



Christ Church Cathedral School News

— 18th September 2026 —



Dear Parents,

I wanted to thank everyone for all the lovely comments that have been made to me about the School and for your kind best wishes for my retirement. Of course, I am looking forward to life after Christ Church, but there is so very much that I will miss terribly, especially the people of course. Fortunately, this is the longest term so there is still a great deal of time left and so many events to come – I am looking forward to it all hugely.

I very much enjoyed, on Tuesday, taking the pupils on a tour of the Bayeux Tapestry. Looking again at that extraordinary work, I was so touched by all the details both of the nation-changing events leading up to the Invasion and, of course, of the Battle itself, but also of the lovely pictures of everyday life which run along the bottom of the tapestry. The boys were fascinated by the details of horses and axes, of spears and arrows as well as the more personal moments like the touching pictures of Harold rescuing Norman soldiers out of the sea, people who were later to invade his country, and then of the moment he swore upon the holy relics under William's gaze that he would allow William to be king of England, something, of course, which occurred but only after Harold had taken the throne for himself and then lost it in the bloody battle. On the 960th anniversary of the battle, namely the 14th of October, the British Museum is broadcasting a lecture for schools about the tapestry, and we will ensure that our pupils are able to watch it. If we can get tickets to see the tapestry itself, we will endeavour to do so but they are very difficult to get so I have told the children that they should try to persuade you to take them. The next batch of tickets comes out on 21st October.

Tomorrow, to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the founding of the Cathedral Choir, we are holding a “come and sing” Evensong for all Cathedral School alumni. A very large number of former pupils are returning to a lunch at the Pavilion followed by the rehearsal and service in the cathedral. If anyone would like to hear this messed choir in action, they would be more than welcome. I’m very touched that so many pupils, including some of those who left last year to those who left over 60 years ago, will be taking part.

In the cathedral this morning, our chaplain, the Revd Catherine Cleghorn, preached to the boys about the importance of forgiveness. She illustrated her talk with the help of a large collection of hymn books. She got a boy to stand with his arms outstretched with a bag hanging from each hand. These were gradually loaded up with hymn books and, after a short while, the boys’ arms dropped and the bags fell to his feet. The point that the chaplain was making was that if we held on to the wrongs that others had committed against us, they would become a burden to us. Though, and she was keen to stress this, we should not ignore all of these things, the act of forgiveness was in fact an act of liberation for ourselves as well as something important to the person who had hurt us. I’m sure she is right. It is so important for our boys to hear such messages. It was, for the second week running, lovely to see so many parents for coffee afterwards. Do please join us.

Many parents said that they had read my comments about Oxford Open Doors and told me about the many places that they had been over the course of the weekend. I was having a conversation with some of the boys about what the most important qualities of a scholar were. They suggested a number of things including reliability, hard work and mental energy. I think these are all right but I suspect another important quality is curiosity and one of the elements I most enjoy about Oxford Open Doors is the discovery of things that are on the other side of walls and it’s always good to wonder what could be through one of those doors. Another quality which is very closely allied to this, is the importance of noticing things. If you notice what’s going on around you, you will probably always be fascinated by everything, and one of the things I’ve always enjoyed about the pupils here is that they very often notice so much. Indeed, one boy said to me recently: “Sir you wore that tie two days ago - do you have any others?” It’s always good to be kept on one’s toes.

Richard Murray

Headmaster

School Calendar

Monday 21st - Sunday 27th September

MONDAY 21 SEPTEMBER

9.05am - 4.10pm: Form 8 Team Building Trip

TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER

9.05am - 2.15pm: Form 5 Trip to Youlbury Activity Centre

~~2.30 - 4.30pm: U8 & U9 Rugby v Cokethorpe Home - CANCELLED~~

WEDNESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER

2.15 - 4.30pm: U12 & 13 Rugby v Bruern Abbey (Away)

2.30 - 4.00pm: U10 & U11 Rugby v Cokethorpe (Home)

7.00 - 8.00pm: Future Schools Forum (WWH)

THURSDAY 24 SEPTEMBER

Early AM: Cathedral Choir depart for tour of the USA (Return on 6th October)

8.00am - 2.00pm: Worcester Choir attending Singing Workshop & Concert

~~9.05am - 2.15pm: Form 6 trip to Youlbury Activity Centre - POSTPONED TO A LATER DATE~~

10.45 - 11.25: Languages Day Celebrations and Pre-Prep Activities

FRIDAY 25 SEPTEMBER

8.45 - 9.15am : Cathedral Assembly, Speaker, TBC

9.15 - 9.45: *Parents are welcome to join us for coffee and refreshments in the Priory Room following the assembly*

Upcoming Events



Whole School Open Morning

Saturday 10th October

9.30am - 12.00pm

CCCS

Come and discover the magic of Christ Church Cathedral School for yourself at our Open Morning on Saturday 10th October.

Prepare to be spellbound as you enjoy a tour of our grounds, meet our staff and chat with our pupils.

Register your place today:

<https://www.cccs.org.uk/private-prep-school-admissions-oxford/open-mornings>



Future Schools Forum

Wednesday 23rd September

7.00 - 8.00pm

Walton Hall

Parents are invited to attend our Future Schools' Forum, hosted by the Headmaster and Deputy Head Academic, which will provide helpful advice about applying for Senior Schools.

All Prep School parents are welcome to attend, although this is primarily focused on the parents of Form 5 pupils.



Nursery Stay & Play

Wednesday 14th October

9.30 - 11.30am

CCCS Nursery

**Curious minds lead to big adventures!
And that's what makes our Nursery so special!**

Our Stay & Play sessions offer a nurturing environment where children can make new friends, learn through play and follow their curiosity.

Come and discover for yourself why our families trust us to start their little one's school adventure!

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

School Clubs Timetable

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Mandarin Rec - Form 2 3.30 - 4.15pm Form 1 Classroom	Multi Sports Rec - Form 4 4.15 - 5.00pm School Field	Chess Forms 1 & 2 3.30 - 4.30pm Form 1 Classroom	Rugby Forms 3 - 8 4.15 - 5.00pm School Field	Greek Club Forms 7 & 8 4.15 - 5.00pm
Football Forms 3 - 8 4.15 - 5.00pm School Field	Chess Forms 3 - 7 4.15 - 5.15pm Darwin		Mandarin Forms 3 - 8 4.15 - 5.00pm Form 4 Classroom	
Real Tennis Forms 5 - 8 4.15 - 5.45pm Real Tennis	Squash Forms 5 - 8 4.15 - 5.00pm Squash Court		Little Musketeers Rec - Form 2 3.30 - 4.15pm Squash Court	
			Little Musketeers Forms 3 - 8 4.15 - 5.00pm Squash Court	

If your child would like to join one of our after school clubs, please email the School Office at schoolsecretary@cccs.org.uk with the below information:

- Your child's name
- Your child's Form
- The name of the club
- Day of the club



Urgent Appeal from the CCCS Charity Committee

I received the very sad news this afternoon from RedEarth Village Schools, the charity I have supported in Uganda for the last 16 years, that a fire has destroyed a boys' dormitory in one of the village schools they support in rural Uganda.

They have launched an urgent appeal which I have shared below.

This morning a fire has completely gutted the boys' dormitory home to 100 boys at Bishop Willigers School.

Thankfully, the boys are safe, but the dormitory and everything that the boys brought to school has been destroyed. The school now urgently needs to rebuild quickly as many of the boys are starting their National Exams in 4 weeks time.

We are aiming to raise £8,000 (\$10,600 US) towards the immediate needs of the boys - mattresses, uniform, shoes etc - Although we don't know the final figure until a structural engineer has inspected the building - this sum should be enough to also reroof.

Bishop Willigers (1,000 village children) is a school that REVS has supported for many years. We have built it from the ground up - it is now teaching 6 years to A Levels. We are determined to stand alongside the school now when it needs us most.

If you can help us rebuild, **any donation will make a real difference.** And if you can share our appeal with others, that would be hugely appreciated too.

I will be meeting with the CCCS charity committee next week to discuss ways we could do some fundraising in school but in the meantime if anyone out there is able to help it would be so hugely appreciated.

The link to follow to donate to the appeal -

[Fire has gutted the Boys' Dormitory - 17th September 2026 - The boys have lost everything and we need to help them rebuild](#)

Many thanks

Charlotte Simpkins (and the CCCS charity committee)



Nursery get into the swing of things!



This week the children have begun to settle into the rhythm of the Nursery Day. We have been working on independence skills, finding activities to work with in the classroom, taking turn and remembering to say please and thank you. We have a very independent group who are very able to get themselves ready to go outside and change back into inside shoes when they return. We have noticed that they can pour themselves a drink at snack time and lunch. Mastering these skills early in the year enables lots of time to develop their play skills, choosing activities following their interests around the Nursery and working on independent projects with their teachers.

This week we welcomed Miss Hannah to lead our first Tatty Bumpkin yoga class of the year. This was held in the library, and Mr Murray popped his head around the door to see the children dancing to the 'bendy, giggly and clever' song. It was such a lovely space for our lesson. Mr Pear had his first Nursery PE session of the term and Madame Williams introduced the children to colours in French sharing a 'Petit Poisson Blanc' story for the first time.

Our family board has some great photographs of our children with their families. The board is where we have found children sharing who is in their family with their friends. If any Nursery families would like to share a photo of their family, please send it to Miss Helen and she can add it to the board.

HB



FREE FLU VACCINATION

for children aged 2 and 3 years

Help protect your child, your family and your community this winter.

Why have the flu vaccine?

- ✓ Helps protect your child from flu and its complications
- ✓ Reduces the chance of flu spreading to family and friends
- ✓ Helps protect babies, grandparents and people who are more vulnerable

Pupils in Reception to Form 8 will receive the vaccine in school. Details to follow.

Choose how to get your child vaccinated

OPTION 1

Complete your consent form and book into an Oxfordshire School Aged Immunisation Service Clinic by following the link or QR Code below

<https://oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/imms/parents/>



(Use school code OX999991 when prompted)

OPTION 2

Contact your GP practice

If you would prefer your child to have their flu vaccination at your GP practice, please contact them directly to arrange an appointment.

Most children receive the flu vaccine as a quick nasal spray. If this is not possible other options may be available.

See our website for more information about the vaccine and how to contact us

<https://oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/imms/>

Protecting futures, one vaccine at a time.

Superheroes, Ready!

Form 1 Everyday Heroes

This week, the children learnt about 'Everyday Heroes' who keep us safe and help our community. We had great fun dressing up and role-playing emergency scenarios requiring urgent assistance from our Form 1 Heroes.

TR



Form 1 Superhero Mathematicians

Our Form 1 children drew from their combined superpowers and completed a range of impressive mathematical learning missions this week. If this is just the start of the term, I think it's clear that this class are going to 'blow Mr Robards' socks off' as the year goes on! Well done to our Form 1 Maths Superstars!

TR



Languages Day at CCCS

Thursday 24th September



Pre-Prep will be celebrating cultural differences and Languages Day 2026 on **Thursday 24 September** with activities throughout the day – some of which will be led by our very own Language Ambassadors in the Prep school.

We encourage all children in Pre-Prep to come to school dressed in a national costume or with an accessory linked to another language and country (nothing too precious, please!).

Merci beaucoup and Happy Languages Day!
SL & AW

Form 7 Team Building



On Monday, all of the boys in Form 7 went bowling and competed in laser tag as part of their form bonding trip. The boys enjoyed two games of laser tag and two games of bowling. Everyone had an excellent time, and the trip provided a valuable opportunity for the boys to spend some quality time together after the long summer break.

FB





Summer 2027 School Trip to

Hadrian's Wall

19th - 23rd July 2027

**Residential Trip open to boys in
Forms 5-8**

The trip will include:

- Walking beside Hadrian's Wall among the breath-taking scenery
- Outdoor Adventures: canoeing, raft building, climbing, abseiling and more
- Visit to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park
- Visit to the Beamish Open Air Museum
- Fun evening activities

To sign up for this trip please complete and sign the form sent from the School Office by **Monday 21st September**.

Music News

It's been wonderful to welcome three new members of staff to the Music department this term, bringing a wealth of expertise, experience and enthusiasm to the team. I hope you enjoy getting to know a little more about them through their introductions below.

SB

Felix Blake

Assistant Director of Music and Chorister Tutor

I have recently moved to Oxford and Christ Church Cathedral School from a strangely familiar place - Cambridge! I had called Cambridge home since arriving there for university to read Music. During my Master's degree, I joined King's College Choir. This was my first exposure to chorister and boarding life, and I thoroughly enjoyed singing daily services in the Chapel, recording the Christmas TV and radio broadcasts, and touring across continental Europe, North America and Australia. While singing at King's, I began to work at King's College School as a House Tutor and Teaching Assistant in Pre-Prep, so am now very familiar with working with choristers, boarding and early years teaching. I also hold ABRSM Diplomas in piano and flute, and have even spent some time supervising undergraduates in the Music Tripos at the University of Cambridge.

Since coming to CCCS, I have been blown away by the amount of musical enthusiasm, talent and creativity across the entire the school. I cannot wait to get stuck in with more classes, rehearsals and all the performances ahead on our wonderfully busy calendar!



Maria Januszevska-Carr

Upper Strings

Maria Januszevska-Carr is a violinist and passionate music educator. She studied at the Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music in Poland and Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, where she completed an MA and Postgraduate Advanced Diploma in Music Performance (Violin). She has performed with orchestras across Poland, the United Kingdom, Italy and China, and has been a dedicated violin teacher at Whitgift School in London. Maria is delighted to be joining Christ Church Cathedral School, where she looks forward to inspiring younger musicians, coaching the string quartet and sharing in her students' musical journeys.



Felicity Newby-Smith

Lower Strings

Felicity Newby-Smith studied Cello at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and then subsequently at the Royal Academy of Music (RAM), finishing her Masters there in 2018. While at the RAM, alongside fostering her love of the cello, she discovered the creative and social possibilities of community music projects through her work with the Open Academy. She went on to become an Open Academy Fellow in 2018/19. In the same year, as a member of the Bloomsbury Quartet (a string quartet she founded at the RAM with three wonderful friends), she was a Wigmore Hall Learning/Open Academy Fellow. She played professionally with the Bloomsbury Quartet for 7 years until the group disbanded in 2024. Now, in her refreshingly varied career, Felicity enjoys teaching, performing and organising community music projects.



'I'm so excited to meet all my new students at Christ Church. I've never taught at a school like CCCS; as a Peri it's unusual to already feel so 'part of the family' and can't wait to get to know the boys I'll be working with. My favourite part of cello teaching is getting to know a new students' personality and how we might work together to learn lots and have fun on the instrument! I hope I can fill the big shoes left by Mr. Wilson!'

KNIGHT UPRIGHT SEEKS NEW HOME

ONE OF OUR OLD BOYS IS LOOKING TO DONATE THIS
KNIGHT UPRIGHT PIANO.

IN GOOD CONDITION, WITH A FEW MINOR MARKS.

COLLECTION FROM BOTLEY.

PLEASE EMAIL THE SCHOOL OFFICE IF YOU ARE
INTERESTED.



School Photobook



Form 4 helped Sebastian celebrate his birthday earlier this week, with a scrumptious cake made by our very own catering team!



Mayyvan also celebrated his birthday this week!

Form 1
Heroes



School Photobook

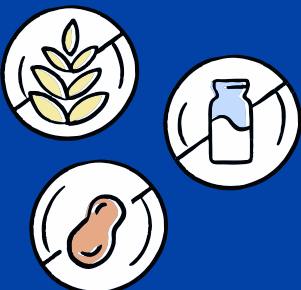
Form 7
Bonding Trip



Nursery in
Full Swing!



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.