

13 DECEMBER 2023

ST CATHERINE'S NEWSLETTER

"Be who God wants you to be, and you will set the world on fire." – St Catherine of Siena



Newsletter Highlights

[WELLBEING WEEK](#)

[SENIOR CHOIR TOUR TO BELGIUM](#)

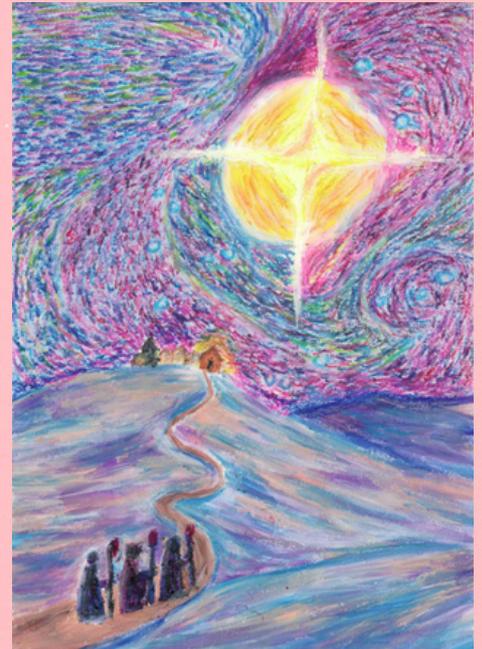
[EGYPTIANS IN PREP](#)

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This is our last newsletter for 2023 as another year draws to a close. These Christmas card designs by Holly (Year 7), Bella (Year 9) and Beatrice (Year 9) were our selected winners for 2023. Congratulations to the girls on such beautiful designs.



Mrs McPherson and all of the staff at St Catherine's wish you all a very happy Christmas.

Wellbeing Week



Wellbeing is an important part of all weeks at St Catherine's. However, our annual Wellbeing Week, which took place in Week 10 was a great opportunity to bring wellbeing into focus for the girls through a variety of activities.

Highlights included planting trees and bulbs in the grounds; a Who am I? Workshop for Year 6, 7 and 9 where pupils explored their gifts, talents and interests; and a thought-provoking visit from Elevate for the Senior School.



A Year 9 Pupil's Experience of Wellbeing Week

The Chocolate Challenge



The "Chocolate Challenge" was an engaging and interactive team-building activity that simulated the dynamics of running a business. In this challenge, groups were tasked with acting as a business unit, channelling our **creativity** and **strategic thinking** to devise **innovative ideas** related to chocolate products. As we took on roles like a marketing team, we were required to **brainstorm, plan, and present** our concepts in a compelling manner. This exercise not only encouraged teamwork but also required skills such as **communication, problem-solving, and collaboration**. The Chocolate Challenge provided a fun and educational platform for us to experience product development and marketing strategies, making it a very interesting experience for all involved.

Who Am I? Workshop

The "Who Am I?" workshop was a transformative and gripping presentation designed to guide us on a journey of **self-discovery** and **personal growth**. This workshop went beyond the usual level of self-awareness, instead it taught us about the core aspects of our identity, values, and aspirations. Through a series of reflective exercises, open discussions and guided activities, we gained a better understanding of ourselves, our strengths and areas for development. The "Who Am I" workshop provided a supportive environment for us to **explore our beliefs, passions and life goals**. This workshop left us with a better understanding of who we are and got us thinking about who we want to become in the future.

Safety talk

Following the workshop, we were visited by two Police officers who spoke to us about **personal safety** when we are out with friends and online at home. The talk was very interesting and gave us lots of **valuable information** about **consent** and the law.

Wellbeing Walk

During lunch on Friday, some **friends** and I decided to join the wellbeing walk in Radnor Gardens. This was an opportunity to get away from any stress we were carrying and set us up for the afternoon lessons. Being outside and just getting some **fresh air** was beneficial to us and was a very **enjoyable time** to make friends with pupils from different year groups. It was a perfect way to end our Wellbeing Week.

Holly, Year 9

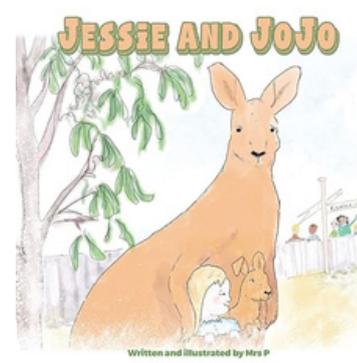


Wellbeing Week in Prep

Managing Feelings Workshop



Years 2 to 6 enjoyed workshops with **Mrs P**, author of the book **Jessie and Jojo**, all about managing feelings. The girls talked about worries being like "bother bugs" and what they can do to manage these.



Who Am I? Workshop

Year 6 took part in a workshop called "Who Am I?" to learn about **identity**.

Bake Sale

Prep Food Committee ran a highly successful bake sale on Friday, selling delicious cakes to the other Prep girls at break time and then again in the afternoon to Senior girls and parents. We are busy counting up the total amount raised for our school charities!



Egyptian Day

Year 2 and 3 had a fun filled Egyptian Day. We started our day learning about **mummies** and wrapping ourselves up in paper. Then we created **sarcophagus pencil cases** and painted **Tutankhamun money boxes**. Lastly we became **archeologists** digging for treasure.



Lego #BuildToGive

The girls in St Catherine's Cub Scouts took part in the **Lego #BuildToGive** initiative. Over the last six years Lego have donated more than 1.6 million sets for vulnerable children who wouldn't have anything to play with over Christmas. By building **heart shapes out of Lego**, we will be able to **donate another 17 sets**. The girls were very creative and we had a great time using their making skills.



Brinsworth House

On 15 November, Year 6 had the privilege of sharing their voices with the **residents of Brinsworth House**, singing songs of Remembrance after a term of studying music from WWI and WWII. It was a delightful programme enjoyed by all, including **songs from The Sound of Music** and some **Vera Lynn favourites**. The girls also had the opportunity to share some of their individual solos on the recorder, violin and piano as well as some solo singing. Brinsworth House is becoming a favourite community link for St Catherine's, and the residents always **appreciate the smiles and talents of our girls**. They are a credit to the school, and I hope that they will be able to share this experience with the Royal Variety residents for many years to come.



House Music

At this year's House music competition, we were privileged to have **Mrs Jane Newberry** as our **guest judge**. Mrs Newberry is a published poet and composer, with a wealth of performance and teaching experience, who has performed alongside Michael Rosen at the Globe Theatre. Like every year all the Houses were very competitive, but this did not stop them from cheering on their peers when it was their turn to perform. We had a range of instrumental solos and duets, including on the drums, piano, violin, clarinet and electric guitar, as well as some wonderful singing. The winners for each category were: **Prep soloist - Mary from Nightingale; Lower school soloist - Evangeline from Bronte; Middle school soloist - Ellyse from Cavell; Ensemble - Sophie and Evie from Cavell**. The **overall winner was Pankhurst** - well done Pankhurst! The House music competition is a great way for pupils to put ourselves out there and build confidence. St Catherine's is full of musical talents and it's amazing to see so many pupils who put themselves forward to represent their House.

Aisan, Year 13



London Symphony Orchestra

Year 5 have begun this academic year learning about the instruments of the orchestra. They had a wonderful opportunity to see the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) in concert at the Barbican Centre this week. It was a wonderful celebration of music that **merged Western and Eastern sounds in telling the story of Diwali**. In addition to the traditional instruments that girls have been learning about, LSO also hosted a trio of classical Indian musicians playing the Tabla, Dohl (drums) and Sitar. Our girls were involved all the way and were even able to share some of their instrumental knowledge. They sang along with 'Jai Ho' and clapped and stomped with enthusiasm and precision when asked to join in with a group song celebrating the victory of the Monkey Army. I would encourage you all to read the story of Diwali and delight in the many exciting plot twists that have inspired this Festival of Lights.



Choir Tour to Belgium

The Choir Tour to Belgium over half term started at 5.30 am, but it was well worth the sacrificed sleep for this amazing experience that we will all remember for the rest of our lives. From the concerts to the elegant dinners, the choir tour was full of excitement and delight!

Our first day of activities included the three-country meeting point Drielandenpunt. After the pleasant scenery of Belgium, we also said 'Hallo' to the Netherlands and Germany. Accompanied by the never-ending rain we enjoyed a leisurely boat cruise along the river Maas in the Netherlands before proceeding to our first ever international concert.

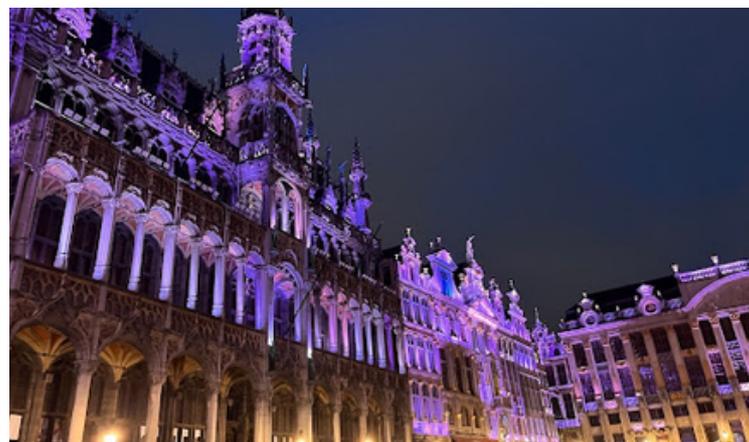
Situated next to Maastricht cathedral, is the equally impressive **St Jan's Church**. After exploring the Netherlands' culinary delights, we donned our black attire and sang for our audience. From 'Rolling in the Deep' by Adele to 'Ave Verum Corpus' by Mozart and two special solos sung by Lucie and Sophie, the choir sang with such passion, we should all be proud of having created something so special.

After our first concert, we unwound by bowling together before enjoying a wonderful dinner. The desert bar was a particularly eye-catching sight with its huge array of different ice cream flavours.

We enjoyed a highly anticipated visit to '**Choco-Story**', a chocolate factory and museum which illustrated the story of cocoa beans and the evolution of chocolate. Surrounded by many shops, offering a variety of souvenirs and, of course, waffles, we had lunch and made our way to the MIM, **Musical Instruments Museum**, showcasing a vast selection of instruments from all over the world.

Our performance at **Brussels Cathedral** was a success, with our singing having attracted many audience members. 'Faure's Requiem' in particular sounded awe-inspiring, and made the most of the beautiful surroundings.

“ Part of this great experience was hearing the echoes of our voices, which made each song sound magical. This will definitely be one of our greatest performances and performance venues. ”



To celebrate having performed in two splendid concerts with such enthusiasm and passion, we ate dinner in another fantastic restaurant. It was a fitting end to a wonderful, unforgettable experience.

A special thanks to our musical inspiration, Mrs Neale, and the incredible Mr Bawden, Miss Collett and Miss Ryan without whom the trip would not have been as enjoyable. Also, we can't forget our wonderful manager Sarah and our amazing driver Jim.

“ We are all immensely grateful for being given this wonderful opportunity. ”

Amelie and Harini, Year 12

Christmas Jumpers and Celebrations



House Quiz

Last week, we had our school's Christmas House Quiz and like always, it was an event filled with laughter, joy and team spirit. There were several rounds in the quiz - starting **from the Prep Teams all the way to the Staff Teams** for the different Houses: Bronte, Cavell, Nightingale and Pankhurst. The teams fought it out to see which one could get the most points for their House.

It was evident that this is one of the most loved school events of the year - there was never a dull moment when the Hall wasn't filled with cheers and drum rolls of anticipation as the scoreboard updated. **Pankhurst won the quiz** - truly a well-deserved win for a well-prepared team.

As one can imagine, a Christmas Quiz cannot be completed without a **Christmas singalong!** The festive spirit of our school truly shone as everyone enjoyed singing and dancing to their favourite Christmas songs!

Gursharon, Year 13



Geography Trip to Dorset

It was a cold and rainy November weekend that faced the Year 11s on their Geography fieldwork trip to Dorset. However, this did not dishearten them and they leapt into their data collection with enthusiasm. They studied the sea defences of **Swanage Bay**, which were judged to be effective despite some recent damage in **Storm Ciaran**. They also investigated the urban environment of **Bournemouth** where they discovered that the regeneration scheme was perhaps not worth the money. The Year 11s were a real credit to St Catherine's, demonstrating a great sense of humour and a general love of Geography.



Sports Report - Netball

Year 4

Year 4 played against Newland House in netball last week. One team drew 1-1; player of the game was Daisy. The other team won 9-0, player of the game was Ria. Well done girls, you all learnt so much and were a pleasure to take, and you coped so well in the rain and cold.



Year 11



Well done to the Year 11 girls who played in the netball match against Radnor. There were two matches.

The A team put on an amazing performance which they really enjoyed and won 27-7.

The B team started off the match very hesitantly; after being 6-3 down in the first quarter, they came back in the final quarter to win 14-13.

The girls should all be very proud of how well they played. Players of the games were Lily and Ros.

Carolling in Kew

On Sunday 3 December, members of the Prep choir sang carols at Kew Village Market. The girls gave a great performance and many **members of the public were singing along with the carols**. Hopefully, it will be the first of many St Catherine's appearances at the market. Well done to all the girls who performed!



Prep Advent Assembly

The Prep School gathered to celebrate the start of Advent in a **musical telling of the Nativity** on Tuesday 5 December. Year 2 led us through the story with Mary, Joseph, angels, a shepherd and a wise man. The whole Prep department joined in with some **reflective and joyful Christmas songs**. 'Born for Us' was a strong ending that showcased the girls' work on singing in harmony this term. We truly shared the joy of Jesus' birth and everyone left with smiles ready to welcome the holidays.



Careers in the Curriculum

Chemistry in Action

On 17 November Year 12 and 13 pupils enjoyed an amazing day at the **Chemistry in Action conference**. They heard from experienced scientists in academia and industry, who addressed issues such as how **nuclear science** has the power to tackle some of our greatest challenges; the quest for **new battery technologies**; and how **chemical forensics** can tackle waste crime. The girls ended the day feeling inspired to become the scientists of the future!



"We enjoyed a variety of talks covering topics such as the importance of batteries in the future, snake venom, and illegal waste. The talks were very interesting and allowed us to contextualise our knowledge and gather a deeper understanding of the role of Chemistry in different fields."

Harini, Year 12



"This conference made me feel so inspired and eager to undertake research myself. I am grateful that I get to study Science in the Sixth Form, and I am looking forward to carrying on my studies at University."

Luci, Year 13



It was super inspiring to see the application of Chemistry in so many areas. From making resources such as antivenom or insulin more accessible to the world, becoming a 'Chemistry detective' to combat illegal waste crimes, to hearing about the research conducted by university students, it was wonderful to listen to such passionate scientists."

Amelie, Year 12



Year 9 Industrial Cadets

We are delighted to be running the Industrial Cadets Bronze project with Year 9. This programme, devised by the **Engineering Development Trust**, will help pupils to develop their STEM skills and their understanding of the role that STEM subjects play in industry.

Francesca, Verity, Armance, Mila, Jocelyn and I will be taking part in the Industrial Cadets project, competing against many other schools nationwide. Working as a team on a STEM project, we will have the opportunity to gain key skills such as teamwork, and leadership, as well as developing our STEM-related knowledge. At the end of the scheme, we will graduate as Bronze-level Industrial Cadets, a nationally recognised award that we can use as evidence of our experience and take forward to complement our future applications and career journeys. We are all extremely excited to work with our mentor, meet new people and at the end, celebrate everyone's achievements.

Gemma, Year 9

She Stoops to Conquer

The evening of Thursday 30 November saw the GCSE and A Level Drama students make their way to the Orange Tree Theatre in Richmond to be treated to an amazing production of Oliver Goldsmith's 'She Stoops To Conquer'.

This star-studded comedy of manners, first performed in 1773, has had its setting updated to the 1930s and combines wordplay and physical comedy to create an extremely humorous performance.



We could certainly see why this production was so brilliantly reviewed, and we were still talking about how electric the performances were the next day. It truly was a wonderful evening!

ISA Dance

On 2 November, during half term, a dedicated group of Year 7s, Year 8s and Year 9s boarded a minibus to go to Reddam House and compete in the finals of the ISA Dance competition. Due to increasing numbers of entries, this year the ISA created an initial round of video auditions. Out of over 140 entries, we were selected as finalists and we were excited to go and perform for the judges. We were entered into the Key Stage 3 category, performing a contemporary routine to a remix of Greta Thunberg's impassioned speech at the United Nations. The squad had worked very hard to get to the finals and excitement was palpable. The standard was incredibly high and included routines from specialised performing arts schools, so we were justifiably proud to be at that level of performance and talent. The girls danced brilliantly, and the judges praised our 'very impressive use of the space' and 'sensitivity through movement'. We were also very proud of the girls' attitude throughout the entire day; they were exemplary in their conduct, support of others, and enthusiasm. We are already planning our entry for next year!

Cinderella

On Wednesday 6 December, Years 7 and 8 headed over to the Lyric, Hammersmith for our annual trip to the pantomime. This year's offering was Cinderella, and contained all the elements of the genre that are necessary for a wonderful time. Since we have been studying pantomime in our lessons, we were looking forward to seeing lots of those traditional elements on stage and the show did not disappoint. Highlights included a dame with a vast number of incredible costumes, one of our pupils being selected to go on stage for the big singalong at the end, and of course, some delicious ice cream! We had a raucous afternoon and a thoroughly enjoyable time, setting us up perfectly for the end of the Autumn term!

Macbeth

This has been a busy half term in the Drama Department at St Catherine's. After a series of callbacks, the cast for 'Macbeth' has been finalised and we are excited to begin our production! Our first rehearsal certainly captured the sense of anticipation as we begin this ambitious project.

The Snow Queen

On Thursday 30 November, all the Prep pupils had an early lunch and then boarded a coach to the Polka Theatre in Wimbledon. There, we were treated to a brilliant performance of the classic Hans Christian Andersen tale, 'The Snow Queen'. We took our seats in the theatre and then thoroughly enjoyed the production, which was full of songs, funny moments, and great acting. The highlight, however, was when a 'cloud' burst right above us and we were showered in silver confetti 'glass', which caused much excitement! It was a lovely way to get into the Christmas spirit.



Spanish

The House Of Bernarda Alba - we spent an excellent evening at London South Bank's National Theatre to see this wonderful adaptation of Lorca's classic and A Level Spanish set work, La casa de Bernada Alba.



Harriet Walter's performance was absolutely incredible! We enjoyed this show immensely.



German

On Wednesday 29 November, the German A Level classes got the opportunity to return to the BFI for another helpful session, where we learnt about how to analyse the films that are studied in the A Level course.

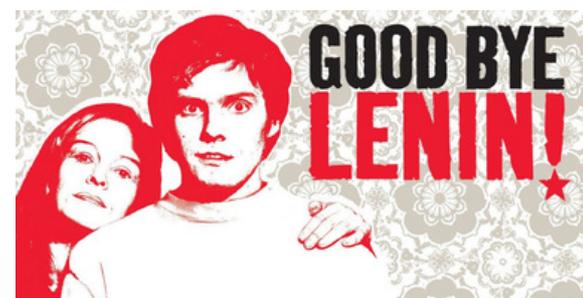
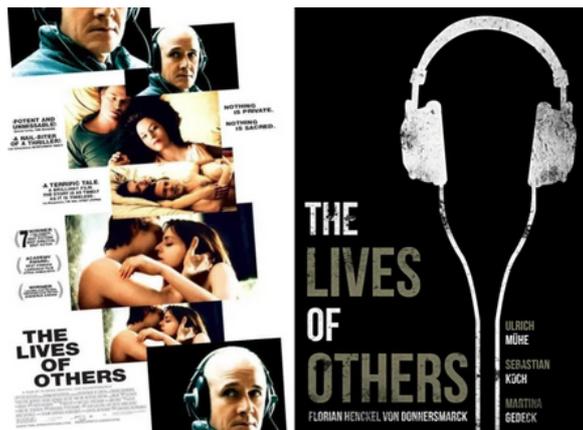
This study day was aimed at helping us build our cultural capital, expand our vocabulary and improve our critical film analysis skills by exploring key themes and styles in contemporary German cinema. The day was focused on the **legacy of East Germany through film**. We looked at the set films **Goodbye, Lenin!** and **The Lives of Others** which are linked to the AQA A Level specification.

The morning session consisted of a clip-based presentation introducing the themes, teaching film-specific vocabulary and analysing key scenes with activities allowing students to better their analysis skills. We received a resource pack at the beginning of the day which included all the activities that aligned with the presentation along with some very helpful vocabulary on the film methods and camera angles, which will be very helpful for when we write essays about the film.

Throughout the day, there was barely any English spoken. The entire presentation was in German, allowing us to strengthen our skills in understanding, interpreting and responding in German.

It was a truly special treat and experience for us and strengthened our love of German even more.

Emma , Year 13



FOSC NEWS

ReDress ReCycle ReWear

ST CATHERINE'S
PRE-LOVED UNIFORM BOUTIQUE

Thank you to all who have purchased from ReDress this term.

Please diarise the dates for 2024, for your convenience:

ReDress Sale:

- 11 January
- 25 January
- 8 February
- 22 February
- 7 March
- 21 March
- 18 April
- 2 May
- 16 May
- 6 June
- 20 June



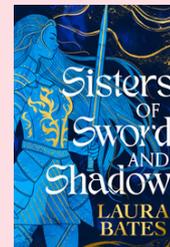
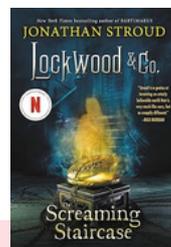
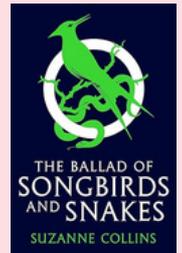
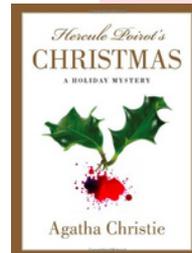
Encouraging reading this holiday season, couldn't be easier with the wonderful books recommended by our Prep Librarian:



OUR LIBRARIANS RECOMMEND

Be sure to carve out some time to read a few good books over the Christmas Holidays. Our Senior Librarian recommends the following titles:

- *Hercule Poirot's Christmas* by Agatha Christie
- *A Snowfall of Silver* by Laura Wood
- *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* by Suzanne Collins
- *The Screaming Staircase* by Jonathan Stroud
- *Sisters of Sword and Shadow* by Laura Bates
- *Catch your Death* by Ravena Guron
- *The Davenport* by Krystal Marquis



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Housekeeping / Notices



ST CATHERINE'S SCHOOL
TWICKENHAM

TERM DATES 2023-2024

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that dates remain unchanged, we reserve the right to make adjustments if circumstances require.

AUTUMN TERM 2023	SPRING TERM 2024	SUMMER TERM 2024
Term Begins: Wed 6 Sept 2023	Term Begins: Mon 8 Jan 2024	Term Begins: Tue 16 Apr 2024
Half Term: Mon 23 Oct - Fri 3 Nov 2023	Half Term: Mon 12 Feb - Fri 16 Feb 2024	Half Term: Mon 27 May - Fri 31 May 2024
Return from Half Term: Mon 6 Nov 2023	Return from Half Term: Mon 19 Feb 2024	Return from Half Term: Mon 3 Jun 2024
Term Ends: Wed 13 Dec 2023 (staggered early finish times)	Term Ends: Wed 27 Mar 2024 (staggered early finish times)	Term Ends: Fri 5 Jul 2024 (staggered early finish times)
	St Catherine's Day: Sat 29 Jun 2024	



ST CATHERINE'S SCHOOL
TWICKENHAM

TERM DATES 2024-2025

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AUTUMN TERM 2024	SPRING TERM 2025	SUMMER TERM 2025
Term Begins: Wed 4 Sept 2024	Term Begins: Wed 8 Jan 2025	Term Begins: Wed 23 Apr 2025
Half Term: Mon 21 Oct - Fri 1 Nov 2024	Half Term: Mon 17 Feb - Fri 21 Feb 2025	Half Term: Mon 26 May - Fri 30 May 2025
Return from Half Term: Mon 4 Nov 2024	Return from Half Term: Mon 24 Feb 2025	Return from Half Term: Mon 2 Jun 2025
Term Ends: Fri 13 Dec 2024 (staggered early finish times)	Term Ends: Fri 4 Apr 2025 (staggered early finish times)	Term Ends: Fri 4 Jul 2025 (staggered early finish times)
		St Catherine's Day: Sat 28 Jun 2025



You are warmly welcome to come and join the Senior Management Team for tea in the Dining Room - next term's dates to be announced.



We continue to be very grateful to parents who are mindful of parking in a way that does not cause any inconvenience to local residents or pose any dangers to other road users or pedestrians.



The Good Schools Guide is famous for unbiased and candid reviews of state and private schools. Schools cannot pay to be included and have no influence over what is written - which is why parents value their expertise and trust them to tell the truth. Please request that the Good Schools Guide include St Catherine's by emailing office@goodschoolsguide.co.uk and asking them to review us. Thank you!



Have you noticed this little mouse? If you find the mouse, email rbishop@stcatherineschool.co.uk and say which page and article you noticed it on and you will be announced in our next newsletter.



"Be who God wants you to be, and you will set the world on fire." - St Catherine of Siena