

# Newsletter

## Weekly news at St Christopher's



Dear Parents,

This week, I was away from school at the end of the week in Eastbourne, where I had the privilege of representing St Christopher's at a meeting of the St Dunstan's Education Group. It was a valuable opportunity to share our emerging five-year

strategy and to hear from partner schools about their priorities, challenges, and ambitions. The discussions were both energising and reflective, and they confirmed that we are part of a dynamic and forward-thinking group of schools. While I was away, I found myself reflecting more deeply on one particular aspect of our new strategy - an area that connects closely with a question raised after last week's thought-provoking talk on Artificial Intelligence. Someone asked, "So, what is the school doing about this?" It's a question well worth exploring, and I thought that I would spend this week's newsletter sharing our response in more detail.

This is not just a school-specific initiative; it is a wider conversation unfolding across the St Dunstan's Education Group. As a community of schools, we are committed to embracing innovation while doing so thoughtfully and with caution. We are already looking at incorporating AI into our long-term planning. It is, without doubt, a transformative tool with the potential to enrich learning, spark creativity, and enable more personalised support. But we are also acutely aware of the need to approach its integration with thoughtfulness, balance, and integrity. One insight from the AI talk stood out: *in a world saturated by digital content, the ability to focus and think deeply is becoming not only rare, but vital*. This is not just anecdotal. A growing body of research highlights the impact of digital environments on attention spans. A 2023 study published in Nature Communications showed that our collective ability to stay with a single topic online is diminishing, in large part due to the rapid-fire nature of social media and short-form content. Platforms like TikTok and Instagram Reels are specifically designed to deliver fast, high-reward 'dopamine hits', making sustained attention harder to cultivate. A widely cited Microsoft study found that the average human attention span dropped from

12 seconds in 2000 to just 8 seconds in 2015. This presents real challenges for schools. Children are growing up in a culture that prizes immediacy, reaction, and rapid consumption. Our role is not just to navigate that reality, but to offer a counterbalance: to actively teach children how to slow down, concentrate, and engage more deeply. That's why we are so excited to launch **The Horizon Project** next academic year. This newly reimagined weekly programme, taking the place of our current ECHO provision, will support pupils in developing the kinds of real-life skills and personal attributes that are essential for thriving in an unpredictable world. As part of The Horizon Project, children will learn practical skills: how to manage their time and money, cook a simple meal, compose a professional email, or sew on a button, useful knowledge that is all too often overlooked. Just as importantly, we will help pupils build tools for attention management, digital wellbeing, and emotional resilience in an era of constant distraction. The programme will also include sustainability, community involvement, ethical debates, and reflective practices like mindfulness, helping pupils to explore the world and themselves beyond the boundaries of a screen. Skills like focus, empathy, adaptability, and teamwork are often called 'soft skills'. But in today's world, we know they are anything but soft. They are essential - and in many ways, endangered. We are very excited about this new venture.

And finally, some exciting news for the next academic year: Munchkins will be taking over our wraparound care provision from SCAMP. We're delighted that Donna will be staying on as our on-site manager, ensuring continuity and familiarity for the children. The provision will now run until 6pm and will include specific groupings for children in EYFS, Pre-Prep, and Prep, with a wide range of engaging activities offered throughout the week. We'll be sending out more detailed information from Munchkins in the coming weeks and will also arrange a time for parents to come in and meet the team, should they wish to find out more. Also see how to book onto the Munchkins Summer Holiday camp in the flyers below.

Mr Carter

**Head Teacher**

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### Walthamstow Hall - Great Maths Race

Two teams in Year 4 and 5 headed to Walthamstow Hall Secondary School, Sevenoaks, on Tuesday afternoon, for an inter school mathematics competition of fiendish and challenging math's questions against seven other local schools.

Our teams (Maxwell, Grace, Tilly and Toby, Year 4, and Junior, Henry, Olivia and Eva, Year 5) worked brilliantly in their teams attempting each of the challenges, with elements of fast paced sprinting, to try and beat the other teams present. Our pupils worked collaboratively to try and answer each question within the 30 minute time limit, which also involved completing a lap of the Hall before submitting each question, achieving great success. An example question was: how many 1's appear between the numbers 1 and 30? (see the answer below).

Both teams came in at a very respectable 3rd and 4th place with only a few points between top and

bottom places. Well done to our pupils and thank you Walthamstow Hall for your kind hospitality and another well organised event. The chocolate brownies you gave us at the end were especially yummy!

(The answer to the above question is: 13!)



### **Allergy reminder:**

Please do not send in snacks which contain nuts or sesame seeds.



### Year 6 Charity

On the afternoon of Wednesday 2nd July, during ECHO time, Year 6 will be having their Charity event: Teachers vs Pupils Cricket! The rest of the pupils from across the school will be coming to watch, support and cheer. As it is a charity event, we are asking all pupils across the school to bring £1 as a spectator fee, which will include an ice lolly, with all proceeds going to our school charity: The Epilepsy Society.

### Emailing teachers

**REMINDER:** ALL emails to teachers should use the [mail@stchristophersthehall.org.uk](mailto:mail@stchristophersthehall.org.uk)



## Summer Fair

Friday 27th June, 3-5:30pm

*Come along and have some fun!  
If you can help in any way, please  
contact the SCA.*

*Remember to purchase your tickets,  
currency and raffle tickets  
beforehand.*

*We look forward to seeing you there.*





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### ABOUT OUR CAMPS!

Our Ofsted registered camps are packed with over 50 fun-filled activities each week to keep the kids entertained, safe and happy during the school holidays!

### TIMINGS & DISCOUNTS

- Standard day at camp, 9:30am-4:30pm
- Extended Hours, 8am-9:30am, 4:30pm-6pm
- Sibling discounts available
- Discounts available for full week bookings

### ADDITIONAL OFFERINGS

- Theme days
- Book with childcare vouchers, Tax free childcare, Bright Horizons & CGPS
- HAF Programme Provider
- Pre-school places available at selected locations

### CAMP DATES

• Feb Half-Term	• Summer Holidays
• Easter Holidays	• October Half-Term
• May Half-Term	• Christmas Holidays

### SUMMER HOLIDAY CAMPS AT MUNCHKIN SPORTS

### BRAND NEW CAMP LOCATIONS

• Dulwich College Ducks (Dulwich)	• Tubbenden Primary School (Orpington)
• St Christopher's The Hall (Beckenham)	• The John Fisher School (Purley)
• Sydenham High School (Sydenham)	

### BOOK NOW!

[MUNCHKINSports.COM](https://munchkinsports.com)

### CAMPS

Munchkin Sports

### Year 2

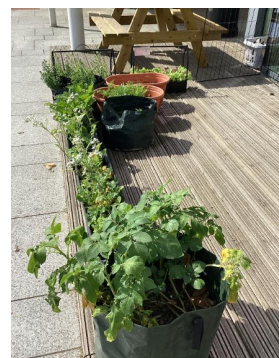
We're thrilled to share how well things are coming along down at the allotment in Year 2! After weeks of planting, watering, and plenty of weeding, it's rewarding to see such healthy growth across all our beds.

The lettuce has really taken off—crisp, vibrant, and full of flavour. We've already harvested several heads and they definitely passed the taste test. The radishes have also been a hit, with a nice peppery crunch.

Our potatoes are coming along beautifully. The foliage is lush and green, and we're hopeful for a good crop beneath the surface. We've been

carefully earthing them up, and if all goes to plan, we should be digging into our first batch of potatoes before the end of term.

Elsewhere, other crops are beginning to show promise, and we're keeping a close eye on them as they develop. It's a real joy to see everything taking shape, and the allotment has become a peaceful, productive space for everyone involved. Fingers crossed for more sunshine and an even bigger harvest to come!





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### Year 4 and Year 6 - Visit to The Siri Guru Singh Sabha Gurdwara

On Monday, our Year 4 and Year 6 pupils embarked on a fascinating and inspiring trip to the Siri Guru Singh Sabha Gurdwara in Croydon - a visit filled with learning, music, reflection, and, of course, delicious food!

From the moment we arrived, we were warmly welcomed by members of the Gurdwara community, including Gurshaan and Harnoop's



Mother, Mrs Chana. Pupils learnt that Sikhism began over 500 years ago in Punjab, India, and was founded by Guru Nanak Dev Ji. They also learnt that Sikhs believe everyone should be treated equally, and that their actions are important in helping them lead a good life. They believe a good way to do this is:

- Keep God in your heart and mind at all times
- Live honestly and work hard
- Treat everyone equally
- Be generous to those less fortunate than you
- Serve others



After that, pupils discovered the meaning behind the 5Ks:

- *Kesh* (uncut hair),
- *Kara* (steel bracelet),
- *Kanga* (wooden comb),
- *Kachera* (cotton undergarments),
- *Kirpan* (a ceremonial sword)

and how these symbolise key values in Sikhism such as honesty, equality, and service.

Our visit was brought to life with a live performance on the tabla (drums) and harmonium, capturing the beauty and spirit of Sikh devotional



music. A particularly special moment was a short meditation session led by Gurshaan and Mrs Chana, helping everyone feel calm and connected. We were also honoured to receive a blessing in the prayer hall, having the chance to sit peacefully and observe the respectful atmosphere. The visit ended with a shared langar - a free, vegetarian meal served to all. The children enjoyed a tasty spread of vegetable curry, rice, warm roti, and fresh fruit - all prepared with love and generosity.

A heartfelt thank you to Mrs Chana and the members of the Gurdwara community for their kindness and hospitality - a truly wonderful experience for all!





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### STEM

Last week Year 3, 4 and 5 pupils took part in a 'Research a Researcher' STEM workshop as part of the STEM ambassador program. Gina, a Materials Scientist and Engineer who works at the National Physical Laboratory in the Mass Spectrometry Imaging group and her colleague Ruby, an Environmental Scientist who works on greenhouse gas measurements, visited our pupils to tell them about what they do as part of their jobs and the skills they need in order to be able to carry out such important and essential work in the world of Science. The children had the opportunity to ask lots of questions to them about their jobs as well as think of their own questions that they might like to investigate in the future if they were to become Scientists. Our visitors were so inspiring and certainly had an impressive amount of experience in their fields. St Christopher's certainly hopes that we have some budding future Scientists in our midst!



### Celebrating Pupil Achievement:

We're delighted to share some fantastic news about three of our brilliant pupils from Year 2 who have gone the extra mile – quite literally!

Lucia, Greta and Sofia took part in the Dulwich Runners' annual Children's 1-Mile race this week. Braving the unseasonably warm weather on Wednesday evening, they showed incredible determination, stamina and team spirit as they completed the course with big smiles and boundless energy. What a wonderful example of resilience and participation beyond the classroom!

At St Christopher's, we love to celebrate all kinds of achievements – from academic triumphs to sporting successes and everything in between. If your child takes part in any exciting activities or challenges outside of school, please do let Mr Carter know. He loves hearing about them and celebrating the diverse talents and adventures of our pupils.



### *What's Happening Next Week*

#### **Monday 23rd June**

- Reception Trip to High Elms
- Year 4 Girls' Cricket v Babington House (Year 4 Girls only) (13:25-16:00)

#### **Thursday 26th June**

- Preschool Sports Day - 11am - 12pm - gates open at 10:45
- Year 5 Cricket v Royal Russell (All Year 5) (13:30-16:30)
- New Parents' BBQ

#### **Friday 27th June**

- Music Exams
- Summer Fair (15:00-17:30)