Christ Church Cathedral School News

13th November 2026



Dear Parents,

Last time that the Pre-Prep and Nursery came to the Cathedral, I told them about my son's pet snake. They seemed to be intrigued by this zoological reference, and so I talked to them about a pet that my father owned when we were young. I told them that the pet lived in a cage. One boy suggested that it might be a crab while another a dragon bird which sounded very exciting. As it happended, it did not take long before a girl guessed that it had been a parrot. I told many stories about the parrot, called Tommy, which were all true. He used to imitate my mother's voice beckoning our dog Robbie to come. Robbie would then run bounding up looking for one of us. Tommy was able to imitate the news pips on the radio which would get many people checking the time and he learnt to imitate the phone which used to annoy my father, particularly as he came up from the garden to answer the call. But he could also react to situations and once, when my mother's vegetables started to boil over, he shouted loudly, "Look out! Look out!" The story which people seemed to enjoy most though was when Tommy flew straight into a plate glass window. He landed in a flurry of feathers at the bottom of the window, trembling slightly. As my father rushed up to see how he was, he slowly turned his head toward my worried parent and said quietly: "Oh Dear!" He lived to see another 40 years.

The point that I drew from these stories was that Tommy's behaviour illustrates two important types of education. Firstly the genuine importance of imitation – so much of value is learnt from imitating others, for instance, drawing or playing a musical instrument and we should not underestimate this. But, as Tommy demonstrated in the last two stories, superior to imitation is the ability to think and teachers convey their most valuable lesson when they teach people how to do this. The ability to think leads to so much, including the ability to distinguish between right and wrong. Pupils cannot

grow up or become proper adults if they cannot think. As you all know, I am always accompanied on my early morning welcomes by a crack force of Form 8 assistants. Today a parent turned to me as he emerged from dropping his child off. “I want to stay around for a bit longer to hear more of the conversation between those boys.” Indeed one of the reasons I ask for help when on Brewer Street is because I gain so much from the interesting conversations which the boys enjoy together. This is a school where pupils really are curious and where they really do think.

Friday is also the day we have Pre-Prep assembly where boys and girls are awarded certificates. I noticed particularly two things as the awards were made today. Firstly, I saw the excitement upon the faces of those receiving the certificates; one girl, when her name was announced, covered her face with her hands as if she was about to mount the stage at the Oscars. Secondly, I also noticed how much the pupils rejoiced in the triumphs of others. When another pupil received one of the certificates, his neighbour hugged him with pleasure – a very touching moment I thought.

I was particularly thrilled that we held a Rugby tournament last Wednesday. This is something we are increasingly undertaking now that the Pavilion is up and running and is such a feather in our cap. I am delighted that so many boys clearly love their sports and I would very strongly encourage you to come to support the School on the Field. Tea is always available too alongside some thrilling sporting action and a world-class view. What more could one wish for?

Next to the field is of course the Woodland School. As ever the younger pupils had been over for their weekly visit and were keen to tell me about it. In amongst all the various constructions which had been completed, I particularly enjoyed hearing one boy say. “I built the Titanic - but it didn’t work!” I’m impressed to see that, at CCCS, art does indeed mirror life!

Richard Murray
Headmaster

School Calendar

Monday 16th - Sunday 22nd November

Monday - Thursday: Forms 3 - 8 Exam Week
All Week: Forms 3 & 4 Play Rehearsal Week

MONDAY 16 NOVEMBER
Odd Socks Day - Postponed

TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER
2.30 - 4.00pm: U8 & U9 Rugby v Oratory Prep (Home) - Cancelled

WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER
9.30 - 11.00am: Nursery Stay & Play
2.30 - 4.00pm: U10 & U11 Rugby v Manor Prep (Home)
2.30 - 4.30pm: U12/13 Rugby v St Hugh's (Away)

THURSDAY 19 NOVEMBER
9.15 - 10.45am: Forms 1 & 2 Trip: Mini French Trip to Le Café

FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER
8.45 - 9.15am: Cathedral Assembly, Speaker, Chris Townsend, Headmaster, Cheltenham College
9.15 - 9.45: Parents are welcome to join us for coffee and refreshments in the Priory Room following the assembly.
9.05 - 10.00am: Nursery Christmas Rehearsal
12.00 - 2.45pm: Form 1 Trip: Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

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	**Table Tennis** Forms 4 - 8 4.15 - 5.00pm	**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	
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Upcoming Events

Nursery Stay & Play

Wednesday 18th November

9.30 - 11.00am

Come along to our Nursery Stay & Play on Wednesday 18th November.

We're welcoming children aged 1-4 to join us for a fun-filled morning of play, learning and building new friendships.

📅 Wednesday 18th November
🕛 Time: 9.30-11.00am
📍 Location: CCCS, 3 Brewer Street, Oxford, OX1 1QW

Click here to sign up today - we would love to see you!



Forms 3 & 4 Present

Snow White and the Seven Jockeys

Tuesday 24th November, 2.30pm
Wednesday 25th November, 5.00pm

Get ready to be spellbound by this classic tale...with perhaps a few twists!

Who are the Seven Jockeys? Will the Evil Queen have an evil plan? Will the Huntsman save the day? And will Snow White live happily ever after? So many questions, but we're not giving anything away...You will have to come and watch the show to find out!





Get ready to sparkle at the

CCCS Light Show

Friday 11th December

4.30 - 6.00pm

There will be a tombola, Christmas Tree Parade, games, mulled wine, hot chocolate, food and so much more!

Christ Church Christmas Tree Festival 2026



After the success of last year's Christmas Tree Festival, Christ Church will once again be decorating the Cathedral and surrounding areas, and we will have our same tree in the Chapter House. As soon as the booking site goes live, we'll share it with you.

New for 2026, you also have the opportunity to participate in decorating one of the trees yourself. The Family Tree Decorating event is on Saturday 12th December, and you can find out more and book a space here:
Family Christmas Tree Decoration Craft Workshop | Christ Church, University of Oxford

Autumnal Creature Crafting in Nursery



The Nursery children made models of creatures with play dough and natural autumnal materials. Their creations were well thought out with inspiration from the seasonal spiders and other creepy crawlies we have found at the foot of trees, and amongst the leaf litter on Christ Church Meadow. I like the way that some of the children chose to use play dough for legs, whilst others chose the sticks we collected from the horse chestnut tree in the Pre-Prep playground.

Helen Backus





Watching the world go by on a river walk



Our weekly Nursery exploration took us down New Walk to the river. Our route took us through puddles, squelchy leaves and through willow bows into imagined houses and castles, before reaching the river. Our favourite mallard hen was not at her post on the wall with her mate. We found her on the edge of the Meadow in a water trough, looking for edible delights in its depths. She was still there on our return. Her mate was standing guard, on duty for the visitors on our return to school, wondering why he wasn't being fed, as he stood next to the 'Please do not feed the ducks' sign.

Helen Backus

Thank you, Gappers!

Our Gappers are very much loved by the Nursery children, whether it is joining us on our Thursday walk over to the Meadow, helping with our weekly PE class with Mr Pear, or when they join us over our lunchtimes in the Nursery. Our current Gappers are upholders of healthy eating, encouraging of eating what they are given and trying the myriad of vegetables prepared in the kitchen. Their rotation in and out of the Nursery is seamless, as they take over building sandcastles, sweeping leaves, assisting with assault course building or arbitrating the sharing of the collection of water from tyres.



Thank you Mr Charlie, Mr Toby and Mr Tom for your continued help in the Nursery this term. You are a very special part of the children's and the teachers' days.

Helen Backus

Reliving Fireworks Night



Inspired by our tremendous CCCS Fireworks Display at the weekend, Form 1 have been getting creative and making magnificent artwork and a grand cityscape illuminated with all manner of bright and colourful fireworks and lights. Huge thanks to Ms Merriman, Mrs Elias, and Miss Antonella for helping the children to showcase their artistic endeavours in such a striking way. What talented children and staff we have in our Pre-Prep!

Tom Robards

Pre-Prep's Mystery Visitors!



Our Pre-Prep children have been enjoying some very special surprises as part of our Mystery Visitors initiative! Parents have been popping into school unexpectedly to share a story, talk about their jobs, introduce us to new interests and teach us something a little different. We have had some fantastic visits, each offering the children a wonderful opportunity to learn something new.

One of our visitors shared the story of Julia Donaldson's *Freddie and the Fairy*, linking this to their work supporting children and families with children who are hard of hearing. The children learnt lots about how we can communicate thoughtfully and make conversations more accessible, including remembering not to cover our mouths, turn away or mumble when speaking to someone who is hard of hearing. We even had a go at learning the British Sign Language (BSL) alphabet and were given our own handouts to practise spelling out our names using sign language!

Another mystery visitor took us on a journey back in time to discover Mansa Musa, the 14th-century Emperor of the Mali Empire, often described as the richest person to have ever lived. We discovered that his wealth would be worth an incredible estimated $400 billion today! The children also learnt about his contribution to education, including the development of Timbuktu as an important centre of learning, with schools, libraries and mosques. This led to a fascinating discussion about where gold comes from, how it is mined and the impact mining can have on both the people involved and our planet. We thought about the importance of looking after our Earth and the little things we can all do to help.

Our most recent visitor brought some music into Pre-Prep! As a member of the fantastic brass band The Brass Funkeys, who have kindly visited our school on several occasions, they treated us to a very special musical performance. The children were delighted to hear the trombone being played, with a selection of familiar pop songs alongside some lively New Orleans-style tunes. It was a wonderful opportunity to experience live music up close and learn a little more about the brass instruments.

A huge thank you to all of our wonderful parent volunteers who have given up their time to visit us and share their knowledge, experiences and talents. These visits broaden the children's understanding of the world and giving them experiences they might not otherwise have had. We are so grateful for your support and can't wait to see who our next mystery visitors will be!



Strumming up fun in Ukelele Club

I am absolutely delighted that our new Ukelele Club has started so positively and that the children are enjoying playing together so much. We have purchased colourful ukeleles for our newly formed ensemble, made up of our Pre-Prep children and several honorary recruits in the form of our Form 7/8 guitar players. It is tremendous to see the children progressing so quickly and to observe their glee as they are starting to be able to play a good number of songs. Our wonderful Ukelele and Guitar Teacher, Trev Williams, has really grabbed the children's attention and generated collective enthusiasm by writing and arranging a medley of Christmas carols for the children to learn and play together. The inaugural ensemble performance will be at our Informal Christmas Concert on 2nd December, so please do come along!

Tom Robards

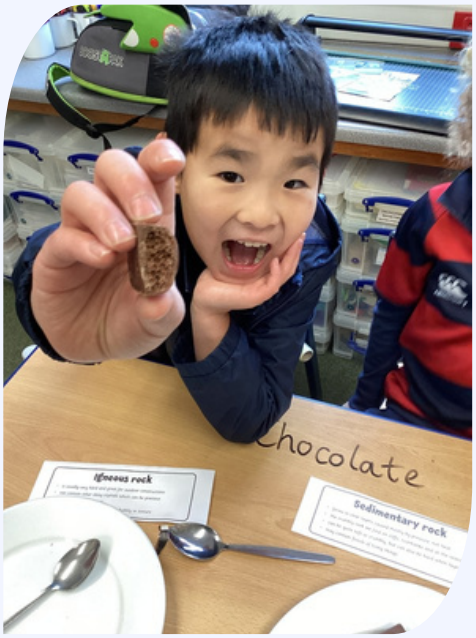


Chocolate Rocks!



Form 3 have been learning about the three main types of rock that are found on Earth. We used ‘bubbly’ chocolate to represent igneous rocks that are formed from magma or lava. We used wafer chocolate to represent sedimentary rocks that are formed in layers and are made up of tiny broken pieces of rocks, crystals or minerals. Finally, we had fun breaking up chocolate and adding pressure and heat to represent metamorphic rock.

Stephanie Green





Rugby Round-up

U11 Contact and Touch Tournament

On Wednesday, we were delighted to host our first ever U11 Contact and Touch Rugby Tournament, welcoming teams from St Hugh's, The Oratory, Manor, Ashfold and Chandlings for a fantastic afternoon of rugby. Our boys rose to the occasion, showing excellent progress throughout the tournament as their confidence and performances grew with each match. Their determination, teamwork and sportsmanship were particularly impressive, and they represented the school superbly both on and off the pitch. A special congratulations goes to Ntiamoah B and Daniel D, who were both awarded CCCS medals in recognition of their outstanding sportsmanship and efforts. It was a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon and a wonderful way to celebrate rugby. Well done to all the boys and staff involved.

Mr Boarder



Oratory v CCCS

On Wednesday the U12/U13 contact rugby team went to play against Cadicott at the Oratory.

We were playing two Caldicott teams, and made a really impressive start, absolutely dominating the first match, scoring numerous tries without reply. There was some excellent running with the ball from Chris, Theo and Richard. We were also defending bravely and making some big tackles. Special mention to Edwin, Ted and Hugo for this. In the first game we ran out comfortable winners.

In the second match, we came up against a much stronger Caldicott side. Once again, we made a great start with a couple of early tries. However, the opposition came roaring back and scored a couple of tries of their own. More big tackles from both teams and some excellent defensive play. With the last play of the match, we managed to get the ball along the line to John who expertly dodged a couple of defenders and ran down the line to score the winning try! 3-2 and a double victory for CCCS!

Mr Pear



The Oxford & Cambridge Singing School

The Oxford and Cambridge Singing School is for boys and girls aged 7 - 13 who love to sing. Established in 2013, the Singing School provides the opportunity to experience great classical music with world class coaches in a relaxed and fun environment and to develop confidence in singing and performing.

Pupils will learn some beautiful carols and seasonal music from around the world, led by our regular team of expert coaches. To join our mailing list and for more information on our courses, please see www.oxbridgesingingschool.com or email

oxbridgess@gmail.com

21 & 22 December 2026

St Barnabas Church, Jericho,Oxford
St Catharine's College, Cambridge

www.oxbridgesingingschool.co.uk

CHRIST CHURCH
CATHEDRAL SCHOOL
OXFORD

REAL TENNIS



1620
LEAVE FROM SCHOOL

1630
COURT BOOKING

1745
BOYS BACK IN SCHOOL

COST
DETERMINED BY NUMBERS

MONDAYS

OPEN TO FORM 5-8

PROFESSIONAL COACH

School Photobook

Pre-Prep Ukelele Club





Autumnal Fun in Pre-Prep

Pre-Prep enjoy visiting Woodland School











Nursery's Autumnal Creatures

School Photobook

News from the CCCS Sports Desk



Working hard for their senior school scholarships! Our aspiring sports scholars took on what must be the most scenic beep test ever conducted, under glorious blue skies this afternoon!





New football goals have arrived for the upcoming season!





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.