

Saint John Wall Catholic School

A Catholic School For All



Mission Statement

'To educate each and every unique child in our care to hear and respond to what God calls them to be'



Issue 30

Weekly Information Bulletin

Date: Friday 9 May 2025



Catholic Life Annual Theme: Pilgrims of Hope on the Path of Peace

Termly Theme: 'To hear and respond to what God calls them to be'

Termly Catholic Social Teaching: Peace

Termly SJW Values: Compassionate and Loving

This week in Weekly Worship...

*"We focused on the pupil leadership opportunities that are available to us next year. This is an afterschool club that will focus on charity, mental health, wellbeing, Catholic Social Teachings and the Catholic Life of the school. We can be **curious and active** by trying to be a part of this group. I like Weekly Worship because we hear verses from the Bible that can help us in our daily lives."*

By Solihome Atobrhan 7BRK

This week in Afternoon Prayer...

*"We prayed for our school values of being **compassionate and loving**. We can be **compassionate and loving** in school by opening the door for someone and by smiling at someone. We also prayed for VE Day, reflecting on the fighting in Europe that came to an end in 1945. I like Afternoon Prayer because it is an opportunity to reflect and pray to God."*

By Pavla Farbarova 7PHA

Dates to Note

- **GCSE/AS/CNAT External Examinations**
Thursday 8 May 2025 to Wednesday 18 June 2025
- **Half -Term (Witsun Week)**
Monday 26 May 2025 to Friday 30 May 2025
- **Year 7 and Year 10 Assessment Week**
Monday 16 June 2025 to Tuesday 24 June 2025

Year 11 Examinations

As you stand on the brink of your GCSE exams, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the hard work and dedication you've shown throughout the year. This is a significant milestone in your academic journey, and I have every confidence that you will rise to the occasion. Remember, these exams are just one step on your path to success. They do not define you, but they do provide an opportunity to showcase your knowledge and skills. Stay focused, keep a positive mindset, and trust in your abilities. You've prepared well.

Take care of yourselves during this period. Ensure you get plenty of rest, eat healthily, and take breaks when needed. Balance is key to maintaining your well-being and performing at your best.

Believe in yourselves, and know that your teachers, family, and friends are all rooting for you. You've got this! #LIMITLESS

By Mrs Chand



Oxhill Road
Handsworth
Birmingham
B21 8HH



0121 554 1825



enquiry@sjw.bham.sch.uk
www.sjw.bham.sch.uk

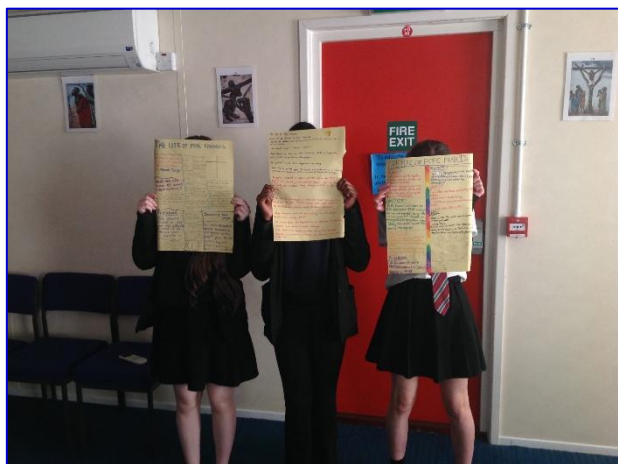
Pope Francis

On Easter Monday the Head of the Catholic Church, Pope Francis, passed away at the age of 88. His death marks the end of a papacy full of **compassion**, humility and dedication to the service of God and humanity.

Pope Francis was elected as the 266th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church on March 13, 2013. Throughout his time as Pope, he was known for his commitment to stewardship and **care for creation**, children, young adults and marginalised communities.

As we honour the loss of Pope Francis, we also celebrate this great legacy. Last week, all pupils in Year 7 and 8 lifestyle lessons and Chaplaincy groups commemorated his life. They reflected on his childhood and his interest in science, before entering religious life at 22. We reflected on his time as Pope and thought about the many different topics, including stewardship, that were of interest to him. Pupils also found out about the way a new Pope is elected and will explore the life of our new Pope, Leo XIV, during their sessions next week.

By Mr Lysaght



This week, staff and pupils have left comments on the legacy of Pope Francis:

"I like the way Pope Francis always wanted to engage with young people and gather the thoughts of parishioners via the synod (an assembly of religious leaders addressing issues of today and Church teachings)." By Miss Marston

"With the passing of Pope Francis, as a Catholic, I asked myself what I think about the legacy of Pope Francis. The first thing that came to my mind was how he understood Jesus' message, that we are all loved by God. One thing I remember the most is how inclusive he was of all members of our society and in the Church. When asked about this, his answer was 'who am I to judge them?'. At that moment I understood that he wanted to make the Catholic Church a place where 'everyone will feel loved and welcome.' For me, that is his legacy. He served the people and not the Church as an institution." By Ms Hewett

*"Pope Francis was just so human. Gone was the pomp and ceremony. In its place, stood a man, willing to serve in the smallest of ways. He was tender and **compassionate** in everything that he said and did, opening the doors to supporting refugees (literally!), providing showers for the homeless on the streets of the Vatican. Pope Francis influenced so many of our lives, whether we realise it or not, especially when we look to his work on climate change. Like Pope Francis, it is in small acts of goodness, that we can make the biggest changes to our world and the lives of those most in need." By Mrs Ellis*

"I think it is important to remember Pope Francis because he was a role model to many people during his time as Pope. He did amazing things such as opening up Church rituals for women and he promoted unity and equality." By Gursirath Kaur 8HEA

"He was an important ray of light that gave hope to many people. He was a humble leader and a kind soul that many will celebrate over the years. Pope Francis wanted to 'build bridges, not walls', showing how he was a Pope that connected with and cared for everyone." By Sarah Omena 8HAB





Celebrating VE Day at SJW

This week, the school came together to mark **VE Day**, reflecting on a moment in history that continues to teach us powerful lessons about **strength, peace, and hope**. Yesterday at **12:00 noon**, a respectful **two-minute silence** was held across the school, marked by a bell, giving staff and pupils the chance to pause and reflect on the significance of the day.

As part of our weekly worship, the whole school community took time to consider the values that VE Day represents and how we can carry them forward in our daily lives—through small acts of kindness, unity, and perseverance.

Staff and pupils also enjoyed **traditional British dishes** in the canteen, adding a meaningful and enjoyable cultural touch to the day. In lessons, pupils explored various aspects of VE Day, from personal stories to historical context.

A huge thank you to all staff and pupils for their support in commemorating this important day—especially **Miss Guest, Miss Lally, Mr Lysaght, Mr Price, and Mr Stanley** for their contributions.

Here's a quick look at some of the things pupils explored in lessons about VE Day, along with a few reflections they shared.

Miss Guest showed pupils in her classes a flag used on VE day by her great aunt- Kathleen Blunt, who was 6 at the time. She told Miss Guest that her father bought her and all her siblings a flag, they waved the flags out of the upstairs window when a procession of people marched past celebrating the end of the war. Kathleen remembered the procession of people banging their dustbin lids and shouting "come and join us" as they marched into the town to celebrate. Kathleen also remembered that she had never seen a banana until after the war, the first time she saw one she hid under the table with it. Miss Guest's nan, Joan Willetts, ran off with her banana!



VE Day Reflections from a Family Memory

Pupils in **Miss Guest, Miss Lally, and Mr McIntosh's classes** explored a personal memory of VE Day, shared by Miss Guest. The source was based on her grandfather's recollection of celebrations in the street at the end of World War Two, including waving flags and hearing church bells ring.

Pupils were **intrigued by the memory**, which gave them a powerful sense of what people felt in that moment. Many pupils commented on the **relief, joy, and hope for the future that they could infer from the source**.

A **huge thank you to Miss Guest** for sharing her family's personal connection to VE Day. It certainly made a lasting impression on the pupils. See pupils' work below.

What can you learn from the source about the end of World War Two and VE day?

A memory of VE day from K. Willetts, written in 2025

"I was 12 when the war ended. It was lovely, everyone had parties. We had a party in our street. We had the best food we could get at the time because food was still rationed. I didn't see a banana for years and during the war we lived off potatoes and bread. Everyone in the street put up bunting and we had electric lights for our street party because the man who lived opposite us in the street was an electrician. We knew the war had ended because there was a lot about it on the radio and when they announced it, all the church bells rang. I couldn't open the curtains or have lights on during the blackout, there would be wardens walking around the streets, shouting at people to put out their lights. I remember going to my grandfather's house because my uncle had just come back from fighting in the war with his rifle and other things. He was about 20. We were all so happy to see him!"

Task 1: Highlight and label the source to show what you can learn about the end of World War Two and VE day.

Task 2: Complete the answer (remember an inference is something you can work out)

What I can infer is people were relieved and happy that war ended

Evidence from the source to support this "everyone had parties"

Task 3: Write a reflection on VE day. What do you wonder? What has this memory of VE day made you think about? What is your personal response?

This made me think about the relief that people must have felt when the war ended. People must have been really happy to see their family members that they thought were lost. I think it must have been a relief to see him because he was so young.

What can you learn from the source about the end of World War Two and VE day?

A memory of VE day from K. Willetts, written in 2025

"I was 12 when the war ended. It was lovely, everyone had parties. We had a party in our street. We had the best food we could get at the time because food was still rationed. I didn't see a banana for years and during the war we lived off potatoes and bread. Everyone in the street put up bunting and we had electric lights for our street party because the man who lived opposite us in the street was an electrician. We knew the war had ended because there was a lot about it on the radio and when they announced it, all the church bells rang. I couldn't open the curtains or have lights on during the blackout, there would be wardens walking around the streets, shouting at people to put out their lights. I remember going to my grandfather's house because my uncle had just come back from fighting in the war with his rifle and other things. He was about 20. We were all so happy to see him!"

Task 1: Highlight and label the source to show what you can learn about the end of World War Two and VE day.

Task 2: Complete the answer (remember an inference is something you can work out)

What I can infer is that VE day was a very joyous time for many people because they were all happy to see him

Evidence from the source to support this "all the church bells rang"

Task 3: Write a reflection on VE day. What do you wonder? What has this memory of VE day made you think about? What is your personal response?

How people did people feel after they found out the war was over? Were they scared when blackouts had place?

What can you learn from the source about the end of World War Two and VE day?

A memory of VE day from K. Willetts, written in 2025

"I was 12 when the war ended. It was lovely, everyone had parties. We had a party in our street. We had the best food we could get at the time because food was still rationed. I didn't see a banana for years and during the war we lived off potatoes and bread. Everyone in the street put up bunting and we had electric lights for our street party because the man who lived opposite us in the street was an electrician. We knew the war had ended because there was a lot about it on the radio and when they announced it, all the church bells rang. I couldn't open the curtains or have lights on during the blackout, there would be wardens walking around the streets, shouting at people to put out their lights. I remember going to my grandfather's house because my uncle had just come back from fighting in the war with his rifle and other things. He was about 20. We were all so happy to see him!"

Task 1: Highlight and label the source to show what you can learn about the end of World War Two and VE day.

Task 2: Complete the answer (remember an inference is something you can work out)

What I can infer is everyone was relieved the war had ended

Evidence from the source to support this "Everyone had parties. We had a party in our street."

Task 3: Write a reflection on VE day. What do you wonder? What has this memory of VE day made you think about? What is your personal response?

I wonder why people had to put their lights out and I was surprised that he was so young to go to war.

What can you learn from the source about the end of World War Two and VE day?

A memory of VE day from K. Willetts, written in 2025

"I was 12 when the war ended. It was lovely, everyone had parties. We had a party in our street. We had the best food we could get at the time because food was still rationed. I didn't see a banana for years and during the war we lived off potatoes and bread. Everyone in the street put up bunting and we had electric lights for our street party because the man who lived opposite us in the street was an electrician. We knew the war had ended because there was a lot about it on the radio and when they announced it, all the church bells rang. I couldn't open the curtains or have lights on during the blackout, there would be wardens walking around the streets, shouting at people to put out their lights. I remember going to my grandfather's house because my uncle had just come back from fighting in the war with his rifle and other things. He was about 20. We were all so happy to see him!"

Task 1: Highlight and label the source to show what you can learn about the end of World War Two and VE day.

Task 2: Complete the answer (remember an inference is something you can work out)

What I can infer is that families were relieved that their family member on war was safe when they came back

Evidence from the source to support this "we were so happy to see him"

Task 3: Write a reflection on VE day. What do you wonder? What has this memory of VE day made you think about? What is your personal response?

What is a blackout? Why didn't see bananas?



Oxhill Road
Handsworth
Birmingham
B21 8HH



0121 554 1825



enquiry@sjw.bham.sch.uk
www.sjw.bham.sch.uk

VE Day Through the Eyes of an Evacuee

In **Mr McIntosh's class**, pupils explored a diary extract from **Dorothy King**, an evacuee, written to her mother on VE Day. The source, taken from the **Imperial War Museum**, gave pupils a unique insight into the celebrations and emotions felt at the time.

Pupils were particularly interested in **how Dorothy found out about VE Day**—through a mix of word of mouth, newspapers, and school announcements. This gave them a real sense of how news spread and how different communication was in the 1940s.

Here are some **reflections on the importance of VE Day** and **what pupils have learnt this week** about how the end of the war was experienced by ordinary people across the country.

By Mr McIntosh

Quotes from pupils about VE day

"What I learned about VE Day is that it happened in 1945, when the German Nazis surrendered. There were huge parties in the streets, and people were really happy and waved flags. Queen Elizabeth, who was a princess at the time, even helped out in the war and went out in disguise to celebrate with the crowds. She left Buckingham Palace, which shows how important VE Day was to everyone. It was a day of triumph and victory for Europe, and people came together to celebrate. It's important because it shows how the Nazis were defeated and how people finally had hope again."

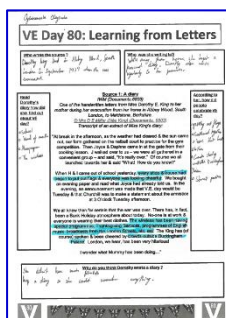
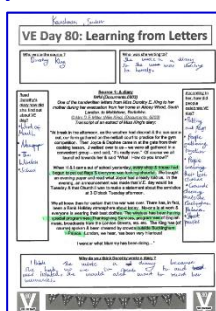
By David Ifeosame 9RAH

"It is important to celebrate VE day as it truly shows us just how many lives were lost So we can have our freedom. A lot of people died for a reason and we should always remember them."

By Amritpal Khela 9ILY

"It is important to celebrate VE day because it shows respect to all the people that lost their lives and those who fought in the war. It also reminds us of how we did we not have to go through it and so we have to be grateful."

By Hairan Kimba Musah 9ILY



Sport 4 Life

This academic year, our pupils have been moving to the beat and building their confidence through the *Sport 4 Life Dance Project*—an inspiring initiative that has brought rhythm, creativity, and self-expression to our school community.

Since its launch in the autumn term, the project has offered pupils the opportunity to explore a wide range of dance styles, from street and hip-hop to contemporary and Afrobeat. Weekly sessions have not only been about learning choreography, but also about teamwork, resilience, and self-belief.

Under the guidance of enthusiastic and experienced instructors, students have flourished. Whether they were complete beginners or experienced dancers, everyone was encouraged to step out of their comfort zone. Many pupils have discovered new talents and developed greater body confidence and coordination.

The dance routines—each reflecting a different genre—culminated in vibrant group performances that celebrated diversity and unity. One of the highlights of the year was the pupils getting to showcase their talents, by performing for their peers, teachers, and families, radiating joy and pride in all they had achieved.

More than just a physical activity, the *Sport 4 Life Dance Project* has helped pupils express themselves, boost their mental well-being, and foster a sense of community through the shared language of movement.

As the school year draws to a close, we celebrate the incredible effort, energy, and spirit our students have brought to the project. Here's to dancing our way into the next academic year with even more confidence and creativity!

Thank you to Miss Guest for liaising with Sport 4 life to arrange this project!

By Miss Young

Favour Year 7 - *"I really enjoyed the dance club—it was so much fun! I learned lots of new and unique dance styles, and the warm-up stretches we did beforehand were really helpful too."*

Meera Year 7 - *"It's amazing! Dance club really boosts your confidence, and I've enjoyed learning lots of new routines and styles."*

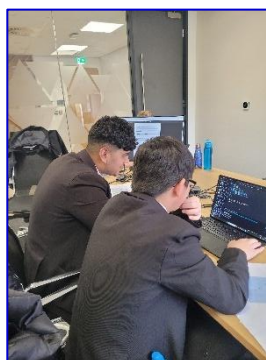
Amarachi Year 7 - *"Dance club is fun and creative because you get to share your ideas with others about the kind of dances you want to do, and then combine them to make a great routine. Our teachers are really nice and kind to us—they are also amazing at dancing!"*

Year 11 GCSE Visit to IFS Nottingham Branch

Over the Easter break, 2 GCSE Computer Science pupils had the opportunity to do a mini work experience at the Nottingham Branch of IFS, a software firm that supports the school. This was a great chance to see some real programmers at work solving real world problems. Thank you IFS for the opportunity.

By Mr Rathbone

"My visit to IFS's Nottingham branch on the 24th and 25th April was an inspiring and educational work experience. We completed various tasks that challenged my problem-solving and programming skills. We got to meet passionate individuals who gave us great insights into their work on the optimization software. The experience allowed me to deepen my understanding of the software development industry and provided valuable perspectives that will guide my future career choices." **By Krish Harjiv 11MCI**





Maths Department

Pupils in Year 7, Year 8, Year 9 & Year 10

From this term onwards all pupils in Year 7 to Year 10 will be required to purchase their own

CASIO Maths calculator product number

Fx-85GT CW

Some are currently available to purchase from school at a HEAVILY discounted price of....

£5 from Reception

(This offer is only available until the End of July)

Visit to St Mary's Coffee Club

Pupils were able to join in with the VE day 2-minute silence this morning which was very special. There were lots of memories shared about how the war affected some of the guests which pupils found fascinating. It was lovely to be able to take part. Next week is bingo.

By Mrs Clayton



Oxhill Road
Handsworth
Birmingham
B21 8HH



0121 554 1825



enquiry@sjw.bham.sch.uk
www.sjw.bham.sch.uk



#LifeorKnife

Warning Signs

If you're concerned about your child or a young person carrying a knife, please look out for the warning signs below.

1. Have they become withdrawn from the family and/or school?
2. Is their school or college reporting worrying changes in behaviour, academic achievement or attendance?
3. Have they lost interest in positive activities such as sports clubs?
4. Do they stay out unusually late without giving a reason and are vague about their whereabouts?
5. Have they stopped seeing old friends and started hanging out with a new group?
6. Are they secretive about the contents of their bag?
7. Are they defensive if you ask what is in their possession or if they are hiding anything?
8. Has their attitude changed about carrying knives/weapons? For example, justifying it by saying people carry them for self-defence?
9. Have any items gone missing from the kitchen, tool box or garage?
10. Have you found a weapon hidden amongst their possessions?



If you answer yes to any of the questions above, visit our website for further advice and support.

Scan QR code to get help now

West Midlands
POLICE



Working in partnership, making communities safer



Oxhill Road
Handsworth
Birmingham
B21 8HH



0121 554 1825



enquiry@sjw.bham.sch.uk
www.sjw.bham.sch.uk



What can I do to **protect** my child?

There are some simple ways to protect your child and your family from knife crime.

Start thinking about safely binning your unused knives. Most knives used in knife crime are kitchen knives, and keeping track or counting your knives could save a life.

Keep up to date with your kids on social media.

Online retailers run fewer checks. Keep tabs on your online shopping accounts for any suspicious purchases or packages.

Get to know their friends and where they hang out. Take an interest in what they've been up to

Create space for that conversation. See our top tips below:

- L**isten to them and support them
- I**dentify a time to chat comfortably
- F**ind all your information on WMP online
- E**xplore ways for them to step away from conflict

- O**pen up about your fears
- R**eassure them that most people don't carry knives

- K**nives don't give them protection
- N**ote that just carrying a knife can have a prison sentence
- I**t's braver and safer to walk away
- F**ind the words to help them step away
- E**xplain they can report anonymously through 'Fearless'

Search
'WMP Life or Knife'

West Midlands
POLICE



NW0000523



Oxhill Road
Handsworth
Birmingham
B21 8HH



0121 554 1825



enquiry@sjw.bham.sch.uk
www.sjw.bham.sch.uk



Communication and Autism



Access to
Education

Secondary Age CAT PAC – Summer 2025 Archbishop Ilsley Secondary School B27 7XY.

We would like to invite you to a CAT PAC course, our parent awareness course designed to support parent carers of children with autism or children who are on the neurodevelopmental pathway and who are on CAT Caseload.

- The course has been designed for parents who want to increase their understanding of autism.
 - The sessions will take place at **Archbishop Ilsley Secondary School B27 7XY.**
 - Each session will last for 2 hours

Session1 – What is Autism?	Tuesday 3 rd June 2025: TIME: 12.45-2.45pm
Session 2 – Social communication	Tuesday 10 th June TIME: 12.45-2.45pm
Session 3 – Sensory differences	Tuesday 17 th June TIME: 12.45-2.45pm
Session 4 – Supporting teenagers with autism	Tuesday 24 th June TIME: 12.45-2.45pm
Session 5 – Emotional well-being / Anxiety	Tuesday 1 st July TIME: 12.45-2.45pm
Session 6 – Parent carer choice & signposting to Local Offer / services	Tuesday 8 th July TIME: 12.45-2.45pm

The subject or title of your email needs to state that it is for the

Summer 2025 Secondary CAT PAC Archbishop Ilsley: In your email please include:

- Your name – Parent carer
- Your Child's name
- Your Child's school (Your child's CAT worker if known.)

Due to limited places, the course will be offered to the first families to contact us. There is an expectation that parents try to attend all sessions if possible.

Please email A2EGeneral@birmingham.gov.uk to reserve a place. You will receive an email response to confirm your place or to tell you that the course is full.

Yours sincerely, Dawn Fisher and Viv Walters.



Oxhill Road
Handsworth
Birmingham
B21 8HH



0121 554 1825



enquiry@sjw.bham.sch.uk
www.sjw.bham.sch.uk



OPEN MAC

A weekly physical drama group for
children with learning disabilities /
autism, aged 9 - 14.

 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

 Every Wednesday

 The MAC

Contact Us
info@opentheatre.co.uk

JOIN NOW!



Oxhill Road
Handsworth
Birmingham
B21 8HH



0121 554 1825



enquiry@sjw.bham.sch.uk
www.sjw.bham.sch.uk