



Christ Church Cathedral School News

22nd May 2026



Message from the Headmaster

Dear Parents,

Mr Peter Last, the Headmaster of Kingham Hill, came to preach to us this morning in the Cathedral. He had set the story of David and Goliath to be read and he very dramatically took the role of the swaggering Goliath, the immensely tall Philistine warrior, who paraded himself in front of the Israelite army daring anyone to come out and fight him. Of course the fear that this towering warrior cast upon his opponents was total – except for the young boy David, who pointed out to Saul that he was used to rescuing his sheep from lions and other ferocious beasts. Saul tried to fit him out with some armour, but David felt uncomfortable in it and refused to accept it. Instead he armed himself with five pebbles selected from the brook, pebbles, of course, which he was to fit into his sling shot and fire at speed into Goliath's head. Goliath fell, at which point David used Goliath's own sword to kill and decapitate him. Mr Last told us not to be frightened by our Goliaths, those ghastly and terrifying fears which cast such shadows over our lives. So often these fears seem larger than us or unmanageable but given courage and preparedness, they are, as David proved, capable of being defeated. Having courage is one of the most important virtues and one that allows so much else to happen.

An indeed so much has continued to happen here at school. Today we had the Fun Run which was a marvellous occasion. All our pupils took part, despite the heat. The runners set off from opposite the Pavilion, each year group accompanied by a valiant member of staff (which did not include me!) (I had to watch everyone you understand) They had to start by crawling through a net which was draped upon the floor having been fired at by a crowd of gappers using water pistols.

They then disappeared from view into the depths of the Woodland School, enveloped in cow parsley and hanging branches. Re-emerging they ran round the fields until they came to a waiting football which they had to kick as hard as possible towards a goal guarded by a senior pupil. All of this palaver was, of course, entertaining for those watching and, indeed, I hope for those participating, but most importantly, over £1000 was raised for our charity Soundabout – a really pleasing sum.

Soundabout is a wonderful charity which the School supported a few years ago. It was founded by two CCCS parents. It aims to provide musical support for those with severe learning difficulties, people for whom normal communication is difficult. What its founders discovered was that people who have severe communication problems can often appreciate music in a profound way and, indeed, that they gain so much from music and from articulating in performance that it can be completely transformational. Music really is the universal language.

I often use this time of year to remind those people about to take exams about the best use of holidays. I would encourage your children to do a bit of revision most days rather than to imagine that revision should happen on a couple of really intensive days. I would produce a timetable which you adhere to – this enables you to know what you have to do at any one time – and then to carry out what you have planned to do. I would ensure that you have a good balance of work, relaxation and rest. These are all very important elements in a decent revision programme. May I wish all those doing revision and exams this year all the very best,

I have rarely felt more delighted to have seen the arrival of the warm weather. I have never felt so cold in May before. I hope very much that the half term week has a great deal of sun in store and that everyone makes the most of it. As someone whom I met very recently said to me “Children should spend all of their time outside.” “Why?” I asked. “Because it makes their brains work.” I strongly suspect that this is true. Maybe we should move all our teaching outdoors therefore. I suspect that would not work but now that we have a very well appointed Woodland School, we might well try it! Happy half term.

Mr Richard Murray,
Headmaster

School Contacts



School Office: 01865 242 561 (8am - 5pm)



Prep Line: 07719 109433 (5pm to 6pm)



Mr Mirko Minibus: 07736 148199



Mr Quen Minibus: 07346 224937

School Calendar

Monday 1st - Sunday 7th June

MONDAY 1 JUNE

ALL DAY: Form 8 CE Exams

TUESDAY 2 JUNE

ALL DAY: Form 8 CE Exams

9.00am - 3.00pm: Reception, Form 1 & 2 Trip: The Walled Garden, Blenheim Palace

2.30 - 4.30pm: U8 & U9 Cricket v Cokethorpe (Home)

WEDNESDAY 3 JUNE

ALL DAY: Form 8 CE Exams

ALL DAY: School Exams (Forms 3-7)

2.15 - 4.30pm: U10 & U11 Cricket v Cokethorpe (Away)

THURSDAY 4 JUNE

ALL DAY: Form 8 CE Exams

ALL DAY: School Exams (Forms 3-7)

2.15 - 4.30pm: U8/U9 Cricket v Chandlings (Home)

FRIDAY 5 JUNE

ALL DAY: Form 8 CE Exams

ALL DAY: School Exams (Forms 3-7)

8.45 - 9.15am : Cathedral Assembly, Speaker, The Revd Liz Boughton, Chaplain, St Edward's School

9.15 - 9.45am: *Parents are welcome to join us in the Priory Room for coffee following the service*

5.00 - 6.00pm: Normandy Trip: Parents' Information Evening

Upcoming Events



Nursery Stay & Play

Teddy Bears' Picnic

Wednesday 10th June

9.30 - 11.00am

Christ Church Cathedral School

If you go into the woods today... you will see that the scene is set, the teddy bears are ready and the only thing missing, is you!

So we're inviting new friends to grab your best cuddly teddies and join our Nursery and Reception children for an exciting Woodland Adventure.

Book your place, simply click [here](#).

School Clubs

After School Club Timetable

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Mandarin Club Reception - Form 2 Form 1 Classroom 3.30 - 4.15pm	Multi Sports Club Reception - Form 4 School Field 4.15 - 5.00pm	Chess Club Form 2 Form 1 Classroom 3.30 - 4.30pm	Table Tennis Club Forms 3 - 8 School Playground 4.15 - 5.00pm
Cricket Club Forms 3 - 8 School Field 4.15 - 5.00pm	Chess Club Forms 3 - 6 Darwin 4.15 - 5.15pm		Mandarin Club Forms 3 - 8 Form 4 4.15 - 5.00pm
Real Tennis Forms 3 - 8 Real Tennis Court 4.15 - 5.45pm	Squash Club Forms 5 - 8 Squash Court 4.15 - 5.00pm		Little Musketeers Reception - Form 2 WWH 3.30 - 4.15pm
			Little Musketeers Forms 3 - 8 WWH 4.15 - 5.00pm

To book your child in to one of our clubs, please email schoolsecretary@cccs.org.uk and confirm your child's name and Form group.

Save the date

The CCCS Parents' Association
invites you to our spectacular once in a lifetime

FORMAL SUMMER BALL

To be held at Christ Church Great Hall

We look forward to seeing all the parents on
the evening of

Friday, 3rd July 2026

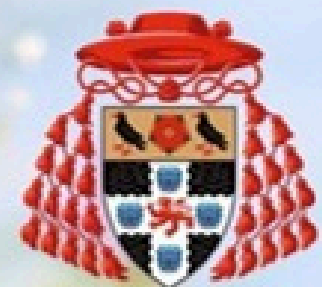
£80 per person

7:30 pm till late

Drinks Reception in the Masters' Garden

Dinner in the Great Hall

Dance in the Undercroft



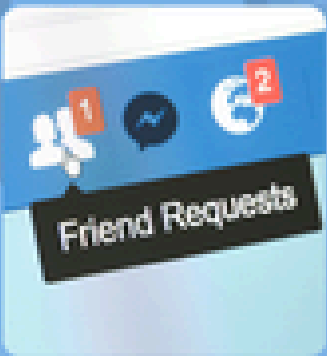
Christ Church Cathedral School

DRESS CODE: BLACK TIE / FORMAL / FABULOUS!

Please check your emails for the menu



The whole concept of social media relies upon users having friends and/or followers. 'Friends' tend to be those with whom users will share their own personal profile. It's usually a mutual relationship with both parties able to engage and interact with everything their friends post online. 'Followers' on the other hand can typically be just one-way relationships and, dependent on the platform, only provide access to certain aspects of an individual's profile, such as a person's content feed. A common trait that often exists between the two however is the desire to gather as many friends or followers as possible.



What parents need to know about SOCIAL PRESSURES LINKED TO 'FRIENDS & FOLLOWERS'



POSSIBLE 'FRIEND ENVY'

Children may compare the number of friends or followers that they have with their own online friends and people they know. In some cases, this could lead to 'friend envy', particularly if they see this as a sign of popularity. This could lead to your child showing signs of jealousy and resorting to sending friend requests to people they don't know that well, or even strangers, in a desperate bid to increase their own status online.



OPEN DOOR POLICY

Another way that children can increase their following is by leaving their accounts open so that they can be easily found, and anybody can view their posts. This is in the hope that other users will like their posts and decide to follow them, therefore increasing their numbers. Once again, this can leave your child vulnerable to being followed by strangers or people who have dishonest intentions.



FEELINGS OF REJECTION

Just like increasing friends and followers can bring a sense of happiness and satisfaction, so the loss of friends and followers can cause children to suffer feelings of sadness and rejection. Depending on how invested your child is in their social media activities, this could influence their attitude and behaviour online and potentially have a negative impact on their mental health and wellbeing.

COLLECTING 'FAKE' FRIENDS

Children who feel under pressure to increase their friend count or want to increase their following as quickly as possible can be vulnerable to collecting 'fake' friends. They may, for example, accept friend requests from people they don't know very well or from complete strangers, inadvertently leaving themselves open to online bullies, trolls or even the possibility of being groomed.

CONSTANT NEED TO PLEASE

As children start to gain more friends or an increasing number of followers, they might start to feel an added level of pressure to provide them with more interesting and likable content. Even if they now have an audience waiting, this constant need to please may be an extra burden that pushes your child into oversharing personal information or posting material that is inappropriate or offensive, inaccurately portraying what they're actually like in the offline world.



Safety Tips for Parents

BE THEIR FRIEND OR FOLLOWER

The best way to know who your child is friends with online or who follows them is to be their friend or follower yourself. This will allow you to see who your child is engaging with most online or open up discussions about how they know certain people they've added to their network who you haven't heard them speak about before or you yourself don't know.

TURN ON PRIVACY CONTROLS

All social media platforms have their own privacy controls which can be used to help protect children online. For instance, removing the ability for strangers to comment on public posts or having a screening process for friend or follow requests is good practice which can help to ensure your child's experience online is a safer one.

TALK ABOUT STRANGERS

If privacy measures have been put in place, then usually your child will receive a notification if somebody tries to befriend them online. Talk to your child about making sure they don't open up their personal life to people they don't know and that if they are ever in any doubt, they should never accept a friend request from a stranger.

BEHAVE ONLINE AS THEY WOULD OFFLINE

Your child's behaviour online should always be treated as an extension of their behaviour offline. Discuss with your child the pitfalls of trying to be somebody they're not and that trying to please everybody will only make them unhappy. Tell them that they should be proud of who they are and that they should always behave in an appropriate and responsible way when posting content online.



TALK TO THEM ABOUT THE VALUE OF REAL FRIENDSHIP

Social media can often distort what true relationships and friendships should actually be like. It's important to teach your child the value of true friendships and that meeting and speaking to people face to face in the real world, online, is often a better way to build a more trusting and confident relationship with someone rather than just speaking to them online.



DISCUSS WHAT BEING POPULAR ACTUALLY IS

A higher number of followers can be a measure of popularity but can also lack substance beyond just the number itself. Discuss with your child that popularity can come and go and that a large number of followers doesn't necessarily mean a large number of friends, particularly online where the real value in a relationship cannot be accurately determined.



Meet our expert

Pete Badh is a writer with over 10+ years in research and analysis. Working within a specialist area for West Yorkshire Police, Pete has contributed work which has been pivotal in successfully winning high profile cases in court as well as writing as a subject matter expert for industry handbooks.



Exploring life cycles through play and creativity

As the Nursery children excitedly await for their classroom butterflies to emerge, they have continued to explore life cycles. They have learnt how to cut out their own butterflies and discovered the different stages of the ladybird lifecycle. This week the children made ladybird pizzas.



In the garden the children have added a telephone exchange to their play, chatting to each other through telephone tubes. They were delighted to find Miss Michelle, from the office, joining in too.

HB



Pre-Prep enjoy Woodland School Cook Out!

Pre-Prep welcomed the first flushes of Summer with a much-anticipated 'Woodland School Cook-Out'.

In the coming months, we plan to enjoy regular Adventure Days and Cook-Outs in our Woodland School, during which all of our friends in Nursery and Pre-Prep will be able to take part in extended activities, including cooking food on the campfire.

On arrival at the Woods, the children helped us to collect sticks and to set up the fire circle. Once the fire was smouldering invitingly, we asked the children to come up in small groups to toast their own marshmallows and to squish them in between biscuits to fashion their own S'mores. The sticky treats were a major hit, and the children were rightfully proud of their delicious creations.

When we asked the children what they would like to cook next time, amongst some excellent suggestions of damper bread, crumpets, sweetcorn, and sausages, there were some higher-level ideas around setting up our own Pizza Shop or French Cafe on Christ Church Meadow. We had better start some serious work on our collective culinary skills, as the children's aspirations know no bounds!

TR



Preparing for future schools



After CCCS, our pupils go on to a wide range of schools: independent or state, day or boarding, local or further afield. The process of selecting the right school for your son starts earlier than many people expect: usually during Form 5. It can all seem quite complicated, but we are very experienced in supporting families – we will work with you to help you find the right school and to help your son secure a place there.

Our philosophy is that there is no one best senior school for everyone but, rather, a senior school best suited to your son. A small, nurturing single-sex school might be right for one child whilst a highly academic mixed boarding school might be just the ticket for another.

Early in Form 5 you will be invited to a meeting with the Headmaster and Academic Deputy about senior schools. This meeting covers the different types of schools available, how to make the most of a visit and what is involved in the application process. You will then be invited to book an individual meeting with the Headmaster, to talk about your son's individual character and abilities, helping you to choose a list of schools to visit.

Most pupils apply for two or three schools. It is a good idea to select these during Form 5 because some schools require you to apply then, although some are happy for you to wait until Form 7 or 8 to apply. For state schools, the system is that you apply half a term before the end of your son's time at CCCS: we can support you with planning for this.

Almost all independent schools have a selection process involving a test, and most do the first, and most important, part of that testing between November and January of Form 6, through online tests in English, Mathematics and Verbal and Non Verbal Reasoning. Your son will have started his preparation for this without realising it, through online learning activities from Form 3 and in a weekly Reasoning lesson from the start of Form 4. We give more formal mock tests from the middle of Form 5 and individual advice and guidance depending on the schools your son will be applying for, to make sure that by the time of the exam, he is ready.

At many schools, interviews are part of the application process. This, again, is something we help with. Before going for an interview, pupils will have interview practice with the Headmaster to ensure that they can present themselves to their best advantage. The Headmaster's knowledge of the different schools means he can tailor the practice interview to the school to which the boy is applying.

By Form 8, therefore, almost all pupils will know which school they are destined for. During the course of their last two years at CCCS, they will be studying for Common Entrance, a set of exams they will sit in the June of their final year. Some schools ask for Common Entrance grades as the final part of the selection process, but whether that is true for your son or not, the Common Entrance syllabus provides boys with a thorough grounding in the subjects they will be taking in senior school and is a valuable preparation for the experience of taking GCSEs.

A final question, once your son has his senior school place, is whether or not he will apply for a scholarship. We usually start preparation for scholarship assessments during Form 7, and we have experience in preparing for academic scholarships as well as for scholarships in music, sport or art. If you are interested in this, please get in touch with us. For those sitting academic scholarships, there are extra lessons throughout Forms 7 and 8 to prepare them for these specific exams which come, depending upon the school concerned, between February of Form 7 and the first week of the Summer Term.

If you have any questions about any aspects of your son's applications for his next steps, please do get in touch.

Mrs Anna Fairhurst

Deputy Head - Academic

Wild Adventures at Oxenwood



Forms 3 and 4 had an amazing time at Oxenwood Outdoor Education Centre in Marlborough this week. In such a short time, they managed to cram in a myriad of activities, from shelter-building to braving a night time walk in the woods, honing their archery skills and developing their survival skills.

Several members of the Oxenwood team remarked on how polite and well behaved the boys were, and even stated that they are the best group they have ever had! We know how wonderful the boys are, so it's lovely that others recognise it too! Well done boys!

We couldn't possibly fit all of the photos into this week's newsletter, so please check out their photo album [here](#) - photo credit to Arlo who took some fantastic shots!



Being a Pembroke chorister

Each morning when our pupils arrive in Brewer Street ready for the school day, they pass alongside one of the best-preserved sections of Oxford's medieval city walls – which also happens to be the southern boundary of Pembroke College. Founded in 1624 by King James I on the site of Broadgates Hall, Pembroke was named after the then Chancellor of the University, the Earl of Pembroke. Broadgates itself was built on land owned by St Frideswide's Priory, the institution which later became Christ Church, giving Pembroke and CCCS an ancient link which should be unsurprising given that they are our nearest neighbours.



Pembroke's celebrated alumni include the writer Samuel Johnson as well as JRR Tolkien, who was a Fellow at Pembroke and wrote much of 'The Hobbit' and 'The Lord of the Rings' while teaching there. Music is a big part of life at Pembroke, with its chapel choir, orchestras, jazz groups, and regular student concerts, all ensuring that the college has a lively and creative atmosphere. In 2019 CCCS established a formal musical relationship with Pembroke, agreeing to provide trebles to sing in its chapel choir. This bucked the nationwide trend of a decline in boys' singing, and to be in a position where three Oxford choirs draw on our musicians is very special indeed.

Pembroke's Director of Music is Mark Wilson, a conductor and bassoonist who has also sung as a countertenor in the choirs of Magdalen Chapel and at Worcester and Birmingham Cathedrals. Mr Wilson trains the choristers in conjunction with Pembroke's undergraduate organ scholars, rehearsing in the school Library on Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 8am. They sing evensong in Pembroke's glorious, colourful chapel during University term time at 5.30pm, in addition to a short practice after school on Mondays. Through their regular choral routine, the Pembroke choristers become confident singers who develop sight-reading, focus and ensemble skills that will stay with them for life – not to mention the camaraderie and discipline that comes from performing at a high musical level on an equal footing with adults.





As with services at Christ Church and Worcester, Pembroke's chapel evensongs are open to the public and I would warmly encourage parents to visit and hear them. It is especially exciting that the Pembroke Choristers will be singing evensong in the cathedral this term, at 6.05pm on Monday 8th June, performing a superb menu of music by Purcell and Dyson. Past Pembroke choir outings have included visiting evensongs at Gloucester Cathedral and Tewkesbury Abbey, and there are exciting plans for a tour next academic year too.... watch this space! CCCS is very proud of its brilliant Pembroke choristers, so if you think your son might be interested in joining please do get in touch. Team Pembroke and I would love to hear from you.

Ms Sophie Biddell
Director of Music

Audition for NCO 2027 NOW!



This year, we celebrated 3 of our boys winning places in the NCO
...could you be next?

Click [here](#) to find out more



THE | OXFORD & CAMBRIDGE SINGING SCHOOL

The Singing School was established in 2013 to provide children with the opportunity to sing great classical music with world class coaches in a relaxed and fun environment and to develop their confidence and ability in singing and performing.

This summer at Somerville College, we will be learning some beautiful seasonal music, and, as always on our courses, we will be giving sessions on vocal technique, music theory, music appreciation and history.

To join our mailing list and for more information on our courses, please see www.oxbridgesingingschool.com or email oxbridgess@gmail.com

21 -23 July 2026

also 21 & 22 December 2026

Courses for those aged 7-13 who love to sing

www.oxbridgesingingschool.com
www.oxbridgesingingschool.com

Sporting Stars

Last Sunday, Patrick (F6) took part in the Witney & District Invitational Swim Competition.

It was his first time competing in a formal race. Compared with the other boys, who train intensively every week, Patrick has had very limited training time. Despite this, he gave it his all and won 3rd place in the Boys' 11-Year-Old 100m Freestyle event. He is very proud of himself and determined to do even better in the future.

Well done Patrick, we are all so proud of you!



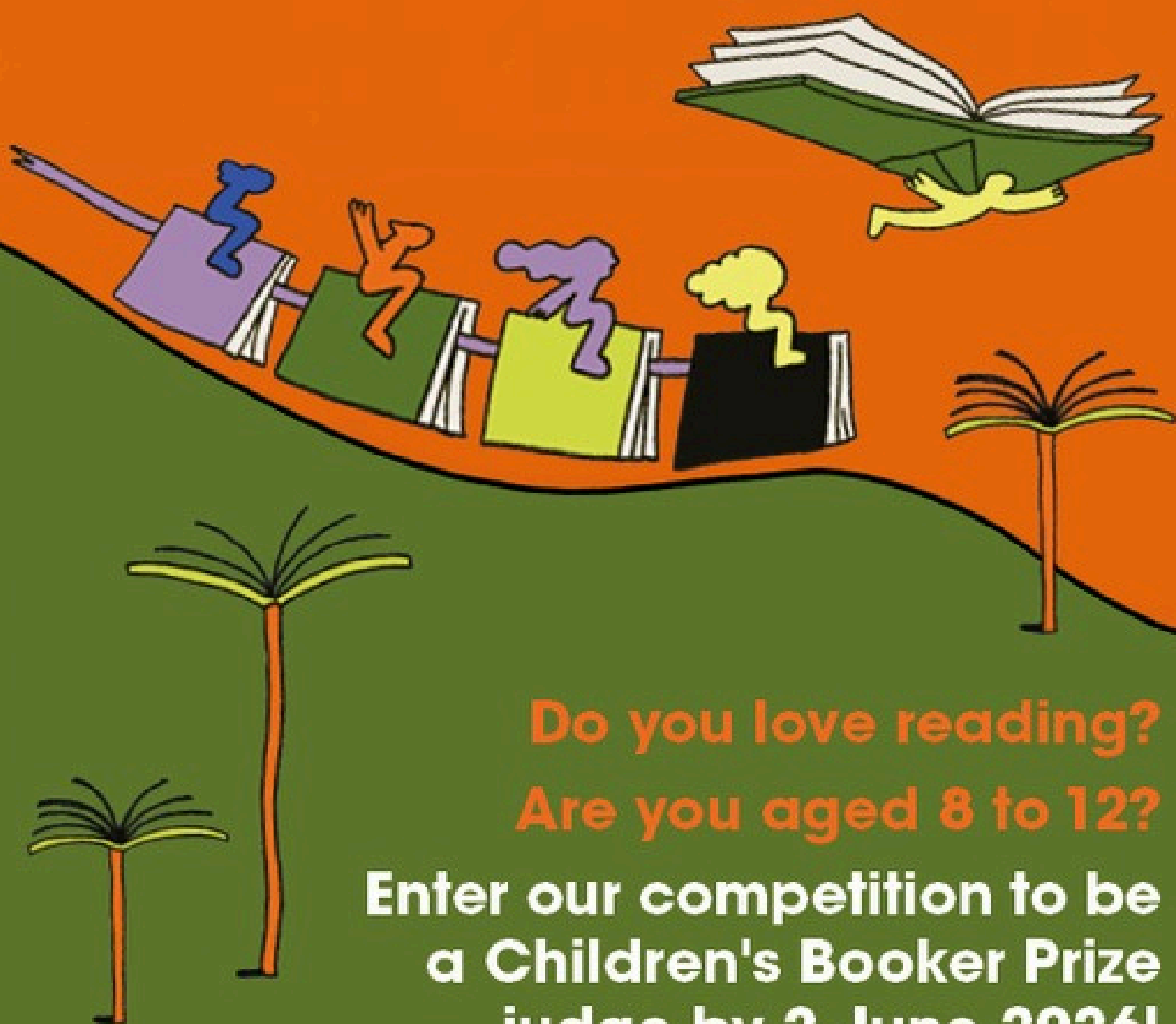
Courtesy of Mrs Chen

The
Children's
Booker
Prize
2027

supported by

AKO Foundation

THE BEST ADVENTURES START WITH A GREAT BOOK



Do you love reading?

Are you aged 8 to 12?

Enter our competition to be
a Children's Booker Prize
judge by 2 June 2026!

Visit thebookerprizes.com/children with a grown-up to find out more

School Photobook

It's Bubbles
O'Clock in
Reception as the
class take on
Bubble Painting!



Fun Run
Friday!

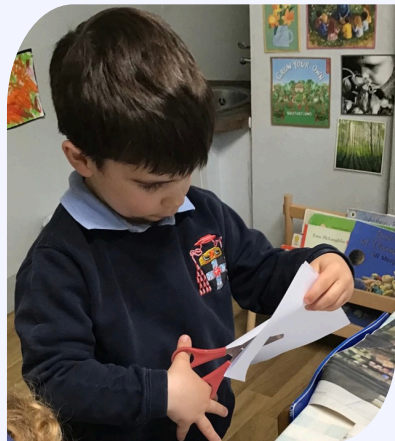


A huge **thank you** to our Sports Team for putting on another incredible Fun Run!
The children (and adults) had an amazing time.

Our friends at SPLAAT were on hand to capture the fun, so please look out for a
notification to let you know when photos are available.

School Photobook

More butterfly
and pizza
making in
Nursery



s'mores
anyone?



School Photobook

Boys Trip to Oxenwood!



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
Please do not bring any outside food into the School.