



Headteacher's Newsletter

November 2025



THIS NEWSLETTER INCLUDES:

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Lead the Way

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Photos

NOVEMBER - REMEMBERING

November is a special month in our faith, dedicated to remembrance. At the start of the month, Mr Ashburn and Mrs Le Roux led Gospel assemblies where they spoke to the children about the significance of All Hallows' Eve, All Saints' Day, and All Souls' Day.

During these assemblies, we explained to the children that All Hallows' Eve is the evening before All Saints' Day. A time we prepare our hearts and minds for the celebration of all the saints. Children explored the celebration of All Saints' Day, a day to honour all saints who have lived holy lives and now share in God's presence in heaven. Pupils also reflected on All Souls' Day, a day dedicated to praying for all those who have passed away - a time to remember our loved ones.

This year, our children focused especially on their class saints. They learned about the lives of these saints and how they followed God's word. One inspiring example shared during assembly was Carlo Acutis, a modern-day saint who, like many children, enjoyed playing video games but lived his life for God. This helped our pupils understand that you don't have to be a superhero to be a saint. As Pope Leo said, saints are "faithful friends of Christ" who are "not heroes or champions, but normal men and women" who lived their faith courageously.

Continuing our theme of remembrance, Year 5 delivered a moving Remembrance Day Assembly, and Year 4 attended a special Remembrance Mass on November 6th.

*"With God at the heart of our St Ursula's family,
we welcome all as we learn and grow together."*

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS



Many of you will know that St Ursula's Catholic Primary School was founded by the Ursuline Sisters, with the mission to provide a quality Catholic education to children in our local area.

Our strong relationship with the Ursuline Sisters continues to this day, and I have recently been working closely with them to explore ways to further enhance our school for the benefit of our entire community.

I am delighted to share that after months of dedicated planning and collaboration, we are ready to begin a series of exciting development projects this academic year. These improvements will not only enhance the safety, comfort, and accessibility of our school environment but also enrich the spiritual and learning experiences of our pupils.

Here is an overview of the key projects underway:

- 1. Canopy Connecting both School Buildings**
- 2. New School Pathways**
- 3. Window Replacements**
- 4. Toilet Refurbishments**
- 5. Security System Upgrade**
- 6. Prayer Chapel**
- 7. School Library Update**
- 8. School Clothes Shop**
- 9. Reading Pods**
- 10. Outdoor Seating**



We are also hopeful about a final project, pending planning permission:

11. Safer Access to Church - We aim to create an internal safe path across the school field, especially benefiting our younger and SEND pupils, to avoid busy road exposure when accessing St Dominic's.

These developments reflect our ongoing commitment to providing an exceptional, inclusive, and nurturing environment where every child can thrive spiritually, academically, and personally. We look forward to sharing updates as these exciting projects progress.

Pupil Chaplains Lead the Way in Catholic Social Teaching

Our 12 dedicated Pupil Chaplains recently led inspiring assemblies—one for Key Stage 2 and one for Key Stage 1—focusing on the vital theme of taking action to support others. Through these assemblies, they helped our pupils understand that supporting others is at the very heart of our school's mission, rooted in Catholic Social Teaching. This teaching guides us with values that inspire care and compassion for both our local community and the wider world.

This year, our chaplains shared a special message from Pope Leo, reminding us that true faith means “reaching out to the suffering with actions, not words.” They explained how Jesus showed love not just by speaking but by healing the sick, feeding the hungry, and showing kindness to all. Our chaplains encouraged everyone to follow this example by turning words into meaningful actions.

Using feedback from pupil voice, the chaplains worked with Mr Ashburn to create a brand-new fundraising calendar that reflects the views of our whole school community. This year, we are excited to support new charities including Teenage Cancer Trust, Essex Wildlife, and St Mungo's. When selecting these charities, pupils considered key Catholic Social Teaching principles such as solidarity, the option for the poor, and human dignity. The Chaplains also worked with classes to choose CAFOD World Gifts, such as teaching people to read, vegetable gardens, goats, and trees to help communities around the world thrive.



Loving God,

**You made each of us in Your image,
and call us to respect the dignity of every person.
Help us to love and serve the poor and vulnerable,
to stand in solidarity with those in need,
and to care for Your creation with kindness and respect.
May our faith be alive in the way we act—
showing kindness, honesty, and resilience every day.
Guide us to work together,
to share our gifts,
and to bring Your peace and justice to our school and world.
With grateful hearts, we ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

We are incredibly proud of our Pupil Chaplains for their leadership and commitment to living out our school's values in action. Together, we continue to build a community where faith and compassion inspire us all.

Farewell and Best Wishes

MRS WALSH & MS CAMILLERI

As we approach the end of this term, St Ursula's Catholic Primary School will be saying a heartfelt goodbye to two cherished members of our staff family, Mrs Walsh and Ms Camilleri.

Mrs Walsh has been an important part of St Ursula's for 18 years, serving as our dedicated homeschool support worker. Her impact on our school community is truly monumental. She has been a familiar and comforting presence on the gate and at our coffee mornings, always ready to offer a listening ear and practical support to pupils, their families and even staff in times of need.

Her kindness, dedication, and unwavering commitment have left a lasting legacy that will be deeply missed by all. As she retires at the end of this term, we celebrate her contribution to our school and wish her a joyful and fulfilling retirement.

We are delighted to announce that Mrs Said, a long-standing member of our school and breakfast club leader, will be stepping into the role from January. Mrs Said's familiarity with our school and children makes her the perfect person to continue the successful work Mrs Walsh has led.

Throughout November, Mrs Walsh and Mrs Said have been working closely together to ensure a smooth transition, and this partnership will continue into December so that all children currently supported by Mrs Walsh can meet Mrs Said. Mrs Said has already completed her home school support worker training and will be ready to provide excellent support from the start of the new term.



After 14 years of dedicated teaching at St Ursula's, Ms Camilleri will be moving on to a new chapter in her career. Starting with us as a newly qualified teacher, she has grown into a passionate teacher, heading subjects such as Science and Art. Many of you will know Ms Camilleri for her heartfelt commitment to supporting SEND pupils, a passion that has guided her throughout her time here.

We are proud that she has found the perfect opportunity to continue this vital work in a SEND school, where her talents and dedication will undoubtedly flourish. We thank her for her many years of service and wish her every success and happiness in the future. We are pleased to welcome Mr Hackett as our new Year 4 teacher from January. Mr Hackett is an experienced educator who has worked in Havering for many years.

WELLBEING



HEALTHY SLEEP for little ones

Supporting your child's sleep is essential for their overall wellbeing and development. Sleep is crucial as it helps with cognitive function, emotional regulation, and physical growth.

Here are some ways you can help your child get the restful sleep they need:

- **Establish a Consistent Routine:** Create a routine that is consistent every night. This could include activities like taking a warm bath, brushing teeth, and reading a story. A predictable routine helps signal to your child's brain that it's time to wind down and prepare for sleep.
- **Limit Screen Time:** It's important to reduce screen time at least an hour before bedtime. The blue light emitted by screens can interfere with the production of melatonin, the hormone responsible for sleep regulation. Encourage activities that are calming and don't involve screens, such as drawing or reading.
- **Use Stories to Calm:** Reading stories can be a lovely way to help your child relax before bed. Choose calming stories that feature gentle, soothing narratives. This not only helps your child unwind but also encourages imagination and creativity. You might also consider playing soft music or audiobooks.

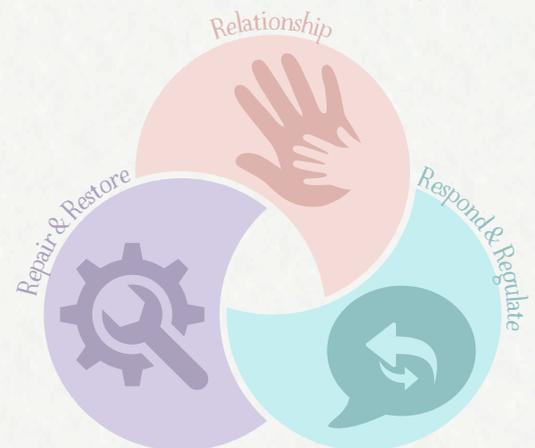
Many children find it difficult to fall asleep. Children who get hyper before bed are often overtired, which causes their bodies to release stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline, creating a "second wind". It is important not to expect them to immediately drift off when this happens as it can take a while for them to settle. Slower activities like the ones mentioned above can help them wind down again.

Children 3 to 5 years old - 10 to 13 hours)
Children 6 to 12 years old - 9 to 12 hours

TRAUMA PERCEPTIVE

We are excited to announce updates to our behaviour policy, embracing a new approach rooted in Trauma Perceptive Practice. This approach was originally implemented to support children who have experienced trauma but this approach can be applied to all behaviour. It places building relationships at the core.

Behaviour is a form of communication, often pointing to unmet needs or stress. By interpreting these signals, we hope to address the root causes of a child's actions. Boundaries and consequences are still very important. However, consequences should foster empathy and support children in understanding the impact of their actions rather than punitive.



WELLBEING AMBASSADORS

At the start of the academic year, our new Wellbeing Ambassadors were chosen by their class teachers and classmates. This half-term, they will be completing their ambassador training so that they can support their classmates on the playground at break and lunchtimes. We can't wait to see what they achieve this year!

Success at Home

Chloe joined Rainbows in September and has already worked well towards her first badge - Helping Badge. This includes helping in different settings including in the community. Chloe has helped with cooking, sorting cutlery, teaching her little sister phonics and collecting service books after church. Chloe has also given to the local food bank! Awesome effort Chloe!



Aurora took part in a gymnastics showcase. She was truly amazing; her performance shone with commitment, hard work, and artistic flair. Her dedication and training turned into a graceful and confident routine, and the showcase was a proud moment for her family.



Way to go Grace! Grace had a very successful November moving up to stage 6 in swimming and completing her grading in ju jitsu, getting her yellow belt. She also completed the Ruby challenge award for dancing, was graded a distinction and told her singing skills were pitch perfect.

Matteo has been making great strides as goalkeeper for his football team, BuzAcademy. The whole team has recently moved up from J to F in the Echo League, and they celebrated a fantastic 1st place win in a multi-match competition. Everybody is very proud Matteo - keep it up!



Shenny (Y4) has been Rocking out On TimesTables Rockstars and has been pitching himself against the whole world, coming first on 8 separate days.

Amazing skills!

Well done Angelina! Angelina got two silver medals in her karate competition two weeks ago. She also achieved her orange belt at karate as well.

Stephanie and Seraphine (Y1) have been displaying excellent behaviour at Church. They sat down quietly, listened to the children sermon and did their church activities without crying, or walking around. They also paid attention to what was being taught. GREAT WORK!



REMINDER

UPCOMING DATES

December

- 4th: Parent Coffee Morning (Christmas Crafting), 8:45am
- 5th: Pantomime in School
- 11th: Christmas Dinner & Jumper Day; Nursery EYFS Christmas Concert, 9:30am
- 12th: Reception EYFS Christmas Concert, 9:30am; KS1 Christmas Concert (Y1 & Y2), 10:30am; KS2 Christmas Concert (Y3-Y6), 1:45pm
- 18th: Christmas Disco
- 19th: End of Term Reports sent; **Early closure at 1:00pm**

Please refer to the school website calendar for times. Further information on events will be shared in our weekly bulletin.



You're invited to St Ursula's
Christmas Nativity
Celebrations

Come and celebrate the birth of Jesus with music and storytelling.

Nursery: Thursday 11th December 9:30am KS1 HALL
Reception: Friday 12th December 9:30am KS1 HALL
Years 1 & 2: Friday 12th December 10:30am ST DOMINIC'S
Years 3 to 6: Friday 12th December 1:45pm ST DOMINIC'S

Tickets cost 50p each and can be bought via Schoolcomms. From Friday 21st November to Wednesday 3rd December, families can buy up to 2 tickets. From Thursday 4th to Monday 8th December, any remaining tickets can be purchased by families wanting more.

Tickets for our Christmas Hamper raffle can also be purchased via Schoolcomms.



Thursday 4th December
8:45am to 9:45am

ST URSULA'S
Christmas Crafting
&
Coffee Morning

Fun Christmas crafting activities for pupils, parents and carers.

RESERVE A SPACE VIA THE SCHOOL OFFICE EMAIL
office@stursulasprimaryschool.co.uk

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT FAMILIES WHO HAVE NOT ATTENDED BEFORE WILL BE PRIORITISED.

THE PAST MONTH IN PHOTOS

