



# Christ Church Cathedral School News

— 12th December 2025 —



## Message from the Headmaster

Dear Parents,

It's been another week of Christmas entertainment! Today we had a wonderful Christmas lunch, Turkey, pigs in blankets, Brussels sprouts – everything that one could possibly have wished for on such an occasion and all beautifully prepared by our wonderful Kitchen staff. It is perhaps a good moment to mention them – in fact all year they have worked tirelessly to provide us with nourishing and tasty food and they have always done so with a smile. We have been doing so well on the sports pitch and in the classroom this year. I'm sure these successes are partly because of the nutritional value of our food. Of course, many of you will know the old phrase, "We are what we eat!" and judging by the quality of our food, we should be a quality school!

Many of our Form 6 pupils have taken tests for senior schools this term. I am delighted to say that so far, every single pupil who has taken a test has either been given a place or has got through to the interview stage which is a very positive outcome. We look forward to hearing how the boys do in their interviews next term. I wanted to thank Mrs Fairhurst for running so successfully our entrance test preparation which starts now in Form 4. Equally it is perhaps worth your knowing that I will give everyone who has been chosen for an interview a one to one interview practice before they have their formal interview.

We were treated to another fantastic nativity play this week, this time provided by our Pre-Prep. The play had been specially written, in beautiful metrical rhyming couplets, by Miss Hopkinson-Woolley herself. Never had I heard a nativity play trip off the tongue in quite the same way. It was also an immensely succinct summary of the Christmas story. When the wise men saw the star leading them towards the birthplace of the saviour, they responded “Wooppee!” while the message of the angels to the shepherds while they watched their flocks on the hills around Jerusalem was “Hey, Wakey Wakey!” As ever, most of the lines were sung and we could hear every word. What a joy it was.

And for the Pre-Prep it didn't end there. The following day Father Christmas came to call, clutching reindeer bells and bringing presents. Before the presents were distributed, the children were allowed to ask him questions. Of course there were many that one might have anticipated, for instance where Father Christmas had left his reindeer and would I be getting all the things I had put down on my list. But as ever, when it comes to our Pre-Prep, there was an unexpected comment. “Santa! Last year your elves ate all my Grandma's plants when you came; will you make sure they don't do so again this year!” Even Father Christmas has to ensure that his co-workers follow correct procedures!

Talking of the unexpected, our new chaplain, The Revd Catherine Cleghorn, also came across an answer to a question she was not expecting. In the Cathedral last week when speaking to the School she preached upon Advent which is, of course, a time for self examination. She asked the question “What have you done recently which you have regretted doing?” she was of course expecting a particularly self-reflective person to admit that they had said something which might have upset someone else or that another might have felt jealous or envious. As ever, a forest of hands appeared. “Yes,” she said, pointing at a slightly anguished looking face. “Bungee jumping!” “Interesting,” she replied. “Any other suggestions?” Clearly this line of questioning wasn't going in exactly the direction she had anticipated. “Yes?” she said pointing at another “Tomahawk throwing!” At this point she decided to explain further what she meant, but I never did find out what it was that the tomahawk thrower regretted about his chosen activity.

It's been a hugely successful term. I would very much like to thank all of our wonderful staff for everything they have done to help the pupils and I would like to thank all of you for your unwavering support for the School. It makes so much difference and does mean that we can look after your sons and daughters so much more effectively.

I am looking forward to seeing you all hugely at the carol service tomorrow and may I wish you all a very happy Christmas.

**Mr Richard Murray,**  
Headmaster

[Click here](#) to see a sneak peak of the Senior Consort carol

# Dates for your Diary

## December 2025

### WEDNESDAY 24 DECEMBER

Christmas Eve

### THURSDAY 25 DECEMBER

Christmas Day

9.30am: Choral Matins for Christmas Day

11.00am: Choral Eucharist for Christmas Day

## January 2025

### SUNDAY 4 JANUARY

Skip Trip Departs, returning on Friday 9th January

### MONDAY 5 JANUARY

7.30pm: Evening concert at Wigmore Hall celebrating Cathedral Choir 500th Anniversary

### WEDNESDAY 7 JANUARY

8.00am: Term begins

## Upcoming Events



### **Be a Chorister for an Afternoon**

**Saturday 24th January 2026**

**2.30 - 7.00pm**

Christ Church Cathedral

If your son is in Year 2 or 3 and has a voice of an angel, then you should sign up to our upcoming 'Be a Chorister' event.

Your son will spend the afternoon enjoying a singing lesson with our Director of Music, Ms Biddell, as well as our world-famous Organist, Mr Peter Holder, who has notably performed at the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II, and the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla.

The boys end the day with a performance at Evensong in Christ Church Cathedral.

Our invitation is extended to friends and family of the School community with boys in Years 2-4, so please spread the word! Families can sign up [here](#).

# Wednesday Wanders With Nursery

The Nursery children enjoyed beautiful winter sunshine on their walk on Wednesday. For the first time this year they circumnavigated Christ Church Meadow, walking along the river bank, admiring the boats and observing that there were no ducks on the fast flowing river.

The London Plain trees looked like they had been decorated with baubles as just seeds hung on the bare branches. The older children were very pleased to show the new children Mr Murray's tree, lying on the riverbank with its roots in the air. We even saw a green parakeet and two bold squirrels eating alder cones.

HB



## Lost Property

As we come to the end of term, the Christmas break can be the perfect time to check your child's school uniform and ensure that everything is labelled with their name tag.

We have a large number of school uniform, sports kit and even coats in our Lost Property. If you have lost any items this term, please do pop in and take a look - you may be reunited!



# It's Panto Season!

Pre-Prep enjoyed a visit to the Burton Taylor Studio, Oxford to watch an energetic performance of *Where's Father Christmas?*



On Tuesday, it was the turn of Forms 3-5 to enjoy a trip to the Oxford Playhouse to see Dick Whittington. The boys had an incredible time and also learned all the actions to the songs - well done boys!



# The Not-So-Silent Night



On Thursday, parents were treated to not one, but two performances of their charming nativity, *The Not-So-Silent Night*. The children were amazing, singing and acting their little hearts out. Well done to the children, the Pre-Prep team and Ms Biddell for putting together such a magical show.



Photos will soon be available on your SPLAAT account, so please make sure that you have registered to be able to view the watermarked photos of your child.

# Christmas Comes Early to CCCS

What a magical day we have had today! A fabulous Christmas lunch cooked by our wonderful Catering Team, Christmas post to be opened and we even had a visit from the man himself... Santa came to say hello to the Pre-Prep children!



# Form 4 visit Elms Farm

## Thank you Farmer Ronan!

Dear Farmer Ronan,

We really enjoyed our trip to Elm Farm. We loved feeding bread to the cows and stroking them. We were very surprised when we saw the calves because they were so big and heavy even though they were only 4 weeks old!

It was fun when we tried to push the enormous hay bale because it was so heavy and we couldn't move it at all! We would have loved to have seen the tractor lift it with its telescopic loader.

Thank you for letting us stroke the chicken – it was so soft!

We were super surprised about how far the sheep's wool went down, and how oily it was. It was funny that they were cross with you like the ducks!

Finally, the milking experience was extremely fun but also hard! We loved shaking the jars of cream to make butter. We tried it at school and it was delicious! Thank you so much for your time and for making our visit so interesting.

We had an unforgettable day on the farm; meeting all the animals,

Form 4



# And The Eco Winners Are...

The results are in for the Most Eco-Friendly Christmas Tree Competition for our Christmas Light Show...

The challenge was set by our newly-formed Eco Committee, which has 12 committed members from several different Forms and aims to raise awareness of how our School can become more environmentally aware.

After much deliberation, it was decided that there should be joint winners... the youngest and the oldest in the School: **Nursery and Form 8!**

Nursery, under the experienced eco-guidance of Miss Helen and Miss Rebecca, decorated a beautiful tree in red, with hand-crafted garlands made from second-hand wool, biodegradable fir cone baubles hanging on natural string and of course the mandatory recyclable paper chains!

Form 8, whilst acknowledging that their tree was not perhaps the most beautiful, impressed with its carefully considered and convincingly presented eco-credentials, including recyclable paper chains and decorations made from re-used paper in the School House colours, using biodegradable string and fairy lights powered by rechargeable batteries.

Every Form produced a spectacular display however, each in a given colour, and it was wonderful to hear the eco debate that the competition prompted.

Special mention must go to the Form 6 tree which had the most challenging of eco colours - gold! The judges loved the well-argued notice that accompanied the largely plastic, but of course reusable, decorations! Most impressive.

Well done, and a very Happy Eco Christmas to all! We hope that these vital eco discussions will continue into your own homes; after all, a green planet should be for life, not just for Christmas.  
EP



# Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge results

All pupils from Form 4 to Form 8 stepped up to take part in a prestigious national challenge designed to stretch their logical-thinking skills - the very foundations of confident computer programming.

We are delighted to announce that their hard work has paid off. Nine of our boys achieved Gold Awards, placing them within the top 10% of participants across the entire country!

Huge congratulations to Qi Heng, Jing, Flynn, Hugo, George R, Edwin, John, Andrew and Leo! This is a remarkable achievement and a testament to their skills and ability.

We are proud of all the boys for taking part, and look forward to seeing how they grow their skills further.



# House Cross Country

This week saw all boys in Forms 3-8 take part in the annual House Cross Country Competition. The boys all ran really well, with some extraordinary performances from those who are confident runners and also those who find long distance running more of a challenge.

Winners of each race :

Form 3-4 - Lucas H

Form 5-6 - Hugo R / Jayden R

Form 7-8 - Patrick D-D

We are really proud of all the boys and the efforts they have shown on the games field this term.

Have a wonderful Christmas break.

Mr Pear



# Tennis Champ joins the TEN-PRO Global Junior Tour



Richard (F6) recently took part in the TEN-PRO Global Junior Tour, held at the Rafa Nadal Academy by Movistar in Mallorca, Spain, where he competed against other rising tennis talents from over 50 countries.

This experience was invaluable for Richard, nurturing both his professional and personal growth. During the week, he competed in both the Under 10 and Under 11 categories, finishing in the top half of the Under 10s, and earning a strong mid-field placement in the larger Under 11 draw with an impressive 64 competitors. His results beautifully reflect his determination, adaptability, and ability to compete confidently against a wide range of international players.

It wasn't all hard work! Off court, Richard was able to observe academy athletes during their practice sessions, giving him a greater insight into understanding the commitment, work ethic and discipline required to achieve success at the highest level. Making many new friends from all over the world also strengthened Richard's communication skills, cultural awareness and respect for diverse perspectives.

An unforgettable highlight was meeting one of his heroes - Mr Nadal himself! A moment we're sure he will always cherish.

Richard's involvement in the TEN-PRO Global Junior Tour represents an important milestone in his tennis journey, and his coach is grateful to the School for their support in making this experience possible.

Well done Richard! - you have aced this experience and we can't wait to see where your next serve takes you!

# Enrichment with a Christmas twist

## The Curious Case Of The Stolen Christmas Pudding!

For our final Enrichment of the term, the Making the Most of Oxford and Photography groups were treated to a specially arranged visit to the magical Christ Church Christmas Tree Festival!

A number of magnificent Christmas trees have been placed around the College and Cathedral, each decorated on a given theme. The trees can simply be enjoyed for their beauty, or as part of an intriguing mystery trail to find out who stole the Christmas Pudding!

The CCCS boys naturally wanted to solve the case and eagerly pursued the clues, gradually eliminating the various Christ Church-related characters as they discovered their variously dubious alibis, until they pinpointed the culprit!

Highlights included the impressively tall Sayers tree (particularly popular with our members of Sayers House!), the magical Alice tree and, of course, the CCCS tree hung with decorations crafted by the children under the artistic direction of Mr Stacey in DT and Mrs Elias in Art in the School House colours.

Thank you so much to Mrs Johnson for arranging our visit and to the College for generously allowing us to join their wonderful trail. It is a very special Christmas festival; we can't recommend it highly enough!

EP



# HEROES



# WELCOME

**COULD YOU  
RESCUE A  
DOG?**



**CHANNEL 4'S**  
*the Dog House*  
**IS BACK!**

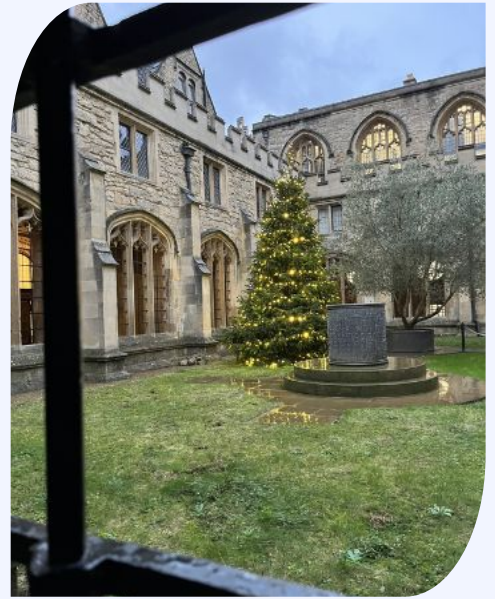
**APPLY NOW**



**C4THEDOGHOUSETAKEPART.CO.UK**

Channel 4's The Dog House is looking for local families to offer a loving home to a rescue dog and share their reasons why on the show! If you're interested, find out more here: [Taking part in The Dog House](#) or email [thedoghouse@fivemilefilms.co.uk](mailto:thedoghouse@fivemilefilms.co.uk).

# School Photobook



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Is there a better way to end the term than by a visit from the youngest member of our CCCS community? Mr and Mrs Pear kindly brought baby Romy in to say hello to all her new friends!



## Help us keep the school community safe

If your child has an upcoming birthday and would like to celebrate with their CCCS friends, please place a cake order with our Chef, giving at least three days' notice. You can email Chef Peter directly at [franks@cccs.org.uk](mailto:franks@cccs.org.uk)

Please do not bring any outside food into the School.