

Bulletin

Friday 7th March 2025

Dear Parents.

I will start with an apology. This bulletin piece is a long one, again, but I wanted to take the time to reflect properly on some of the conversations I have had with parents over the past few weeks as well as share some personal reflections from the Society of Heads Conference I have recently returned from.

It also feels fitting that this bulletin comes at the beginning of Lent, a season of reflection and preparation.

Traditionally, Lent is often seen as the season of 'giving stuff up', however I feel that it is just as important to see it as a time to focus on what truly matters. It invites us to strip away distractions, pause, and make space for growth, both as individuals and as a community.

Lent is also about intention. It calls us to examine the choices we make, reflect on what is essential, and consider how we can be better: better in our relationships, in our generosity, in the way we listen, and in how we live out our values. In many ways, this mirrors what we are doing with our Teaching and Learning Review this term (more on this next week). It is not just about improvement for the sake of it. It is about clarity of purpose - reflecting honestly on what we do well, what we could do better, and how we ensure that every decision we make serves the long-term flourishing of our children.

Lent is also not a solitary journey. It is about walking together. Just as this season reminds us of the importance of community, shared purpose, and action, we too are thinking carefully about how we grow together as a school; deepening learning, strengthening relationships, and ensuring that the education we provide is rich, purposeful, and fully human.

I would like to take a moment to warmly welcome Ms Khalique to Saint Christina's. Ms Khalique has joined our team as maternity cover in our Reception AN Class, and I know you will all help make her feel at home in our wonderful community.

I am also delighted to share the joyful news that Ms Nunes has welcomed a beautiful baby boy! Both mum and baby are doing well. I am sure you will all join me in sending our heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Ms Nunes and her family during this incredibly special time.

Technology and Learning: How do we find the right balance?

Recently I have had some brilliant conversations with parents about the use of technology in the classroom. It is one of those topics that divides the crowd. Some will want more, or different, and some will want less. Some love tradition, others embrace innovation. What matters most to us is our why, so that we are clear about why we make the choices we do.

There is no doubt that when used wisely, technology enhances learning. It can support independent thinking, give children access to a wealth of knowledge, and help teachers to personalise learning. I have seen it used in creative ways to consolidate knowledge, reinforce key concepts, and encourage deeper engagement. It allows children to work at their own pace, revisit tricky concepts, and extend their learning in creative ways. In the right hands, technology can be an incredible tool for developing curiosity and confidence.

It would also be foolish to ignore the other side of the debate, we also need to be intentional about how we use technology. Jonathan Haidt, in *The Anxious Generation*, argues that childhood has been rewired, with screens replacing real world interactions. He and others have linked this shift to increased anxiety, stress, and social fragility in young people. I think if you asked a teacher who has been in this profession for a while, the vast majority would tell you that concentration spans have decreased significantly. Schools that have introduced one to one devices often report higher levels of distraction, reduced focus, and a decline in face-to-face communication, and the data supports this. Governments are stepping in too. Denmark has recently announced a ban on mobile phones in schools and after school clubs, recognising the negative impact of excessive screen time. Educators and policymakers are realising that while technology has its place, it must be managed with care.

In a talk I attended this week, Dr Aric Sigman spoke about what he calls radical traditionalism: the idea that the things that are best for children are timeless and, more often than not, free. Sitting with a real book, having unstructured time to think, reflect, and imagine. Playing outside. Engaging in deep, meaningful conversations. We need to ensure that we are preserving the experiences that truly help children to flourish. At Saint Christina's, we want to lead young people towards a healthy future, one that balances the best of modern technology with the things that are timeless and truly matter.

Eudaemonia and Flourishing in Education

At the heart of this discussion is something deeper than the practicalities of technology or the structure of our curriculum. It is about what kind of life we want our children to live. The ancient Greeks had a word for this: eudaemonia. It is often translated as happiness, but it means much more than that. It is about flourishing; living a life of meaning, purpose, and virtue. A life where children develop their character, their relationships, and their understanding of the world, not just their ability to pass tests or use a device. This is what we want for the children at Saint Christina's. Not just success but flourishing. A school experience that gives them the skills, knowledge, and character to step into the world with a sense of purpose and joy.

Open Day – 12 March

If you love this school as much as I do, I would love you to help us spread the word. Our Open Day is on 12th March, and I want as many people as possible to experience the uniqueness of Saint Christina's. If you agree that we have something special here, please tell your friends and help us to spread the word.

Reflections from the Society of Heads Conference

The Society of Heads Conference in Bristol was a welcome opportunity to hear from leading thinkers in education and leadership. It was also a chance for me to reflect on what makes Saint Christina's special and how we continue to shape our approach in a way that feels true to our values.

One of the most thought-provoking talks was given by Jamie Hayes, who spoke about the human side of leadership in an increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous world. He asked: *How do we prepare children for a future we cannot predict? How do we make sure we do not lose sight of what really matters in the noise?* This connects closely with our work on critical thinking and metacognition. We do not want children who simply absorb

knowledge. We want them to understand how to learn, how to challenge ideas, how to recognise their own thought processes, and how to approach problems with independence and curiosity.

Another word I came across at the conference that I now love is 'belongingness'. We are social creatures, and all have a need to be part of something bigger than ourselves, to share an identity and a purpose. That is what I think makes Saint Christina's special. Ours is a School where children and colleagues support one another, listen to each other, and recognise that living, learning, and leading are shared experiences.

Gavin Esler, the BBC broadcaster and journalist, also spoke at the conference about what he learned from interviewing world leaders. His talk, based on his book *Lessons from the Top*, explored how the most influential figures frame their narratives and communicate their vision. His talk was not about leadership as a set of personal qualities, but about how great leaders tell their stories in a way that makes people believe in what they stand for. It was fascinating to reflect on this in the context of education. What story do we want to tell about Saint Christina's? What do we want our children to believe about themselves?

A recurring theme at the conference was technology and its role in education. Dr Aric Sigman whom I referenced earlier reminded us that while technology evolves, children do not change as quickly as we think they do. Their needs remain the same. This is where the challenge lies. We want to lead young people towards a future that prepares them. One that balances the best of modern technology with the things that are timeless and truly matter. We need to be clear about why we use technology and ensure it enhances learning without taking away from the fundamental experiences of childhood like play, conversation, imagination, and deep thinking.

A Final Thought

Education is not just about preparing children for their next steps, but for their whole lives. We want them to leave us with knowledge and skills, but also with a deep sense of who they are, what they believe in, and how they can make a difference. As we move through Lent, I encourage all of us, children, colleagues, and parents, to take this opportunity to reflect on what truly matters. What do we want more of? What do we need to step back from? And how do we continue to create a community where every child flourishes in mind, body, and spirit?

That is why in the next chapter of our story, I want us to think carefully about every decision we make. That is why we will always put our children, their character, and their spiritual and emotional wellbeing at the heart of everything we do.

Have a good weekend when it comes.

Best,

Damien Walshe Headteacher

Janie Walle

RSE Policy Review

We are currently reviewing our Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy. As part of our commitment to parental consultation, we invite you to review the policy and share any feedback you may have. If you have any comments or suggestions, please email me at dburke@saintchristinas.org.uk by Friday 14th March. You can access the policy here: https://www.saintchristinas.org.uk/assets/Documents/Attachments/RSE-Policy-v2.pdf

Mr Burke

The Passage Assembly

This week, Anna from The Passage visited our school to talk about homelessness and the challenges faced by those without a safe place to live. She helped the children understand why people become homeless and the difficulties they experience. The children also learned about the vital support The Passage provides, including food, clothing, medical care, and help with housing and jobs.

Anna encouraged the children to think about how they can help and show kindness to those in need. A huge thank you to Anna for delivering such an important message. We look forward to supporting The Passage - please see an update from our Caritas Ambassadors below.



Mr Burke

Caritas Ambassadors Bake Sale for The Passage

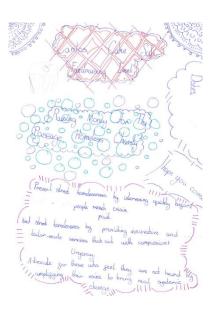
On Wednesday, Anna from *The Passage* visited us to talk about the incredible work they do to support homeless people. We learned about the challenges faced by those without a home and how small acts of kindness can make a big difference.

To help raise money for this important charity, we are holding a Bake Sale on Thursday 27th March in the school hall. There will be lots of delicious cakes and treats available for a small donation.

https://superkind.org/campaign/saint-christinas-caritas-fundraiser-for-the-passage

We hope you will come along, enjoy some cake, and help us support *The Passage*!

Caritas Ambassadors and Charity Prefects



Yoga Club

The Reception children have been working hard in their Yoga Classes, learning new yoga poses and partner poses, and they also did a fantastic job rolling up their mats!

















Ms Edina – Reception TA

Cooking Club

In the past few weeks, the children have been busy making veggie burgers, banana oat cake, and heart shape pastry. The children were experimenting with new tastes and textures, including having a fruit-tasting session too!

They also had fun mixing and pouring ingredients, and had the opportunity to smell and touch different fresh herbs.





















Ms Edina - Reception TA

Year 1

Year 1 have been enjoying the story 'Flat Stanley' by Jeff Brown.

This is a story about an ordinary boy who gets flattened by a bulletin board hanging in his room. To his surprise, Stanley discovers that he can do many things, like sliding under doors and mailing himself to faraway places. We have each cut out and decorated our own' Stanley's', who have now been posted and are on their way around the world.





We look forward to finding out about where they have visited and learning about different places from friends and family. Keep an eye out after the Easter break for another update!

Ms Higgins - Year 1 Class Teacher

World Book Day with Year 1



It has been a wonderful and exciting World Book Day in Year 1. We enjoyed the special assembly in the morning, before taking part in a 'guess the story' quiz and each writing a description of our favourite characters. We enjoyed the sunshine with our Year 4 buddies as we shared our stories and designed bookmarks to bring home.











Year 2

It's been a brilliant week in Year 2! As part of their RE learning, they acted out three of Jesus' miracles: *The Healing of the Ten Lepers, The Feeding of the 5,000*, and *The Healing of the Paralysed Man*. Through drama, they explored what happened in each story and reflected on their deeper meanings.

The class was also visited by Ellie from Holroyd Howe, who spoke to them about nutrition and healthy eating. The children had the opportunity to ask questions and think about how to make good food choices.

As part of Careers Week, they were also visited by Mrs Murchie, who spoke about her job as a radiographer, giving them a fascinating insight into the world of healthcare. A big thank you to her for coming in and sharing her expertise!





On World Book Day, Year 2 enjoyed celebrating their favourite books and characters, sharing stories, and taking part in book-themed activities. They also spent time with their buddies, sharing the joy of reading together.

It's been a fantastic week of learning and fun!

Mr Burke - Head of KS1 and Year 2 Class Teacher

Year 4

Year 4 have enjoyed a busy week, with visits from multiple parents sharing their experiences for Careers Week, a visit from Ellie the Nutritionist, Anna from The Passage teaching us about the amazing work they are doing, and World Book Day!

We raced against the clock during the Pancake Day challenge, started designing our rainforest dioramas in Art & Design Technology and thought of ways we spread kindness for Lent. We learned about the pros and cons of deforestation in Geography, and practised drawing and reading graphs in Maths.









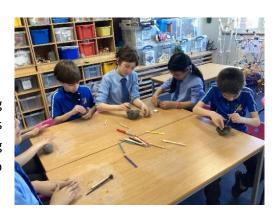




Ms Farquhar – Year 4 Class Teacher

Year 5 Get Creative with Monet-Inspired Clay Water Lilies!

This week in Art, Year 5 have been channelling their inner Monet, using clay to create beautiful water lily tea light holders inspired by his famous paintings. The children explored different moulding techniques, learning how to shape, smooth, and refine their designs to bring their lilies to life.





With careful attention to detail and a splash of creativity, they sculpted delicate petals and textured leaves, capturing the essence of Monet's impressionist style. We can't wait to see their finished pieces once they're painted and ready to shine!

Fantastic work, Year 5!





Ms O'Leary - Year 5 Class Teacher

Year 6 Week

This week has been packed with excitement for Year 6! The children have begun rehearsals for the Passion Play, which they will perform at the end of term — a special highlight of their final year at the School. They also enjoyed taking part in the House Pancake Competition, showing great teamwork and flipping skills!

As you know, Year 6 have been working hard on their *F1 in Schools* project. Unfortunately, the London competition they were due to attend was cancelled. However, with the children's dedication to the project in mind, Mr Hirst and I quickly sought out an alternative — securing a place at the Bath Regional Final instead! This led to the exciting organisation of an overnight STEM trip.

We set off early on Wednesday morning, heading first to Aerospace Bristol, where the children explored the history of aviation and took part in an engaging workshop where they made rockets and even blasted them into space! We were so fortunate to "bump" into Mr Walshe who was on his way back from his conference and came to see us!

At Aerospace we also got to step on board Concorde and learnt all about the luxurious journey. From there, we travelled to We The Curious in Bristol to watch a planetarium show and create our own water cycles in a science lab.



We spent time doing lots of different activities in a curiosity lab. After a busy day of learning, we enjoyed a delicious dinner at a restaurant before making our way to Bath for the night.

On Thursday, we woke up bright and early, ready for an exciting day at the University of Bath for the F1 in Schools Regional Finals. After a delicious breakfast, we headed to the competition where our four teams — **The Racing Minions** (Apolline, Alexander, Isabella, and Nuriddin), **The Chasing Cheetahs** (Aoife, Sophie, Giulio, and Juliana), **Lightning Bolts** (Alice, Hugo, Milana, and Momoka), and **Wings of Speed** (Sebastian, Alex, Yumi, and Edda) — set up their incredible pit stop displays. The creativity on show was fantastic, with teams baking biscuits, making meringues, and even incorporating helium balloons as part of their displays!

Each team followed a busy schedule throughout the day, which included delivering a verbal presentation, racing their car, and discussing their portfolios with judges and experts. They also had the chance to design their own racing jumpsuits and helmets — a real highlight of the day.

At the awards ceremony, our teams' hard work and dedication were truly rewarded:

- **Fastest Car** The Racing Minions
- 🙎 Best Pit Stop Display Wings of Speed
- Best Verbal Presentation Lightning Bolts
- Sponsorship and Marketing Award Wings of Speed
- Team Identity Award The Racing Minions
- Future Vision Award The Chasing Cheetahs
- **Best Engineered Car** Wings of Speed

A huge congratulations to **The Chasing Cheetahs**, who came **third overall**, and **Wings of Speed**, who were crowned **Regional Champions!** Both teams have been invited to compete at the **National Finals in two weeks' time** — an incredible achievement!

It was a fantastic experience, and every team should feel so proud of what they have achieved.

Mrs Ellisdon - Head of KS2 and Year 6 Class Teacher

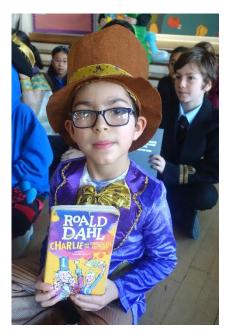
World Book Day

This week, the School has been buzzing with excitement as we celebrated World Book Day and welcomed the annual Book Fair. The children's costumes on Thursday were fantastic — from classic characters to modern favourites — bringing stories to life across the School.

Year 5 led a brilliant assembly, reminding us all of the importance of reading and the joy that books can bring. Throughout the day, classes spent time with their buddies, sharing stories and taking part in book-related activities.

The Book Fair has been hugely popular, with children enjoying browsing the shelves and choosing new stories to take home. Many of the orders have already been delivered, but as we only receive a small number of each title, any additional books have been ordered and will be delivered to your child early next week.

Thank you for your support in making this such a special week and for helping to inspire a love of reading in all our children!













PE Update

It has been lovely to see the sun shining this week, and the children have continued to impress me with their hard work and efforts during their PE lessons. Spring has arrived, bringing with it a renewed energy from the children. The children have continued to impress with their enthusiasm and dedication in PE lessons.

On Monday, our Year 3 and 4 Football teams performed brilliantly, securing three fantastic victories against Ivy House in what were three very competitive matches. The scores were 3-2, 6-0, and 4-2 and the children should be proud of an incredible performance all around. A big congratulations to Ari, Alejandro, and Noah, who were awarded Star Players for their outstanding efforts.

On Wednesday, a team of Year 4 and 5 girls took part in a Football tournament hosted by Cavendish, competing against 10 other schools. Despite playing against Year 6 teams from other schools, our girls showed immense determination and skill. They finished 7th overall, with a couple of losses and two hard-fought draws. A huge well done to all the girls who participated, and a special mention to Isabella, who was named Star Player for her fantastic performance with some very strong defending and tackling throughout the event.



Today, the Year 5 and 6 girls took part in another Football tournament hosted by Regents Park. I will be updating you on their performance in next week's bulletin.

In PE lessons this week, our classes have continued to develop their understanding of Tag Rugby. The focus has been on improving passing techniques and finding effective ways to defend and attack. The sessions have been both fun and educational, with lots of teamwork and skill-building. It's great to see everyone making progress and enjoying Tag Rugby.

It's been an action-packed week, and I'm incredibly proud of all our children and their continued efforts and determination in their PE lessons.

Upcoming Fixtures

Date	Opposition	Team	Time
Monday 10th March	Devonshire House	Year 5A and B Girls Netball	16.00-17.00
Tuesday 11th March	Trevor Roberts	Year 5/6 Mixed Football	16.00-17.01
Monday 17th March	St Mary's	Year 6A and B Girls Netball	16.00-17.00
Thursday 20th March	Devonshire House	Year 6 Girls Football tournament	13.00-15.30

Inter House Pancake Challenge

In addition to our usual sporting events, the entire School took part in the highly anticipated Inter-House Pancake Challenge. Every child participated by completing an obstacle course while carefully carrying a pancake in a frying pan. The course was filled with exciting challenges, including balancing on benches, crawling through tunnels, and

zig-zagging through cones. To make things even more fun, the children had to complete 3 pancake flips before crossing the finish line!

The children were timed based on how long it took them to complete the entire course, and it was fantastic to see so many of them demonstrating excellent balance, agility, and speed. It was a wonderful way to bring everyone together in an attempt to earn points for their Houses.

Nursery









Reception









Year 1









Year 2







Year 3









Year 4









Year 5







Year 6









A huge well done to Azuha, Octavia, Misha, Raphael, and Pia, who were the fastest to complete the course in their classes. Your speed and skill were impressive. Special congratulations must go to Eduardo, Adrian, and Alice B, who were the fastest in their Key Stage and were awarded a special medal for their fantastic performance. It was also lovely to see so many staff attempting the course with Mr Burke finishing in a close second place behind Mr Raveney.

The average time to complete the course by each House for each Year group were added together, the overall winners of the Inter-House Pancake Challenge were Saint Francis House, completing the course in the shortest total time across the whole school. Congratulations to Saint Francis for their amazing teamwork and determination.

Saint Cecilia	Saint Francis	Saint Joan of Arc
40.9 Seconds	36.9 Seconds	38.1 Seconds
3rd	1st	2nd

It was such a fun and competitive event. Thank you to our House captains for their help in organising and running the event.

Mr Raveney - Director of Sport

Art at Saint Christina's

Year 2 Bake UK-Shaped Shortbread!

This week, our Year 2 children put their baking skills to the test by making delicious shortbread biscuits from scratch! As they have been learning all about the UK, they gave their biscuits a special twist—shaping them like the United Kingdom.

It was a fun and tasty way to combine Geography with their Design and Technology lesson!





Year 3 Explore Volcanoes Through Art!

This week, our Year 3 children have been busy learning all about volcanoes and exploring how different artists, such as Nick Rowland and Andy Warhol, have depicted them in the past.

They discovered various artistic techniques and even put the splattering technique into practice to create their own explosive artwork. A fantastic blend of creativity and Science.

Year 6 Bring North American Landscapes to Life!

This week, our Year 6 children have been putting their knowledge of rivers and North American landscapes into practice through an exciting new project. They have begun creating a special school display from scratch, starting with a flowing river made from textiles.

In the coming lessons, they will design and craft the rest of the display until it transforms into a stunning North American landscape. We can't wait to see the final masterpiece!







Ms Bretones - Art Teacher

Saint Christina's Partners With and Resilience

Thank you to those who have already taken part in the andResilience Parent Survey. Your feedback is invaluable as we work to strengthen resilience within our school community.



If you haven't yet had a chance to complete the survey, we would love to hear from you! It's completely anonymous and takes just five minutes to complete. The insights gathered will help shape the support we offer to pupils, staff, and parents alike.

Your voice matters, and we truly appreciate your time in helping us make the most of this partnership.

Click here to take the survey: Parent Survey

Thank you for your support!

Mr Burke - Head of Wellbeing

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 7 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's 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 Community and Participation.



As human beings, we are called to live in community, with others, growing together and flourishing as a result. We are called to be active members of society, our local and global community. Observing the reality of the world, remembering that first guideline of the dignity of all people, supporting one another and recognising how our gifts and talents could be used to the advantage of the wider community. We can't just sit back and bemoan what's happening, whether in our own parish and community, society, or the world. We are called to get our hands dirty, to get involved, to help build a better world. We're all called to put love into action. These lessons help children to understand the role we all must play in creating a fair society and strong communities.

Mr Burke

Fr Terry's Food Bank

We believe, at Saint Christina's, 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 half 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 Friday 21st March.

Thank you for your support with this cause.

Mr Burke, Caritas Ambassadors and Charity Prefect



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

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

Dates for your diary			
Monday 10 th March	 Y5 A and B Netball Fixture (Away) Science week 		
Tuesday 11 th March	Y5 and Y6 Mixed Football Fixture (Home)		
Wednesday 12 th March	Open Morning for Prospective Parents		
Friday 14 th March	 Y4 Trip Y1 Saint Patrick Mass 		
Monday 17 th March	 VR Science Workshops Y6 A and B Netball Neurodiversity Celebration Week 		
Wednesday 19 th March	Y3 Coffee Morning		
Thursday 20 th March	Y6 Girls Football Tournament		

Friday 21st March	 World Poetry Day Y3 First Reconciliation LFB Visiting EYFS Nearly New Uniform Sale
Wednesday 26 th March	Westminster Junior Citizenship Scheme for Year 6
Thursday 27 th March	Y5 and Y6 Cross Country

Friday 28th March SCHOOL CLOSES AT MIDDAY FOR THE END OF TERM

Wednesday 23rd 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/