

Our Lady's December 2025

A message from Miss Cahill



Communication



Dear Parents,

The Christmas season is close by....! The shops are all decorated, the weather is even colder (if that's possible!) and the children are all getting very excited.

This season of Advent is a wonderful time to reflect on the year that has gone by and look with hope and anticipation to the next year. Each passing year in schools brings joys and challenges and I'm sure this is also reflected in our own families and homes. Our Lady's is a community where we work together for the good of our children and each other. So please remember if you need any help and support please come and talk with us - our door is always open.

School Association

The school association have been working very hard to prepare a programme of Christmas events for the children. This combined with the school events make a really wonderful final few weeks in school for 2025.

- Thursday 4th December - KS1 games night - £1.50 per child - non uniform day key stage 1 only
- Friday 5th December - a special visitor in school

- Wednesday 10th December - 2pm KS1 Nativity (Acting by Reception support with the singing by year 1 and year 2).
- Friday 12th December 1.45pm - KS2 Carol Concert (in church)
- Friday 12th December 3.30pm - Christmas Fair
- Wednesday 17th December - Christmas Dinner in school for the children - Children can wear their Christmas jumpers or festive colours
- Thursday 18th December - Year 2 - 6 Cinema Visit 'How the Grinch Stole Christmas'
- Thursday 18th December - KS2 Christmas Disco - non uniform day Key stage 2 only
- Friday 19th December - Break up for the Christmas Break - **Early collection option at 1.30pm or normal 3.15pm collection.**

Manor Adventure

Year 6 have recently enjoyed a wonderful few days away on residential at Manor Adventure. They had the opportunity to do wonderful activities including climbing, abseiling, canoeing, high ropes and many more activities. They had a wonderful time and were a credit to themselves, their families and the school - well done children! Huge thanks to the staff who supported them and gave us their evenings to make this trip possible, Mrs Roberts, Mr O'Connor, Mrs Duffy and Miss Locke - thank you!

Christmas Break up

We will be offering an early close on Friday 19th December as a Christmas treat for the children.

You will be able to collect at 1.30pm Gates will be open from 1.25 - 1.40pm or the normal time of 3.15pm.

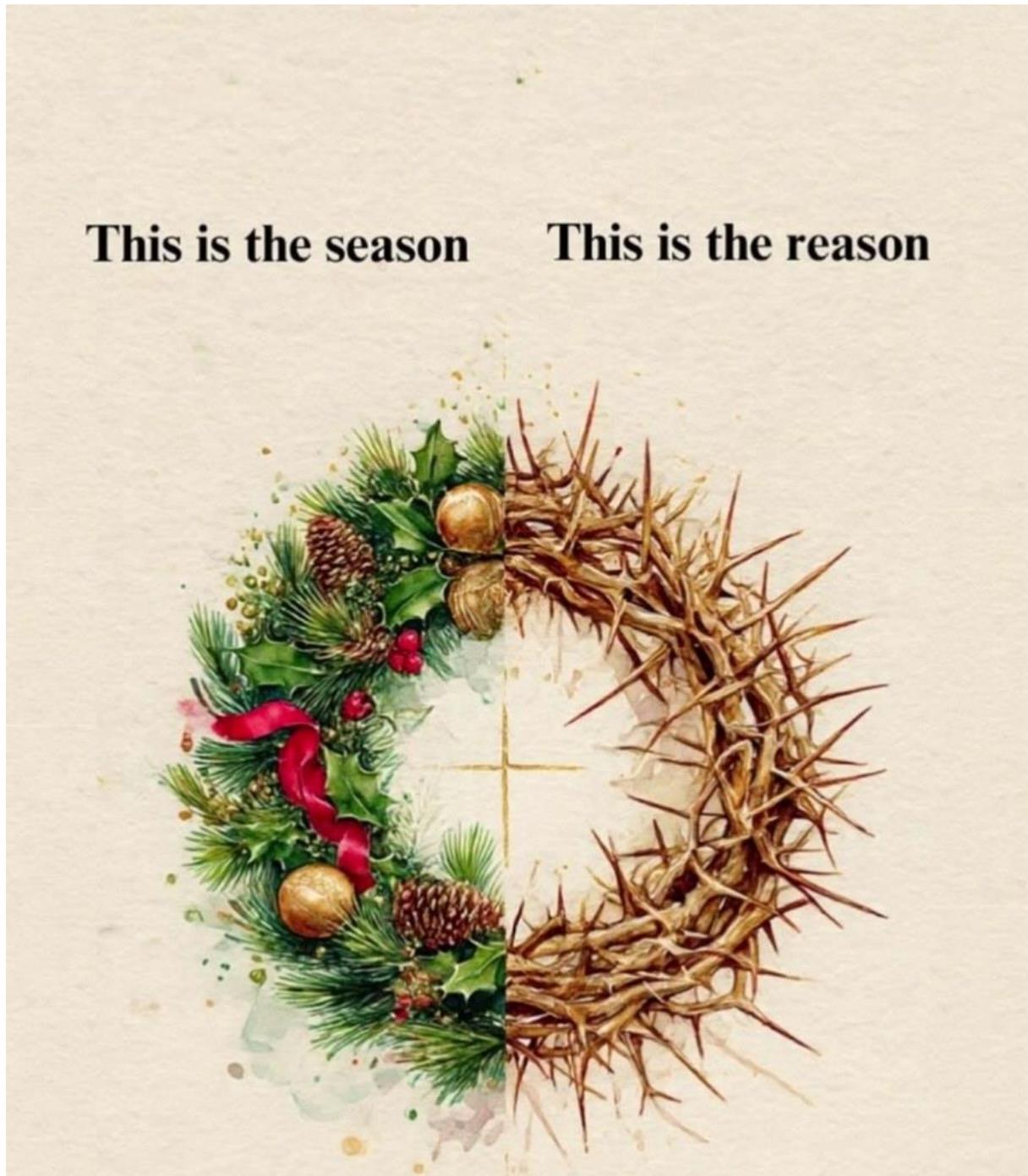
Monday 5th January is an INSET day and is closed to pupils. We look forward to seeing the pupils on Tuesday 6th January at 8.35am.

Thank you all for your continued support. Wishing you all a wonderfully joyful and peaceful Christmas and every blessing for 2026.

Best wishes,

Miss Cahill

The Reason for the Season



Let us remember that this wonderful season is a religious one. This holiday and celebration is to celebrate the coming of God, baby Jesus, in to the world. Without this wonderful event there would be no trees, gifts, Christmas dinner or celebrations.

We pray for all those Christians who will be unable to celebrate Christmas this year owing to religious persecution, we ask that in a quiet moment of peace and calm they feel Christ's love for them this Christmas.

Our Lady Help of Christians Mass Times

- Christmas Eve 6pm and 9pm
- Christmas Day 9.30am (no evening mass)

Parking

A reminder that only parents with permission from the headteacher is permitted to use the staff car park. If you have not had a meeting with me about this - you don't have granted permission.

The electric gates will be being fixed soon and support us in maintaining the safety for all on the car park.

Please also continue to be considerate of our neighbours when parking around school for collection and drop off. Please do not block driveways, damage grass areas or park in a way that could be considered a hazard.

Blue Sky

Our new social media platform is 'BlueSky'. This is a very similar platform to X (Twitter).
<https://bsky.app/>

The app is free to download and register for an account.

Some of you expressed an interest for us to have an Instagram / Facebook presence - however we are unable to join this with our current email handles.

Please do have a look at the new BlueSky page for Our Lady's - there will be lots of updates so you can follow what we are up to daily :-)
@ourladystilecross.bsky.social

Inspire Workshops



Our Inspire workshops are in full swing and I know that Year 1 and year 6 parents have recently attended to work with their children.

A reminder that these opportunities are provided so that you can work with your child rather than a social event with other parents.

Inspire Workshop Future Dates:

- Reception - 4th March 2026
- Year 1 - completed
- Year 2 - 18th March 2026
- Year 3 - 14th January 2026

- Year 4 - 4th February 2026
- Year 5 - 11th February 2026
- Year 6 - completed

A word from Pope Leo....."Do not settle for a shallow version of faith. Seek the real friendship that Jesus offers you. Listen to Him in prayer and let Him shape your life. When you do this, you carry His presence into the world with joy, hope and creativity. Authentic witnesses of the Gospel can help heal and unite humanity."



In this quote Pope Leo tells us to deeply engage with faith and prayer and through this we can change the world and bring people together. If we engage with prayer and with God we unite not judge, help not hinder and support not condemn.

Health and Safety



Earrings must be removed or covered with a plaster for PE lessons. This is to prevent injury during physical activity. Earrings should be small stud earrings only to comply with our school rules.

In the same way long hair should be always tied back for school and must be tied back for PE lessons or swimming.

Thank you for your understanding.

A reminder that any form of trainers are not correct school uniform shoes. Please ensure your child has school shoes to wear for school.

Holiday requests / Leave in Term Time



Unfortunately, holidays in term time will not be authorised and could result in a referral to the Local Authority where further action may be taken. Children have missed a lot of learning during the pandemic, please only take holidays during the school breaks.

There is updated guidance effective from 19th August 2024 that will have been sent to you - do have a look at the detail (summarised below):

- Increase in fine - From £60 to £80 if paid within 21 days. From £120 to £160 after this 21 days.
- If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling three-year period, the notice will be charged at the higher rate of £160 with no option for this second offence to be discharged at £80.
- Further unauthorised absences within a 3 year period may result in further more serious sanctions eg prosecution.

Thank you, we really appreciate your support in helping your children receive the best learning opportunities that they can.

2024/2025 there have been **26 fines** issued for holidays in term time.

We are on week 11 of the new school year and we are already aware of 10 families taking holidays in term time this term. Holidays in term time are unauthorised and therefore

finances from the council may also follow. Education for our young people is so important - we do understand that holidays are cheaper but please do not take them out of school. Each day missed from education can have a significant impact on the children's progress and attainment.

Attendance



Attendance Period: 02/09/2025 to 3/12/2025

- Reception - 92.36%
- Year 1 - 92.04%
- Year 2 - **94.19%**
- Year 3 - 93.55%
- Year 4 - 93.66%
- Year 5 - 91.27%
- Year 6 - 92.62%

None of our year groups are at the targeted 96% attendance.

Whole school - **92.81 % Declining!**

Our whole school target is 96%

We already have over 40 children in school whose attendance is below 90%!

96% is equivalent to missing 8 days of education across the year - it is vital that your children are here so that they can learn! Every day matters!

Nut Free



A reminder that we are a **nut-free school** as we have children and staff with severe nut allergies. Please check ingredients of snacks and lunch items before you send them into school.

Diary Dates



- Mon 8th Dec - Compass Parent Workshop @ 2.30pm - 3.15pm in school
- Wed 10th Dec - KS1 Nativity @ 2pm in school
- Thurs 11th Dec - Non - uniform day - cake donations
- Fri 12th Dec - Year 2 Mass in school
- Fri 12th Dec - KS2 Carol Concert @Church 1.45pm - 2.45pm
- Fri 12th Dec - Christmas Fayre 3.30pm - 4.30pm
- Wed 17th Dec - Christmas Dinner Day & Christmas Jumper Day - £1 per family
- Thurs 18th Dec - Year 2 - Year 6 visit to the Cinema
- Thurs 18th Dec - KS2 Disco 3.15pm - 4.30pm in school
- Fri 19th Dec - Break up for Christmas Holidays (Early close option - see above)**
- Mon 5th Jan 2026 - Teacher Training Day school closed to pupils**
- Tues 6th Jan 2026 - School open to pupils/staff**
- Wed 28th Jan - Year 6 visit to St Chad's
- Thurs 26th Feb - Year 6 Confirmation 6.30pm Our Lady Help of Christians

School Year 2025 to 2026

Autumn Term 2025

Term starts: Monday 1 September 2025

Half-term: Monday 27 October 2025 to Friday 31 October 2025

Term ends: Friday 19 December 2025

Spring Term 2026

Term starts: Monday 5 January 2026

Half-term: Monday 16 February 2026 to Friday 20 February 2026

Term ends: Friday 27 March 2026

Summer Term 2026

Term starts: Monday 13 April 2026

Half-term: Monday 25 May 2026 to Friday 29 May 2026

Term ends: Monday 20 July 2026

Inset Days 2025/26

- Monday 1st September
- Friday 24th October
- Monday 5th January
- Monday 23rd February
- Monday 1st June
- Monday 20th July

child off school?



Yes

Until...

Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and Flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

No

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about...

Hand, foot and mouth	Glandular fever
Head lice	Tonsillitis
Threadworms	Slapped cheek



SCAN ME

Advice and guidance

To find out more, search for **health protection in schools** or scan the QR code or visit <https://qrco.de/minfec>.