



Christ Church Cathedral School News

— 5th September 2025 —



Message from the Headmaster

Dear Parents,

Despite the fact that I have been a teacher for a long time, the beginning of the year never fails to excite me. It was a real joy to arrive on Brewer Street this Wednesday to see some expectant pupils already in position outside the school waiting to be let in. As I opened the gate, the first two boys to enter the building rushed past me talking excitedly. Already the choristers had taken the building over, and Music was sounding around the corridors. The building had sprung to life again, a place that, during the course of the summer, had become a collection of rather empty corridors. The school is never itself until the pupils arrive.

One of the first things I told the pupils was that a number of classrooms had been renamed. All of this stems from the fact that we have our new library. We have named the library after the well-known Early 20th century detective writer Dorothy L Sayers, who was born in the school as her father was the Headmaster in the 1890s.

The room in which the library is now housed used to be the old changing room. Since Covid we have no longer been using it and so it has been reborn as a library. Over the course of the term it will develop further and I can't wait to see the emergence of a wonderful mural which will be very kindly painted by a remarkably talented parent. It will show a number of Oxford literary characters.

The books are now in place and there is also a pile of beanbags into which pupils will insert themselves in order to travel into the glorious fictional world contained between the covers of the many books in the room.

During my first assembly with the pupils, I held up my iPhone and asked the pupils what the object in my hand was. Unsurprisingly, it was quickly identified as a phone, but just as rapidly the pupils started to make suggestions as to its other functions. They mentioned that I could use it as a camera, that I could find my way around the country (and indeed the world) by using it, that I could play music with it and that I could use it as a torch - indeed, one young man went as far as to suggest that I could use it to play games. I told him that I did not do such a thing! Remarkably, I pointed out that it gave me access to more knowledge than was contained in the world's greatest library and to artificial intelligence which could scour this archive and summarise it almost instantaneously. I reminded the pupils just what a miracle this tiny object was and how extraordinary were its powers. But I did say that I believed it should be our tool and not our master, that we had to retain power over it rather than to allow it to control us.

One of the ways that we would achieve this is to ensure that at CCCS we continue to teach people to think and to calculate and to navigate, to know things and to think logically. These things I can assure you we will continue to do in order that our pupils are able to make use of the extraordinary power that AI brings without losing the ability to be fully human.

I've had a lovely day today. It was glorious to be back in the Cathedral, particularly given how many parents attended, and coffee afterwards was a delightful and lively gathering. It was so nice to see how happy all the new pupils seemed to be – one of the new Reception pupils had told his mother that he had made a new best friend – “Mr Berry!” I thoroughly enjoyed my philosophy enrichment where we got into an animated discussion about the morality of different social systems, though my group was dwarfed by many of the other groups, especially by the large number of people signing up for card games and for cross country running! I also visited the DT room where the pupils were given the task of refashioning a set of the most old-fashioned desks which had been removed from one of the classrooms – it will be interesting to see what use the pupils put them to. Meanwhile in the Form 3 classroom, I arrived only to find that the pupils were covered in bandages, a result of their being present in a French lesson where they had to learn the words for various catastrophic looking injuries, many of them to the head. I sincerely hope that these pupils will return to school on Monday otherwise we could be a class down. Despite this setback, it's been a glorious start to the year!

Mr Richard Murray,
Headmaster

School Calendar

School Diary: Monday 8th Sept - Sunday 14th Sept

After School Clubs commence this week.

MONDAY 8

Form 6 CAT 4 Tests
After School Clubs begin

TUESDAY 9

Form 5 CAT 4 Tests

WEDNESDAY 10

Form 6 CAT 4 Tests
9.00: Form 6 ISEB Mock Pre-Tests
1.00 - 2.30: Cardinal Scholars visit to Weston Library

THURSDAY 11

Form 5 CAT 4 Tests
Form 7 ISEB Pre-Tests
9.00 - 10.00: Pre-Prep and Nursery New Parents Coffee Morning

FRIDAY 12

Form 6 C and 7 ISEB Mock Pre-Tests
8.45: Cathedral Assembly - Speaker: The Headmaster

SATURDAY 13

9.00 - 12.00: School Open Morning

Notices



School Open Day

Saturday 13th September, 9.00-12.00

Please let your friends and family know about our School Opening Morning next Saturday. Discover why our pupils love being at CCCS.

Please [click here](#) to register a place.



St Giles' Fair - Travel Plans

Please remember that St Giles' Fair will be in Oxford on Monday 8th and Tuesday 9th September, and road closures will have an impact on travel plans.

[Click here](#) to find out if your journey to Brewer Street will be affected.

Early Years News

Settling Back into Nursery Life

This term we have welcomed back some familiar friends and new children to the Nursery. It has been lovely to see them begin to learn our new routines in the day.

It has been amazing to allow families to use the Nursery Gate to help to make a smooth transition into School. Please can Nursery parents remember to ring the bell if the gate is not open.

We have already had lots of missing items in the Nursery and we would ask that all of the children's clothing, boots and slippers are labelled over the weekend.

We are looking forward to meeting the families at our coffee morning next Thursday morning at 9am.

HB



Pre-Prep News

Our first wander to Woodland School

Pre-Prep enjoyed their first experience of Woodland School in the early Autumn sunshine.
MB



Get Involved

Bikeability Course

We are really happy to offer the Bikeability course, Levels 1 & 2, to our boys again this year. It's a relief to know that soon, they will be more road aware and much safer on the roads! The course is open to boys over the age of 9.

Please remember that all children cycling to school must be wearing a helmet and a Hi-Vis jacket. Don't forget to check their lights are working before it gets dark!

SL



New Battery Recycling Bins

We are excited to have introduced our new battery Recycling Bins. Please do feel free to dispose of your batteries in one of the bright pink bins located in school.



In the Boarding House

Welcome back to our Cathedral Choristers!

Welcome back to the Cathedral Choristers. In particular we are delighted to welcome: AJ, Qi Heng, Jasper, Fred and Harrison.

JR



NORMANDY TRIP 2025

Dates: 6th - 10th July 2026

Price: £650

Open to boys in Forms 5, 6 and 7



We still have spaces for our very popular and fully immersive trip to Normandy, France next July. We will be staying at “Le château de la Baudonnière”, a 19th century château with 100 acres of woodland, which boasts a lake, orchard, farm and stables.

All activities, visits and tours will be led in French. The pupils will be encouraged to speak French at all times, even during meal times. They will receive worksheets to reinforce the French they have learnt and be provided with key phrases, vocabulary, exercises and puzzles to complete at the end of each activity.

Please contact schoolsecretary@cccs.org.uk to book a place for your son on this trip before **Friday 19th September 2025**.



[Click here](#) to view photos from last year's trip to Normandy, or you can view the highlights on our [Instagram](#) account.

School Photobook



Photograph Permissions

Please remember to complete and return the Photo Permission Consent Form to Mrs. Johnson so that we can include a photo of your child in the newsletter and on our social channels, and share all the fun things your child has been doing at CCCS.