



# St Ursula's Catholic Primary School

## HEADTEACHER'S NEWSLETTER

03.11.23

#8

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you had a wonderful half term break with your family. The first week of Autumn Term 2 saw our children celebrate All Saints' Day, a solemn holy day of the Catholic Church celebrated annually on November 1st. It was great to see so many parents join us in worship at St Dominic's Church. Although the weather was miserable, our children brought joy with their rendition of 'O When the Saints go marching in'.

One of children asked their teacher "Why are we going to Mass when we only went on the Friday before our break?." All Saints' Day is a Catholic Holy Day of Obligation, meaning all Catholics are required to attend Mass on this day. **FACT:** It was in 835 AD the Roman Catholic Church made November 1st a Church holiday to honour the saints. This was when the day started to be called All Saints' Day.

I'm sure many of you would have been discussing Halloween with your children this week and some of them may have asked whether Halloween was linked to our faith. I hope the information below will help aid you in any future discussions you have:

Halloween is a non-religious festival where people carve pumpkins and dress up as scary things! But the word 'Halloween' actually comes from the word 'hallowed' meaning 'blessed' or 'holy.' You might recognise that word from when we say the Our Father – 'hallowed be thy name.'

'Hallowe'en' is actually a shortening of 'All Hallows' Eve.' Just like Christmas Eve is the day before Christmas, 'All Hallows' Eve' is the day before 'All Saints' Day' on the 1st November. On All Hallows' Eve Christians often prepare by praying or fasting, and worshipping God.

Today, we hosted a parent coffee morning which was well attended. During this event, our Pupil Chaplains spoke to parents about their role and the school's Catholic life and mission. Parents had an opportunity to ask them questions and to look at the 'Our Catholic Community' page on the school website. We appreciate the support given to the school by our parents and carers and this appreciation was shared through the following prayer that was read by one of our Pupil Chaplains:

*Heavenly Father,*

*We thank you for blessing us with our parents and carers. They show us that we are loved. We thank you for all the wisdom, discipline, teaching, and instructions that they have given us. Give us the grace, Father, to respond in love, gratitude, and respect toward them for everything they have done for us.*

*Amen.*



### BUILDING WORK—UPDATE

Thank you for your continued understanding and patience whilst the planned works continue at St Ursula's. 3 out of 5 new external gates have been installed and the new fencing will follow. From looking at the new gates you will see that our new boundary fence will be much taller with smaller gaps, providing greater security for our school site and community.



**NO ENTRY**  
Building work  
in progress

### Attendance TOP FIVE

1	St Helen's	100%
2	St Margaret's	99.52%
3	St Paul's	99.45%
4	St Teresa's	99.08%
5	St Philomena's	99.05%

### A PRAYER FOR NOVEMBER

Our 'Faith in Action' pupils (Formerly known as RE monitors) meet with Mrs Hall regularly to plan and discuss collective worship in class. At the start of each month, a 'Faith in Action' pupil is chosen to write a prayer. November's prayer is written by

Tiliyah, Year 5:

*Dear Lord Jesus,*

*Please bless those who are in trouble and living in war zones such as Gaza and Israel. Let us be thankful that we have our family around us and that we are living in peace. Let those surrounded by violence remember the Holy Spirit is always in their heart to give them strength.*

*Amen*

### CHILDREN'S RIGHTS'

**Mr Birbeck spoke to Reception and KS1 about Article 3 – Best Interests of the Child:** The best interest of the child must be a top priority for every decision made.

**Mr Hill spoke to KS2 about Article 29- Goals of education:** Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.



**RIGHTS  
RESPECTING  
SCHOOLS**

# 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: Alexander (Year1)

Respect: Anya (Year2)

Kindness: Ayrton (Reception)

Honesty: Ronnie (Year 1)

Resilience: Noah (Year 2)

### KS2

Faith: Amelia (Year 6)

Respect: Tiara (Year 3)

Kindness: Zac (Year4)

Honesty: Bobby (Year 5)

Resilience: Ella (Year 6)

*“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*

# Faith in Action at Home

Pope Francis implores us to work together to create a better world for future generations and asks us to make the necessary changes in our lives in order to take care of, respect and value our 'common home'. If like us, you want to put your faith in action and make a difference, we encourage you to attend CAFOD's 'Faith in Action: Fighting for a better world with CAFOD' online event taking place on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November. Please click on the link below to register:

[Register Link](#)

If you would like to find out about how St Ursula's is creating a better world for future generations, please click on the following link:

[Laudato Si'](#)

## What is Laudato Si'?

In 2015 Pope Francis wrote a letter addressed to every person on the planet, asking us all to protect the earth. Laudato Si' is an encyclical written by Pope Francis, it was published on the 18 June 2015. Encyclicals are open letters written by the Pope.

Laudato Si' discusses the damage being inflicted on the Earth by humans and calls on 'every person living on this planet' to make urgent changes to our lifestyles and how we consume energy in order to protect the planet.

It deals with many environmental issues including:

- pollution
- climate change
- water
- loss of biodiversity
- decline in the quality of human life.





# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# X

AGE RESTRICTION

13+

In October 2022, the enormously popular social media network Twitter was purchased by tech tycoon Elon Musk. That sparked a host of changes to the platform – not all which have been received positively by its fans. The alterations have continued with each passing month, many of them raising online safety concerns among the 530 million users of Twitter (now rebranded as simply X). With further adjustments reportedly in the pipeline, X has attracted more than its usual share of controversy and caution in recent times.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### A BLOCK ON BLOCKING

X has announced plans to remove its blocking feature. Previously, this stopped other users from viewing your profile or sending you direct messages, while also hiding their posts from your feed. Only this latter function will now remain. The decision has been criticised by some members, who feel that blocking (in its current form) protects them from X users who promote denial and hatred.

### LIMITED REPORTING FEATURES

X offers a premium membership, with some functionality (such as controlling who can view and reply to your posts) increasingly being made exclusive to those who pay the subscription fee. Several commentators have speculated that X could one day become an exclusively paid-for service, with access to accounts being revoked for anyone unwilling or unable to take out a subscription.

### AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Many of X's less age-appropriate posts can feature anything from extreme political views to pornography. While accounts marked as 18+ are restricted from non-members, it's still fairly easy to stumble across this material accidentally. X's new 'For You' page also shows content from accounts that a user doesn't already follow – meaning that almost anything could end up on a child's feed.

### VERIFICATION FOR SALE

Historically, Twitter's moderators granted account verification: certifying someone as authentic by placing a blue tick next to their username. One of X's earliest changes was to place verification behind a paywall; this caused the number of celebrity impersonators to rise and left no way to distinguish, say, a legitimate influencer from a copycat fake account seeking to exploit other users.

## BLUE TICK SALE

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### PROTECT PRIVACY

Unsavory characters may try to gain access to a young person's X account – either to view their posts and gather information on them, or to completely take control of it. To minimise risk, ensure the account has a strong password and enable the 'Protect Your Posts' feature (via the account settings), so that strangers can't view your child's posts without first being approved as a follower.

### DON'T RISE TO THE BAIT

To gain more views and followers, some X users post deliberately inflammatory comments on sensitive topics such as race, sexual orientation and gender issues. Many young people could find this upsetting. Emphasise that, if your child encounters someone spreading hate on X, it's best not to give that person what they want: an argument. Ignore them, mute their account and move on.

### STAY ALERT FOR IMPOSTERS

Make sure your child understands that X's blue ticks no longer guarantee the identity of anyone on the platform. While it might be exciting if a celebrity liked your child's post, it could just as easily be an imposter with malicious intentions. If your child's not 100% sure that an X user actually is who they claim to be, advise them to err on the side of caution and avoid interacting with that account.

### ONLY FOLLOW TRUSTED ACCOUNTS

Using the 'Following' tab on X helps to ensure that the only content your child sees has come from accounts they've chosen to follow: this should reduce the chance of them inadvertently being exposed to harmful, violent or explicit content. Show your child how to report another user's account if, say, they're behaving inappropriately by spreading misinformation or offensive opinions.

### BE READY TO TAKE ACTION

If your child suffers harassment on the platform or becomes the target of a hack, you could consider deactivating their account entirely. Recently, X's safety features have been criticised for allegedly failing to protect users' wellbeing – so if your child is being subjected to abusive messages or similar mistreatment on the platform, it might be prudent to remove them from X altogether.

## Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and esports site GGRecon and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. Always eager to test out the latest apps, games and online trends, he's also a parent who understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and TechRadar.



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday