

# Newsletter

## Weekly news at St Christopher's



Dear Parents,

Christmas is such a magical time of the year, with the excitement and anticipation of the season bringing a feeling of unity and belonging – and I always think the Nativity play

is a huge part of the excitement. I enjoyed every part of “Prickly Hay” this week when I watched both casts perform on Wednesday. This inventive retelling of the nativity story (including a very catchy song which wouldn’t be out of place on Strictly Come Dancing!) was a great way to link all the age groups in the Pre-Prep together and enable them to learn from one another: I hope the younger children were inspired by watching the older ones, and the older ones enjoyed supporting their younger counterparts. Mrs Gay, Mrs Wooderson, and the Pre-Prep team of staff are to be congratulated on a successful show!

Our annual Parent Survey went out on Thursday. If you missed the link, it can be accessed here: <https://forms.gle/LNZBN9kjmLv1JLxw5>

You may remember I started this when I arrived at the School last year. I believe that parental involvement is a great thing, and it is important to capture your feedback. I hope the feedback will not only help you contribute positively to your child’s learning experience, but will also provide useful insights for us that may otherwise go unnoticed. We ask that these be completed over the Christmas period, before we return to school, in the New Year. However, as useful as these surveys are, nothing beats old fashioned face to face communication. Therefore, if there are areas regarding the School that you feel strongly about or have issue with, rather than use the survey, please come and see me, as I will be happy to discuss this with you. My door is always open and this is bound to be more fruitful for everyone.

We held our parents’ evening, on Monday and Tuesday this week, where we provided an extended fifteen minute slot per meeting, as we started last year. I hope you feel that the longer face-to-face time with your child’s teachers is useful. I want

to remind you that parents’ evenings are an update on progress and hopefully should not contain any surprises. Throughout the year, if you become aware of an issue, don’t wait for a parents’ evening to roll around - contact the School as soon as possible and make an appointment with the relevant staff to discuss it specifically. By the same token, the School will let you know of any issues, and work with you to deal with them as they arise. Finally, remember that it’s rarely helpful to compare your child’s performance to other members of the class, year group, or a single mark or assessment - what’s important is that they are achieving in line with their own capabilities, not those of others.

We look forward to seeing you for “St Chris in the Hall” on Monday. The Christmas Fair always requires a lot of preparation earlier in the year, so I am very grateful to the SCA, as always, for their hard work, creativeness and logistical know-how. Having the fair within the school week has also been very well received, by staff and parents alike. The main reason for any event at this time of year is to feel part of a community, and I know the staff have appreciated having greater chance to be involved with it not being at the weekend. Please note, because the entrance to the fair will be via the main gate, the pupils will be dismissed from other exits (see timings outlined below)

Finally, I am delighted to say that our 3-D virtual tour is now live on our website. This provides an opportunity to explore our school from the comfort of your own home, and will be very useful for prospective parents prior to their visit on an Open Morning. You can take a peek by going to the website. The link is here: <https://www.stchristophersthehall.org.uk/admissions/virtual-tour/>.

Let me know your thoughts.

Enjoy your weekend. Our last day is next Tuesday, so please do note the earlier time of dismissal for pupils on this day, outlined below.

Mr Carter  
**Head**

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### Year 3

On Friday 2nd December, Year 3 came to school dressed in their best Egyptian attire, ready for a fabulous day of learning and fun linked to their Humanities topic: 'Ancient Egypt'.

The children enjoyed learning a dance to some Egyptian music as part of their PE lesson and were able to show off their best moves and twist to the rhythm of the music. Thank you to the PE Department for organising this fun session!

They also had to put construction hats ready to build pyramids. Using sugar cubes and their times-tables knowledge, the children built their pyramids with a 6x6 base, gradually building up until they reached 1x1 (the top!) It was clear to see that we have lots of budding builders in Year 3!

Next on the agenda was a mummification ceremony - only not the kind you would imagine. The children followed the steps they have learnt in class to mummify a body, only with a tomato! Though somewhat disgusted by the idea of removing the insides of a tomato, the children loved bringing the process to life. From watching the tomato 'dry out' in salt, to wrapping the tomato with an amulet using bandages, there was plenty to laugh about and enjoy!

At lunch time, Linda and the Harrison Catering team kindly put on a small tasting menu of food you might taste if you visited Egypt. On the menu were a variety of dishes including Hawawshi and fried cauliflower, with the real winner being the feta cheese balls. The children enjoyed tasting some different foods and we were so proud of how many of them were keen to try something new. Thank you to Linda and the Harrison Catering team for

providing this tasty culinary experience!

The day ended with an exciting game of 'Wrap the Mummy', where the children got to work in teams to wrap a member of their team in toilet roll. As you can see from the photos, it was great fun!

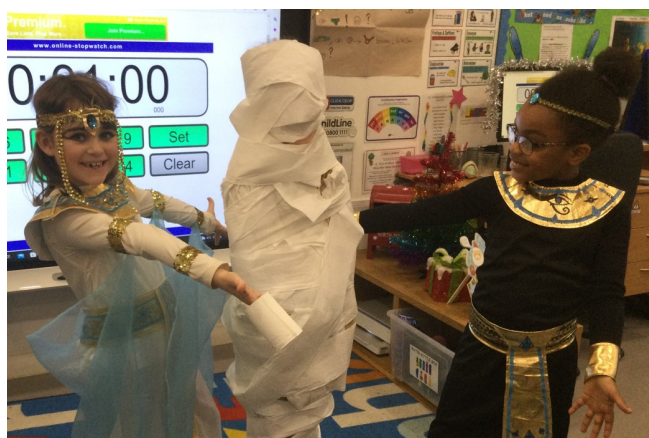
Some of the children's comments from the day:

**Evie:** *My favourite part of the day was when we mummified tomatoes because we actually got to wrap our tomato in real bandages.*

**Benji:** *I loved taking the insides out of my tomato, it felt really slimy and kind of gross.*

**Inez:** *I had lots of fun being wrapped up like a mummy by Fola and Emily. They covered me from head to toe and I couldn't see!*

**Monty:** *The feta cheese balls that Linda made for our Egyptian food menu tasted delicious. They were so soft and gooey. I wish I had a whole bowl of them!*



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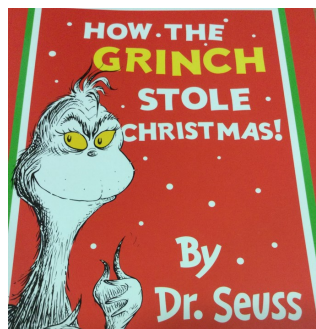
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### ECHO

#### *Book (Pre-Prep)*

We've been getting into the festive spirit and have been listening to Christmas stories such as, "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas". Last week, we carefully decorated our Christmas cards and this week we 'Christmasfied' the envelopes to make them merry and bright!



#### *Creative (Prep)*

This half term we have been thinking about Christmas! We started by sewing a cross stitch Christmas tree card which looks absolutely adorable. Even though we have threaded many needles and unravelled many tangles, the outcome is fabulous! The children have put a lot of effort into their cards and should be very proud of what they have achieved. The lucky recipients will indeed be thrilled. We also made some snowmen tree decorations which involved sewing felt together, stuffing them and then embellishing with details. They will look lovely when dangling from a Christmas tree. Fir cone Christmas trees were our last creation!



Well done to all our Creative Club participants - their perseverance and dedication on their projects should be applauded.

### Carol Service and Carol Singing

Congratulations to all our pupils for their part in our Carol Service, last Thursday. It was a beautiful start to our Christmas season. We are grateful to our Governor, Chris Martin, for taking an audio recording the service and this is available here:

<https://on.soundcloud.com/nVk5s>

We have separate recordings of the readings. If any of the readers' families would like these, please email Mrs. Gay, and she will sort the request.

A reminder from the Music Department that the Senior Choir will be Carol singing next Monday morning (12th) at 11.30am at St. George's Church - all are welcome. They will then be singing again in the afternoon at the opening of the School Fair around 3:15pm. School Uniform for the Choir on Monday, please!

### Pre-Prep Nativity

After months of preparation, our Pre-Prep nativity play, 'Prickly Hay', was performed to parents on Wednesday with great success. This charming adaptation of the nativity story, with its fun, hoedown flavour, was a real treat for our proud parents! Children performed with big smiles, enthusiastic singing and great expression. Well done to all the children who took part. YEE-HA!



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### Governors' news

The Governors held their termly meeting on 1 December. They considered the reports from all the subcommittees: Safeguarding, Education, Finance, Health and Safety and IT. They would like to thank all the staff who give up their time to attend these subcommittees and talk to us so insightfully on every aspect of school life.

The governors reviewed the School's plans to meet the cost pressures that are facing every organisation in the current economic climate, not least fuel costs, and are confident that the School has an effective and robust financial plan going forward. Now that the Preschool refurbishment is complete, we are considering our next steps to maintain and improve the fabric of the School buildings, as well as how to bring energy efficiency, recycling and green matters to the heart of what we do.

The Governors are also delighted to welcome Mr Tuki Rounds, Senior Deputy Head at Trinity School, Croydon, to the Board and look forward to the benefit of his experience contributing to our activity and planning in the future.

### Pupil success

We are delighted for Ethan (Year 6) and Nicole (Year 4), who took part in ISA National Swimming Championships on Saturday. Both pupils should be so proud of their achievements in the finals.

Last Sunday, Lottie (Year 5) represented Beckenham Swimming Club at the NUEL Late County Qualifier in the London Aquatic Centre, where the 2012 London Olympic Games swimming events were held. She swam in the Under 9s 50m butterfly and 50m breaststroke events and won a silver and bronze medal, respectively. Congratulations, Lottie - what an achievement!



### Charity Update

This term we have been busy thinking of others less fortunate than ourselves and, in addition to contributing goods to the local Food Bank for Harvest, we have raised a substantial sum of money for charity. October saw us raise £366.95 for Young Minds in aid of Mental Health and November £360 for the Poppy Appeal.

Last Thursday, in our 'annual charity voting assembly', we were inspired by presentations from our three Year 6 finalists. We heard from Zac, Otis and Wilfie supporting Cancer UK, Anya supporting Diabetes UK and Bella and Lexi supporting Freddie Farmer Foundation. The pupils voted, and Freddie Farmer Foundation was democratically chosen as the School charity for this academic year. All the finalists should be extremely proud of their hard work and representations in support of their chosen charity.

So far for Freddie Farmer we have raised £705 from our Carol Service and Nativity retiring collections and £60 from our Penny Post. We look forward to welcoming a representative from this charity in an assembly next year to tell us all more about the work they do to support children with disabilities. Thank you all for your continued generosity and support



### Black History Month and EDI

We have posted our bumper edition of Black History Month Celebrations and our work to date this academic year on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, on Google Classroom, together with some short videos for you to enjoy.

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### E-Safety Tip

With the Christmas holidays fast approaching, online and screen time of children may increase. With that in mind, please do check this resource around the PEGI system of rating games according to their content, not difficulty. There are five age ratings and eight content categories used. The British Board of Film Classification ceased to be the main provider of these ratings for video games some time ago, but may also restrict content in extreme cases with an age restriction certificate. The PEGI ratings give you some guidance and assurances of what your child may/may not be exposed to in playing a particular game.

<https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/mental-health-wellbeing/online-safety-wellbeing/video-game-age-restrictions/>

### Clubs

The parents' area of the School website now includes club information for Spring Term 2023. You will have received an email about this too, but please take the time to read the information and decide what clubs are suitable for your child. Look at how many clubs you are putting them in for and if they really want to be taking part.

We will not be able to constantly make changes. Once clubs are selected you will be charged for these even if you withdraw. Please take into consideration your child's Games Afternoon as these will be the afternoons when matches happen and therefore these will take priority. Refunds will not be given for clubs missed due to matches.

**All contact re: clubs** should be via: [clubs@stchristophersthehall.org.uk](mailto:clubs@stchristophersthehall.org.uk). Any other correspondence will not be responded to, this includes telephone calls to the office.

The Club booking form will be available on the School's website and go live on **Wednesday 14th December**

**PRE PREP AT 11am**

**PREP AT 11.30am**

Any queries please contact [clubs@stchristophersthehall.org.uk](mailto:clubs@stchristophersthehall.org.uk)

### St Chris in the Hall Monday 12th December

Our Christmas Fair is on Monday, and the Main Gate will open at 15:15. As such pupils will be dismissed from the following exits at the following times:

Preschool: 15:00 **SCAMPS Gate**  
Reception: 15:15 **Front Door**  
Years 1 & 2: 15:15 **SCAMPS Gate**  
Years 3 & 4: 15:45 **Front Door**  
Years 5 & 6: 15:45 **SCAMPS Gate**

### Dismissal on Tuesday 13th December

Remember that we finish earlier next week, on the last day of term: Tuesday 13th December.

The dismissal times are as follows:

**11.20** - Preschool from SCAMPS Gate  
**11.30** - Reception from the Front Door  
**11.40** - Year 1 & 2 from the Main Gate  
**11.50** - Year 3 & 4 from the Main Gate  
**12.00** - Year 5 & 6 from the SCAMPS Gate

### *What's Happening Next Week*

- Monday 12th December**
  - Christmas Fair
  - "St Chris in the Hall" (15:15-18:00)
- Tuesday 13th December**
  - Term ends (11:20-12:00)
  - please see specific times for your child's year group above

### *What's Going on Next Term*

- Monday 9h January**
  - Spring Term begins - Main Gate will open at 08:15am