



Christ Church Cathedral School News

— 25th September 2026 —



Dear Parents,

Thursday 24th September

At the moment I am writing to you from the back of a Delta Airlines Airbus 330. Onboard wifi allows me to communicate with the outside world. Below us is an unimaginably vast vista of land – Canada stretches before us as far as the eye can see but there are no roads or houses or signs of human habitation. The world is truly remarkable. I am accompanying the Cathedral Choir on its 500th anniversary tour to the US. I am particularly enjoying the fact that the 500th anniversary of the foundation of the Choir (and hence the School) coincides with the 250th anniversary of the country we are visiting, namely the United States of America – that makes us twice as ancient as our host nation! Two of the choristers have already joined the Delta Airways flight crew by walking through the cabin collecting rubbish – or garbage as it seems to be called here. Talking of differences between English and US English, I was again reminded of one of my favourite and potentially life-changing variants – as we taxied down the tarmac at Heathrow, the American captain of our plane announced, with absolutely no hint of panic: “Ladies and Gentlemen, we will be taking off momentarily!” Fortunately, the take-off which we shortly thereafter undertook has so far led to a flight which has lasted for several hours and we are now closing in on our first destination, Minneapolis, where we are to give our first concert. Everyone seems to be having an enjoyable time though I confess that the boys are watching different films from the one I chose!

Last Saturday we witnessed an extraordinary event. Gathered in the Cathedral was a huge choir of former choristers who had been invited to sing with the Cathedral choir. There were about 50 singers, a few who had left the school three months ago and one who had left the school 75 years ago!

One of the pieces we sang was the Jubilate by the former Cathedral Chorister and Christ Church undergraduate, William Walton. Very touchingly, some of the singers who were there on Saturday had sung as trebles in the piece's first performance at Christ Church with the great composer himself sitting in the choir stalls. The piece is typical Walton, full of characteristic energy and power with an opening section which has an element of discordant pointedness. But as the piece nears the end, in one of my very favourite moments of choral music, it melts into one of the most ravishing and warm-hearted passages accompanying the words "His truth endureth from generation to generation", a phrase which always seems to me to be moving but which, last Saturday, given the generations of former choristers singing in the building where they had had so many formative experiences, was particularly touching.

Friday 25th September

We arrived last night in Minneapolis, one of the largest cities in the Mid West, that part of America where the distances are vast and which produces much of the agricultural produce of both the country and many parts of the world. It is an immensely gentle and friendly place – Minnesotans pride themselves on this and indeed when we arrived at the airport we were guided by a volunteer from before we arrived at Immigration right through to where we met the bus. It is ironic then that such a gentle city, which I have known for a long time as it is the home of a great friend of mine, should be inevitably associated in so many people's minds with three acts of violence, the killing of George Floyd which led to the Black Lives Matter movement and the two recent ICE killings. So far we could not feel more welcome or safe here.

But of course the most delightful people of all have been the choristers, who have been wonderful travelling companions. Indeed one member of the plane crew said that she had never met a politer group of boys. Our first concert is tonight in St Mark's Episcopal Cathedral where we are also having supper. I am certain that the boys will charm further members of the local population, this time both socially and musically.

Mrs Fairhurst is providing me with a daily update on what is happening in the school. On my first day away there was an action-packed day and I cannot wait to read through the newsletter tonight to see what else has occurred. I wanted to thank Mrs Fairhurst and all the staff for so kindly covering for me in my absence.

As I write, day is slowly dawning across the man-made skyline of Minneapolis. I know that most people at school have already had lunch – things really do move fast in Oxford. Have a good weekend.

Richard Murray

Headmaster

School Calendar

Monday 28th September - Sunday 4th October

24TH SEPT - 6TH OCT CATHEDRAL CHOIR USA TOUR
27TH SEPTEMBER: Live broadcast from Washington National Cathedral - [Watch here](#)

MONDAY 28 SEPTEMBER
ALL DAY: Bikeability

TUESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER
ALL DAY: Bikeability
9.15am - 2.45pm: Pre-Prep Trip to Cogges Manor Farm
2.30 - 4.00pm: U8 & U9 Rugby v MCS – Home

WEDNESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER
2.30 - 4.00pm: U10 & U11 Rugby v MCS – Home

THURSDAY 1 OCTOBER
9.05am - 3.00pm: Forms 3 & 4 Trip to Hill End
7.00pm - PA Informal Parent Drinks at The Lamb and Flag, Oxford

FRIDAY 2 OCTOBER
8.45 - 9.15am : Cathedral Assembly, Speaker, The Sub Dean
9.15 - 9.45: Parents are welcome to join us for coffee and refreshments in the Priory Room following the assembly

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	

Upcoming Events



Nursery & Pre-Prep Cathedral Assembly

Friday 9th October

8.45am

Christ Church Cathedral

We are looking forward to the Nursery and Pre-Prep children joining us for Cathedral Assembly. As always, all parents are welcome to attend the service and join us in the Priory Room for refreshments afterwards.



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 [here](#).



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 families trust us to start their little one's school adventure!

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

CCCS Parents' Association

You're Invited...



We are pleased to announce we will be having an informal parents' drinks evening next week. This is a great opportunity to meet new people from our wonderful varied parent body!

Thursday 1st Oct. from 7pm at the Lamb and Flag
12 St Giles, Oxford OX1 3JS

<https://www.facebook.com/p/Lamb-Flag-Oxford-100085928253700/>

Thank you for your generosity

Thanks to your kind generosity at the recent second-hand uniform sale, we have both a French magazine subscription and some long-needed Classics posters on their way to brighten up our school.

We hope to see as many of you as possible next Thursday!
The PA

Nursery wander to Woodland School



This week the Nursery children enjoyed their first walk and Woodland School visit. They walked beautifully down St Aldates and across the road with all their teachers and the Gappers. On our walk we passed the gardens full of vibrant end of summer colours. The children were interested in the beds that had been created and planted with wildflower seeds outside the Meadow Building. These observations initiated conversations about planting seeds over winter so they could be frosted before they germinate.

In the woodland we found our first autumn leaves, conkers that have been eaten by animals, a moth resting under loose bark and for some we found our first worm. We also put some more small sticks and leaves into one of the bug hotels. It is going to be fascinating to hear the children chat about these adventures on Christ Church Meadow and the woods on Merton Field as their knowledge grows.

Helen Backus



The Nursery gang needed to sit down after a busy time at Woodland School!

Nursery to Reception Transition

The Nursery children enjoyed a story with Mr Berry on Thursday afternoon. We are very fortunate as an Early Years team to work with all of the children from our new starters in Nursery to the oldest children in the Reception class. We get to know the children very well and the children in return get to know us. 'Mr Berry tells great stories. He's so funny' was a review from one of these listeners. These little moments across the year make the transition from Nursery to Reception such a seamless one for the children.

Helen Backus



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



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

<https://www.oxfordhealthimms.co.uk/Forms/Flu>

(Use school code OX999991 when prompted)

Please note, the URL above is different to the one provided in last week's newsletter. Oxford Health has kindly updated the links for us, so please be sure to use the URL above.

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.

Star Bakers in Reception

We had a super time this week during our first cooking session making Glacé Cherry Shortbread Biscuits. The reason for this focus was to link to our colour of the week which was red and we looked at the process of making glacé cherries and the different shades of this colour.



The children were so excited to get involved and enjoyed measuring out the ingredients, mixing everything together and rolling the dough. They were really interested in watching the ingredients change as we mixed them together and enjoyed talking about what we were doing. The children were all given a glacé cherry to cut safely into different pieces, and before being allowed to eat it they had to tell me how many pieces they had. This proved a very effective way of cementing one-to-one correspondence!

This was a great opportunity for the children to develop their fine motor skills, hand eye co-ordination, communication and language and early mathematical skills, while also encouraging independence, turn-taking and working together.

The children were very proud of their biscuits and were especially excited when it was time to taste them! We made plenty and shared them with the whole of Pre-Prep during our drama session.

Miles Berry



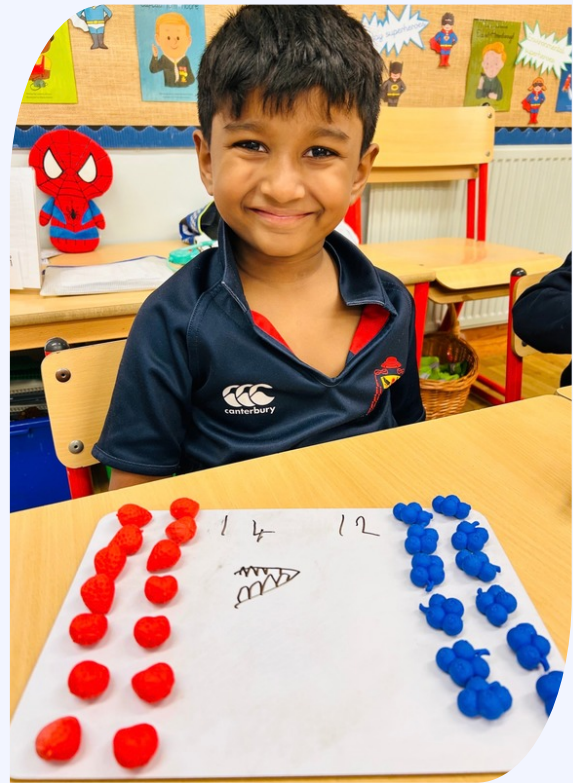
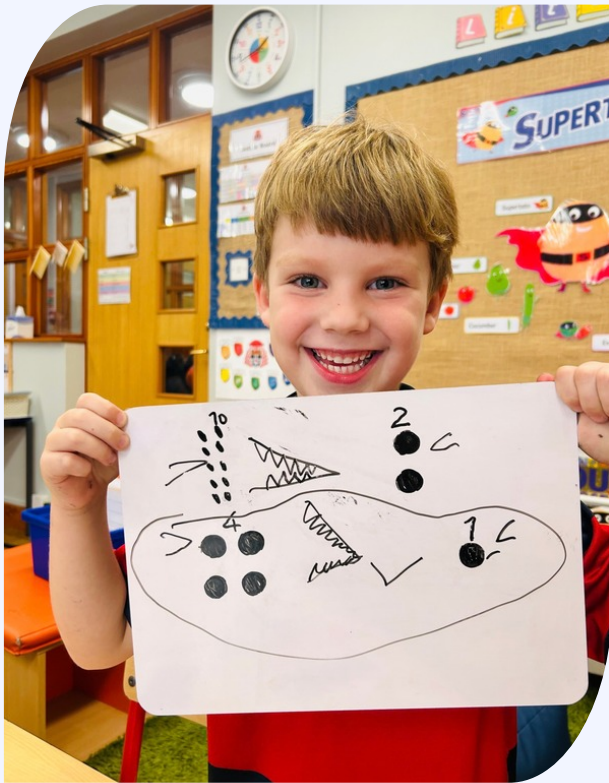
Why not have a go at making these at home?

[Shortbread recipe - BBC Food](#)

A snappy way to learn Maths

Our budding Form 1 mathematicians had a great time this week learning all about comparing numbers, using the 'greater than, less than, and equal to' symbols. Adding sharp teeth to a crocodile's mouth is an impactful way for the learning to land. Just watch out for any marauding crocs over the weekend.

Tom Robards



Magic Pebble Poems

This week, Form 2 have been letting their imaginations run wild as they wrote their very own Magic Pebble poems!

Inspired by Roger McGough's *The Magic Pebble*, the children thought carefully about what their own magical pebble might look like, where they might find it and, most importantly, what amazing things it could do.

The results were wonderfully imaginative! We had pebbles that could create jelly floods, turn into pets, give their owners superpowers, save the climate and even transport children to school. One pebble was so enormous that it needed 2,068 lorries to carry it! The children also had great fun adding humour to their poems. We particularly enjoyed the idea of a pebble that could turn bullies into frogs, and another that caused a huge jelly flood across the school!

It has been fantastic to see the children experimenting with rhyming words, repetition, description and imaginative ideas to create poems that are completely their own. They should be very proud of the finished pieces, although we're not sure we'd want some of those magical pebbles anywhere near our classroom!

Molly Hopkinson-Woolley



You can read the poems [here](#).

Woodland School

Pre-Prep had a fantastic time at Woodland School this week, playing in the glorious September sunshine. We organised some fun team games such as '1,2,3 Where Are You?' and 'Hunters and Survivors'. The children showed impressive leadership and teamwork skills, devising successful strategies that led them to victory. Those very same teamwork skills also came in handy when we worked together to build an epic den for the children to play in (pictured).

Tom Robards



Languages Day 2026!



We usually use the European Day of Languages (26/09) as an opportunity to remind our pupils of how lucky they are to learn languages at school. On Thursday, we started our day with an assembly led by our Form 8 Language Ambassadors Max C., Adam C., Theo H. and Ray K. They led an inspiring assembly celebrating language learning, diversity and the opportunities that come along when you are able to speak another language.

Later on, Form 7 Language Ambassadors, Richard H, Hugo R, George R, Patrick S, Alex T and Ted Y led a game of "1-2-3 soleil" and "les pêcheurs et les poissons", bringing the whole of Prep-Prep into running, laughing and speaking French.

International snacks and an international lunch will follow soon, as we want to celebrate language learning and cultural diversity for as long as we can!



Here is next week's challenge - Can you learn a language for 7 days in a row? The boys and their families are invited to join our Duolingo Challenge until Sunday 8pm. Beware, the boys can be extremely competitive and fierce language learners!

Best wishes,
Mme Loyer and Mme Williams

Duolingo Challenge # CCCS 2026

Which language are you
learning?

Join one of our 2 classrooms!
www.duolingo.com/classroom/rprtgv
www.duolingo.com/classroom/zevuga

Class Codes: rprtgv OR zevuga

Monday 28th September- Sunday 4th October 8pm!
Bonne chance!



Form 5 visit the Youlbury Activity Centre



Form 5 enjoyed the thrill of the zip wire, trying to land on their feet with a smile, but mostly landing on their bottom, with a laugh!

Afterwards, backwood cooking was a great success. The boys loved baking over a campfire - bread, pizza, melted chocolate and banana were their snacks and I am convinced they will want to do this again, at home, with their parents.

After our picnic, they enjoyed playing 'capture the flag' in the forest and spent the entire journey back debriefing about who did what, and when.

It is heart-warming to see the boys feel so happy, keen to play together and ready to help each other out from the start of the year.

Sophie Loyer



Form 8 Go Ape!



On Monday 21st, Form 8 had a day out to Go Ape for team bonding and team activities with Mr. Harrison and Mr. Gordon. We headed out to the minibus as the day began and started our trip. The journey did not seem long, though it was roughly just over one hour. As the day started, we put our things away and started the day with a team game. This was based on a mat in an open field where we had to roll a dice and choose from different types of challenges: brain puzzles, physical challenges, performance challenges, and team challenges. This was very enjoyable and ended with a paper airplane competition. This took us all the way to lunch, where we energised ourselves for the inhumane activities to come at the heights of Go Ape.

We got strapped up and headed to the area before the course, and learnt the rules, then did a practice zipline. Then the real thing happened, catching all of us off-guard. Endless screams of panic were thrown around as we started the course of wobbling planks, tightropes, and especially, ziplines.

I think it would be fair to say that our confidence levels certainly skyrocketed compared to everyone's at the start, but a few were very confident and lapped most people. One of the only things that gave some of us comfort was the fact that Mr. Harrison had come here plenty times before, so it felt mostly safe. Overall, it was a very enjoyable day and thank you Mr. Harrison for organising it and Mr. Gordon for helping.

By Max C

CCCS Sports - Rugby Ruck

U12/U13 Bruern Abbey v CCCS

The Form 7-8 boys travelled to Bruern Abbey on Wednesday for their first rugby fixture of the season. Due to pitches being hard under foot and the fact that a number of our team were busy in rehearsals, the decision had been taken to play a game of touch rugby. We came up against a very strong Bruern team, who were able to showcase some excellent passing along the line. However, our boys worked really hard to stem the tide and defend admirably. We also posed a threat going forward with some excellent breaks from Ted, Theo and Adam. After two tough halves, the game finished with CCCS a few tries behind. However, special mentions must go to Ted and Ray for both scoring excellent tries as well as Hugo who was everywhere in defence. A lot of learning took place in this match, and is one we'll reflect on and improve from over the coming weeks during games sessions.

Mr Pear

On Wednesday, the Form 7 and 8 boys travelled to Bruern Abbey to play their first touch rugby game of the year. With some solid training to start the season, the boys were confident and started well with their first win coming 4-2 with tries from Harry, Chris and George. In the second game, Gustav with 2 tries and Jaden with a hat trick secured 2 wins from 2. With a lot left to learn this term there were some great positive signs which we will continue to build on.

Mr Rowland

U10/U11 CCCS v Cokethorpe

On Wednesday, the Form 5 boys had a touch rugby match against Cokethorpe. With a strong start to the match, the boys put on an early lead through their teamwork and efficient passing to catch the defence of Cokethorpe off-guard. As this continued it allowed CCS to come out on top against a strong opposition. A special mention goes to Lucas who worked extremely hard in defence limiting the oppositions' ability to score a try! It was a great start to the rugby season and will become stronger as the term goes on!

Mr Gordon

On Wednesday, the Under 11's took on Cokethorpe in a thrilling game of touch on Merton field. The opposition came out firing scoring 7 tries within the first 10 minute quarter, however the game was far from over. The boys regrouped and didn't drop their heads, had a team chat and came out in the second quarter and scored 3 tries back to back to back! They went on with this attitude until the end of the game, and despite not winning they definitely showed what they are capable of and will no doubt win plenty of games this season. Special mention to Andy T who led from the front with some hard runs, and also Sooyeon with his very fast feet who left defenders in his tracks.

Mr Morgan

Music News

Cathedral Choir Tour USA

We are excited to share news that the Cathedral Choir will be singing evensong at Washington National Cathedral on Sunday 27th September, as part of their USA tour. Parents who would be interested to watch the livestream should find it available at 9pm UK time via the link below:

[Watch here - Washington National Cathedral](#)

Sophie Biddell



Worcester Choir welcomes FundacionAzteca

On Thursday we celebrated International Languages Day, so surely it can't be a coincidence that on the very same day, our Worcester Choristers were invited to a singing workshop and informal concert with [FundacionAzteca](#) from Mexico, where they joined forces for a beautiful performance of *Somewhere over the rainbow*.

Thank you to Worcester Choirmaster Mr Lee, for organising such a wonderful occasion.



>> Click [here](#) to watch



>> Click [here](#) to watch

Enrichment

Life Skills

Last week, the Life Skills enrichment group got to grips with personal hygiene, including sampling some essential products and a shaving lesson with Mr Robson in the boarding house, promoting good routines for fragrant teenage boys! We hope it pays off!!

Emma Price



Life Skills Con't

This week, the Life Skills team were in the boarding house, learning how to iron and fold shirts and sew on buttons. Matron Tina ensured that all was Shipshape and Bristol Fashion ready for the choristers when they return from their tour!

Emma Price



School Photobook



Star Bakers in
Reception



Form 8 Go
Ape!



School Photobook

Form 5 Class
Photo!



Nursery at
Woodland
School



School Photobook



Form 5 visit
Youlbury
Activity Centre



Remember to check
out the [Photo Album](#)
for more photos!



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.