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# St Agnes' Weekly News

*The family of St Agnes loves, learns and grows together as followers  
of Jesus.*

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## DECEMBER

21st - Early closing 1:45pm

21st December - 5th January  
- Christmas holidays

## JANUARY

8th - School reopens for  
children and staff

11th & 12th - Years 3 & 4  
Bikeability Level 1

15th - 19th Years 5 & 6  
Bikeability Week

19th - St Agnes' Feast Day

23rd - Year 3 trip to St  
Albans

23rd - Year 1 Trip to BAPS  
Shri Swaminarayan

24th - Year 2 Tower of  
London Trip

26th - Parent Forum 9am

26th - Year 6 Mass 2:30pm

29th - Athlete Freya Levy  
school visit

Dear Parents,

### Advent Week 3

During mass on Sunday this week we will watch the candle being lit on the Advent wreath. This time it is traditionally the pink candle which is set alight signifying it is 'Gaudete Sunday' meaning REJOICE. We are reminded that on this Sunday we are filled with joy at the coming of Christ in his human form and we look forward with hope and love to the joy of Christmas. The entrance Antiphon that you will hear in church on Sunday is Phillipians 4: 4, 5 which says 'Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I say rejoice'. By now we should be well down our Advent path of prayer and getting ready to receive the Christ Jesus, we have only one more week to go until then.

Once again in school this week we were pleased to welcome parents into our Year 3 and 4 carol service on Tuesday. This was a super event with the children telling us the Christmas story through carols and scripture readings. Our Year 5 and 6 pupils completed our Christmas offering to parents in the parish church on Wednesday evening - again a beautiful rendition of the greatest story ever told through song and drama. There is something so special and atmospheric about being in church hearing these carols that is hard to put into words - I know we all felt it. My sincere thanks goes to the staff and pupils for preparing so well and for the parents who came and supported the children.

FOSA were once again busy this week with setting up Santa's Grotto which took place yesterday in school. A sincere thanks to those parents (I think you were Santa's Elves) who gave of their time to help create this special event and in particular to Indy who had the original idea and assisted with gifts. Of course we must thank Santa (Fr Christmas himself) as we are delighted that he could take time out of his busy schedule and travel from the North Pole to be with us and spend the day with us, meeting children to give them their gift. As always FOSA paid for a special treat for the pupils from both Nursery and Reception - who thankfully were all on his 'nice' list and no names were on the 'naughty' list!

Wishing you all a great weekend,

Susan O'Reilly



Please see the information below where you can celebrate the weekly gospel at home with your family.

<https://www.paperturn-view.com/uk/wednesday-word/christmas-holiday-special?pid=MTA101634&v=114.2>

### **Parents in School - Safeguarding**

For safeguarding reasons parents are not permitted to enter the school beyond the Reception area at any time of day unless they are arriving for a scheduled appointment.

This is the case for all schools. I have been made aware that a number of parents are entering the school building particularly at drop off or pick up times and when a member of staff has reminded them of the rule they have not been happy. Parents should only enter the school via the main Reception area.

Staff are asked by myself to be vigilant to keep all of our children safe and part of this relates to parents in the building. Thank you for adhering to this and our safeguarding request.

Mrs O'Reilly

### **Christmas Card Competition Winner**

This week we were delighted to have an award ceremony for Fatima 4D. Fatima's design was chosen as 'highly commended' and appears on the inside cover of MP Mike Freer's cards this year.

A very big congratulations to Fatima!

Miss Batchelor (Art and DT Lead)



### **Christmas Holidays**

Please note that we break up on **Thursday 21st December at 1.45pm** and return to school on Monday 8th January. Please ensure that you have noted the early finish time on the last day and ensure your child is collected on time. It is always distressing for a child to be kept waiting for a parent when everyone else is gone.

All children are expected to be in school on the last day of term and the first day of the new Spring term.

### **KS1 Winter Sports Festival**

On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December, children from Year 1 and Year 2 took part in a Winter Sports Festival at Saracens. They had the opportunity to work at different stations and were introduced to a variety of activities which involved throwing, balance and accuracy. All the children had a lovely time. Thank you to Elizabeth and Kerry for taking them.



Miss McSweeney

### **Reception Trip**

Last week, Reception went on their first school trip of the year to the Arts Depot. They watched a very special performance of 'Dear Santa' and were lucky to receive a gift at the end!



Gianna: my favourite bit was the Santa

Amelia Jane I liked the Santa giving all the presents

Martina: I love when he was singing jingle bells

Zoe D: When the elf was flying the kite that was so funny

Eva - We're waiting for the bus I am so excited

Raffie - I hope the elf can read us a story!

Kiara - I like the cat gift

Kaia - I saw Santa!

Miss Bashid





Congratulations! We're pleased to say that the following children from St Agnes have made it through to the next stage of BBC 500 Words:

The Search for the Ultimate Cinnamon Roll: An Epic Journey by Savannah 5M

Santa by Daniel 3G

Ella and The Ghost Curse by Amelia 3C

The Day the Aliens land by Charlie 2M

500 words received thousands of entries and only around 5,000 go through for the second round of judging by the Reading Agency. We are very proud!

They'll be back in touch with an update when they have selected our shortlisted stories in January.

Good Luck

Mrs Gale

### **Lost Uniform**

Parents - we have a huge amount of uniform in our lost property box.

Staff have looked through this and have noted that a lot of the items are not labelled and have no means of identification to return them to their owners. Please can you ensure that all uniform is clearly labelled and preferably not in pen which tends to wash off over time.

If you purchase uniform through our second hand sales, please ensure that the new owner's name is put on it.

Thank you

Mrs O'Reilly

### **Dr Bike**

Barnet Council's Parking team has arranged free Dr Bike sessions run by qualified bicycle mechanics in December. Members of the public can take along their bicycles to have a free, full safety check, which includes the condition of tyres, rims, gears, brake function and tyre pressure and adjustments can be made if required.

The sessions will take place on the following dates between 9am and 3pm.

Watling Avenue Car Park, Burnt Oak, HA8	16/12/2023
Lodge Lane Car Park, North Finchley, N12	17/12/2023
Marsh Drive Car Park, West Hendon, NW7	23/12/2023
Stapylton Car Park, Barnet, EN5	30/12/2023

**Note:** Both adult and child bicycles can have the free safety check.



# Preparing the Church for Christmas



On Thursday, the Social Action Leaders and Deputies (except for Olivier N and Alicja as they were representing the school choir) all attended the Church to help to prepare it for the festivities over Christmas.

They helped to polish the pews, tidy up the bookshelf and the hymn books, sweep up the leaves in the foyer, sort the candles so they are easier to pick up.

They did a fantastic job and what a selfless act to support the Church and the local Community in the run-up to the busy time of Christmas.



*Miss Blooman*

### **Year 6 School Trip Bentley Priory Museum**

On Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December, Year 6 had the pleasure of visiting Bentley Priory Museum. It was an incredible day out as this was the exact location where The Battle of Britain was won! To get there, we had a long journey.

We left at roughly 9:15am and walked to the nearest bus stop. We took the bus to Willesden Green train station. From there we had about 7 stops before reaching Stanmore. Once we arrived at Stanmore, we had to take another bus to our final destination.

When we arrived, we met the staff and split into groups. 6M started the day off with a tour of the fascinating museum. We learnt that the Bentley Priory Museum was where the headquarters of the RAF was and where the Dowding System took place. Without this astonishing system, we wouldn't have won the war. We also learnt how to plot enemy aircraft in the air. We went into the operating room where there was a giant map and various coding systems to inform the pilots of the location of other aircraft.

It was an amazing experience and we would definitely recommend going again.

Miss McSweeney



### **House Captains Bunting**

At the beginning of December the House Captains organised Christmas bunting to be delivered to the Royal free Charity. Here are some lovely photos that have been sent back to us with a massive thank you from the Hospital staff and patients.

Miss Bashid





### *Choir Trip to Magnolia Court*

Some members of our newly formed St Agnes Choir brought the joy of Christmas to the residents of Magnolia Court this week. It was a wonderful time for all involved and a great experience for the children.

Miss Duggan

Today we went to Magnolia Court which is a residential care home for elderly people. We went to sing them Christmas Carols and spread some Christmas cheer. We all had a great time and all the residents loved watching us because they don't usually get lots of children visiting them. However, they were not the only ones loving the time -as we all loved it too!

Poppy-Mae

When we arrived, I was worried the Magnolia Court residents wouldn't like us. To my surprise, when I introduced who we were, they smiled and were pleased. I was happy to know that I made their day and some of the elderly were singing along! It was truly a great experience and I hope I get the opportunity again!

Kristiana





# 12 Top Tips for Children and Young People to Enjoy a TECH-FREE CHRISTMAS

The Christmas holidays are tailor made for families to enjoy relaxed quality time in each other's company – but with distractions like pinging phone notifications, the lure of games consoles and online Boxing Day sales, that can be more difficult than it sounds. Staying off our phones, laptops and tablets, however, can really help us to appreciate the things that genuinely matter at this special time of year. Follow our 12 top tips for a tech-free festive season... Yule be glad you did! Merry Christmas!

## CHRISTMAS CRAFTING

Get out the paper, glue and scissors and have a go at hand-making cards or gift tags. You could also create your own decorations to add a uniquely personal touch to the Christmas tree.

## NATURE QUEST

Try a scavenger hunt in the garden or your local park. Challenge yourself and your family to find natural treasures that are symbolic of this time of year – like holly or pinecones, say.

## CAROL KARAOKE

Sing your hearts out with a Christmas carol karaoke night. Pick out your favourite tunes and enjoy a musical celebration with family and friends.

## WANDER DOWN MEMORY LANE

How about making a scrapbook filled with your favourite memories from Christmases gone by? Unleash your creativity while you enjoy reliving those magical holiday moments.

## TRY REFLECTIVE JOURNALLING

Jot down your thoughts, feelings and reflections on the holiday in a notebook or diary – you could also list some of your main goals for the new year.

## WRAP IT UP

Take time to get inventive with some luxurious gift wrapping. Break out the wrapping paper, ribbons and bows to make parcelling up those presents into a creative adventure.

## WALK IN A WINTER WONDERLAND

Delight in the great outdoors with some gentle walks over the holiday. The family can all wrap up warm as you add to your step count and savour the crisp winter air together.

## BE A SEASONAL CHEF

Get the whole family working together in the kitchen for some Christmas cooking. Choose a recipe and whip up a festive feast that all of you can enjoy.

## ENJOY A CHRISTMAS STORY

Christmas is a perfect time for sparking stories. Get cosy and lose yourself in a brilliant book, from Dickens to Dr Seuss or a more modern favourite by Chris van Allsburg or Tom Fletcher.

## SNOWY SCULPTURES

If we're fortunate enough to get a white Christmas this year, make the most of the opportunity by having a family snowman-building competition.

## GAMES NIGHT GALA

Dive into some old-school fun with a tech-free games night. Classic board games and card games have stood the test of time for a reason!

## GOODWILL TO ALL

You and your family could spend a day volunteering – perhaps at a food bank or helping a local charity. After all, kindness and thinking of others are part of what Christmas is all about.

## Meet Our Expert

Wendy Arnold designs and delivers the only specialist postgraduate mental health qualifications. They also provide training and support to education organisations and local authorities – empowering school leaders and staff with the knowledge and tools to shape their settings into inclusive communities where the mental health of pupils and personnel is a priority.



The  
National  
College



National  
Online  
Safety

#WakeUpWednesday



Class	Star of the Week
1B	Lesego
1Z	Rien
2C	Carmel
2M	Zara
3C	Jessica
3G	Juliana
4AM	Eric
4D	Ché
5M	Oliwier
5P	Francesca
6M	Yuliia
6S	Julia
TT Rockstars	Riley 5M
Reading Eggs	Class 2M Caddie 1Z
AFS	KS1 Jordan 1B KS2 Luisa 6S

Weekly Attendance		
Class	Attendance %	Number of Lates
RB	88	0
RS	97	0
1B	90	3
1Z	88	3
2C	96	0
2M	93	1
3C	97	1
3G	90	1
4AM	94	1
4D	99	2
5M	97	0
5P	96	3
6M	96	3
6S	95	6
School Target 97.5%		

### Safeguarding

The wellbeing of our children is of paramount importance to all staff. Should any person (parent or staff) have a concern regarding a child's wellbeing, please inform one of the school safeguarding team (Mrs O'Reilly, Mrs Hourihan, Mrs Gale, Mrs Breslin or our Chair of Governors Gill Abbott). In cases where school staff have concerns, they have a duty to discuss the issue with Social Services to seek further advice. This is the statutory obligation of all schools.

### Birthdays up to 17th December 2023

11th Lesego 1B  
13th Celia 6S  
14th Alex 2M  
15th Aleah 4AM



### Thought of the Week

'There is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it.'

Amanda Gorman

