



St Margaret's  
Academy

ST MARGARETS ACADEMY

Autumn Newsletter #12

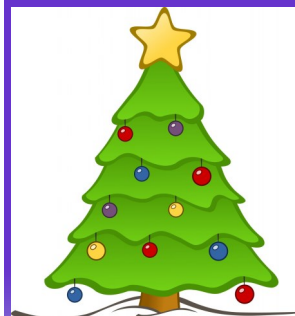
Dear Parents and Carers,

### **The Magic of Christmas at St Margaret's**

The festive spirit has truly arrived at St Margaret's! From glittering decorations and Christmas trees galore to joyful carols and fabulous festive jumpers, the school is sparkling with cheer.

This year, the celebrations were topped off with an amazing movie experience for the whole school - complete with popcorn! And let's not forget the enchanting Grotto and Santa experience, which was nothing short of magical.

A huge thank you to our incredible PTA for creating such a wonderful treat for all our staff and children. On behalf of the entire school community, we are so grateful for everything you do to make this time of year so special.



ACTIVE THINKING

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## Year 2 Art Update

Year 2 have been developing their drawing skills, focusing on different shading techniques such as hatching, cross-hatching, and contour hatching. These methods help children create depth and texture in their artwork, encouraging observation and fine motor control.

We'll be using these skills to add beautiful detail to our final drawings of St Paul's Cathedral. It has been a wonderfully calm and creative activity—perfect for this busy time of year! Please check out the [link](#) to see this in action.

In addition, Year 2 were thrilled to welcome parents and carers into school for a special celebration of their learning about The Great Fire of London. The children proudly shared everything they have discovered about this significant event in history, impressing their grown-ups with fascinating facts and stories.

As part of the celebration, pupils showcased their stunning artwork inspired by the Great Fire, demonstrating creativity and attention to detail. The afternoon concluded with a lively performance of our Great Fire of London song, complete with BSL signing, which has helped the children remember key facts in a fun and engaging way.

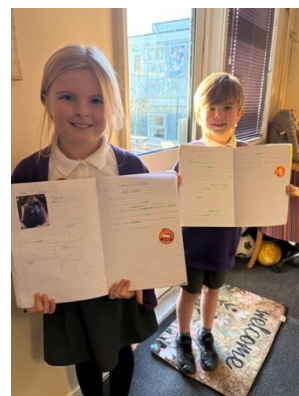
A huge thank you to all the parents and carers who joined us—it was a fantastic opportunity to share our learning and achievements together!



## Year 4 Writing

This week, I had the pleasure of being joined by Maddy and Harley from Cherry Class to showcase their incredible writing inspired by *Oz the Great and Powerful*.

Year 4 have been exploring recount writing, focusing on diary entries, and these two really impressed us with their creativity! They worked hard to include rich and varied vocabulary, powerful verbs, and thoughtful conjunctions to bring their ideas to life. It's wonderful to see such enthusiasm and talent—well done, Maddy and Harley, and all of Year 4. We're so proud of the super writers you are becoming!



## Rowan Class Signing Lessons

Each week, Rowan Class enjoys a 30-minute signing lesson led by Mrs Saunders. These sessions help the children communicate with friends in our class who are hearing impaired. Many of the children first learned British Sign Language (BSL) in Year 1 and Year 3, and they are now becoming quite the experts!





## Year 2 Christmas Multi-Skills

On Thursday 4th December, some Y2 children from Apple and Oak went to a Christmas multi-skills event at St Cuthbert Mayne School. They had a fun time trying out different activities, testing their agility, balance and co-ordination.

The multi-skills stations were organised by the sports leaders at the secondary school and they were great at encouraging our children to have a go and do their best. They made them extra Christmassy too!



## Pupil Spotlight—Sophia (Year 4)

We are so proud of Sophia for truly living out our school values of Kindness, Aspiration, Respect, and Responsibility!

Sophia recently took part in an incredible Junior Zoo Experience, where she showed amazing dedication and care. She helped clear out the giraffe enclosure, sorted food for the animals, and even had the special opportunity to feed Tilly, a 13-year-old giraffe, with fresh leaves.

Sophia's enthusiasm and commitment are a wonderful example of how our values come to life beyond the classroom. Well done, Sophia – you're an inspiration to us all!



## Upcoming Festive Events—Quick Reminder

We have lots of exciting celebrations coming up!

- **Christmas Dinner Days: Monday 8th to Wednesday 10th (Pupils only).** Please encourage the children to wear their **Christmas jumper or a festive accessory** to make it extra special.
- **Reception Christmas Church Service: Thursday 11th at 11:00 AM**  
Followed by the **KS1 Nativity** at **Babbacombe Theatre** in the afternoon.
- **Key Stage 2 Christmas Carol Practice** in the church in the afternoon (If you do not wish your child to attend either the practice or concert on the 15<sup>th</sup>, please let the office know.)
- **Key Stage 2 Christmas Carols: Monday 15th at 2:00 PM**  
Join us at the church as KS2 gets festive with carols.

We hope you can join us for these wonderful festivities and help us make this season magical for the children!



Lastly this week, we have been promoting and celebrating kindness across our school community.

I would like to say a massive thank you to all the volunteers who supported the PTA, staff, and children during the Year 2–Year 6 cinema trip on Wednesday. It has been wonderful to see both children and adults sharing recognition of spreading kindness with others.

This is the season to really stop and think about others and cherish this special time with loved ones and friends. I wish you all a wonderful weekend and look forward to welcoming you back on Monday for more fun and joy.

*Mrs Nikki O'Dwyer*  
*Headteacher*





## Useful Reminders and Sign-posting



If your child was born between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022 they should start school in September 2026.

### What do I need to do?

Applying for primary school - it's as easy as 1-2-3!

1. Read the TIPS 8 guidance booklet on our website (printed copies available upon request)
2. Apply online from 1 November 2025 - [Apply for a primary school place - Torbay Council](#)  
or  
Contact us to request an electronic form - E: [pupil.services@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:pupil.services@torbay.gov.uk); T: 01803 208908
3. Submit your application by 15 January 2026

### You must complete an application even if:

- You already have an older child at your preferred school
- Your child attends a nursery attached to a primary school
- You have completed a registration form at a primary school
- You have sent in a supplementary form to a primary school



**TORBAY COUNCIL**

## Lumi-Nova—What's it all about?

You may have seen reports on BBC Spotlight recently about a new app called Lumi Nova.

Lumi Nova supports children to build confidence and learn lifelong skills to manage their fears and worries through an intergalactic adventure game.

It's been used by more than 1,100 children in Devon and more than 90% saw their condition reliably improve or stabilise after using it.

Lumi Nova is available to families in partnership with Children and Family Health Devon (CFHD).

Powered by science and backed by the NHS, Lumi Nova is:

- Designed for children aged 7-12 years
- Suitable for children with mild to moderate fears and worries
- Safe and secure
- Recommended by the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE)

In particular, children with SEND have seen significant improvements after using the service – 97% experienced reliable improvement or saw their condition stabilise.

ACTIVE THINKING



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## Youth Mental Health Foundation

Need help supporting a child struggling with their emotions, behaviour or mental health?

A free coaching session takes place in the new year for parents and carers living in or sending their child to school in Torbay.

There are two information sessions for interested parents and carers on Tuesday 13th and Wednesday 14th January.

Book a place on one of these sessions:

[Select a Date & Time - Calendly](#)



### Book a quieter ice rink session

We're excited to announce that Torbay's much-anticipated festive ice rink will include some SEND-friendly sessions.

The quiet sessions will have no music and no flashing lights.

There are currently two sessions but more may be added if there's demand.

The ice rink is the newest addition to Torbay's festive offering, which also includes the 1.5 mile fully-accessible Bay of Lights illumination trail and Torre Abbey's Christmas market.

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# Diary Dates

8th December 2025	Y5 Birch Swim Session Y4 Trip to Torquay Museum Reception, Y1 & Y2 Christmas Dinner Day
9th December 2025	Y3 & Y4 Christmas Dinner Day
10th December 2025	Y5 & Y6 Christmas Dinner Day
11th December 2025	11.00—11.45—EYFS Christmas Church Service for Parents 14.00—15.30 KS1 Christmas Nativity Play 15.15—16.15 Y3/4 Football Vs Sherwell Valley (Away)
15th December 2025	Y5 Birch Swim Session (Cancelled) 13.30—14.30 KS2 Carol Service at Church
19th December 2025	End of Term
20th December 2025— 5th January 2026	Last Day of Term
Monday 5th January 2026	Teacher Training Day
Tuesday 6th January 2026	First Day Back for Children

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Ash	Donny	For an amazing drawing club story - so exciting - what an adventure - such a wonderful story and the use of your new story words Well done
Elm	Finley	For being a good friend, for having good FredTalk fingers and Miss Tolley is so proud of you.
Beech	Ollie	Ollie has done a great job being kind to his friends, using kind words, and playing nicely in class and on the playground. Even when it is tricky, he keeps trying, and we are very proud of him.
Pine	Sidney	Sidney shows such kindness, all the time. He is always there to help if someone needs support and he loves to help us adults too! Thanks Sidney!
Apple	Matilda	Matilda is the kindest and most helpful person all of the time. She quietly looks out for everyone and never looks for rewards or recognition for her kind acts - she is just always so thoughtful towards others.  Thank you Matilda!
Oak	Teddy	Teddy joined Oak class in year 2 and we are so happy to have him! He is incredibly kind to both adults and children. Teddy is always polite and he works incredibly hard to do his best. Super effort Teddy- you are a star!
Willow	Ella	Willow's Star of the Week is Ella. She has always shown kindness to others in and out of the class. She consistently gives up her time to help others feel more confident during learning. She is always giving to others and we are so proud of her. Well done Ella.
Holly	Ella	Our star this week is Ella, she has kindness running through her bones! She is always there to care for everyone in the class - keep being a kind friend to all Ella. It's lovely to see.
Cherry	Bethany	Bethany is our kindness superstar this week in Cherry class - You show great empathy and care for all the children in the class and you are a good friend to all. Well done!
Hazel	Nessee	We have been really focusing on our kindness value this week in Hazel. Nessee is someone who is always kind to everyone. Nessee is always sharing, always holding doors for people and always respectful to all. Nessee truly has a heart of gold and we are so lucky to have her in Hazel class. Well done, Nessee!
Rowan	Alice	Alice is the star of the week in Rowan class as she always demonstrates our school kindness value. She is super supportive of all members of the class and willingly helps others. She is polite and shows great empathy for how other people feel. You are a wonderful member of Rowan class Alice.
Birch	Guy	I have noticed that Guy has shown great kindness this week by helping the adults in the classroom with different tasks. One standout moment was when he kindly helped Mrs Gunstone sort out the baubles we made for our Christmas tree. Well done, Guy!
Hawthorn	Zane	Zane has shown super kindness all week! He is always ready to help anyone who needs it and has been very patiently helping others. Zane has also worked super hard on his DT this week and made improvements in his maths learning - Well done Zane!
Maple	Evie	Our star of the week is someone who has been showing our value of kindness. They have been a super kind friend this week, and have also been trying extremely hard in their learning, showing real perseverance and resilience. Well done Evie!