



ST KATHARINE'S
C of E
PRIMARY SCHOOL

*Friendship, Effort, Respect,
& Honesty*

Friday 5th December 2025

NEWSLETTER No: 6

Our Value This Term Is...

Hope



Dear Parents,

It's been busy and set to get a little busier still over the coming fortnight. We have a school calendar that is busy with rehearsals and singing practices, children have scripts to learn and stage directions to memorise. Our aim is to keep things as normal as possible for the children, for as long as we can. I think we will manage that until the final week, when everyday has at least something happening that involves the word Christmas! Last week our choir adventured all the way to the Wyvern Theatre in Swindon to take part in the Swindon Voice Festival. Along with lots of other schools from across Wiltshire, the children took to the stage to sing a medley of Christmas songs to an audience of parents, grandparents and loved ones. We haven't been involved in the event before but I hope for this to be the first of many. It was a great event and an opportunity for our choir to perform on a big stage, accompanied by a 7-piece orchestra. More than once, teachers from other schools commented on the brilliant behaviour of our children. My thanks to all the parents who bought tickets and supported this event, thanks also to Mrs Freeman and Mrs Groves who gave their time to support back stage before and during the event. Thank you to all of you who booked and attended our first round of parent consultations this year. We have an almost 100% record of parental engagement in these meetings. We all know that it is a team effort, educating and supporting the learning of young children. We have them for 6 hours of the day but couldn't do our jobs as well without your support and involvement. Thank you. I

look forward to seeing lots of you over the coming fortnight at our Nativity and Carol Service. All parents are welcome at both. If it's a little bit of Christmas magic you are after, I highly recommend you come along!

Ms Jones

Principal

'From little acorns, great oaks grow'



Christmas Diary Dates – and a note about

Christmas Jumpers

We have tried to help you out by highlighting the events in the calendar where you either need to be somewhere or send your child into school with something. It is a very busy time; there is even more juggling required than usual.

Please note that on Christmas Party Day children can come dressed in their Christmas Jumpers (normal uniform other than that). This is in support of the Save the Children charity. Please don't feel that you need to go out and purchase a Christmas Jumper – we are **very** happy to see children's home-made additions to a normal jumper to make them Christmassy. We only ask that children taking part donate to the charity. The suggested amount is £1 but you are of course free to give more generously should you wish to.

Christmas Lunch – Wednesday 10th

We can see that lots of you have booked a lunch with Sue Brady. As always, we will all eat together in the school hall and enjoy a slightly extended playtime on that day. If you are sending your child to school with a packed lunch, please do include a few Christmassy treats if you would like to. Instead of crackers we spend a bit of time in the morning making paper hats out of recycled newspaper. More environmentally friendly, very cheap and lots of creative fun. If you have newspaper that you can donate to school before Wednesday morning – please send your child to school with it. Thank you.

Attendance Update

Current whole school attendance data: 96.6%

Our end of year attendance target is: 97%

We have had a pretty torrid time with illness in school. I know that some children (and their adults) have been very unwell. At one point last week we had only 87% of the children in school. I am hoping that we are all on the up and that you all manage to stay well over Christmas. Fingers crossed also for a healthy New Year.

Parents' Evenings

Thank you to all of you who booked and attended a parents' evening last week. We hope that this meeting, combined with the opportunity to come into school and share your child's learning prior to the meeting with your child's teacher, has given you an insight into their progress and areas for development and support. Please know that if you have any concerns, that you feel you would like to discuss in greater depth, our teachers are always happy to arrange a face-to-face meeting with you at a mutually convenient time.

St. Katharine's Day

Thank you to the small team of parents who kindly baked cakes for the children (and maybe the staff!) to enjoy when we celebrated St. Katharine's Day on Wednesday last week. They went down a treat at break time.

Personal Data Check

Please can we ask parents to check that the personal data we currently hold on you, your emergency contact/s and your child/ren on Bromcom (our MIS system) is up to date. If you move house or change your phone number (work, mobile or home) for example, please remember to let us know. You can make amendments to the information yourself by logging into your [MCAS](#) account. Alternatively, feel free to email Hayley on admin@stkatharines.excalibur.org.uk.

Nine Lesson Service

A group of Key Stage 2 and some Year 2 children will soon start rehearsing at school for the Nine Lessons Service at St. Katharine's Church on Sunday 14th December. The children will be singing a hymn at the service. Please do go along and support them. The service starts at 6pm and is always followed by mince pies and mulled wine.

Lost Property

Please remember to call in and look through the lost property basket. Anything left in the final week of term (week commencing 15th December) will be put on a table near the school gate at the end of the day for parents to look through. Any property remaining at the end of term will be put into the donation station or given to local charity shops. Please make sure that everything is named. We can then easily return items to their rightful owner.

Primary School Applications

The national deadline for applying for a primary school place is 15th January 2026. Please ensure that you have your application in by that date if you have a sibling (of a child already in school) due to start with us in September 2026.

Message on behalf of the Governors

In September the St Katharine's School Governors invited parents to an evening in school to meet the Governors. This was for parents to learn a bit about the role of Governors and how the Academy Council works with the school and the Excalibur Trust. It was great to see so many of you in school. There was a lovely buzz in the school hall.

During the evening parents were asked to share comments and suggestions on cards:

There were questions about Forest School and developing, our collaboration with our wrap around care partner, the Savernake Day Nursery, we are looking at both of these areas and will keep you updated. We also had lots of offers from parents who have an area of specific interest or specialism that they might be able to offer. Since the meeting we have already had a visit from a parent who is a vet in support of classroom science and have some exciting work planned to involve the children more in the work of the farm. We have also had many offers of support from those of you that are keen to volunteer in school on a regular basis. We now have a group of parents who come into school every week supporting early years, forest school and reading. This help is invaluable – please don't hesitate to get in touch with the school if you would like to be included. If you have any questions or comments for us as a group you can find a list of Governors on the school website, please do get in touch.

Message on behalf of the PTA

Hello everyone,

We hope your Christmas preparations are going well! A gentle reminder that we still have raffle tickets available. Please do pass them on to friends and family. Every ticket helps. We will also be selling tickets at next week's cake sale. Please ensure all tickets are returned by 15th December. **The draw will take place on 18th December.**

As you begin your Christmas shopping, please remember to use EasyFundraising. Every penny you raise goes directly towards supporting the school.

We'd love you to join us for some festive fun after school on Friday 12th December in the playground. There will be a cake sale, raffle tickets, apple juice, wreaths and Christmas lucky dips available.

Could we kindly ask parents and carers of Oak Class to contribute some baked treats for the cake sale? Please bring any donations to school on the morning of Friday 12th December.

And finally (we promise!): There are still a few spaces left on the Christmas Wreath making event, if you'd like to take part. Please get in touch with Tamsyn to secure a spot.

Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Look out for the 

<i>December</i>	
Monday 8 th	KS1 Cricket Skills Festival Marlborough Leisure Centre
Wednesday 10 th	 Christmas Lunch
Friday 12 th	British Museum: Ancient Egypt Virtual event – Chestnut Class
	 Reception and KS1 Nativity dress rehearsal 2pm – parents and grandparents welcome NOTE CHANGE OF DATE AND TIME
	 PTA Christmas cake sale 3.15pm
Sunday 14 th	 Nine Lessons Carol Service in Church 6.00pm
Monday 15th	Oak Class Farm Walk
Tuesday 16 th	 Reception and KS1 Nativity in Church (4.45pm drop) 5.00pm-6.30pm
Thursday 18 th	 Christmas Party afternoon and Christmas Jumper Day <i>Children will be in Christmas jumpers, no party clothes or food needed. This is also in support of the charity Save the Children – please send children with a donation (£1)</i>
Friday 19 th	 KS2 Carol Service in Church 9.30am
	Last day of Term 2 Finish at 1:15pm
<i>January</i>	
Monday 5 th	First Day of Term 3
Tuesday 6th	Sycamore Class Table Tennis sessions PM
Tuesday 13 th	Oak Class visit to Sevington Victorian School
Wednesday 15 th	Deadline for primary school applications

Please also refer to the **Key Dates Planner V1**, that includes all the dates that we know of for the academic year 2025/26 (at this point).

Our aim is that we give you advance warning and enable you to plan well ahead for some of the main events in the year. As events come into the school diary they will be added to the dates sections of the Newsletter and to Key Dates Planners V2 and V3 which are resent at the beginning of Terms 3 and 5.

Remaining TD Days 2025/26

20th April 2026

Please Note

We will close at 1:15pm on the following end of term dates:

- **Friday 19th December**
- **Friday 27th March**
- **Wednesday 22nd July**

Children will be ready to be collected from the playground at 1:15pm. *On these days we ask that children do not stay to play so that end of term clear-up and organisation can be planned to include any grounds maintenance that might be needed.*

Thank you

Other things you might want to know...

Be a Star
and donate
a gift



Could you help us make Christmas special for those who may have little or nothing under the tree on Christmas morning?

Gifts for children and adults
(must be brand new and unwrapped)

Donations via:
Claire Presley, 49 Bourne Way, Burbage - 07787 533677
Ducklings Toy Shop, Marlborough or Wootton Bassett

****Deadline for donations 16th December 2025****

or visit our website
www.salvationarmy.org.uk/swindon-gorse-hill



The Salvation Army Trustee Company acting as Trustee of The Salvation Army Trust (Central Funds), a Christian Church and Registered Charity No. 214298 and its Scotland SC099298. The Salvation Army, Tomteplatz 1, Chesham Park, London SE1 8PA.

Help Shape Health & Care Services for Children in Wiltshire

Have your voice heard at one of our upcoming workshops

The WPCC is working with HCRG Care Group to help shape health and care services across Wiltshire to meet the needs of children, young people, and their families.

HCRG is currently going through a transformation process to reshape services, so they respond better to the people who use them.

Why Your Voice Matters

Parent carer engagement has already made a huge difference in Wiltshire.

Your involvement helped design the Wiltshire Neurodevelopmental Pathway and led to the creation of the WPCC ND Advice Line.

This next phase is another chance to influence what local community health services look like and how they work.

What the Workshops Will Cover

Each workshop will explore:

- What HCRG Care Group does
- Your experiences of using their services
- How services could work better for your child, you, and your family

Refreshments & Expenses

Free refreshments and a simple buffet lunch will be provided.

Out of pocket travel and childcare expenses paid.

WHEN AND WHERE

Three daytime face-to-face sessions - 10am to 2pm

- Calne – Friday 5th December 2025
- Devizes – Thursday 11th December 2025
- Salisbury – Thursday 15th January 2026

(Each session offers the same opportunity to contribute.)

BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL

To book your place, please visit:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WPCC-HealthandCare-DectoJan>

or telephone the WPCC on 01225 784647.

Information about venues is on the booking form.



Jolly Days in TreeHouse

Come and join us for festive fun at our Holiday Club, packed with Christmas cheer!

Christmas Holiday Club

Opening Times: 8:30am - 5.00pm
£41.75

Location:

Sunflowers at Grafton, The Green, East Grafton, SN8 3DB

MON 22 DEC | TUE 23 DEC

Christmas at Sunflowers

Staying cosy with winter wanderings and festive crafts to get us into the Christmas spirit!



Breakfast, After School & Holiday Club

Wraparound Care at TreeHouse

Did you know we offer flexible wraparound care before and after school?

Breakfast Club at Great Bedwyn School - Start the day with a healthy breakfast and fun activities!

After School Club at Sunflowers, Grafton - Pick-up from Great Bedwyn and Burbage Primary Schools via minibus. Enjoy games, crafts, exciting activities and a healthy tea, until 6pm.

Holiday Club at Burbage School - Packed with a wide variety of activities and special visitors, giving children fun and memorable experiences.

Holiday Club 'Out and About' - Heading out on the minibus for exciting day trips, discoveries and fun-filled adventures!

Look out for February's Holiday Club Timetable January 2026!

To book places, or for more information, email treehouse@sunflowers-grafton.co.uk

