



Newsletter



St Cuthbert Mayne | Autumn 2, 2022



A message from the head

Advent is a time of preparation for the coming of Jesus. In our collective worship during Advent, we have been learning that we can all be messengers of Christ. It is through our words and actions that we can bring the Good News of love, hope and kindness to others.

We won't always get it right. But as a community growing together in love and learning as followers of Jesus, we are keenly focused on this special mission and every day I see this being lived out in the words and actions of the members of staff, pupils and parents that I encounter.

Advent is a time to rejoice and I feel a keen sense of joy and pride in being part of a community that even if sometimes falls short, strives every day to be messengers of this Good News.

Have a restful Christmas and we look forward to seeing everyone in the new year.

Alex Sallis (Headteacher)

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House winners

Congratulations to St Dominic for winning the House Cup this term!



Caritas

Thank you to the 55 pupils from across the school who with Mrs Welch and Mrs Young attended the Caritas event at Our Lady Queen of all Creation Church on Sunday 19th December. The elderly parishioners were rightly amazed with their enthusiasm and musical talent. Particular praise to our musicians. Without prior rehearsal, they performed traditional Christmas songs for the audience to participate in. We will look forward to visiting again in the summer term.

Advent giving Calendar

Thank you to everyone who has given generously to Dens through our Advent giving Calendar. Your donations will support those in need this winter. The Parish volunteers were delighted with the volume of donations received from families at the school.



Christmas Concerts

Year 3 and Year 4 pupils invited families to come and watch their Christmas Concert. All children who participated shined brightly. Through your generosity, £440 was raised for Cancer Research UK following Victoria's and Klara's appeal.

Dominican Sisters

We are proud to be a Dominican school. Our Dominican heritage is a source of pride and inspiration encapsulated in our motto: "To Praise, To Bless, To Preach". You can find out more about the Dominican Associates through their [website](#).

Upcoming Mass / Liturgies in School

TBC: Mass
2/02/23: Service of light Y3N - First Holy Communion Induction
22/02/23: Ash Wednesday Liturgy 3A

CLASSES

Year 3

We have had a busy half term in Year 3 with our school trip, the Christmas production and our DT project. In November, we went to College Lake to learn about fossils as part of our Science topic. We had a fantastic sunny day becoming archaeologists, dating artefacts and discovering the history of College Lake.



Year 3 have sung their hearts out in three brilliant performances of the Christmas production alongside Year 4. We have been practising our singing whilst continuing with our learning and writing our adventure stories based on Flat Stanley. This term both classes have also been creating picture frames as our DT project.



Year 4

We rehearsed as a team to perform our first Nativity concert since the children were infants! In DT we have been sewing and designing Christmas decorations to take home.



CLASSES

Year 5



Year 5 visited Hazard Alley and learnt:

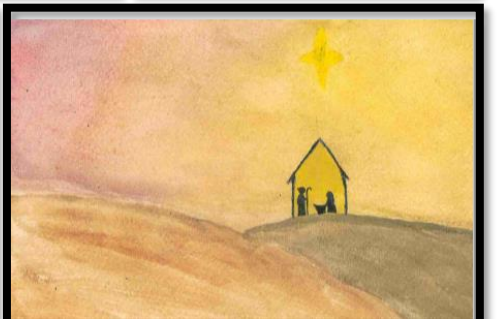
- about stopping distances and safely crossing the road.
- about fire safety and the purpose of smoke detectors.
- about being safe around a train track and being aware of large vehicles when crossing the road.
- about making a 999 call to report a fire.

5M and 4J did some shared reading as part of Feeling Good Week



Year 6

This term, Year 6 spent time with their buddies sharing their favourite books. Additionally, we have been practising different watercolour techniques and have incorporated these into a painting of a nativity scene. Year 6 have worked very hard this term in preparation for their SATs – we are incredibly proud of them!



Curriculum Development

Mrs Bassil has been working with the Head of Curriculum at HFL Education (Ian Connors) to create a model for other curriculum areas in school. Clear progression in skills, linking the subject with our school curriculum vision (PRAY) and ensuring that diversity is clear in the choice of subject matter has been a priority. Miss Thompson will be looking at our Geography curriculum with Ian in the spring term.

Questioning and feedback

Teachers have been developing questioning strategies in school. We have all been practicing 'cold calling' and 'think, pair, share' as strategies to ensure every child is thinking in every lesson.

Clubs

Clubs have continued throughout the second half of the Autumn term. Playfeet put on an incredible performance of Frozen, pupils performed with Kew Dance with other children across the area and both the boys and girls football teams experienced successes.

Next term we are excited to welcome Theo Nicholson who will be running a boxing club each Friday.

Improving Writing

Writing has been identified as an area for improvement in school. Mrs Welch and Mrs Knight are leading this focus and are working with staff to develop effective strategies to improve writing for every child.

As part of this work, Mrs Bance will continue working with classes across the school to raise writing standards. She is a highly experienced and skilled teacher who cares deeply about the school and every child in it. Her mantra is that every child can succeed through careful listening and good concentration. I know the results will speak for themselves.

Volunteers

After Christmas we will be starting up Forest School again. Mrs D'Souza, supported by Mrs Reynolds, will be working with classes across the school on a rota each Thursday and Friday for the remainder of the year. If you think you would be able to support this through being a regular volunteer please complete this [google form](#).

After Spring Half Term, 4A would like some helpers to go swimming on a Tuesday afternoon. If you are able to offer 1pm-3pm each Tuesday afternoon please email Mrs Welch via admin.

Breakfast Club

Breakfast club now hosts over 60 pupils throughout the week. Children

start the day with great breakfast and a chance to play with other children.

STAFF UPDATE

Welcome

We welcome Paula D'Souza who will be leading Forest School in the new year and Amanda Tizard who will be working with teachers to support the sustained improvement of curriculum PE in school, including working with TAs and our Sports Council to set up and run lunchtime sports clubs.

Co-curricular

Theo Nicholson from Challenge Sport will be running a 6-week boxing programme for Year 5 with a focus on mental and physical health.

Watford FC Education Trust will also be running a 6-week programme each week for Year 4 around healthy lifestyles called 'Joy of Movement'

PUPIL GROUPS

School Council

The School Council have led work collecting for the Poppy Appeal and have asked classes about their views on break and lunch times in order to inform decisions on how to improve these periods of the school day for the Spring Term.

Among the changes being made as a result of this feedback are: improvements to the outdoor toilets, new equipment for classes, and setting up pupil and staff led activities during the lunch period.

Chaplaincy Team

The Chaplaincy Team have teamed up again with the parish to collect for Dens through the Advent Giving Calendar. They also visited Westminster Cathedral to take part in the Advent Service led by the Diocese to support the Catholic Children's Society.

POPStars

The POPstars have signed up to a local project 'Dacorum Street Heroes' and 'Junior River Warden Project' which will both get started in the Spring Term. These activities will support an application for an eco Blue Peter badge.

Sports Council

The sports council are planning to introduce a school-wide active mile throughout the Spring term. Alongside the School Council, they have also been petitioning staff for more outdoor equipment for classes to use at break and lunch time.

Amanda Tizard will be working in school each Tuesday and Thursday afternoon until Easter, supporting pupils to set up and lead activities during break and lunch periods.

Governors

Governors have provided valuable support to staff and school leaders this term. Each Governor has met with a subject or area lead to find out about the intent for their area of responsibility, how it has been implemented and assess the impact that this has had on outcomes in order to support us to achieve the highest standards possible.

The different committees: Finance, Personnel and Premises, Catholic Life and Curriculum and Admissions have met and fed back to the Full Governing board meeting in December.

Dacorum ASCAT Regional Hub

The Diocese of Westminster has set out its time frame for Academisation. All schools are expected to have a road-map by Christmas 2025 and a projected conversion by 2027-28. St Thomas More, St Albert the Great and JFK have gone out to consultation. Governors from St Roses and St Cuthbert Mayne met and agreed that they will move forward together and have set up a joint working party to achieve this.

PA and Class Reps

The first school discos since school closures in 2019 were a huge success with pupils, staff and parent volunteers dancing away.

Many families enjoyed the pantomime at the weekend and the Christmas Raffle left many people happy winners as well as raising money for the school. Thank you for the continued commitment and support to all those parents who have contributed.

Our first class representative meeting is due to take place in the Spring Term. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions relating to school business please pass these onto the appropriate class representative so that these can be addressed through this forum.

DfE Building Project

Survey's have continued through Autumn 2 and the DfE and contractors will be presenting their findings and recommendations in the new year.

Tell us what you think

Help us improve by completing the parent survey below. There are four sections.

1. Communication
2. Teaching and Learning
3. Clubs
4. Transport

[Parent Survey December 2022](#)