

# *St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Oxford*

*"Let us protect with love all that God has given us"*  
(Pope Francis 19.03.2013)



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8<sup>th</sup> December 2023



*Today we celebrate the feast of the Immaculate Conception*

Dear Families,

Today we held our Advent Service. The focus was living together in peace, hope, love and joy in line with our social teaching. We are very grateful to Sr Marie Ann for writing the script for an amazing service which incorporated all faiths. It was a lovely start to our Advent celebrations and our Year 6 pupils were amazing at reading with eloquence and clarity!

It is a busy end of term— many happy and tired children! Thank you for all the parental support for our plays. We still have the Key Stage 1 nativities, the Christmas meal and our Sparkle Assembly to look forward to on the last week of term.

If you know any families with reception aged children for September 2024, please invite them to visit our school (in fact children of any age are welcome if we have a space!). We offer individual tours to families if they ring the office. Reception applications must be submitted by 15<sup>th</sup> January. If you are happy with our school, please spread the word! Word of mouth is the most effective way of promoting our school. In fact, we appear to be Number 1 primary school in Oxfordshire on a website called Snobe!

Enjoy our very full newsletter – what a lot has happened. A huge thank you for the PTA Christmas Fair which raised such a lot of money. Can I wish you a happy weekend and we look forward to our last week and a half of term.

Warm wishes

Jess Tweedie  
**Headteacher**

### Advent Service

This morning the whole school went to St Anthony of Padua Church, where we celebrated a prayerful and beautiful Advent Service. Thank you to Sister Marie Ann for writing such a thought-provoking celebration for us all to share. The behaviour of our younger children was exemplary and Year 6 pupils spoke with clarity and eloquence.



### EYFS Nativity

The hall was filled with beautiful singing voices and some remarkably clear speaking voices as our Reception children performed their very first Nativity Play. The children performed for Year 1 and Year 2 and older siblings before two performances to which parents and carers were invited. We know that performing in front of an audience can be daunting but our youngest children told the story of the very first Christmas in an engaging and delightful way.



## Chess Club Update

This week, two girls from Year 5 who enjoy Chess share their experience of attending the Tuesday club:

*We think Chess Club is great because you are surrounded by people who want to learn chess. The atmosphere is welcoming and the teacher is very kind and open to questions.*

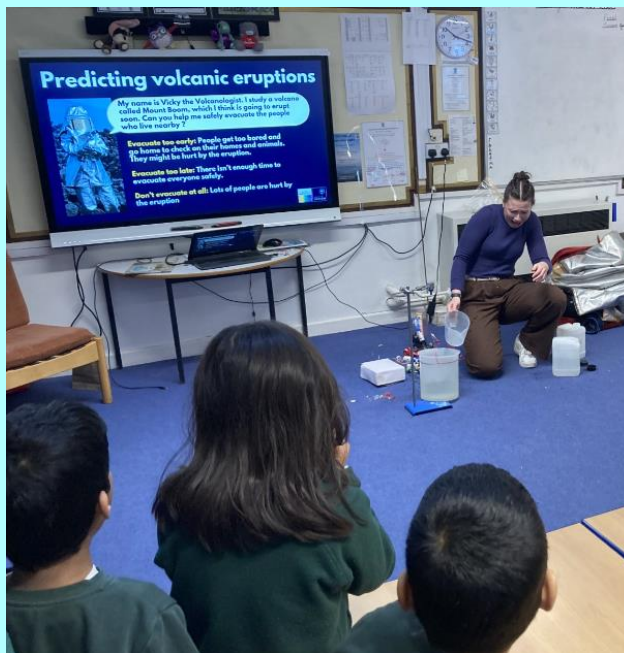
*If you are interested in joining Chess Club it runs from 3:10-4:15 pm on Tuesdays. Every so often, pupils take part in chess competitions against other schools.*

*We recently played two games each against the Dragon School Chess Club who are very good. After each game, we waited for the last person to finish and then went for snacks while parents waited and chatted in another room.*

## Science Events

We have had a fortnight of scientific discovery for three different year groups. On Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November, Year 6 travelled to St Edward's School for a series of Christmas science themed mini-lectures. The pupils returned to school very enthusiastic about the practical experiments which had been demonstrated, as well as the delicious refreshments and the craft kits which came from Father Christmas!

On Thursday this week, Year 3 and Year 5 took part in an outreach activity led by Charlie Rex from the University of Oxford. She is an Earth Scientist and brought in some interesting rock samples and equipment used by volcanologists. This really enriched the work our pupils have been doing about different types of rock. Not only did the children investigate the different types of rock, their properties and how they were formed, they also created their very own volcanic eruption.



## Winter Mini Reading Challenge 2023

### **Oxfordshire Libraries announce the return of the Winter Mini Challenge!**

The Reading Agency has once more teamed up with the Youth Sport Trust and public libraries, continuing with the Ready, Set, Read! theme from the Summer Reading Challenge. The Winter Mini Challenge is a free reading challenge, completely online, that tackles the holiday reading 'dip', encouraging children to keep up good habits or discover the joy of reading.

- Children will re-join the six characters from the Summer Reading Challenge, as they go on a winter walk to the library (they don't have to have done the summer challenge to join this one!)
- They will unlock virtual rewards and a special certificate by rating and reviewing books.
- A target of 3 books is recommended for children, who set their own reading Challenge. Children can read any books, including eBooks or eAudio, which can be borrowed for free from Oxfordshire Libraries.
- There will be a themed collection of eBooks to download from our [Overdrive Ebook Platform](#)
- Parents and carers can sign up their children to join the library by visiting [Oxfordshire Libraries](#)

**Challenge start date: 1 December 2023**

**Challenge end date: 19 February 2024**

Parents and carers can register their children for free at [Winter Mini Registration - www.wintermini.org.uk](http://www.wintermini.org.uk)

**Good luck - we look forward to hearing how the children get on!**

### iRock Concert – 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023

Last Friday parents were treated to an iRock concert. It was fantastic to see how the children's confidence has grown over successive performances; along with how well they cooperated with each other, listened to instructions and, importantly, were good audience members for their peers.



## Christmas Fair



On Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November, the PTA organised a wonderful Christmas Fair! There were tombola, a raffle, craft tables, face painting, biscuit decorating, delicious goodies at the café and a special visitor in a beautifully decorated grotto! The event made **£2,085** profit which is a phenomenal amount. Thank you so much to all the PTA, parent and staff volunteers who made this event possible.

We are also grateful to all the organisations who donated raffle and tombola prizes: Co-op, Tesco, Tile Shop Alehouse, Craft Burger, Heavenly Desserts, La Croissanterie, Demop and Headington Homewares, Shimadzu Instruments, Cotswold wildlife park, Roves Farm, Nuffield Health, Science Oxford, Pegasus Theatre, North Wall Theatre, Oxford Playhouse, Blenheim Palace, Oxford City Museum, Fairy-tale Farm and Jump.

### Choking Guidance

The Local Authority asks us to remind parents that depending on size, parents should halve or quarter cherry tomatoes, strawberries and grapes and raw carrots and cucumber must be cut into batons and not rounds.

### Explaining Sparkle Assembly

We do not have a Christmas Jumper day at our school. Instead, we have Sparkle Assembly on the last day of term. On this day, children wear school uniform, but with a touch of Sparkle! What does that look like? Well, some children might have a wristband of tinsel, or a hair tie of something that sparkles – go to town, enjoy the Sparkle! Remember that school finishes at 1:30pm on the last day of term.

## Road Safety Week



Road Safety Week took place during w/c Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November. Our classes rose to the challenge and decorated their traffic cones (kindly donated by Chevron Traffic Management) which were placed on the roadside. We know that it is vital to help our children develop good road safety habits from an early age. Please continue to encourage them to cross at the crossing, and to wait for the 'green man' before stepping into the road – always looking and listening for ambulances as well!

Please park with consideration in surrounding streets and do not pull on to the grass verges or cycle lanes on Headley Way.

We ran a competition to design a road sign, which will be created by Chevron Traffic Management in their depot, the lucky finalist will be announced in the new year, watch this space....

### **Practical Help and Signposting**

Sadly, things at the moment are difficult for many of our families. Bills all seem to be rising, and everything is getting more expensive. We want to make sure that all our families have support in place if it is needed. Even if your child is not eligible for Free School Meals, we may be able to help with uniform from our vast stock of good-quality second-hand items, we are able to refer to local Food Banks and signpost families to other sources of help, advice and support.

If you are struggling, please contact our home/school link worker, Mrs Kate Stratford. Her contact details are below. Mrs Stratford will be happy to talk to you in confidence to see what support we can offer.

If you need help towards paying for school trips, please contact the office to arrange a confidential conversation with Ms Tweedie.

Mrs Kate Stratford

Home/School Link Worker and Deputy DSL

Tel: 01865 763357      Mobile: 07500 802732

Email: [kstr3838@st-josephs-pri.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:kstr3838@st-josephs-pri.oxon.sch.uk)

### Dairy Dates

Date	Year Group/Class	Event
Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> December	All year groups	Advent Service
Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> December 3:30pm	Year 1	Nativity Performance
Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> December 3:30pm	Year 2	Nativity Performance
Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> December 3:30pm	Year 1	Phonics Meeting for parents
Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> December	All year groups	End-of-term Mass
Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> December	EYFS	Christmas Crafternoon
Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> December	All year groups	Christmas Lunch
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> December 3:30pm	Choir	Christmas Choir Performance
Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> December	All year groups	Sparkle Assembly
Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> December	All year groups	School finishes at 1:30pm

## Flyers and Information



# Christmas Fair

4.15pm to 7.30pm  
Friday 8 December  
Craft Fair and Food Market  
Free Entry

Festive Gifts  
Delicious Food  
Activities

## All Welcome

Cokethorpe School, Witney, OX29 7PU



## OXFORD SALVATION ARMY TOY APPEAL

Could you help us make Christmas special for those who may have little or nothing under the tree on Christmas morning?

### Ways you can give:

You can donate new, unused toys at:

**Hope Oxford**  
Templars Square  
10am – 4pm  
4<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> Dec

**The Jungle**  
Templars Square  
Co-op  
Westway Square, Botley

Or you can donate to our JustGiving page using the QR code below:



<https://tinyurl.com/Oxfordtoyappeal>

**Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR**

The Salvation Army Trustee Company acting as Trustee of The Salvation Army Trust (Central Funds). A Christian Church and Registered Charity No. 214799 and in Scotland SC009359. The Salvation Army Territorial Headquarters, 1 Champion Park, London SE1 8FJ. Image by brgfx on Freepik.

**Contact us:**

 @SalvationArmyOxford  
 @OxfordSalvationArmy  
 oxford@salvationarmy.org.uk

Oxfordshire Libraries



# SHORT STORY

## WRITING COMPETITION!

Are you aged between 7 and 11?  
Do you love writing?

Why not have a go at writing a short story for our competition?

It can be on any topic and up to 1,000 words long

The winning story will be published as an eBook for library members to borrow!

More information and instructions on how to enter can be found on the Oxfordshire Libraries website.

 @oxonlibraries Entries open: **11 December 2023**  
 Oxfordshire Libraries Closing date: **11 February 2024**

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/shortstorycompetition](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/shortstorycompetition)



Join us for our monthly First Friday event

## Green Grotto

### FRIDAY 1 DECEMBER

### 4PM TO 7PM

**Green Grotto Swap Shop:**

Bring preloved, good quality toys, christmas jumpers\* and decorations, then Swap (not shop) to find new to you treasures

If you don't have anything to swap, still join us, making a small cash donation if you can for any items taken - this supports community projects

Items can be donated on the day, or dropped to Flo's on Mondays or Fridays between 9-3 (FAO Victoria). Please email any enquires to [victoria@flosoxford.org.uk](mailto:victoria@flosoxford.org.uk)

\*please only bring christmas clothes as we don't have storage space for surplus items after





# FREE TASTER SESSION

Century cricket is all about learning skills, having fun and enjoyment all through the love of cricket! Come and check out our FREE taster session with our very own Level 2 Cricket Coach!

Sandhills Primary School

12th December

5.30pm - 6.30pm

Ages 5-11

Register now at:  
[www.wrsportsltd.com](http://www.wrsportsltd.com)