

St. Augustine's Catholic Voluntary Academy



Let all that you do be done in love.

1 Corinthians 16:14



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A MESSAGE FROM MRS COX

This morning, I led the whole school in singing assembly, practising some favourite Christmas carols ready for our Liturgy and 'carols singalong' next Wednesday at 1.30pm. Isn't it amazing, how carols can immediately bring up such a range of emotions in us each year – joy, nostalgia, sometimes sadness for lost loved ones or stillness in the wintery scenes conjured in our minds. In The Bleak Midwinter always brings a tear to my eye.

I was shocked that the children didn't know some of my favourites – Oh Little Town of Bethlehem, Oh Come All Ye Faithful and Hark the Herald Angels Sing, were all new to most. As ever though, they learned quickly and joined in with gusto – if a little too many 'smudgy notes' (glissando) between those two 'pea-ace' notes at the end of Silent Night! I'll be uploading some practise tracks to everyone's Seesaw account and would ask that you have a family sing-song ready for next week.

If we think a little more deeply about the message of the carols we sing each year, they contain so many beautiful Gospel messages and images of Jesus - which is maybe why they fill us with such reflective peace and joy.

So, as you find yourself listening to, humming along or singing enthusiastically with others, do pay attention to those lyrics and their meaning, which can be so easily lost.

This Christmas, as 'the wondrous gift is given', I very much hope that God imparts to your heart, and the hearts of all of your loved ones, the blessing of His heaven.

Mrs Cox



VIRTUES CERTIFICATES

Congratulations to all of the recipients of this week's Virtue Certificates:

Cedar Class - Isobel - **Friendship & Kindness**

Sycamore Class - Ripley- - **Friendship & Kindness**

Olive Class - Emilia -- **Friendship & Kindness**

Acacia Class - Jacob G and Jake - **Love of Learning & Determination**

Willow Class - Nazim - **Friendship & Kindness**

Juniper Class - Bryony - **Hope & Confidence**



Well done to you all!
We are all very proud of you.



LET US PRAY

God of light, shine brightly, show us how to bring hope to others.

God of love, help us to comfort people and to share in their joy.

God of hope, help us this Advent, to share your light with others.

Amen.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

We have lots of birthdays to celebrate over the Christmas holidays!

Happy Birthday to:

Althea in Y3 Olive Class who will be 8 on 11th December

Elsbeth in Y4 Acacia Class who will be 9 on 19th December

Sylvie in Y6 Juniper Class who will be 11 on 19th December

Jack in Y1 Sycamore Class who will be 6 on 21st December

Rocky in Y1 Sycamore Class who will be 6 on 21st December

Holly S in Y4 Acacia Class who will be 9 on 23rd December

Oscar in Y6 Juniper Class who will be 11 on 24th December

Finn in EYFS Cedar Class who will be 5 on 31st December

Jonah in Y5 Willow Class who will be 10 on 3rd January

Jacob G in Y4 Acacia Class who will be 9 on 3rd January

We wish you all a wonderful time celebrating your special days!

E-SAFETY WITH ALAN MACKENZIE

For Parents - Little Digital Helps Toolkit

This is a really useful toolkit for parents/carers who may be unsure about what parental features are available on their children's devices. Put together by Internet Matters and Tesco it takes around 8 minutes to answer a few questions and then receive a tailored toolkit.

All details about the toolkit can be found [HERE](#).

For Parents - Roblox Checklist 2023

I shared this checklist a few months ago, but with Xmas just around the corner it's a useful resource to share with parents, particularly as Roblox is one of the most popular games out there.

Roblox and SWGfL have collaborated together and created a checklist for parents which includes:

- How to report abuse.
- How to block users.
- Setting up a parent control pin.
- And more.

The resource can be downloaded [HERE](#).



GAUDETE SUNDAY - 17TH DECEMBER

The third Sunday of Advent is here, and this special Sunday is also known as 'Gaudete Sunday'. The term 'Gaudete' is derived from the Latin opening words of the introit antiphon, "Rejoice (Gaudete) in the Lord always.":

The theme of the day expresses the joy of anticipation at the approach of the Christmas celebration. Priests wear rose-coloured vestments to represent the joyful reward that comes from offering sacrifice with patience.

Sunday 17th December is also Bambinelli Sunday, a beautiful Advent tradition instituted by Saint Pope John Paul II during his Papacy.

The tradition follows that on the Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday) children and adults bring their Baby Jesus figures from their homes to St Peters Square where they are blessed by the Pope.

If you are attending Mass at our parish church on Sunday, you are invited to bring your cribs or figure of Baby Jesus to whichever Mass you attend for blessing at the end of Mass.



WILLOW CLASS



Our Y5 Willow Class children are radio stars! They sang 'Sleeps 'til Santa' on Rutland and Stamford Sound's Breakfast Show with Rob Persani.

Please [click here to listen!](#)

Thank you, Miss Copeland, and well done to all of our Willow stars!

A MESSAGE FROM CANON PETER

In his church newsletter last week, Canon Peter wrote about 'A history of the Nativity':

"Every year, one of our favourite Advent traditions is probably setting up the Nativity set, and every Catholic household should have one. Perhaps your nativity is made of wood, or silver, or china, or simple plastic; maybe you put it on the mantelpiece, or in the centre of the dining room table. It is there to remind ourselves in our own homes of the reason for the Christmas season.



We keep the Baby Jesus hidden away, ready to place Him in the manger, made soft by the straw of our good deeds over Advent, on Christmas morning. The three Kings are placed in a different part of the house; they will arrive on Epiphany and not before. But who invented the Nativity scene? A deacon in Italy in the 13th century, who had a special love for the Child Jesus, hatched a plan to inspire this same love in the townspeople. In a cave near the town, he set up a manger and brought a real ox and donkey to play their part. He invited the people to Midnight Mass at the cave, and they came, the forest ringing with song and bright with candlelight. After chanting the Gospel, the deacon preached a sermon about the Babe of Bethlehem, Whose Name he could not utter for sheer love. He kept the manger empty, since the Child had not arrived yet. But one man—a holy citizen and former soldier who was a friend of the deacon—said that he saw, in the manger, a beautiful, radiant Child. He witnessed the deacon gathering this Child devoutly in his arms. Of course, the deacon was none other than St. Francis of Assisi, and this is the story of the first Nativity scene, as related by St. Bonaventure in his biography of the saint. St. Bonaventure also relates that the hay from that first crèche was saved by the townspeople in attendance and that it miraculously cured ailing cattle. So, when we put our Nativity sets out this Christmas, remember we are continuing a tradition that started 800 years ago, in 1223"



ATTENDANCE

Our whole school attendance this week was 88.24%

Our attendance by class is as follows:

Cedar - 85.96%

Sycamore - 91.41%

Olive - 82.81%

Acacia - 95.63%

Willow - 88.64%

Juniper - 83.04%

Being around teachers and friends in a school environment is the best way for pupils to learn and reach their potential. Time in school also keeps children safe and provides access to extra-curricular opportunities and pastoral care.

For more information, please visit the gov.uk website [here](#),

ADVENT AT ST. AUGUSTINE'S



On Sunday, the third day of Advent, we will light the JOY candle.

This is pink and symbolises joy. It is called the "Shepherd's Candle," and is pink because rose is a liturgical colour for joy.

The third Sunday of Advent is Gaudete Sunday and it reminds us of the joy that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus, as well as the joy that the faithful have reached the midpoint of Advent.

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES



If you are at home this Christmas or hosting family in Stamford, Mass times at our parish church, St. Mary & St. Augustine, over Christmas will be:

Sunday 24th December, Christmas Eve:

6:00pm Vigil Mass

11:30pm Office of Readings followed by Midnight Mass

Monday 25th December, Christmas Day:

9:00am Dawn Mass of Christmas

11:00am Day Mass of Christmas

LINCS COMMUNITY SAFETY SERVICE

Kathryn Smith, Community Safety Strategy Coordinator at the Lincolnshire Community Safety Service, has been in touch with a message for all parents and carers:

'Online behaviour is something we talk regularly to children and young people about across the county within our online safety sessions. We want to also make sure parents are aware of these laws and the potential consequences our online behaviour can have in the real world, and on our children's futures. We have made a video which outlines the different laws regarding online behaviour; please [click here](#) to watch on YouTube.'



CURRICULUM BY CLASS

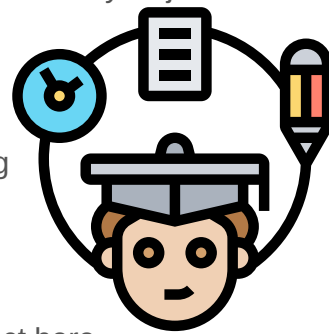
Did you know that all of our class curriculum offers are published each term on our website?

Here you can access what your child's teacher has planned for the term ahead and about what the children are learning in each topic.

As well as your child's planned timetable, your child's class teacher will also details their key objectives and their vocabulary targets.

You can access the curriculum plans on our website by clicking [here](#).

You can also see all of our curriculum plans for each subject [here](#).



NUTS AND IMMUNO-SUPPRESSED CHILDREN

A reminder that St. Augustine's is not a nut-free school, but we do have children in school who have extremely severe nut allergies whereby an allergic reaction could be triggered by touching or eating them.

We are very grateful that you all ensure that you avoid any nuts or nut-containing foods in lunchboxes or as snacks..

We also wanted to let you know that we have some children, and staff, in school who are immuno-suppressed, usually through severe illness.

We often chat to the other children who are in contact with them, take all the usual precautions against the spread of bacteria/viruses with enhanced cleaning routines and encouraging good hygiene with all the children.

It's imperative that you notify our office team if a medical professional diagnoses your child with any illness such as chickenpox, shingles, measles, flu, tonsillitis, Covid etc so that they can share this vitally important information with parents.

Thank you so much for your endeavours to keep our whole school safe and healthy.

SCHOOL COUNCIL & GREEN TEAM

A reminder that Mon 8th January is our next Green Team meeting, and Mon 15th January is our next School Council meeting. Please collect your child at 4pm.

Thank you all for your generous donations of clothes to Bag2School.



All of your donations totalled an amazing 44kgs!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Do you, or does anyone you know, have any spare time to volunteer at George's Food Hub?

If so, please visit George at our on-site hub for more information.

FAMILY WINTER WARM SPACE

A reminder that Art Pop-Up, MindSpace Stamford and George's Food Hub have joined forces for a new initiative; Family Winter Warm Space.

Every Thursday evening until March 2024, they will be at the Free Church here on Kesteven Road to offer a free evening meal and creative corner for children and adults in a warm, cosy and friendly space.

Take a book, your homework or just go and hang out for a while. Please book your place by clicking [here](#) and scrolling to 'Thursday' events.

Art Pop-Up

MindSpace



FOCUS ON FOSA!

I would like to take this time to reintroduce you to FOSA. My name is Lara Kurys and I am the Secretary, and together with Wendy McDonald - Chair, and Tanya Milojevic - Treasurer, we make up the committee for Friends of St Augustine or as you will most likely hear us called FoSA.

We arrange events and activates in school to raise funds that help toward things the school would otherwise not be able to fund themselves, and we do all this through your amazing and continued support; thank you to all the parents, carers and staff that have supported us over the years.

Here are a few of the highlights from where we used the fundraising money last year:

- Theatre show in school for all children - £358.8**
- Wondersome planetarium experience for all children - £380**
- Easter Eggs for all children - £75**
- FOSA uniform shed so all have easy access to 2nd hand uniform - £1095**
- Window screens for the Dining hall to block heat in the summer - £400**
- Wooden benches with our school values engraved - £1290**
- Money toward the cost of the coach to Crich for the year 6's - £460**

All of the money for these events was raised from our events like disco, cake sales, ice poles sales, 2nd hand uniform sales and of course our Summer and Christmas Fairs.

This years fundraising is already in full swing after our Christmas Fair last night, where we raised of just short of £900. Thank you to all of you that that attended, and a special thank you to all that helped on stalls, helped set up and helped tidy away, without all of you it would not have happened.

We are looking forward to another fun filled year of Fundraising, if you would like to get involved either with the committee at regular meetings or just to help out during events, please get in touch with any of us or the school.

I've said it a few times already but it cannot be said enough...thank you for your continued support.



**Lara Kurys (and River!)
FoSA Secretary**



**Wendy McDonald
FoSA Chair**



**Tanya Milojevic)
FoSA Treasurer**

CHRISTMAS BONANZA WEEK AT ST. AUGUSTINE'S!

What a wonderful day we had at St. Augustine's on Thursday! There was a wonderful array of Christmas jumpers, an exciting trip to Stamford Corn Exchange to see the pantomime, Christmas lunch for all of us, and then the FoSA Christmas Fair! Phew! Our Willow and Juniper classes also went to Morrisons on Wednesday and sang their hearts out with some beautiful Christmas songs. Thank you to all of our staff for making all of the events such a success for all of our children, the FoSA team for all of their hard work, and to all of our St. Augustine's families for your continued support in making these events so special for the children.

