20th November 2026

NEWSLETTER

At St Philomena's, We Share the Love of God





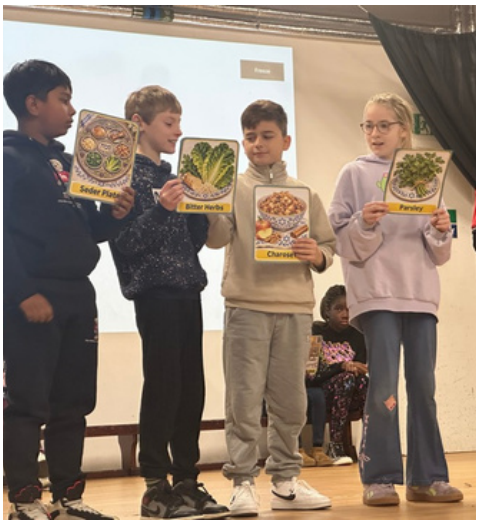
We are incredibly proud of all the children who represented our school at the cross country event last weekend! The 2km course was certainly no easy challenge, with plenty of hills to tackle along the way. Our children showed fantastic determination, resilience and perseverance, putting in brilliant performances from start to finish. They were wonderful ambassadors for our school, and we couldn't be prouder of them. Well done, everyone!



We are also proud of all our children who took part in our Pudsey Run, raising an amazing £2,125.50! Children in Need supports so many young people across the UK, making a real difference to their lives. A huge thank you to everyone who took part and donated. What a fantastic example of faith in action!



This week, we celebrated Anti-Bullying Week with the important theme "Break the Silence." It was wonderful to see so many colourful odd socks around school, reminding us that we are all unique and that our differences are something to celebrate! Throughout the week, children reflected on the importance of kindness, respect, inclusion and speaking up when something isn't right. We reflected on the beautiful words of Jesus: “Love one another as I have loved you." This powerful message reminds us that we are all called to show love, compassion and kindness to one another, helping to make our school a place where everyone feels valued and included.



Inter Faith Assembly

It was wonderful to welcome so many members of our school community to our Interfaith Assembly and to see the children sharing their learning with such confidence and enthusiasm.

With our Catholic faith firmly at the heart of all we do, it is important that our children develop an understanding and appreciation of the British Values of mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We are so proud of the children for reminding us that, while we may have different beliefs and traditions, kindness, love and respect bring us together. Thank you to everyone who joined us for this special celebration of faith and community.



Head Teacher Conference

This week, I had the pleasure of attending the Headteacher Conference, where I joined headteachers from across the Diocese. It was a wonderful opportunity to come together in faith and reflect on our roles as Catholic school leaders. It was a valuable reminder of the importance of working together, learning from one another and continuing to make our school the very best it can be for our children.

Catholic Virtue

This Sunday's Gospel reminds us that Jesus is a King unlike any other. Rather than ruling with power and riches, Jesus leads with love, kindness, compassion and forgiveness. In the Gospel, we hear how Jesus, even as He suffers on the cross, shows mercy to the man beside Him, promising him a place in His Kingdom.

This powerful message reminds us that true greatness is not about being the most important or having the most, but about how we treat others. Jesus teaches us that we can all help build His Kingdom through our everyday actions, by showing kindness, offering forgiveness, helping those in need and treating everyone with love and respect. As a school community, we are encouraged to follow Jesus' example and make our school a place where everyone feels valued, welcomed and cared for.



We can reflect on:

- How can we follow Jesus' example of love, kindness and forgiveness?
- What small actions can we take each day to help make our school a place where everyone feels loved and valued?

We are proud of the children who have demonstrated this virtue this week!

A Note from the School Council

We have been consulting on a small change to our school badge. We want people to know that we are from a Catholic school because we are proud of our faith and we are keen for our badge to reflect this. We also want to keep the badge mostly the same because we think it represents St Philomena's and the history of our school really well. If you would like to know about the history of our school, which goes back to 1856, you can read about it on our website in the 'Our School' section.

We asked children, parents, teachers and governors what they thought about the change. We were really happy that everyone who replied was positive and nobody objected to our idea!

This means our school badge will now be changed to say St Philomena's Catholic Primary School. Don't worry, **you do not need to buy new uniform**! You can still wear the old badge, and both badges will be accepted.

We have also been helping to design a new sign for the bottom of our school driveway so everyone can see our school name. We are really excited that our idea is going to happen and that we have helped make a positive difference to our school!



School Values

This week, as we have reflected on the important message of Anti Bullying, it has been wonderful to see our school values of Excellence, Community and Respect being lived out across St. Philomena's. Our children have shown that even the smallest acts of kindness can make a big difference, whether by including others, celebrating differences, standing up for what is right or offering a helping hand. These thoughtful actions help to create a school where everyone feels safe, valued and a true sense of belonging. A huge well done to all the children recognised this week for being such positive role models and showing what it means to put our values into action.

YEAR GROUP	**EXCELLENCE**	**RESPECT**	**COMMUNITY**
YEAR R	GEORGE	OBI	ADDISON
YEAR 1	ELIA	MILLIE-RAE	OLIVIA
YEAR 2	IMMANUEL	EVA	ENZO
YEAR 3	DANIEL B	GABRIELLE	CHRISTABEL
YEAR 4	GABRIELLE	LORENZO	AIDEN
YEAR 5	SANDRA	BENJI	IVY
YEAR 6	JAMES	ELSIE	LUCY



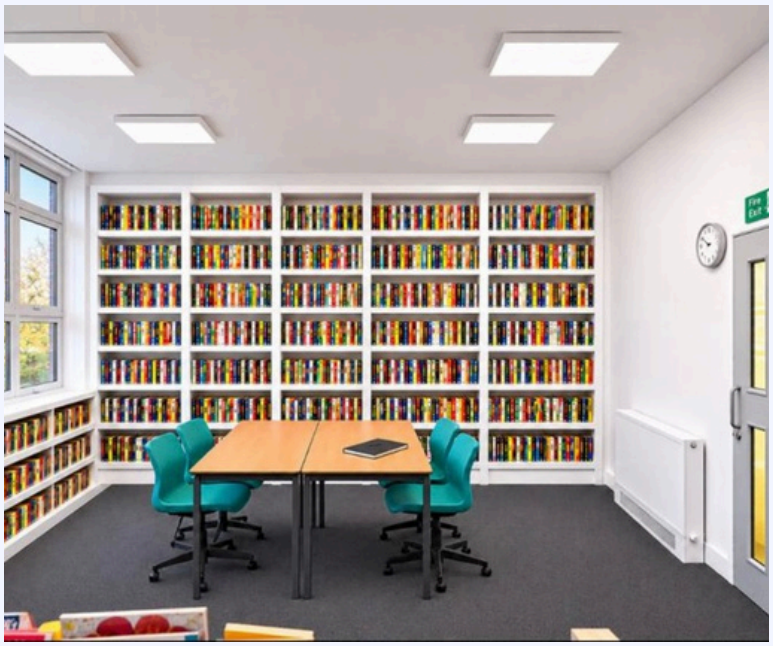
Football Success!

Our boys' football team are on a fantastic winning streak! This week, they played against St David's Prep School in the Small Schools' League and secured a brilliant 2–0 victory! It was a fantastic match, with great teamwork, determination and skill on display. Well done, boys! We are incredibly proud of you all. Keep up the great work!



Exciting Plans for Our School Library!

We have recently been reviewing our reading books and assessments across the school to ensure that every child receives the right level of support and challenge in their reading journey. We have invested in developing our reading resources, and now we want to create a library space that truly reflects our love of reading. Our school library is looking a little tired and is in need of some TLC! We would love to transform it into a beautiful, welcoming and inspiring space where children can develop their love of books and reading.



We have received a quote for new shelving around the entire library, which would completely transform the room and provide much needed space for our growing collection of books. As every class visits the library weekly, this is a project that would benefit every child in our school and be enjoyed for many years to come.

We would be incredibly grateful for the support of our wonderful PTA in helping us raise funds to bring this exciting project to life.
Together, we can create a library that our children will love and enjoy for years to come!

Uniform Reminder

As the weather gets colder, please remember that school coats must be black or navy. Children must also wear their school tie every day, and earrings are not permitted at any time. Thank you for your continued support in maintaining our school uniform standards.

TERM DATES

ACADEMIC YEAR 2026 - 2027



Autumn Term 2026
INSET Days
Wednesday 26 August 2026
Thursday 27 August 2026
Friday 28 August 2026
Bank Holiday
Monday 31 August 2026
First Day of Term
Tuesday 1 September 2026
Half-Term
Monday 19 October – Friday 30 October 2026
Back to School
Monday 2 November 2026
Last Day of Term
Friday 18 December 2026
Spring Term 2027
First Day of Term
Monday 4 January 2027
Half-Term
Monday 15 February – Friday 19 February 2027
Back to School
Monday 22 February 2027
Last Day of Term
Thursday 25 March 2027
Easter Bank Holidays
Good Friday: Friday 26 March 2027
Easter Monday: Monday 29 March 2027
Summer Term 2027
First Day of Term
Monday 12 April 2027
May Bank Holiday
Monday 3 May 2027
Half-Term
Monday 31 May – Friday 4 June 2027
Back to School
Monday 7 June 2027
Last Day of Term
Wednesday 21 July 2027
INSET Days
Thursday 22 July 2027
Friday 23 July 2027

Just 10 minutes late each day amounts to 50 minutes of lost learning each week.

Please ensure children are on the playground by 8.50am, ready for the bell, so that every child can start their day positively and make the most of learning time.

Class	Attendance (%)	Lates (Occasions)
YEAR R	98	3
YEAR 1	98	1
YEAR 2	97	1
YEAR 3	99	1
YEAR 4	99	0
YEAR 5	97	0
YEAR 6	97	1
Overall Weekly Attendance: 97.9%		

Gates Open: 8.45am
School Begins: 8:50am
Gates Lock: 9:00am

DATES FOR THE DIARY

SEPTEMBER

- 10 September – Whole School Mass in Church
- 15 September – International Day of Democracy
- 14 September – Jeans for Genes Day
- 14 September - Secondary Transfer Meeting
- 21 September – International Day of Peace
- 21 September - Fairtrade Fortnight
- 23 September – PTA AGM
- 23 September – Phonics Meeting for Reception
- 25 September – Ambassadors to Mass at the Cathedral
- 25 September - Deadline for Holy Communion applications.

OCTOBER

- 1 October – Rosary Week
- 1 October – National Poetry Day
- 1–31 October – Black History Month
- 2 October - Harvest Festival
- 2 October – CAFOD Family Fast Day
- 4 October – Feast Day of St Francis of Assisi
- 5 October - St Francis Day in EYFS class
- 9 October - Year 3 Assembly and Stone Age Day
- 10 October – World Mental Health Day
- 13 October - Y3 to Natural History Museum
- 14 October – Grandparents' Tea Party
- 14 October - EYFS Food Tasting
- 16 October - Year 5 Assembly

NOVEMBER

- 1 November - All Saints Day
- 2 November - All Souls Day
- 9 November - Inter Faith Week
- 11 November – 10am Remembrance Day Assembly
- 13 November – Children in Need Run
- 13 November - Y6 at IWM
- 14 November - Y5 and Y6 Cross Country
- 16 November – Anti-Bullying Week
- 16 November – Odd Socks Day
- 20 November - 10am Inter Faith Assembly
- 22 November - Choir at Christmas Lights
- 23 November - EYFS to St Andrews
- 24 November - Parliament Week
- 27 November - 10am Y6 Assembly
- 30 November - TTRS Legends Bowling Trip

DECEMBER

- 2 December – EYFS Nativity
- 4 December - 10am Y4 Assembly
- 4 December - Choir glades performance
- 4 December - Choir performing at the Glades
- 9 December – KS1 Nativity
- 15 December – Steps in Faith returned to School
- 16 December – Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Lunch
- 16 December – Rock Steady Concert
- 17th December – KS2 Carol Concert in Church
- 18 December – End of Term

PTA ANNOUNCEMENTS

Christmas Fair 5 December | 2:00pm
Join us for our Christmas Fair, with each class hosting its own festive stall. Come along, enjoy the afternoon and support our school!

Safeguarding

GTA 6 is rated PEGI 18 and is not suitable for children. It contains violence, strong language and adult themes. Children may encounter gameplay clips on YouTube or social media. We encourage parents and carers to monitor online content, check age ratings and use parental controls to keep children safe.

GRAND THEFT AUTO VI

Grand Theft Auto 6 (also stylised as GTA VI) has been one of the most highly anticipated games of this generation, following GTA V, one of the best-selling video games of all time. Set in the fictional state of Leonida, including Vice City, it follows criminal partners Jason and Lucia as they become embroiled in a wider conspiracy. Although GTA VI is intended for adult audiences, its enormous popularity means that younger people may still encounter gameplay footage online or express an interest in playing it.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

PEGI 18

EXTREMELY VIOLENT CONTENT

GTA VI is rated PEGI 18 for a reason. Players may encounter weapons like guns, knives and explosives, with violence portrayed in highly realistic ways. As in previous GTA games, players may also encounter violence involving vehicles and other characters. The game is categorically not for younger audiences, with blood, gore, and intense violence clearly identified in its official content.

SENSITIVE SOCIETAL TOPICS

Like other games in the Grand Theft Auto franchise, GTA VI uses satire to explore aspects of society and contemporary culture. Its exaggerated characters and situations are fictional and may be intended to challenge or mock particular attitudes rather than endorse them. Younger viewers, however, may struggle to recognise this context and could misunderstand jokes, stereotypes, or social commentary without guidance from a trusted adult.

TALKING TO STRANGERS ONLINE

GTA Online, the multiplayer experience associated with GTA V, allows players to communicate with others online. GTA VI has been announced as a single-player experience at launch, so the same in-game chat risks should not yet be assumed. Children may still discuss the game through other online platforms potentially encountering strangers, inappropriate language and adult themes.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE

Throughout GTA VI's storyline, drugs and alcohol form part of the game's criminal world. The official content rating identifies the use of both, while Rockstar's character descriptions reference drug runners and dealers. Earlier titles also showed substance use affecting how characters see and move around the world. Younger viewers may struggle to understand these portrayals in the context of a fictional crime story, particularly without guidance from a trusted adult.

NUDITY AND SEX

CENSORED

Relationships and sexual themes feature in GTA VI, while previous GTA titles have allowed players to visit strip clubs and solicit sex workers. It should also be recognised that GTA VI's graphics aim to be realistic, meaning depictions of nudity and sexual content may be explicit. Official ratings confirm nudity and strong sexual content, although details of specific scenes should not be assumed from earlier games.

OPTIONAL IN-GAME PURCHASES

As with its predecessor, GTA VI includes optional in-game purchases that use real-world money. While these purchases are not necessary to play the game, the appeal of additional content may encourage some players to spend more. Younger players may not fully appreciate the cost or how quickly small payments add up.

Advice for Parents & Educators

PARENTAL CONTROLS

Parental controls can block age-restricted games, but they won't remove GTA VI's adult themes from elsewhere online. On PS5, go to Settings > Family and Parental Controls > Family Management, select the child and choose your restrictions. On Xbox Series X|S, use Settings > Account > Family settings, or the Xbox Family Settings app, to manage age restrictions and screen time.

LIMIT ACCESS TO BANK DETAILS

Limiting access to banking details helps prevent accidental or unauthorised purchases. Avoid storing payment details on a child's account and require approval before spending. On PS5, parents and carers can set a monthly spending limit through Family Management. On Xbox Series X|S, the Ask to Buy feature can request adult approval for purchases, helping children and young people understand their real-world cost.

COMMUNICATION RESTRICTIONS

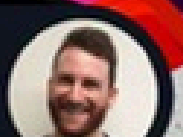
On PS5 and Xbox Series X|S, parental controls can restrict voice chat, messages, friend requests, and communication with other players. Parents and carers can limit interactions to approved friends or prevent communication altogether, depending on the available settings. These restrictions are especially helpful for reducing children's exposure to strangers, inappropriate language and adult themes through console chats or other multiplayer games.

MAKE THIS A CONVERSATION

Even if a child is not playing GTA VI, they may still watch gameplay clips, livestreams or trailers shared by friends and content creators. It's important to talk openly with children about why GTA VI has an adult age rating and discuss its violence, crime, strong language, sexual themes, satirical lens, and other mature content. Ask what interests them about the game and what they already know. Talk about the difference between fictional behaviour and real-world consequences.

Meet Our Expert

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for 12+ years as a journalist, editor and social media expert. He's travelled the world playing video games and working with publishers and developers to fine tune their audience messaging.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College