



Dear SAS parents and carers,

As we reach the end of our first half-term, it's wonderful to reflect on what a successful and enjoyable start we've had to the school year. It has been a blessing to see how well the children have settled into their new classes and routines, bringing energy and enthusiasm to each day.

Welcoming New Staff This term, we have had the pleasure of welcoming new staff members to our school community including Miss Dabica, Miss Joseph, Mrs Rindfleisch, Mrs Rose, Miss Rowson and Mrs Xeni. We also look forward to connecting and working more closely with other local Catholic schools as we welcome our new Executive Head, Mrs Wilson, who is also Head of Divine Saviour Catholic Primary. Each new staff member brings unique gifts and talents that are already enriching our children's experience. Sadly, we have said goodbye to our school crossing patrol, Mr Jackson and also to Mr Green (Mr Albi), our assistant premises manager. We are grateful to them both for their cheerful hard work, and we wish them every blessing for the future.

Autumn Fair Success A highlight of this term was our annual PTA Autumn Fair, a fantastic event that brought together families, staff, and friends of the school in celebration. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of the PTA and their tireless volunteers, visitors to the fair enjoyed a range of stalls, fun activities and delicious food and drink. It was heartwarming to see everyone enjoying themselves while supporting our school. In total, the Autumn Fair raised an amazing £3500, which will go directly toward enhancing our school environment and learning resources and providing memorable experiences for our pupils. Thank you for to the PTA and to everyone else who supported the Fair for your continued generosity and involvement in our community.

Trip and Visits Our curriculum has already been enriched by some exciting trips this term, allowing children to learn beyond the classroom. Year 6 had an incredible time on their residential trip to the Isle of Wight, where they built confidence, teamwork skills, and friendships while enjoying adventurous activities and exploring the stunning coastline. Meanwhile, Year 2 experienced the grandeur of London with a visit to the State Rooms in Buckingham Palace. The children have also had great opportunities for exploration closer to home. Year 1 visited Clarence Park after looking at maps of the area as part of their Geography topic.



Catholic Life

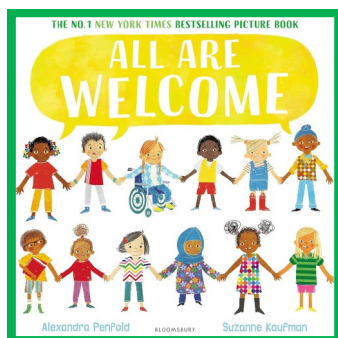
Welcome Mass for the Start of the Year We were blessed to begin the term with a beautiful Welcome Mass, where we came together as a school community to give thanks for the start of a new academic year and to celebrate God's love. Year 6 led the readings and prayers with great reverence, helping to set a positive and prayerful tone for the year ahead. The Pupil Chaplaincy Team were also commissioned and blessed as they begin their new roles. Thank you to Father Michael for leading our Mass and reminding us all to live out the words of our School Prayer every single day: 'Help us to be the best that we can be'.



St Teresa's House Celebration In September, St Teresa's House pupils enjoyed wearing their House colour of yellow and celebrating their special Saint's Day with worship, singing and a sweet treat!

Harvest Festival Our Catholic Social Teaching topic this half term was Community and Participation. We lived out this principle during our Harvest collection, when food and toiletries generously donated by school families were given to the St Albans Foodbank.

One Million Children Praying the Rosary In October, children across the school joined an initiative called One Million Children Pray the Rosary, organised by Aid to the Church in Need. Many children brought in their own rosaries and engaged wholeheartedly in prayer, offering their hopes and intentions to Mary for peace in the world. Children of other faiths were encouraged to meditate and reflect on world peace in their own way. Joining in with a worldwide movement to unite with other children in prayer was a very powerful experience.



All Are Welcome and Black History Week We have shared this lovely book to set our theme for the year as we strive to promote justice, equality and diversity over the coming terms. The words of the book sum up our hopes for the year:

***We're part of a community. Our strength is our diversity.
A shelter from adversity. All are welcome here."***

During Black History Week, in lessons and during assemblies, we learnt about and celebrated the contributions of black individuals and communities throughout history and in our present day. Staff and pupils gained a deeper appreciation for the rich diversity within our own school and local community.

School Development Plan Parents who attended our Coffee Morning last week had a preview of our 2024-25 School Development Plan. This strategic document is created using the previous year's feedback from pupils, parents, staff, governors and inspectors. Our School Development Plan sets out our aims for the year, giving everyone an understanding of where the school is going and the actions we will take to ensure we get there. We will update you regularly on progress towards achieving our goals.

AREA	KEY PRIORITY	OBJECTIVE
1. CATHOLIC LIFE & R.E.	Prayer & Liturgy	To implement and evaluate a range of ways of praying across the school.
2. QUALITY OF EDUCATION	Improving teaching using evidence-based principles	To embed Rosenshine's principles of instruction consistently across the school to ensure good or better progress for all pupils.
3. BEHAVIOUR & ATTITUDES	Developing positive attitudes	To continue to ensure that all pupils behave consistently well, demonstrating self-control and highly positive attitudes to their education.
4. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	Promoting justice, equality & diversity	To continue to promote justice, equality and diversity irrespective of race, ethnicity, gender, culture, or background.
5. LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT	Empowering effective and stable leadership	To fully empower all leaders so that they are accountable and effective in their respective roles.
6. EARLY YEARS	Personal, Social and Emotional Development.	To continue to enhance continuous provision in the outdoor environment to promote good Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) and Literacy.

Parent Volunteers We have regular volunteers who support with reading and in our School Library. If you can spare some time each week and would like to help, please contact Mrs Bates via admin@ssas.herts.sch.uk. Green-fingered parents and grandparents can also join our Volunteer Days once each half term, working alongside Miss Sophia, our environmental tutor to improve the school grounds. Thank you to the keen volunteers who worked with their children last week to transform the pond area, build and plant flower beds and boxes and tidy and repair our plastic bottle greenhouse.



Online Safety– Smartphone-Free School At St Alban & St Stephen, we are aiming to become a smartphone-free school. We encourage all parents not to give their child a smartphone while they are in primary school. If you would like to find out more, come along to our parent coffee morning at 9am on November 13th. More information about the Smartphone-free Childhood campaign can be found at: <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/>. You can also sign up to the Parent Pact here: <https://parentpact.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/>

Attendance Our current whole school attendance for this year so far is **96.6%** (National average=95.2%). As we move into the season of coughs and colds, follow NHS guidelines <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>, or phone to ask for advice if you are not sure whether to send your child into school or not. Remember that due to new Government guidance, our attendance policy has changed: <https://www.ssas.herts.sch.uk/school-information/attendance/>.

We look forward to continuing the journey through this term with Advent preparations, assemblies, and our Christmas celebrations—all chances for our children to grow spiritually as well as academically. Please keep an eye on the school calendar for upcoming events and key dates.

With best wishes,

T. Hackett

Ms T. Hackett, Head of School