

Newsletter

Weekly news at St Christopher's



Dear Parents,

We've reached the end of the first half of the Spring Term already! As we conclude, we've had Years 5 and 6 enjoying exciting sporting fixtures and fun times at our Echo clubs. And finally, all remaining Year 6

results from their 11+ will be received by parents today. It's been a busy and fruitful time for all involved!

This week is extra special because it marks Children's Mental Health Awareness Week. This annual event is like sunshine on a cloudy day,

shining a spotlight on the well-being and emotional resilience of our amazing students. At St. Christopher's, we know that nurturing not only academic but also emotional intelligence is key to our pupils' growth. We've been all about promoting positive mental health practices, having heart-to-heart chats, and making sure our students have all the support they need on their well-being journey. I

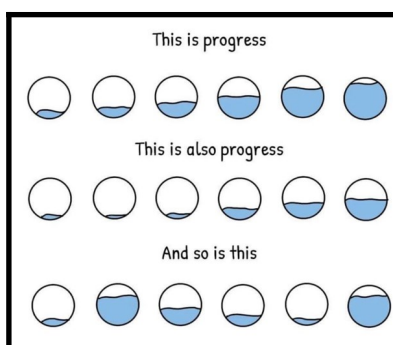
was delighted to see pupils embracing the occasion by coming to school wearing their onesies and oodles, a suggestion that stemmed from a pupil on the School Council. This showcases the importance of our School Council as a forum for student voices. I extend my gratitude to Mr. Codd and Mrs. Shivers for their exemplary organisation and promotion of this week's events.

Today, your child's mid-year reports will be winging their way to your email inbox, scheduled to arrive promptly at 16:15. If by any chance you haven't received them, please take a moment to check your junk folder. Should you still not find them, don't hesitate to reach out to the School office, and we'll gladly resend them. I hope you enjoy seeing this snapshot of your child's progress thus far, serving as a follow-up to the discussions held during parents' evening in the Autumn Term. Our aim is always to support every child in reaching their full potential, and we encourage you to celebrate their achievements along the way. I saw this pictorial representation over the weekend

of what we should consider to be progress, and I thought it was so true, not just for children, but for all of us. If you have any immediate concerns or queries, please don't hesitate to contact us. It's important to remember that, where the reports in Year 3-6 include standardised scores, it's crucial to interpret these scores within the context of your child's unique learning journey, as they only capture a snapshot of their abilities at a specific time.

As we approach the end of the term, it's not uncommon for parents to hear about their children's conflicts with friends. Mrs. Jeffery has aptly coined this period 'The Fractious Fifth,'

noting that friendship issues seem to always arise in the fifth week of the term. In light of this, I've penned a piece, below, on navigating children's friendships, stressing that such disagreements are a natural part of development and provide valuable learning opportunities. Reflecting on my own upbringing, I recall my mother's initial response to me telling her of any friendship issues



or sanctions by teachers being, "What did you do?" and I wonder if this is still the same these days. It's important to trust our staff to handle matters fairly and in the best interests of all students, guiding them to make better choices when things go awry. Sometimes, imposing sanctions is necessary to help the children recognise and learn from their mistakes. It is also crucial to understand that while a one-off incident of unkindness can be distressing for a child, it doesn't constitute bullying, as bullying typically involves repeated and intentional harm. I hope you trust our process and understand that our teachers will always address any matters appropriately, alleviating the need for parental intervention.

I wish you all a fantastic half-term, and I hope you enjoy your week with your families. We look forward to seeing you back at school on Monday 19th February.

Warm regards,

Mr Carter

Head Teacher

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Year Three visit to Beckenham Place Park

Last Friday Year Three walked to Beckenham Place Park as part of our current Science topic on Rocks and Soils. We learnt about three different types of rocks and tested some of their properties. We tested for permeability and durability, and then went out into the park to find rocks to test in the same way.

After lunch we were soil detectives after the instructor's chocolate cake was stolen. The culprit had left muddy footprints at the scene and we had to identify the thief from three people working in three different locations in the park, where there were different soils. Which one would match the footprints?!

We had a great day and walked a very long way!



No Pen Day next term

On Tuesday 20th February, we are, yet again, putting our pens away, for the entire day!

Staff are looking forward to getting really creative and putting speaking, listening and understanding skills in the spotlight. We look forward to showing you what we get up to.

NSPCC Number Day

Last Friday was 'Number Day' at St Christopher's where the whole school took part in class activities based around Number. This day is all about spreading awareness for the fantastic work the NSPCC do to support children and their parents. The day started with an Assembly using the game 'Higher or Lower?'. Three teams (of pupils and teachers) answered times table questions in order to move through the playing card board by guessing if the next card would be higher or lower than the one before it! A good dose of good luck was needed! Every class participated in Maths lessons that were planned around a 'Maths Through Stories' text, chosen by each year group, which gave the children the opportunity to link English and Maths. Activities included making a number with objects, adding fruit to create number bonds to 10, patterns with multiplication and investigations on the circumference of shapes. Thank you to all the children and staff for entering into the spirit of being a rock star in order to make the day a success.



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Navigating Children's Friendships: A Note to Parents

As we near the end of the half-term, it's not uncommon for parents to hear about their children's falling-outs with friends. These moments might leave you feeling concerned or wondering if there's something you should do to intervene. However, it's essential to recognise that such disagreements are a natural part of childhood development and can even serve as valuable learning experiences for your child.

Normalising Conflict:

Falling out with friends is a rite of passage in childhood. It happens for various reasons – disagreements over games, misunderstandings, or simply spending too much time together. While it might be distressing for both you and your child in the moment, it's crucial to understand that conflict is a normal part of human relationships.

Building Social Skills

Learning to navigate conflicts with friends teaches children essential social skills. They learn how to communicate their feelings, negotiate, compromise, and empathise with others. These skills are invaluable as they grow and interact with a diverse range of people throughout their lives.

The Importance of Independence

As parents you want to protect your children, but as tempting as it may be to swoop in and resolve your child's conflicts for them, it's important to resist the urge to get involved in these situations. Allowing children to manage their own friendships and disagreements fosters independence and resilience. It shows them that you trust their judgement and capabilities, which boosts their self esteem.

Respecting Boundaries

While we always encourage open communication between parents and teachers, it's essential to respect the boundaries of the school environment. Trust that we handle matters fairly and with the best interests of all students in mind. Directly intervening in minor friendship disputes can disrupt the natural process of conflict resolution and undermine your child's ability to develop essential social skills.

Addressing Serious Concerns

Of course, there are instances where parental intervention is necessary, especially in cases of bullying or other serious issues. We take such matters incredibly seriously and have robust systems in place to address them promptly and effectively. If you have genuine concerns about your child's safety or well-being, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

Enjoying the Break

As we approach half-term, take this opportunity to relax and recharge. A break from the routine can provide perspective and allow both you and your child to return refreshed and ready to tackle any challenges that may arise. Remember that disagreements among friends are often temporary, and with time, most issues resolve themselves naturally.

While it's natural to feel concerned when your child experiences a falling-out with friends, it's essential to trust in our ability in school to manage these as teachers and also your own child's ability to navigate these challenges independently. By allowing them space to manage their own friendships, you're empowering them with valuable life skills that will serve them well into adulthood.

IAPS Hockey Tournament and Year 5/6 Swimming Gala

On Monday the U11 Boys' Hockey team travelled to Charterhouse to compete in the U11 Boys' Hockey IAPs. We started strong with a convincing win in our first match. This was followed by some tough matches against strong schools but the boys pulled together and demonstrated some fantastic hockey in every game. We finished 4th in our group, narrowly losing 1-0 in the quarterfinals.

The team showed great resilience in every match.

On Thursday Year 5 and 6 Swimming Squad took part in the Merton Court Swimming Gala against Eltham College and Merton Court. The competition was tough with some strong swimmers but, St Christopher's put their best efforts forward and held their own on the night. A particular highlight was the Freestyle team relay at the end of the evening, it was a delight to see pupils enjoying their swimming. Well done to all that took part!

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St Christopher's in the Community

As half-term approaches, why not consider spending some quality time with your children while also making a positive impact in our local community? With St. Christopher's in the Community initiative, you have the perfect opportunity to do just that! As a reminder, St. Christopher's in the Community was established to commemorate our school's 130th anniversary, and it aims to integrate our school into the fabric of our neighbour-



hood by pledging 130 hours each year contributed by both students and staff - to support those in need within our community through volunteering.

This half-term break presents an excellent chance for you and your children to get involved.

Whether it's lending a hand at a local food bank, participating in a neighbourhood cleanup, or offering your skills and expertise to assist others, there are numerous ways to make a difference.

On this very note, we are delighted to be informed that Hector (Year 2) and Arthur (Rec) Buchanan looked to help out in the community by committing themselves to doing litter picking (2hrs) to contribute to the community service target. Well done, boys; we are proud of you.

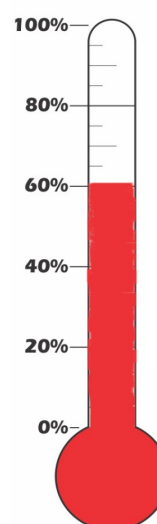
In addition, although Christmas is now a distant memory, we haven't yet mentioned that Mrs Gay

led the carols and 'choir' at the Epsom Riding for the Disabled Nativity and carols at the stables back in December as a charitable endeavour!

If you or your family do anything to give of your time, do let Mr Carter know so we can edge ever closer to our 130hour target this year.



130 Hours Target of Volunteering



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E-safety Tip

What is Doxing? - South West Grid for Learning

What do young people want to be? Well, as I'm sure you're aware, many of your pupils are now aiming to become YouTubers, DJs and TikTok stars. For many these dreams will fade, as they mature into older students and want to break out from beyond the screen into the real world. But all their online activity, from posting video clips to dropping a soundtrack on a Spotify account will remain forever. This opens a vulnerability window that will never close, as the internet is plagued with individuals who will seek to do harm to the media poster in question. Whether for financial gain or just because they feel like it, online spectators can easily find out key details about an individual's life. Their place of work, their home address and their identity. But what happens, when these malicious spectators decide to publish this information publicly rather than harvesting it for themselves? Over at the South West Grid for Learning, they've written an article answering that question. If interested, please follow the link below:

<https://swgfl.org.uk/magazine/what-is-doxing-a-guide-for-professionals-parents-and-carers/>



Communication

A quick reference guide for communication in school.

Music or peris lesson	musicadmin@stchristophersthehall.org.uk
Sports or fixtures	sport@stchristophersthehall.org.uk
Lunchtime or afterschool clubs	clubs@stchristophersthehall.org.uk
Finance	bursar@stchristophersthehall.org.uk
SCAMPS (bookings)	scamps@stchristophersthehall.org.uk
SCAMPS (logistics or payment)	bursar@stchristophersthehall.org.uk
Anything class related or for the teachers	mail@stchristophersthehall.org.uk NB: please mark F.A.O and indicate who this is for. Anything urgent or time sensitive – please call or mark email URGENT
Anything that needs the Head's attention	headspa@stchristophersthehall.org.uk

Pupil Achievement

We are so proud of Arjun (Year 1) who, alongside his NexGen U6 football team, took part in the Crystal Palace festival at the Crystal Palace Academy ground, at the weekend. The team did a fantastic job winning five out of their six matches. He is pictured with his winning team in the dugout with their medals.



What's Happening Next Week

- Monday 19th February**
 - Back to school for 2nd Spring half-term
 - Year 4 Football v Colfes (14:20 - 16.45) all year 4 to play
- Tuesday 20th February**
 - No Pen Day!
- Wednesday 21st February**
 - Year 3 Viking Workshop (am)
- Thursday 22nd February**
 - Pre-Prep Drama Workshops (am)
 - U11 Girls Football v Croydon High, selected girls to play (14:30-17:00)
- Friday 23rd February**
 - U11 Girls Football Tournament @ Eltham College, selected children to play (13:20-16:45)