



# Saint Christina's

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

## Bulletin

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Dear Parents,

I'm writing this from the Catholic Independent Schools Conference in Oxford, where the theme this year has been *Hearts on Fire - Feet on the Move*. I like this theme because alongside the overt rallying cry it is also an invitation to dig a little deeper and reflect on our purpose and direction as educators. There was a quote by Frederick Buechner in one of the sessions that instantly brought my mind back home to NW8: *"The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."* My gut feeling is that for most of us, the secret ingredient to human flourishing exists in that space, that intersection where joy and purpose come together.

Earlier this week I witnessed the manifestation of this idea in real time, and it all started on Monday morning with the following question: *"If you rent a donkey, do you also rent its shadow?"* A little context will probably help here! *The Philosophy Man*, who will be assisting us in the launch of our culture of thinking, came to deliver P4C sessions to the children and sparked some priceless conversations throughout the school, but the one that really made me laugh was delivered in a KS2 assembly about whether a donkey's shadow can be rented separately from the donkey itself. The story goes that a man hired a donkey for a journey across the desert. When the sun became too hot, he stopped to rest in its shade. But the owner protested, claiming that he had only rented out the donkey, and not its shadow. A dispute followed: should the man have to pay extra for the shade, or was it naturally included? The debate went in all sorts of directions - was the shadow part of the agreement, or an unexpected bonus? Should it come at an extra cost, or does its value depend on need? It was a brilliant example of what happens when children are given the space to think deeply, reason carefully, and listen to other perspectives. And they went really, really deep!

On Wednesday, a former colleague of mine, who now writes the computing curricula for the Raspberry Pi Foundation, visited us to talk about Coding, the place of AI in education, and more generally all things computing. We spoke about how schools prepare children for an increasingly digital world and how best to ensure that technology remains a tool to enhance learning, rather than an end in itself. This last point has been a common theme in my recent parent Coffee Mornings, alongside what constitutes an appropriate limit on screen time. Our newly installed Digital Strategy committee have started these discussions, and as we move forward in writing our strategic plan, we are committed to ensuring that our approach is measured and purposeful. Also, our visitor *loved* the school, remarked on how calm it was, was blown away by the exemplary behaviour of the children, and, like so many of us who step through these doors, remarked that she *felt the school* from the moment she walked in.

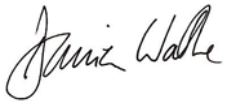
Philosophical questions like the donkey's shadow are a brilliant way to encourage children to dig deeper in their thinking. As we've been discussing in school for *Children's Mental Health Week*, thinking about our thoughts – why we believe what we do, how we see and talk to ourselves, and how we grow, can be just as important as answering a question itself. One of the best ways you can support this at home is by asking follow-up questions when your child shares their ideas. For this week's sticky question, try a few of this following:

- *Can you tell me more?*
- *Can you say why?*
- *You said (repeat the answer), but I think...*
- *Can you give me an example?*
- *Why is that important?*

These kinds of prompts help children develop the confidence to justify their reasoning, build on their ideas, and consider alternative perspectives. Whether it's a debate about a donkey's shadow, a question about fairness, or a discussion about AI in education, encouraging children to explain *why* they think something is true is a powerful way to deepen their understanding.

Have a good weekend when it comes.

Best,



**Damien Walshe**  
**Headteacher**

## Parent Child Learning Review

It was a pleasure to see so many parents come into school on Wednesday and Thursday morning for the Parent Child Learning Review. The children enjoyed the opportunity to showcase their fantastic work to their parents. We hope everyone found the experience enjoyable and worthwhile. Thank you for taking the time to fill in the feedback forms.



**Mr Hirst – Deputy Head**



**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February until Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February.**

Our annual **Book Fair** will be in school from **Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February** until **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February** and promises to have many new and contemporary book titles on offer!

Your child will be allocated a time to browse the books at the Book Fair with their class. They will write down the titles that they would like to purchase on a form that they will bring home. You will then have the opportunity to discuss whether you would like to purchase any of the books that your child has selected. If you decide to make a purchase, you will be asked to scan the QR code on the form which will enable you to make a payment electronically (QR code also at the bottom here should you need it). This is a **cashless event** so all payments will need to be made through the QR code. Please list the books that you would like to purchase **clearly** alongside the total amount. When you have made your purchase you will be given a reference number for your payment. Please write this clearly on the form.

*Please note that you can only order books which are at the Book Fair as not all books on the Scholastic website are available for schools at the Book Fair costs. Please see the list of books generated on your child's list.*

Once the form is complete and payment has been made, your child should bring the form back to school and return it to **Mrs Ellidson by 9am Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February at the latest**. Books will be delivered to your child as soon as the order form is in. If we run out of a certain book this will be ordered and delivered to your child the following week.

Please contact me if you have any queries regarding the details of this letter.

**Mrs Ellidson - Head of KS2 and English**

## My BOOK FAIR Wish List

IF YOU SPOT ANY BOOKS YOU LIKE AT THE BOOK FAIR, YOU CAN WRITE THEM DOWN ON YOUR WISH LIST BELOW.

NAME:	CLASS:
Title	
Title	Price

**Information for Parents and Guardians**

If you'd like to purchase any of the books your child has listed and want to avoid sending cash into school, you can pay online at [www.travellingbooks.co.uk/pay](http://www.travellingbooks.co.uk/pay) or by purchasing Book Fair gift vouchers. You can find out more about the books available and confirm prices at [travellingbooks.co.uk/books](http://travellingbooks.co.uk/books)

**Pay Online: (this is a payment platform only, you do not enter your order)**  
Visit [travellingbooks.co.uk/pay](http://travellingbooks.co.uk/pay)

If you're at the Book Fair, or if your child has attended and chosen their books, you can now pay online using our secure parent payment system. Once payment is complete, to place your order return this wish list to your school so your child's books can be supplied from the book fair.

Reference number:	Total order value: £ .....
Books Purchased:	

**Pay with Gift Vouchers:**  
Avoid handling cash with pre-paid gift vouchers. Visit [travellingbooks.co.uk/parents](http://travellingbooks.co.uk/parents) to purchase, available in £5, £10, £15, £20 and £25.

Gift Voucher code: GOOD .....	Total order value: £ .....
Gift Voucher value: £ .....	

Scan the QR code to pay online!



As we set out on this Jubilee Year journey, we look forward to deepening our understanding of hope and how we can live as joyful and compassionate pilgrims in our school and community.

**Ms O'Leary – Head of Religious Education and Year 5 Class Teacher**

## Eco Committee Update

This week, the children met with Mr Steve as part of the Eco Committee's Environmental Audit. They had the opportunity to quiz Mr Steve about the processes the school has in place to save energy. He showed them the controls used to monitor the temperature throughout the school.

We also discussed the school's recycling process and identified areas for improvement. The children learned about the LED lights in the school and how we plan to install a new WRAS-approved de-scaler, which will enhance the efficiency of the boilers and the hot water calorifier, resulting in energy savings.



As a result of our conversation about recycling, we are working with Holroyd Howe to explore ways to reduce delivery waste. It was a very productive meeting, and the children enjoyed seeing Mr Steve's office!

**Mr Hirst / Ms Sephton / Mr Steve / Eco Committee**

## Message from the School Council and Library Prefects:

Dear Saint Christina's Children,

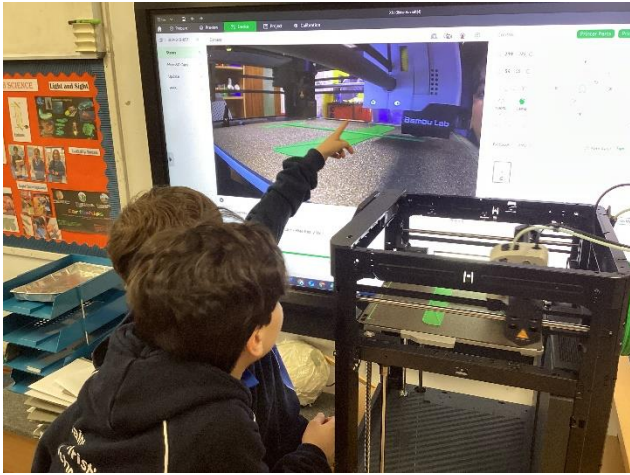
Please have a think this weekend of the types of books you would be interested in reading in the library. We are interested to hear of authors, book series, genres and specific books. Please make a note of them and then pass to your School Council representative (or your class teacher) early next week. We are excited to hear your suggestions to feed into the Parent Link Library project!

Kind regards,

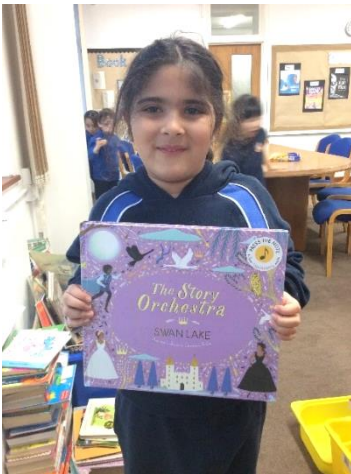
School Council / Edda and Apolline

## STEM Club – 3D Printer

The 3D printer has been in action again this week. After a few teething issues last week, we're back to printing high-quality items. This week, we've created a glider that works well, allowing us to explore aerodynamics and the forces at play. We've also designed a storage box for utensils.



Mr Hirst – Deputy Head



## KS1 Story Club

The Story Orchestra: Swan Lake - *I like this story because it is sweet and it has really nice songs to go with it. My favourite song is Act 1, Flight of the Swans. The story is beautiful and has lovely pictures. It has a crown at the front.* – **Child in Year 1**

## Year 1

Year 1 have been learning about 'Families and Celebrations' in RE this half term. This week, we enjoyed a visit to the Chapel to find different items.

We were able to see stained glass, lots of crosses, the Bible, the Tabernacle and lots more.

We have been reflecting on why people visit a Chapel and a Church and thought about how special it is to have the Sisters and the Chapel as part of our school!





This week is Mental Health week and Year 1 have been reflecting on how we are all unique.

In English, we have enjoyed listening to the story of 'Leo and the Octopus' and writing letters, sharing our advice for Leo to help him when he isn't feeling green.

During PSHE, we have been reflecting on things that make us proud, people who support us and things that help us feel calm.

**Ms Higgins – Year 1 Class Teacher**



## Year 2 P4C Workshop with Tom Biggleswade

This week, Year 2 took part in an exciting *Philosophy for Children* (P4C) workshop led by Tom Biggleswade. P4C encourages children to think deeply by exploring big questions through discussion and reasoning.

In our session, we were given a challenge—ordering different actions from least naughty to naughtiest. Should calling a teacher a bad name be seen as worse than accidentally leaving a banana skin on the floor? This sparked a thoughtful debate, where we listened to each other's ideas, explained our reasoning, and agreed or disagreed respectfully.

It was a fantastic opportunity for the children to develop their critical thinking, communication and teamwork skills.

**Mr Burke – Head of KS1 and Year 2 Class Teacher**



## P4C Workshop

*I work with dozens of schools, hundreds of teachers and thousands of children each year, but there was something very special about Saint Christina's. I was struck by the children's willingness and ability to work together to enrich each other's thinking. Their care over what they said, and eagerness to show how it connected to what others think, was a delight to see.*

*The school's commitment to developing the independent and critical thinking skills of their children, evidenced by their commitment to embedding philosophy and metacognition, is very innovative. To spend time focusing on the awareness and practise of the skills which underpin not only all academic pursuits but social interactions and a flourishing life beyond school, is crucial. It's no surprise the hugely respected Education Endowment Foundation rank metacognition and oracy as the first and third most impactful interventions a school can make for pupil progress, respectively.*

*It was a huge pleasure to work again with you, Damien, and to train your committed and tight-knit team of colleagues in embedding philosophical questions into their curricula. I look forward to our continued work with the school over the course of the next few years, and incorporating Thinking Moves metacognitive framework".*

**Tom Bigglestone**

**The Philosophy Man / Co-author, Thinking Moves A-Z and Sticky Questions**

## **Year 3 Learn about Hinduism and Advait's Thread Ceremony**

This week, Year 3 had a special lesson as a child in Year 3 shared all about his Vratibandha Sohala, also known as the Thread Ceremony in Hinduism. This important rite of passage marks the start of a child's journey towards God, education, and a disciplined life.

Long ago, boys would leave home to live with their teachers, learning Holy Scriptures (Vedas), Arts, and Trades. The Thread Ceremony was performed before they left, symbolising their growth from childhood to responsibility.

The child shared a video and lots of beautiful photographs as explained the different mini ceremonies that took place during his Thread Ceremony. This helped his classmates understand the traditions and meaning behind this very special event in his life. It was a wonderful opportunity for Year 3 to learn more about Hindu culture and celebrations!

We compared it to the journey many of the children in Year 3 are undertaking this year, preparing for the two sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion.

**Ms Sephton - Year 3 Class Teacher**





## Year 4

Recently Year 4 learned about the colour wheel. We learned about the 3 primary colours, and how these can be used to make secondary colours. Complimentary colours are across from each other on the colour wheel. We put this knowledge into practice by mixing together paints to complete our own version of the colour wheel. We were amazed at how many colour we could make by only using red, yellow and blue!



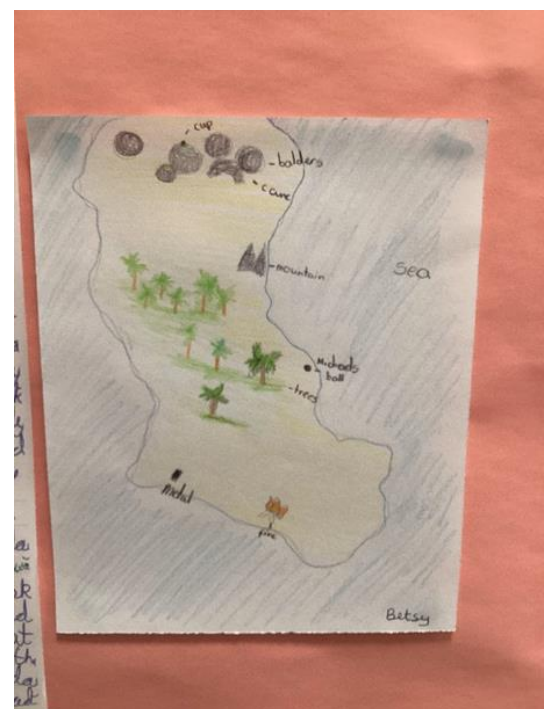
Ms Farquhar – Year 4 Class Teacher

## Year 5 Adventures in Creative Writing

This week, Year 5 children have been immersing themselves in the captivating world of *Kensuke's Kingdom* by Michael Morpurgo. Inspired by the story's vivid setting, they unleashed their creativity by drawing and describing their own unique islands.

To bring their imaginary landscapes to life, the children are exploring the power of sensory language—describing what they might see, hear, touch, and smell on their islands. From the salty tang of sea air and the rustling of palm leaves to the rough bark of towering trees and the gentle scent of tropical flowers, their writing has become rich with imaginative detail.

These budding writers are learning how to create settings that leap off the page and spark readers' imaginations. We can't wait to see where their creative journeys take them!





## PE Update

We have had another busy week of sport with the Year 5 and 6 girls having 2 Netball matches against Village Prep and St Margaret's.

The teams put in some fabulous performances with 3 wins and 1 draw. It was so lovely to see the children playing so well as a team.

A special well done must go to the star players Beatrix, Pia, Norah and Yumi. Next week we have our final fixture of the half term with the Year 5 and 6 taking on Ivy House in Football.



Year 4 have represented the school so well during their Swimming sessions. The progress the children have made has been impressive.

This week the children have continued to develop their swimming techniques to make them more efficient. As well as this they have spent time working on effective breathing during Breast Stroke and Front Crawl.

On Thursday the class enjoyed learning some simple life saving skills including treading water and using flotation devices to help a struggling swimmer before pulling them to safety.

The sessions have been very enjoyable, and the children enjoyed taking part in some fun races during their final session on Friday. Thank you for your support in dropping them into school slightly earlier over the last 2 weeks.



On Tuesday Year 3 and 4 enjoyed their Inter House Netball competition which was a brilliant event! The children have really improved in Netball and there were some excellent games throughout the afternoon! The competition was very competitive, and Saint Cecilia and Saint Joan of Arc ended up being joint winners of the competition! Well, done to Ava and Imad who scored the most goals during the afternoon and a special congratulations must go to Advait, Nao and Angelo who were awarded star players from their teams.



Year 1 have continued to enjoy their Gymnastics lessons this week with us continuing to develop different jumping techniques whilst using apparatus to improve their balance. It has been lovely to see them improving over the recent weeks. Year 3 and Year 5 are close to completing their final routines in Gymnastics and it has been lovely to see them working so well in small groups to plan and perform their sequences.

### Upcoming Fixtures

Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> February	SHHS	5 Netball tournament	15.00-17.30
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March	Ivy House	Year 3 and 4 Mixed Football	15.30-16.30
Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> March	Cavendish Tournament	Year 5/6 Girls Football	10.00-13.30
Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> March	SHHS	6 Netball tournament	15.00-17.30
Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> March	Regents Park	5/6 Girls Football	TBC
Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> March	Devonshire House	Year 5A and B Girls Netball	16.00-17.00
Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> March	Trevor Roberts	Yr5/6 Mixed Football	16.00-17.01
Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> March	St Mary's	Year 6A and B Girls Netball	16.00-17.00
Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> March	Sarum Hall	Year 5 Cross Country	14.15-15.00
Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> March	Devonshire House	Year 6 Girls Football tournament	13.00-15.30
Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	Devonshire House	Year 5/6 Girls Cross Country	13.00-15.30

Mr Raveney - Director of Sport

## Primary Mathematics Challenge Bonus Round

Last November saw close on 50 of our children participating in the first round of the National Primary Mathematics Challenge. This is a competition which is now in its 25<sup>th</sup> year, and we have had children participate in the challenge pretty well every year.

This year, three of our children got through to the Bonus Round (which used to be referred to as the Finals Round!) and they sat the paper on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February.

Our three children were Edda, Hugo and Seb.

We will not know their results for another few weeks, as the Mathematical Association of Great Britain has to wait for all of the results to be submitted, but we are hopeful that our results will be good this year!

If you are interested in what the problems were like this year, you will have to wait for two weeks until we can legitimately print some of them in our bulletin! This is because children have the opportunity to participate in the Bonus Round up until the end of the week, and copyright dictates that we do not publicise anything before then.

**Fr Rudolf Loewenstein - Teacher in charge of Mathematics**

## Intermediate Mathematics Challenge 2025

This year, Year 6 sat the paper for the Intermediate Mathematics Challenge in late January. Although many of the questions are beyond the reach of your average child in Key Stage Two, the class had a brave attempt at the paper.

I was impressed with the determination that they all showed, and there were certainly some members of the class whose performance will have put them on par with some much older children, including those in Years 9 to 11.

We will have to wait for a few weeks yet to see if any of our pupils will have gained any awards this year, as the UKMT does not publish results until all entries are sent in to them. However, we should be in a position to know more by early March, hopefully.

To whet your appetite, here are two of the questions that our children attempted this year:

*Qu 4: All Felix's cats are normal cats. Together, they have 12 more legs than they have tails. In total, how many ears do they have?*

*Qu 24: Two white roses and a yellow rose costs £5. Two white roses and three red roses cost £10.50. Three yellow roses and two red roses cost £11. What would be the total cost of one red rose, one white rose and one yellow rose?*

**Fr Rudolf Loewenstein - Teacher in charge of Mathematics**

## 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.

### 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.

### 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 10 <sup>th</sup> February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individual 11+ Meetings for Year 5 Parents</li><li>• Year 5 Netball Tournament (Home)</li></ul>
Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• KS2 Music Assembly</li></ul>
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• KS2 Music Assembly Part 2</li></ul>
<b>Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025 SCHOOL CLOSSES AT USUAL TIME FOR HALF TERM</b>	
<b>Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February CHILDREN RETURN</b>	
Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• KS1 Music Assembly</li><li>• Year 5 Netball Tournament</li></ul>
Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 11+ Information Meeting for Parents with children Year 3 – 5 (Information to come)</li></ul>
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Year 5 Mass</li></ul>

Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 3 and 4 Mixed Football (Home)</li> <li>• Westminster Junior Citizenship Scheme for Year 6</li> </ul>
Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interhouse Pancake Challenge</li> </ul>
Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 5 and 6 Girls Football (Away)</li> <li>• Year 6 Netball Tournament (Away)</li> </ul>
Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 6 Lent Mass</li> </ul>
Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 5 A and B Netball Fixture (Away)</li> </ul>
Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 5 and 6 Mixed Football Fixture (Home)</li> </ul>
<b>Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Open Morning for Prospective Parents</b></li> </ul>
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 1 St Patrick Mass</li> </ul>
Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 6A and B Netball</li> </ul>
Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 5 and 6 Cross Country</li> </ul>
Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 3 Coffee Morning</li> </ul>
Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 6 Girls Football Tournament</li> </ul>
Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 3 First Reconciliation</li> <li>• Nearly New Uniform Sale</li> </ul>
Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KS2 House Quiz</li> </ul>
Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year 5 and 6 Cross Country</li> </ul>

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March**  
**SCHOOL CLOSSES AT MIDDAY FOR THE END OF TERM**

**Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April**

## 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/>**