



St. Stephen's School
and Children's Centre
Learning for Life

Headteacher's Newsletter

Issue 3

6th January 2025

Dear Parents, Carers and Children,

Happy New Year! A warm welcome to the start of a new term and a fresh chapter at St. Stephen's. I hope your holiday season was filled with joy and that you are ready to embrace the opportunities and challenges that 2025 brings.

This year, I encourage our children to dream big, work hard and take ownership of their learning. To our parents and carers, your role is vital in this journey. By fostering routines such as consistent bedtimes, reading together and encouraging independence in daily tasks, you provide your child with essential life skills that lay the foundation for success in school and beyond.

This term, we have planned an exciting range of workshops and activities. These are wonderful opportunities to engage with your child's education and connect with our school community. Let's make 2025 a year of collaboration, growth and celebration as we empower our children to become confident, capable, and independent learners.

I am also delighted to introduce Habebur Rahman, who joins us as a new parent governor. We look forward to the dedication he will bring to his role in supporting our school community.

Recently, we received feedback about one of our year group workshops. While the event was enriching for those who attended, lower than expected participation left some children feeling disappointed. Your presence at school events makes a huge impact—it strengthens the bond between home and school, builds your child's confidence and reinforces the value of education. We understand the demands of busy schedules, but even small acts of involvement can make a world of difference.

Finally, please see the staffing section for updates about changes to our team, including transitions within the school.

Here's to a fantastic year ahead, filled with learning, achievement and joy!

Warm regards,

Ms. Neena Lall OBE

Headteacher



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS- Mr Shashankar Jana

Hope you had a nice Christmas break.

Happy New Year 2025!

We welcome everyone back to school for another year of great success and joy. At St. Stephen's, Governors, staff, parents and children work together in a happy, creative and high attaining environment; with our core values of honesty, kindness, respect and responsibility underpinning everything that we do. I strongly believe our children continue to work hard and are utilising the many opportunities here at St. Stephen's. This success is a direct reflection of the great inspiration and motivation given by all the teachers, staff and being efficiently led by the Head teacher and her leadership team.

The children in our school achieve high standards across the curriculum as verified by OFSTED. We are justifiably very proud of them and would like to thank the parents who encourage and support their children so admirably. In an outstanding school, such as ours, parents take a great interest in their child's learning and development. I appeal to our amazing parents to continue to help us bring the best out of our children.

I would like pupils to be confident and courageous, true to who you are and learn all that life has to offer. We are all here to make you a successful and happy person. Enjoy every moment of your time here at St. Stephen's.

As Governors, we always pledge to do our best to support the school in every way required. The Governing Body is involved with our school at every level. This includes finance, safeguarding, premises management and staff appointments. As Governors, we consider our most important role to be the safety, welfare and education of our pupils.

STAFFING

As we begin this term, I want to share some important updates.

It is with a heartfelt mixture of sadness and immense gratitude that I announce the departure of Mr. Chetan Patel from St. Stephen's School. After 13 years of dedicated service, including his role as Assistant Headteacher, Chetan has made the difficult decision to leave due to personal circumstances.

Throughout his time with us, Chetan has been more than an educator; he has been a pillar of strength and a source of genuine inspiration. His unwavering commitment to the education and wellbeing of our children, his trusting relationships with staff and families and his passion for teaching will forever be a part of our school's legacy. He has shaped countless lives, leaving an enduring imprint that will be felt for years to come.

While we will miss his presence and contributions, we wholeheartedly support Chetan's decision. Please join me in expressing our gratitude for his many years of dedicated service and in wishing him all the best for the future.



Additionally, I would like to acknowledge the departure of our SENDCo, Maryjane Winston. Maryjane has been a dedicated member of the St. Stephen's family for over 11 years, contributing immensely to the well-being and success of our children. She has decided to step away to devote more time to her family.

Please join me in extending our heartfelt thanks to Maryjane for her unwavering commitment, hard work and passion during her time with us. We wish Maryjane every happiness and success as she begins this new chapter in her life. She will always remain a part of St. Stephen's story.

We are delighted to welcome **Eluned Williams** as our new Primary SENDCo. Eluned brings a wealth of experience and is passionate about supporting every child's potential.

CHARITY WORK AT ST STEPHEN'S

- Donations of food for our, all year round food bank were gratefully received and are distributed by the Children's Centre over Christmas and will continue throughout the year.
- Food hampers were distributed to the Ambulance Service, The Salvation Army and the domestic staff at Newham General Hospital.
- The Children's Centre continues to work with many vulnerable families, and during the Christmas break, the team delivered toys and gifts to the many families that we support in the community.
- Macmillan Coffee Morning : £946.11

SCHOOL FUND ACCOUNT:

- Current Balance £4485.83

Year Group Fundraising Days

The Nursery held a Physical Curriculum Day and all of the children and parents took part in a sponsored walk. £600 was raised towards new garden equipment.

Year 2 organised an immersive 'Polar Express Day,' which was planned around their core book for this term. They came to school dressed in their pyjamas and took part in drama activities re-enacting the story. They also baked some delicious healthy cookies, which they sold at hometime.

Year 5, took part in an 'Evacuee Day,' in which they experienced what it would be like to be an evacuee in WW2. They came to school dressed as evacuees and built air raid shelters using wooden sticks, saws and glue guns. They also baked some welsh cakes using wartime rationed ingredients, these were sold after school on the KS2 playground.

We would like to thank all parents for your support with these fundraising days. Without you we would have not been able to raise over £220, which we will dedicate to ensure new resources are provided to aid your children's learning.

LION KING VISIT

On 11th December, our Key Stage 2 children had an unforgettable opportunity to attend the acclaimed West End production of *The Lion King*. From the moment the curtain rose, the



performance captivated everyone with its breathtaking special effects, dazzling costumes, and awe-inspiring puppetry. It truly was a magical experience that left both children and staff in awe!

This incredible trip was made possible thanks to the generosity of our sponsor, **Ark Build PLC**, who provided significant financial support, allowing us to keep ticket costs remarkably affordable for families.

To enrich the experience further, the children engaged in pre- and post-show learning activities, diving deep into the story and themes of *The Lion King*. Some creative work is now proudly displayed in the school entrance hall—do take a moment to admire it next time you visit!

We are so proud to provide opportunities like this that bring learning to life in such an inspiring way.

JOY CUP

The Joy Cup is awarded to one child from each class at the end of every term. The recipient is chosen by the teachers and staff who work closely with the class, recognising those who consistently demonstrate a genuine enthusiasm for attending school and fully embrace the values and opportunities offered at St. Stephen's.

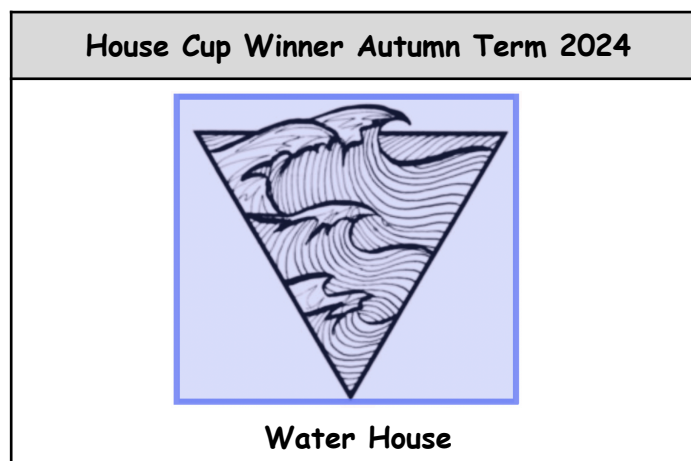
I would like to congratulate the joy cup winners for the Autumn Term 2024:

RNO: Eshaal Hossain RLP: Aydin Khasia RJM: Dewan-Ismaeel Chowdhury	1HA: Saarah Yusuf 1JR: Nirav Sarath 1SS: Thilinee (Tilly) Serugo - Lugo	2EC: Khadijah Patel 2MW: Eva Butt 2PM: Hidayah Begum	3AG: Sahaan Vaghela 3JC: Yousef Qureshi 3NB: Tahmid Miah	4CC: Muhammad Abdullah 4RM: Jarir Sulaman 4LT: Safiyyah Harif	5AW: Dawood Abu Bakr Waseem 5EW: Mia Malik 5PC: Anayah Rahman	6AQ: Khadijah Patel 6JL: Joel Williams 6LD: Michael Adamafio
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HOUSE CUP WINNERS

We are thrilled to share the results of our very first House Cup competition. This term, all of the children have worked incredibly hard to earn house points for their teams by consistently demonstrating our **WE CARE** values: **Wellbeing, Expression, Courtesy, Acceptance, Respect, and Excellence**.

It has been wonderful to see the enthusiasm, teamwork, and dedication across all houses, and we are so proud of how every child has embraced the new system. Congratulations to **Water House** for their fantastic achievement and for being the very first winners of the House Cup!



To celebrate their success, the St Stephen's House Cup, adorned with Water House's blue ribbons, is now proudly displayed at the front of the school for everyone to admire. We look forward to seeing even more house points earned next term and finding out which House will be victorious in the Spring Term!

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Attendance and punctuality are both life skills that they need to develop whilst they are young. It is important that all children establish good routines and habits in preparation for the rest of their lives.

Attendance

3rd September-12th December 2024		<p>Well done to Years 4 & 5 for having the best attendance so far!</p>
Year	%	
Nursery	88.3	
Reception	92.5	
Year 1	95.1	
Year 2	95.9	
Year 3	95.7	
Year 4	97.3	
Year 5	97.6	
Year 6	96.2	

Please note that 100% attendance is the school target for every pupil.

Punctuality

Below are the classes in each year group who have had the best punctuality so far!

Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
RJM	1SS	2PM	3AG	4RM	5EW	6LD



HEALTH

Biscuits for breakfast

As a healthy school, we encourage nutritious breakfasts to support children's energy and focus. Sugary options, like biscuits, can cause a quick energy spike followed by fatigue later in the day.

We recommend breakfasts with slow-releasing energy, such as:

- Whole grain cereals (low in sugar) with fresh fruit
- Wholemeal toast with nut butter or avocado
- Unsweetened yogurt with oats and berries
- Boiled eggs with wholemeal toast

Thank you for supporting your child's well-being with healthy choices!

Allergies

The medical team are vigilant in ensuring that the school is in line with local and government allergy policies, including our bespoke menus that cater to a range of dietary needs. In response to this, we are asking that all parents of children with allergies provide medical documentation to support this and update the school office if there are any changes. We will be contacting parents in due course to attend an allergy information morning.

School Dietician

The School is privileged to have Pavita, a qualified dietician offering health workshops and 1:1 support to our families once every half term. Her workshops are particularly related to the prevention of heart disease and diabetes. Please ask at the Children's Centre front desk for more details.

Healthy streets

The Local Authority introduced Healthy Streets on Whitfield Road and Wyndham Road in October. The timed road closure aims to make the roads safer for children to walk and cycle, and restrict through traffic at drop-off and pick-up times. Less traffic in the area will also improve local air quality.

Newham has the worst air quality in the country with seven out of every 100 deaths being linked to dirty air and some of the highest asthma rates amongst the under 18s.

SAFEGUARDING - Working Together

At our school, we are here to help and support you and your child, and we believe that working together is key to ensuring their well-being. If you have any concerns about your child's welfare or if something might be affecting them, please don't hesitate to let us know. Our dedicated pastoral team is available to offer support, and we are always ready to collaborate with you to make sure your child is thriving. Additionally, if there are any wider family challenges that you are facing including financial or housing challenges, our Children's Centre is here to provide assistance.

It's also important that you are honest with us about any absences, especially if your child is abroad. If we are unable to contact you and are unaware of your location, it can become a safeguarding



concern, and we may be required to report the child as missing to the local authority. By staying open and communicative, we can ensure the best care and safety for your child.

NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE

The children that started nursery in September are now settled and learning. The Nursery staff are supporting all of our children to develop social skills, for example saying 'please' and 'thank you', taking turns and being kind and caring to others. Please help your child with this by encouraging them to say 'Good Morning' or 'Good Afternoon' when they arrive at school.

The Nursery is encouraging all parents and carers to 'Break the Buggy Habit'. We are committed to encouraging children to walk whenever possible - this will help children to eat well, sleep well and support their physical development.

The Children's Centre Team are aware of the difficulties of our local community related to social and private rented accommodation. We are currently working with the charity Shelter who can support families to understand their rights and address issues such as illegal evictions, disrepair and homelessness. A series of workshops are being held in Green Street Library in January - please ask at the Children's Centre front desk for further details.

The cost of living crisis continues to cause hardship in our community and the Children's Centre team is supporting families with food and items of clothing. On the last Friday of every month between 9am - 10am the centre holds a 'Cost of Living Coffee Morning' in the Nursery. If you need any items of school uniform please come to the Children's Centre any day after 3:30pm. All are welcome.

Marie Foley- 07904663072

Meral Sami- 07494067676

CONTACT US

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Primary Deputy Head Teacher

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This newsletter is also available on the school website.



SPRING TERM EVENT DATES 2025

JANUARY 2025	
Monday 6th January	Children's Centre opens
Monday 6th January	Primary pupils return to School
Monday 6th January	Year 6 Growing Against Violence Workshops
Tuesday 7th January	Nursery pupils return
Tuesday 7th January	Year 6 Tate and Lyle Visits
Thursday 23rd January	Year 5 Curriculum Parent Workshop: Secrets of the Amazon
Tuesday 28th January	Year 4 Times table parent workshop @ 2:45pm
Wednesday 29th January	Reception Parent Workshop @ 8:30am
FEBRUARY 2025	
Tuesday 4th February	Year 6 SATS parent meeting @ 2:45pm
Wednesday 5th February	Scholastic Book Fair Arrives for one week
Thursday 13th February	Year 3 Parent's Assembly @ 8:45am
<i>Half Term: 17th - 21st February 2025</i>	
Monday 24th February	Primary and Nursery pupils return to School
MARCH 2025	
Tuesday 4th March	Year 3 Curriculum Parent Workshop: Egyptian Expedition
Wednesday 19th March	Year 2 Curriculum Parent Workshop: I am a Warrior!
Monday 24th March	Federated Parent Consultation Day - All classes closed to children
Wednesday 26th March	Year 1 Visit to the Forest
Thursday 27th March	Governors Open Day
Friday 28th March	Mum's Morning
APRIL 2025	
Thursday 3rd April	Year 4 Parent's Assembly @ 8:45am
Thursday 3rd April	Last Day of Term for Nursery School
Friday 4th April	Last Day of Term for Primary School: Closes at 12:45pm
Tuesday 22nd April	Primary and Nursery pupils return to school

I will inform you of any additional dates and events that may be set during the term.



SCHOOL TERM/HOLIDAY DATES

SPRING TERM 2025

First day of term for Primary School	Monday 6th January
First day of term for Nursery School	Tuesday 7th January
Half term	Monday 17th February to Friday 21st February
Last day of term	Friday 4th April 12.45pm finish

SUMMER TERM 2025

First day of term	Tuesday 22nd April
TT Day	Friday 2nd May
May Day	Monday 5th May
Half term	Monday 26th May to Friday 30th May
Last day of term	Thursday 24th July 12.45pm finish

AUTUMN TERM 2025

TT day	Monday 1st September
First day of term for pupils	Tuesday 2nd September
Half term	Monday 20th October to Friday 31st October
Last day of term	Friday 19th December 12.45pm finish

