



Friday 15th December 2023

Dear Families,

A message from Mrs Little:

As we prepare for Christmas, I can see how blessed I am to be the Executive Headteacher of two Catholic Primary Schools. To hear the children singing is a delight, and the awe and wonder of the Christmas Story has been so beautifully told by our youngest children.

I am also writing to share a personal message. Some of you may know that I reached a 'significant' birthday last summer, and with that, the reality of my parents being elderly and very far away (they live in Canada) was something we discussed as a family. My lovely Dad was diagnosed with Alzheimer's dementia a few years ago and my Mum needs ever increasing support to be able to care for him. I don't know how much precious time I will be able to have with them both and being a Headteacher means I have little flexibility in when I am able to go and visit and help care for them both. I have therefore taken the very difficult decision that this is the right time for me to retire from this role so that I am able to spend as much time as possible and treasure the moments and memories I have with them both.

I will therefore be officially retiring from my Executive Headteacher role at the end of this academic year, in the summer of 2024.

The Governing Boards of both schools will work closely with the ASCAT CEO to recruit a new Executive Headteacher and I am sure you will hear more about this in due course.

This Christmas, I hope we will all be able to reflect on the importance of family, to celebrate the love we have and where there are challenges faced, that we can draw on the strength of Our Saviour, Jesus Christ who became known to us on Christmas Day, to be with us and comfort us, and know we are all loved.

With my love and very best wishes to you and your families.

Mrs Little



Catholic Life of the School

This week we lit the second candle on our Advent Wreath.

We were treated to the EYFS Nativity this week. The children sang beautifully, spoke clearly and confidently reminded us of the story of the first Christmas. We were please Mr Wheatley, the ASCAT CEO, was able to join us for this special performance. Thank you to the Nursery and Reception staff for preparing the children.



On Wednesday morning we had our dress rehearsal and on Thursday evening had our performances of the KS2 Carol Concert. The children shared readings and carols, reminding us of the first coming of Jesus and our anticipation of his return one day. Thank you to the staff for their support in making this happen and for the children for your lovely singing and learning of lots of lyrics!

On Friday morning, Fr Joseph came in to share the Sacrament of Reconciliation with some of our KS2 classes as we prepare ourselves spiritually for Christmas. Thank you for your support Fr Joseph.



Across all of our Christmas performances, we have fundraised for 'Under One Sky', a charity helping to solve the causes of homelessness and help those living on the streets know they have not been forgotten this Christmas season. From all of the performances, a huge **£420.34 has been raised** for the charity. Thank you for your incredible generosity.

Thank you to Fr Joseph, families, parishioners and governors who joined us for these events.

Thank you!

Christmas Fayre and Art Competition

Thank you to the army of parents and volunteers who helped make the Christmas Fayre such a success. It was wonderful to see the school so busy and festive. From the face painting, Santa's grotto to biscuit decoration – thank you for your support at this wonderful event to raise money to enrich the school lives of the pupils at our school.

Well done to all who entered the art competition, the winners were as follows:

Ruari (Y6), Iza (Y5) and Harriet (Y4) and runners up prizes to Ula (Y6), Orla M (Y1), Orla K (Y1) Chloe-Marie D (Y4) and Renzo (Y1). Well done to all the entries, there was excellent creativity displayed.

Thank you and goodbye

At the end of term, we will be saying a fond farewell to Mrs McCloskey. Mrs McCloskey has helped support our teaching of French at St Thomas More for a number of years and will be missed as she relocates. We wish you all the best with the move.

Curriculum Lead

Recently we have had the pleasure of welcoming Miss Gabbitas to the Senior Leadership Team as our Curriculum Lead, working with and supporting subject leaders in their roles and helping to continue to drive school improvement.

Milk List

Earlier this week, communication was shared asking parents to let us know if you would like your child to receive



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milk. This is to help reduce the huge amounts of milk wastage. Please let the office know if you would like your child to receive milk but did not yet respond. Thank you

Attendance

Whole school attendance is **89.19%%** this week.

Reception	82.01%	Year 4	91.03%
Year 1	94.21%	Year 5	86.67%
Year 2	81.50%	Year 6	86.40%
Year 3	94.25%		

Congratulations to Year 4 who achieved the highest attendance this week!

U11 Table Tennis

On Thursday 23rd November St Thomas More Boys and Greenway girls represented Dacorum at the County U11 School Games Table Tennis Finals.

Some brilliant play, and some extraordinary teams—Well done to St Thomas More who took away the Silver medals and to Greenway girls for coming a respectable 4th place.

STMSA News

A huge thank you to all the parents, staff, governors, family and friends and children who came to our Christmas Fayre. Thank you for the hours of volunteering before and during the event to make it such a success. Photos taken in Santa's grotto have been emailed to those who visited Santa.

Raffle

Thank you to local businesses for donating prizes and to parents for donating items to make up the hampers. Our lucky raffle prize winners are:

Hampers: Eric Nichol (NYE), Lisa Wighthoide (Arts & Crafts), Maisie Musgrove (Spa), Miss Addison (Movie Night), Tommy Nichol (Chocolate), Toorwa family (Christmas baking), Petchey family (Christmas treats), Mrs Hotson (Afternoon tea), Kevin Jaggs (Mini hamper)

Vouchers: Eliana Marshall (Temptations), Frances Rattigan (Cooks), Hassan Sajid (4D Martial arts), Henry Ward (Berko Box), Loretta McCallister (Best Results Fitness), Morei Round (Tropic), Mrs Hotson (Thrive Physio), Regan Allen (Fred & Ginger), Toorwa Family (Dermaline)

Other prizes: Luciana Samtani (Make Believe books, Waitrose plushie, cocktail shaker), Nancy Ives (The Lamb beer), Nancy Quilan (Mercurio's Panettone), O Dovan (M&S wine)

100 Club

Dec 100 Club Winners

1st (£100) Jacqueline Kelley 2nd (£50) Ann Moshakis 3rd (£25) Helen Jewell

If you would like to sign up please go to <https://forms.gle/p6w6TZoL76wpEvFc7>

STMSA AGM

Please put Friday **19th January 2024** in your diaries for the STMSA AGM. We are looking for a volunteer chair / co-chairs to take over in January. Please do let us know if you are interested.

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Community News:

The Annual Carol Service in aid of The Hospice of St Francis will take place at 6.30pm on **Saturday 16th December 2023** at The Sacred Heart Church, Berkhamsted. Our school choir will be singing at this event. Please join us in supporting this worthy cause. Free entry/ donations on the door/ refreshments in the Parish Hall afterwards.

Prayer at Home

Hopefully you and your families are enjoying the Prayer at Home resources. They are all available on our school website [here](#).



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Calendar dates:

Autumn Term:

December

18/12/23 School Christmas dinner – *children to wear school uniform with a Christmas jumper on top if they wish*
19/12/23 EYFS and Year 1 Pantomime Trip
20/12/23 End of term – school finishes at 1.30pm

January

4/1/24 and 5/1/23 INSET Days – school closed
8/1/24 Start of term – children back to school

Have a lovely weekend,
Miss Lally
Assistant Headteacher



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