the School Office. Thank you for your co-operation.

Sunday Mass

Just a reminder to everyone, you are all invited to join Sunday Mass, which is held in the Chapel at 10.00am

Dates for your diary

Monday 13th January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clubs to start this week• Year 5 and 6 Mixed Football Fixture (Home)
Tuesday 14 th January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nutritionist Workshop
Friday 17 th January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nursery & Reception Parent Coffee Morning with Mr Walshe and Ms Randle – 9.00-9.45am in the Arts Hall• Whole School New Year Mass – 2.45pm
Monday 20 th January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heritage Week• Year 5 A and B Girls Netball Fixture (Away)
Wednesday 22 nd January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 1 and 2 Parent Coffee Morning with Mr Walshe and Mr Burke – 9.00-9.45am in the Arts Hall• Year 3 Netball Fixture (Home)• Year 5 A and B Girls Netball Fixture (Away)
Friday 24 th January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 3 and 4 Parent Coffee Morning with Mr Walshe and Mr Hirst – 9.00-9.45am in the Arts Hall• International Mass led by Year 2 – 2.45pm
W/C Monday 27 th January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 4 Swimming (for 2 weeks)• Year 3 and 4 Mix Netball Fixture (Home)
Wednesday 29 th January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 5 and 6 Parent Coffee Morning with Mr Walshe and Mrs Ellisdon – 9.00-9.45am in the Arts Hall
Friday 31 st January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 6 Mass – 2.45pm

Monday 3 rd February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P4C (Philosophy for Children) workshops (Rec to Y6) • Year 5 and 6 Netball Fixture (Away)
Wednesday 5th February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/Child Learning Reviews – Reception to Year 6 • Year 6 A and Yar 5 A Girls Netball Fixture (Away)
Thursday 6th February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/Child Learning Reviews – Reception to Year 6
Friday 7 th February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Mass (House Competition)

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/>