

St. Francis' School Newsletter

9th January 2026



Virtue of the month – Faith

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome Back!

"Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." The historian Herodotus said this about the ancient Persian postal system; I think that many of us have shown similar resilience this past week getting into school!

Welcome back. We are delighted to see everyone after the Christmas break. The children have settled into school routines wonderfully and are embracing the new term with enthusiasm. Despite the light snow on the playground, the children got outside and enjoyed playing in the snow. It was lovely to see them having so much fun! As the colder weather continues, please ensure that your child has appropriate footwear, a warm coat and gloves in school so they can stay comfortable during outdoor activities. Please also give yourself a few extra minutes to get in on time if it looks like the roads are busy.

On behalf of all the staff, we would like to wish you a very Happy New Year. We hope you had a joyful Christmas and New Year with your families. Thank you for all the thoughtful cards, messages, and goodies you shared with us at the end of last term, which meant a lot to us.



Attendance Cup

Well done, **Apple Class!** Your fantastic attendance this week has earned you the Attendance Cup. It's great to see your commitment to being in school and learning together. To all our other classes: keep going, your turn to shine next week.



Catholic Social Teaching: Our Shared Values

Throughout the year, Catholic Social Teaching (CST) supports the values we promote as a school community. These principles help children understand the importance of kindness, respect, fairness and responsibility, both in school and in everyday life. Through learning and daily interactions, children are encouraged to recognise the dignity of every person, care for others and the world around them, and understand that everyone has a role to play. We also support children in developing a strong sense of justice, empathy and peace, helping them make positive choices in their relationships with others.

These values are woven into classroom learning, collective worship and everyday school life, supporting children's moral and spiritual development all year round. You as parents and carers play a vital role in reinforcing these values at home by:

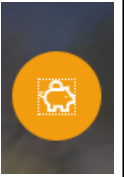
- Talking with your child about kindness, fairness and helping others
- Encouraging sharing, turn-taking and listening to different points of view
- Modelling caring behaviour and peaceful ways to resolve disagreements
- Involving children in small acts of helping others or caring for the environment

By working together, we can help children live out these values with confidence at home, at school and in the wider community.

This month, our virtue of the month is faith. Let's make a shared point of living and acting out of faith rather than fear or despair. This is not a 'nice' or comfortable choice, but rather a positive choice that will shape our lives for the better. As Pope Leo has said, "Faith is a walk with stones, puddles, and unexpected hugs. I'm not asking you to believe in everything. I'm asking you not to close the door. Give a chance to the God who waits for you without judgment."

St Francis' School Development Fund

The St Francis' School Development Fund plays an important part in helping us enhance our school buildings and learning resources, so we can continue to provide a welcoming, inspiring environment for all our children. Every donation, no matter how small, truly makes a difference. If you're able to support us, we would be very grateful for a voluntary monthly or one-off donation. **Please click this link: [Donate now](#)** or visit the donation page on our website (image to the side) to find out more. Further information will also be sent out shortly. All donations are handled confidentially, and we thank you for your kindness and continued support.



Stem Talk For Year Six

We would like to extend a huge thank you to **Mrs Cooper**, a parent of children in Reception and Year 1, who kindly volunteered her time to visit Year 6 and deliver an engaging talk. The session focused on **aviation** and how **STEM subjects are used in real-life work environments**, which the children found both interesting and inspiring. The children thoroughly enjoyed the visit, and we are extremely grateful for the time and effort Mrs Cooper gave to make the session such a success. See the student website [Speedbird-Z](#) for more info (minimum age 13 - however they may sign up before with an adult's email and supervision).

Primary School Admissions

Please remember the deadline for Reception 2026 applications to School Admissions is the **15th January**. Any applications received after this date are treated as late applications.



Celebration Assembly

Well done to all the certificate winners this week and to **Thomas More** for winning the House points.



Best wishes,
Mr Doyle and Staff

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As Christmas passes, we can reflect on the gifts we were given. The pair of socks, chocolates or tin of biscuits. They remind us of the importance of gifts in the bible. This week we shared Epiphany, when the Magi came to see Jesus and presented him with the gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. But we can also consider gifts given other Bible episodes, like the woman in the temple who gave all the coins she had, or the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is also a time when many readings refer to love and God being love itself. If we have love in our hearts, we show that we have God in our hearts too. At a time when many people make new year resolutions, perhaps we can all resolve to show more love to others.

Mr Yarnell

Calendar Dates

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| 13 th February | Break up For Half Term |
| 23 rd February | School reopens @9am |
| 25 th February | Dorking Hall Festival |
| 13 th March | INSET – School Closed |
| 17 th March | Royal Albert Hall – Details to Follow |
| 27 th March | Break Up From School @1pm |
| 13 th April | School Reopens @9am |
| 4 th May | Bank Holiday -School Closed |
| 5 th May | Year 3 Trip Frylands Wood |
| 5 th May | Year 4 Trip to High Ashurst |
| 11 th – 14 th May | Sats Week for Year 6 |
| 22 nd May | Break Up For Half Term |
| 1 st June | School Reopens @9am |
| 17 th July | Break up From School @1pm |

A very Happy New Year to all our St Francis families!

We hope you all had a restful and enjoyable break. As we start 2026, we are incredibly excited to kick off the spring term with a fresh perspective and a new team dedicated to making our school the best it can be for our children and community.



Introducing Your New PTA Committee

We are delighted to introduce the three new Co-Chairs leading our committee this year. Each is a parent currently in the thick of school life and eager to make a difference:

Rachel Curtis: Mum to Rosa (Reception)

Leah Mouatt-Benson: Mum to Evlynn (Reception)

Rajaa Habib: Mum to Zakariya (Year 1)

We are also thrilled to share that much of our experienced team is staying on to provide vital continuity. **Amie** our previous Chair, is staying on as Deputy Chair. We also have **Andrew** and **Debbie** continuing in their essential roles. This blend of fresh perspectives and seasoned experience makes for a fantastic new committee!

Fresh Ideas for a Sustainable Future

As we launch this new chapter, you will notice some changes in what the PTA organises compared to previous years. We want to be transparent about why: our primary focus is to ensure that every event we run successfully raises the funds needed to support the school.

Sadly, some past activities haven't brought in enough donations to sustain them, so we are introducing new, fresh ideas to ensure our efforts are effective. While some things will look a little different, many "old favourites" will still be there—some with a brand-new flair! Our goal is to keep our community spirit high while ensuring every penny raised goes back into our children's education.

Our Purpose: Supporting Equity and Excellence

It is important to remember that the PTA is a registered charity. Our sole purpose is to create an equitable and positive environment for every student. We provide the "extras" that fall outside the standard school budget provided by the Xavier Trust.

Without your generous donations of time and money, these essential items and experiences simply cannot happen. We aren't just "running events"; we are bridge-building for our children's future.

Did you know... If you are making a donation via a business this and any donation may be tax deductible. All you need from us is our registered charity number, so if you would like to utilise this, please get in touch and please make sure you speak to a financial accountant for further information.

Our Aims and Objectives for 2026

We have worked closely with the teaching staff to identify where we can make the most impact. Our key goals for this year include:

Boosting School Applications: By enriching our Early Years play equipment, as guided by our teaching staff, we aim to make St Francis the first choice for new families.

First Impressions: Updating the front entrance and school signage to better reflect our fantastic school community.

Going Green: We are working towards installing solar panels to improve our "green" credentials and help the school manage rising utility costs.

Supporting Our Teachers: We are providing £200 per class in enrichment funds. This ensures staff don't have to fund classroom extras out of their own pockets, as many have been doing.

Key Resources: Funding essential tools including e-learning memberships, laminators, guillotines for projects, and new PE equipment.

Better Facilities: Investing in new storage solutions and exciting water play equipment for outdoor learning.

We are so excited to get started. Whether you can help at an event or offer a donation, your support is what makes these goals for our School and our children a reality. Here's to a productive and fun year ahead for the whole St Francis community!