



DCET Newsletter

December 2025



I don't know about you, but I can't believe there is only a handful of 'sleeps' - as I hear headteachers say - until our schools all finish for what I'm sure will be a welcome break for everyone.

What a joy and privilege it is each year to see how everyone is so completely engaged in preparing for Christ's birth. The advent masses and nativities this year have been wonderful. A huge thank you to teachers, TAs, support staff, parents and carers, governors, the whole of schools' communities - well done!

A key task for the Trust Board each autumn is to consider the external auditors view of our annual accounts, financial statements and provide a management letter. I'm delighted that the external auditors found no significant issues and we will be considering a clear management letter at the Board meeting. Thank you to the whole range of colleagues in our finance and business teams for their essential contributions to the process.

With the autumn budget announcements, a schools white paper expected early in the new year, the new Ofsted inspection framework roll-out, and the next budget cycle to start there is a lot for directors to discuss, and we will be looking to ensure our schools, and Local Governing Committees are well briefed and engaged in discussions, too.

As we welcome that break that is edging closer, and on behalf of my colleague DCET directors, I wish all of you a peaceful Christmas and successful 2026.

Warmest wishes

Catherine Christie
Trust Board Chair of Directors

People, Governance and Communications Committee

The Trust's People, Governance and Communications Committee (PGC) met four times in 2024-25. Its membership is composed of directors and chaired by Peter Smith, a former Chief People Officer and qualified lawyer. The committee's delegated terms of reference enable directors to inform decision making and oversee progress and impact against the Trust's strategic priority: Our People.

Currently, DCET oversees 13 primary schools, 2400 students, 400 employees, and £29m budget but the Trust is set to expand to 20+ primary and secondary schools by 2028 in line with the Bishop's directives. This means that our people, structures, and policies must be fit for future. The below shows some major areas of focus for PGC, alongside related strategy, growth, risk and policies.

Organisation

The PGC discusses at all its meetings the health of the organization. It looks at such matters as the development and training of all staff, recruitment, staff wellbeing and remuneration. All of this is needed to ensure delivery of excellent education for our pupils and the PGC sees this as a critical area of accountability. All members of the PGC are highly appreciative of the work undertaken by employees of DCET and their drive to help our pupils be successful.

Governance

As with any organization, but especially when it is funded by public money, good Governance is essential. In this regard the PGC looks at areas such as how the Trust Board and its sub-Committees are made up and how they operate. How well the "rules" under which the Trust and the Local Governance Committee operate are understood and applied. This is a complex area, but we were delighted to have been able to launch a Governance Handbook at the start of this school year which we will increase awareness of this area.

Communications

The recent updates on our Websites and this Newsletter are two examples on how the PGC has set out for 2025/26 a challenge for the DCET team to increase awareness of all the great achievements of the Trust - all of which are set against a background of significant growth. Communication covers a whole range of areas, how we engage with parents/carers, how a school demonstrates that it is part of our wonderful Trust from the moment someone comes into reception, how we interact with the Diocese, Government Departments and agencies such as the Department of Education and Schools Inspectors. We want our parents/carers and other third parties to be aware of all the great things that happen within DCET e.g. education performance, extra curricular activities, new schools joining as possible.

Peter Smith

Director and Chair of the People, Governance & Communications Committee

School Improvement

In November, we were thrilled to bring together all our teachers from across the Trust for one of our Trust Inset Days - a fantastic opportunity to collaborate and share ideas. This year marked the launch of our work on developing clear teaching and learning principles that will shape the way we support every child.

We were delighted to welcome Tom Sherrington, a highly respected educational author and researcher, who inspired us with practical strategies and thought-provoking insights. The day was filled with energy and optimism as colleagues explored approaches to strengthen classroom practice and raise outcomes for all pupils.

To build on this momentum, we've invested in centrally funded access to *Teaching WalkThrus*, a rich package of professional development resources. These tools will support leaders and teachers in every school as we continue to refine our practice and ensure the very best teaching for every learner across the Trust.

Richard Simmonds
Director of School Improvement

It has been lovely to be in schools over the Advent period and attend the events in all our schools. These events have been beautiful and reflected the true message of Advent and Christmas. I hope you enjoy reading about all the exciting activities that have happened this term and the celebrations and reflections that happened in schools during Advent.

On behalf of the whole Trust, I wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas.

Helen Taylor
Chief Executive Officer

Facilities Update from the Chief Finance and Operations Officer

During the summer, we worked hard to complete the majority of improvements in time for the start of this academic year. Now, as we approach Christmas, we are reflecting on the positive impact these changes have had on our school communities. These projects were expertly coordinated by our Head of Estates and Compliance and carefully scheduled to minimise disruption, ensuring that pupils and staff could benefit from the enhancements as soon as possible.

Highlights of the works completed:

Christ the King – Successful CIF bid enabled essential heating upgrades and new glazing works, improving energy efficiency and classroom comfort.

St Gildas – Patio works transformed outdoor areas, alongside repointing and a decorative refresh, creating inviting spaces for outdoor learning and play.

St Joseph's, Burnham – Roofing works scheduled to secure the building, ensuring a safe and dry environment for all.

St Joseph & St Teresa's – Removal of the Noah's Ark building opened up valuable outdoor space for provision and play.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel – Successful CIF bid enabled installation of an air source heat pump, supporting sustainability and providing efficient heating.

Saint Edmund's – New washrooms and a series of internal and external improvements, including fencing and patios, enhancing hygiene and accessibility.

St Louis – External works on low walls and paving stones, plus internal damp-proofing, ensuring safety and structural integrity.

St Mary's, Bath – Tarmac and garden works revitalized outdoor areas, creating attractive and practical spaces for recreation and learning.

Benefits for our school communities:

Enhanced wellbeing – Improved outdoor spaces encourage active play and social interaction, supporting physical and mental health.

Better learning environments – Upgraded heating, glazing, and damp-proofing ensure classrooms are comfortable and conducive to learning.

Safety and sustainability – Roofing, fencing, and energy-efficient systems provide secure, eco-friendly facilities for the future.

Inclusive spaces – New washrooms and refreshed areas promote dignity, hygiene, and accessibility for all.

These investments reflect our commitment to providing high-quality environments where children can thrive and staff can work effectively. Thank you to everyone who supported these projects and continues to make our schools exceptional places to learn and grow.

Maxine Ratcliff
Chief Finance and Operations Officer



Christ the King

It seems that in a blink the term has reached its end here at Christ the King Catholic School. Of course, this brings with it all of the festivities of the forthcoming season and the school hall has been filled with the melodies and harmonies of our children singing Advent hymns and preparing for performances in the final week of term.



Our eldest pupils were able to demonstrate our focus value of 'respect' when they joined the Mayor of Amesbury for the Town's annual Carol Concert. Our children in Willow, Maple and Hazel Classes sang and signed using Makaton to make this a reflection of our truly inclusive school ethos, each receiving a well-earned chocolate treat from the Mayor in recognition of their efforts.



Earlier in the term, children represented the school in the local Remembrance Parade, with other pupils getting to meet the Lieutenant of Wiltshire at the Centenary of our local Historic Landmark *Antrobus House*, which included a performance by the Queen's Grenadier Guards: although the rain stopped the guards' parade, we still found time to visit Antrobus House on this special day and sing "Happy 100th Birthday!".

Speaking of wind and rain...the weather has really tested our commitment to outdoor learning with children being far less bothered by the elements than anticipated and truly enjoying the autumn months for all their squelchy, muddy goodness!



Our pupils have enjoyed local visits to the History Centre whilst Advent has helped us to reflect on our faith, finding more time to pray and spiritually prepare.





Corpus Christi

We've had an exciting and busy start to the academic year at Corpus Christi, filled with learning, creativity, and community spirit!

Our Year 6 pupils kicked off the term with an unforgettable residential trip to Kilve. It was a fantastic opportunity for them to build independence, teamwork, and confidence while enjoying outdoor activities.

During October we continued our commitment to charitable causes close to our hearts. Our Chaplaincy team members helped to organise a cake sale and we raised over £100 for Weston Hospice through our 'Blue for You.' This term the children also donated generously to Weston Foodbank. Zoe and Kirsty from the Hospice visited us for a special assembly, helping children understand the incredible work they do.



This term, we've offered a wide range of after-school clubs and special sessions to enrich our pupils' experiences. This has included School Sports Teaching Association who have been providing multi skills sessions after school each week and opportunities for children to take part in local football tournaments. As well as these, children have been spending time in Drama, Choir, Dance or Cooking club. Making mince pies has been a popular treat!

As part of 'Young Poet's,' week, KS2 took part in an online poetry workshop with two professionals who shared tips and techniques to help them spark ideas, experiment with language and shape their writing into poetic form! As part of the workshop, the children gave ideas for a country wide poem built by all the children. One of our Year 6 children's ideas was even mentioned during the workshop.

As we approach the festive season, the whole school is busy preparing for our Christmas Service, featuring children from EYFS to Year 6. Recently, we also joined St Paul's Church for a creative workshop. The children decorated stars and these beautiful creations will be displayed throughout Advent and Christmas.





Our Lady of Mount Carmel

We have had a very busy autumn term in our school and local community. We welcomed visitors to lead assemblies including the NSPCC, Road Safety and Carymoor who led recycling and sustainability workshops.

After a two hour interview Eco council were delighted to be told that we have achieved the Live Simply award after twenty months of hard work demonstrating how we can live simply, sustainably and in solidarity at a school, local and global level.

We have been successful in local sporting tournaments in Tag Rugby and Netball.

We attended both the Remembrance Sunday parade and the two-minute silence with the community. Our huge 6-foot flag was pride of place in church.

Each class visited the town library for a love of reading session.

Suez recycling gave up a Saturday morning to clear an area which they will return in the spring to plant and sponsor too. Our wonderful PTFA have organised a craft afternoon and a disco. We are very appreciative to everyone for their hard work and generosity in giving up their time.



Thirty-four families took part in Wincanton Carnival with our entry "Books in Action". We won a cup for Spectator's choice. Chaplaincy Commissioning took place on Monday 10th November at St Luke and St Teresa's Church. Our preparations are in full swing for the Key Stage One Nativity, Hey Ewe. Key Stage Two will perform at a Music concert. Our school choir are singing Christmas Carols in the local hospital, care home and the Community Centre.



St Benedict's



We have had a wonderful start to the 2025/26 academic year as part of the DCET Trust, spending the first two terms focusing on the shared values that guide both our school and the Trust. In Term 1 we explored stewardship and were delighted to welcome the Bristol and Avon Rivers Trust to lead an assembly and workshops on protecting the environment by reducing water run-off into rivers and streams. They also worked with groups of children to install living drains in both playgrounds so that rainwater from the downpipes can be used to water a variety of plants chosen and planted together. This was a thoughtful and practical way to reflect on our responsibility as ambassadors for the wonderful creation God has given us.

In Term 2 we focused on respect and were honoured to contribute to the local community Remembrance Service, where children shared prayers, poems and laid wreaths. In school, Fr Martin led us in a moving remembrance liturgy, helping the children understand that respect can be expressed in many forms. Across both terms we have deepened our understanding of values and responsibilities by working towards becoming a Rights Respecting School. Mrs Winter and the Rights Rangers have helped ensure everyone understands the importance of having a voice, while our Chaplaincy Team and Wellbeing Champions have led projects that secured funding to improve the school area through developing a vegetable garden, EYFS equipment and the beginnings of our sensory prayer garden.



We are proud to have strengthened our music provision through the introduction of RockSteady, enjoyed welcoming local nurseries for community events, and embraced kindness through our 25 Acts of Kindness challenge. As Advent begins, we continue to support our local food bank so that everyone can enjoy a special Christmas.

“What an excellent first term—our values shining brightly in all we do.”



St Edmund's

In September, St. Edmund's welcomed a new Executive Head, Helen Biles-Wood into the school community. We also welcomed new members to our staffing team, all of whom are already making a positive contribution to school life. During Term 1, we were fortunate to welcome Paralympic champion Katrina Hart to our school. Her visit made a significant impact, inspiring and motivating pupils to persevere and embody the value of resilience.



With the support of FOSE (Friends of Saint Edmund's), we were able to invite, The Rise Theatre Company, to deliver a performance of their new show: *'The Treasure Within'*. This production successfully engaged the whole school while reinforcing the seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching. Our children shone through our school RE inspection report and inspectors noted many strengths for us to celebrate, including our; *'strong family community, where all are cared for and valued, especially those most vulnerable'*. We offered a 'Light Party' on Halloween to all children of the school. This was a very special occasion during the half term led by our talented LSA Mrs Butler.



During Term 2, we welcomed Father Vincent into school to offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Members of our Chaplaincy Team participated in a special reflection session delivered by the Chaplaincy Team at St. Louis, strengthening spiritual development across both schools. Our Year 6 pupils also led a reverent Remembrance service for the school.

Pupil leadership

continues to grow through our new Enrichment teams, which include the School Council, Eco Ambassadors, Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, Arts Council, Chaplaincy Team, and Well-being Teams. These groups have provided pupils with increased opportunity to influence school life and contribute to whole-school initiatives. In addition, our newly formed school choir has already made a positive contribution to the wider community, performing at a local care home and during our Christingle service. We remain grateful for the generosity of our families, particularly during this year's Harvest collection for the local food bank. Contributions were exceptional, with one family donating an entire wheelbarrow of food!



The school recently took part in the local Lantern Parade for the Christmas light switch-on.

From all the pupils and staff of St. Edmund's, we wish you all a very happy Christmas and New Year.

Living Our Year of Hope: Celebrating Achievement and Preparing for Christmas at St Gildas

This term has been a true blessing, filled with learning, service, and joy. Our children have worked diligently, supported by inspiring excursions and enriching incursions that have deepened their understanding of God's world. Their achievements remind us that education is not only about knowledge but about growing in faith and virtue.



Central to our mission has been living out our *Year of Hope Jubilee Pledge*. In the spirit of Christ's love, we have reached out to those in need through the Lord's Larder, the Blythwood Shoebox Appeal, and fundraising for Children in Need, which included a delightful visit from Pudsey Bear. We have also embraced Hello Yellow Day, Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day, and other initiatives that reflect our Gospel call to compassion and solidarity.

As Advent unfolds, our school is joyfully preparing to celebrate the birth of our Saviour. Nativity plays and carol services will help us reflect on the true meaning of Christmas, and there may even be a visit from Santa to add a little festive cheer! These celebrations will unite us as a community of faith, hope, and love.



Thank you to all who have supported our journey so far. May this season bring peace and blessings to every family as we await the coming of Christ.

St John's

The academic year began with a busy and positive September, during which our 46 new Reception children settled confidently into school life alongside newly appointed members of staff. Key Stage 1 started the term with great excitement following an unexpected visit from a “dinosaur” who left footprints behind. There was even evidence of his visit on the CCTV! This memorable event inspired pupils to produce detailed and imaginative fact files about dinosaurs.

In Years 3 and 4, pupils explored personal development through the film *Adventures on the Inside*, which formed the foundation of a term's work in PSHE. Children reflected on trusted adults, bodily sensations, core emotions and reactions, building the foundations of their own emotional-regulation toolkits. Meanwhile, in Years 5 and 6, the curriculum focus on Ancient Egypt resulted in impressive homework projects. Pupils proudly presented their creations, demonstrating enthusiasm and depth of learning.



Sporting achievements have also been strong this term, with the girls' football team, boys' football team and girls' netball team all competing successfully in local tournaments. Our SENCo hosted a well-attended coffee morning, giving parents valuable insight into SEN provision at St John's.

We were delighted to welcome Neil, a trainee priest at St John's Parish, who generously shared his knowledge about the celebration of Mass. His thoughtful explanations inspired both pupils and staff.

The Catholic Schools Inspection took place on 26–27 November, and we look forward to sharing the outcome once the final report is released. Preparations are now underway for the KS1 Nativity, the EYFS Christmas performance, and our joint Carol Service with St Gregory's Catholic College—a highlight of the festive season.





St Joseph & St Teresa's

Chaplaincy Team:

Many of our Chaplaincy Team members were commissioned by Bishop Bosco on 20th November 2025. The pupils were a credit to the school and enjoyed their day. Our Chaplaincy Team collected dried goods for the Connect Centre in Wells. Our Chaplaincy Team organised for the pupils and staff to celebrate "All Saints Day" by coming to school dressed up as a Saint. It was lovely to see both traditional outfits and some creative outfits inspired by what they were patron saints for.



Visits to the Local Library:

All of our classes have had the opportunity this term to visit the Library in Wells. The Librarian read each class a story and gave our pupils the opportunities to explore the library. Those pupils who had a library card were able to take books away with them.



Wells Cathedral's Festival of Remembrance

As part of Wells Cathedral's Festival of Remembrance, each class contributed to a Schools' Remembrance Exhibition, which was on display in the spectacular surrounds of the Chapter House. Each class was given the task of designing an exhibition board on the theme of Remembrance, which have been placed in the niches of the Chapter House.

EYFS & KS1 Nativity

Our EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils performed The Nativity, the week beginning 1st December. They sang and acted it out beautifully, we were so proud of them all.





St Joseph's, Bridgwater

Sustainable Drainage Project

We're excited to begin a two-year Sustainable Drainage Solutions (SuDS) project with Wessex Water, the Department for Education, and Robert Bray Associates. This initiative will transform our school grounds to capture and reuse rainwater, reducing pressure on sewers and helping prevent local flooding. To launch the project, Year 5 and 6 took part in an engaging workshop with Wessex Water, learning practical tips on water conservation, the dangers of fatbergs, and why only the "three Ps" should be flushed—sparking great conversations about protecting our environment.



Visit from Ashley Fox MP

Seal and Otter classes had a very special afternoon when Ashley Fox, MP for Bridgwater, visited our school. The highlight was a lively debate on the motion: "This house believes it is acceptable to use AI when completing

homework." The debate followed the same format as those in the House of Commons, with pupils taking on roles as speakers and voters. After strong arguments on both sides, the motion was defeated—15 votes for, 36 against—showing that most of our pupils believe homework should remain a human effort! It was a fantastic opportunity for the children to experience democracy in action and develop their speaking and listening skills.

Sporting Achievements

- Year 5 & 6 athletics team placed 2nd locally and head to County finals.
- 19 pupils competed in Sedgemoor Cross Country; two finished in the top 10.
- Girls' football team came 3rd in the Sedgemoor EFSA tournament.
- Boys' football team finished 4th out of 12 schools.
- New Year 6 Sports Leaders appointed—the largest group yet!



Community & Chaplaincy

Our Year 5 class brought festive cheer to Rosary Care Home, singing carols and sharing smiles with residents. The visit was a heartwarming experience for both pupils and residents and supports our journey towards the CAFOD Live Simply Award.



Meanwhile, our Chaplaincy Team has been busy spreading kindness and faith. They filled shoeboxes for the Blythwood Appeal, providing gifts for those in need, and led worship sessions in every class to mark the Jubilee Year. Each class made a pledge to live out these values, and we are encouraging everyone to keep their promises throughout the year.



St Joseph's, Burnham-on-sea

At St Joseph's our school community has embraced a term full of learning, creativity, wellbeing initiatives, faith celebrations, and sporting triumphs. We have celebrating reading and creativity taking part in National Nursery Rhyme Week. The Book Fair was a huge success, sparking excitement for reading across all year groups. Students enjoyed inspiring sessions with authors, learning about the writing process and asking thoughtful questions. These visits encouraged many budding writers to dream big! Creativity flowed during Poetry Day, with students exploring rhythm, rhyme, and expression. Maths week England and "Decembar" have also supported our children's problem solving!



We were proud to take part in the NSPCC Speak Out Stay Safe initiative. Our school marked World Mental Health Day with activities focused on wellbeing, mindfulness, and the importance of looking after our mental health. We also celebrated Anti-Bullying week through discussions and creative projects. Students and staff came together to honour those who served, with a moving Remembrance Day service and participation in the community parade. We joined in the celebrations with the Diocese Jubilee Day, a day filled with reflection, prayer, and community spirit with the pupils focussed on how they can be pilgrims of hope. A special moment this term was the commissioning of our Chaplaincy team, who will play a vital role in supporting the spiritual life of our school. A heartfelt thank you to Mr Robinson from the Diocese for his wonderful musical support, enriching our music curriculum and singing experience. We have supported our local Foodbank, Young Somerset and the Christmas Sparkle Project.

We have had further sporting success. Our talented athletes showcased incredible teamwork and determination, earning a well-deserved bronze medal. Our cross-country runners impressed once more with their stamina and spirit, continuing their tradition of excellence. A huge congratulations to our girls' football team for their outstanding victory in the ESFA Area Finals—a fantastic achievement! Our boys' football team also shone brightly, securing success in the ESFA competition. We have begun the festive celebrations with a live theatre performance of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and our Christmas disco and are looking forward to our cinema trip and Nativity performance. Our Christmas wish tree has given our community the opportunity to reflect on their hope and wishes for other. On behalf of everyone at St Joseph's we would like to wish you a very happy Christmas.





St Louis

Here at St Louis in Frome, we have had a busy few months since September. First things first, our children were chosen for their roles and responsibilities – and there are many! We have Chaplaincy Team, Eco Warriors, Wellbeing Ambassadors, Digital Leaders, House Captains, School Council, Librarians and Red Hats!

Our children have had the opportunity to access a wide range of enrichment activities throughout the term so far. We have had a multi-sports festival, yoga lessons, street dance and superhero PE, to name just a few. Our Year 3s have been learning to play the violin for the last few weeks and are coming along nicely. Year 2 took a trip into Frome to visit the Frome Museum for their topic on Frome in the past. We were also able to take some of our children to represent our school at the Frome Remembrance parade. We were incredibly proud of them!



As well as all this exciting learning happening outside of the classroom, there has been some exciting learning happening inside the classroom! Year 6 have been writing blogs in computing and will go on to publish them, using our Purple Mash system. Some of the exciting entries include: horses, football and much more! Year 5 have been making moon buggies in their DT project and hope to be able to make them move electronically. Year 4 have been reading *The Land of Roar* and even designed their own lands of roar, which was a fantastic display of both creative thinking and understanding the language used by the author.

Alongside their History topic on the Stone Age, Year 3 have been learning to sew their own pouches. Some of the children from this class have been so inspired that they joined our after-school sewing club! Year 2 have used their resilience in learning about fear in their book *'Orion and the Dark'*, in which they spent some time working on 'book talk' and responding to images. Year 1 brought in their own toys from home and created a 'Toy Museum' in the classroom. They impressed with their curious questions about other children's toys. Reception showed their stewardship and created bird feeders for our orchard.



Our Chaplaincy Team have been busy working together to choose which charities to show love to and support by raising money throughout all our Christmas events. Our School Council have been beacons of respect as they ensure our school is kept clean, tidy and inviting for all to see.

As we move into Advent, we kickstart the special season with our Advent reflections in which we will think about times we have needed to be forgiven and needed to forgive someone else. We do this in preparation for Jesus's coming at Christmas.



St Mary's, Bath

We began the year with a beautiful Mass welcoming our new starters and the Reception children and their families into the St Mary's community.



Our Catholic Life is always at the heart of everything that we do at St Mary's and this year we have had more children apply to be Chaplains than ever before. They took part in a training day with our fellow Camino schools as well as attending the Chaplaincy Commissioning Mass at the Cathedral. The children have reflected on St Therese De Lisieux's little ways and carried out their own acts of kindness during Little Ways Week and Father Jeremy has been into school to help some KS2 classes prepare and then celebrate their class

Masses. We also celebrated the end of the Jubilee year of Hope with Mass and other memorable activities.

Personal development is so important, and we strive to give our children opportunities and experiences outside of the classroom. So far this year, the children have been to the Bath Children's Literature Festival, had visiting book authors come into school, taken part in Black History Month workshops, been on a visit to Stonehenge, taken part in Anti-Bullying Week, had Forest School sessions and watch the production of Oliver at the Royal High School and the Snow Mice at the EGG theatre.



We have also taken part in many sporting opportunities such as having a resident dance coach, participating in a sports festival at Oldfield School and more competitively in Cross Country, Football and Netball. Some of our Y6 pupils have also successfully passed their Bikeability Training.



As the term draws to a close, EYFS and KS1 are busy practising for their nativity – 'Lights, Camel, Action' and KS2 are singing in preparation for their Carol Service at the Church. We are looking forward to sharing a Christmas dinner and the choir will be performing for our Chandler Close residents at their Christmas Lunch. On the last day we all come together for a Christingle Service and in true St Mary's tradition we end the day with the wider school community singing carols around the tree!



St Mary's, Chippenham



As we come to the end of a busy and joyful term at St Mary's in Chippenham, it is important to stop and reflect on the many wonderful events that have brought our school community together. This term, we have continued to welcome prospective Reception parents to our Open Days, giving families the chance to experience the warmth and vibrancy of our school community, our polite, happy children and to see St Mary's at its very best – during a normal school day. The children at St Mary's continue to make us so proud every day – their kindness and positivity sit at the centre of everything and it is hard not to smile and feel happy when you meet them.

We were delighted to accompany our Chaplaincy Team to Clifton Cathedral earlier this term, when they all had the honour of being commissioned by Bishop Bosco. A truly special occasion that reminds us of our mission to live out our faith in service and love. Across the school, learning continues to extend beyond the classroom with outdoor learning, exciting class trips to the local library, the REME Museum, and Bristol's Wake the Tiger immersive art experience – all of which support our curriculum by enriching our children's experiences and sparking curiosity. As Advent began, we turned our hearts towards the true meaning of Christmas. We are looking forward to our EYFS and KS1 Nativity - a lovely traditional retelling of the Christmas story, full of joy and wonder and also the KS2 Nine Carols and Readings service. If previous years are anything to go by, this will be a real treat – beautiful and moving with exceptional singing! We also look forward to gathering as a school community for our Advent Mass with Father Keith, a time of prayer and reflection as we prepare for the birth of Jesus.



These moments remind us that Christmas is not just about celebration, but about hope, peace, and love. Thank you to our staff, parents, and parish community for your support in making this term so special.



Wishing you all a happy and holy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Advent prayer

Heavenly Father,

During this season of Advent, we thank You for the gift of family and the hope that comes through Your Son,
Jesus Christ.

Prepare our hearts to welcome Him with joy and peace.

Help us to slow down, to listen, and to love one another as You have loved us.

May our homes be filled with kindness, patience, and faith as we wait for the coming of our Savior.

Bless our family and all families with unity and grace during this holy season.

Amen.





Contact Us

DCET - Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust

Park Avenue

Bridgwater

Somerset

TA6 7EE

Visit us on the web at [Home: The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust \(thedcet.com\)](http://thedcet.com).

Safeguarding

DCET are committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of all our children in all of our schools. We believe that pupils have a right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment which includes the right to protection from all types of abuse; where staff are vigilant for signs of any pupil in distress and are confident about applying their/our safeguarding processes to avert and alleviate any such problems.

Safeguarding is about ensuring that everyone is safe from harm - safe from bullying, safe from people who could abuse, safe from discrimination or harassment - and that we all feel safe in our environment.

If you are ever concerned about the safety or well-being of someone at one of our schools, please talk to one of the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead's (DSL's).

