

St Ursula's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher's Newsletter

October 2024



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Celebrating a new school year

As we find ourselves at the start of October, I want to reflect on the events and accomplishments that have marked our first month of the academic year. It has been, without doubt, a bustling and productive period, rich with opportunities for growth, celebration, and community engagement.

As always our school calendar commenced with a Whole School Mass at St Dominic's on Thursday, 19th September. Although technical issues meant we didn't have music, the wonderful voices of our pupils filled the church, their beautiful singing a testament to their dedication and the nurturing environment we strive to provide. Such moments serve as poignant reminders of the spiritual foundation upon which our educational journey is built.

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

Harvest Celebrations

In a display of empathy and social responsibility, our Year 2 shared a heart-warming Harvest Festival Assembly. This event not only showcased their burgeoning talents but also instilled in them the importance of gratitude and sharing.

The generosity of our school community was evident in the bountiful donations of food for the Harold Hill Foodbank. Through these acts of kindness, we reinforce our commitment to fostering compassionate, socially aware individuals who understand the value of contributing to their wider community. Thank you for your support with this collection!

Continuing with the theme of harvest, our Year 3 and Year 5 pupils will be attending a special Harvest Mass on 3rd October, at St Dominic's. These occasions provide valuable opportunities for our pupils to deepen their understanding of the liturgical calendar and to participate actively in our faith community.



Year 6 Residential

Looking ahead, our Year 6 pupils stand on the cusp of an exciting adventure. On 20th September, Mr Fielder and Miss Gilligan hosted a residential meeting with parents, unveiling the plans for this year's trip.

These experiences are invaluable, offering our eldest pupils the chance to develop independence, resilience, and camaraderie beyond the confines of our school walls. This year, our Year 6 pupils will be attending a 3 day, 2 night residential at Essex Outdoor, Danbury. The trip will take place on the 16th – 18th June 2025. Further information regarding costs and payment dates will be shared by Mr Feilder shortly.



Supporting Phonics

In our ongoing efforts to support our youngest learners, Mrs Stone will be leading informative phonics meetings for parents. Such sessions are crucial in bridging the gap between home and school, ensuring that our collaborative approach to education yields the best possible outcomes for our pupils.

- Key Stage 1 parents - Friday 4th October @ 2:00pm
- Reception parents - Friday 11th October @ 2:00pm

This year we have made a change to our reading arrangements so that we are fully in line with our Read Write Inc Phonics Scheme. This adjustment is designed to enhance your child's reading development more effectively. We have invested in new books that directly support this scheme, and pupils will now bring home **two** books each week.

By aligning our home reading materials with the phonics scheme used in school, we create a seamless learning experience that reinforces and builds upon the skills taught in the classroom.

This consistency between home and school reading materials will provide pupils with the repetition and practice necessary to build confidence and fluency in their reading abilities.

These changes will be discussed further during the above phonics meetings.



There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate's loot on Treasure Island." - Walt Disney



Parking and Social Media

On a more practical note, I must address two matters of importance. Firstly, I kindly remind all parents and carers to exercise consideration when parking outside the school. The safety of our pupils is paramount, and thoughtful parking contributes significantly to maintaining a secure environment for all.

Secondly, in this age of digital communication, I feel it is important to remind our community about the importance of responsible behaviour on social media platforms. While we value open communication, we must also respect the appropriate channels for addressing concerns. I encourage any parent or guardian with issues to follow our school's complaint policy, ensuring that we can address your concerns effectively and professionally.

It's also important to note that many of our dedicated teachers are themselves parents within our school community. Their dual roles as educators and parents make them particularly sensitive to discussions about our school. I ask that we all consider this and strive to create an environment of mutual respect and understanding.



Important Dates and Events

As we look to the immediate future, I draw your attention to several important events on the horizon. Parents' evenings will be held on Monday 21st October, Tuesday 22nd October, and Thursday 24th October. These evenings provide an invaluable opportunity to discuss your child's progress and to strengthen the vital partnership between home and school. Coinciding with these evenings, we will be hosting a book fair, offering a chance to nurture your child's love of reading while supporting our school's literacy initiatives.

For those considering joining our St Ursula's family, we are pleased to announce that New Nursery and Reception intake meetings and tours will take place on 17th October. These sessions offer prospective parents a glimpse into the nurturing environment and exceptional educational opportunities we provide for our youngest learners.

Other important dates:

- Flu vaccinations will be taking place on 18th October.
- St Ursula's Feast Day is on 21st October, with the school attending Mass.
- Our much-anticipated International Day is scheduled for 25th October. Year 6 pupils will create an international market of food and games, which each year group will have the opportunity to visit throughout the day. Parents are also warmly invited to join us for this vibrant celebration of cultural diversity.

Marking at St Ursula's

We have recently updated our marking policy, introducing a dynamic approach we call 'Marking in the Moment'. This innovative strategy involves providing immediate, verbal feedback to our pupils during lessons, complemented by coded marking in their books. This approach serves as a prompt, reminding pupils of the feedback given and the actions required of them.

In implementing this new policy, our teachers and teaching assistants will utilise a colour-coded system: green for growth and pink for praise. This visual distinction aids in clearly communicating areas for improvement and celebrating achievements. The essence of this approach lies in its immediacy; upon receiving feedback, pupils are expected to act upon it straightaway, before progressing further with their work.

To support this new system, marking codes will be prominently displayed in classrooms, serving as a constant reference point for our pupils. However, I want to emphasise that these codes will be applied judiciously, with teachers using only those relevant to each pupil's work. Our goal is to provide clear guidance without overwhelming our young learners.

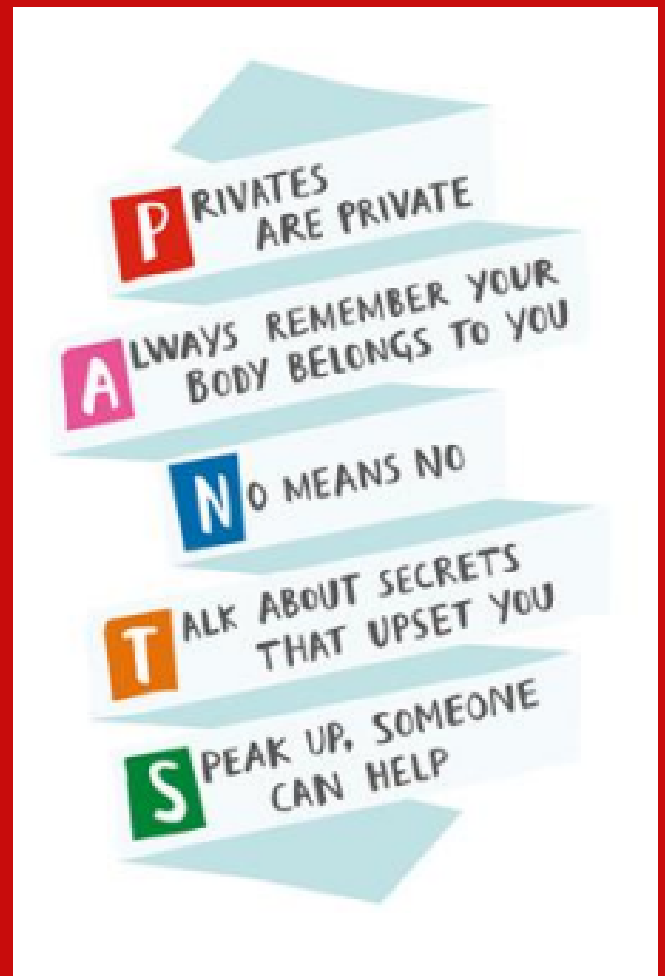
KS1 & KS2 Feedback Codes	
Code	Meaning
I (or independent stamp)	Independent (the child has worked entirely independently on the task)* Mostly for SEND & SEND support children.
S (or supported stamp)	Supported (the child required support in order to complete the task)* Mostly for SEND & SEND support children or when a Teacher/TA has worked with a group.
CL (e.g. t)	Capital Letters - add in the missing capital letters (or change the capital letters that have been incorrectly used)
Spellings written in the margin	Spellings - copy out the correct spelling 3 times (incorrect spellings of keywords must be addressed particularly in Science, CLC and RE)
Sp _____	Spellings - correct the underlined spellings (incorrect spellings of keywords must be addressed particularly in Science, CLC and RE)
H (could be accompanied by an example of the handwriting or letter/number formation)	Handwriting - take care with your handwriting – focus on improving your presentation and handwriting (including number formation in Maths).
P (e.g. The cat meowed_)	Punctuation - add in the missing punctuation (the missing punctuation can be specified next to the P symbol. For example, P . would show that full stops are missing).

(e.g. The girl had a toy.)	Finger space
① (circled question number)	Supported question, etc.
~~~~~ (e.g. The boy play a game.)	<b>Grammar</b>

SEND, EYFS & Continuous Provision Feedback Codes	
Code	Meaning
AL - I	<b>Adult-led and Independent</b> (the task/activity has been initiated by an adult and completed independently)
AL - S	<b>Adult-led and Supported</b> (the task/activity has been initiated by an adult and completed with support)
CI - I	<b>Child-initiated and Independent</b> (the task/activity has been chosen and initiated by the child and has been completed independently)
CI - S	<b>Child-initiated and Supported</b> (the task/activity has been chosen and initiated by the child and has been completed with support)
Annotations	Adults to <b>briefly</b> scribe the child's dialogue and comments relating to the work that they have produced (keywords only).
CH	<b>Challenge</b> question/task to extend learning
→ _____ (feedforward)	<b>Feedforward</b> - feedback and opportunity to respond to the feedback will take place after the lesson (ideally in the next lesson). The number relating to the feedforward task must be noted.
✓	Great work; correct answers
Feedforward Tasks	
1	Adapt planning
2	Intervention task
<b>Reception only: as of Summer Term, note the demarcation of sentences for relevant pupils using the following codes:</b>	
CL (e.g. t)	<b>Capital Letters</b> - Add in the missing capital letters (or change the capital letters that have been incorrectly used)
P. (e.g. The cat meowed_)	<b>Full Stops (punctuation)</b> - Add in the missing full stops



# NSPCC Talk PANTS



During the Week beginning 14th October, your children will be talking about the NSPCC's Talk PANTS rules in our wellbeing lessons.

Through play, stories and activities in we will be sharing important safety skills without giving explicit information or telling scary stories. We will be teaching children the NSPCC's, Talk PANTS rules using the 'PANTS' acrostic, which is like a green cross code for helping children to keep safe. PANTS stands for:

- Privates are private
- Always remember your body belongs to you
- No means no
- Talk about secrets that upset you
- Speak up, someone can help

The lessons will introduce a range of ideas, all delivered in a way that's fully age-appropriate. These include:

- "Appropriate" and "inappropriate" touch
- Your child's right to say no to things that make them feel upset or uncomfortable
- Naming parts of the body
- Who your child can turn to if they ever feel upset or worried

If you would like to know more about the NSPCC's campaign and see how you can help keep your children safe, more information can be found at [nspcc.org.uk/underwearrule](https://nspcc.org.uk/underwearrule)