

# MORE NEWS

6<sup>th</sup> December 2024

Issue: 13

Parish website: [olcsaffronwalden.org.uk](http://olcsaffronwalden.org.uk)

## Diary Dates



7th December – Spirit of Christmas 4pm Y5&6.

9th December – Reception Cooking week & last swim

10th December – Y6 Prayer & Liturgy (Advent) & Year 2 last swim

12th December – Infant Concert 2pm & 6.30pm

13th December – Uniform & Cake Sale 3.15pm

16th December – Infant Christmas Party 1.30pm

17th December – KS2 Concert 2pm & 6.30pm

18th December – Whole School Christmas Lunch & Christmas Jumper Day

19th December – Junior Party 1.30pm

20th December – 9.30am Christmas Mass, All welcome. Last Day of Term

6th January – Inset Day

7th January – Back to School

8th January – Reception Class, Natural History Museum & Dinosaur 9am – 12pm

## Lunch

### w/c 9th December Week 3

Please pay lunches on School Money - £2.40 per day

## Swimming

9th December – Year 4&6

10th December – Year 2

### Message from Mrs McNally

It has been a very busy week at St Thomas More. We have now put up our Christmas crib and tree so the hall is looking very festive.

We welcomed prospective new parents at our open morning on Wednesday and our visitors were able to see the wonderful learning in classes and speak to pupils about their experiences of school life. The children, as expected, were a credit to the school. They spoke politely and enthusiastically about their learning and their love of school.

### Santa Dash

The children had lots of fun during our Santa Dash on Thursday and looked very festive in their Santa hats.



### Year 6 – Prayer & Liturgy Tuesday 10th December

Y6 will be presenting a Prayer & Liturgy celebration about Advent on Tuesday 10th December at 9am. Parents are welcome to join us.

### House Competitions - Reminder

Entries need to be handed in to Year 6 by **Monday 9th December**. Don't forget to add your name and year to your entry.

### School Money – Christmas Lunch

If your children would like to have Christmas Lunch on 18th December can we please remind you to make payment for this on School Money. The cost of the lunch is £4.00. Thank you.

### Reception admissions for academic year starting in September 2025

The primary school (Reception) admission round opened on **Monday 4 November 2024**, for parents of children to apply for a Reception school place for the academic year that starts in September 2025. The statutory national closing date for applications is **15 January 2025**. Applications can be made online via [www.essex.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.essex.gov.uk/admissions). 99% of parents in Essex applied online last year. All of the application information is available on the website above.

## Prayer of the Week

**Sunday 8th December is the 35th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

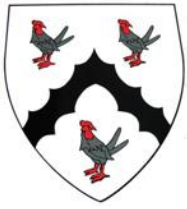
Alleluia, Alleluia

Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight, and all mankind salvation of God.

Alleluia

Mother Mary you have blessed us with God's precious son, Jesus.  
Pray for us throughout the day and be with us when we are scared in the darkness.  
We thank God for all of our mummies who we love and treasure.

Amen  
By Year 1



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## Coding Club

There will be a make-up session for Coding Club on Thursday 12th December

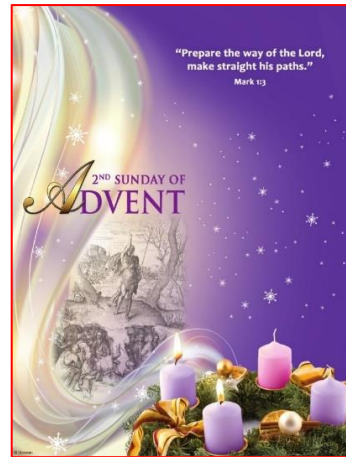
## Spring Term Clubs

Please see attached document for Spring Term Clubs. The clubs go live on Monday 16th December, if you would like to book a club please pay for this on School Money to secure a place.

## Advent

Sunday December 8<sup>th</sup> is the Second Sunday of Advent

On Friday, the children will take part in an Advent Prayer Trail, led by our Year 6 chaplaincy team children.



## Spirit of Christmas – Saturday 7th December at 4pm

Year 5&6 will be taking part in the Spirit of Christmas Concert at St Mary's Church on Saturday 7th December. **The concert begins at 4.00pm but the children are asked to be at the church at 3.00pm to be ready for a rehearsal at 3.15pm.** It should be finished by 5.30pm. Boys are expected to wear their normal school uniform. Please can the girls wear a skirt with black tights and a sweatshirt, not cardigan. The children will then look smart to perform in the choir. Please click on the below link to purchase your tickets.

[www.ticketsource.co.uk/saffron-walden-choral-society](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/saffron-walden-choral-society)

## Infant & Junior Performances

The Infant performance is on Thursday 12th December and the Junior performance will be on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December with shows at 2pm and 6.30pm. No tickets will be issued, but a register will be taken on entry.

Two people per family will be allowed at each performance. Pre-school siblings will be admitted to the 2pm performance only. **Only adults will be admitted to the 6.30pm performance.**

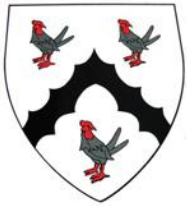
Please note seats are not transferable between families.

Infant children – please could the children return to school at 6pm to give the children time to change.

**If Infant children usually attend Double Club on the 12th, we advise they are collected at 3.15pm instead so they can go home for a rest before the show.**

## Recording of the Infant Nativity

One of our parents will be recording the Infant Nativity. If you would like a copy on USB, this can be purchased on School Money for



## Message from Eco Club

Thank you so much to everyone who supported Eco Club and purchased a Christmas Candle Decoration. Please remember to keep them watered every few days to keep them fresh throughout the festive season. If anyone would like to donate the white ceramic pots back to school, these can be recycled for next Christmas!

Thank you.

## Consultation on Admission Arrangements

In accordance with the DfE's 2021 statutory 'School Admissions Code' guidance, as a school we must consult on our admission arrangements at least once every seven years. I am writing to notify you of the consultation on our Admissions Policy for the academic year 2026-27.

The six-week consultation period will run from Wednesday 27th November 2024 to 4pm on Tuesday 21st January 2025; during this time, parents and other key stakeholders are invited to express their views about the admission arrangements.

All responses to the consultation should be made in writing and submitted before 4pm on Tuesday 21st January 2025 to [admin@stmsw.co.uk](mailto:admin@stmsw.co.uk)

The determined admissions policy will be published by March 2025.

The proposed admission policy can be found here <https://www.stmsw.co.uk/school-information/admissions/>

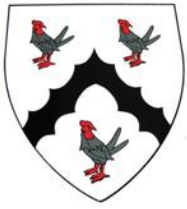
## More Sports News

Six golfers took part in a tournament at Saffron Walden Golf Club. Conditions were wet underfoot but the sun was out and there was no wind. In the event, all three of our pairs played with their opposite numbers from RAB. The format of alternative shots from 100 yards to full greens ensured that everyone had an opportunity to contribute and play as a team. Congratulations to Alfie and Hugh for winning the silver medal and to our other pairs for being within two shots of bronze. Everyone played well, had a very positive experience and were a credit to the school both on the course and in the clubhouse. Well done!



## Hockey Trials

On Tuesday 10th December we will be holding Hockey trials. We will be using this session to select a team for the forthcoming Hockey Tournament. The trial will be open to all children in Year 5 and 6 however, they must have a gum shield and shin pads to be able to attend the trial. Please note that team selection will be based on this trial and failure to attend with the above items will prevent them from participating. The trial will be taken by Mrs Head and Mr Hall.



## PSA News

### Christmas Bazaar

Thank you to the PSA for the wonderful Christmas Bazaar last weekend and to all of you who volunteered your time or donated items. Thank you to each and every family who came along and supported the school; we hope you enjoyed it as much as we did. The event raised an incredible £3900- thank you so much for your generosity.

The PSA would like to thank all the local businesses who very generously gave donations of prizes and vouchers towards the fete. We are very grateful for your support.

The support of these local businesses makes such a difference.

### **Hamper Winners:**

Please could we ask the hamper winners to return the hamper baskets to school so we can use them for our next event. Thank you.

### Uniform & Cake Sale – Friday 13th December at 3.15pm

The PSA will be holding a sale after school on Friday 13th December for pre-loved uniform and Cakes. Any cake donations will be gratefully received! Thank you.

### Christmas Jumper Day – Wednesday 18th December

Children are welcome to wear a Christmas jumper on this day with their school uniform.

### Smartphone Free Childhoods

On behalf of the PSA we would like to send out a survey about children's smartphone use.

Smartphone free childhoods - currently being debated by parliament. There is overwhelming evidence of the negative impact of smartphones and social media on children's brains. It is widely accepted that children's brains are now being exposed to things they are nowhere near developed enough to cope with, and as a result a generation of children are suffering; anxiety, eating disorders, bullying and sexual predators - research shows all have a proven link to early access to smartphones.

SURVEY: <https://forms.office.com/e/812P7CahuU>

Please will you take 2 minutes to fill in this survey to tell us your view on your child(ren)'s access (now or in the future) to smartphones, so that we can gauge (a) interest in attending/receiving additional resources to help navigate this challenging area; and (b) interest in each year group for signing a pledge to not provide your child(ren) with a smartphone until a certain age.