

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER



NEWSLETTER DATED FRIDAY 5TH DECEMBER 2025

Dear Families,

As we reach the end of another busy and vibrant two weeks in Term 2, I want to take a moment to reflect on the wonderful learning experiences and community events that have taken place across our school. It has been a period overflowing with creativity, curiosity, and togetherness—hallmarks of our Catholic school family.

We began with an inspiring visit from the RISE Theatre Company, whose engaging performance encouraged our children to think deeply about faith, kindness, and the positive impact they can make in the world. Their message resonated beautifully with our school values, catholic social teaching and the children have continued to talk about it with great enthusiasm.

Our Upper Key Stage 2 pupils were fortunate to take part in workshops led by Trowbridge Museum, exploring the history of World War II in Trowbridge. These sessions brought history to life in a meaningful and locally relevant way, enriching the pupils' understanding of the past.

We were equally pleased to welcome representatives from the English Hub, supported by the Department for Education, who visited to observe and support our ongoing work in early reading and phonics. Their positive feedback reflects the dedication of our staff and the enthusiasm of our children as they grow into confident readers.

This fortnight also saw valuable parent workshops with the School Nurse, alongside our warmly received Reading Breakfasts, where parents and children enjoyed sharing stories and celebrating the joy of reading together. Across the school, excitement continues to build as our EYFS pupils prepare for their Nativity, and as the older children practise their carols for our much-anticipated Carol Concert. The sound of joyful singing has filled our corridors and reminds us of the hope and light of this Advent season.

Last Friday the whole of the staff team gathered together for our annual day of RE reflection and spiritual development. We were blessed to be joined by Sr Judith Russi who lead us with an inspirational morning of professional development and spiritual growth – there is much for us to do and we are excited about the opportunities ahead of us. It was also a timely opportunity for the team to reflect and celebrate the outcomes of the Section 48 inspection.

Strengthening Home–School Partnerships

Having listened carefully to feedback from our Summer Term Parent Survey, particularly the request for more guidance on supporting learning at home, we are taking steps to enhance the way we share information with families. Parents are key partners in their child's education, and we want to ensure you feel confident and well-informed about the curriculum and how best to support your child's progress.

As part of this work, we are trialling a new approach with our Upper Key Stage 2 children. Before the end of Term 2, parents will receive information about their child's reading age and decoding skills. This will be accompanied by clear, practical suggestions for supporting reading fluency, decoding strategies, and comprehension skills at home. This trial will help us determine how we can most effectively share meaningful information with families moving forward.

With so much happening across the school, it has been a joy to see the children embrace every opportunity with enthusiasm, resilience, and kindness. They continue to thrive academically, socially, and spiritually, and we remain immensely proud of each and every one of them. Thank you for your continued support and partnership as we journey through Advent together.

Warmest wishes,

Mrs O'Rourke

Headteacher

GOOD NEWS - Diocese Inspection

Dear Families,

As you will have heard from Mrs O'Rourke following the recent R.E. inspection on 13th/ 14th November St. Johns have been graded "Outstanding" in religious education by the Inspectors. As R. E. is a golden thread throughout the curriculum this indicates a high level of achievement across all subjects.

On behalf of the Governors "Congratulations" to Mrs O'Rourke and the Whole School Team and of course the Children who are really engaged in their learning.

Thank you also to you the parents and carers for your support to the school.

The Governors wish you a Happy Christmas and a peaceful 2026

Mike Simmons

Chair



R.E. Inspection Celebration

To celebrate our “Outstanding” result in our R.E. Inspection, staff were treated to an amazing celebratory “cookie” gifted to us by Miss O’Mahony’s sister.



Dates For Term 2

Monday 8th December 2.00pm -3.00pm - OPAL Stay and Play – Parents Welcome

Tuesday 9th December at 9.05am - Kindness Class Mass. Families Welcome

Wednesday 10th December – Christmas Lunch

Wednesday 10th December – Christmas Jumper Day

Thursday 11th December at 2.00pm - EYFS Nativity in St John the Baptist Church

Monday 15th and Tuesday 16th December – Planetarium Dome in school hall – supported by the Friends of St. John’s

Monday 15th and Tuesday 16th December – Christmas Cards and Delivery Day – children are invited to share Christmas cards

Thursday 18th December at 9.15am - Whole School Carol Concert in St. John the Baptist Catholic Church

Upcoming Dates

Monday 5th January – T. D. Day – School closed to all pupils

Tuesday 6th January at 9.15am – Whole School Mass celebrating the Feast of the Epiphany

Wednesday 7th January – Open Day for new families

Tuesday 20th January – Year 3 Reading Breakfast

Sunday 25th January – Children’s Mass at 10.30am

Sunday 8th March - St John of God Feast Day

Friday 22nd May - Sports Day

Saturday 27th June - St John the Baptist 150th Celebration – being celebrated at St Augustine’s Catholic College

Friday 10th July from 4.30pm – 7.30pm

Friday 10th July from 4.30pm – 7.30pm – Summer Fayre

Christmas Jumper Day on Wednesday 10th December 2025

A reminder that on Wednesday we are having our Christmas lunch. Pupils are invited to wear a Christmas jumper on this day.



We are delighted to be hosting Open Days on the following dates

23rd September 2025

16th October 2025

15th November 2025

7th January 2026

All families welcome including applications for EYFS September 2026.
Please contact Miss Byrne on 01225 752006 to book an appointment
for a tour with our Headteacher. We look forward to welcoming you to
our wonderful school.

www.st-johns-trowbridge.wilts.sch.uk



Advent Penitential Service

This morning, our Chapel Champions beautifully led our Advent Penitential Service, continuing their vital role in shaping the prayer life of our school and supporting others in their faith journey. The children showed deep reverence throughout - singing, praying and reflecting on the Advent themes of hope, renewal and preparation.

A huge thank you to Father Richard for celebrating Mass with us, to Mr Almeida for leading the music and to our parish priest Fr Krupa for supporting the children in Years 4, 5 and 6 as they received the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Carol Singing in the Playground

For the last couple of weeks of term we will be singing carols on the playground at home time. Below are the days that each class will be singing their carol. We will sing from 3.10pm - 3.15pm. We hope you enjoy!



Date	Class
Wednesday 10th December	Wisdom and Understanding Class (Foundation Stage Playground)
Thursday 11th December	Counsel, Courage and Knowledge Class (main playground)
Friday 12th December	Love Class (main playground)
Monday 15th December	Joy Class (main playground)
Tuesday 16th December	Peace Class (main playground)
Wednesday 17th December	Patience Class (main playground)
Thursday 18 th December	Kindness Class (main playground)
Friday 19 th December	Faithfulness Class (main playground)



Trainers in School

Please can you ensure that your child's trainers have some grip on them. Pupils are outside in all weathers. We have had an increase in injuries caused by slipping on the wet or icy ground during playtimes and breaktimes in wet weather.

Thank you

Sunday Children's Mass

Once again this year we are delighted to be working in partnership with St John the Baptist parish and all children are warmly invited to join our celebration of Mass. Miss O'Mahony will be organising readers and singers. Everyone is welcome!

Sunday Children's Masses:

Term 3 – 25th January 2026

Term 4 – 22nd March 2026

Term 5 – 10th May 2026

Term 6 – 28th June 2026 - St John The Baptist Church 150th Anniversary Celebration Mass

OPAL Parents Stay and Play!

Monday 8th December, 2-3pm, all parents are invited into school to join Opal with your children. Come and play outside and see what we get up to every lunch time. Please arrive through the main school gate. Everyone is very welcome!

Scholastic Book Fayre

On Monday 24th November the families of St John's celebrated their love of reading by attending the annual Book Fair. Whether it was about chameleons or Christmas, dragons or doctors, children and adults were excited to see so many engaging books on display. The staff team did their very best to make sure that no one was left disappointed, nor had to wait in a queue too long! Thanks to all the parents and relatives who supported their children's love of reading and as a result have managed to raise over £1,000 for the school to buy some more books!



Skern Lodge

When we arrived, we were greeted by the instructors with a wave and led us into our dorms. The dorms were nice and tidy, all rooms had bunk beds and a clean bathroom. We were told our activities for the day and we got ready. Our activities included bodyboarding, swimming, night walk, climbing and other sorts of different things. All the activities were great and we all tried our best even if we didn't complete them. Everyday, breakfast, lunch and dinner were amazing. All the food were fresh and delicious. We were all satisfied and full every meal. The instructors were nice and supportive, they were clear on their instructions on the hard parts like the harnesses. Adding on, the instructors were very welcoming, they allowed us to ask questions when we were stuck and struggling. Skern included a tuck shop and, with our money, we bought toys, souvenirs, accessories and food or drinks. Overall, Skern was extremely fun and we made memories we will never forget. We learnt new skills we never knew we could do.

By Jacob L and William F from Kindness class.



Light Up A Life Service at Dorothy House

Mrs Ladner attended the light up a life service at Dorothy House Light Up A Life Service on Sunday in honour of our friend and colleague, Adrian Smith.

This commemoration was held to remember all those who have used and are currently using the wonderful service provided by our local hospice.



Inclusion and SEND Drop In Meetings for Parents

If parents have already spoken with their child's class teacher and would now find it useful to make an appointment with Mrs O'Mahony our inclusion lead please do contact Mrs Burden in the school office who will be able to offer a time and date for you to meet.

Wednesday Word

Please find below the link to this week's copy of the **Wednesday Word** which can be copied and pasted into your browser. This week's word is PREPARATION

<https://www.paperturn-view.com/wednesday-word/good-news?pid=MTA101634&v=163.4>

Can you Sew? LKS2 Need You!!!

Lovingly handmade Christmas decorations are something to cherish. We would like all children in LKS2 to have the opportunity to make a sewn felt Christmas decoration. **Love, Joy and Peace** class will be sewing on **Tuesday 16th December** throughout the day and possibly **Wednesday 17th December** in the afternoon.

If you have any time to spare, please help us. You don't need to have a DBS check as you will be working with us in the classroom. If you'd like to know any more details, please pop and see Mrs Noad on the playground or contact her via the school office. If you can help us, please let the school office know.

Patience Class Mass – Tuesday 25th November

On Tuesday 25th November, Patience Class celebrated their Class Mass in the Hall with family and friends.

The Mass honoured St. Catherine of Alexandria, and the children impressed Father Richard with their knowledge of her life and faith. They explained how she inspired others to follow God and even remembered that the Catherine wheel firework is named after her!

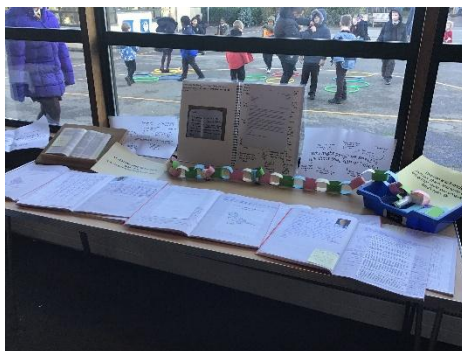
The Mass highlighted the children's many gifts and talents, with reverent readers and magnificent musicians. The children were also praised for their excellent singing and their exemplary behaviour throughout. It was a joyous occasion for all!

Pupil voice:

- “I liked that everyone took part in the Mass through responding and singing.” Hunter
- “The most meaningful part of Mass was when we sung *Be Not Afraid* because it sounded really peaceful, and it encourages you to go out and make a difference.” Hope
- “The most meaningful part of Mass was when I received Communion because it reminded me of what Jesus did at the Last Supper and how he died to save us.” Amy

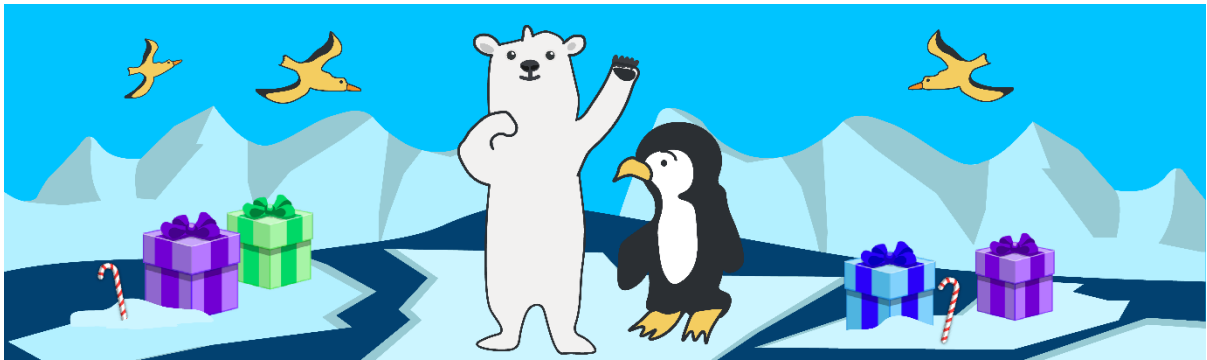
Parent voice:

- “I enjoyed the beautiful singing.”
- “It was lovely to see all the children together and playing instruments.”





The Winter Calendar is coming soon!



The Winter Calendar will soon be arriving in Doodle, a seasonal event where your child can earn festive in-app rewards by Doodling 'little and often'!

Between the **1st-24th of December**, your child can open the calendar doors by **completing at least one exercise a day** in DoodleMaths and/or DoodleEnglish.

They'll find **festive goodies** hiding behind each one – and if they open them all, they'll receive a **virtual Winter Calendar badge**!

Top Doodling Class this week:

DoodleMaths: Faithfulness Class (48% of pupils in the green zone)

DoodleTables: Love Class (24% of pupils in the green zone)

Congratulations to all of the children in the green zone – they should be really proud of themselves!

Doodling 'little and often' can make a huge difference to your child's confidence and ability in maths!

First Holy Communion Enrolment

The next First Holy Communion and First Confession preparation programme at St John the Baptist will start on 29th January and run on certain Thursday evenings at St. John's Parish Centre until June (dates will be given to parents upon registration).

If your child has been Baptised and is in school year 3 and above you can enrol them by filling in the online form: [First Holy Communion Registration 2026](#) Alternatively, the form can be found on the St John the Baptist parish website: www.stjohnthebaptisttrowbridge.co.uk

Deadline for registration is 5th December. There will be no registrations past this date. Baptism certificate's need to be emailed to Eve in the Parish Office to complete your registration: trowbridge.stjohnthebaptist@cliftondiocese.com

Birthdays

During Celebration Assembly or in the classrooms, we celebrated all children who have had birthdays and presented them with a St. John's birthday pencil.

Pupils

Alan S	Edmund P
Ivy K	Amy P
Patrick M	Lorenzo O
Freddie P	Rose B
Jackson W	Abigail E



Reading Breakfast with Families

We are warmly inviting parents and carers into the school hall on the following dates to enjoy a relaxed start to their day with coffee/tea and croissants with their child and sharing some high quality books together. We look forward to welcoming you into school to share your love of reading and power of the word!

Year 6 – Thursday 15th January from 8.40am – 9.30am

Year 3 – Tuesday 20th January from 8.40am – 9.30am

Year 1 - Tuesday 17th March from 8.40am – 9.30am

Year 2 – Thursday 5th February from 8.40am – 9.30am

EYS – Wednesday 22nd April from 8.40am – 9.30am

Inconsiderate Parking in the Housing Estates At Drop Off and Collection

Once again we have had complaints about families parking their vehicles in the neighbouring housing estates and roads paying no attention to the residents needs by blocking driveways and pavements. Residents are angry that they are unable to get on/off their driveways during these busy times.

We have had a report of a patient at Wingfield Surgery being very nearly knocked over by a parent using the private car park this week. They were left very shaken by this incident.

We know that parking is very limited (especially now that the doctors surgery/care home car park is no longer available and should not be used by parents). May we suggest that you could park further away and walk to school to avoid upsetting local residents.

Please be mindful where you park in order that we all take responsibility to keep our pavements and roads safe for all children and families even if it's only for a few minutes. Thank you.

Charlie Waller Trust Fundraiser



A huge thank you to everyone who's donated so far!

We've almost reached our target, with an amazing **£49,914** raised so far. Can you help us surpass our target and prevent more young people reaching crisis point?

Spread the word

Please tell your friends, family and colleagues about our appeal. It's called **Mental health: starting early, staying well.** The money we raise will help us prevent more young people reaching crisis point by giving the adults around them practical strategies to support them.

The Charlie Waller Trust have been working with St. John's and supporting pupils at the school.