

# Newsletter

## Weekly news at St Christopher's



Dear Parents,

Today is our 50th edition of our newsletter since I started this in September 2021. Fifty editions have gone very quickly, and I am so delighted that, each week, we can share such broad and exciting news about our school. Over the

past year and a half there has been much change, and I hope we can keep refining the education within our school to give the best to our pupils. I do hope the newsletter is useful, and entertaining each week, and I thank all parents for their support, encouragement and positivity with all that we do.

This week, we held our first Open Morning of the term, and as with every Open Morning we have held this year, it was very well attended. Our Open Mornings give prospective parents a sense of what the ethos and vision is at St Christopher's. We had lots of lovely compliments from the parents about the facilities, the

warmth they felt from the staff, and most importantly, how amazing they thought our pupils were. Needless to say, I am not surprised, as I think we have the most polite and well mannered pupils of any school I have worked in. You can be very proud of your child! Mrs Jeffery always mans the helm magnificently during these events, and I am grateful to her for all the work she does to make them so successful.

I wrote last week about our STEM drive, and we are currently putting the final touches to launch Design and Technology (DT) into our curriculum. This idea partly originated from a pupil in Mrs Morris' and Mrs Dodd's class; writing a persuasive letter urging me to look at how we can build DT opportunities into our curriculum, and from that we looked to see what we could do! Miss Leaf is leading on this initiative and she has been working to create a curriculum that compliments our Art curriculum, with the aim to ensure that all pupils:

- Develop the creative, technical and practical expertise needed to perform everyday tasks confidently and to participate successfully in an increasingly technological world,
- Build and apply a repertoire of knowledge, understanding and skills in order to design and make high-quality prototypes and products for a wide range of users,
- Critique, evaluate and test their ideas and products and the work of others,
- Understand and apply the principles of nutrition and learn how to cook.

During the summer term, pupils will experience their first DT unit, where we will look at food technology. In all year groups, we will teach our pupils to understand and apply the principles of a healthy and varied diet, prepare dishes using a range of techniques, and know where and how a variety of ingredients are grown, reared, caught and processed. DT will then be threaded into each term where

pupils will learn a range of skills and enable them to draw on their maths, science, engineering, computing and art skills, as well as helping pupils to become resourceful, innovative and enterprising. So watch this space for more exciting news.

And finally, this week...as you know, we are always looking to find new and varied ways of celebrating things within our school, and this year we have a particular reason to mark an event. Not only do we have the King's coronation in the Summer Term, but our school turns 130 years old! We have already got our thinking caps on about what we can do in school to celebrate this big birthday, but if any parents have any good ideas or inspiration, do let me know.

Have a lovely weekend.

Mr Carter

**Head Teacher**



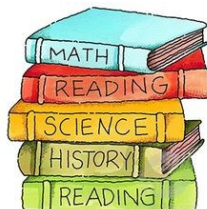
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### Curriculum Overviews

We wanted to draw you attention to our curriculum overviews which outline the content and key learning taught across each term in every year group. Our Curriculum overviews ensure that learning is sequenced, building ever upwards through the weeks, terms, years and key stages in terms of skills, knowledge and vocabulary. The curriculum webs for each year group, can be found in the parents area of the website, via this link:



<https://www.stchristophersthehall.org.uk/parents/curriculum-overview/spring/>

### Year 1

This term, Year 1 has been learning about the seasons and seasonal changes. We are recording the weather for the week. This involves measuring the rain fall and looking to see which way the wind is blowing. To help us to do this we have made a rain gauge and a weather vane.



### ECHO

#### Lego

This term, we have been focusing on the Character Values: Teamwork, Creativity and Adaptability. In our opening week, the children were asked to construct the tallest, free standing tower that could withstand wind. The tallest structure belonged to Giles and William (Year 6), standing at an impressive 90cm. All the other teams successfully completed the brief and were proud of their achievements.

*“Despite many challenges (including our tower tragically snapping in half), we persevered - ignoring the cacophony erupting from our competitor’s mouths – William and I were undeniably proud of what we achieved.” (Giles Year 6)*

*“My favourite part was when the teachers blew our tower; fortunately, it did not fall. I felt really proud of myself because I had to adapt and overcome challenges throughout the build.” (Micah Year 5)*



#### Table Tennis.

This term, the pupils in ECHO have focused on our forehand and backhand delivery across the table, trying to hit target areas. We have also been introducing battleship type games and competitions, whilst learning to keep a rally going with our opponents and finishing with a competitive match. The children are learning the rules of table tennis and how to umpire and score matches.



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### Parents' survey feedback and actions

Thank you to everyone who returned the annual parent questionnaire.

We are delighted by the responses and comments we received. You will hopefully see how these have been used in focusing our future developments for the year ahead. It is good to see that the hard work that goes on at school has been recognised. We very much rely on this process as a way of evaluating the performance of our school for the past year and have identified strengths along with aspects that we will continue to work together on develop.

We feel that it is important that the responses are fed back to you as parents, to keep you informed. The questionnaire is a real way for parents to be heard. Your comments are very helpful in focusing our future school developments to make further improvements.

**A few key headlines are as follows:**

95% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed the School's curriculum is broad and balanced,

92% agreed or strongly agreed the School has a positive, respectful culture in which the children are well cared for,

93% agreed or strongly agreed that the teaching at the school is good,

98% agreed or strongly agreed that staff are welcoming and approachable,

91% agreed or strongly agreed that the School meets the particular needs of my child,

89% agreed or strongly agreed the School values the views, wishes and feelings of parents,

90% agreed or strongly agreed that the School ensures that my child is well prepared for the future.



We also appreciate that there are always things that could be even better, and we are aware of these. From the survey, this year, we will be looking at

- **Communication from the School to parents:** we recognise that this needs to be streamlined to avoid many different channels being used, which can be confusing. We are currently looking into ways to ensure timeliness and clarity for parents.

- **11+ prep for exams:** in school, the Year 5 and 6 teams have already met to map out what our plan is to ensure that everything that needs to be covered in terms of curriculum content and exam preparation is in hand. Miss Rule will be speaking to Year 5 at the 11+ meeting later this term about how we are delivering the integral preparation to ensure pupils are more than ready for the 11+ exams in December.

- **Greater parental understanding of the curriculum we are covering:**

we are very keen to develop and extend this, and as such, we will be producing a programme of Parent Education each term where parents will be invited to experience sessions on what, how and why we teach various subjects, as well as guidance and parental support with pastoral matters.

In terms of smaller things to work on:

- **Holiday clubs** - we appreciate that there is a need for provision from a provider to run clubs during the holiday period, and we hope to be able to provide something by the Easter holidays. Watch this space.

- The **weekly lunch menu** now appears on the parents area of the website with specific dates, not week numbers to avoid confusion:

<https://www.stchristophersthehall.org.uk/parents/lunch-menu/>

### Reviews

We love hearing your feedback, so if you have a Google account, and feel inclined, please leave a reviews for us by using the link or the QR code:



<https://q.page/r/Cd0V7pg2h8TCEAg/review>

### Social Media

If you are not following us on social media, you are only getting half the story! You can follow us at [@stchristhehall](#) on insta and Twitter, as well as [@stchristhehallsport](#) to get all the inside info from school life!



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### Pupil success

Matteus, in Year 5, had recently participated in a UK Cubing Association speedcubing competition, in Stevenage. He learnt how to solve the Rubik's cube in the summer holidays and has, since then, worked on learning different cubes and the quickest ways to solve them. We are amazed that Matteus managed to achieve new personal best times of 5.88 seconds in the 2x2 cube, 10.09 seconds for the Pyraminx and 90 seconds for the 4x4 cube at the event! What a skill! We look forward to hearing more news when he competes again in more UK Cubing Association competitions in the future.



If any pupils experience success outside of School, we'd love to hear about it, so do let Mr Carter know.

### Our Number Day Event

Friday 3rd February 2023

Dress as a Digit!  
£1 for the NSPCC



### Emailing teachers

**REMINDER:** ALL emails to teachers should use the

[mail@stchristophersthehall.org.uk](mailto:mail@stchristophersthehall.org.uk)

It is very likely that emails will not get to their destination if you email teachers directly.



### Chinese New Year

On Wednesday, we had a lovely Chinese themed lunch in celebration of Chinese New Year with ribs, spring rolls and five spice chicken! This year is the Year of the Rabbit, and people who are born this year, would be wonderful ambassadors for our Character Values, as they are usually kind-hearted, modest, good team players, and considerate of others feelings. Kung Hei Fat Choi to you all!



### *What's Happening Next Week*

- Monday 30th January**
  - Year 5 Coding trip at London Transport Museum (all day)
  - U8 boys Hockey (mixed)/Football (boys) v Merton Court (15:30-16:30)
- Tuesday 31st January**
  - Reception trip to The Discovery Story Centre (all day)
  - U11 Hockey (mixed)/Football (boys) v Merton Court (15:30-16:30)
- Wednesday 1st February**
  - NSPCC National Number Day (come dressed as a number!)
- Thursday 2nd February**
  - Year 1 trip to Dulwich Picture Gallery (am)
  - U10 Boys Football v Alleyns (16:00-17:00)
- Friday 3rd January**
  - Year 3 trip to Beckenham Place Park (rocks and soils)
  - U11 Girls Netball ISA tournament qualifier