



Mr. Hall writes ...

December 2024



People often speak about the 'true meaning' of Christmas being lost. Well, there's certainly no chance of that happening if you work in a Catholic school. Over the last couple of weeks, I have attended no less than five nativities and three carol services – I certainly know the story pretty well, if I didn't already! It really is a privilege to be able to journey with your children right up until nearly the very end of advent. I have been blown away by the power of the children's singing voices; they really have been proclaiming the Christmas story for all to hear!

If you're anything like me, then there are still plenty of friends and family members who I have yet to buy Christmas presents for. Whether you've finished with the wrapping paper or not, it's always worth considering whether Fr Christmas might be able to squeeze a book or two into your child's stocking. It's really important that we all have a chance to rest and recuperate over the holidays, but reading with your child needs to be something that continues each and every day – it should be as habitual as brushing your teeth! Last year I attended a training course which spoke about the 'million word gap' which relates to a study regarding children's exposure to words by the age of five. Young children whose parents read them five books a day enter Reception having heard about 1.4 million more words than children who were never read to. Here are the startling statistics:

- Never read to, 4,662 words
- 1-2 times per week, 63,570 words
- 3-5 times per week, 169,520 words
- Daily, 296,660 words
- Five books a day, 1,483,300 words

Reading five books a day might seem like a lot to fit into our already very busy family lives. However, it highlights the importance of carving out time to read with our children whatever key stage they're in. There's even evidence to suggest that turning on the subtitles when your children are watching the TV improves word recognition. So, when your relative asks you what your child would like for Christmas, then a book voucher is a great suggestion; you can then carve out some time to browse the local bookshop with your child before taking it home to read together – and with a bit of luck they'll carry on reading it without you!

The New Year will be upon us before we know it. After our first week back, Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> Jan, Bishop Richard will be celebrating the 11am Mass at St Joseph's Catholic Church, during which I will be inducted as Head of School. I know that the Mass is very well attended, but it would be lovely to see lots of St Joseph's families there; it's a great opportunity to recognise the strong links between school and parish and celebrate our community.

*Learning and laughing together in the light of God's love.*

The end of term was an opportunity to bid a very fond farewell to Mrs De Sampayo as she leaves to become Headteacher of Green Wrythe Primary School in Carshalton in January. Anoushka has worked at St Joseph's since 2016; in her role as Head of school and Designated Safeguarding Lead, she has supported innumerable children and families and she has done so with calmness and compassion. We are so very grateful to her for all that she has given to our school and we wish her the very best of luck in her new role.



I hope you all have a very blessed and peaceful Christmas Holiday. We look forward to welcoming you back to St Joseph's in 2025.

### Catholic Life at St Joseph's

Only one thing can be said to have dominated life at St Joseph's this half term... Advent.

Throughout this half term, we have been preparing, body and soul, for Christmas and all the wonderful things that come with it. Of course, one of the things on everyone's minds has been the nativities! Each class has been part of a Nativity service in one form or another, and have been reflecting on the various roles people have played in this timeless event. From the kings to

shepherds, the way in which we've witnessed the message of Christmas being lived out has been a core focus for us.



### Faith Leaders

Our Faith Leaders have stepped into their new role with courage and determination, and have already gone forth to share their faith with other Year groups during their Collective Worship time. Since their commissioning at the start of this term, these pupils have been planning, resourcing and delivering prayers across the school. We're immensely proud. **This is what some of them have said about their new roles:**



'We help to spread the Word of God so that they can too'

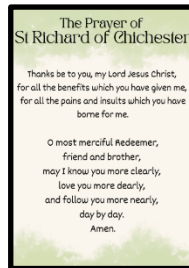
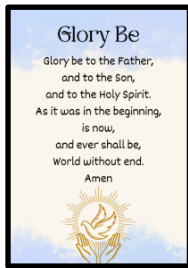
'It helps me to connect with God.'

'We are role models for others'

'I like having the responsibility'

'It helps us to build our confidence too'





### Wintershall visit for Year 3

Year 3 pupils had an amazing opportunity to continue their understanding of the Advent story when they visited Woldingham School to take part in the Wintershall Travelling Crib.

They were able to take a journey around to visit the different 'characters' including the shepherd, the donkey, Mary, Elizabeth and one of the Wise Men and to hear about their part in the story of Jesus' birth..

They were given gift bags to take away to enable them to continue to reflect on the story in class and at home.



### Sports at St. Joseph's



#### **Girls Football Vs. Meath Green**

The game of football on Monday, the 11<sup>th</sup>. November played by the teams, St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Redhill and Meath Green Junior School, Horley was won by St. Joseph's 6:0.

The girls played exceptionally and dominated the entire game. The team played not as individuals but together as a team – Written by Carla in 6S

#### **St. Matthew's Football Tournament**

On Wednesday, our football team travelled to St. Matthews school to attend a tournament where we played multiple schools like Reigate Priory, Hatchlands and Merstham School. In our group (there were

3 groups) we came first in our group and in the other 2 groups, R.A.A came first and in group1, Sandcross came first. We had played both teams and the tournament came to an end. We scored 4 points and out of everyone we came joint 2<sup>nd</sup>. Place with R.A.A and Sandcross placed 1<sup>st</sup>. – Written by Elsa (Goal keeper)

### **St.Joseph's (Girls) Vs Reigate Priory**

Played on 27<sup>th</sup>. November 2024

Last week, St. Joseph's girls team played a great match on our astro turf pitch against Reigate Priory. In the first half, we scored a fantastic goal securing a 1-0 lead until half time. The second half was more evenly matched, but by full time, St. Joseph's had won. We were delighted with our fantastic win. We are looking forward to our next match and hopefully we will win again. Go St. Joseph's!! - Written by Emilia (Left Back)

### **Lunch Time Chess Club**

Several children have enjoyed the opportunity to take part in the lunchtime chess clubs on offer for Years 3&4 and Years 5&6.

They have been encouraged and led by Thomas from Year 6 to understand the basics or take part in some exciting games depending on their experience and ability.



## Music

This term, Year 3 have been learning to play the trumpet with Mr Beagley from Surrey Arts! We've had such a good time and have learned a lot. Watch out for our performances on Google Classroom!



## Bling your bike

On Wednesday 4th December, all the children took part in the bling your bike competition. We had the amazing Louise from Sustrans come in to talk to us all about the importance of being bright and seen during the winter months. Children were invited to make their bikes, bags or scooters bright and seen, through the use of a range of recycled materials. We had some fantastic entries! 14 children were chosen as winners (2 from each Year group). Some were awarded for the most effort and others for the most eco-friendly. Have a look at some of our amazing creations!



Most effort

### Reception



Most eco-friendly



Most effort

### Year 1



Most eco-friendly



Most effort

### Year 2



Most eco-friendly



Most effort

### Year 3



Most eco-friendly



Most effort

## Year 4



Most eco-friendly



Most effort

## Year 5



Most eco-friendly



Most effort

## Year 6



Most eco-friendly

### Forest School

In Year 2, we have been learning about Monarchs through the years. Our highlights were making wooden hobby horses, lounging around in the hammock, icing gingerbread biscuits, doing lots of scavenger hunts, painting coloured bread, cooking it on the BBQ and washing it down with a hot chocolate.

In Year 3, we have improved our knife skills. We made some yummy sautéed herby potatoes and cooked them on the BBQ. We then took it a step further making ratatouille using a range of fresh familiar and not so familiar vegetables. We also worked on our tool work skills producing a wooden robot or pencil pot. We also enjoyed going on mammoth hunts.

Abi, 3W says she really enjoys Forest School especially the cooking and bonfires. She was very impressed by the cooked plums.

Lila 5S says, "I always look forward to Forest School days. I loved Forest School especially when we made the campfire bread which I made again at home with my family. I can't wait until we have it again in Year 6."



### **Dinner Money**

Please can we remind all parents/carers to check their child's dinner money balance on SCOPAY and settle any outstanding debts as soon as possible. May we also remind you that dinner money must be paid in advance or weekly as we cannot allow any debts to accrue. The cost of a meal is £2.80. If your child chooses to have a school dinner, please ensure their SCOPay is active.

### **YMCA Pick up arrangements**

From January, the school gate will be open from 4:45pm, for all YMCA pick-ups. Please ensure that when entering the school premises, you are following the speed limit displayed to ensure everyone is safe.



### **Message from Mrs De Sampayo**

I would like to thank you for all the kind wishes, gifts and cards. I have loved my time at St Joseph's. It is such a happy and vibrant school! I will miss the school community very much and wish you all the very best for the future.

## Santa Run Success for Jessica

Congratulations to all who participated in the YMCA Santa Run in Priory Park, and particularly well done to Jessica, who was the first girl over the finish line in the family race. A fantastic achievement! Jessica has written a note of the event for the newsletter:

*Sunday the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 2024. The Santa Run Reigate Priory was about to happen when Jessica, Eady & Elsa arrived ready to compete against 700 people in the 1 Mile family race. We put on our festive Santa costumes and lined up across the start line. The air-horn blew off and the race started!*

*With Jessica in the lead, she started over-taking people, whilst Elsa was not far behind Jessica. Eady was not far behind Elsa. Soon, Jessica finished the race and came in 1<sup>st</sup>.*

*Then, Elsa came 5 minutes later, with Eady a couple of seconds behind Elsa.*

*We all got a medal of participation and Jessica got a plaque from the Mayor of Reigate & Banstead.*

6 THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2024

### News

# Santas jingle all the

A WAVE of red and white swept through Priory Park, in Reigate, as more than 700 runners took part in YMCA East Surrey's ever popular festive fun run.

Aged from just four to more than 80, and all dressed up as the man in red, those taking part in the annual Santa Run helped to raise vital funds to support the accommodation of young people in the district through a specific Life Change Fund.

Reigate & Banstead's Mayor, Councillor Eddy Humphreys, and his wife Sarah officially sounded the start of each of Sunday's races with the help of a klaxon horn, and were there to enthusiastically welcome the hundreds of smiling fundraisers as they returned from their one or three-mile runs.

People from across Surrey took part with children in pushchairs completing the course alongside elite athletes and a few good-natured pet dogs on leads.

Prior to each race, fitness instructor Nikki Lempidaki encouraged runners to warm up for five minutes with her lively routines that made people dance and get into the Christmas spirit, while Julie Bourgeois, YMCA fitness centre manager, provided an uplifting commentary as runners returned from their races.

Each participant earned themselves a chunky medal, with the top achievers also winning a trophy.

Jessica Jupp, from Redhill, was the first girl over the one-mile line for the family race, while Henry Man, from Reigate, triumphed for the boys. In the adult three-mile run, Ellen Winn, from Claygate, who runs with Epsom Allsorts, was the first woman over the line, while Harry Mullard, from Reigate Priory Athletics Club, was the fastest participant overall, swiftly followed by Alistair Watson, from Wimbledon, and Gaj Sivadas, from Caterham.

Mr Mullard recently achieved such an impressive Valencia Marathon time that he qualified for Championship entry at next year's London Marathon. In this run, his secret weapon was an empty can of Coca-Cola balanced in his Santa hat, to keep it looking smart. He kept it there for the duration in spite of his head receiving a few knocks.

YMCA East Surrey chief executive Ian Burks was Master of Ceremonies for the day. He said: "The Santa Run is always a fun event. We are so grateful to all the families who have turned out today to help us get the festive season off to a fantastic start. "Thank you also to the incredible people who volunteer their time - this event simply wouldn't happen without them. The Santa Run is a great way to get fit and active with friends and family while raising funds for YMCA's charitable work in our community."

The charity has already secured the date for the 2025 YMCA Santa Run on Sunday December 14, and the annual YMCA Fun Run will take place on Sunday May 4.

THE MAYOR OF REIGATE & BANSTEAD, Cllr EDDY HUMPHREYS, AND HIS WIFE SARAH WERE THE OFFICIAL RACE STARTERS

DARREN PEPE

PICTURES: YMCA EAST SURREY

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2024

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