

ENGLISH MARTYRS' CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



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Headteacher: Mr J Camilleri

NEWSLETTER

Friday 12th December 2025

Dear parents and carers

This last week has been a special one in so many ways. On Monday our Worship Leaders from Years 5 and 6 led our reflections on the season of **Advent**. On the same day, a group of children from Years 3 and 4 made us proud by taking part and winning medals at a **swimming gala** at Darwin Court. Well done!

Over three days then, **parents** had the opportunity to meet with their child's class teacher at our **Termly Learning Conferences**. I am sure this was a good opportunity for all to find out more about the progress children have made this term and their targets for the Spring Term.

Our week came to an end today with the whole school Advent Mass in the parish church in which we also said thank you to **Mr P Gillespie** who has recently retired following many years of service as chairperson of our school's Governing body. His commitment means that the school is in a strong position to look forward and continue to make sustained progress.

Next week is our last week of term and we look forward to very special activities such as the various **Nativity plays**, our **Christmas Jumper Day** and the **Christmas Lunch** on Thursday. Please see details on page 3 of this newsletter for more details. We are also collecting food items for our **Parish food bank** to support families and homeless people this Christmas and beyond.

Thank you and have a good weekend.



This Sunday is the THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

As we light the third candle on our Advent wreath we think of how best to prepare for the coming of Jesus into our hearts.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



The following are some of the important dates to remember:

**Week beginning
Monday 15th December**

Nativity Plays
(see Page 3 of this newsletter for more details)

Wednesday 17th December
Christmas Carol Service in the Parish Church at 2.00 pm.

Parents and Parishioners are very welcomed to join us.

Thursday 18th December
Christmas Lunch
Christmas Jumper day
(£1 contribution for charity)

Friday 19th December
Last Day of term
Children finish at the normal times

Tuesday 6th January 2026
Children return to school
Spring term

WORSHIP TOGETHER - ASPIRE TOGETHER - EXCEL TOGETHER



AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES CLUBS

Please note that this was the **final week** for all after-school activity clubs for the autumn term, the last session was today **Friday 12th December**.

After-school activity clubs will start from **Monday 12th January** for the **Spring Term**.

ATTENDANCE and PUNCTUALITY

We are very proud of our high percentages of our pupils' school attendance over these last few years. However, parents are reminded that **no holidays or travel should be booked during term time** and that all children arrive by no later than **8.45 am** each morning.



ENGLISH MARTYRS' PARISH CHURCH

Our school is part of the ENGLISH MARTYRS' PARISH community. The parish church is right next door to the school. There are Masses regularly every weekend at the following times:

Saturday evenings at 6:00 pm

Sundays at 9.00 am

Sundays at 11:30 am

Sunday evening at 6:00 pm

For more information call the parish office on 020 7703 4967



Starting Reception School in September 2026

If your child was born between

1st September 2021 and 31st August 2022

Your child is due to start primary school in September 2026

You will need to complete the online local authority form using the following link <https://www.eadmissions.org.uk>

before the closing date

Thursday 15th January 2026

Applications made after this date will not be considered for the first round and will be 'a late application'.

Every week our Mid-day meals supervisors award stars to pupils who show our school values during lunchtime breaks. The following are the names of our Star children for this week.



Nursery:

Lemlem, Amaya

Reception:

Declan, George

Year 1:

Elsae, Avarya

Year 2:

Amelia, Lorenzo

Year 3:

Yasmin, David

Year 4:

Grace, Mbuta

Year 5:

Adedolapo, Emmanuella

Year 6:

Joshua, Benjamin, River





NATIVITY PLAYS and other services

GROUPS - CLASSES	DATE	TIME
Advent and Christmas Mass in church	Friday 12th December	9.30 am
Nativity Play Year 1 and Year 2	Tuesday 16th December	9.15 am
Nativity Play Year 1 and Year 2	Tuesday 16th December	1.15 pm
Nativity Play KS2 Grp A: Classes 3C, 4J, 5E, 6T	Tuesday 16th December	2.15 pm
Nativity Play KS2 Grp A: Classes 3C, 4J, 5E, 6T	Wednesday 17th December	9.15 am
Nativity Play Reception and Nursery	Wednesday 17th December	1.15 pm
Christmas Carol Service in church	Wednesday 17th December	2.00 pm
Nativity Play Reception and Nursery	Thursday 18th December	9.15 am
Nativity Play KS2 Grp B: Classes 3M, 4G, 5T, 6M	Thursday 18th December	2.15 pm
Nativity Play KS2 Grp B: Classes 3M, 4G, 5T, 6M	Friday 19th December	9.15 am

Please
arrive a
few
minutes
before
start time

CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

As part of our fundraising for people in need this Christmas we're asking everyone to **contribute £1** on

Thursday 18th December which is our **Christmas Jumper day**. This year our fundraising money will go to a charity **CAFOD** which supports poor families in many parts of the world.

Christmas
JUMPER DAY



FOOD DONATIONS to PARISH FOOD BANK

Monday 15th to Friday 19th December



As we approach Christmas we want to be more generous and to think of others who are less fortunate.

Next week children are encouraged to bring some food to be donated to **Parish Food Bank**.

They organise food parcels for homeless people as well as emergency packages for local families who may not have enough food and other necessities.

ONLINE SAFETY

Nowadays our children are exposed to a number of **social media** platforms that are not appropriate for their age.



One of these apps is **WHATSAPP**. Have a look at page 5 of this newsletter to find out more about how to make sure we are all using social media in a safe way.

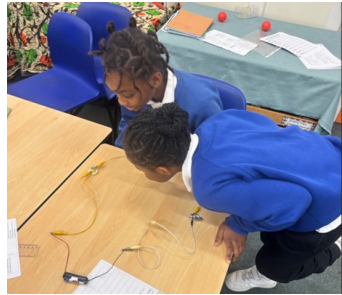
Please make sure you always monitor what your children are accessing on laptops or mobile phones in order to ensure they are always safe online and away from any potential danger.

FROM AROUND THE SCHOOL

THIS WEEK

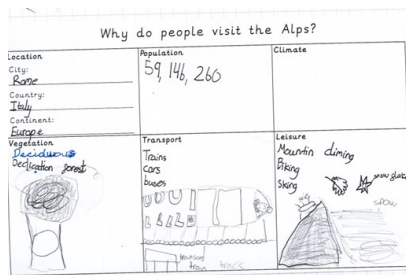
CLASS 4J

We are now learning about **electricity** in science. We have also made cross curricular links with science and writing as the book we are using in writing is



'Until I Met Dudley' by Roger McGough. This book explains (in a fun way) how electricity appliances work. Here, we are making **circuits** and ensuring they are done correctly so that our light bulbs will light up.

In Geography, we have been learning about the **Alps**. We have been carrying out research about



the countries in Europe that have Alps and have also found out why people visit these Alps.

CLASS 6T

This week is a very busy week for 6T as we prepare for our **Nativity performance**. We have been practising with our class and with



the other year groups to give our best performance for when our parents and carers come to see our show.

As we come to the end of term in RE we are looking at **Advent** and the different parts of the journey **Mary and Joseph** took. We have also reflected on different artists impressions of the events.

Some of the class took part in a **reconciliation service** in the Romero room in preparation for Advent.

In maths we continue revising and building on our prior knowledge. We are focusing on **perimeter and area** applying this knowledge to reasoning and investigation questions.

In writing we are writing **formal and informal** letters to the editor of the **Guardian newspaper** in response to the court case of the **Three Little Pigs**.

NURSERY

It continued to be a very busy term for Nursery children. They have settled well and are making some really lovely **friendships**. They are now familiar with the **school routines** and the **rules** that we have to keep everyone **safe** and create a **positive learning environment**.

This term our theme was **Traditional Tales** and we had been looking at some wonderful books including **Goldilocks and The Three Bears, The Three Billy Goats Gruff, The Gingerbread Man and Little Red Riding Hood**. We used lots of **mark making** and **drama** to share our ideas and experiences and looked at the **repeated refrains** to describe settings and characters in the stories. In Maths we used **number names** and **language in play** and focussed activities of sorting different objects into groups. Children explored things decreasing in **size, patterns** and were encouraged to play freely with **blocks and shapes** and explore longer and shorter. The children continued to develop their **confidence** and sing some of their favourite **nursery rhymes** in front of the class and participate in lots of **messy Arts and Crafts**. In RE we are looking at **God's Family** and how it relates to our own. Children have learnt to make the sign of the cross and recite daily prayers and have been extremely busy with the **Nativity play**. Please remember that Nursery children need to come in wearing the correct PE kit on Wednesdays and Fridays.

I look forward for your continued support and to the build up to Christmas and the exciting Nativity Play your children will be involved in.



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHATSAPP

WhatsApp is a free messaging service owned by Meta which allows users to send text and voice messages, make video calls, share multimedia – such as images, videos, documents and polls – and have group chats. WhatsApp messages are encrypted, meaning only the sender and the recipient can view what is sent. While this privacy may sound attractive on paper, this app comes with several associated risks that must be considered – especially for younger users.

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

GROUP CHATS

Group chats let friends talk together but can pose problems for young users. They might feel excluded – like discovering events they weren't invited to. Hurtful comments can also escalate quickly, as more people join in, amplifying the impact through a wider audience.

EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it attractive to scammers. Tactics include impersonating a child in an 'emergency' to request money, or triggering a login code, then pretending to be WhatsApp and asking for it – giving them access to private messages and personal data.

CHANNELS

'Channels' let users follow topics anonymously, interacting only through polls or emoji reactions. However, fake channels can mimic real ones, spreading misinformation, hate speech, or phishing for personal data. WhatsApp may also collect and share channel-following info with third parties, raising privacy issues.

DISAPPEARING MESSAGES

Disappearing messages help share sensitive info, but young people may wrongly assume they're fully private. Senders can opt for their message to vanish after 24 hours, 7 days, or 90 days – or for media, after one view. However, recipients can still save them by bookmarking or taking screenshots, reducing their privacy.

FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's simplicity makes sharing news quick – accurate or not. To help curb misinformation, messages forwarded over five times now show a 'Forwarded many times' label with a double arrow. This alerts users that the message isn't original and may be unreliable.

CHAT LOCK

The new 'Chat lock' feature lets users store specific messages in a separate passcode- or biometrically-protected folder. While useful for privacy, it could be misused by younger users to hide conversations or content they know parents and educators might find inappropriate, including age-restricted material.

VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's 'live location' feature helps friends meet up or parents check a child's route home. However, anyone in a child's group chats can track their location, potentially revealing their home address or regular travel patterns to strangers.

AI INTEGRATION

Meta AI on WhatsApp poses risks to children, including exposure to misinformation, inappropriate content, and data privacy issues. AI responses may be inaccurate, and kids might share personal information unknowingly. It can also hinder critical thinking by offering ready-made answers.

Advice for Parents & Educators

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage children to treat unexpected messages with caution. Get them to consider, for example, whether it sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

THINK BEFORE SHARING

Help children understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content sent to one user to then be shared more widely, and even publicly on social media. Encourage them to consider how an ill-judged message might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change a child's WhatsApp settings to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval. To do this, go to 'Privacy', then 'Groups'. You can give permission to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except...'. Additionally, if the child needs to use 'live location', emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Have a conversation with youngsters about how they're using WhatsApp, emphasising that it's for their own safety. If you spot a 'Locked Chats' folder, you might want to talk about the sort of messages that are in there, who they're with and why they have been hidden. Also, if a young user has sent any 'view once' content, discuss their reasons for using this feature.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian Government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/whatsapp-2025>

@wake_up_weds

/www.thenationalcollege

@wake.up.wednesday

@wake.up.weds

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 16.04.2025

Missed your flu vaccine?

**Live or attend school in the borough of
Southwark? Aged 4 – 16?**

Come down to a flu catch-up clinic and
protect yourself!

Saturday 6 December
10:00 – 14:00

IRMO Centre, Warwick House, SW9 7JP

Saturday 20 December
10:00 – 14:00

Big Yellow Flexi Offices, SE5 7SW

**For more information
or to book an
appointment call 020
8614 5495**



MUSIC GROUPS AT



St George's Cathedral runs a thriving **music programme** for **children aged 0-18**. All choirs are **free** to join and open to boys and girls.

Small Sounds (New from November 2025)

Weekly music classes on Wednesday mornings for children aged 0-5 and their grown-ups.

Children's Choir

Informal singing group for children aged 5-7 on Wednesday afternoons.

Junior Choir

Church choir for young singers aged 7-12 on Thursday afternoons.

Cathedral Choir

Auditioned, selective choir for talented singers aged 9-13 on Friday afternoons and Sunday mornings.

Cathedral Consort

Liturgical choir for older children aged 13-18 on Wednesday afternoons and Sunday mornings.

For more information and to register please visit <https://stgeorgescathedral.org.uk/music/> or contact cathedralmusic@rcaos.org.uk



NATIONAL SCHOOLS SINGING PROGRAMME





SmallSounds
by CATHEDRAL MUSIC TRUST



SMALL SOUNDS

Free, drop-in music sessions for
children aged 0 - 5 and their grown-ups

Shake, rattle and roll with your little ones and
discover the joy of music through songs and play

WEDNESDAYS at **10:15** in
term time

ST GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL
Lambeth Rd, SE1 7HY

Scan to join our mailing list:

<https://www.stgeorgescathedral.org.uk/smallsounds>



LOCAL MUSIC LESSONS

Dear parents

PEMBROKE ACADEMY OF MUSIC offers music and instrumental lessons to local children mainly those in Year 3 to Year 9.

Please see the poster below for more details about dates and times as well as fees for lessons.

We would like to support this initiative and children from our school who would like to take part and start learning how to play a musical instrument.

Please see Mr Camilleri if you would like to discuss further.

Thank you.



Wednesdays (term time) **6:30pm-8:15pm**
At Pembroke House 80 Tatum St SE17 1QR

For Ages 7-14 (Yr3 - end of Yr9)

Weekly high-quality music tuition in a range of musical instruments, music theory and ensemble performance at subsidised rates for all participants.

Contact by email or phone:

lucy.duncan@pembrokehouse.org.uk
020 7703 3803

Fees per term:

Full Price: 1st child-£55,
2nd child-£44, 3rd child-£33
Concession fees available.



WALWORTH LIBRARY HOMEWORK CLUB



WELL, WE CAN HELP!



**Need support
with
homework?**

We are offering pupils the
support needed to complete
homework or revision

**Every
Tuesday
4-5PM**



Children's
Area

TERM TIME ONLY