ST CATHERINE'S NEWSLETTER

Autumn Term, Week 8-9

Message from the Head

"The Gospel invites us not to calculate: even one. Every child, every human being, possesses an infinite dignity."

- Pope Leo XIV

Dear Parents,

It's been a busy two weeks since our last newsletter, and as ever, St Catherine's remains a bustling and positive environment for your daughters.

Over the fortnight, we have gathered for two whole school assemblies. Our first assembly focused on displaced persons, reflecting on Pope Leo's view that every person possesses an infinite human dignity that must be welcomed, protected, promoted and integrated rather than reduced to statistics. Our other whole school assembly, led by Miss Aherne, highlighted the importance of community and how reflecting on our shared connections enhances all of our wellbeing.

This week was Wellbeing Week, which brought a great mix of practical learning and downtime for pupils across the school. A big thank you to Miss Aherne for overseeing such a successful week. Highlights can be found on page 5.

On Wednesday, our school community gathered for our annual Remembrance Day service. Our Year 11 pupils read with great poise, clarity and respect throughout the service. Taking time to remember those who served and gave their lives for our freedom is vital to who we are as a school. This act of reflection directly connects to our core value of service to others, reminding us of the selflessness required to put the good of others first. It also calls us to reflect on courage, not only the heroic bravery shown by previous generations in times of conflict, but the moral courage we ask of our pupils every day. Rooted in our faith, our shared prayers allow us to find strength, hope and peace together, reinforcing our tight-knit school community.

Last night, I visited the Art and Photography Exhibition at London Square, Twickenham Green. It was wonderful to see our pupils displaying their artistic talents publicly, and I would like to say a huge well done to everyone involved.
We wish Mr Rock, Miss Aherne and all our Year 11 geographers the very best of luck and plenty of warmth as they head to Dorset for their field trip this weekend. I hope they have packed plenty of layers.

On Monday, we are encouraging our pupils to kick off Anti-Bullying Week by wearing odd socks to school. This year's theme is Break the Silence; the fun and colourful initiative of odd socks serves as a reminder to celebrate individuality, embrace our differences and build on our already inclusive environment where every pupil feels valued and supported.

With best wishes,
Andrew McCleave
Head



PREP SCHOOL NEWS

Show and Share

Our recent Prep Show and Share session was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the girls' hard work and achievements so far this term.

The girls loved welcoming their parents and grandparents into the classroom to share their learning and proudly show off all the work they have been busy creating. It was also a lovely opportunity to explore the classrooms and see the girls' work on display.

What a busy term it has been so far, and what a special way to celebrate all their efforts and accomplishments.





Guiness World Record Contribution

St Catherine's are record-setting readers in the National Year of Reading. Congratulations to Year 6 for taking part in the Take 10 to Read event in October.

We are delighted to share that we have helped set a new Guinness World Record title for the most people reading online in 12 hours. 153,862 participants took part in the event around the world from 92 countries and territories.

More than 3,000 schools, libraries and community groups got involved in the event hosted by former Children's Laureate Frank Cottrell-Boyce, who treated us to a reading from his latest book and spoke inspiringly about finding joy in reading.

Diwali Celebration

Year 3 and 4 have been celebrating Diwali in style, bringing PSHE lessons on our diverse school community to life.

Hearing directly from Hindu, Sikh, and Jain families in our class showed pupils how the Festival of Lights is honoured in beautifully unique ways - from lighting traditional diyas, creating beautiful rangoli patterns and exploring meaningful Jain spiritual teachings.

Sharing these distinct traditions, festive stories, and symbolic references, alongside exchanging delicious traditional Indian sweets like barfi, truly immersed everyone in the vibrant culture.

It was a joyful reminder for us all that while our beliefs and customs may differ, celebrating them together with open hearts brings us closer and strengthens our entire school community.



SENIOR SCHOOL NEWS

Year 7

Year 7 brought true "bakineering" to the science lab. Demonstrating outstanding STEM integration, pupils applied practical scientific principles to construct detailed, edible cell models for Biology.

Their ability to translate complex biological structures into creative design makes us exceptionally proud. We look forward to seeing these young scientists and engineers leading innovation in the future - and who knows, maybe even competing on Baking Impossible one day?







Sixth Form visit the British Library

Year 12 and 13 Politics pupils recently enjoyed an inspiring evening at the British Library, attending "Making Sense of the Midterms".

The lively panel featured leading US politics scholars alongside former Members of Congress Val Demings (Democrat, Florida) and Garret Graves (Republican, Louisiana).

Reflecting on Capitol Hill and the Midterms, the speakers offered three distinct perspectives on the outcome of the recent Midterm elections in the USA.

It was an invaluable, thought-provoking experience that brought Politics vividly to life.





Catholic Life of the School

On Thursday, 12 November, we were delighted to welcome Canon Peter Newby - Parish Priest of St Margaret of Scotland and St James, Twickenham - to visit the school.

During his visit, he met with Mr McCleave and our Chaplain, Miss Toone, who shared insights into the vibrant Catholic life of our school community. We look forward to working with him.

WELLBEING WEEK



Staff Feature

Meet Miss Lianne Aherne, Deputy Head Pastoral

Can you tell us a little about your background and what brought you to St Catherine's?

For the past twenty years, I have had the privilege of supporting and championing girls in a variety of different roles. Whether as a Geography teacher or Head of Careers, a Housemistress or Director of Sixth Form, what I have always enjoyed is playing a small part in each of their journeys. Getting to know them as individuals, helping them find what it is that brings them joy at school as well as guiding them through some of the most formative years of their lives is something that I find incredibly rewarding and, ultimately, my aim is to help them to flourish both at school and beyond.

When I first considered joining St Catherine's, I was struck by its distinctive ethos of warmth and ambition. It is a school where girls are genuinely valued for who they are and where they are encouraged to make the most of the many opportunities on offer. It is a school that works hard to foster a sense of belonging and I felt that I would quickly feel at home here.

What do you enjoy most about your role and working with our girls?

For me, fostering a sense of belonging is one of the most important parts of my role. I want girls to feel free to be who they are called be, to be kind to themselves as well as to those around them, to know that they have the power to bring about positive change and to be equipped with the skills, values and personal qualities that will empower them to face the challenges they may face on their journeys.

To be able to do the above, I have to immerse myself in all areas of school life and this is what I enjoy the most; getting to know the girls in and out of the classroom and learning what matters to them. Being able to listen to their stories and to hear their aspirations for the future and work with them to help them get there is something that I really enjoy.



What makes St Catherine's special to you?

I think, for me, what makes St Catherine's special is the genuine care that I see every day and the way in which everyone is committed to bringing out the best in one another, both girls and staff.

This is a community that wants the very best for every girl and we know that success looks different for everyone. We are able to help a girl discover her strengths, find her own path and give her the confidence to pursue it.

What is something pupils and parents might be surprised to know about you?

I once led a month-long expedition to Mongolia, half of which was spent on horseback. It remains one of my favourite countries I have visited.

WELLBEING WEEK

This week has been our annual wellbeing week and we have been impressed with the way in which girls have embraced what has been on offer.

The week began with an assembly from Miss Aherne on the theme of community and during Form Time girls all reflected on different ways that they could help promote their own wellbeing, the wellbeing of others and the wellbeing of the world.



The week ended with a highly popular non-uniform day raising money for Mary's Meals. Wellbeing will continue to be a focus as we move throughout the year and we look forward to working with the girls on more initiatives in the future.





The kindness and care that went into their suggestions was notable. Throughout lunch and break time there have been opportunities to come together whether that be over hot chocolate, noisy board games, 'Sip and Paint', friendship bracelet making or even karaoke led by the Head Girl Team.

With yoga sessions and bikeability, it has been lovely to see the girls try something new. We have also had a range of workshops on a variety of study skills including one run by a recent alumnae on the responsible use of AI. We were delighted to welcome back the fantastic author Tamsin Winter too.



CO-CURRICULAR NEWS

St Paul's X Country Competition

On Tuesday, 3 November, on a fresh but windy day, teams from Year 6, 7 and 8 took part in the St Paul's Cross Country Competition for the first time. It was a fantastic opportunity for the girls to compete against other schools and challenge themselves over a demanding cross-country course.

Congratulations to all of the girls who took part, showing grit and determination from start to finish.





U16 and U18 Netball

On the afternoon of 14 October, our players demonstrated incredible skill and sportsmanship at the Middlesex Netball tournament:

The U18s opened against eventual winners, LEH, with fantastic focus, featuring stand-out flying interceptions from Alice and a brilliant return to court from Claudia at WD. Kaitlyn and Salma formed a fluid, highly accurate circle partnership, highlighted by a perfectly timed midcourt feed from Chloe to Salma against St Augustine's.

Eve and Imogen worked tirelessly in the circle to disrupt opposition play, with Imogen showcasing the 'fastest arms in Hampton' against Richmond Park. Eve also commanded the midcourt with a seamless shift to GD. Chloe, Pippa and Ava dominated the midcourt with unstoppable work ethic, sharp dodging, and relentless defensive reach.

As always, the St Catherine's girls made us proud with their relentless effort and team spirit throughout the day.



CO-CURRICULAR NEWS



U15 Netball vs Kew House School

A fantastic start to the season for both teams in their first games against Kew House School.

The A Team secured a closely fought 15–13 victory, with Paula named Attacking Player of the Game and Freya taking Defensive Player of the Game.

The B Team had an excellent 12–1 win, with Ellie named Player of the Game. A fantastic performance from both shooters helped the team to a convincing result.

These matches were a great reminder that focusing on the basics, working together and building confidence is the foundation for a successful season. Well done to everyone involved.

U16 Netball vs Kew House U18

Well done to the U16 Netball A and B team who had a tough game against Kew House U18 recently.

Well done to Sammy and Julia who were voted player of the match by Kew House. Some really fantastic play and lots of smiles all around.





Year 7 Inter House Netball

A fantastic afternoon of inter house netball took place on Tuesday, 10 November for Year 7. With some tough fought games the houses scored several goals against each other and demonstrated fantastic teamwork and sportsmanship.

Cavell proved themselves as the team to beat on the day, scoring 26 goals during the afternoon and coming 1st in the competition, closely followed by Bronte 2nd, Pankhurst 3rd and Nightingale who came 4th.







WHOLE SCHOOL NEWS

London Square Twickenham Art and Photography Competition



"What Twickenham Means to You"

Pupils, parents and the wider community gathered at London Square on Twickenham Green on Thursday, 12 November for our Art and Photography exhibition, exploring the theme "What Twickenham Means to You."

Visitors enjoyed a diverse showcase spanning local landmarks, green spaces, candid everyday moments, and imaginative interpretations that showed Twickenham in a whole new light. Throughout the evening, proud pupils walked their families through the displays, sharing the stories and skills behind their work.

We were delighted to welcome Councillor Rhi Lee (a St Catherine's alumna), who assisted in judging the entries. Thanks to London Square's generous sponsorship, two £100 vouchers will be awarded to the overall Art and Photography winners respectively.

Thank you to everyone who attended, to London Square for hosting and sponsoring the prizes, and to Councillor Rhi Lee for her support. The winners will be announced soon – watch this space.

Thank You for Supporting Our Open Evening

A huge thank you to all the parents and pupils who helped make our recent Open Evening such a success. We were delighted to welcome so many prospective families, and we are especially grateful to the girls who gave their time to welcome visitors, lead tours and share their experiences of life at St Catherine's.

Their warmth, enthusiasm and pride in their School made a wonderful impression and helped visitors experience what makes our community so special.



Open Morning

Our next Open Morning is on Thursday, 28 January from 11.00am.

Please share the date with friends and family who might like to discover what makes our school so special.

Book online to attend via our website.

If you would like to be involved at Open Events as a Parent Ambassador, please contact Mrs Kassanis on jkassanis@stcatherineschool.co.uk.

HOUSEKEEPING

St Cecilia Concert

A reminder to RSVP to our annual St Cecilia Concert, where we celebrate the musical talent of our pupils. Please RSVP by 17 November here.





HOUSEKEEPING

TERM DATES 2026-2027

AUTUMN TERM 2026

Term Ends:
Fri 11 Dec 2026 at 12.30pm

SPRING TERM 2027

Term Begins:
Inset Days: Mon 4 Jan & Tues 5 Jan
Wed 6 Jan 2027

Half Term:
Mon 15 Feb - Fri 19 Feb 2027

Return from Half Term:
Mon 22 Feb 2027

Term Ends:
Wed 24 Mar 2027 at 12.30pm

SUMMER TERM 2027

Term Begins:
Inset Days: Mon 12 Apr 2027
Tues 13 Apr 2027

Half Term:
Mon 31 May - Fri 4 Jun 2027

Return from Half Term:
Mon 7 Jun 2027
St Catherine's Day: Fri 2 Jul 2027

Term Ends:
Wed 7 Jul 2027 at 12.30pm

TERM DATES 2027-2028

AUTUMN TERM 2027

Term Begins:
Inset Days: Thurs 2 Sept & Fri 3 Sept
Mon 6 Sept 2027

Half Term:
Mon 18 Oct - Fri 29 Oct 2027

Return from Half Term:
Mon 1 Nov 2027

Term Ends:
Fri 10 Dec 2027 at 12.00pm

SPRING TERM 2028

Term Begins:
Inset Day: Tues 4 Jan
Wed 5 Jan 2028

Half Term:
Mon 14 Feb - Fri 18 Feb 2028

Return from Half Term:
Mon 21 Feb 2028

Term Ends:
Wed 5 Apr 2028 at 12.00pm

SUMMER TERM 2028

Term Begins:
Inset Day: Mon 24 Apr
Tues 25 Apr 2028
* 1 May Bank Holiday

Half Term:
Mon 29 May - Fri 2 Jun 2028

Return from Half Term:
Mon 5 Jun 2028
St Catherine's Day: Fri 30 Jun 2028

Term Ends:
Fri 7 Jul 2028 at 12.00pm

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

FOSC NOTICES

JOIN US STRAIGHT AFTER THE CAROL SERVICE FOR OUR FESTIVE SAUSAGE SIZZLE!

TO MAKE THE NIGHT RUN SMOOTHLY, WE ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO PRE-ORDER AND PRE-PAY. PLEASE REMEMBER TO KEEP YOUR TICKET EMAIL AS PROOF OF PURCHASE.

Christmas Sausage Sizzle

Pre-order now to enjoy your choice of:

Meat
Veg/Vegan
Gluten-Free Meat
Gluten-Free Veg/Vegan

Enjoy a warm bite, good company, and plenty of Christmas cheer!

CALL FOR DONATIONS

Christmas Fair

Our much-loved Carol service / Christmas Fair is just around the corner – 10th December – and we need your help to make it a festive success!

BOTTLES

All families to bring bottles for the school tombola.
(Wine, fizz, olive oil etc.)

SENIOR CHOCOLATE

Senior girls to bring chocolate bars for the tombola.

THE BIGGER THE BETTER!

PREP JOLLY JARS

Prep girls to bring filled and decorated jars with small chocolates or sweets. Get creative!

Pre-order via the link below:



Pre-pay now! – Christmas Sausage Sizzle Pre-pay – St Catherine's School

Christmas Sausage Sizzle Pre-pay – St Catherine's School. Thu 10 Dec 2026 - Join us straight after the carol service …

tickettailor

EVERY CONTRIBUTION HELPS MAKE THE FAIR A MAGICAL ONE FOR EVERYONE!

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR SUPPORT

♡

PLEASE DROP DONATIONS INTO RECEPTION BY
MONDAY 7TH DECEMBER

THE FOSC TEAM

Not words, but deeds.

Remember to follow us on social media.