



St Andrew the Apostle School Weekly Newsletter

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

24 March 2023

Message from Executive Headteacher

It has been another focused and purposeful week in school this week. Staff have been busy preparing for what is always such an important time in the life of a Christian school, Easter. We have organised our Easter services at St Katherine's Church and we are very grateful to Father Damian for putting on services for all year groups at such a busy time for him and his church.

Students and teachers will be walking to the church for services on the following days:

- Monday 27 March – Years 7 and 11
- Wednesday 29 March – Years 9 and 10
- Thursday 30 March – Years 8, 12 and 13



These church services are wonderfully distinctive and inclusive events that underpin our Greek Orthodox designation. All services will feature our Byzantine Choir and we are blessed to have Father Damian leading the services. He ensures that the various parts of the service are well explained to the students, making them accessible and inclusive for students of all faiths and none.

In addition to these school services, Father Damian has also asked for support from our students and their families at St Katherine's Church services this Easter:

- Palm Sunday (9th April) at St Katherine's is dedicated to children. There is a procession at the 11.30am service where children hold palm tree branches.
- On Holy Monday and Tuesday at 7.00pm there are services, where children hold candles.

- On Holy Wednesday at 7.00 pm, it is the Service of the Anointing of the People.
- On Holy Thursday there are services in the morning between 8.00am and 10.45am (Communion of many people) and at 7.00pm with the 12 Gospel readings, again with children holding candles.
- On Holy Friday evening at 7.00 pm it is the service of Lamentations with a procession at approximately 8.15pm; students may assist with holding the banners, cross, candles and spreading flowers. This last event is the most important for the church and there will be local dignitaries present.
- On Holy Saturday at 11.00pm the church is holding a Resurrection service and pupils may help during the procession.

For all of these services, the church would welcome the assistance of 2-4 students from St Andrew the Apostle School. If you attend St Katherine's Church and would like your child to be a part of these services, please see Father Damian. If you normally attend another Greek Orthodox or Orthodox Church but you and your family would like to be a part of any of these services, do contact me and I can inform Father Damian. When helping at services, please note that students should wear their full school uniform. I hope that our school will be well represented at these church services this Easter.



We have also been preparing for our achievement assemblies next week, which are on Thursday and Friday. These are always a great chance for Heads of

Year to recognise students in their year groups. This recognition will come in many forms: attitude, progress or linked to our school values.

As well as the support you may be able to provide for the church services at St Katherine's, as a parent body you have been supporting us with donations. Thank you to all of you who have made donations through our donations page:

<https://standrewtheapostle.org.uk/stafund>

It is so very much appreciated, not least in the current financial climate. We feel very humbled when we received this support, not least as donations have already surpassed the total donated for the entire previous academic year. These donations help with the little and not so little extras. A 'little' extra would be the chess sets for chess club, which is a great success and features a tournament this week. A 'not so little' extra would be the benches we are sourcing for our playgrounds. These things make a big difference to the lives and working of our school and directly benefit our learners. With all our purchases we try to make sure the equipment will be able to transfer into our new building.

Lastly from me this week, please remember that we have an early finish for the last day of term and students will be dismissed at 12.35pm. Please read the full announcement below in this newsletter with all the other news of the week.

Anthony Easton (Executive Headteacher)

Upcoming key Dates and Information

- Thursday 30 March – Year 7 Parents Evening
- Friday 31 March – End of Term 12:35 Finish
- Please [click here](#) to access term dates.
- Please [click here](#) to access school calendar.
- Please [click here](#) to access previous editions of the Newsletters.

Faith- πίστη

The Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross



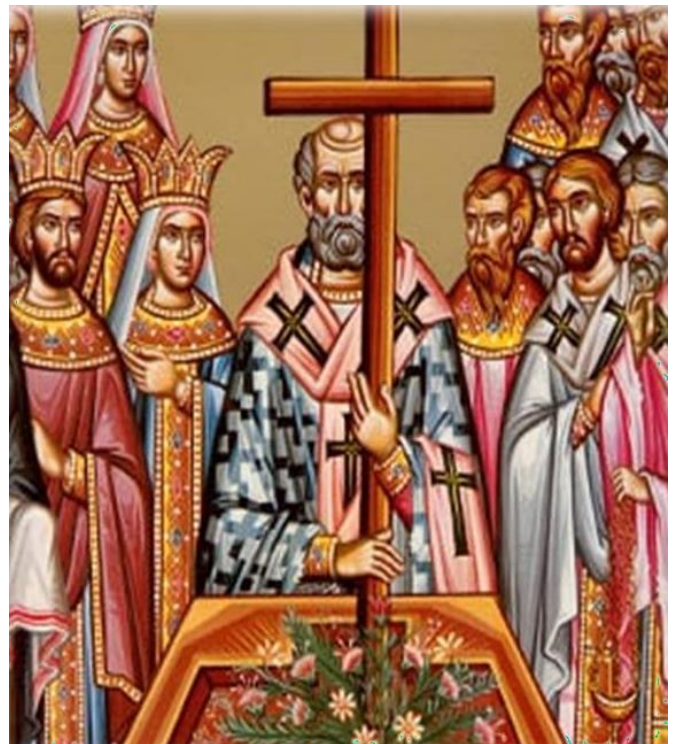
The Sunday of the Holy Cross prepares us for commemoration of the Crucifixion, but it also reminds us that the whole of Lent is a period when we are crucified with Christ.

As we have "crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (Galatians 5:24) and will have mortified ourselves during these forty days of the Fast, the

precious and life-giving Cross is now placed before us to refresh our souls and encourage us who may be filled with a sense of bitterness, resentment, and depression. The Cross reminds us of the Passion of our Lord, and by presenting to us His example, it encourages us to follow Him in struggle and sacrifice, being refreshed, assured, and comforted. In other words, we must experience what the Lord experienced during His Passion – being humiliated in a shameful manner. The Cross teaches us that through pain and suffering we shall see the fulfilment of our hopes: the heavenly inheritance and eternal glory.

As they who walk on a long and hard way and are bowed down by fatigue find great relief and strengthening under the cool shade of a leafy tree, so do we find comfort, refreshment, and rejuvenation under the Life-giving Cross, which our Fathers "planted" on this Sunday. Thus, we are fortified and enabled to continue our Lenten journey with a light step, rested and encouraged.

Or, as before the arrival of the king, his royal standards, trophies, and emblems of victory come in procession and then the king himself appears in a



triumphant parade, jubilant and rejoicing in his victory and filling those under him with joy, so does the Feast of the Cross precede the coming of our King, Jesus Christ. It warns us that He is about to proclaim His victory over death and appear to us in the glory of the Resurrection. His Life-Giving Cross is His royal sceptre,

and by venerating it we are filled with joy, rendering Him glory.

The present feast has been placed in the middle of Great Lent for another reason. The Fast can be likened to the spring of Marah whose waters the children of Israel encountered in the wilderness. This water was undrinkable due to its bitterness but became sweet when the Holy Prophet Moses dipped the wood into its depth. Likewise, the wood of the Cross sweetens the days of the Fast, which are bitter and

often grievous because of our tears. Yet Christ comforts us during our course through the desert of the Fast, guiding and leading us by His hand to the spiritual Jerusalem on high by the power of His Resurrection.

Moreover, as the Holy Cross is called the Tree of Life, it is placed in the middle of the Fast, as the ancient tree of life was placed in the middle of the garden of Eden. By this, our Holy Fathers wished to remind us of Adam's gluttony as well as the fact that through this Tree condemnation has been abolished. Therefore, if we bind ourselves to the Holy Cross, we shall never encounter death but shall inherit life eternal. The icon shows the priest venerating the Cross as the people chant the hymn "We venerate Your Cross, O Christ, and Your holy Resurrection we glorify," which is inscribed on the table holding the Cross.

March 25 Marks the Annunciation, A Feast for Orthodoxy and Hellenism

25 March which passed us, is one of the most important dates of Hellenism throughout the world since it marks both the anniversary of the Greek War of Independence and the Feast of the Annunciation, a significant celebration in Christianity. The Feast of the Annunciation marks the visit of the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, during which he told her that she would be the mother of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

More importantly, since it occurs nine months before the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day, the Annunciation marks the actual incarnation of Jesus Christ – the moment that Jesus was conceived and that the Son of God became the son of the Virgin Mary. The Virgin Mary is the second-most sacred figure in the Greek Orthodox Church after Jesus Himself.

The feast day celebrates two things:

- God's action in entering the human world as Jesus in order to save humanity.
- Humanity's acceptance of God's will in Mary's freely given acceptance of the role of being the Mother of God.

The story Annunciation is told in Luke's Gospel, 1:26-38.

In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."



"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative, is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. For nothing is impossible with God.”

“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered.

“May it be to me as you have said.” Then the angel left her.

25 March was the name day of all those called Evangelia, Evangelos, Angela, Angelo, Maria, Mario, Theotokis, Panayiota, Yiota, Panayiotis and other derivatives of “Evangelismos” (Annunciation).

Saint Name Days for the week commencing 27 March

Date	Saint Celebrated
Monday 27 March	FILITAS, LEEDA, LIDIA, MAKEDON
Friday 31 March	YPATIS
Sunday 02 April	TITOS

End of Term Arrangements

As we approach the Easter break, we would like to inform you that the end of the Spring term will be on Friday 31 March 2023.

In the line with our normal procedure, students will be dismissed from 12.35pm by their Heads of Year. Students who are in receipt of free school meals can collect these from the canteen of the building they are in on that day.

The final day of term will feature normal lessons to conclude the term and all students are expected to attend on that day. Some year groups will have also had their achievement assemblies, led by their Head of Year, on that day as well.

Basketball Club

Unfortunately, our cup run comes to an end. The Year 9 boys left it all on the basketball court but came up short against a well-structured Christ College side. STA Year 9 boys were on top form against other schools which led them to this semi-final game. Well done to our MVP, Hendrik S who played excellently on both

ends of the court. The future is promising for our boys’ basketball team!



Mr De Jesus (Cover Supervisor)

Anti-Bullying

All our form tutors, Heads of Year and indeed all adults in the school are training in how to identify, report and respond to signs of bullying. We have robust procedures and policies in school which we follow to ensure that we reduce and remove this from our community.



One of our values in school is respect and we expect all students to show respect to each other.

However sometimes these signs in school can be very subtle initially and it can be difficult for adults to spot these signs. We also know that some students would be concerned about their teachers knowing that this is happening.



When issues of bullying or unkindness occur in school, we address this in sensitive and appropriate ways. This can include closer monitoring or dealing with the issue in a way that reduces rather than aggravates the situation.

If your child has reported any unkindness to you that you are concerned about, please do report this to us using our staff contact form and we can discuss how we can support your child in the most appropriate way with a discussion between you, as parents, initially, so we can agree on a way forward.

Mr Martin (Deputy Headteacher)

Term 4 Extra – Curricular Sports Clubs

PE extra-curricular clubs re-commence on Monday 16 January 2023.



Monday

Activity: All Years Dodgeball

Time: 3.00pm-4.00pm

Venue: Building 5 Hall

***Change in building 5 changing rooms.**

Activity: GCSE Trampolining (invite only)

Time: 3.00pm-5.00pm

Venue: East Barnet School

***Change in building 5 changing rooms.**

Tuesday

No clubs due to sports fixtures

Wednesday

Activity: All Years Dance

Time: 3.00pm-4.30pm

Venue: Building 5 Hall

***Change in building 5 changing rooms.**

Thursday

Activity: All Years Basketball

Time: 3.00pm-4.00pm

Venue: Building 4 and 5 Playground

***Change in building 5 changing rooms.**

Please note students do not wear PE kit to school on the day of clubs. If you do not have PE on the day of the club, but wish to attend, please bring PE kit to change into after-school. Full PE kit must be worn to after-school clubs. If you have PE lessons on the day of a chosen club, you will already be changed into full PE kit.

Mr R Browell (Head of PE)

Safety around our schools and homes

From time to time, we get messages from the local police or the local authority about safety of young people. We had one of these messages from the School's Safeguarding Lead at Barnet Education and Learning Service, which related to recent information circulating amongst schools and the wider community, and he wanted to share the following information:

We are aware of a series of incidents that are currently circulating online involving an allegation of an attempted child abduction. Police are aware of this, however at this time there is no evidence of a crime having been committed. Should anyone have any further information please contact police via 101 or www.met.police.uk

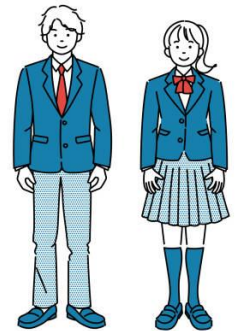
This information should not cause alarm and may reassure. It is always good to be aware.

School Uniform

We are incredibly proud of our students and the way that they present themselves to our community. We do this by 'sweating the small stuff' when it comes to uniform, and this ensures that larger behaviour issues are less common. The aim of our uniform policy is to ensure that all students look professional, are ready to work in school and be prepared for the world of work after they leave us.

Please do support the school culture and ethos by helping us ensure that students have the correct uniform. In particular:

- Students should be wearing leather shoes, [the types that are acceptable can be found here.](#)
- Students should not wear any jewellery or piercings other than a single stud in each ear lobe.
- Students should be wearing neutral trainer socks or no socks with tights.
- Students should also have their shirt tucked in, top buttons done up and ties tied correctly.



If students arrive to school in incorrect uniform, they could be asked to return home to change and return immediately or failure to follow clear and reasonable instructions to address their uniform could result in students being detailed or placed in our Referral Room.

Mr Martin (Deputy Headteacher)

Mobile Phones



As we enter the final term of the academic year, we would like to remind parents that the use of mobile phones is prohibited during the school day, and students should not use them to communicate with anyone including parents. This is to ensure that our students can concentrate on their learning without distractions and to maintain a positive learning environment.

Our school has a strict policy on mobile phone use, and we expect all students to adhere to this policy. Mobile phones must not be visible or used during the school day, including breaks and lunchtime. Any mobile

phones that are seen or heard will be confiscated by the school staff and returned to the student at the end of the school day. If this happens twice, parents should expect to come and collect the phone from the school office.

We understand that mobile phones can be important for staying in touch with parents and guardians, particularly in emergencies. However, we have systems in place to ensure that students can communicate with parents in case of emergency. Parents can contact the school office, and we will make sure that the message is relayed to the student. We encourage parents to use this system rather than contacting their child directly during the school day.

We believe that the mobile phone ban is essential to create a positive learning environment where students can concentrate on their studies without distractions. Mobile phones can be a significant source of distraction, and we want to ensure that our students have the best possible chance of success in their academic studies.

We appreciate your support in enforcing the mobile phone ban and remind parents that it is their responsibility to ensure that their child adheres to the school's policy on mobile phone use. We encourage parents to talk to their children about the importance of the ban and the impact that mobile phones can have on their academic performance.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter, and we look forward to continuing to work together to ensure the best possible learning environment for our students.

Mr Martin (Deputy Headteacher)

Study facilities in Barnet Libraries

Barnet Libraries offer a wide range of services to support students. For example, they provide GCSE and A Level revision guides as well as a large collection of non-fiction books. We also offer a wealth of [online resources](#) including encyclopaedias, dictionaries, online newspapers and biographies. All are available to use free with a Barnet Library card. Library members can use a PC for 90 minutes each day or enjoy unlimited access to our Wi-Fi.

They are pleased to offer study space for students. This is available in both staffed hours and [self-service opening](#). Self-service opening allows eligible library

card holders to use libraries during unstaffed opening hours. Young people aged 14 and over can register for self-service opening by completing a form at any Barnet Library. The form must be signed by a parent or guardian.

Self-service opening hours are available at Burnt Oak, Chipping Barnet, Colindale, East Finchley, Edgware, Finchley Church End, Golders Green, Hendon, North Finchley and Osidge libraries.

In order to create a positive learning environment for young people during the busy study period now approaching, we'd like to remind students of their study requirements:

- Study space is limited and is provided on a first come first served basis. We are not always able to accommodate every student.
- Please share tables so we can accommodate as many people as possible.
- Some areas of the library are reserved for users who are not studying. Please respect other library users' and their needs
- Sockets are limited. We recommend you charge your device before you come to the library as you may not be able to plug in
- If you do have safe access to a socket, please ensure that wires do not trail across the floor.
- Please ensure people can get to the library shelves to browse.
- PC desks are only available for people using that PC. Please do not study at PC desks.
- Please do not let anyone into the library if they do not have their own library card or they are not registered for self-service opening.
- Please keep fire escapes clear
- Please do not move furniture.
- If you wish to sit on the floor, please do so in the Teen Lounge area only.
- Please be quiet.
- Please place all litter in bins provided.
- Please return books to a trolley after use
- No food deliveries, hot food or take-aways are permitted
- Thieves operate in libraries. Please do not leave bags or valuables unattended.

For safety and security, libraries are monitored by CCTV at all times.

Please note toilets are available during staffed opening times but may not be available in self-service opening.

For more information visit www.barnet.gov.uk/libraries

The Dangers of TikTok: A Call to Parents



As social media continues to dominate our daily lives, TikTok has emerged as one of the most popular platforms, particularly among young people. While it can be a fun and entertaining way to connect with friends and explore new interests, TikTok also presents potential dangers that parents should be aware of.

One of the most significant risks associated with TikTok is the exposure of personal information. Users are encouraged to share videos of themselves, and these videos can often reveal details about a person's identity, location, and interests. This information can be used by online predators to target and groom vulnerable children and teenagers.

In addition, TikTok's algorithms and recommended content can expose children to inappropriate material, such as sexual content or graphic violence. This can have a negative impact on their mental health and wellbeing, as well as their overall safety.

Another concern is the potential for cyberbullying on the platform. TikTok users can receive hurtful comments or messages, and the viral nature of the app

can lead to harassment and public shaming. This can have a devastating impact on young people's self-esteem and mental health.

To help parents navigate the potential dangers of TikTok, the National Online Safety Group has created a comprehensive guide. This guide covers topics such as privacy and security settings, how to report inappropriate content or behaviour, and advice on how to talk to children about online safety.

We urge all parents to take the time to read this guide and have open and honest conversations with their children about the risks associated with TikTok. By working together, we can help to create a safer and more responsible online community.

Remember, TikTok can be a fun and entertaining app, but it is important to use it responsibly and with caution. Let's work together to keep our children safe online.

Teenage Vaccinations

Teenage vaccinations given in years 8, 9 and 10 – is your teen up to date?

Teenage vaccinations are the best way to protect your child from serious diseases such as HPV-related cancers, meningitis, septicaemia, diphtheria, tetanus and polio. In school, your child will be offered:

- The HPV vaccine in year 8 and 9 as a 2-dose schedule
- The MenACWY vaccine in year 9 and 10
- The 3 in 1 teenage booster in year 9

If your child has missed any of these vaccines, speak to their school immunisation team or GP surgery and make an appointment to catch up as soon as possible. For more information, visit:

- www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them/

Stephen Warrick
Communications and Engagement
Public Health, London Borough of Barnet

Parents – Conversation Starters

Parenting the digital world is difficult, no-one can deny that. For many of us we didn't grow up in a world of technology, therefore we don't have 'lived experience', we're just trying our best. With many parents I speak to, one of the questions I regularly get is, "How do I start the conversation?"

With the exploitation of children getting significantly worse each year, those conversations are so



More information and teacher sign-up can be found here:

- <https://www.londonstemambassadors.org.uk/stem-resource/online-mentoring-for-west-london-students/>.

You can also contact a.stoten@stem.org.uk for additional information from STEM LEARNING

**Steve Marshall, BPSI - BELS - Science
Barnet Education and Learning Service**

Public Health Updates

Mental Health Support for CYP Leaflet

Please find attached an amended version of the mental health support for children and young people leaflet.

Please see attached flyer for St. Vincent's Wellbeing Hub.

This is open to anyone that supports/leads on mental health in schools or would like to learn more about the Senior Mental Health Lead training. For further information, please contact emma.scelsi@stvincents.barnet.sch.uk

Jayne Abbott, Resilient Schools Manager

Public Health Directorate, London Borough of Barnet

Safe and Healthy Online Habits

Bad things sometimes happen. It's a regrettable but inescapable fact of life. Nobody – especially in the vast, untamed wilds of the internet – can avoid setbacks indefinitely. What we can do, however, is fortify ourselves – and, crucially, our children – with the knowledge and the skills to cope with and adapt to these difficulties when they arise. That's digital resilience. Coaching children and young people to handle the slings and arrows of online misfortune will hugely benefit a generation who are growing up publicly in an online environment. This guide has some basic and easily achievable suggestions for good online habits that will help young people to enjoy the digital world more safely and healthily.

important. In my voluntary work with the Police, I visit many homes where a child/young person has uploaded illegal imagery, and yet so often I hear "Why did you do that, you knew it was wrong!", 'That's it, you're banned" and much more. This is victim blaming.

From a parental perspective I get it, I understand the reaction. Parents are scared, even traumatised. Yet these criminals are devious, I often see the chat logs, children are ALWAYS victims.

The Internet Watch Foundation have put together a brilliant guide for parents. You can find the guide [HERE](#).

Mentoring for Career in STEM industry (14-18)

Students from West London are invited to participate in a [free, online mentoring scheme](#), funded by the Mayor of London, for disadvantaged 14 to 18-year-olds who may be interested in career within the STEM industry, or want to know more about it.

This scheme is exclusively for students in Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow and Richmond and runs from 24 April for 12 weeks.