

From the headteacher



Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of a busy and successful Autumn term, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and partnership with our school. It has been a pleasure to see the children's enthusiasm for learning, their kindness towards one another, and the progress they have made across the term.

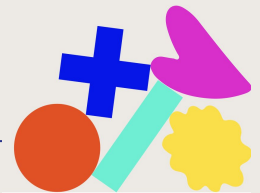
The weeks leading up to Christmas have been filled with excitement, celebrations and special moments, and I hope you have enjoyed sharing these with us. Our school community is something we are very proud of, and it is thanks to the support of families, staff and pupils working together.

As the holidays begin, I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a peaceful, healthy New Year. I hope you enjoy some well-earned rest and quality time together.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back next term, refreshed and ready for another exciting chapter of learning.

Warm regards,

Helen Darrell



THIS WEEK AT ST PAUL'S

- A huge thank you to our catering team who cooked a wonderful Christmas dinner.
- Our Christmas church service was a great success - the children did so well with great reading, acting and enthusiastic singing. Amazing! Thanks to Rev. Imogen and Becky for leading the service.
- Victoria Goodman has led storytelling sessions for all classes this week.
- All term, the children in newspaper club have been busy writing features, interviewing teachers and parents, devising puzzles and quizzes and designing artwork. Last week, they got to see it hot off the press with a visit to the north Cambridge press where the newspaper is now printed. Tracy, who runs the printer, explained to us how the press uses lithography to transfer the images and text of our newspaper from a metal plate onto paper via a rubber cylinder. Then he took us through to the factory floor where we got to push the button to send this term's issue of The Epistle to press. It was very exciting to see the paper racing around the machinery and eventually falling into a stacking device and rolling out in piles. Thank you to Tracy and Iliffe Print for their generous support of The Epistle and for letting us have a peek under the hood.

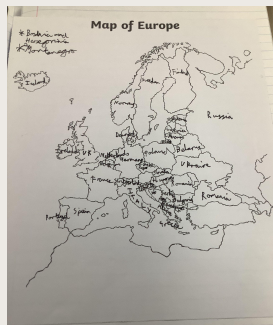
Hedgehog class news

This week, we have been carrying out science investigations to see what happens to the size of a shadow if the light source is moved closer to or further away from an object. Plus, where would a sun shade need to be positioned to give shade to a person on a sun lounger. We enjoyed this practical science and were able to put our results to the first investigation into a line graph.

In geography, we have been learning about how diverse the continent of Europe is. We have researched both human and physical features of major cities in different European countries as well as using atlases to help us name the different continents and countries within the continent of Europe.

In English, we have enjoyed learning the poem 'Night Mail' by WH Auden and then performing it in groups making use of our voices to create sound effects. We then looked at a similar poem called 'Junk Mail' and made comparisons between the two. To end our unit, we have written our own poems about 'email' using as many of the poetic techniques that we have learnt.

In D.T. we have made a 'steady hand game' where we had to use knowledge from our earlier science electricity unit to make them work. They were a little frustrating to get them to work but have showed true resilience to get final success.



Useful dates Attendance Matters!

Autumn Term 2025
Wednesday 3rd Sept 2025 -
Friday 19th Dec 2025

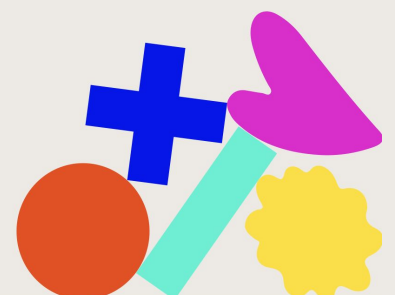
Dates for your diary

Mon 5 Jan - Staff training day

Tues 6 Jan - Children return
to school

Good attendance is essential for your child's learning and progress. We work hard to build strong relationships with families, understand barriers to attendance, and provide support where needed. Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly. We place high priority on improving attendance and work closely with families to address any difficulties. **If your child is struggling to attend, please contact us early so we can work together to find solutions.** We're here to understand what makes attendance difficult and provide tailored support. Every day in school counts towards your child's success and wellbeing.

Let's talk
attendance!



St Paul's C of E Primary School

Life in all its fullness

Getting your child the right support when needed...

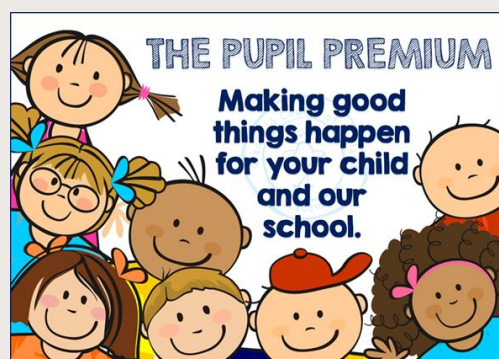
Pupil Premium and Free School Meals.

Checking whether your child is eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) is quick, confidential, and can make a real difference to their education. Even if your child chooses not to take the meal, simply being registered can bring valuable **Pupil Premium funding** into the school. This additional money is used to provide extra support, resources, and opportunities that directly benefit children—such as smaller group work, academic interventions, enrichment activities, and wellbeing support. By taking a moment to apply, you could help unlock funding that strengthens your child's learning and benefits the whole school community.

We encourage you to check your eligibility

here: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/schools-learning/help-with-school-learning-costs/free-school-meals>

No matter which year group you are in, this funding can begin to support your child and the school when they first join us. If you are not sure, please either ask or submit an application to see if you are eligible.



Young Carers

Letting your school know that you are a young carer can make a big difference to your wellbeing and success at school. When staff understand the responsibilities you have at home, they can offer the right support—such as extra time for homework, someone to talk to, or flexibility when things become difficult. Schools can also connect you with helpful services, clubs, or young carer groups so you don't feel alone. Sharing your situation doesn't mean you'll be judged; it simply helps the school make sure you're treated fairly, understood, and given the support you need to balance caring with your education and your own wellbeing.

If you believe your child is a young carer, please do reach out to Mrs Thake who can offer support as and when needed.

IS THIS YOU?



"My Mum is sick.
I have to stay home
from school some
days to help her."

"I have to make sure
Dad takes his
medication each
morning and night-
time."

"I need to make sure
my younger brother
and sister get ready
for school"

SIBS

Sibs is a UK charity that supports **siblings of children and adults with disabilities, long-term health conditions, or additional needs**. They provide information, advice, and emotional support for both young siblings and adult siblings, helping them deal with the challenges and responsibilities that can come with having a brother or sister who needs extra care. Sibs also works with schools and professionals to raise awareness and make sure siblings get the understanding and support they need.

If your child has a sibling with disabilities, long term health conditions or additional needs, please do let us know. Mrs Thake would be your first point of contact.

Collective worship theme

The Christmas Story

At Christmas time we see crackers everywhere – on dinner tables, at parties, full of colour and noise. When we pull a cracker, we don't know what's inside. There's a surprise, a bang, a joke, a hat and a small gift.

The Christmas story is a bit like that very first cracker. Mary and Joseph had a big surprise when they learned they would look after a very special baby. The shepherds were frightened when angels appeared, but they were told good news: Jesus had been born. The prophets' words from long ago were like a riddle that finally made sense when Jesus arrived. And the paper hat reminds us of a crown – because Christians believe Jesus is a king, not a powerful ruler, but a king who brings love and peace to everyone.

At the heart of every cracker is a gift. At the heart of Christmas is God's gift of Jesus. As we enjoy the fun, food and presents this Christmas, let's pause to remember the very first Christmas and think about kindness, love and the things that really matter.

Please do read more about our school's values...

[St. Paul's vision and values](#)



News from the Governors

The governing board met this week with the expectation of two inspections that the school is due to receive imminently: from Ofsted and from the dedicated church schools inspectorate SIAMS. We are confident and looking forward to both of these, but there is understandably a certain amount of pressure that these visits bring – both agencies having recently adopted new frameworks. We have had a flurry of external peers and other advisors in to give us assurance of the areas where we are strong and make any suggestions for where we can improve, and as governors we have also stepped up our monitoring efforts. All is reassuring, but as you would expect there are always modifications to make and the school's leaders and teachers have had a very busy term implementing the various recommendations.

The meeting included extensive discussions of our attendance – an increasingly critical national priority given its impact on educational outcomes – and where we need to see improvements among particular cohorts and groups when benchmarked against other local schools. At a bigger picture, we also noted a recent uptake among new, mid-year joiners to the school, which has boosted numbers and brought many new families into our wonderfully diverse school community.

And on that subject, we as governors really enjoy the Christmas season as it brings so many opportunities to interact with pupils and parents, whether through the nativity play, carol service, school Christmas dinner, disco and many other events. We hope to see as many of you around in the final days of term and are always happy to hear your thoughts and questions.

