

Newsletter

Weekly news at St Christopher's



Dear Parents,

It's been a relatively quiet week here at school, providing a welcome opportunity for pupils and staff to focus on their routines and settle into the rhythm of the term. With fewer major events on the calendar, it's been wonderful to see the children fully

engaged in their lessons, embracing new challenges, and enjoying their time with friends both in and out of the classroom.

On Wednesday, we held our first House Meeting of the term. House Meetings are an important part of school life, giving our pupils the opportunity to connect across year groups in a "vertical stream." This means younger and older pupils come together, fostering a strong sense of belonging, teamwork, and support within their Houses. In these House Meetings, we introduced an exciting new initiative – the Life Skills Challenge! We hope this challenge will encourage children to develop practical skills, build confidence, and gain independence. Our Pre-Prep pupils will be focusing on tasks such as tying their shoelaces, laying the table, and making their beds, while our Prep School students will take on more advanced skills like cooking, loading the dishwasher, and tidying up. Full details of the challenge can be found in the parents' area of the website [here](#), and we're sure the children will be eager to (hopefully!) explain what they need to do. We'd also love to hear about any additional life skills they're learning at home, so please encourage your child to share their experiences with their House Leader. Later this term, we'll celebrate everyone's hard work and hold a special prize draw for each House to recognise their efforts. We're also looking forward to incorporating more house-themed activities to further build teamwork and house spirit.

We are pleased to share that we have now analysed the recent parent survey feedback and are thrilled with the positive responses received. We were delighted to see an increase in the number of parents who agree or strongly agree in key areas such as feeling well-informed about the curriculum, being comfortable approaching the school



with questions or concerns, and - most importantly - that their children enjoy school and are making good progress. It's also wonderful to see comments such as, "Thank you for working so hard to keep our little people happy" and "Our child continues to thrive in the St Christopher's environment, for which we are very grateful" and "It is a kind and nurturing school, recognising each child's strengths"; they truly mean a lot to us. We will obviously continue to work on clear communication and driving the healthy agenda for our pupils as well. For those who provided more detailed feedback, the Senior Leadership Team and I are working to follow up and address any specific points they have raised in due course with those parents individually. We are so grateful for all your input and will continue to use it to drive further improvements across the school, which we hope you will see reflected over the coming months.

Finally, it was interesting to see recent news, this week, highlighting the importance of reading, something I have always passionately supported for our pupils. Children's Laureate Frank Cottrell-Boyce has called on the Government to show a clear commitment to valuing children, emphasising how they have been deeply affected by recent challenges such as austerity, the pandemic, and Brexit. He highlighted concerns over a "happiness recession" among children and stressed that investing in early literacy is a crucial yet long-term commitment that can have a profound impact on their future. As you know, I believe that reading is the key - it is the one thing that truly makes a difference in children's learning. While there is no magic wand, it is clear that pupils who read widely and share literature with their parents achieve more in school. Reading not only supports academic success but also nurtures imagination, empathy, and confidence, helping children make sense of the world around them. We remain committed to encouraging a love of reading and ensuring every child has the opportunity to experience the transformative power of books.

Warm regards (especially during these chilly days!),

Mr T Carter
Head Teacher

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IT Adventures ECHO

This term, we've been diving into the fascinating world of interactive storytelling! In this club, we've been exploring stories where *you* - the reader - become the hero, making decisions that influence the outcome of the adventure.

One of the exciting aspects we've discovered is that this style of storytelling requires a different approach to writing—using the second-person perspective, where the pronoun "you" places the reader directly into the story. This has been a new and interesting challenge for us, as it's a style we haven't encountered much before.

Building on our newfound understanding, we've now begun designing and creating our very own simple digital games on the computer, where players can explore a story and make choices that shape its outcome. We've been learning how to use hyperlinks to create branching narratives, turning our creative ideas into interactive experiences that engage and surprise players.

Throughout our sessions, we've been sharpening our storytelling skills by crafting exciting scenarios and intriguing plot twists, all while thinking carefully about how different choices can lead to unexpected outcomes. Writing in this unique style has encouraged us to be more creative, using our imagination to build immersive worlds filled with ad-

venture and mystery. At the same time, we've been developing problem-solving and critical thinking skills as we map out different story paths and consider how one decision can change everything. Plus, we're getting to grips with some cool digital tools that help bring our ideas to life, giving us a taste of what it's like to design our own interactive experiences from scratch.

We're excited to see how our interactive stories evolve



Arts and Crafts ECHO Club

This week, in Mrs Titchener's Arts and Crafts Pre-Prep ECHO Club, the children displayed an abundance of Creativity and Enthusiasm! The children used paints, straws and their wonderful



imaginations to create their own monsters, by using the paint-blowing method. The children chose their colour monster and worked beautifully to produce an abstract piece of Art. Next week, they will add more

details onto our monsters, using decorations such as stick-on eyes, pom poms, and glitter, cut them out and make them into their very own card.

Whilst their paintings were drying, the children took part in some mindfulness through meditation - linking their breathing to the straw-blowing technique. We also discussed the link between mindfulness and Art. Mrs Titchener and Miss Abbey were so impressed with the children's hard work!



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SCA

The SCA AGM will take place on **Tuesday 11th February 2025 at 8pm via zoom**. All parents are encouraged and welcome to attend the meeting. Details on how to join and documentation will be sent out prior to the meeting. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible.



The SCA is also excited to announce it will be holding the first of its two discos in February for Pre-Prep, on **Friday 7th February 2025 between 3.15pm-4.30pm**. The children will be accompanied to the main Hall for the event and will be supervised by teachers and SCA Committee members. Tickets are now on sale and can be purchased from www.scascales.co.uk, tickets are £10 each and will also include a snack. Older siblings in Prep will not be able to attend this disco and will need to be collected as usual. Pre-Prep clubs will not be running on this day. Parents are also not allowed to attend!

Pre Prep children can come into School in their own clothes on the day of their disco.

Although children in the Pre School will not be attending the disco they can also wear their own clothes on the 7th of February.

The Prep disco will take place on **Friday 28th February 2025** between 3.45pm and 5.15pm. Further details will be provided shortly. Prep School children can come into school wearing their own clothes on that day.



PE and Sport

It's been a busy and exciting start to the term for the Sports department. Pupils have been working hard in their lessons, honing their skills in both football and hockey, and have had the opportunity to put them to the test against several local schools.

Years 5 and 6 enjoyed a fantastic set of hockey matches at Colfe's, while Years 3 and 6 kicked off their football season with fixtures against Breaside. Among the week's highlights were a superb 2-0 victory for the Year 6 girls' team and an action-packed 5-5 draw for the Year 6 boys' team - featuring a stunning long-range strike from Spencer, who fired the ball from just inside the opposition's half straight into the top corner!

Looking ahead, Year 4 will have their first football fixture of the season next week, and I am excited to see how all the pupils continue to develop their skills in the coming months.

Well done to everyone involved!



What's Happening Next Week

Monday 27th January

- Year 4 (All Year 4) Football v Breaside (Away) (13:45-15:45)

Friday 31st January

- Year 6 Boys Football v St Dunstan's (Away) (13:00-15:45)