



St Ursula's Catholic Primary School

HEADTEACHER'S NEWSLETTER

20.10.23

#7

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have had a great start to the year with several assemblies, parent workshops and Masses. This last week has definitely been the busiest week of them all! Our Year 4 had the opportunity to visit South Weald Country Park, where they were developing their fieldwork skills, they identified and classified a variety of wildlife and used their sketching skills to complete drawings.

Tuesday saw our Year 5 pupils share the story of St Ursula's. Their wonderful assembly included drama and singing – the audience particularly liked the Sister Act number that was beautifully sung. This was the perfect preparation for our celebrations that took place on Friday.

Thank you to our parents and carers that booked a Parents' Evening consultation, I'm sure the discussions were useful and gave you an insight into your child's progress and attainment so far this year. A reminder that on Thursday 7th December, parents and carers are invited to our Curriculum Celebration Afternoon, where you will be able to spend time looking through books. Autumn Term reports will also be sent out on this date, for Year 1 to Year 6 pupils.

Thursday saw the return of our 'International Day'. Every Autumn term, Year 6 children select a country they are interested in and research the culture, landmarks, food and geography of that nation. This year, the KS2 hall was transformed into international market place for a day and each group of Year 6 children were able to sell their items to the rest of the school. On this day, our children were able to dress up in traditional dress or the colours of any country they have links with – it was a fantastic celebration!



To finish this week and the half term, we celebrated the feast of our school's patron saint, St Ursula at Mass with Fr Joseph. Saint Ursula was not afraid to stand up for her faith. She shared her faith with others and encouraged other young people to follow a Christian life. For that reason we look to her when we are feeling lost as we know St Ursula will lead us in the way of Christ. Children were reminded that St Ursula was an intelligent, outgoing and friendly girl. She was deeply spiritual and at an early age had dedicated herself to God.

We also celebrated the commissioning of our new Pupil Chaplains. At the start of the year, Miss Gilligan (RE Lead) offered our Year 6 pupils the opportunity to apply for the role of Pupil Chaplain; Eighteen Pupils applied!

Myself and Miss Gilligan had the pleasure of reading all the applications, and after being short listed the children were invited for a formal interview. Our 18 applicants were asked about their faith and how they could enhance the faith of our school. It was a privilege hearing all of our Year 6 applicants reflect on how their faith has affected their lives.



Congratulations to our 2023-2024 Pupil Chaplains who were commissioned in front of our St Ursula's family.

Mr Ashburn

Attendance TOP FOUR

1	St Anne's	100%
1	St Martin's	100%
2	St Matthew's	99.11%
3	St John's	98.75%
4	St Edmund's	98.28%

CHRISTMAS NATIVITY AND CAROL SERVICES

You are warmly invited to this year's Christmas performances, taking place on Friday, 8th December 2023. There will be a variety of musical performances from our pupils, musicians and School choir.

Nursery: 9:30-10:00

Reception and Key Stage 1: 10:30 -11:30

Key Stage 2: 1:45 -2:45

You will need tickets to watch the performances. Tickets will go on sale on Friday, 3rd November and are 50p each, which will include a strip of raffle tickets. **2 tickets per family will be allocated** and unsold tickets will go back on sale on Monday, 20th November.

Additional raffle tickets can be purchased on the day where our prizes will be on display. In addition to covering the costs associated with this type of event, the monies raised from the concerts will be used to support our pupils and also the Brentwood Catholic Children's Society.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS'

Pupils were introduced to Article 6 (life, survival and development) this week, as the 16th October is marked as Harvest and World Food Day in the Unicef calendar:

Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential.



CELEBRATING OUR SCHOOL VALUES

The core values of our school focus on high expectations for all learners, developing skills for life, encouraging good self-esteem and developing a set of core moral values based upon the teachings of Jesus Christ. These values are core to every part of our lives and are reflected in the way that we treat each other, the way that we look for every day opportunities to help those in need and in the example that we demonstrate to all those we meet.

At St Ursula's we have our School Value trophies that are given out during our weekly Achievement Assembly.



There is an award for each of our 5 values:

Faith

Respect

Kindness

Honesty

Resilience

These trophies are awarded to different pupils from Reception to Year 6, who have lived out our Gospel Values. These trophies are taken back to class and displayed on our classroom prayer tables.

THIS WEEK'S WINNERS – CONGRATULATIONS!

EYFS & KS1

Faith: Riaan (Reception)

Respect: Nkunim (Year1)

Kindness: Emily (Year 2)

Honesty: Oliver (Reception)

Resilience: Joshua (Year1)

KS2

Faith: Praise (Year 5)

Respect: Shantelle (Year 6)

Kindness: Ripley (Year 4)

Honesty: Josephine (Year 3)

Resilience: Tiliyah (Year 5)

“There is a great need in our days for people who know how to make a courageous testimony of the moral values taught by the Gospel.” Pope Francis

Collective Worship at home

Miss Gilligan sent out a letter last week which explained that at St Ursula's our pupils take part in daily 'Collective Worship'. The term 'collective worship' is a term that is broadly used to describe when we come together to worship.

Our children are taught that God loves us and wants to have a relationship with us, which is built through our worship of him. Through collective worship we aim to enable our children to live their lives to the fullest, through deepening their faith and developing a personal relationship with God.

We encourage our families to make use of our worship resources such as the Wednesday Words. The Wednesday Word resource can support your prayer time with family — it aims to help all our families draw closer to God,

Our children take part in the Wednesday Word each week and the link below allows them to share what they have been doing with the rest of their family, at home. Usually this would be sent home in paper form, unfortunately the Wednesday Word company are having printing issues; however our website will always have them on.

<https://stursulascatholicprimary.co.uk/catholic-life-and-mission/collective-worship>

Below is a special HOLIDAY booklet for the half term Holiday:

https://files.schudio.com/st-ursulas-catholic-federation/files/documents/RE-Documents/6_Holiday_Special_Card.pdf



School on Wednesday
The Sunday Gospel through

Top Tips for SETTING BOUNDARIES AROUND GAMING

If your child loves video games, then you'll probably be aware that how long they spend gaming – and what they're actually playing – can occasionally become a source of concern or conflict. The UK's trade body for interactive entertainment, Ukie, has recently launched a campaign to promote safer and more responsible gaming among young people – with parents and carers helping by setting sensible and fair boundaries. Our guide has tips on key areas where you could agree some healthy ground rules for your child's gaming activity.

PROMOTE SAFER GAME CHOICES

Deciding which online games are OK – and which should be avoided – is tricky. Some titles allow children to cooperate or compete with strangers, which creates potential risks. Watching your child play online for a while could provide more insight into a particular game, while the parental controls on most consoles allow you to limit who can chat to your child or send them friend requests. Remind your child of the hazards around strangers online when you discuss this boundary with them.

ENCOURAGE REGULAR BREAKS

Help your child understand the need to take regular breaks, playing in shorter bursts rather than marathon sessions. Bear in mind that some games (such as role-playing games) require time investment from the player, while others (online team games, for example) can't be stopped or paused at a moment's notice. A quick break every hour or so is good practice, and you could suggest some things to do in these breaks, such as having a drink of water or getting some fresh air.

AGREE SPENDING LIMITS

There's no doubt that gaming can be expensive, and younger players often don't realise how much paying for digital items and subscriptions can add up to. Many young gamers love to buy new skins or upgrades for their character, so you could settle on a fixed amount that your child is allowed to spend on in-game items each week or month. This sort of boundary will not only help your child to manage their expectations but will also make you more aware of the price of these items.

DISCUSS AGE RATINGS

Children often ignore the age ratings on games – or are unaware they even exist. If you're happy with your child playing a particular game even though it's rated above their age, then establish that as a boundary: emphasise that you've made an exception, and talk about what age ratings mean and why they're important. You could add context to this boundary by browsing games' boxes together while shopping, discussing why some games might have earned certain age ratings.



Meet Our Expert

Daniel Lipscombe is a writer specialising in technology, video gaming, virtual reality and Web3. He has also written 15 guidebooks for children, covering games such as Fortnite, Apex Legends, Valorant, Roblox and Minecraft. With work published by the likes of PC Gamer, Kotaku, Pocket Gamer and VG247, he has reviewed more than 50 games and products over the past year.



FACTOR IN FRIENDS

If your child is a keen video gamer, the chances are that they'll have other gamers among their social circle, too. When friends visit, do they instantly dash to their console or computer? You could put boundaries in place before their guests arrive by agreeing on a length of gaming time. Bear in mind, though, that they may try to extend this once they're together. Try coming up with activities or challenges for them during screen breaks – if they join in, they earn a little extra time on their game.

ENJOY GAMING TOGETHER

Setting time aside to play video games together can be an enjoyable bonding exercise. Undeniably, some young gamers may be less enthusiastic about a parent or carer joining in, but it can be a productive way of encouraging them to share their hobby with you. Setting goals or tasks might be useful: if they love Minecraft, choose something to build together; if Fortnite's their favourite, ask to try out some of the fun game modes, like Prop Hunt, which don't require high skill levels.

TALK ABOUT EMOTIONS

Help your child to monitor their emotions as they play. Discuss what is (and isn't) an acceptable level of competitiveness to show while gaming. Are they allowed to trash talk other players, for example? Can they notice when they get angry if they lose? Do they think these emotions are healthy? Some games can provoke anger, but others can bring joy, humour and the thrill of overcoming a challenge. Try to steer your child towards games that tend to produce these more positive feelings.

BE PREPARED FOR TROLLS

A frequent problem when gaming online is other players who are deliberately troublesome. Make sure your child knows how to report and block someone who makes their experience a negative one. Between you, decide if or how they should deal with these online trolls. Talk about where your child's boundaries are in terms of what they think is acceptable: what behaviour by other users is merely frustrating, and what crosses the line to become upsetting or abusive.

Source: <https://hipalapp/about/privacy.html>