



December 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope this newsletter finds you well. We are nearly coming to the end of our autumn term and 2025. Please take some time to read the school newsletter with key information and dates.



Catholic School Pupil Profile

For this half term we focused on the virtues of *Learned* and *Wise*. Pupils are growing in knowing the liturgical year and the way we can choose to live our lives to serve God and to serve others. *Learned*, finding God in all things; and *wise* in the ways we use our learning for the common good.

Catholic Social Teaching

For this half term we focused on the teaching of *Solidarity and the Common Good*. Pupils are growing in their understanding of the teachings of God and how to apply the teachings to their everyday life in order to make *wise* choices.



What does this mean?

Catholic schools help their pupils grow by being a school community which is *learned* in its way of proceeding to build-up quality of life; and which is *wise* in the way it offers an alternative vision of education and the human person rooted in the Gospel



The Pope's Prayer Intentions for December

In December, let us pray with Pope Leo for Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, to be seeds of peace, reconciliation and hope. 'May the Jubilee remind us that peacemakers will be called 'children of God'.

Live Simply

During this time of Advent, many of us will be sending Christmas cards to one another to share the joy of the birth of Christ. We implore you to think about sending e-cards this year as a way to live *sustainably* and be stewards of our common home.



Advent

We are in the season of Advent which is a liturgical season consisting of four Sundays leading up to Christmas and ending on Christmas Eve. It is an Old English word coming from the Latin *adventus* (arrival) or *advenire* (to come). It is a special time dedicated to the remembrance of Jesus' coming as a baby over 2,000 years ago. Christians across the world prepare to celebrate the arrival of the Lord into the world through the birth of His son Jesus Christ. Advent is a time to celebrate light in the midst of darkness.

During the season of advent we have been focussing on sharing Hope, Love & Joy through networking with charities and our chosen charity has been Father Hudson's to support those in need...

**THE DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE WARMLY
INVITES YOU TO SUPPORT OUR 2024
REVERSE ADVENT
CALENDAR**

Throughout Advent, every child, young person and member of staff in a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Birmingham is invited to show their love and support for those in need by contributing at least one item to the diocesan Reverse Advent Calendar.

This year we are collecting toiletries which will be donated to Father Hudson's Caritas to support people living on the streets or those arriving new to the country as asylum seekers or refugees. Father Hudson's Caritas is desperately in need of the following items:

- ◆ Deodorant
- ◆ Body wash
- ◆ Sanitary products
- ◆ Toothpaste
- ◆ Toothbrushes

◆ ...or any other hygiene products you would like to donate

Please add an item or two to your weekly shop during Advent and add it to your school Reverse Advent Calendar.

I wish to send my sincere thanks and gratitude to you all for your support and contributions to our chosen charity as well as towards our school winter fete.

Thank you for making a difference!

Winter Fete

Thank you so much to all of you who came and supported our winter fete on Saturday. It was wonderful to see so many of you there with us. We were lucky enough to even have a visit from the deputy mayor!

A huge congratulations and well done to our amazing PTA team who made it all possible. What an enormous success!



PE Lessons

Physical Education is an important part of our school curriculum. Please ensure that your child has their PE kits and swimming kits in school ready to take part in PE lessons.

These are the times and dates for after Christmas :

| Year group | Day of the week | Activity |
|-------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Reception - | Monday afternoon Tuesday afternoon | Sports coach Teacher leading |
| Year 1 - | Monday afternoon Friday afternoon | Sports coach Teacher leading |
| Year 2 - | Monday morning Wednesday afternoon | Sports coach Teacher leading |
| Year 3 - | Monday - morning Thursday afternoon | Sports coach Teacher leading |
| Year 4 - | Monday - SWIMMING Tuesday afternoon | Swimming Teacher leading |
| Year 5 - | Monday morning Friday afternoon | Sports coach Teacher leading |
| Year 6 - | Monday morning Wednesday afternoon | Sports Coach Teacher leading |

A reminder that for the Spring term, children should come to school **wearing their PE kit (tracksuit)** on their designated PE day listed above. PE kit to school – this should consist of **a plain white T-shirt and black/blue/grey joggers, school jumper or cardigan pumps or sensible trainers**. I would like to remind you that this is the only agreed PE kit in school. We have some other clothing that is not described as our PE kits. Please could you help us monitor this upon return in January 2026. Children will receive dojos for wearing the correct kit.

Healthy Choices

We continue to be proud of our Platinum Healthy School Award. **Please support your children to make healthy choices for break times and at lunchtimes in their lunch boxes.** Please choose the children's snacks with a careful thought. We are seeing a rise in unhealthy snacks across school. Please check your child's lunchboxes and this will give you an indication of how much your child has eaten. Please note that school provides a piece of fruit at breaktime for your child. Thank you for your support.



Healthy Snacks

A gentle reminder! Please take note of the snacks your child is bringing into school. Please help and encourage your child to choose a healthy snack – instead of big bags of crisps and sweets. There is a rise in pupils bringing in big bags of crisps and sweets. We see the effect this has on children throughout the day with their sugar levels. Thank you for your support.

Wraparound

Please see below details of or Wraparound before and after school. Please contact the School Office for more details.

Contact Details



It is important that school has your updated contact details. **If you have changed your contact details, please pop into the office and let the school know.** We want to ensure that we can contact you directly in the case of an emergency or if your child falls ill or has an injury at school during the school day. You can also update your own details in Arbor.

Thank you

Parent Workshops

After great success with Year 5's parent workshop and Reception's story time afternoon we are excited to open our doors to you all in other classes too!

Keep a look out for we will be providing more opportunities for parents to join us in school to support your children with their learning and in turn understand our curriculum better.

Dates for January workshops:

Reception RWI (phonics) workshop – Wednesday 21st January 2026

Year 1 RWI (phonics) workshop – Wednesday 14th January 2026

St Philip's
Catholic Primary School
Messenger Road,
Smethwick, B66 3DU

Tel: 0121 558 1643
www.st-philips.sandwell.sch.uk
Principal: Mrs Carmel Hinton

Part of the Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company

Private Limited Company of Charitable Status within the Archdiocese of Birmingham
Registered in England and Wales Company No 09174154





Attendance

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Please ensure that you endeavour to get your child to school and in on time for **8:50 am**. The playground opens at **8:40am and the official start to the school day is 8:50 am**. If your child arrives to school after the registers close, they will receive a late mark that is recorded on your child's attendance record. **If your child is ill and is unable to come to school, you must call school on the first day of their absence (and any further days) to inform the school office of the reason for the absence.** Any medical appointments that are unavoidable in school hours must show proof of appointment to the school office. The school office number is 0121 558 1643.

On the third consecutive day of any absence, school will carry out a welfare check via telephone or a home visit.

If your child's attendance drops below 85% then you will be invited to a meeting with school staff such as the Learning Mentor, Attendance Officer or Vice Principal to offer support with improving your child's attendance.

Any further meetings with regards to attendance concerns below 80% will be escalated to the Principal.

Please also remember that taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling and we ask for your co-operation to not take your child away in school time as this will be UNAUTHORISED and you could be at risk of a fine from the Local Authority of Sandwell.

Safeguarding

We are dedicated to safeguarding our young people at St Philip's Catholic Primary School. If you have any concerns with safeguarding, then please speak with a member of staff or myself and we will endeavour to help and support.

Could I please request that if your child has an injury that has happened at home or outside of school could you please be so kind to let us know. Telling us would avoid myself from contacting you unnecessarily. If you do have a concern or would like to talk to someone in confidence about a safeguarding concern, then I am the Designated Safeguarding leader (DSL) in school. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer is **Mrs Anslow** and Safeguarding Officers are **Miss Reaney and Mr Padaton**. Our safeguarding policy is available on our website to help and support you with how safeguarding works in our local authority of Sandwell and the Multi academy Company of the Emmaus MAC.

Nursery places — Please see the information below!

We have nursery places available now! We can offer a nursery place to your child when **YOUR CHILD TURNS 3 YEARS OLD** or will be within the current term, please get in contact and we will be happy to support with completing the application forms and supporting you and your child.



St Philip's Catholic Primary School
Learning and working together through Christ

Nursery Places Available
FREE 30 HOURS
FOR WORKING PARENTS

Ring us now on 0121 558 1643 to find out more
Messenger Road, Smethwick, B66 3DU



Please note!

You can now apply for a Reception School place in September 2026.

The closing date for applications is 15 January 2026

Any applications received after this will be treated as a late application. You can apply for a place to start Reception in September 2026 if your child's date of birth falls between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022. Please see the link below to apply for a Reception place.

www.sandwell.gov.uk/school-admissions/applying-reception

Keep in touch

We are here to serve you, and it is our pleasure to help. Your child's safety, happiness and academic progress are the reason why every single member of staff is here. If you are concerned about any aspect of school life – no matter how small – it's really important to let us know. The sooner we know about things the sooner we can do our best to sort things out. The teachers and teaching assistants can take quick messages on the door before and after school – if you need a longer, private conversation please call the school and the member of staff that you need to speak with will be in contact with you.

Change of circumstances

It's important for us to know that if your personal circumstance have changed you may be entitled to Free School meals. You can help the school to access precious funding for years to come (called Pupil Premium) by registering for free school meals. Please apply for free school meals if you are on a low income and/or receive benefits. As well as receiving a free school meal every day (if you choose to take it) you will generate significant funding for our school for many years to come – finding that is all spent on better provision for the children. If you think that you may qualify, please pop into school and speak to Mrs Slater.

Our School Website/Social Media

Please remember to visit our school website which is full of useful and up to date information. Please log on and have a look. You can post a message on the guest book page to let us know your thoughts and take a look at our Twitter (X): STP_School and Instagram: stphilipsprimary and Facebook: St Philip's Catholic Primary School. The address is : www.st-philips.sandwell.sch.uk/

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Dates For Diary 2025-2026

| Term Dates | Activity |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Friday 19 th December 2025 | Term ends for Christmas at 3:00pm |
| Monday 5 th January 2026 | Children return back to School |
| Friday 13 th February 2026 | Children break up for half term |
| Monday 23 rd February 2026 | Children return back to School |
| Friday 27 th March 2026 | Children break up for Easter |
| Monday 13 th April 2026 | Children return back to School |
| Monday 4 th May 2026 | May Day Bank Holiday – School Closed |
| Tuesday 5 th May 2025 | Children return to School |
| Friday 22 nd May 2026 | Children break up for half term |
| Monday 1 st June 2026 | Children return to School |
| Sunday 6 th June 2026 | Sacrament of First Holy Communion at St Philip Neri Church at 09:30am Mass |
| Friday 17 th July 2026 | Children break up for Summer |
| Monday 20 th July 2026 | Training day school closed |

PLEASE NOTE !

- *Inset Day:* Friday 26th June 2026
- *Inset Day:* Monday 20th July 2026

Goodbyes

Sadly, as we break up for Christmas, we say goodbye to Mr Raj who is teaching Year 5 with Mrs Anslow. We are so sad to see him leave us, but we wish him all the best on his endeavour. We have all wished him well and send our prayers with him.

Year 5 will be welcoming a new teacher alongside Mrs Anslow after Christmas. Mrs Nelson who is looking forward to meeting you all in the new year.
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ST PHILIP'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



What a beautiful festive period the children of St Philip's have created over this last week of term! The productions from EYFS to Year 6 were outstanding and we couldn't be prouder of them all.

A massive well done to all the amazing children and staff who put their hard work into making them as fantastic as they were.

Thank you to all parents who came to be an engaged audience and supported your children.

Wishing you and your families every good wish for a lovely Christmas and New Year in 2026.

God Bless

Mrs C Hinton
Principal

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