



Headteacher's Newsletter

January 2026



THIS NEWSLETTER INCLUDES:

School Fund

Wellbeing

Key Dates

School Fundraising -
Spring

Parent Support

Game Bags

Nursery
Applications

Success at Home

JANUARY

As the children returned after the Christmas break, it was wonderful to see their motivation and eagerness to learn shining through. January can sometimes feel a little gloomy after the bright and colourful celebrations of Christmas, but here at St Ursula's, we began the term with a joyful celebration of Epiphany during the first week back, setting a positive and hopeful tone for the months ahead.

In this edition, we'll share important updates about our voluntary school fund and how these contributions are helping us to continue developing and enriching our school environment for all pupils.

Our wellbeing page this month focuses on supporting emotional regulation at home, offering practical and useful ideas that you may find helpful in nurturing your child's emotional wellbeing.

We are also excited to introduce our new Game Bags initiative, designed to engage and inspire pupils in fun and meaningful ways.

I hope you have had a wonderful January and enjoy reading this newsletter.

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

SCHOOL VOLUNTARY DONATION FUND UPDATE

In September 2025, we introduced an annual School Fund donation to help cover important costs that are not fully funded by the government. As a Catholic school, we have additional expenses because we share the cost of building repairs and improvements with the Diocese. Unlike local community schools, we contribute 10% of these costs from our own budget, which adds extra financial pressure.

The School Fund is helping us invest in the following key areas:

- Upgrading IT equipment
- Installing new playground equipment
- Repairs and replacement of the school roof
- A new pupil toilet
- A new school security system

Thanks to your generosity, we have already raised £6,600, with a further £548 kindly donated recently. This support has enabled us to upgrade our IT equipment, including new interactive whiteboards in classrooms and iPads for both KS2 and EYFS/KS1 pupils, greatly enriching their learning experience.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has contributed so far—your support is making a real difference.

Now that the IT upgrades are complete, we are turning our attention to enhancing our school playgrounds. Our aim is to create engaging play spaces where children can enjoy building, role-playing, creative activities, reading, sports, and quiet areas for reflection and calm.

Our target for the School Fund this year is £11,000, which means we still need to raise £3,852 to bring these exciting plans to life.



We kindly ask for your donations for the Spring Term. If you have already donated the full annual amount of £45, thank you! If you pay termly, please send your £15 Spring Term donation.

All payments can be made easily through SchoolComms. Please note, this donation is per family, not per pupil. If you are able to give more, we would be very grateful.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us provide the best possible environment for our children to learn and grow.



REMINDER

UPCOMING DATES

Spring Term

9th February - Parents Evening from 3:30pm to 5:30pm

10th February - Parents Evening from 3:30pm to 5:30pm

12th February - Parents Evening (Day 3) from 3:30pm to 5:30pm

12th February - Children's Mental Health Dress-up Day

13th February - INSET Day - School Closed

5th March - Lent Penitential Mass (Year 1 & 3) - 9:30am

6th March - Parent Coffee Morning - 8:45am

6th March - World Book Dress-Up Day

11th March - Year 1 Assembly Celebration of Learning! at 9:00am

13th March - Science Dress-Up Day

24th March - Year 4 Easter Production - 9:00am

25th March - Easter Egg Hunt

26th March - Whole School Easter Mass (Years 1-6) - 9:30am

27th March - Parent Coffee Morning (Easter Crafting) - 8:45am

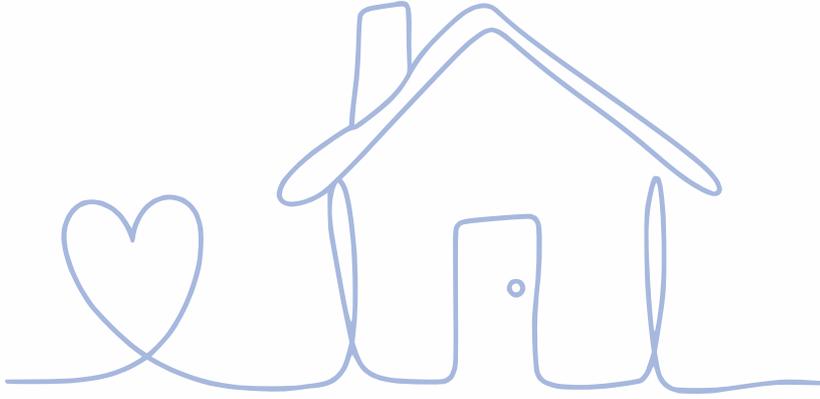
27th March - Be Bright Day

27th March - End of Term Reports sent out

27th March - Early Closure - 1:00pm

WELLBEING

Supporting Emotion Regulation at Home



Emotion regulation is a vital life skill that takes a lot of practice. The reality is, most adults are still learning how to regulate their emotions effectively, and teaching children this skill can be just as challenging. Children often find it tough to know what to do when they feel strong emotions such as frustration, anger, or sadness. Here are some practical ideas to help support your child's emotional regulation at home:

Create a Safe Space or Calm Corner

You don't need anything fancy for this! Find a quiet, cosy spot in your home and add a bean bag, pillows, or cushions. Include calming activities that your child can easily access, such as fidgets, colouring pages, or blowing bubbles. Other helpful items might be string lights, a white noise machine, sensory bins, weighted blankets, noise-cancelling headphones, or Play-Doh. This calm corner can be a place for your child to take a break throughout the day, whether they feel calm or dysregulated.

Talk About Emotions

Make feelings "check-ins" part of your daily routine. Ask your child how they are feeling and model this by sharing your own emotions first. Talk about why they might be feeling a certain way and discuss strategies to help them feel more awake, calm, or happy. A fun way to do this is by discussing the emotions of characters in your child's favourite books or movies, helping them understand that everyone experiences emotions.

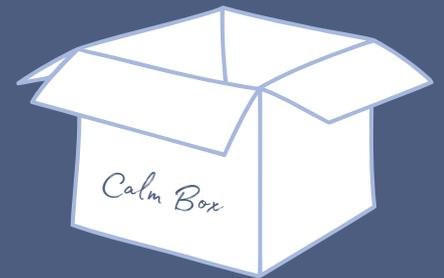
Get Active

Incorporate movement into your child's day. Physical activity provides a quick release of energy and helps their body feel "just right." This doesn't have to be intense exercise—try playing their favourite song and having a dance party. Movement supports emotional regulation and sensory input.

Use Regulation Tools

Practice simple self-regulation strategies with your child for when emotions feel big. These can include taking deep breaths, counting to 10, squeezing hands together, using positive self-talk, or asking for a hug.

Self-Soothe Boxes



Create a "Calm box" with your child. The box should be filled with things that appeal to their interests but activities they will have to focus their mind on; 'happy distractions' for when they're struggling. It also promotes self-regulation and positive coping strategies. You could include:

- colouring
- small Lego project
- a puzzle
- play dough
- fidget toys
- a diary

Decorating the box with your child will make it feel more special. Talk with them about the things that have helped and the things that didn't help as much. You don't need to spend a lot of money; an old shoe box, gift box or something similar will do.

Here is a link to some free breathing cards that can be printed and left inside the box.

<https://littlewarriors.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Mindful-Breathing-Cards.pdf>

ST URSULA'S FUNDRAISING CALENDAR: SPRING TERM UPDATE



At St Ursula's, our fundraising and charity activities are more than just events—they are a reflection of our commitment to living out Catholic Social Teaching through faith in action.

We believe in nurturing a strong sense of community and responsibility among our pupils, from Nursery to Year 6, by involving them directly in choosing the causes we support. Through assemblies, discussions, and surveys, our pupils' voices guide our efforts, ensuring our fundraising is meaningful and impactful.

During the Autumn Term, our Pupil Chaplains collaborated with their peers to create a fundraising calendar, incorporating ideas and charities suggested by pupils across the school. We are pleased to share with you the exciting and purposeful fundraising events planned for the Spring Term

We warmly invite all families to support these initiatives, helping us to embody our values of faith, respect, kindness, honesty, and resilience while making a positive difference in our community and beyond.

Event	Info	CST Link	Date
Children's Mental Health Week	Fundraising for the Anna Freud Centre, a leading child mental health charity.	Human Dignity, Solidarity	Thursday 12th February
The Big Lent Walk -CAFOD	Led by our R.E. monitors, this year's appeal supports CAFOD's 'Walk Against Hunger' challenge, encouraging pupils to walk 200k to help stamp out hunger.	Human Dignity, Solidarity, Option for the Poor, Peace – Rights and Responsibilities	Wednesday 18th February – Thursday 2nd April
Science Week	Pupils dress as scientists, with donations supporting the Essex Wildlife Trust, dedicated to protecting local wildlife for future generations.	Stewardship of Creation	Friday 13th March
Be Bright Day	Pupils wear bright clothing to raise awareness and funds for DePaul UK, a charity tackling youth homelessness.	Option for the Poor, Human Dignity	Friday 27th March



PARENT SUPPORT

Earlier this academic year, we reached out to our parent community to understand what types of workshops and support they would find most helpful. We also asked about preferred formats and timings to ensure our offerings fit with busy family schedules.

Based on this feedback, we are excited to announce that we are developing an online Parent Support Page platform. This resource will provide guidance across a broad range of topics, including how to support and challenge children in their curriculum learning, wellbeing and safeguarding support, SATs preparation, and much more.

We learned that many parents are unable to attend face-to-face sessions due to work and other commitments. Therefore, our primary offer will be online, making it accessible anytime, anywhere. However, we will continue to provide face-to-face sessions where we believe they will offer greater benefit and engagement.

The Parent Support Pages will give a deeper insight into how we support and challenge children at St Ursula's and offer practical ways parents can mirror this at home. We aim to launch this valuable resource by Early May.

NURSERY SPACES AVAILABLE SEPTEMBER 2026



ST. URSULA'S CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL



NURSERY

SPACES AVAILABLE
FOR SEPTEMBER 2026

Ofsted said...

"Pupils' behaviour is excellent. This is because the school's core values, including kindness and forgiveness, are part of the culture."

"Mental health and well-being have a high status. Adults provide exceptional support to pupils in managing their emotions and feelings."

"Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is exemplary. This is because all staff have consistently high expectations."

APPLY NOW





GAME BAGS



You may remember that last year we launched an idea to create a board game library for families to borrow games and enjoy quality time together at home. While this initiative didn't quite take off as we hoped, our commitment to encouraging children's engagement with board games and puzzles has remained strong. So, we've developed an exciting new plan that we're thrilled to share with you!

Starting this week, each class at St Ursula's will have a 'game bag' that a different pupil will take home each week. These bags are filled with carefully selected board games and puzzles designed to support your child's development in fun and meaningful ways.

Why are we doing this?

At St Ursula's, we understand the powerful impact that board games and puzzles can have beyond just entertainment. These activities help nurture essential skills that benefit your child's social, emotional, and cognitive growth:

Enhancing Communication & Collaboration: Playing together encourages children to express their ideas clearly, listen attentively, and work cooperatively as a team.

Building Critical Thinking & Problem-Solving: Games challenge children to think strategically, adapt flexibly, and resolve conflicts constructively.

Developing Empathy & Emotional Intelligence: Through play, children learn to appreciate different perspectives and manage their emotions effectively.

Teaching Turn-Taking & Self-Control: Board games help children practice patience, focus, and good sportsmanship.

Strengthening Family Bonds: Sharing game time offers valuable opportunities for quality family interaction and creating cherished memories.

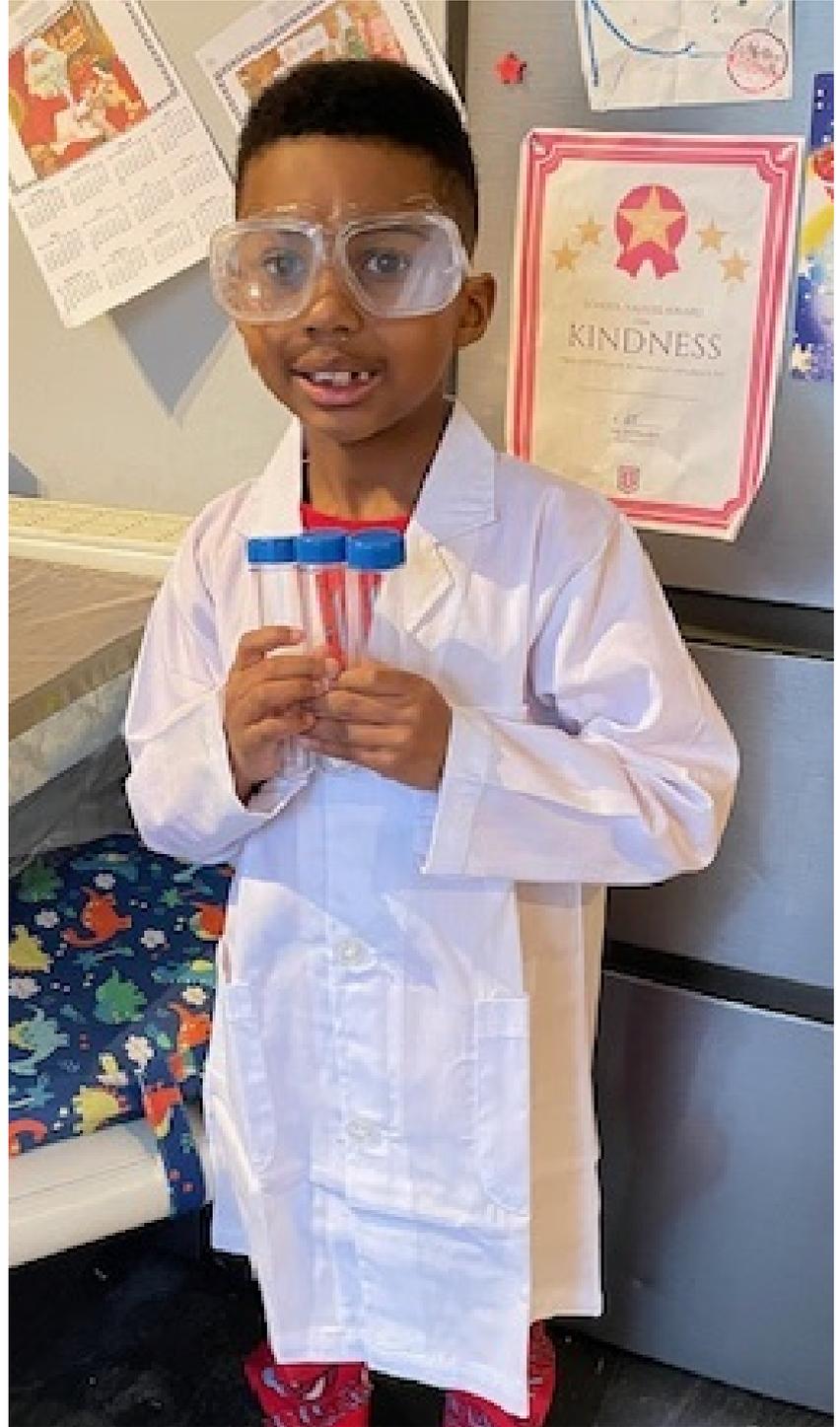
Reducing Screen Time: Engaging with board games provides a healthy, screen-free alternative that supports wellbeing and family connection.

We are excited to see how the 'game bags' will enrich your child's learning and bring families closer together. Thank you for supporting this new initiative—let the games begin!

THE PAST MONTH IN PHOTOS



Success at Home



We were delighted to receive a wonderful message from Quincy, one of our enthusiastic pupils. Quincy shared that he had been conducting some exciting science experiments using a science kit he received for Christmas.

He made crystals with red, yellow, and blue food colouring, and in another experiment, he created the colour purple. Quincy also carefully measured the crystals to observe their size.

It is truly inspiring to see such creative and hands-on learning taking place at home. Well done, Quincy, for your curiosity and dedication to exploring science beyond the classroom!