



# Christ Church Cathedral School

Friday 10th November 2023

Dear Parents,

It was a great honour to have been visited today in the Cathedral by the Bishop of Worcester, The Right Revd John Inge. He appeared resplendent in his episcopal robes and came in wearing his mitre, that traditional symbol of a Bishop. The first Bishop of Worcester was consecrated in 680AD, a timescale which makes our 500 year history seem like the blink of an eye. Bishop John told us that he was the 113th Bishop of Worcester – a staggering thought. He brought with him a visual aid, hidden at first under his mitre, which the boys had to guess. It turned out to be a small log. Bishop John explained that the lines on the surface of the log told the story of the log's growth, just as knowing Jesus told us about the loving nature of God, a very vivid way of making a point which is at the centre of Christianity.

Bishop John is the Lord High Almoner, a position which goes back to the 13th Century. The holder's role is to support the Sovereign in their distribution of the Maundy Money every year, a symbol of charitable giving which the Sovereign has always undertaken on Maundy Thursday at one of the English cathedrals. When I asked Bishop John whether he had ever been to Christ Church Cathedral before, he mentioned the visit he had made with the Late Queen in 2013 to distribute the Maundy Money. This was shortly before I came to the School but many of the children remembered the Queen's visit. In many ways that was a different era.



Last Friday afternoon, as I mentioned, I heard about a pilgrimage to Mount Athos that one of our pupils had made. Today I was visited by another father and son who wanted to share a tea drinking ceremony with me. It was a very moving experience. I wrote about the drinking of tea a few months ago after we had been treated to tea at our Art Exhibition. But this time I learned a great deal more. Everything was done with such care and tenderness, all the equipment being laid out beautifully. What became apparent was that the ceremony was much more than merely drinking tea. I was fascinated by the way in which the tea was thought of as something alive which had a personality. We drank three teas, each one very different. We watched carefully as the tea woke up, becoming more aromatic and the very leaves changed their shapes as the ceremony continued. By the end, I had no difficulty in understanding the power of the Tea Ceremony and understood why the tea was talked about as if it were alive. I asked whether anyone in China drank coffee - a naive question. Apparently, there are Starbucks all over the place, where harassed people down vast cups of coffee in the same way that we do when rushing to work. But tea is clearly the superior drink. Interestingly I was told that tea is now pretty expensive in China, where it is so highly regarded. This reminded me of the way things must have been in 18th Century England where tea was of such value that it was often kept in special locked containers. This was another unforgettable end to my week.

This morning we held our Remembrance Ceremony in the playground. The whole school stood still as we waited for the right time to begin, it being important that the two minutes' silence happened at precisely 11.00. When the silence itself came it was deeply moving as we heard Great Tom (the vast mediaeval bell in Tom Tower) tolling out across the City, marking the hour when the guns fell silent at the end of WWI. I am always impressed by the way in which our pupils have the ability to understand the importance of such solemn occasions. All societies need to have such moments of serious contemplation.

We have been focussing on table manners this week and Mr Harrison gave a talk to the Prep School on various dos and don'ts. He showed a video of the correct way to use a knife and fork, both the American way and the European way. Particularly, we have been asking boys to ask if they can leave the table and to ask their friends to pass things rather than to stretch across the table. If you feel happy to do so, please reinforce these manners at home. That way they will become habitual, as manners ought to be.

I had a wonderful break time. At the beginning of it, I received a huge chocolate cup cake as it was a boy's birthday. Perhaps I have got to the stage when I shouldn't accept such offers; however, I did so with great pleasure. It was just as I had finished the cake that another boy came up to me and offered me a present for Divali. "What is it?" I asked, innocently. "A chocolate," was the response. As a child I had always lived by the old English proverb, "Never look a gift horse in the mouth." I was certainly not going to change my approach at this late stage! I accepted without even a show of restraint! May I wish all those who are going to celebrate Divali this weekend all the very best.

Mr Murray  
Headmaster

## Michaelmas 2023

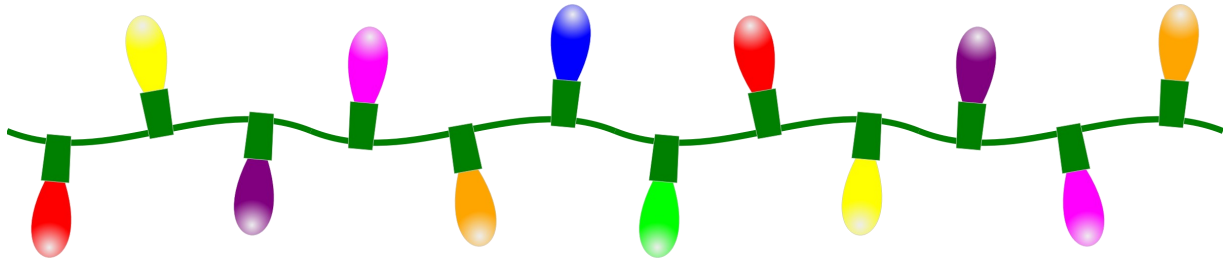
### Monday 13th - Sunday 19th November

MONDAY 13	School Exams Week Begins (Forms 5 - 8)
2.45	1st XII Rugby v MCS (Home)
3.30 - 4.30	After School Chess Club (Form 2)
4.10 - 5.00	Ancient Greek Club (Forms 7 & 8)
4.10 - 5.00	Forms 3 - 5 Football Skills Club (WWH)
TUESDAY 14	School Exams (forms 5 - 8)
WEDNESDAY 15	School Exams (Forms 5 - 8)
	Forms 3 & 4 Swimming
2.30	Rugby House Matches
3.55 - 4.45	After School Chess Club (Forms 3 & 4)
4.10 - 5.00	After School Mandarin Club (Forms 7 & 8)
THURSDAY 16	School Exams (Forms 5 - 8)
FRIDAY 17	School Exams (Forms 5 - 8)
8.30	Cathedral Assembly, speaker James Hodgson, Headmaster, Bedford School
9.15 - 10.45	Form 1 Trip to a French Café
10.00	<b>Form 2 Parents' Prep School Information Meeting (WWH)</b>
1.00 - 4.00	Rugby 7s Tournament (Abingdon Prep School) (Forms 7 & 8)
4.10 - 5.00	Multi Sports Club (Rec - Form 2)
	CC: OUT (Return 4.00 on Sunday)
SATURDAY 18	
SUNDAY 19	<i>The Twenty-Fourth SUNDAY after Trinity</i> <i>University Seventh Week</i>
6.00	CC/CP: Rehearsal (WWH) CC: Evensong

### Form 2 Parents' Prep School Information Meeting

Mr Murray and Mrs Fairhurst will be holding  
a Prep School Information Meeting  
at 10.00 am on Friday 17th November. LK

## CCCS Christmas Light Show



This year, our Christmas Light Show will be held on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December from 4.30 – 6.00 pm. We plan to light up the School's playgrounds, with each class decorating a Christmas tree, based on a chosen theme.

During the event, there will be the chance to buy food and drink, play Christmas games, have a go on the Bottle Tombola and enter the fantastic raffle - with prizes donated from each Form. Last year's event was incredibly well supported and we are hoping that this year will be just the same.

The cost of a ticket for adults is £10, which includes a voucher for either a drink or some food; entry for children is free. Additional food and drink vouchers will be available to buy on the night. You will be able to pay via cash or add items to your termly bill if you wish to. At the event, there will be several stalls and games for children (and grown-ups) to take part in. These will all cost 50p to enter, so please do bring some small change.

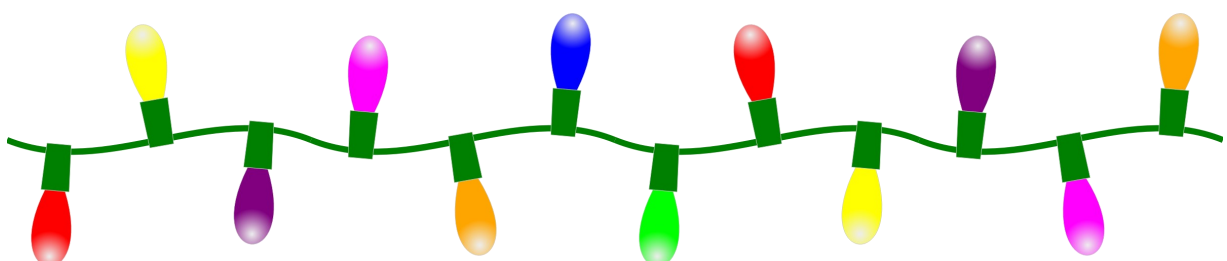
To help with this year's event we kindly ask for donations from parents. If you can give any of the following, please get in touch:

**Bottles for the Bottle Tombola** – These can be anything from a bottle of lemonade to a bottle of champagne. Anything you have lying around at home, we would love to add to our stall.

**Christmas lights** – If you have any lights, used or new, we would love to borrow them for our Light Show.

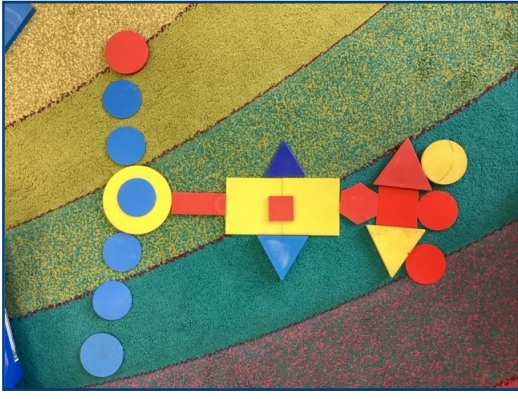
**Form Hampers** – We would like each Form to organise a hamper for our raffle.

Please get in touch with Michael Crooks - [microoks@gmail.com](mailto:microoks@gmail.com), who will be helping to coordinate everything. I'm sure Michael would greatly appreciate some help from representatives, for each Form.





## Reception News



This week, we've been learning all about 2D shapes. In group time, we began by sorting some shapes according to their colours and sizes. Next, we found shapes and sorted them into circles, triangles, squares and rectangles. We've used lots of new mathematical vocabulary as we described the properties of shapes, including some formal and informal language, such as sides, corners, curved, straight, round and flat.

We went on a shape hunt around school then, during Woodland School, I challenged the children to make some shapes using sticks. They were very quick to work out that we could only make shapes with straight sides!

The boys are continuing to work on learning their phonics and there is a lot of lovely mark-making and emergent writing happening. KS



## School Council Elections

Congratulations to the newly elected school council! Thank you for a fantastic first meeting. If boys have any ideas, to improve our school, do let your Form School Council Representatives know. SG





## Form 1 News

As part of our work in class on Bonfire Night and the story of Guy Fawkes and The Gunpowder Plot, Forms 1 & 2 visited The Ashmolean Museum for an interactive workshop. We were lucky enough to spend time with the actual lantern that Guy Fawkes was carrying in 1605 when he tried and failed to light 36 barrels of gunpowder to blow up parliament. The boys delighted in the story being brought to life by acting it out, learning the famous rhyme, and making superb Guy Fawkes hats and 'super-safety sparklers'. I think it is safe to say that our Pre-Prep boys will always 'Remember, Remember, the fifth of November! TR



We managed to dodge the rain to fit in some time for practical outdoor Maths this week. The boys had great fun jumping on chalk number lines and wowing us with their addition and subtraction skills. TR



## Woodland School Fun



This week at our Woodland School Pre-Prep children had fun in the autumn leaves, and learnt how a fawn keeps still to hide from predators, in the game Sleeping Fawn. HB & MM

We used leaves from our Woodland School to thread and assemble beautiful leaf crowns. The boys also designed autumnal leaf stencils using card and tissue paper, as well as 'fire' pictures on the Bonfire Night theme. These are now in pride of place, catching the light in our Pre-Prep classroom windows. What creative pupils we have! TR





## Form 7 News

This week, Form 7 had the opportunity to present their recent Geography PowerPoint projects related to tourism in Oxford and in Blackpool. The boys worked in small groups to act as Travel Agents trying to entice tourists to their city. Form 7 have worked incredibly hard on these projects which they were really proud to share with their classmates and teachers. It was an entertaining morning and some brilliant presentations and convincing arguments as to why someone might want to visit these very contrasting cities. Well done to all the boys in Form 7. DP



## Science News



Last Friday, Form 5 visited the Science Oxford Centre in Headington. The first activity of the day was a puzzle workshop where the boys got the opportunity to work together to solve a variety of challenges involving both scientific and mathematical thinking skills. Next, they explored the many interactive exhibits at the Centre. A particular favourite was the wind suction machine which the boys had great fun with, feeding in balls and scarves and then using the air jets to send them around the machine and out again.

After lunch, a lesson about Earth and Space gave the boys the chance to show off their knowledge around the topic. The boys thoroughly enjoyed their day and we will definitely be returning soon! CS





## Music News



Will, Splendour and Trust attended this year's Radley Orchestral Day on Tuesday, which gave them the opportunity to play in a fantastic orchestra of around a hundred pupils and staff under the direction of Mr Gladstone. The boys also received several hours' worth of sectional coaching during rehearsals with Radley's Music staff, tackling repertoire by Tchaikovsky and Grieg as well as two Latin-style pieces.

CCCS has strong ties with the Music department at Radley, so it was excellent to bump into several ex-pupils who are now music scholars there - not to mention some of our shared instrumental teachers. The opportunity to see Radley's beautiful, newly-extended chapel and organ (as well as have a delicious lunch) were all bonuses! Will, Splendour and Trust were superb ambassadors for CCCS, and should be very proud of their playing throughout the day. SB



STANDISH  
CONSORT

**Zelenka**  
**Missa**  
**Votiva**

Fux: Overture Suite  
in D minor

Heinichen: Concerto in  
A minor  
Recorder soloist: Kate Allsop

Led by Mark Wilson, Music Director  
at Pembroke College, Oxford  
*Accompanied by Ensemble La Notte*  
Saturday 2nd December 2023, 7pm  
All Saints Church Cheltenham GL52 2HG



Any parents looking to take their sons to an unusual concert in a fascinating location might like to know about an event coming up in Cheltenham on 2nd December, directed by Mr Wilson (Director of Chapel Music at Pembroke).

It offers a wonderful opportunity for boys to find out more about period instruments, and to hear music in the church where Gustav Holst was a chorister.

There will be ample parking, as well as lots of Oxfordians in Mr Wilson's University alumni choir! SB

# TRINITY

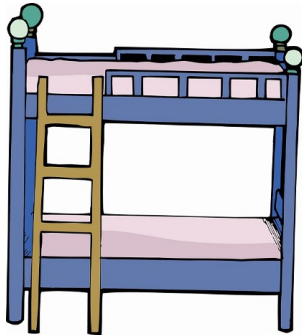
## COLLEGE LONDON

This term's Trinity music exams will take place  
on Tuesday 5th December.

## Flexi-Boarding

We offer flexi-boarding for £63.00 per night. If any of our parents would like to use this facility, please contact Mrs Kemp:

[registrar@cccs.org.uk](mailto:registrar@cccs.org.uk).



## Lost Property

Cosme Takamura (Form 7) has mislaid his named school blazer.

Please would parents check that Cosme's blazer has not been brought to the wrong home, by mistake.

Thank you. LK



## Nursery News

Nursery children visited Christ Church Meadow at the beginning of the week and were excited to find letters on the signs that were familiar and important to them.

We took the opportunity in a window of beautiful weather to collect the pods from the beans in our garden to save for next year. "They're purple," remarked one of the children, in surprise, as they broke open the crumbly brown pods.

The children also found time to practise their creaming skills when they made cookies, which were baked in the school kitchen ovens. HB



## Computing News

Forms 7 and 8 enjoyed a masterclass on Artificial Intelligence (AI) from one of our parents who works in the industry. He challenged us to think about the impact of past new technologies on the way people think and work and then transfer these thoughts to the future with AI.

Our visiting parent was able to answer a huge range of the boys' questions, but his main message was to "Guard your mind" - we need to make sure we have secure values and that we decide how to apply what AI has given us, rather than be driven by it. That is good advice in many areas of life... AF



## Meet and Greet: Helen Backus - Head of CCCS Nursery

**What did you want to be when you grew up and what are you doing now?** I wanted to write children's picture books. My particular favourite growing up was Dick Bruna, who wrote the Miffy books. I wrote a Miffy book when I was about five called, 'Miffy goes to the Supermarket,' which my mum sent to Dick Bruna in The Netherlands. He wrote back a letter to me, telling me I should draw every day and I still do. I am now Head of Nursery.

**If you could travel anywhere in the world tomorrow, where would you go and why?** To the Isles of Scilly. It's a hidden paradise off the coast of Cornwall, accessible by boat with some of the most beautiful beaches and car-free islands in the world.

**Who is your idol?** My primary school teacher Mrs Hill, who believed in all of us. She developed our spelling and grammar, she instilled a love of writing, art, and poetry. She taught us grace and courtesy and to finish a project through to completion.

**Favourite city or town and in which season?** Oslo in May. It is a very walkable city with the most amazing lilac in bloom. I can smell it just thinking about it.

**One thing you would change in the world if you could?** For more people to make, repair and recycle things.

**Is there a family trait/habit that you have?** A gift of a book, and a bar of chocolate on Christmas Eve, following the Icelandic tradition of Jolabokaflokkur.

**Favourite Book?** Summer Book, Tove Jansson.

**If you could start something new (hobby/interest or sport) and were not limited with time/age/money, what would it be?** To develop a school kitchen garden, where the children grow food, garden every week and cook with the ingredients they grow in their own courtyard, child-sized, kitchen, following the work of Stephanie Alexander's Kitchen Garden Foundation in Australia.

**Any advice on to relax at the weekend?** A long walk with our dogs, Ava and Isla, to our Sycamore Tree between Cutteslowe Park and Islip. To sit with a flask of tea and to take in the glorious view of the Oxfordshire countryside.

I love it that you wrote your own Miffy book, but maybe even more so that your parents sent it to Dick Bruna - we all need a cheerleader. There are so many benefits of drawing every day - apparently it reduces stress, increases emotional intelligence and boosts self esteem, just to name a few. I love the idea of repairing, making and recycling; it feels like it's a skill we are taught at school, using our imaginations to create something and make something out of nothing. The Repair Shop (TV show) is great for this concept, but there is usually an enormous amount of sentiment attached and I find the handing over of the newly-repaired item to its owner, which reminds them of their late grandmother, a bit emotional! I am really looking forward to seeing your kitchen garden at school and I am sure there will be many willing participants to water and weed and distribute the produce. I have used herbs from the CCCS garden club before; it was most definitely my favourite meal. What a great concept!

A warm welcome Helen.

Have a lovely weekend,  
Kathryn