

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO, MARK RANDALL

We have had another busy term here at Enhance Academy Trust.

Batley Parish received their SIAMS inspections a few weeks ago. As a Church of England Trust, the outcomes of our SIAMS inspections are extremely important to us and celebrate many different aspects of our work. I am delighted to tell you that through their vision and practice, Batley Parish is living up to its foundation as Church schools and are enabling pupils and adults to flourish. Well done to Louise Sennett, the Headteacher, and all of her team.

St. Mary's, Royston St. John the Baptist and Dodworth St John's joined our Trust family in September. Horbury St. Peter's and Clifton CE Primary School have been working closely with us and we look forward to them joining us soon.

We say goodbye and thank you to Simon Kaufman (Headteacher at Dodworth St. John's) who leaves us at Christmas. We look forward to welcoming Rob Harvey as the new Headteacher at St. Helen's and Andrew Gibbins as the new Executive Headteacher at Highburton and Lepton in January.

Finally, I would like to congratulate all of our children on their brilliant performances in their plays and nativities over the last few weeks. We clearly have more than a few budding performers in our midst who we hope might go onto join CAPA College in a few years.

Thank you to all of our staff and governors for their hard work this term. Thank you also to all of our parents and carers for their continued support; without this support our schools would not be as successful as we are.

I wish you all a wonderful, peaceful and blessed Christmas and look forward to sharing more news with you in the new year.

With best wishes

Mark Randall



TRUST NEWS

POETRY COMPETITION

Children across the whole Trust have taken part in a poetry competition to demonstrate their superb performance poetry skills. Over the recent weeks, our children have been busy practising and rehearsing a poem of their choice, to then perform for the competition.

A winning entry was selected from each school, which entered a pool of other entries from schools across the trust. We then had the incredibly difficult task of selecting an overall winner.

The quality of the performances were outstanding and we are very proud of each and every child that took part. We had funny poems, poems about harvest - we even had one poem about chocolate cake!

However, our overall winners were Year 6 at Sandal Magna Community Academy, who received our Enhance Academy Trust Poetry competition trophy.

Huge congratulations to each of you - your performance of "Nan, Can You Rap?" was superb!



BATLEY PARISH NEWS

LEGO EXPERIENCE

Our Upper Key Stage 2 children were offered the chance to take part in an engaging STEM learning experience with Yorkshire Water.

The session was based on the theme of sewer blockages and flooding and involved the children using coding and robotics design to complete a real-world challenge using Lego.

The children were so engaged throughout the day and it sparked conversations about future careers in the STEM industry.



ROAD SAFETY

Children across school have been involved in a variety of road safety initiatives this autumn term. We have been very fortunate to have support from the team at Kirklees Council.

They carried out a whole school assembly on the theme of 'Be Bright, Be Seen' and the children were given the opportunity to purchase reflectors to attach to their coats and bags.

Individual classes then received road safety sessions, with our Year 3 children learning how to safely cross the road.

This skill is so important at Batley Parish as we are situated near some busy roads.

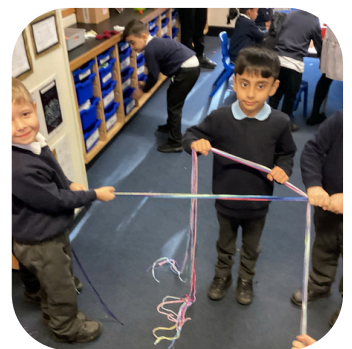


VISION & VALUES MORNING

Parents and carers from across the school were invited to join in with our annual Values Day event.

Each class focused on an individual Christian value, with parents and children working alongside each other to create artwork to display around school. We also took the opportunity to launch our revised school vision, with each child and adult adding their individual thread to the class plaits.

They help us to see how we have 'woven together' as one.



SIAMS

We are delighted to share the results of our recent SIAMS Inspection, which found that we are living up to our foundation as a Church school and are enabling pupils and adults to flourish.

The Inspector felt that our school has a strong sense of community and offers warmth, care and hospitality, living out the vision that 'together we are one'. The school's commitment to inclusion was noted to be a strength, with adults who are ambitious for the children in our care. The children shone throughout the day and were proud of their school.

Well done everyone!

CHRIST CHURCH NEWS

BOX PROJECT

Our Upper Key Stage 2 pupils have had a fantastic Autumn term, with plenty to celebrate.

Years 5 and 6 have been taking part in an inspiring boxing project with Mark, who has been helping them build respect, discipline and confidence.

The sessions have been a real hit, with pupils growing in focus, teamwork and self-belief while learning a sport that promotes self-control and positive behaviour.



YEAR 6 RESIDENTIAL

Year 6 had a fantastic residential at Newby Wiske, full of stories and memories to last for years. The trip gave pupils the chance to try new activities, discover new talents, and strengthen friendships. It was wonderful to see them challenge themselves, grow in confidence, and enjoy every moment.

Throughout the week, pupils took part in a wide range of exciting activities, including zip-wire fun, fencing and water rafting — all of which helped them develop their problem-solving skills, resilience and teamwork.

Their enthusiasm, determination, and support for one another shone through, making it a truly memorable experience for everyone involved.



OWL BABIES

Year 1 enjoyed an exciting visit from a local bird of prey centre to bring their literacy learning to life.

As part of their work on Owl Babies by Martin Waddell, pupils learned fascinating facts about owls, watched them soar around the school hall, and even had the chance to hold Milo, the Little Owl.



FOREST SCHOOL

Forest School continues to nurture both practical and personal skills, helping our pupils grow in confidence, independence and character.

Pupils continue to develop a wide range of skills as they explore the outdoors and the natural environment through practical, meaningful activities.

This term, they have been busy building dens, working together as a team, and learning the importance of cooperation. They have also been developing concentration and responsibility while following safety rules to use knife peelers correctly.



DIAMOND WOOD NEWS

CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHT SWITCH ON

Although many of our pupils do not personally celebrate Christmas due to their own religious beliefs and cultural traditions, we continue to mark this time of year in school as part of our RE curriculum and our commitment to teaching British values. This includes learning about different festivals, understanding their significance, and recognising the traditions that are part of our wider community.

As part of this, our Reception children were delighted to help decorate the Christmas tree in the hall. They did a wonderful job and were thrilled to enjoy a magical light switch on moment together.

Our Key Stage 1 pupils then took part in a special assembly led by our RE Leader, Mrs Umarji, where they learned about Advent and the Christmas story. Their assembly also concluded with a light switch on, creating a warm and memorable atmosphere that the children really enjoyed.

Decorating the tree and sharing a light switch on has been a treasured tradition at Diamond Wood for many years, and we are pleased to continue offering these moments of reflection, learning, and community for our pupils.

NURSERY OWL VISIT

Our Nursery pupils were thrilled to welcome the owls into school this half term. A unique experience they wouldn't usually have the chance to enjoy. This much loved annual visit not only sparks excitement but also deepens the children's understanding of the natural world, linking beautifully with their current key text Owl Babies.

The children were captivated as they observed the owls up close, and many were confident enough to hold them safely. They learned new vocabulary, including the word talons, and have already begun weaving this language into their play and storytelling.

The visit also tied in perfectly with the start of the RSPB's Big School Birdwatch, an event our children look forward to each year. Mrs Price even overheard two Nursery pupils, completely unprompted, chatting about the birds they had spotted on their way to school and proudly identifying them using the images from the RSPB posters. Moments like these show just how powerful hands on learning can be.

It was a truly memorable experience and a wonderful way to launch this year's birdwatching activities.



CORRIDOR MONITORS & PUPIL LEADERSHIP

As part of promoting democracy and developing early careers skills, our newly appointed Year 2 Corridor Monitors have joined the Pupil Leadership Team.

After being nominated and recruited, they now 'work' each lunchtime to model and promote our expectations, encouraging children to walk safely on the left and move calmly through school.

Monitors award Corridor Stars to peers who show they are sensible and safe. The class with the most stars each week wins the Star Trophy, with a record of 99 stars so far! The monitors can also earn a 'wage' of 20 Dojos per half term for their work, which they can save or spend in the Dojo Shop.

We are very proud of the excellent example they are setting.

DODWORTH ST JOHN NEWS

LOOKING TO THE SKIES - INSPIRING FUTURES

Recently, a simple question from a pupil — “Where do you think that plane’s going?” — sparked a playground game of imagining adventures.

That spark of curiosity is what the Primary Futures Aviation in Primary Schools programme builds on. It connects children with aviation specialists through engaging sessions, showing that aviation is about more than flying: it’s teamwork, STEM, and seeing the world differently.

Last year’s Year 6 loved it, and we’ve re-applied for this year! We’re proud to announce DSJA has earned the Primary Futures Bronze Award for promoting career awareness.

Let’s keep those sparks flying!



BRASS TUITION BEGINS - BUILDING CONFIDENCE THROUGH MUSIC

Exciting developments from our brass tuition meeting! It’s incredible to see students go from never having held a brass instrument to exploring different ones and producing their very first notes.

The official programme starts after school on Tuesday and runs for 12 weeks, culminating in a celebratory concert to showcase their progress.

Music has the power to inspire, connect, and build confidence - and we can’t wait to see our pupils shine.

Here’s to a term filled with rhythm, melody, and new achievements! Our thanks go to the local Dodworth brass instrument team in giving their time and expertise for this.



ASTHMA FRIENDLY SCHOOLS INITIATIVE LAUNCHED

We’re proud to share that all staff have completed Asthma Awareness training last month, helping us achieve Asthma Friendly accredited status. This important initiative is designed to improve care for pupils with asthma and raise awareness of this common long-term condition.

To earn this accreditation, our school, led by the lovely Barnsley Hospital NHS team has committed to:

- Training all staff in Asthma Awareness
- Implementing an Asthma Policy and maintaining an Asthma Register
- Ensuring consistent inhaler storage across the school
- Creating a system to track inhaler expiry dates
- Keeping a spare emergency inhaler and spacer on site
- Establishing clear escalation procedures for individual cases

This is another step forward in making sure our pupils with asthma feel safe, supported, and ready to thrive during their time at Dodworth. Thank you to our dedicated staff team for making this happen!

FEATHERSTONE ALL SAINTS NEWS

ARMISTICE DAY SCHOOL SERVICE

Our Year 6 pupils represented the academy with maturity and respect at the annual Remembrance Service held at the Memorial Gardens on 11th November.

The children stood alongside members of our community, veterans and cadet forces to pay their respects and observe the two-minute silence.

It was a poignant and valuable opportunity for them to understand the significance of this tradition and to reflect on the sacrifices made by those who have served.

We were incredibly proud of the thoughtful and exemplary behaviour displayed by all the children, who were a credit to our academy.



BISHOP JOHN OF TANZANIA VISITS ALL SAINTS

On Wednesday 12th November, our Year 6 pupils attended the service at our local church, All Saints.

The pupils met Father John from Tanzania.

The children had the opportunity to ask questions about Tanzania and how life has similarities and differences to here in Featherstone.

Bishop John visited England and spent time exploring parishes and schools in the Wakefield and Huddersfield areas, deepening connections with the diocese, who have a strong link to the church in Tanzania.



FUTURE FRIDAYS - CAREER FOCUSED VISITS

As a school, we are working hard to continue to encourage all pupils to aspire to be the best that they can be, and in every sense of the phrase, 'Grow and Flourish.' One way we are working to do this is by inviting as many visitors into school as we can, from a range of professions.

Pupils in Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to meet the visitors, listen to them talk about what it is that they do, how they have achieved their goals and also ask them questions.

So far this year, we have welcomed a pilot, rugby league players and a paramedic - pupils have had the opportunity to dress in the pilot outfit, look in the back of the ambulance and learn all about it. The pupils have had some brilliant questions to ask and it has been an incredibly positive, motivational experience!



HIGHBURTON NEWS

SCARECROW TRAIL & PUMPKIN PATCH

Our PTA organised a community pumpkin patch and scarecrow trail. Children from school and the community made and displayed their scarecrows outside their homes and on the school field.

A map around the village marked all the scarecrows with space to complete your guess as to who they were!

Our Art club also helped create the props on our school field.

What a day! Who knew scarecrows and pumpkins would bring our whole village community together!

Thank you so much to all of you who made a scarecrow and who completed our trail.

The feedback has been amazing and the request to turn it into an annual event has been secured!



REMEMBRANCE DAY

Three of our pupils represented the school at the Kirkburton Cenotaph for Remembrance Day. They took part in the service alongside members of the local community and respectfully laid a wreath on behalf of all the children and staff at school.

We are very proud of the way they conducted themselves throughout the event, showing great maturity and understanding of the importance of remembering those who have served and sacrificed in conflicts past and present.

Our beautiful poppy artwork from our Art club members is also displayed in the gardens surrounding the cenotaph.



KIRKLEES CROSS COUNTRY FINALS

The children performed brilliantly during the recent cross-country event at Leeds Road Playing Fields, despite the very wet and challenging conditions.

Every participant showed fantastic resilience and determination, demonstrating real strength of character throughout the course.

We are incredibly proud of the way they represented the school, supportive, hardworking, and unfazed by the weather.

Well done to all the children who took part.

HORBURY BRIDGE NEWS

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE IN REID PARK

On Tuesday 11th November, our school community gathered in Reid Park for a poignant Remembrance Service. It was a reflective moment as pupils, staff and families came together to honour and remember those who have fallen.

It was moving to see so many people standing side by side in shared respect. Pupils conducted themselves with great dignity, demonstrating their understanding of the importance of remembrance and the value of taking time to reflect.

Thank you to everyone who joined us. Your presence helped make the service a meaningful and heartfelt act of remembrance for our whole community.



CLASS 3 EXPLORE COXLEY WOODS TO LAUNCH BRIDGE-BUILDING DT TOPIC

Class 3 had a brilliant start to their new Design and Technology topic with an inspiring visit to Coxley Woods. The children ventured along the woodland paths to study the different ways a stream can be crossed, observing everything from simple natural crossings to more structured man-made solutions.

They spent time sketching, comparing and discussing the various bridge types they discovered, thinking carefully about how each design works and why certain structures are more effective. Pupils showed great enthusiasm as they examined balance, stability and the choice of materials, all of which will feed into their own bridge-building projects back in the classroom.



FOREST SCHOOL ADVENTURES & FIRE SAFETY SKILLS

Our youngest learners in EYFS had an absolutely fantastic time in Forest School this term where they experienced the simple joy of making toast over an open fire. The excitement and wonder on their faces as they watched their bread turn golden brown was a beautiful reminder of how powerful outdoor learning can be.

Meanwhile, our Year 6 pupils demonstrated remarkable maturity and responsibility during their fire safety assessment. Starting and managing a fire safely requires knowledge, careful planning, and excellent risk management skills – all qualities that our oldest pupils displayed in abundance. They thoroughly enjoyed the practical challenge, and it's been wonderful to see them develop these important life skills.

CLASS 2 EMBARK ON EGYPTIAN ADVENTURE

Our Class 2 pupils have made a brilliant start to their Design Technology unit exploring Egyptian Colours. The children have been learning two fundamental embroidery techniques: the running stitch and the cross stitch. Threading a needle for the first time can be quite a challenge, but every single child rose to the occasion magnificently.

What impressed me most was how the children supported one another, offering encouragement and celebrating each other's successes. Well done, Class 2 – your Egyptian-inspired creations are going to be spectacular!



LEPTON NEWS

SPORTING HEROICS

Across Autumn term, school have seen some amazing sporting achievements - both individually or in teams. Firstly, some of our Key Stage 2 children took part in a cross-country event which led to two of our children representing school at the regional finals - way to go!

The children showed endurance and perseverance when faced with some dreadful weather conditions but they came out with smiles on their faces.

Also, our Year 6 girls entered a football tournament and came out as victorious winners! It was a first for some of them to represent school so a huge achievement for all involved.

Finally, in terms of group achievements, our sports hall athletic team have qualified for the regional finals!

On an individual level, one of our Year 5 girls took an astonishing gold medal in a regional gymnastics tournament, a Year 2 golfer took 4th place in a European tournament and one of our very own Year children has been signed on to Huddersfield Town Ladies and Girls.

We're incredibly proud of all of their achievements.



BRINGING JOY TO THE COMMUNITY

Over the past few weeks, our choir and gardeners have been extremely busy spreading their festive cheer!

The choir visited the local supermarket to sing Christmas carols to shoppers, whilst our Gardening Club spent time making their own Christmas wreaths for members of the local community and creating a Nativity scene in the wheelbarrow for all of our school community to enjoy. Children love sharing their talents and passions with the local community and we can't wait for this to continue into the Spring term.



VISITS TO CHURCH

We are very lucky to have such strong connections with our local churches. Reception children visited Lepton Methodist Church along with Year 6 to celebrate and reflect on remembrance and the significance of it still today. Children listened to stories and took part in activities, whilst engaging in reflection and prayer.

Our Year 2 class visited Almondbury Methodist Church to celebrate the Christmas journey, with children taking part in an immersive experience.

These visits to our local places of worship are truly valued by the children and staff.



OVERTHORPE NEWS

REMEMBRANCE REFLECTION

Our school community came together at Thornhill Parish Church for a deeply moving Remembrance Service led by Reverend Debbie Nash, Mr Mitchell and our Senior Pupil Representatives.

A powerful moment in the service involved each pupil holding a small piece of red ribbon. This simple symbol helped us all reflect on the stories of courage, loss and hope that shape our shared history. The Senior Pupil Representative beautifully explained how, just like individual poppies, each thread represents memories, and when these threads are woven together, they create something strong, meaningful and lasting.

Pupils also listened to memories of war shared from books, poems and the personal reflections of Ms Scott, a staff member, reminding us that remembrance is not only about the past, but about the values we carry forward: peace, compassion and courage.

We are incredibly proud of the respect, maturity and empathy shown by all our pupils. Their thoughtful participation helped make this year's Remembrance Service a truly special and heartfelt occasion.



EXCITING DEVELOPMENTS IN OUR COMPUTING CURRICULUM

We are excited to share the great progress students are making with our new computing curriculum, which focuses on creativity, coding and online collaboration.

Year 1 have created vibrant digital art using Seesaw.

Year 2 have produced their own stop-motion animations.

Year 3 are learning coding skills, including sequences, animations and conditional events.

Year 4 have designed interactive posters to promote sports clubs.

Year 5 are developing online collaboration skills, learning to think critically before posting and to evaluate online information.

Year 6 are exploring advanced coding, working with variables and object properties.

The children's enthusiasm for these new tools and projects has been inspiring. Our curriculum aims to nurture creativity, critical thinking and collaboration, preparing children for future opportunities.

We also look forward to sharing upcoming computing projects and events for families to enjoy.



CROSS COUNTRY COMPETITION

We held an internal Cross Country Competition after more than 75 pupils showed interest. From this, 45 children went on to the North Kirklees Finals, where the school achieved its best-ever results. Our Year 3 girls, Year 5 boys, and four individual runners all qualified for the next round.

At the Kirklees Finals, the children continued to perform brilliantly, and we are now awaiting news on who will progress to the West Yorkshire Finals at Temple Newsam.

To celebrate the children's hard work, outstanding participation and excellent results, the School Games organisers surprised us in Achievement Assembly with the Cross Country Participation Award. We are extremely proud of all the children for their determination, confidence and sportsmanship.



ROYSTON ST JOHN THE BAPTIST NEWS

HARVEST FESTIVAL

Royston St John Baptist CE Primary School recently took part in a special St John's Harvest Festival at our parish church. The service was led by Father Craig and attended by members of the church community, staff, families, and pupils.

Year Six pupils prepared and read thoughtful prayers, reflecting on the importance of gratitude and sharing with others. The school community also donated a wonderful collection of food and essential items to support local families in need — a true demonstration of our caring school values in action.

Everyone joined together in song, filling the church with joyful harvest hymns to mark this special occasion. It was a lovely opportunity for pupils to come together in worship and thankfulness for the gifts of the harvest.



STEM IN ACTION

Pupils across the school took part in exciting STEM sessions with Amaze Labs, becoming scientists for the day! They explored chemical reactions and discovered why certain substances react in different ways. Pupils in Key Stage Two even made slime as part of their experiments, learning about its texture and the science behind how it is created.

One child in Reception proudly declared at the end, "I want to be a scientist — this was the best day ever!"

As a school, we are raising the profile of STEM this year, and this event was a fantastic way to inspire curiosity and enthusiasm for scientific learning right from the start of the term. Pupils showed great teamwork, problem-solving skills, and a real sense of wonder as they experimented and made new discoveries.



KINDNESS MATTERS

To promote our core school value of kindness, we held a competition to design a poster as part of Kindness Week. We received an amazing 74 entries showcasing creativity, compassion, and thoughtfulness. Our Peer Wellbeing Champions carefully judged the entries and presented the winners with books as prizes.

As part of the week, pupils also took part in Compass B workshops focused on emotions, empathy, and healthy peer relationships. In addition, we celebrated World Mental Health Day by wearing yellow and taking time to reflect on ways we can prioritise our wellbeing and support one another.

It was a truly uplifting week that reminded us all that small acts of kindness can make a big difference — in school and beyond.



SANDAL MAGNA NEWS

FOREST SCHOOL

Year 4 have been fully embracing their Forest School sessions with Benji every Monday afternoon in the run-up to Christmas. The children have loved learning new outdoor skills, including creating their own flint tools and safely using saws to cut wood.

They have practised fire-lighting techniques and enjoyed working together to build sturdy tarp shelters in the woodland area. Alongside these practical skills, pupils have taken part in a range of team-building games that encourage communication, cooperation and problem-solving. It has been wonderful to see their confidence grow each week as they explore, create and learn in the great outdoors.

IGNITE SESSION

This term, our children have been thriving in their weekly Ignite sessions with Bop, where they take part in drama, singing and dancing activities designed to bring learning to life. Each session is carefully linked to our curriculum, helping pupils remember key vocabulary and content through creative expression. Whether they are acting out scenes, learning new songs or exploring movement, the children have shown great enthusiasm and energy, and it has been wonderful to see their confidence grow.

A highlight of the term has been the development of our very own Sandal Magna Values song. Working closely with Bop, the children have helped create a lively and memorable piece that reinforces our school values, along with clear examples and definitions. Its catchy tune has quickly become a favourite across the school, and we often hear pupils singing it with pride throughout the day.

In addition to the Ignite sessions, we now offer Bop Boogie at lunchtimes, giving children the chance to get active and enjoy our whole-school dance routines at the end of lunch. These sessions have proved incredibly popular, bringing fun, fitness and a real sense of community to the playground. It has been fantastic to see so many children joining in with smiles and enthusiasm.



KINDNESS MATTERS

Just before the October half-term break, our school was buzzing with creativity and teamwork as we hosted our exciting Parent and Child Marble Run Challenge. This highly anticipated event saw families collaborate under a tight 30-minute time limit to construct a functioning marble run using only paper and Sellotape.

It was wonderful to observe the innovative designs and problem-solving skills on display as parents and children worked together in fantastic harmony. The atmosphere was one of focused concentration mixed with lots of laughter and encouragement.

The true test came when we put the creations to the trial. Marbles were released, and the air was filled with anticipation! Congratulations to the winning team whose ingenious design managed to keep the marble rolling for the longest time.

We look forward to holding similar challenges in the future to foster engagement and collaborative learning.



ST BOTOLPH'S NEWS

REINDEER RUN

Our whole school took part in a joyful Reindeer Run to raise money for our local Wakefield hospice, proudly collecting over £800 for this important cause.

Children donned festive reindeer antlers as they ran, filling the community with Christmas cheer.

During the route, pupils made a special stop outside The Rivers care home, where they paused to sing for residents, spreading warmth and smiles.

It was a wonderful example of our school community coming together to support others.



YEAR 6 FUTURE BIKES

Year 6 had an exciting and informative day learning all about road safety with Tom from Future Bikes.

The children took part in practical sessions and then headed out for a supervised bike ride around Knottingley, applying their new skills in real situations.

They learned how to navigate roads safely, understand key road signs and build confidence when cycling in the community. It was a valuable experience that left pupils feeling more aware, responsible, and ready to ride safely.



BEDTIME STORIES

Our Bedtime Stories event was a magical evening as children and parents returned to school after dark to share stories together.

Families snuggled up with cosy blankets, enjoyed delicious hot chocolate and cookies, and listened to teachers read much-loved tales by torchlight.

The event created a wonderful atmosphere of togetherness and imagination, celebrating our whole school's love of reading and the joy of ending the day with a good book.



CHRISTMAS EVE EVENT

Our Wraparound Care Christmas Eve event was filled with cosy cheer as children enjoyed a relaxed afternoon of festive fun. They snuggled up to watch Christmas movies, sipped warm hot chocolate and got creative making their own decorations to take home.

The atmosphere was full of excitement and sparkle, making it a perfect way for our children to end the term and begin the Christmas celebrations.



ST GILES NEWS

TRIP TO PONTEFRACT CASTLE

Lower Key Stage 2 had a fantastic trip to Pontefract Castle, where we stepped back in time over 800 years to learn about medieval life and the story of Magna Carta.

We discovered how a local lord, Lord John de Lacey and other barons stood up to King John, who was known for being selfish and greedy with taxes. The children learned that the Magna Carta was written in Latin and helped make laws fairer for everyone — laws that still influence our society today.

The class explored the castle grounds and learned about Ilbert de Lacy, who built the castle around 1000 years ago. They also found out how Roger de Lacey, a rich and powerful knight, passed his lands to John after his death.

A highlight of the trip was going down into the castle's dungeons, where we discovered what life was like for prisoners in the past. The children saw how dark, cold, and cramped it was — a powerful way to understand the harsh reality of medieval punishment and justice.

Everyone enjoyed a hands-on workshop about the Magna Carta, helping to bring history to life in a memorable way.



REMEMBRANCE DAY

This term, St Giles came together as a whole school community to mark Remembrance Day with dignity and respect. Our School Ambassadors represented the academy at the town's war memorial, where they joined Mrs Houchin in observing the minute's silence. Back in school, all children also paused to reflect, honouring the moment alongside their peers and demonstrating the shared values that unite our Trust schools.

Continuing an important annual tradition, our Year 6 pupils took part in a workshop with Elizabeth from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. They visited the graveyard opposite school to learn about those laid to rest there and to pay their respects. The pupils showed impressive maturity, empathy, and understanding as they deepened their knowledge of the sacrifices made by others.

St Giles' thoughtful engagement in Remembrance activities reflects the school's strong sense of community and its commitment to fostering respect and reflection in all pupils.



CROSS COUNTRY COMPETITION

For the first time ever, St Giles is heading to the West Yorkshire Cross Country Competition at Temple Newsam! Our runners have shown incredible dedication, determination, and team spirit throughout the season, and their hard work has truly paid off.

The children are buzzing with excitement as they prepare to compete in March, ready to represent St Giles with pride.

We can't wait to cheer them on as they take on this exciting challenge—well done to all our amazing athletes!



ST HELENS NEWS

ADVENT MASS

Key Stage 2 visited St Helen's Church to observe and take part in a beautiful Advent Mass.

Year 5 confidently explained the meaning of the Advent candles and their links to the Christmas story.

We were delighted to be joined by parents for this special celebration—a wonderful way to begin our Christmas season.



CURRICULUM SHOWCASE

Oak, Sycamore and Chestnut Classes delivered their Curriculum Showcase Assemblies this term, proudly sharing their learning with pupils and parents.

Each class presented with confidence and enthusiasm, celebrating the breadth and creativity of our curriculum. We were delighted with the fantastic parental turnout, which helped highlight the many strengths of St Helen's curriculum.



SCARECROWS WEDDING

Acorn Class visited St Helen's Church to learn about celebrations and take part in a special 'Scarecrow's Wedding' ceremony, inspired by Julia Donaldson's story.

The children loved exploring the church on their very first visit, discovering its different features and enjoying a memorable, joyful experience together.



CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES

Festivities at St Helen's have been wonderful, with Christmas discos, Christmas dinner, Christmas Jumper Day, carol concerts, Reindeer Run and nativities filling our days with joy.

The children have truly rejoiced as we gather in celebration, joining in with the blessed season of Advent and reflecting on the hope, peace and light Christ brings.



ST MARY'S NEWS

ANNUAL INTER SCHOOLS ATHLETICS COMPETITION

On 5th December, PSP proudly hosted their annual Inter-School Athletics Competition at Barnsley Football Club Community Trust.

Eight local schools came together for an afternoon filled with energy, determination, and sporting spirit.

With parents cheering from the stands, every child gave their all—running, jumping, and competing with passion across a variety of events. The atmosphere was electric as each school showcased incredible talent and teamwork.

In the end, it was St Mary's who emerged victorious, securing a well-deserved place in the Barnsley School Finals this coming January. A huge congratulations to all our athletes for their outstanding effort and sportsmanship, and to our supporters who made the day even more special.



CHILDREN IN NEED

We raised nearly £150 in support of Children In Need this year through our non-uniform day.

A fantastic spotty day whilst thinking of those in need.



REMEMBRANCE DAY

Year 6 were honoured to take part in the Remembrance Day service at the war memorial in Barnsley.

The service was led by dignitaries and clergy and the children took the opportunity to remember those who gave their lives.

A special thank you to Katie and Charlie who laid a wreath on behalf of St Mary's CE Primary.



YEAR 6 RESIDENTIAL

We are extremely proud of our Year 6 class who have returned from their 3 day residential adventure at Robinwood Activity Centre.

They showed tremendous resilience when approaching new activities, respect to adults supporting them and good relationships with each other as they supported their friends to be the best they could be.



ST MICHAEL'S NEWS

YEAR 6 RESIDENTIAL

Advent began at St Michael's with our Christmas Craft Mornings welcoming parents into school to join their children for a festive, creative start to the Christmas season. The classes were filled with excitement as families gathered around craft stations, sharing ideas, plenty of glitter and Christmas Music!

Throughout the morning, children and parents worked side by side to create a wonderful selection of Christmas-themed crafts. From hand-decorated tree ornaments to sparkling festive calendars, it was a pleasure to see children proudly showing parents the techniques they've been learning in class, and equally lovely to watch families collaborate on their Christmas masterpieces. Many parents commented on how nice it was to spend creative time with their children in school.



OWL VISIT

Our youngest children at St Michael's enjoyed owls visiting school, giving Nursery and Reception children the chance to meet these remarkable birds up close and in person. The visit brought learning to life in the most exciting way, sparking curiosity and wonder throughout the early years classes.

Children were able to observe a variety of owls, each with its own unique features. They listened carefully as the owl handler explained how the birds live, hunt and communicate, and the children were fascinated to discover how quiet an owl's flight can be.

The session linked with our early years topics on animals and the natural world. The highlight for many was having the opportunity to see the owls perched just a short distance away — a moment that sparked wide eyes and even wider smiles. Experiences like this not only enrich classroom learning but also help build confidence, curiosity and a love for the world around them.



HAND TO MOUTH VISIT

We were delighted to welcome Hand to Mouth into school this half term, bringing a wonderfully rich experience in spirituality to our children from Reception through to Year 3. Each class had the chance to take part in thoughtful, hands-on activities designed to spark curiosity, reflection and imagination.

In Reception, children loved making colourful bead bracelets to show where they belong, carefully choosing each bead to represent something special to them. Moving into Year 1, pupils explored the question "Who is God?" through a feely-bag activity that had them talking, wondering and reflecting together. For Year 2, a calm and engaging Godly Play session all about creation encouraged deep thinking and gentle discussion. Meanwhile, Year 3 enjoyed a remarkable spiritual journey about the Trinity, exploring this concept through a series of short reflective tasks.

Staff commented on how engaged, thoughtful and enthusiastic the children were during each of the sessions. Visits like these broaden children's understanding, nurture their natural spirituality and give them meaningful opportunities to reflect on themselves, others and the wider world.



SOCIAL MEDIA ACROSS THE TRUST



St. Michael's
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Year 4 are also in the mood for @BBCCiN! They have taken on maths challenges linked to fundraising and escaped the classroom, before spending some time completing some mindfulness pictures.



St Helen's CE Primary School
@StHelCEPrimary

X.com

Our Year 4 scientists have been exploring how everyday kitchen liquids can affect tooth enamel — some surprising results! Meanwhile, Year 5 have been busy investigating dissolving, learning all about solutes, solvents, and what makes some materials insoluble.
[#ScienceInAction](#)



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@stgilesacademy

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Locating & building attractions around the UK, focussing on the human features this week in LKS2. Discussing and explaining why these are tourist attractions & which we'd like to visit too! 🗺️🏰
[#StGilesGeography](#)



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Congratulations to our KS2 stars of the week! As always, we are blown away by their hard work and determination. Keep up the hard work! 🌟

