



SAINT CHRISTINA'S BULLETIN

Friday 5th September 2025



CURIOSITY CHARACTER COMMUNITY



SAINT CHRISTINA'S BULLETIN



Dear Parents,

The first week of a new school year always carries with it a special sense of anticipation. As a child, I always associated the end of the holidays and the start of September with a trip to Woolworths to buy a new pencil case (and to irritate my mum until she bought me some pick-n-mix). There is something about new stationery, the neatness of unused note books, and the feel of sharp pencils that all carry the excitement of new beginnings and possibilities. New books, classrooms and friendships all bring with them that same promise. I think what makes September so powerful is the sense of hope it stirs in us.

As a teacher, when I think of September I think about resolutions. I found out this week that the concept stretches as far back as the Babylonians who made them over 4,000 years ago, and of course the Romans made theirs to Janus, the god of beginnings. Across time people have used turning points in the calendar to set their intentions. Teachers are lucky in this regard because we get two chances each year: January and September. Both encourage us to pause, take stock, and decide where we want to focus our energy.

This September I have asked colleagues to think not only about what they want to achieve for themselves, but also about the intentions they hold for the children in our care, and I would like to extend that invitation to you, also. What hopes or intentions do you hold for your children this year? It might be as simple as trying something new, reading a little more widely, or showing kindness when it is not the easy choice. These small resolutions, shared between home and school, can help shape the habits and values that last well beyond the year.

We live in a world that increasingly feels weighed down by uncertainty and challenge, and a barrage of headlines remind us daily of difficult realities beyond our little oasis in St. John's Wood. Yet walking through school this week, teaching Philosophy lessons to Year 5 and 6, hearing laughter in the classrooms, watching children lean into their learning, and noticing the small acts of kindness that make Saint Christina's what it is, reminds me once again why education matters so deeply. Schools are places of optimism and hope, and just like new stationery, they remind us of what is possible.



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At Saint Christina's, we begin this year with a clear sense of purpose. Our Approaching 2030 plan is about more than academic standards. It is about shaping character, developing knowledge and skills, and building a culture of thinking that prepares children for a complex world. If Aristotle was right; that if you have their hearts, you have their minds, then our task is to hold both together. We want to inspire intellectual growth while also nurturing the compassion and resilience that enable children to feel comfortable in their own skin and flourish.

In this bulletin, you will find letters from our newly installed Assistant Headteachers, Mr Burke and Mrs Ellisdon, who are sharing their pastoral and academic visions for the year ahead. I encourage you to take a moment to read them. Pastoral care and academic ambition are two sides of the same coin, and we want to ensure that every child is both supported and challenged, growing not only in their learning but also in the kind of person they are becoming.

So, as we begin again this September, I hope we can all take up the gift of resolutions. Not just private goals, but shared intentions that bind us together as a community. To help the children learn well, to encourage them when they stumble, and to remind them that they belong here. Saint Christina's is at its strongest when we remember that we are a community bound together by our Golden Thread and a shared purpose. That is what makes September more than a beginning. It is a reminder of what we can achieve together and together is always better.

Thank you, as always, for the trust you place in us. I look forward to walking alongside you and your children in the year ahead. To the children and families who are joining Saint Christina's for the first time, a warm welcome. We are so pleased you are with us, and I hope you will quickly come to feel part of the family. Saint Christina's is a very special community.

Have a good weekend when it comes.

Best,

Damien Walshe
Headteacher





SAINT CHRISTINA'S BULLETIN

Assistant Head - Pastoral - Vision for 2025–26

Dear Parents,

As I step into this new year as Assistant Head (Pastoral), my vision is simple: to ensure that every child at Saint Christina's feels safe, supported, and known. For me, pastoral care and academic ambition are inseparable because children learn best when they feel they belong, when they are listened to, and when they are encouraged to become the best version of themselves.

This year, our pastoral provision will be rooted in tailored care and pupil voice. Weekly check-ins with teachers will make sure that every child is thought about individually, while our half-termly pupil voice surveys will give children a direct say in shaping school life. I want pupils to see that their ideas matter, with the School Council helping to analyse results and feed them back to the wider community.

Alongside this, we are building opportunities for children to decompress, connect, and play through our daily pastoral activities - from sensory circuits to nature breaks, music and movement, gardening, and the weekly Wellbeing Hub. The Hub, run with our Wellbeing and Inclusion Ambassadors, will continue to be a safe and welcoming space where children can find calm, creativity, and support from their peers.

The Catholic life of the school remains at the heart of what we do. Each half term we will explore a principle of Catholic Social Teaching, beginning with Care for Creation. Through the work of our Caritas Ambassadors and initiatives such as supporting Fr Terry's Food Bank, pupils will learn how Catholic Social Teaching is lived out through service, kindness, and making a difference to others.

Finally, I oversee PSHE across the school. This is about giving children the tools to build healthy relationships, manage feelings, and grow in confidence and resilience. It also links closely with our whole-school focus on the 6Cs: Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Curiosity, Creativity, and Commitment. Together, these values will help children to thrive not only in their learning but also in the kind of people they are becoming.

My hope for this year is that every child knows they are valued, every voice is heard, and every pupil has the chance to shine, both in their achievements and in the kindness and resilience they show to others.

Mr Burke - Assistant Head (Pastoral) and Year 2 Class Teacher



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Assistant Head - Academic - Vision for 2025 - 26

Dear Parents,

As I begin this year in my role as Assistant Head (Academic), my vision is to ensure that every child at Saint Christina's is challenged, inspired, and supported to achieve their very best. Our aim is not only to nurture academic excellence but also to equip the children with the skills, curiosity, and confidence they need to thrive in a changing world.

This year, our academic focus will be shaped by the whole-school 6Cs: Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Curiosity, Creativity, and Commitment. In particular, we will continue to develop the children's metacognitive skills, encouraging them to reflect on how they learn, and to take increasing ownership of their progress. By understanding their own thinking, children will be better prepared to set goals, overcome challenges, and unlock their full potential.

Across Key Stage 2, we have introduced STEM lessons into the timetable to embed opportunities for the children to apply their learning collaboratively to real-world and community challenges. This will help children to see the relevance of their learning beyond the classroom, building both problem-solving and teamwork skills. In addition, Philosophy for Children (P4C) will be introduced across the whole school, providing all children with the chance to ask big questions, reason together, and enrich their critical thinking.

New House Competitions will be introduced throughout the year; each designed to highlight and celebrate the 6Cs. These events will not only encourage collaboration and creativity but also build resilience, confidence, and pride in achievement.

Enrichment will also play a central role and will give the children opportunities to explore a range of new ideas and activities. Trips will connect to curriculum topics, deepening children's understanding by bringing learning to life.

The curriculum is designed to spark a love of learning and to prepare our children to be thoughtful, responsible, and compassionate global citizens. My hope for this year is that every child knows their efforts are valued and takes pride in their achievements and continues to build their confidence and ambition to make a difference in the world.

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



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The 6Cs: Beginning the conversation with your children

You may start to see your children coming home with stickers showing one of our 6Cs. These are the six habits and skills that we want to weave through learning at Saint Christina's:

- **Communication**
- **Collaboration**
- **Critical Thinking**
- **Curiosity**
- **Creativity**
- **Commitment**

They are not add-ons to academic learning but the threads that help our children grow into confident learners and contributors to the world around them.

Communication

Being able to share ideas clearly and listen carefully to others.

Questions you might ask:

- *"How did you explain that to me so clearly?"*
- *"Can you tell me your idea in another way?"*
- *"What did you mean when you said...?"*

Ways you could praise:

- *"You explained that really clearly. I understood straight away."*
- *"I like the way you looked at me when you were talking."*
- *"You listened carefully before answering. That showed great communication."*

Collaboration

Working well with others so everyone has a voice and a role.

Questions you might ask:

- *"How did you work together on that?"*
- *"What helped you to agree on the best idea?"*
- *"How did you make sure everyone had a turn?"*

Ways you could praise:

- *"I like the way you listened to each other."*
- *"You shared the jobs really fairly. That was great teamwork."*
- *"You helped when it got difficult. That made a difference."*



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Critical Thinking

Looking closely at information, spotting patterns, and making thoughtful decisions.

Questions you might ask:

- *"What makes you think that?"*
- *"Is there another way you could solve this?"*
- *"What is the strongest reason for your answer?"*

Ways you could praise:

- *"You took time to check your answer instead of rushing."*
- *"I like how you explained your reasoning."*
- *"You spotted the problem before it happened. That showed careful thinking."*

Creativity

Using imagination to come up with new ideas and fresh ways of doing things.

Questions you might ask:

- *"What is another way you could do this?"*
- *"If there were no rules, what would you try?"*
- *"How could you make this even more interesting?"*

Ways you could praise:

- *"That was an original idea. I had not thought of it like that."*
- *"I love how you put those two things together."*
- *"You made something new out of what you already had. That shows creativity."*

Curiosity

Asking questions and wanting to find out more about the world.

Questions you might ask:

- *"What do you wonder about this?"*
- *"Why do you think it works that way?"*
- *"What would you like to find out next?"*

Ways you could praise:

- *"That was a brilliant question."*
- *"I like the way you wanted to dig deeper."*
- *"You did not stop at the obvious. You kept asking."*

Commitment

Keeping going, even when things are challenging, and finishing what you start.

Questions you might ask:

- *"What kept you going when it was hard?"*
- *"How did you feel when you finished it?"*
- *"What would you try again next time?"*

Ways you could praise:

- *"You did not give up even when it was tough. That is commitment."*
- *"I saw how much effort you put in, and it paid off."*
- *"You kept practising until it clicked. Well done."*

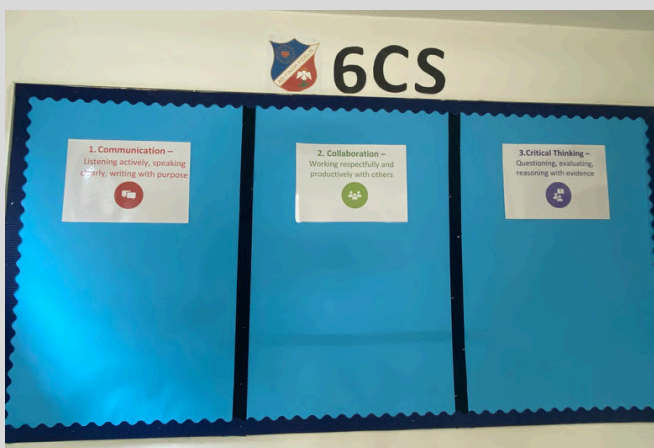


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A final word for parents

When your child comes home with a 6C sticker, you might want to ask them what they did to earn it and use one of the questions above to help them reflect. Praising their effort, persistence, and willingness to try new things reinforces the habits we are encouraging in school. My hope is that we can make these six habits part of daily life so that children grow in confidence and self-belief.

Mr. Walshe - Headteacher





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Sustainability and Eco at Saint Christina's

As part of my new role leading the sustainability strategy across the whole school, we are continuing to grow our focus on sustainability and care for the environment, building on the foundations we have already put in place. As part of this, we will once again be working towards the Eco-Schools Green Flag Award, which recognises schools that put environmental awareness and action at the centre of school life.

Our vision is that every class will take part in at least one eco-focused lesson each term, as well as one lesson outdoors that encourages children to appreciate and connect with nature in less obvious ways.

Key Stage 2 will be helping us launch this next stage: Year 3 and 4 are starting with a STEM recycling project, exploring how waste is managed at school, at home, and in the local area. They will share their findings and ideas with our soon-to-be-formed Eco Committee, which will meet in the first few weeks of term with the guidance of our new Eco Prefects, Raphael and Sara, in Year 6. Meanwhile, Year 5 and 6 will be taking responsibility for our green spaces, tending to our gardens and green walls, setting up composting systems, and monitoring food waste at lunchtimes.

We are also looking forward to building links with our local community, exploring opportunities to work with organisations such as London Zoo and other partners to enrich the children's learning and strengthen our impact.

This is only the start of the next chapter in our sustainability journey, and we are excited to see how the whole school can play its part in making a real difference.

Ms Randle - Head of EYFS, ECO and Sustainability, and Nursery Class Teacher



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Attendance & punctuality – quick reminder (2025/26)

We follow the DfE's Working together to improve school attendance statutory guidance (in force since 19 August 2024 and applying this year). [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

- Drop-off & registers: Pupils must be in class by 9:00 am; morning register closes 9:15 am. If arriving after 8:55 am, please sign in at the foyer. Arrivals after 9:15 am may be recorded as an unauthorised late (U code) for the morning session. Doors open at 8:40 am for Years 4,5, and 6 and 8:45 am - 8:50 am for KS1/EYFS.
- Reporting absence: Phone the Office by 8:45 am each day of illness and also email your class teacher and the Office; thank you.
- Planned absence: Request in advance via the Headteacher for exceptional circumstances; term-time holidays can't be authorised.
- When attendance drops: We'll work with families to help. Persistent absence is below 90%, and certain absences are shared with the local authority (e.g., 10 consecutive days; 15 days for illness under Code I).

Thank you for supporting excellent attendance and punctuality.

Mr Hirst - Deputy Head

Planned TfL strikes next week – roads likely busier

TfL expects severe Tube disruption from Sunday 7th – Thursday 11th Sept, with no DLR on Tuesday 9th & Thursday 11th, and residual knock-on effects on Friday 12th.

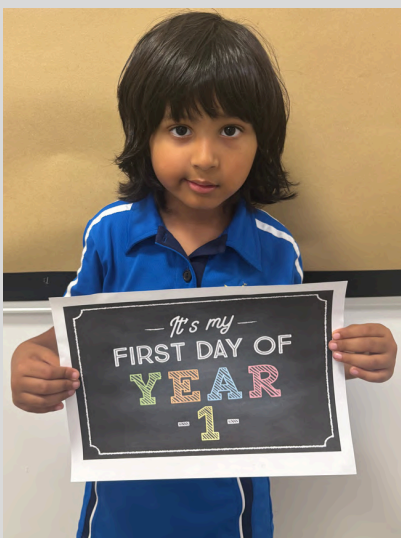
Please see [here](#) for more information.

We anticipate heavier traffic and longer queues around school. Please allow extra time for drop-off and collection, and consider walking/scooting or car-sharing where possible. Keep checking TfL for updates.

Mr Hirst - Deputy Head

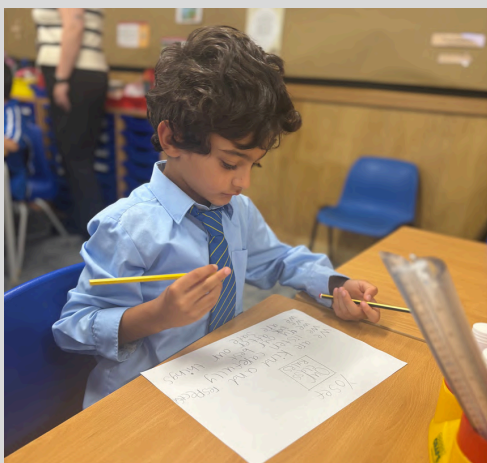


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Music Update

We are very much looking forward to another exciting term of music-making!

To kick off the new academic year, we will be holding our **Instrument Demonstration Assemblies** next week on **Wednesday and Thursday mornings**. During these sessions, the children will have the opportunity to hear live performances and learn about a range of instruments from our visiting peripatetic teachers.

This year, we're delighted to be showcasing the following instruments:



Flute



Violin



Guitar



Trumpet & Trombone

Following the assemblies, in the weeks ahead, teachers will be offering a **free 10-minute taster lesson** where children can try out the instrument and get a feel for what lessons would be like. The teacher will then contact you to discuss it.

If you would like to sign your child up for a free taster lesson, you can do this [here](#).

We also offer piano and singing lessons. To set up regular lessons on any instrument, you will find details and the application form [here](#).

We have a wide range of Music clubs which we encourage children to take part in. All Music clubs are free. If you would like your child to take part in one of the invite-only clubs, please contact me via ebryant@saintchristinas.org.uk

| Group | Day and time | Open to |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Senior Choir | Monday 8:00am | Years 5 and 6 |
| Junior Choir | Monday 12:30pm | Years 3 and 4 |
| Little Voices | Tuesday 12:45pm | Years 1 and 2 |
| Brass Group | Wednesday 12:30pm | KS2, by invitation |
| Orchestra | Thursday 8:00am | KS2, by invitation |
| Music Theory | Thursday 12:30pm | KS2, by arrangement with Mrs Bryant |
| String Ensemble | Friday 12:30pm | KS2, by invitation |

Mrs Bryant - Director of Music



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If you have any questions about clubs, instrumental lessons, or music at Saint Christina's in general, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

In class, Year 3 began a little project this week on Rounds - songs which can be sung starting at different times, forming cyclical layers. We started by learning Frère Jacques and put together a performance in three parts in just a few minutes - well done Year 3!

[Year 3 Rounds week 1 - Frère Jacques](#)

Mrs Bryant - Director of Music



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House Competition Launch: Design the 6Cs!

This morning, we launched the first House Competition of the year, and it's all about celebrating our school's core learning values: the 6Cs!

The 6Cs, Communication, Collaboration, Commitment, Critical Thinking, Curiosity, and Creativity, are at the heart of how we learn and grow together. Now, your challenge is to bring them to life!

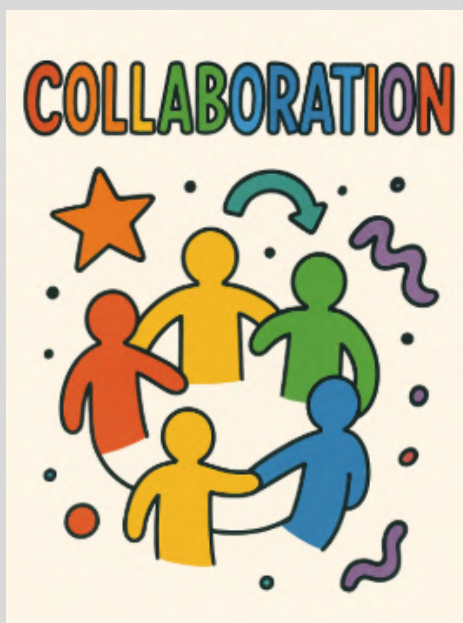
For this competition, children are invited to design a heading and logo for each of the 6Cs. Using their imagination, Creativity, and artistic skills, children should:

- Design the lettering for one or more of the 6Cs in a creative and eye-catching way.
- Create a unique logo to represent each capability.
- Make their designs bright, colourful, and bold.

All designs must be completed on a plain A4 piece of paper and can be either hand-drawn or created using a computer.

- Deadline for entries: Monday 22nd September
- Submit to: Mr Raveney or your House Captain
- Don't forget: Put your name and house clearly on the back of your entry.

House points will be awarded for every entry, and children may choose to design one or more of the 6Cs. The winning designs will be proudly displayed around the school and used in materials that celebrate and explain the 6Cs.



Mr Raveney - Director of Sports



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Library

A huge congratulations to the children who have already been busy collecting money for the Read-a-thon initiative over the summer! They showed great commitment to reaching their reading targets, with fantastic support from friends and family. The donations raised are helping us transform our library into a bright and welcoming space filled with exciting new books. We're delighted that the Read-a-thon will continue into Autumn Term 1, giving everyone the chance to start the school year with plenty of reading. More information will be shared by class teachers.

English Channel Relay Thank you

A huge thank you to all the parents and children who kindly donated towards my relay swim across the English Channel. Together, we raised an incredible amount for the RNLI, a charity that works tirelessly to save lives at sea and provide vital safety education. I'm delighted to share that our team successfully completed the crossing in 12 hours and 22 minutes, during the 150th anniversary year of the very first Channel swim. Your support played a big part in making this achievement possible. Thank you!



Ms Williams - Reception Class Teacher



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Wellbeing Hub & Pupil Ambassadors

We are delighted to share that the Wellbeing Hub will be returning this academic year! The Hub provides a calm and welcoming space at lunchtimes where children can take part in activities, chat, and find support from trained peers.

To help us run it, our Year 6 children have been invited to apply to become Wellbeing Ambassadors and Inclusion Ambassadors.

- Wellbeing Ambassadors will help host the Hub, support younger children, and promote positive mental health across the school.
- Inclusion Ambassadors will champion kindness and respect, ensuring every child feels welcome and valued.

We are really excited to get going again this year and look forward to the applications coming in from our Year 6 children!



Catholic Social Teaching at Saint Christina's

Catholic Social Teaching is an expression of our faith, guiding us in how we live, treat one another, and care for the world around us. Across this academic year, children will be exploring the seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching:

- Sharing God's World, Protecting the Poor
- Human Dignity
- Caring for Creation
- The Common Good
- Solidarity
- Family, Community and Participation
- Dignity in Work

Each half term, we will focus on one principle in depth.

This half term, our theme is Caring for Creation.



The earth and all it contains is God's gift to us. As Christians, we are called to be custodians of creation, to look after it, protect it for future generations, and use its resources wisely.

Through this theme, children will be learning what it means to be a good steward of the earth and how the way we treat our common home affects people everywhere, now and in the future.

Mr Burke - Assistant Head (Pastoral) and Year 2 Class Teacher



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Fr Terry's Food Bank

As part of living out Catholic Social Teaching, we are once again supporting Fr Terry's Food Bank this half term. Your generosity last year made a huge difference, and we are continuing our collection of non-perishable food to support the homeless and local families in need.

If you would like to contribute, please send any non-perishable goods with your child to be placed on the designated tables underneath the stairs next to the Arts Hall. We kindly ask that donations are brought in by Friday 11th October.

Even the smallest donation can make a big difference, and together we can continue to serve those around us in need.

Thank you for your support.



Mr Burke and the Charity Prefects

Caritas Ambassadors

We are delighted to share that we have invited children in Year 5 to apply to become Caritas Ambassadors this year.

The Caritas Ambassadors programme, created by Caritas Westminster, helps pupils learn about the principles of Catholic Social Teaching and put their faith into action. Ambassadors will meet regularly to explore themes such as dignity, solidarity, and the common good, and then design and lead social action projects that make a difference in our school and wider community.



This is a wonderful opportunity for our children to grow in leadership, empathy, and responsibility while deepening their understanding of how we are called to live out our faith in practical ways.

We are very excited to get started and look forward to seeing the positive impact our Caritas Ambassadors will have this year.

Mr Burke - Assistant Head (Pastoral) and Year 2 Class Teacher



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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.

Parking and Engine Idling

We kindly ask all parents to please avoid stopping or parking on the school's zigzag lines at drop-off and pick-up times. These markings are there to keep our children safe and ensure clear visibility. Please also remember to switch off your engine when stationary to reduce air pollution around the school.

Thank you for helping to keep our school environment safe and considerate for everyone.

Neighbours

We kindly ask all parents and guardians to avoid parking in or blocking neighboring residents' driveways during drop-off and pick-up times. Please be considerate of our neighbors 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!

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.



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Dates for your diary

**Monday 8th
September**

- Extra-curricular Clubs begin

**Friday 12th
September**

- Year 6 Mass

**Monday 15th
September**

- Year 5 and 6 Girls Football (Away)

**Friday 19th
September**

- Year 5 Mass

**Monday 22nd
September**

- Year 3 and 4 Mixed Football (Away)

**Tuesday 23rd
September**

- Year 5 and 6 Mixed Football (Home)



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**Wednesday 24th
September**

- **MacMillan Coffee Morning (9.00 am - 10.00 am)**
- Year 6 A and Year 5 A Girls Netball (Away)
- **New Parents Social Evening (Details to follow)**

**Friday 26th
September**

- Year 4 Mass

**Monday 29th
September**

- Year and 6 Mixed Football (Home)

**Monday 29th
September**

- Year and 6 Mixed Football (Home)

**Tuesday 30th
September**

- Year 6 A and 5 A and B Girls Netball (Away)

Friday 3rd October

- St Francis House Mass

**Monday 6th
October**

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



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| | |
|--|---|
| Wednesday 8th October | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reception Parent Coffee Morning (Details to follow)• Year 5/6 Inter House Netball |
| Friday 10th October | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 3 Mass |
| Monday 13th October | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent Teacher Meetings Week |
| Wednesday 15th October | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open Morning (9:15 am - 11:30 am)• Year 5 and 6 Girls Football (Away) |
| Thursday 16th October | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 6 Trip |
| Friday 17th October | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• House Poetry Competition• No Mass |

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

Monday 3rd November
CHILDREN RETURN

ABOVE TIMES/DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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

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