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"God never gives someone a gift they are not capable of receiving. If he gives us the gift of Christmas, it is because we all have the ability to understand and receive it." [Pope Francis](#)

"Once in our world, a stable had something in it that was bigger than our whole world." [CS Lewis](#)

Our Values
for December
Holiness &
Purity

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School and Nursery

Issue 4

December 2017

As the Autumn term draws to a close, I would like to, on behalf of all the staff and Governors take this opportunity to wish everybody a peaceful and joyful Christmas and a very Happy New Year. We say a fond farewell to Mrs Akpuogwu and wish her and all her family well for the future. We welcome back to the school Ms Lue-Kong, who will be job sharing with Mrs Schneider in Year 3.

The children over the past few weeks have enjoyed a delicious Christmas lunch - eating turkey, ice-cream and reindeer biscuits as well as pulling crackers and reading the jokes. A very enjoyable meal was had with staff and children enjoying each other's company. The pantomime "Beauty and the Beast" was a great success with the children joining in with much "he's behind you" and booing and shouting as well as joining in the songs and actions - all part of the enjoyment! Although the staff were fairly deafened by the end.

The children have been busily posting letters in the Christmas post box and the Year 6 elves have been delivering them on a daily basis.

The Infant Nativity After practising the wriggling, learning their lines, the carols and dance routines "A Wriggly Nativity" was a resounding success with the children reading, acting and singing with much gusto and enthusiasm. A special mention must also be made for the narrators, musicians and the Reception children as twinkling and wriggling stars.



The Junior Carol Concert was a lovely and thought-provoking service, giving us time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. Our special thanks must go to Mr Bramley for the music, the choir, narrators, drummers and our marvellous ukulele players. All the children and staff worked tirelessly to produce such amazing performances. A wonderful and well-attended afternoon performance.



The children have also had the opportunity to take part in **Advent Reflection Services** in the Hub - which was transformed to a wonderful reflective room, with candles, music and incense. The children had the opportunity to listen to the Gospel readings and pray quietly and reflectively together.

The Christingle Service was an excellent opportunity for Year 3 to celebrate the coming of Christ, the light, into the world. The children used oranges to create visible symbols of the Christian message. Their singing, narration and praying reinforced the importance of Christ's coming at Christmas.



Carols on Bellingham Green: St Augustine's Choir represented the school at Bellingham Green Community Carol Service on Monday 4th December. A number of local schools and organisations attended the event including Sedgehill School Orchestra, who provided excellent accompaniment to the carols. Our choir have worked hard under the guidance of Ms Walcott and Mr Bramley and sung clearly and beautifully. It was wonderful to be part of an event supported by the local community, The Mayor of Lewisham and Churches Together.



The Nursery children loved the freezing weather last week and enjoyed being outside wearing their warm winter coats. The dinosaurs had been trapped in the ice and the children worked together to find out how they could free them. They used spoons and spatulas to smash the ice. They then spent the rest of the morning exploring and finding ice in lots of different places. The children were hoping for snow to fall as well - unfortunately so far no snow but plenty of ice.

Year 1 children have been "Maths wizards" The children have been learning the names of 3D shapes and how to describe them for example using faces, vertices and edges. As a class they hunted for the shapes and had to describe them and played shape detective, where the children had to guess what shape was being described. The children investigated how 3D shapes can be made from nets, how you can join some 3d shapes together and how you can sort them into groups.



The Reception children have been having a wonderful time celebrating Jesus's birthday. Last week they celebrated by making jelly and finishing the week with a dance birthday party. It had been a very busy week with the Nativity play. The children felt very proud of their performance. Thank you to all parents for bringing in the costumes.

Year 6 have spent this term going across to Beckenham Place Park (every Thursday afternoon) to develop their cycling skills especially their BMX skills. This has been a marvellous opportunity for the children and has certainly made them all fitter and healthier. Steph Walters, the BMX Coordinator, wrote the following,

"I just wanted to say a massive thank you for the letters that the children wrote to the BMX team for their sessions, they were lovely and little things like this really do put a smile on our faces! I am so glad they enjoyed their sessions and I do hope some of them will continue at the local club.

The coaches had great things to say about the Year 6 class and I was passed on that the groups enthusiasm made them a pleasure to teach. It has been great to work with your school over the past two terms and I do hope that we have the chance to work together again next year with more year groups".

On Thursday November 30th, Year 5 went to visit St. Paul's Cathedral. The children learnt a lot about what materials parts of the Cathedral are made of; why some of the parts are wooden while some are gold-coated iron; they also had a Q&A sheet (question and answer sheet) to fill in. Firstly, the children went up to the top balcony. There were so many steps, their legs felt like jelly at the end of it all. They went up there to look around, see the view and to see if a myth was true. There is a myth that if you whispered into one end of the room's wall, you could hear it from the other side, and guess what, it is true! It works because your small echo travels around the room and hits the other person. At first they were a little impatient. Mr Headley-Morris told the children that this is because they are so used to text messages and e-mails coming and going from device to device instantly. After a while, the children started to hear the voices of the other children from across the room. They were absolutely amazed and Mr Headley - Morris was rather "freaked out" a bit!

After that, the children had to start answering more questions. The questions directed them to specific places in clue form - almost like a treasure hunt!

We had a splendid time and I hope to go there again. I knew a lot more at the end than when I arrived, and the hosts were very pleasant! I really enjoyed that trip. I might as well call it the best trip ever! ~ Michael

The basketball festival held at Bonus Pastor on 30th November was a fun action packed tournament with some amazing basketball skills. Four schools played in a round robin tournament. The winners were Good Shepherd who scored a total of 28 baskets! The results were very close, and it was only in the last round that the team took first place by one point. The atmosphere was exciting and tense with many parents, carers, teachers and friends cheering their teams on! The players all thoroughly enjoyed themselves and enjoyed meeting pupils from other schools. Several pupils should consider attending Lewisham Thunders Basketball club as they showed excellent talent. The club has a junior section for primary pupils every Saturday morning at 10am and every Tuesday evening at 5pm at Forest Hill School. This club is an excellent exit route for boys and girls to attend in a safe and friendly environment. Our thanks must go to Ms McGuire and Ms Baker for taking the children and encouraging them throughout as well as all the parents who attended.



The school is very appreciated of all the hard work from the PSA. I sometimes hear parents say they don't know what the PSA actually does, who they are, when they meet and whether YOU can attend. They appear to be like this invisible force that just 'makes things happen!!' Unless you are involved, you are unaware of the amount of work that is involved. The PSA always needs volunteers - so just either contact Michelle Coutinho in the playground or leave your name at the office. The PSA so far organised the film night which was a great success, the Christmas raffle (amazing prizes) and the children have the school disco to look forward to on Tuesday 19th. The PSA have paid for the pantomime and contributed to buying school equipment which is invaluable during these educational cuts.

The Bags2School will be collecting your old clothes on the **18 January 2018**. Bags will be given out on our return. So start sorting through your wardrobe after Christmas.

Our School Governors are truly amazing. The Governing Body is responsible for working with the school to ensure that it continues to deliver an outstanding education and that the Catholic Faith remains at the centre of school life. Together with the headteacher, who is responsible for day-to-day management, they set the school's aims and policies. The Governors, despite working full time, dedicate time and commitment to help drive school improvement and the passion and ambition to achieve the best possible education for our children. Our parent Governors, Mr Coutinho and Mr Noirtin, can often be seen in the playground and Mr O'Shea (Chair of Governors) is a frequent visitor to the school meeting with the children and staff.

Safer Internet Day 2018 will be celebrated globally on Tuesday 6th February 2018 with the slogan "Create, Connect and Share Respect: A better internet starts with you". Check our school website - it has guides for parents and carers on how to help keep your child safe online. Remember it is important to have regular conversations with your child about the online world. This will help you to understand what they experience and give you an opportunity to support them and reassure them that you are always there to help.



Future Diary Dates: more dates will follow

20 December School finishes at 2pm

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|------------|----------------------------------|
| 3 January | Start of term |
| 8 January | Mass 10:45am |
| 15 January | Closing date for Reception place |
| 16 January | School photographs |
| 18 January | Bags2School |
| 19 January | Yr 1 Assembly |
| Term dates | 3 January—29 March 2018 |
| | Half term 12-16 February |

To encourage musical appreciation, our focus during December will be on Christmas Carols and music from around the world.



Gentle Reminders:

- ◆ Have you paid any money owing for school dinners
- ◆ During the holidays remember to encourage your child to read daily
- ◆ Monitor your children when they are using the internet

This newsletter and other links are available on our website

www.staugustines.lewisham.sch.uk

