

# St Andrew the Apostle School Weekly Newsletter



Be kind to one another, forgiving one another, as God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32

21 December 2023

## Christmas Dinner & Jumper Day

Students at St Andrew the Apostle enjoying Christmas Dinner and wearing their wonderful Christmas jumpers.



## Message from the Headteacher

It has been another action-packed week with barely time to recover from the wonderful Christmas Concert on Friday evening. On Monday I had the privilege of taking a group of pupils around the site of the new school. We were given a whistlestop tour by our expert guides from Bowmer and Kirkland inside and outside of the new sports hall and studio complex. We also took the opportunity to make our mark by writing on the inside of one of the walls of the new building.

Tuesday was an exceptionally busy day, with a Christmas Fair orchestrated brilliantly by our Sixth Formers, a choir recital in a packed Trafalgar Square and, also in the evening, a GCSE and A level certificate presentation. It was wonderful to see so many current students and alumni turn out with their families and to have both our Chair of Governors, Mary Karaolis and another Founding Governor, Marina Pareas, hand out the Yiannis Pareas Award for Exceptional Academic Achievement. Christmas lunch and Christmas jumper day on Wednesday added to the festive feeling and the efforts of our catering team at Innovate were widely appreciated.

You will have hopefully seen my end of term letter to all parents. We look forward to seeing your sons and daughters back with us on Tuesday 9 January. For those in Years 11 and 13, particularly if mocks did not go quite as well as hoped, I would strongly recommend that post-Christmas, a few hours revision each day would be a wonderful way of starting the New Year on track. Year 12 will also have an exam in the week of their return so that would be a good New Year's resolution for them too. Be sure to also scan the QR code for our students Apostle News edition 3 on the last page.

We wish everyone a very happy Christmas in the company of loved ones and a very happy New Year.

Philip Hills



## Upcoming Dates and Information 2023 - 2024

- Tuesday 9 January 2024 – First day of term at 8.30am
- Please click [here](#) to access term dates.
- Please click [here](#) to access school calendar.

## Social Media



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## Faith



The Nativity, the incarnation of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ, also called Christmas, is one of the Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church, celebrated on December 25.

In the fullness of time, our Lord Jesus Christ was born to the Holy Theotokos and Virgin Mary, thus entering into the world as a man and revealing Himself to mankind.

According to the Bible and to Holy Tradition, Jesus was born in the city of Bethlehem in a cave, surrounded by farm animals and shepherds. The baby Jesus was born into a manger from the Virgin Mary, assisted by her husband St. Joseph. St. Joseph and the Theotokos were forced to travel due to a Roman census; the odd location of the birth was the result of the refusal of a nearby inn to accommodate the expecting couple (Luke 2:1-20). Since it is known historically that dwellings were built directly over such caves housing livestock--in order to make use of the heat.

Though three magi (learned men) from the East are commonly depicted as visiting during the event itself, the Bible records the coming of an unspecified number of wise men as being a few years after Jesus' birth (see Matthew 2). In either case, these magi came bearing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh (Matt 2:11). In the hymnography for the feast, these gifts are interpreted to signify Christ's royalty, divinity, and suffering.



## Christmas Show 2023

'Tis the season to be jolly, and our school community recently experienced an unforgettable evening of joy, merriment, and talent at our annual Christmas concert. The event, held in our school hall, showcased a remarkable amalgamation of musical performances, dazzling decorations, captivating drama acts, energetic dancing, and heartfelt expressions of gratitude. As the curtain fell on this magical night, the resounding cheer was not just for the holiday spirit but also for the incredible talents that graced our stage.

The audience enjoyed musical performances that ranged from Greek carols to contemporary hits. The melodious notes from the vocal groups and instrumental ensembles filled the auditorium, creating an enchanting atmosphere that transported everyone into the true spirit of Christmas. The dedication and hard work put in by the musicians and singers were evident in every chord struck and every note sung.

The stage came alive with vibrant and energetic dance performances that added a dynamic element to the evening. From the graceful movements of modern ballet to the lively beats of modern pop, our talented dancers wowed the audience with their precision and flair. The synergy between music and dance brought a unique dimension to the concert, leaving a lasting impression on everyone present.

The drama acts were, as always, a delightful addition to the program, weaving together heartwarming narratives that captured the essence of the season, full of meaning and emotion. The performers brought their characters to life with passion and skill, leaving the audience both entertained and moved. The carefully crafted scripts and impeccable acting showcased the dedication of our drama enthusiasts.

A special mention must be made of our presenters, who seamlessly guided the audience through the evening's festivities. Their charisma and warmth set the tone for the night, creating a sense of connection and community among everyone in attendance. Their efforts to ensure a smooth flow of the program did not go unnoticed, and their presence added a touch of professionalism to the event.

The auditorium was transformed into a winter wonderland with the creative and festive decorations. From twinkling lights to festive wreaths, every corner radiated holiday cheer. The visual appeal complemented the performances, creating a magical ambiance that enhanced the overall experience.

As the night concluded, it was only fitting to express our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of the Christmas concert. The teachers, students, parents, and volunteers who dedicated their time and talent deserve a heartfelt thank you for making this event possible. A special mention to Friends of St Andrew (FOSA) who provided the refreshments. It truly was a collaborative effort that showcased the strength and unity of our school community.

In the spirit of the season, we extend warm wishes to everyone for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May the joy and goodwill generated during our Christmas concert continue to resonate throughout the holiday season and beyond. As we bid farewell to another year, let us carry the spirit of unity, love, and celebration into the coming year, creating a tapestry of memories that will last a lifetime.

Wishing you all a joyous holiday season and a prosperous New Year!

**Mr Lasithiotakis (Head of Performing Arts)**



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## Performance at Trafalgar Square



### Harmonising for a Cause: Our Choir's Heartfelt Performance at Trafalgar Square

In the heart of London's iconic Trafalgar Square, the spirit of giving and festive joy reached new heights as our school's 20-member choir took center stage for a special performance. With a dual purpose of raising funds for Noah's Ark Hospice and spreading the Christmas spirit to the hundreds gathered, the event was a resounding success that resonated with warmth, harmony, and a sense of community.

The chilly evening air was quickly warmed by the melodic voices of our talented choir members, who, clad in festive attire, stood united in their mission to make a positive impact. The choice of Trafalgar Square as our performance venue ensured that our voices reached not only the ears but also the hearts of a diverse audience – a true reflection of the inclusivity and diversity that define our school community.

The choir's repertoire ranged from traditional carols to modern holiday classics, creating a musical tapestry that captivated the onlookers and passersby. The harmonious blend of voices echoed through the square, creating a magical atmosphere that transported everyone into the enchanting world of Christmas. The sheer talent and dedication of our choir members shone brightly, leaving an indelible mark on all who were fortunate enough to witness the performance.

However, this event was about more than just the joy of music. Our choir took this opportunity to raise funds for Noah's Ark Hospice, a cause close to our hearts. We were there to support hospice's invaluable work in providing care and support to children with life-limiting or life-threatening conditions, truly embodying the spirit of giving that defines the holiday season.

Beyond the fundraising efforts, the choir's performance served as a conduit for spreading the Christmas spirit far and wide. The square, adorned with festive decorations and a towering Christmas tree, became a temporary haven for all those seeking solace from the hustle and bustle of city life. The shared experience of music and community fostered a sense of togetherness among the diverse audience, transcending barriers and fostering a collective appreciation for the magic of the season.

As the last note echoed through Trafalgar Square, our choir received a well-deserved applause from the appreciative crowd. The smiles on the faces of both performers and onlookers were a testament to the success of our mission – to bring joy, raise funds for a noble cause, and share the magic of Christmas with the wider community.



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all!



**Mr Lasithiotakis (Head of Performing Arts)**



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## Senior UKMT Challenge

We are delighted to share some exciting news about one of our outstanding Year 12 students, Sidney, who has achieved remarkable success in the Senior UKMT Maths Challenge.

Sidney not only participated but also excelled in the Andrew Jobbings Senior Kangaroo challenge, earning a well-deserved merit. The Andrew Jobbings Senior Kangaroo is a prestigious follow-on round to the Senior Mathematical Challenge, showcasing Sidney's exceptional mathematical skills and dedication to the subject.

This accomplishment is a testament to Sidney's hard work, perseverance, and passion for mathematics. We are immensely proud of Sidney's achievement and believe it marks the beginning of many more successes to come.

Please join us in congratulating Sidney on this remarkable feat. We look forward to celebrating further achievements and milestones in Sidney's academic journey.

**Mr Dogan (Head of Maths)**



## A-level & GCSE Certificate Award Evening

We were thrilled to welcome back so many former students from last year's Y11 and Y13 to our school on Tuesday 19 December. Moving this event to late in the term meant that students at university were able to attend and accept their Level 3 certificates. Mr Francis and I were over-whelmed by the many students from his year group who attended to receive their certificates. The attendance says a great deal about both year groups, and the positive academic, social and faithful experience they had in our school. We were so proud of the collective outcomes for all students in these year groups and it was great to catch up with those who have moved on to hear what they are doing now. Notably the Headteacher's Award was presented to Natalia E for her outcomes and for personifying our values here at St Andrew. Marina Pareas, Founding Governor, was on hand to present the Award honouring her late husband, Yiannis – our Founding Chair of Governors. The recipient was Pavlos K, whose results embodied our school motto – 'Ever to Excel'. It was especially lovely to see so many parents attend this event! Thank you to all those who attended and to those, behind the scenes, for making it happen.

**Anthony Easton, St Andrew the Apostle School/RET Lead Adviser**



## Sixth Form Christmas Fair



St Andrew's Sixth Form students set up a Christmas Fair for the whole day on Tuesday. Students and staff thoroughly enjoyed. The event was a success!



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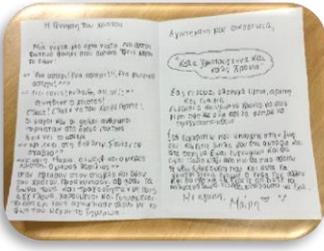
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## Greek Lessons

As we were approaching towards the Christmas festivities, we took the chance to celebrate the Christmas spirit throughout our Greek lessons. We decorated our Christmas tree, and we placed the Nativity at the bottom. We created festive activities which included: interacting with the Christmas vocabulary, crafting Christmas cards with Christmas wishes and writing a letter to Father Christmas in Greek. We learned about Greek Christmas customs and traditions such as making the traditional sweet treats, "melomakarona" and "kourabiedes", singing Greek Christmas carols and studying the Greek orthodox story of the nativity of Christ, especially the scene of the three wise men and the presents they gifted the newborn baby Jesus.

Miss Ntaountaki (Greek Teacher)



## Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge School Final

Many congratulations to our 6 finalists on their excellent performance in our school Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge Final which took place on Tuesday. Daniel, Ariana, Isha, Chloe, Megi and Angelo captivated their year 10 peers with passionate speeches on a range of challenging topics like struggle, depression, death penalty and illegal immigration. The judging panel, consisting of Mariami from (6<sup>th</sup> form student), Ms Pallas (English Teacher) and Mr Browell (Head of Year), were particularly impressed by fluency and passion of delivery as well as interesting arguments. Special congratulations to Chloe for winning a runner up place with the speech on her passion for rugby and Isha for winning with her speech on cultural identity. Supported by Chloe and her friends, Isha will represent our school in the Barnet Regional Final on 16 January, where she will compete against other school from the borough. Wish her luck!

Ms Bassington (Head of English)



## Y7 & Y8 Attendance Awards

This week, in addition to lots of Christmas Festivities, we have also celebrated and recognised those students who have achieved more than 96% attendance since September.

Y7 and Y8 students enjoyed a cinema style afternoon, where they were able to enjoy popcorn, drinks and a film, whilst recognising with their peers what a brilliant achievement it was to have such high attendance.

We set the benchmark of 96% attendance because we know that when students achieve this, their chances of attaining 5 GCSE's at Grades 5 or above significantly improves.

We can't wait to celebrate even more students in the new year!

Miss Walt (Head of Y11)



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## Art & DT

Lots of festive activities going on in Art and DT this week, students especially liked our Christmas themed after school club, students and staff had fun designing and decorating a Christmas jumper to wear to school on Christmas jumper day this week. Bringing in an old jumper allowed students to recycle and reinvent something old, giving it new life and serving a new use. Yummy chocolates were given out to the most creative designs. Here are a few fun photos.

Miss Agathangelou (Art & DT Technician)



As we all set our sights on the Christmas holidays, let us not forget that the birth of Jesus was heralded with a lot of joy and thanksgiving. Christians believe that his arrival was God's fulfilment of the promise of a messiah to bring salvation to humanity.

As we celebrate, everyone, regardless of our faith or beliefs will hopefully reflect on how to personalise the message and teachings of Jesus. Let us bear the reality of our lives with equanimity and be thankful for our friends and family, particularly at this time of the year.

But we must also think about others who are in despair or dealing with any difficulty or unpleasantness. We must reach out and help those in need. St Paul, writing from prison years ago reminded us of the importance of the human spirit and generosity when he wrote to the Ephesians "...and be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."

Happy Christmas!

Mr Iberi (Head of Religious Studies, PSHE & Careers Lead)

## APOSTLE NEWS

Bringing good news to our community

Scan me



Access our Student Newsletter - Apostle News Edition 3 by scanning the QR code!



We are excited to invite you to an online presentation hosted by the Met Police on Street Safety, namely Robbery Prevention and Awareness. This presentation is designed to help you stay informed about the dangers of robbery, how to protect yourself, and what to do if you are unlucky enough to be robbed. The Met Police will also share how they are tackling this subject matter.

The content will include examples of current trends of youth violence and crime which may highlight incidents in the boroughs of Brent, Barnet, and Harrow, and across London.

The sessions are live and will allow students and their parents to ask relevant questions around the topic area if they wish via writing these into a text or asking a question. This opportunity is to be offered to academic Years 7 – 13 cohorts.

Wednesday 10 January 2024 at 11.00am - 11.25am: Parent Day Session

[Teams Meeting Link](#)

We hope to see you there.

Mr Martin (Deputy Headteacher and DSL)

## Safeguarding

At St Andrew we have a team of colleagues ready to remove or reduce any barriers to students learning or wellbeing. If you have any concerns about your, or any other child in school please contact us. This should include:

- Their physical safety, such as their travel to and from school or the environment they are in outside of school.
- Their mental wellbeing, such as any concerns about anxiety, loneliness, bereavement or other mental health concerns.
- Their social development, such as concerning friendship groups or worries over gang involvement.
- Any other concerns such as obsession over gaming or being on the internet too much.

Please contact us through the staff contact form on our website, even if we cannot help directly, we can signpost families to local organisations and charities.

In particular, please contact the safeguarding leads below, or any other adults.

Your Designated Safeguarding Leads: Mr Martin, Ms Walt and Ms Viala



## Extra Curricular Clubs Timetable Autumn Term

	Lunchtime	After school
<b>Monday</b>		All Years Dodgeball (3 – 4pm) KS3 (Y7 - Y9) STEM Club – SC4 (3.05 – 3.45pm) Homework Club – ICT1 (3.30-5pm)
<b>Tuesday</b>	Y7 and Y8 Drama Club - DR1 (12.50 – 1.20pm)	Homework Club – ICT1 (3.30-5pm)
<b>Wednesday</b>	Strategy Club: Chess, Connect 4, Backgammon, Card Games – MA3 (12.35 – 1.10pm) Y9 Drama Club - DR1 (12.50 – 1.20pm)	Dance - B5 Changing Rooms (3 – 4.30pm) Art Club – Art1 Sign Up Only (3 – 4pm) Homework Club – ICT1 (3 - 3.50pm)
<b>Thursday</b>	Strategy Club: Chess, Connect 4, Backgammon, Card Games – MA3 (12.35 – 1.10pm)	All Years Basketball – B5 Changing Rooms (3 – 4pm) Netball - B5 Changing Rooms (3 – 4pm) Choir – MU1 (3 - 3.50pm) Homework Club – ICT1 (3 - 3.50pm)
<b>Friday</b>	Guitar Club - MU1 (12.35 – 1.20pm) MFL Speaking Club – CR11 (12.35 – 1pm) A Level girl Club – ENG (12.35 – 1.15pm) Apostle News Writing Group (12.35 – 1.15pm)	Homework Club – ICT1 (3 - 3.50pm)