



9th October 2026

NEWSLETTER

At St Philomena's, We Share the Love of God



You may have noticed that our website has not been updated this term – that is because we have been working on a brand new website! This is now live and we hope you find it clear, easy to navigate and useful. We'll continue to add new content throughout the year. If there's something you're looking for that isn't there yet, please do get in touch and we will be happy to help.



Year 3 have had a busy and exciting week! They entertained us with a fantastic assembly and enjoyed a fun filled Stone Age Day, bringing their learning to life through a range of exciting activities. The children also enjoyed a webinar with Frank Cottrell-Boyce, exploring the importance of reading and the joy that books can bring. A wonderful week of learning for Year 3!



We celebrated Forest School Day this week. Our Gardening Club marked the occasion with a range of activities, learning more about nature and how we can care for and protect our outdoor spaces. Forest School is an important part of our RHE curriculum, helping children to develop confidence, independence and resilience through experiences in the outdoors. We are very lucky to have such beautiful school grounds for our children to explore, enjoy and learn from.

World Teacher's Day

Monday 5th October was World Teachers' Day, providing a wonderful opportunity to recognise and celebrate the dedication and commitment of our teaching staff. To mark the occasion, we surprised our lovely staff with a special doughnuts treat as a small token of our appreciation for all that they do for our children and our school community. We are truly blessed to have such wonderful teachers.



Grandparent Tea Party

Next week, we look forward to welcoming our grandparents to school for our tea party. We are very excited to share this special afternoon with extended families and hope it will be a lovely opportunity for grandparents and children to spend time together. Please let your class teacher know if grandparents will be attending.



Black History Month

Children enjoyed taking part in the Great Big Live Assembly to celebrate Black History Month. Broadcast live from The Story Museum in Oxford, the assembly explored this year's theme, "Honouring Our Communities." Children heard inspiring stories and celebrated the important contributions made by people such as teachers, nurses, carers, volunteers and leaders. It was a wonderful opportunity for children to recognise and celebrate the people who make a difference in the lives of others every day.

Clubs

We are very excited for our new clubs to begin after half term. Booking links have been sent to families who expressed an interest. Please contact us if your child is interested in joining a club.

Our Junior Choir are looking forward to a very special opportunity to perform at The O2 as part of Young Voices! There is no cost for children taking part in the performance. Tickets are available for family and friends who would like to come along and watch. It promises to be a wonderful evening, and tickets are selling quickly, so we encourage families wishing to attend to book soon.



Safeguarding

This week, we are reminding children about the difference between secrets and surprises. A surprise is something happy that will be shared soon, such as a birthday present or party. However, children should know that they should never feel that they have to keep a secret that makes them feel worried, uncomfortable or upset. We encourage children to talk to a trusted adult if anyone asks them to keep a secret that doesn't feel right. At home, you may wish to talk with your child about the adults they can turn to if they are ever worried about something.



Saint Francis Day

To celebrate Saint Francis Day, the children in Reception came to school dressed as animals! The children learnt about the life of Saint Francis of Assisi and his deep love for God, discovering how he showed his faith through his kindness and care for animals and the natural world. Putting their learning into practice, the children prepared food for local wildlife, created beautiful animal art and considered the different ways in which we can care for the creatures around us.

They also made crosses from clay as a reminder of Saint Francis' devotion to God. It was a joyful day, encouraging the children to follow Saint Francis' example by showing kindness and care for God's creation.



Wellbeing

Our Wellbeing Ambassadors have been working hard to support our children on the playground each day. They help to make sure everyone feels welcomed, included and cared for, putting our Catholic values of kindness, compassion and service to others into action.

They have spent time organising a variety of activities for children who may need a friend or a little encouragement to join in with play. This week, they have helped children choose a Wellbeing Buddy!

A huge thank you to Lucy and Elsie for the time, care and enthusiasm they give to their role.



Catholic Virtue

This Sunday's Gospel reminds us that God invites everyone to share in His Kingdom. In the Parable of the Wedding Feast, Jesus tells of a king who prepares a wedding feast for his son and invites many people to come. However, the invited guests refuse the invitation and do not want to attend. The king then opens the invitation to everyone, and many people come to the feast.

This reminds us that God's invitation is freely offered to each of us. We are called to be open to God, accept His invitation and show through our lives that we are ready to follow Him. It is not enough simply to hear God's call; we must respond with faith and live according to His ways.

We can reflect on God's invitation in our own lives:
Are we open to God's call and willing to follow Him?
Do our words and actions show that we have accepted His invitation?



We are proud of the children who have demonstrated humility this week!



A Note on Catholic Life from the Deputy Head Boy and Head Girl

Keira, Deputy Head Girl

At St Philomena's, our faith is a really important part of our day. We pray at least four times each day at school, which helps us remember that God is always with us and to keep Him in our hearts. We show our faith by being respectful to everyone, listening to each other and treating people how we would like to be treated. We try to make good choices and show God's love through the way we behave and care for one another.

Teddy, Deputy Head Boy

At our school, we live out our Catholic faith in many different ways. We take part in collective worship every day and one class goes to church each week. We also try to help and care for others, for example by donating school uniforms to families who need them. On the playground and in the classroom, we try to show kindness, respect and forgiveness. We follow the example of saints, such as Saint Philomena, by trying to live with faith, courage and love and by treating everyone as Jesus taught us.

School Values

This week, we have been focusing on excellence through vocabulary. Across the school, every class has a Word of the Day, and we have been so impressed by the ambitious vocabulary our children are beginning to use.

It has been wonderful to hear children trying out new words in their conversations and using increasingly interesting and precise vocabulary in their writing. Children have been challenging themselves to understand what new words mean and finding creative ways to use them in the right context.

We are very proud to see our children striving for excellence by expanding their vocabulary and becoming confident, articulate communicators. Keep listening out for those wonderful words!

TERM DATES

ACADEMIC YEAR 2026 - 2027

TERM DATES 2027 - 2028 can be found on our website.

Autumn Term 2026

INSET Days

Wednesday 26 August 2026

Thursday 27 August 2026

Friday 28 August 2026

Bank Holiday

Monday 31 August 2026

First Day of Term

Tuesday 1 September 2026

Half-Term

Monday 19 October – Friday 30 October 2026

Back to School

Monday 2 November 2026

Last Day of Term

Friday 18 December 2026

Spring Term 2027

First Day of Term

Monday 4 January 2027

Half-Term

Monday 15 February – Friday 19 February 2027

Back to School

Monday 22 February 2027

Last Day of Term

Thursday 25 March 2027

Easter Bank Holidays

Good Friday: Friday 26 March 2027

Easter Monday: Monday 29 March 2027

Summer Term 2027

First Day of Term

Monday 12 April 2027

May Bank Holiday

Monday 3 May 2027

Half-Term

Monday 31 May – Friday 4 June 2027

Back to School

Monday 7 June 2027

Last Day of Term

Wednesday 21 July 2027

INSET Days

Thursday 22 July 2027

Friday 23 July 2027



Just 10 minutes late each day amounts to 50 minutes of lost learning each week.

Please aim to be on the playground by 8.50am, ready for the bell, so that every child can start their day positively and make the most of learning time.

Class	Attendance (%)	Lates (Occasions)
YEAR R	93	1
YEAR 1	97	1
YEAR 2	99	1
YEAR 3	95	2
YEAR 4	97	1
YEAR 5	97	1
YEAR 6	100	2
Overall Weekly Attendance: 96.9%		

Gates Open: 8.45am
School Begins: 8:50am
Gates Lock: 9:00am

DATES FOR THE DIARY

SEPTEMBER

- 10 September – Whole School Mass in Church
- 15 September – International Day of Democracy
- 14 September – Jeans for Genes Day
- 14 September – Secondary Transfer Meeting
- 21 September – International Day of Peace
- 21 September – Fairtrade Fortnight
- 23 September – PTA AGM
- 23 September – Phonics Meeting for Reception
- 25 September – Ambassadors to Mass at the Cathedral
- 25 September – Deadline for Holy Communion applications.

OCTOBER

- 1 October – Rosary Week
- 1 October – National Poetry Day
- 1–31 October – Black History Month
- 2 October – Harvest Festival
- 2 October – CAFOD Family Fast Day
- 4 October – Feast Day of St Francis of Assisi
- 5 October – St Francis Day in EYFS class
- 5 October – World Teachers Day
- 9 October – Year 3 Assembly and Stone Age Day
- 10 October – World Mental Health Day
- 13 October – Y3 to Natural History Museum
- 14 October – Grandparents' Tea Party
- 14 October – EYFS Food Tasting
- 16 October – Year 5 Assembly

NOVEMBER

- 1 November – All Saints Day
- 5 November – Outdoor Learning Day
- 9 November – Diwali Workshop
- 11 November – Remembrance Day
- 13 November – Children in Need
- 14 November – Y5 and Y6 Cross Country
- 16 November – Anti-Bullying Week
- 16 November – Odd Socks Day
- 23 November – UK Parliament Week
- 23 November – EYFS to St Andrews
- 24 November – School Council to Parliament
- 27 November – Year 6 assembly

DECEMBER

- 2 December – EYFS Nativity
- 9 December – KS1 Nativity
- 15 December – Steps in Faith returned to School
- 16 December – Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Lunch
- 17th December – KS2 Carol Concert in Church
- 18 December – End of Term

PTA ANNOUNCEMENTS

Toy Story Movie Night 15 October | 3:30pm

Christmas Cultural Café 13 November | 3:30pm

Enjoy delicious food and drinks from around the world while children choose Christmas gifts for friends and family and wrap them ready for Christmas.

Christmas Fair 5 December | 2:00pm

Join us for our Christmas Fair, with each class hosting its own festive stall. Come along, enjoy the afternoon and support our school!