



St Catherine's Catholic Primary School

'Let your light shine and set the world on fire'

Upcoming dates

Year 4 Fenwicks
Window and Library -
2nd December

Year 5 Carols at the
Cathedral - 3rd
December

Year 3 Stay, Pray and
Pray - 9am 5th
December

Christmas Fayre -
2.45pm 5th December

EYFS Performance - 9th
December 9.30am

Christmas Lunch - 10th
December

Year 1-Year 6
Performance - 10th
December 2pm

Year 1 Fenwicks
Window and Library
Trip - 15th December



Dear Parents, Carers, and pupils,

It is hard to believe that next week marks the beginning of December. We are all very excited for the festive activities planned over the coming weeks.

We started the Christmas spirit a little early this year, with our Key Stage 1 children enjoying a trip to the Christmas Pantomime earlier this week at Northern Stage- what a great time they had!. Their smiles and excitement certainly set the tone for the season ahead!

We hope you will be able to join us for the fantastic array of events taking place soon, starting with our Year 3 Advent Stay, Pray and Play and our Christmas Fayre on Friday. Your support and presence make these moments even more special for our school community.

Wishing you a joyful start to the festive period.

Warmest wishes,
Miss Hoey
Headteacher





Reception - 83.5%

Year 1 - 94.7%

Year 2 - 87.5%

Year 3 - 96%

Year 4 - 89.3%

Year 5 - 92.3%

Year 6 - 97%

Year 6

- Attendance Winners

Attendance below 90% has a drastic effect on academic achievement

91-95% is a cause for concern

96-100% is spot on!



Star Awards

Our Star awards been handed out to the children for living out our SHINE Values.

SHINE Star of the Week - Caroline Year 3

Letting your Light Shine Frame - Jacky Year 3

Nursery - Eliza & Zuzanna

Reception - Abigail & Alyaan

Year 1 - Aisha & Ekow

Year 2 - Frankie & Modawi

Year 3 - Jagteswar & Seraphina

Year 4 - Ruth & Zaviyar

Year 5 - Lara & Valentina D

Year 6 - Denzel & Kayan

Advent - Travelling Crib

Next week, the children in every class will begin bringing home our Advent Travelling Crib. This special tradition helps us strengthen the link between school and home through shared prayer as we prepare for the birth of Christ on Christmas Day.

Each Travelling Crib box will contain a selection of items to help you set up a simple prayer space at home, along with instructions on how to arrange the crib and lead the short prayer together as a family.

We would love to see and celebrate these moments. Please feel free to share photographs on Dojo, email them to the school office, or stick them into the accompanying book to show your child taking part.

Thank you for supporting this lovely Advent tradition.



Our learning

Nursery- Nursery have carried on with our space topic, we were introduced to some new words through our book 'Toys in Space' and through our non-fiction book on the planets. The children loved using dough to design a 'Hoptopize' and planets in their story dough sessions and they have been coming up with some wonderful conversations and ideas on space. In Maths we have been learning all about number names, we began by finding out what a number name was and listening to number names in songs, the children particularly enjoyed the rhyme one two buckle my shoe as it went all the way up to 20. We followed that up by finding out that number names come in a particular order and we practised saying those names with silly voices. We then counted backwards and began counting with objects. In RE we started our Advent topic with a visit from a parent and her new baby, the children had lots of insightful thoughts and comments about what was needed in preparation for having a baby. We have decorated the classroom for a birthday party and began learning about advent by making advent wreaths indoors and outdoors. Of course, we wouldn't have been nursery if we hadn't taken advantage of the ice and snow and developed our language and understanding of what happens when the weather changes.

Reception- In RE, Reception has enjoyed exploring our new topic, Birthdays. We have been learning what a birthday is and talking about how people look forward to celebrating the birth of Jesus. In PSHE, we continued our topic Handmade by God, focusing on what makes each of us unique. During our literacy sessions, we loved exploring the stories The Grinch Who Stole Christmas and The Girl Who Stole the Stars. The children have been working hard to write initial sounds and use exciting vocabulary when discussing the texts. In Maths, we have been representing the numbers 4 and 5, identifying groups, using positional language, and recognising and comparing shapes. In PE, we have continued developing our ball skills, listening, and attention through a range of fun and active games. In our Understanding the World sessions, we explored light sources and seasonal changes—perfect timing as we were very lucky to experience snow and ice last week! The children have also been learning a variety of songs for our Christmas performance, and we look forward to sharing them with you on Tuesday 9th December!

Year 1- Over the past two weeks, Year 1 has been busy with lots of exciting learning! In English, the children have been writing clear instructions to help Miss Barnes get ready for school, making great use of bossy verbs that they have absolutely loved. In Maths, they explored 2D and 3D shapes in detail, learning to name them, describe their properties, and sort them based on different features. They also enjoyed hands-on activities, building shapes and spotting them in the environment around them. In Art, the children created beautiful artwork inspired by insects and plants, showing lots of creativity and care. In History, they talked about toys they played with when they were babies and compared them to the toys they enjoy now. In Computing, they used digital tools to design their own shapes. In RE, the children learned about Advent and why it is an important time for Christians. They also practised songs for their upcoming play, singing enthusiastically and with great confidence. To end the fortnight with a treat, Year 1 visited the theatre to watch The Christmas Mouse, which everyone thought was wonderful!

Year 2- Last week in Year 2, we began our new RE topic Advent with the big question "Do we need to prepare?" and had some great discussions. In our explorer's topic, we continued learning about famous figures and focused on Bessie Coleman. We have now come to the end of our addition and subtraction unit in Maths and are excited to move on to the next one. In English, we are also nearing the end of our book The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark and have been discussing how the story ends. This week we have had a lovely week. We played some hockey matches on Tuesday, using the skills we have learnt. We planned our Shining Writes and produced the most beautiful pieces of work. We also began our new Maths unit on multiplication and division, with a focus on equal groups. On Wednesday, we enjoyed an exciting trip to the Northern Stage.

Year 3- Over the last couple of week Year 3 have made great progress in learning about mechanisms to make pop-up books in DT - we can't wait till next week when our parents are invited in to help us with them! We had two wonderful trips to deepen and strengthen our learning and understanding. In PE we are still upskilling ourselves in football and basketball. In Maths we have learned about measuring and how to convert between different units of measure. We are now using those skills to help us find the perimeter of different shapes. In English we are extending our learning about the Stone Age by reading the Stone Age Boy. In Science we have learned so much about magnets and forces. Year 3 are so excited for their stay and pray next Friday, we hope our families can join us to hear us speak about God's gift at Christmas.

As always, we greatly appreciate all parental and family support - through helping with homework, listening to the children read and writing a meaningful comment in the diaries, helping the children practice their spellings and of course, coming on trips! Thank you so much.

Year 4 - Year 4 have explored the 7 times table in Maths and created our own brochures about Barcelona in English. In Science, we investigated temperatures under different conditions, while in PE we focused on teamwork and problem-solving. In RE, we began learning about Advent and the gift of Jesus, even creating our own Advent calendars. This week, we moved on to reasoning and problem-solving using the 3, 6, and 9 times tables in Maths. In Geography, we compared our region to Campana, and in Art we drew real objects using techniques inspired by Vincent Van Gogh. We also learned about the role of Parliament and why it is important. In Science, we carried out an experiment to find the most effective method for melting chocolate.

Year 5- This week in Year 5 has been a vibrant mix of creativity, curiosity, and self-discovery. We are writing a Shining Write on our biography of Jane Goodall or Charles Darwin, exploring the lives of these remarkable scientists and how their work shaped our understanding of the natural world.

In maths, we've been exploring fractions, building a deeper understanding of how parts make up a whole and why this concept matters in everyday life.

Our geography lessons have taken us on a journey to compare our region with Brazil, investigating similarities and differences in climate, culture, and landscapes through maps, data, and discussion.

In art, we've been practising skills inspired by Georgia O'Keeffe, experimenting with bold colours, close-up perspectives, and expressive brushwork to create striking floral compositions.

Year 6 - Over the last two weeks, Year 6 have been busy across the curriculum. In English, the children have begun exploring the story of the Titanic, building their understanding of events and key facts ready to write their own newspaper reports. In Maths, they have been confidently tackling both short and long division, applying their growing skills to increasingly tricky problems. Our science lessons have focused on classifying animals, using scientific vocabulary to sort living things into groups. In RE, we have started our Advent topic Expectations, reflecting on the themes of hope and preparation. Alongside this, the children have been enjoying learning the songs for our Christmas nativity, bringing plenty of festive cheer to our days.



Worlds Children's Day Mass

Thursday 20th November was a very special day in our Church and in the world - we celebrated World Children's Day, a day to give thanks to God for every child, everywhere. As a school family we gathered together in prayer to remember that Jesus welcomes everyone - every child, every heart - into His arms. Thank you to Father Peter and our wonderful KS2 children for leading such a beautiful service.



Northern stage

On Wednesday, Year 1 and Year 2 had a wonderful morning. We went on a frosty walk to the Northern Stage to watch *The Night Before ChrisMouse*. When we entered the show, we followed a trail of cheese on the floor which led us to a cosy room filled with carpets and a stage covered in presents. We were greeted with tails to wear, just like the mouse in the show. We really enjoyed the performance and even got involved, one of our students was chosen to hold the special bell, and when the silly mouse dropped all the sweets on the stage, we helped collect them and return them. The production had a happy ending as the mouse and cat became friends. We then took the frosty walk back to school, where we were greeted with our lovely lunch. Thank you to all who donated and bought cakes, as your support allowed us to go on this trip.

Collection for Vinnies- Faith in Action

As part of the Faith in Action Award, our Year 6 pupils are inviting families to donate selection box for the Vinnie's Centre in Newcastle. This is a wonderful opportunity for our school community to support others during the Advent season and spread a little joy. We will be collecting them from now until Monday 8th December.

#Thank you, as always, for your generosity and kindness.

Year 6 also have another great Faith in Action project coming soon, so watch this space!



A Huge Thank you - St Dominic's Crafty Coffee Group

St Catherine's staff and children would like to express a massive thank you to the St Dominic's Crafty Coffee group, who generously fundraised an impressive £500 to support our school. This wonderful contribution will allow us to purchase the new Bible resources we need to deliver our updated RE curriculum.

Your kindness and support are truly appreciated by our whole school community. Thank you!



Monthly Message from our Attendance Office - Susan Jenkins

Here at St Catherine's, we have high expectations in regard to Attendance and Punctuality. All Children will be sent home with Schools 'Traffic Light Letters', this term. These show you your child's attendance percentage, and in what 'zone' they are in. **The RED Zone** is for children under 90% and is classed as the 'danger zone'. This means they are classed as a Persistent Absentee (PA).

The **AMBER Zone** is for children who's attendance is between 91% - 96% and is classed as the 'At Risk' zone.

The **GREEN Zone** is for children who's attendance is 98% and above and is classed as the 'Safety Zone'.

Where are you on the Traffic light system ?



Every Day Counts! Why Attendance Matters?

Did you know? Missing just two days a month adds up to nearly 20 days a year—that's almost four weeks of learning lost!

Why Attendance is Important

- Confidence grows when children keep up with lessons.
- Friendships flourish when they're part of the class every day.
- Learning sticks when there are no gaps to fill later.

Top Tips for Parents

- ✓ Set a regular bedtime and morning routine.
- ✓ Book appointments outside school hours where possible.
- ✓ Talk positively about school - make it exciting!

Together, we can make every day a success!

Let's give our children the best start by making sure they're in school, on time, every day.

Here at St Catherine's, we see Punctuality very important. School starts at 8.40am with Attendance Registers taken at 8.50am. If you are later than 8.50am your child will receive a L mark.

Registers close at 9.20am. If your child comes to school after this time, they will be marked with a U code. This means they have missed their morning mark, and this will effect their overall Attendance.

Start the Day Right: The Importance of Punctuality

Arriving on time sets children up for success! When pupils start the day promptly, they: Feel prepared and confident - No rushing means a calm start.

- Join in morning learning - Key instructions and activities happen first thing.
- Build responsibility - Being punctual is a life skill that lasts forever.



Did you know?

Being just 10 minutes late each day adds up to over 30 hours of lost learning a year! 30 hours equates to between 5-6 days.

Top Tips for Parents

- ✓ Leave home 5-10 minutes earlier than usual.
- ✓ Prepare school bags and uniforms the night before.
- ✓ Encourage a positive morning routine.

Together, let's make every minute count!

If your child is struggling to come into School, and you need some support and advice, please call Susan on 0191 2326803.

Our parish churches

St Dominic's Catholic Church, New Bridge Street, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 2TE

Mass times: Saturday 5.30pm Sunday 10.00am

Holy Name Jesmond, 7 North Jesmond Avenue Jesmond Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 3JX

Mass Times: Saturday 4.00pm Sunday 10.00am



Contact Information

Should you have any questions, please contact:

School Office: Mrs Johnson & Mrs Roberts 0191 232 6803

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Safeguarding Lead: Miss Hoey 0191 232 6803

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Parent Support Advisor: Susan Jenkins 07506221429

SENCO: Alys Haddow sendco@stcatherinesnewcastle.org