

Newsletter

We work together, we play together, we laugh together, we pray together.

Forthcoming dates

- 8, 9 & 10 Dec** Infant Nativities
- 14 Dec** Junior Carols 7pm
- 16 Dec** Children's Christmas Party
- 17 Dec** Break up 1.30pm
- 4 Jan** Inset Day
- 5 Jan** Back to school
- 7 Jan** House of the term mufti day
- 17 Jan** Y3 Mass and First Holy Communion meeting 2.15
- 21 Jan** Y5 assembly 9.15
- 24 Jan** Parent and child bookshare (arrangements TBC, COVID dependant)
- 26 Jan** First Communion classes begin for Y3
- 28 Jan** 'Winter' mufti day
- 31 Jan** Family Mass for Y2 & 4

Please note: these dates do not include school trips. Please check on classlist, and in your child's bag, for other letters and announcements

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we head ever closer to Christmas, we have been reflecting with the children on how to become better people during Advent and how to prepare our hearts for Jesus. The children have made a great effort to get ready for their Nativities and the Carol Service and are looking forward to performing for you. Due to the pandemic, it is the first time that many have performed in front of a live audience for some considerable time (if ever!). They are doing a remarkable job.

Pyjama day last week raised an amazing £376.51 for Glass Door. Your generous donations will have a huge impact on the work that the charity can do to help the homeless this winter. Well done to School Council for organising the day, and thank you to the PA for the hot chocolate treat!

And finally... thank you for your congratulations after seeing our school in the Times newspaper's 'top schools' feature over the weekend! We were ranked 13th in the country. While I always take these things with a pinch of salt, believing that every school does its very best for the children in their care, and feel that these sorts of league tables can be unfairly damaging to schools who do not feature on them, it is an achievement we can be proud of. It is down to the efforts of the whole community that our children achieved so well. Thanks to all children, staff, governors and parents for their hard work!

Best wishes, Mrs Griffiths, Headteacher

Get thinking!

Why didn't God provide a better place for Jesus to be born than a stable?

What do you think? Take a moment to discuss this at home, or with your friends. Remember, there is no right or wrong answer and it is the process of discussing that is important!



Spirituality Day



Last month, as part of our 'friendship and kindness week', each class took part in a 'spirituality day' in order to focus on being kind to themselves and experience the peace that prayer can bring. The school hall was set up with 12 'prayer stations', and the children took time to visit each one. Opportunities included: untying knots in string to release their worries; making heart decorations as they gave gratitude for those they love; contemplating God's creation and the tranquility nature brings. Here you can see children in Year 5 during their visit; the children explained how the activities had helped them to relax. One child commented: "I had a lovely day. I feel very calm and enjoyed the time being quiet and reflective".

Fortnightly Learning Summaries

You may wish to work on the following areas of learning with your children:

Reception

- Literacy: phase 2 phonics, story mapping and describing characters
- PD: learning positional language through gross motor activities in PE.
- RE: The Nativity story.
- Maths: finding one more and one less within 5.
- EAD: Leaf fox painting and making stick puppets for role play.
- UTW: floating/sinking by making and testing boats. Lifecycles & animal facts.
- Computing: Using the iPad to take photos and beebot programming.

Year 1:

- English: recreating and writing our own version of 'Billy and the Beast'.
- Maths: learning how to subtract with numbers up to ten, exploring +/- facts
- Science: learning about the different materials and classifying objects in a table depending on what they are made from.
- RE: discussions about the Nativity story and the birth of Jesus Christ.
- Topic: Mary Anning and fossil drawing.
- DT: designing and making animal toast.

Year 2:

- Maths: money, combining amount and finding different ways of making the same amount
- English: planning a new version of the Lonely Beast Story
- Science: Habitats
- Topic: Great Fire of London Fact File
- RE: Advent and the Angel Gabriel's visit to the Shepherds
- Art: Comparing religious art representing Angel Gabriel visiting the Shepherds and creating our own versions.
- PE: Foot work- dribbling and passing the ball

Year 3:

- Maths: Addition and subtraction patterns; Adding and subtracting two 3-digit numbers
- English: Iron Man - Writing diary entries from Hogarth's point of view; Writing persuasive letters to the police about problems the Iron Man is causing.
- Topic: Learning about life in Chelsea workhouse
- Art: Looking at the work of Miles Cole and Brian Marshall and creating metalwork collages based on the Iron Man.
- Science: Recognising that light is the absence of dark and noticing that light is reflected from surfaces.
- R.E: Understanding that God called Mary to be the mother of his son and creating Annunciation art; Knowing that Mary went to visit her cousin, Elizabeth; Understanding that Advent is a time to prepare for the birth of Jesus and how we can prepare.
- French: Classroom instructions; Telling time to the hour

Year 4:

- English: Writing a letter as Ivan explaining why he has left; writing a newspaper report retelling the events that happened to Ivan in the forest
- Maths: Using the inverse to check answers when adding and subtracting; Understanding perimeter of rectangles and rectilinear shapes
- RE: What we can learn from Mary? How did Joseph put his trust in God?
- Art: Creating Roman mosaics
- Science: To know what condensation and evaporation is; and how temperature affects evaporation
- PE: Learning about precision in tennis to help us score points

Year 5:

- Maths: Interpreting tables; Two-way tables; Interpreting and drawing line graphs; Multiples, factors, prime numbers, cubed and squared numbers; Inverse operations
- English: Clockwork by Philip Pullman: Comic strips, debate, balanced argument
- Topic: Investigate the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb and what we understand that tells us about ancient Egyptian beliefs; Art: Research tomb paintings and the way Egyptian lives were depicted, and learn how to draw and paint Ancient Egyptian style figures. Combine paper cutting and collage techniques to create a detailed profile of Queen Nefertiti
- RE: Be aware of our need to grow in faith and trust in God. Know that God made a covenant with Moses and the Israelites. Be aware that this covenant is also made with us. Reflect on the message of the prophets for us.

Year 6:

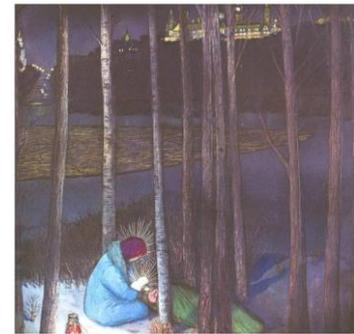
- English: Narrative writing: 'Over the Top' - soldiers in the trenches; Christmas truce newspaper report. 'Private Peaceful' comprehension.
- Maths: Fractions: equivalence and simplifying; ordering and comparing; adding and subtracting. Puzzles using BODMAS & the 24 hr game.
- RE: To know we are called to work for justice; To learn about those who have been persecuted for speaking out against injustice; To reflect on what we can learn from those who work for justice.
- History: Examining primary sources in relation to The Battle of the Somme: looking for bias/truth/reliability. Life in the trenches. Trip to the Household Cavalry Museum
- Art: Studying the painting 'Gassed' by John Singer Sargeant. Posing the question: How reliable is art to the historian?
- Latin: conjugating verbs in the present tense

Assembly this week

Our theme for assemblies this week was 'Hope'. We heard the bible story of Mary and Joseph looking for a place to stay. We also lit our first candle on our Advent wreath.



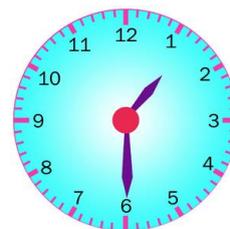
Our artwork of the week was based on alternative depictions of the road to Bethlehem by Fritz Von Uhde and William Kurelek



Our music of the week was 'Carol of the Bells' by Libera:



End of Term



Don't forget that school finishes at 1.30 on the last day of term, 17th December.

We know that many of you are hoping to go abroad to see family during the Christmas holidays. However, please do keep to our term dates to make sure that your child does not miss out on any learning before and after the holidays. Remote learning/extra homework is not given in these circumstances.

Arrangements for Advent and Christmas

What is advent and how do we prepare at our school?

As a Catholic school, we will be using this opportunity to encourage the pupils to remain focused on this period of the Liturgical Year and not to jump ahead to Christmas. Advent is about preparation and waiting and it is important we do not skip past this important time in the Church's calendar.

We will be preparing in several ways:

- ★ Using purple cloths on our prayer areas in each class. Purple is the colour of Advent.
- ★ Lighting our Advent Wreath and learning about its meaning.
- ★ Making Advent calendars to encourage us to prepare our hearts and minds for Jesus.
- ★ Set up our crib in the hall with Mary and Joseph in at first- to remember that we wait for Jesus to arrive.
- ★ Making Advent stars for the tree with our advent promises on.
- ★ In the juniors, making cards for children recently arrived in London from Afghanistan. This has been a very difficult year for them, and we wish them peace and happiness during the Advent season.

How do we celebrate Christmas at our school?

Although Advent ends on Christmas Eve, we also want the children to be able to celebrate the wonder of the Christmas season together, and so in the last week and a half of term we will:

- ★ Share cards through our 'school post box'.
- ★ Add joyous decorations to the Christmas Tree made by Loosh Club.
- ★ Add all the figures to the crib.
- ★ Celebrate together through our Carol Services, Nativity Plays and Christmas Lunch.
- ★ In January we will return to school in time to celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany together. The children will be making crowns to add to the tree.

What are the particular arrangements for special events at this time of year?

Infant Nativity Plays

These will be performed separately on three consecutive days in the hall, at 2pm. Each class will act and sing.

- Wednesday 8th December 2pm: Year 1
- Thursday 9th December 2pm: Reception
- Friday 10th December 2pm: Year 2

After the performance, the Parents' Association will kindly provide refreshments while you wait for your child to get changed into uniform again. Parents who are attending the plays are asked to do a lateral flow tests beforehand and to wear a mask.

Junior Carol Service

On Tuesday 14th December our Junior Carol Service will take place at the Oratory Church. The service will start at 7pm, however, all children must arrive at St Joseph's hall at 6.40pm. Children should arrive quietly, as there may be a Mass in progress in the Little Oratory chapel opposite. The pupils must be clean and tidy in appearance, *wearing full school uniform with white shirts, cardigans/jumpers and blazers*. Duffle coats and hats must be left with parents as they cannot be left on St Joseph's hall. At the end of the service, the children will process down the aisle, and wait with their teacher outside where you can collect them. Please let the teacher know that you are taking your child. This is a religious service, and **NO PHOTOGRAPHY IS ALLOWED**. Please ask your friends and relatives too, as unfortunately every year there are a handful of people who sadly do not respect this request and need to be reminded during the service. We would be grateful if some parents could volunteer to carry the heavy benches back to their original positions at the end of the service, please let your rep know if you can help.

Children's Day

Thursday 16th December is Children's Day. Pupils attend school wearing their own clothes (a Christmas jumper would be fun!) and enjoy lunch that the Parents' Association will very kindly provide. The infants will have an entertainer in the morning and the juniors will have a disco in the afternoon. The children always have a wonderful day with lots of fun and laughter, plus Father Christmas will also be visiting us again this year! We ask for a donation of £2 per child to cover the cost of the entertainment. Please give this to the class teacher on the day.

Parents Association News

Dear Parents,

Just a few words to firstly thank Mrs Chiner and Mrs Campbell for the beautiful tree that's up in the hall for the all the children to decorate. It has already been much admired. Secondly, thank you to all the reps who donated and helped serve the hot chocolate to the children on Friday for pyjama day. It clearly went down very well as I was asked by some Reception children this morning if they could have some more today! Mr and Mrs Blake's kind donation of four large flasks made the operation much easier as we were able to bring half of it in ready prepared. Mrs Williamson then made the rest on the staff hob as the rest of us carried it around. Thank you all!

The Christmas cards have arrived and your child should be bringing them home shortly. Please make sure you've paid for your order as well as any money for second hand uniform and tea towels you may still owe. The PA hasn't been able to hold any cake sales this term, due to the works on the roof, so your contribution is, as ever, gratefully received. For reference the PA bank details are:

The Oratory Primary School Association of Parents and Friends
20082895
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We're getting ready for the children's day on the 16th December. Whatever modifications we have to make for the current situation, we will do everything we can to make the day special for the children.

Alex