

'Be who God wants you to be and so set the world on fire.'

St. Catherine's Newsletter: Summer 2 Term 2023



A Message From Miss Quiligotti

Dear parents and carers,

As we look back on another academic year completed, it's a great time to reflect on everything our fantastic children have achieved. We're so incredibly proud of everyone in our school community who has contributed to helping shape young minds and create a lasting, engaging and fun education for our children. Parents, you are our children's first educators and you pave the way for their learning and create the foundations for them to gain new knowledge and skills. Thank you for continuing to champion our school and our successes and celebrate how truly wonderful our children are. To our hardworking and dedicated staff, you really do go above and beyond in your quest to make every day a happy, engaging and fulfilled learning experience for each and every child in our care.

Thank you for taking on every challenge with positivity and determination and 'shaping the whole child' in everything you do. To our governors, your ambition for our school and our children helps us to 'strive for excellence' in all we do and we are so grateful for your strategic leadership. To our parish, our flourishing links benefit our children's faith journey vastly and we are so grateful to all who are involved, especially Father John who welcomes our children with love and compassion. To our children, you bring smiles and joy to our school community every single day and we are so incredibly proud of the people you are and how you are learning to 'set the world on fire' in all you do by being who God wants you to be.

The end of one school year brings the excitement of the next, and we're already working hard in the background to prepare for another fantastic year of learning for our children.

We have recently made some inspiring new internal leadership appointments, helping us to continue to develop our staff to shape the future of our school. We are delighted to welcome Miss Jones on board our Senior Leadership Team as an additional Assistant Headteacher. Miss Jones has recently completed her Senior Mental Health Lead training and qualification and will lead on Personal Development across our school. We are also thrilled to welcome two new Phase Leaders to our middle leadership team: Mrs Hunter will take on the role of KS1 Phase Leader and Miss Scott will take on the role of Lower KS2 Phase Leader. We are confident that Miss Jones, Miss Scott and Mrs Hunter will bring further strength to our school leadership and help shape our strategic development and improvement. Our staff team is amazing and it is a pleasure to be able to make internal leadership appointments to both strengthen our school leadership as well as develop the talent we have within our staff team.

Love

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We are thrilled to have recently secured funding from Salford Diocese to upgrade our Key Stage Two toilets. This is something we have been working on for a while now and we are delighted to very soon be able to provide improved facilities for our children. The building work will start on the boys' toilets over the summer holidays and then the work on the girls' toilets will continue into the first half of the Autumn Term. Although this will cause some minor disturbance on the KS2 corridor for a short while, the benefit we will gain from our improved facilities will far outweigh this. The new toilets will all be cubicle-based, rather than urinals for the boys, meaning we will be able to split the new toilets into boys' and girls' cubicles whilst we await the completion of the current girls' toilets.

As we bid farewell to another school year, let's embrace the future with courage, knowledge, and an unwavering belief in our children's potential. "Every ending is a new beginning; as we leave behind what was, we step into the vast possibilities of what could be."

To those of our staff, children and parents leaving St. Catherine's this year, know that you have a special place in our hearts and you will always be a part of our St. Catherine's school community. May your futures be filled with joy, success and happiness and we are proud to have been a part of your journey.

We wish all of our families a joyful summer and we can't wait to see you in September 2023!

Miss Quiligotti

Whole School



This Half-Term...

We've had a fantastic final half-term of this academic year. On our Inspiration Core Value day (our theme this half-term), we welcomed Bartholomew Gee into school, an inspirational man who showed us how disability can be turned into possibility. His life story was truly amazing and inspirational and we learnt so much from him. We also celebrated 'Healthy Schools Week' with some brilliant workshops and activities. Our Year 5 children completed their Bikeability workshops too, learning how to cycle safely on local roads.

Lots of our year groups have been on some exciting school trips and we've had some brilliant visitors in school too, including circus performers, farm animals, an ice cream man and more! We've loved inviting parents into school for meetings with teachers to show all the fantastic learning our children have achieved this year as well. They really are super stars!



Sports Day

We have finally been able to run our full Sports Days for the first time in four years! A fantastic time was had by all and we were so proud of our children for their fantastic teamwork, sportsmanship and perseverance. Thank you to The Barlow for facilitating our Sports Days for KS1 and KS2 - we love using your school grounds!



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Year 6 Leavers



We are so incredibly proud of every single one of our Year 6 children who will be moving onto high school in September. Children, you have brought us such joy and pride during your years at St. Catherine's and we know you will do the same at your high schools. We are so proud of everything you have achieved and of all the different ways you are learning to 'set the world on fire' through being who God wants you to be.

Children, you hold a special place in our hearts. As you leave our school, remember that you will forever be a part of our St. Catherine's community. We will continue to support and cheer you on as you spread your wings and soar to new heights.

As you embark on the next phase of your educational journey, carry with you the knowledge that your abilities are limitless, and your potential knows no bounds. May your futures be filled with joy, success, and happiness. May you always remember the lessons learned and the friendships forged during your time here and may your spirits remain forever bright as you embark on the exciting journey that awaits you. "Every ending is a new beginning; as we leave behind what was, we step into the vast possibilities of what could be."

Thank you to
The_event_artistry for creating
our amazing balloon arch for
our Year 6 leavers' party!



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Long Service Awards



We are incredibly proud of three of our staff members who have recently received Long Service Awards for the dedication and service to education in Manchester. Mr Clarke and Mrs Chidgey both received their 25 years Long Service Award for working in schools across Manchester for over 25 years and Mrs Dewsnap received her 40 years Long Service Award for over 40 years of dedicated service to schools in Manchester, with most of these years being at St. Catherine's!

We are immensely proud of our staff members and know how lucky we are to have them as part of our staff family. Take a look on our Facebook page to see the surprise videos we created for them to watch at their Long Service Award ceremony!



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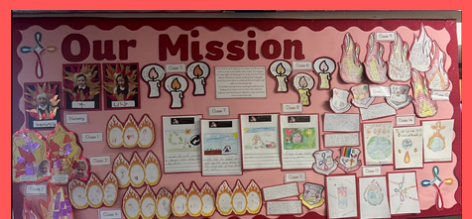
Catholic Schools Inspection

We are delighted with the outcome of our recent Catholic Schools Inspection and how inspectors recognised and commented on so many wonderful elements of our school community.

Some of the highlights of the report are:

- Pupils actively contribute to the mission of the school. They have a clear understanding of St Catherine's Catholic identity and are able to articulate the school mission statement and how it impacts the life of their school. Indeed, one child stated 'It is the middle of everything. It is the reason for everything we do.'
- Pupils understand that they are valued and cared for in this loving community.
- Pupils make good progress in knowing more and remembering more and can speak with confidence about what they have been learning in religious education lessons over time. Pupils enjoy their lessons. As one pupil said, 'School is better for having RE lessons.'
- The mission statement is known, lived and witnessed throughout the school day.
- There is a culture of welcome that extends to the whole community.
- The school is a supportive and joyful community and is appreciated by parents. One parent stated, 'My husband and I feel lucky to have found this school'.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils in religious education lessons using sacred scripture as the starting point in all lessons observed.

We are really proud of our fantastic school community!



Nursery



This Half-Term...

This half term, our topic has been Minibeasts! We started the half term with some caterpillars in our classroom and focused on the story, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. We looked closely and carefully to changes and after a few weeks, our caterpillars emerged from their cocoons as beautiful butterflies! We enjoyed setting them free.

In Maths, we have been looking at different ways to make numbers, as well as addition and subtraction number problems! We have also recapped our shape knowledge through our focus text, *Walter's Wonderful Web*.

We have been investigating symmetry too and used pipettes to put paint on one side of a butterfly, folded the paper and pressed down, before revealing our beautiful, symmetrical butterflies!

We have enjoyed lots of other wonderful events, such as Stay and Play sessions with our grown-ups, Sports Day, our first ever class worship, our visit to Didsbury Park and of course our end of year beach party. We have had so much fun!

Our children say...

"We have been learning about minibeasts. Some of them can fly because they have wings."

"We had Sports Day! We had to do the egg and spoon race and we had to throw beanbags into the hoop."

"A farmer came to see us. He brought animals! I liked the alpaca."



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Reception



This Half-Term...

We had a wonderful trip to Didsbury Park. We completed all sorts of activities such as parachute games, minibeast hunts, building fairy houses and elf dens and using the zip line.

Our topic of Minibeasts means we have learnt lots of facts and information about insects through the story 'Christopher's Caterpillars'. Christopher sent us some live caterpillars to look after. We were amazed to see them change into a chrysalis. This helped our investigation into life cycles and we had a ceremony to release the butterfly which emerged.

We had lots of animal visitors from the farm who came into our playground. We feed chickens, goats, ducks, sheep and even took an alpaca for a walk!

We have been focusing on the concept of 'doubling' in Mathematics. First, we generated a number to double using the number fans. Then we counted out the correct number of counters and showed how this could be doubled using a mirror. We know that to double means having two lots of the same amount.

Our children say...

"I love learning about minibeasts. We did the 'Minibeasts Rave Song' with Mrs Dewsnap. I can dance like a ladybird!"

"We had real caterpillars in our classroom. They went into a chrysalis and turned into a butterfly."

"I know all about doubles. It needs to be the same lot of two numbers. $6+6=12$."



Year 1



This Half-Term...

This term in Topic, we have been learning about "Our School". We have had various visits from past pupils such as footballer Emilio Lawrence and even took a trip down School Lane to learn about the area our school is in.

We have been developing our artistic skills in Design Technology as we have made our own mobiles inspired by sculptor Alexander Calder. We loved bringing our creative side to our learning!

In Religion, we have been learning about the importance of being sorry. We have loved listening to Jesus' teaching and sharing ways we can use what we have learnt both in and out of the classroom.

As a celebration of our successes, this year we shared a joint "St. Cathsbury Farewell Festival" with Year 2. We thoroughly enjoyed the various activities such as face paintings, tattoos and the live band who came to play for us. It was lovely having the opportunity to celebrate our hard work in style!

Our children say...

"The festival day was the best day ever! It was fun dancing on the playground with my friends. I can't wait for next year's already."

"I loved learning about money in Maths. I liked understanding the difference between coins and notes."

"Learning about St. Catherine's has been one of my favourite topics. I like learning about how old the school is and how it has changed."



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Year 2



This Half-Term...

As part of our Science topic about animals, we went on a trip to Knowsley Safari park. Here we went on a safari drive with one of the park rangers and learnt all about the animals. We also watched a birds of prey display and a sealion show! It was so much fun and it really helped to bring our topic to life.

Our Design Technology topic this half-term was all about moving mechanisms. We worked in small groups to design and make our own car. We used Hot Wheels car designs as our inspiration. Our cars looked amazing and we are awaiting a call from Formula One!

As a celebration of our successes, this year we shared a joint "St. Cathsby Farewell Festival" with Year 1. We thoroughly enjoyed the various activities such as face paintings, tattoos and the live band who came to play for us. It was lovely having the opportunity to celebrate our hard work in style!

We have been learning how to represent, interpret and answer questions in statistics. We have looked at tally charts, bar charts and pictographs. We have made our own class tally chart based on our favourite sports and answered lots of questions. We have also been focussing on positional language and using vocabulary to help direct each other.

Our children say...

"I had the best day at our festival and I loved getting to rock out with my friends!"

"Our school trip was so much and I couldn't stop laughing at the sealions when they were showing off some of their tricks."

"I loved making a car in DT with my friends and I'm going to try and convince my Dad to let me design our new car."



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Year 3



This Half-Term...

This half-term has been a very special one for many of our Year 3 children as they made their First Holy Communion in June. We were privileged to join our children on their sacramental journey and we made sure we celebrated this wonderful faith milestone in school too.

In Topic, we have been learning all about Didsbury. We have been finding out about all the human and physical characteristics.

In Art, we have been looking at the work of Claude Monet. We have been using different paints and brushes to create a variety of effects. We've also been We have enjoyed sewing in Design Technology and have been very creative with our designs. We realised how mindful and fun sewing can be.

In Maths, we have been looking at shape and even had a go at making our own 3D shapes using spaghetti and marshmallows. It was challenging, but we persevered, especially as we got to eat some marshmallows at the end!

Our children say...

"I really enjoyed coming into school in my communion dress and having a big party in the community centre and dancing on the stage."

"I loved our trip to Didsbury Park!"

"I've learnt so much about Zeraffa Giraffa and now want to visit Jardin de Plantes."



Year 4



This Half-Term...

In Maths, we have been learning about money, converting pounds to pence and pence into pounds. We have used our estimating skills and even calculated money! One of our favourite lessons was playing supermarket sweep and challenging ourselves with more than one and two step problems!

Our new Topic has focused on our city of Manchester. We have looked at what Manchester is like, what human and physical features have shaped Manchester and what the landscape of Manchester is like. The children had the amazing opportunity to visit the Manchester Science and Industry Museum.

In English, we have been focusing on the book 'Blue John'. We have created some amazing pieces of writing describing the inside of a cave and had a main focus on the type of technical vocabulary that we use.

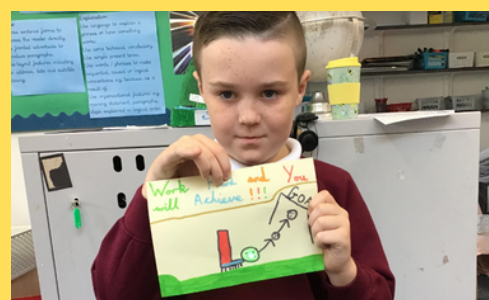
We have had the exciting opportunity to create a light up sign in Design Technology. As part of our project, we had to create a circuit using copper tape, a battery and a bulb in order for the sign to light up. This was so much fun and everybody's cards were amazing!

Our children say...

"I like learning about all the different places of Manchester and what parts are man-made and which are formed naturally."

"Maths has been very enjoyable and taught me a lot about money in everyday life. My favourite part was super market sweep because it was very competitive!"

"I really like the book Blue John and I have learnt some new words such as stalagmites, stalactites, limestone, era, Epoch and many more!"



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Year 5



This Half-Term...

This half term, we were lucky enough to be invited to The Barlow for 'Environment Day'. This was a fantastic day where the children were taught how to take care of their environment and even how to up-cycle food to make pizzas!

In English, we have been working on creative writing skills based on the book 'The Hunter'. The children have worked hard on their descriptive writing and have produced some wonderful stories for their write-away.

Year 5 children have been working hard in Design and Technology to research and design a pulley or lever system. Many children chose to create a flag pole with a pulley, using household items. It was great to see the final designs which the children could then evaluate in their booklets.

In Topic, we have been looking at the county of Lancashire. We have researched the human and physical features of Lancashire and compared them to similar sized regions in Europe. We also had great fun using Atlases to find the capital cities of neighbouring European countries!

Our children say...

"I liked going to The Barlow and especially making pizzas; it was good because usually you would just throw that food away but now I know how to make a pizza out of it."

"The Hunter has been my favourite book in English this year. I loved learning all about the elephants and being able to describe them in my writing."



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Year 6



This Half-Term...

The Year 6 production of Super Stan has been a huge part of our life at school. The children have loved performing, making props, designing the set and choreographing the dances. It was a fantastic team effort and we are bursting with pride.

During our History lessons, we explored a new topic 'Early Islamic Civilisation'. The children created a timeline of events and researched how Early Islamic Civilisation became such a major world power.

Year 6 children have become skilled and elegant gymnasts this half term due to their gymnastic lessons with Mr Borjus. They have developed their skills each week and performed to our Nursery children.

The children worked hard in groups to deliver a weather update for Spain during their Spanish lessons this half-term. These weather updates were amazing, a fantastic collaboration and involved very funny props!

Our children say...

"I enjoyed the production of 'Superstan' because it was really fun and creative!"

"It was great to learn new skills in gymnastics such as a handstand. I loved performing to Nursery too!"

"It was really interesting to learn about the inventions that formed the world during our History topic."



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Music with Mrs Dewsnap



It has been an absolute honour to be able to teach Music throughout the school and my role this year has enabled me to elevate Music teaching to another level with practical lessons that allow children to develop their skills creatively on tuned and percussion instruments with an understanding of Notation. The engagement, enthusiasm and progress in all classes has been tremendous and I am excited once again to be able to continue to teach Music to your children next year! (From Mrs Dewsnap)

Musical Learning in Key Stage One

Year 1 children have been musical 'superstars' as they always love singing, finding the pulse with percussion instruments and moving to music. They especially responded with excitement to 'Nautilus' by the composer Anna Meredith. You have all been GREAT to teach!

Year 2 children have been learning the Tin Whistle and enjoyed swinging along with Shostakovich! They are a wonderful singing group and showed off their talents in our KS1 Singing Square!



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Music with Mrs Dewsnap



Musical Learning in Lower KS2

Both Years 3 and 4 have taken part enthusiastically in learning the Ukulele and made great progress with this instrument. The children have learned chords to accompany Calypso Music, 'The Tango' and 'The Blues,' and have appreciated and listened to different music from many cultures including South Africa and America.



Children in both KS1 and KS2 have learned about composers past and present from Beethoven, Bob Marley and The Beatles to modern day women composers who have pioneered for gender equality including Anna Meredith and Shiva Feshereki. All our pupils took part confidently in our 'Singing Squares' this year. We welcomed our Spanish friends who delighted us with their rendition of the song 'Flowers' by Miley Cyrus. They were amazing and inspired us all to sing it!



Musical Learning in Upper KS2

Our pupils have had the experience of learning to play some tunes on the guitar and our Year 5 children have even accompanied our hymn singing brilliantly in church. Our Year 6 children had some awesome lessons using Music Technology to compose and perform incredible raps, wrote their own poetic lyrics and chose instrumental backgrounds as an accompaniment.



Choir and Music Tuition



Choir

Our wonderfully talented school choir has had an amazing year that has included our annual trip to sing with 8,000 other children from Manchester schools at the 'Young Voices' concert. It is always a spectacular event and never fails to please, especially this year as we were truly privileged to sing 'Proud' alongside Heather Small and were fortunate to have made a unique single with her of her iconic song! The choir has had an incredible time rocking it to Soul and Motown music at the prestigious Bridgewater Hall and many donned their 70's outfits to befit the occasion! Our children have also sung Christmas carols at 'The Parrswood Pub' for 'Didsbury Good Neighbours,' taken part in an open-air Nativity at Withington Baths and most recently have sung a medley of songs alongside other instrumentalists and performers at a Charity Concert in church in aid of 'OpenDoors', which raised £2000! Thank you children for all your effort and commitment to our school choir, particularly this year, and I know many of you now cannot wait to sing at a certain wedding in September!



Musical Tuition

We have been thrilled to expand our musical tuition this year. Mr Marks teaches woodwind group lessons within KS2 and we have just further expanded our private and shared piano tuition for next academic year with Mrs Hunt. We held a session for parents recently to show off what our children have been learning during their lessons and we can't wait to take this to a wider scale next year!

Student Leadership



We would like to thank all of our student leaders who have had a really positive impact on our school this year. From our play leaders and learning leaders to our GIFT and Caritas Teams and Laudato Si Council, we are blessed to have such driven and motivated children who want to make a difference not only to our school but to the world in which we live. We cannot wait to see the impact that our next set of student leaders will have next year. We hope lots of our children are already thinking about applying for some of our prestigious student leadership roles!



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Parent and Teacher Association (PTA)



Dear parents and carers,

Financial Update

Firstly, we wanted to start by saying a huge thank you for your generosity and support throughout this academic year. The funds we raise do make a meaningful difference to the children and school community. We say that everytime, but all funds that we raise go to the betterment of the school and we couldn't do it without you.

Rainbow Events- £1049.66 with 100% gift matched
Summer Fair- £5600 with gift match requested.
Bag2School raised £130.50 with guest match requested

We have therefore raised over £20,000 this academic year!

The PTA Committee met this week to discuss a full calendar of events commencing September 2023. We will be sharing full details of this upon return to school in the Autumn. The next PTA meeting will be in late September with the AGM in November where we will elect a new committee.

Ongoing events

As mentioned in previous updates, there are a number of easy fundraising opportunities listed below in which we encourage you to participate.

Your School Lottery

<https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/st-catherines-r-c-primary-school>
Lottery tickets cost £1 per week. For every ticket you play, 76% goes to our school and prizes. You could even win £25000!

Parent and Teacher Association (PTA)



Easy Fundraising

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stcatherinesdidsbury/>

You'll find big name retailers here like John Lewis, Amazon, Tesco, Currys, Asda, Iceland, eBay and Apple, all ready to help you raise more for your cause when you shop with them. So, whether you are school uniform, shoe shopping, or thinking ahead to Christmas, there are over 7,000 brands who will donate part of what you spend to Saint Catherine's. It won't cost you any extra. The cost is covered by the brand.

Gift Matching

Please check with your employer to see whether you are eligible for Gift Matching as part of the company benefit. Your contributions towards fundraising activities for the PTA can often be matched either in full or in part by your employer.

Thank you and have a great summer!

The PTA



Raise **FREE** funds
for us every time you
Shop online



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