



St Catharine's Catholic Primary School

Christmas Message

On behalf of the staff as well, I would like to extend very best wishes to all parts of our school family as we break up for Christmas. We hope it will be a happy and peaceful time for many. We are also mindful of the families within our community who will find Christmas particularly tough this year, and you are in our thoughts and prayers even more at this time.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the dedicated staff of St Catharine's School. They are working tirelessly for the children, during evenings and weekends as well, and making a positive difference in so many ways.

We are also lucky to have such tremendous volunteers connected with the school:

Governors working late into the evening and often unsung; Parents who are volunteering in classes/ listening to readers/making amazing cakes for the cake sale; 'Friends of St Catharine's' who provide invaluable funds and bring the school together at special events- 'fun raising whilst fund-raising.'

Thank you to you all for your support of our school, and generosity. Mrs Welch

Mini Marines

Children have been training outside, whatever the weather, and have been able to build up their fitness, resilience and team-work in a new and exciting way. The next class to have this opportunity will be Dover Class in the Spring Term! (JW)

Thursday mornings, for twelve weeks, Noel Class has been having a training session with the Marines, doing physically and mentally challenging exercises. We have had to complete an obstacle course, set cotton wool on fire to toast marshmallows, and have built shelters. There has been a lot of physical activities too – press-ups, star jumps, jumping jacks and running. We all think this was an exciting and fun experience but tough at times. Charlie S (Y6)



St Catharine's Remembers... Noah (Wilson) and Zach (Brook) laid the school wreath at Chipping Campden Remembrance Parade. All children were a credit to their families and school.

New Year Resolutions

We have been exploring Pope Francis' call for appropriate care of our common home through 'Laudato Si.' The children have had some amazing ideas for how to reduce wasting paper and as part of this, in the new year we will be requesting, once again, contact email addresses for parents so that we communicate more via email, and with letters displayed in hall windows and on the website, with a text message indicating the presence of the communication.

Advance notice... Space Camp

The tents, sleeping bags and massive telescope are ready and 'Space Camp' will soon be coming to St Catharine's! We have become the cluster lead for the project and are excited that we will be stargazing in 2019. This will be an exciting way to support the coverage of the Primary Science Curriculum.

November Attendance

1st Brook
98.75%

2nd Ashbee
97.95%

3rd Dover
97.8%

4th Noel
97.30%

5th Greene
96.25%

6th Wilson
95.90%

Curriculum News

At St Catharine's we are proud that we are still striving to deliver a broad and balanced Curriculum for the children, despite the high standards expected in English and Maths.

This term has concluded with every child in the school having the opportunity to perform to large audiences, enabling children to showcase their talents, develop new skills, build their confidence and create special memories:

Greene Class

Our Reception pupils performed 'Away in a Manger' in St Catharine's Church. Every child spoke out and all sang seven hymns together. The level of confidence was incredible after only one term at school.

Brook and Ashbee Classes

Y1 and Y2 pupils performed 'The Sleepy Shepherd' in the school hall. All children were involved and spoke, sang, danced and entertained with a wonderful professionalism for their ages!

Year 3 and 4 - 'The Christmas Truce'

Children marked the symbolic moment of peace during the 'Christmas Truce' of 1914, through a poignant performance of drama and song. This moving sketch built on the school's commemoration of the centenary of the end of World War One.

Years 5 and 6 - 'Born to Give them Second Birth'

Our oldest children had the most incredible opportunity to perform a specially composed Nativity written by St Catharine's Church organist, and professional musician, Charles Matthews- see www.charlesmatthews.co.uk. The piece is the most challenging we have attempted and the children have been fortunate to work with both Mrs Lovelock and Charles Matthews. In terms of music, children sang in three part harmonies, and instrumentalists at school all had sections of the piece written for them especially.

Chaplaincy Team Commissioning

On Friday 30th November, Chaplaincy representatives from each KS2 class attended the commissioning service at Clifton Cathedral. Children met with over 900 other child chaplains from across the diocese and children had the opportunity to speak with other, share experiences, receive badges and make promises to bring the 'Year of Prayer' back to the school community. Children pledged to lead the 'Children's Mission Prayer' each day at school. Please join in with this on the playground each morning:

May all the children
In the world
Share love
Share friendship
In the peace
Of God's love
Now and forever

Children were shown a large Lampedusa Cross. This was a model of a cross originally made by Francesco Tuccio, a carpenter from the small Italian island of Lampedusa, in 2013. When hundreds of refugees drowned off the coast of Lampedusa, Tuccio was moved to gather the driftwood from the wrecked boats and turn them into crosses, which he offered to survivors as a symbol of hope. Canon Bosco used this symbol in his homily, and at the end of the service he said; "This cross is entrusted to you. As it moves round each of our schools in turn, I hope it will remind you that we need to work to bring justice and hope to our world, to remember that God walks with us, even in difficult times, and of our need to pray," The cross will move over the next few months around all the schools in the diocese, becoming a focal point for prayer, and will arrive at St Catharine's in May 2019.

GOVERNOR NEWS

All committees have met this half-term. Governors have continued with their whole board training; A number of areas of school life have been monitored, including English, Maths, RE, website, Special Educational Needs, Pupil Premium spending and Finance.

Governors are benefiting from the expertise of Christine Richmond as an Associate Governor; she works as a 'School Improvement Partner' to schools in Tower Hamlets. Governors were delighted to welcome Paddy Sexton, former St Catharine's pupil and current Secondary School Teacher, to join the Governors.

Greene Class 'On Tour'

Work is due to start on the new and safer entrance to school on Monday 7th January. To minimise the length of disruption and to ensure all appropriate health and safety measures are in place, Greene Class will be going 'on tour,' as described by Mr Ellacott, to a temporary classroom situated on the playground. Children will return to their usual classroom, and then move within the early stages of the project.

Paper Chain Challenge

Y1-6 participated in the 'Paper Chain' challenge this Advent. Quite simply, each child had to make the longest possible paper chain out of a single (scrap!) piece of paper, in only one hour. Competition was tough and the winners were as follows...

Brook- Alex J- 1.70 m
 Ashbee- Ermione- 4.02 m
 Wilson- Sophie H- 6.75m
 Dover- Ed R- 7.78m
 Noel- Gemma - 7.5m

Thank you to all of the children for providing paper chain decorations for the school and to Mrs Bennett for organising this D/T Challenge. Congratulations to overall winner Ed!

The Origins of the Crib

A long time ago there was man called St Francis of Assisi and he put together a real-life crib scene with real people. It was in his friend's cave and it was to show the meaning of Christmas. All the people came up the side of the mountain with their lit stick torches. (They had flaming sticks because they didn't have electricity or electronics back then.) St Francis even brought some animals. When the people got there, and St Francis of Assisi told them the story of Jesus' birth, they understood him.

Evie P (Y2)

Tag Rugby Tournament

In the cluster tag-rugby tournament, St. Catharine's Yellow Team won the whole event! Meanwhile other teams from St Catharine's got to the semi-finals and quarter finals. St. Catharine's Yellow was actually not undefeated as they played St. Catharine's Green Team and Green Team won, with Oscar and Bertie scoring a try each. However the overall winning team was the one with the most tries and St. Catharine's Yellow Team scored the most tries.

In the group stage St. James Red played St. James Green and Green won but they didn't go further even though they qualified. St. Catharine's Green played St. James Yellow and drew in the quarter final. Bertie and Ed R scored. In the semi-final St. Catharine's Blue played St. James Blue and St. Catharine's won. Liam, Emma and Charlie scored. The St. Catharine's Yellow Team played Blockley in the final. The final score was 2-2 in a very tight final. As it was a draw, I suggested that the next try should win the tournament. I scored the final try by running diagonally and slid in for the try!

Daniel S (Y5)

Christmas Fair Update

A massive 'Thank You' to 'Friends of St Catharine's for planning and running such a super event for the wider community. Over £3,000 was raised, to the credit of the hard-working tea, and these funds will be targeted towards upgrading computing resources at school. This support is absolutely invaluable. It was incredibly impressive that Father Christmas was booked, and his grotto, complete with staff elves was a real delight.

SPRING INFORMATION BRIEFINGS

Parents from Greene and Brook Classes are invited to attend a Storytime **Phonics** briefing on **Wednesday 16th January at 3.30pm**. A crèche for pre-schoolers and pupils will be provided by Mrs Robinson and Miss Harding.

There will be an opportunity for parents to learn about the school's new '**Behaviour Policy**' on Tuesday 5th February.

