



St Margaret's Academy

ST MARGARETS ACADEMY

Autumn Newsletter #12

Dear Parents and Carers,

Our School is Sparkling with Christmas Cheer!

This week has been filled with festive joy across the school. From delicious Christmas lunches freshly prepared by our superb catering team, to the sound of carols echoing through the corridors and performed in public for all to enjoy, the spirit of the season has truly come alive.

The celebrations were topped off with an incredible Nativity performance by our amazing KS1 pupils at the Babbacombe Theatre – a show that captured hearts and showcased the talent and enthusiasm of our youngest learners. Thank you to all the volunteers who supported the school to ensure a smooth and successful trip, your time was greatly appreciated.

I am truly proud to be part of such a wonderful school community that comes together to create magical moments like these. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to making this time of year so special for our children and families.

Next week, the celebrations continue with a wonderful Christmas Carol Service with KS2 at St Mary the Virgin in St Marychurch, led by Father Nick, on Monday. We hope you can join us!

A huge amount of hard work and effort goes into organising, preparing, and delivering these events - for both staff and children - but it's always so worthwhile when we receive such lovely feedback. Thank you for your kind words! Here are just a few to celebrate:

"It was absolutely brilliant! Such a lovely school that always goes over and beyond."

"The best school - always doing so much lovely stuff for the children."

"I'm a Nan, of one of the children and I walked with them from school to the theatre. It was so well organised. Well done to the staff and children alike."



ACTIVE THINKING



RESILIENCE



MOTIVATION





Christmas Tree Competition

Well Done to both Oak Class and Maple Class for winning the PTA Christmas Tree competition. The trees looked fabulous.

Keeping Our Children Safe Online

Young people today spend more time online than ever before—whether for schoolwork, socialising, learning, or creative expression. So much of their world exists at least partly online.

As a result, social media has become a big part of many children's lives. We know that parents and carers often worry about the content their child might see or the risks they could encounter.

To support you, the Children's Society have created a **Social Media Safety: A Guide for Parents and Carers**.

This resource will help you and your child learn how to set up controls and manage the content they see online or on social media platforms.

Together, we can make the online world safer for our young people.

[Click the link](#) for more information

Community Plea

At St Margaret's Academy, we value the strong sense of community that surrounds our school. To keep this positive spirit alive, we kindly ask for your support in ensuring that our relationships with local residents remain respectful and considerate.

Recently, concerns have been raised about parking near the school—particularly blocking driveways and parking & dropping off on yellow zigzags—which can affect both safety and goodwill. We also ask for your help in encouraging pupils to behave thoughtfully while waiting at the back entrance gate, as this area is close to residents' homes.

How you can help:

Park responsibly: Avoid blocking driveways or stopping on yellow zigzags.

Supervise children: Ensure they are calm and considerate while waiting for the gate to open.

Respect our neighbours: Remind children to keep noise levels down and treat the area with care.

By working together, we can make sure St Margaret's Close remains a safe and welcoming space for everyone. Thank you for your understanding and commitment to fostering a caring community for our children and neighbours.

Staff News

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Mrs Saunders for her incredible commitment and support to St Margaret's Academy as our Teacher of the Deaf for the past nine years. Jo has made a lasting impact on our school community, and her dedication to our pupils has been truly inspiring. As she retires from this role and begins an exciting new chapter, we wish her every happiness and success for the future. Thank you, Jo—you will be greatly missed!



When the new term starts we welcome new members of staff to the school community. Mrs Dinning will be joining the school as Teacher of the Deaf, and two Teaching Assistants Miss Page joins the Year 3 team and Miss Lambourne in KS1.

Oscar Shares his Passion for Trains and Lego

This week, Oscar had a wonderful opportunity to showcase his love of Lego and trains with his friends and peers. It was fantastic to see his confidence grow as he spoke about his passion for trains.

Oscar brought in part of his train collection and carefully set up an impressive display for his six peers to enjoy. He explained how the setup worked and even gave everyone a chance to take control and drive the train themselves. The experience was a big hit—everyone thoroughly enjoyed it!

To make the day even more special, Oscar received a gift pack from Great Western Railway (GWR), which he proudly shared with the group. Thank you, Oscar, for bringing your enthusiasm and knowledge to the classroom and creating such a memorable experience for everyone.



A Christmas Thank You

As winter whispers through the trees,
And twinkling lights dance in the breeze,
We pause to share a heartfelt cheer—
For all you've given throughout the year.

Your kindness shines, your spirit strong,
Together we've journeyed, all along.
Through learning, laughter, highs and lows,
Our St Margaret's family ever grows.

So as the holidays draw near,
We send our love, our thanks sincere.
May joy and peace your hearts embrace,
And Christmas blessings fill your space

Here's to the magic yet to come,
To warmth and wonder for everyone.
Until we meet in the bright new year,
Merry Christmas and Happy Cheer!

Wishing you a wonderful and restful weekend with loved ones and friends.

Take care,

Mrs Nikki O'Dwyer
Headteacher





Christmas TOMBOLA

Saturday 13th December
+ 19th* 20th* 22nd* 23rd* & 24th* (Christmas Eve)
*Santa will be with us at the Indoor Market

**Regular & Soft Toys - Seasonal Gifts for Adults
Ornaments, Collectables and Lots, Lots More**

£1 a Go - A Prize Every Time

ONLY
£3
To Meet Santa
in His Grotto

All proceeds go to



Registered Charity 1200973

**Meet Santa
Get a Gift**



Torquay Indoor Market
Entrances in Union Street & Market Street

Come and see us at the Indoor Market
There are numerous nice shops to see as well



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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; 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.

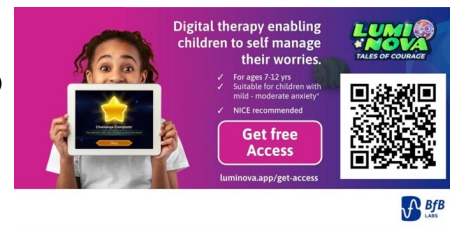
It's been used by more than 1,100 children in Devon and more than 90% saw their condition reliably improve or stabilise after using it.

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.



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

15th December 2025	Y5 Birch Swim Session (Cancelled) 13.30—14.30 KS2 Carol Service at Church
18th December 2025	10.00—10.30 HSC Tea Party—See Invite 10.00—10.30 Rock Steady Performance
19th December 2025	End of Term—Non-Uniform Day 09.30—10.30 House Point Winner Treat
20th December 2025— 5th January 2026	Christmas Holiday
Monday 5th January 2026	Teacher Training Day
Tuesday 6th January 2026	First Day Back for Children



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Ash	Charlie	Great snappy fingers and fabulous letter formation during boogie write!
Elm	Annie	This week Annie is the star of the week. For being confident when sharing your super speedy sounds and sign language. For being a kind and caring friend to all in Elm class! Well done Annie, you are a super star. Miss Tolley is very proud of you!
Beech	Ruby	Ruby has been sitting so beautifully and staying really focused in all her learning, and it's clear she's trying her very best all the time. Her effort shows in the way she listens, participates, and keeps a positive attitude.
Pine	Leo	Leo is our star this week for his resilience and for overcoming his fear of getting on the stage yesterday. We are so proud of him, for pushing himself and reaping the benefits!
Apple	Chester	Chester is our star in Apple Class as he performed his lines in our KS1 Nativity so enthusiastically and threw everything into his performance. He had quite a lot of lines and really persevered with learning them. Watch out in the West End - we've a budding star in the making!
Oak	Jake	Jake is our star as his effort and perseverance with learning and saying his lines for the Nativity at the theatre was fantastic. Jake really impressed me when writing a recount of the play as he included detail and presented his work neatly. Well done Jake- you are a star!
Willow	Ethan	Ethan is the star in Willow class this week. Ethan always shows respect to all adults in children around the school and is an amazing role model to others. He's a pleasure to have in the classroom and we're so lucky he's part of our Willow team! Well done, keep up the amazing work.
Holly	Erin	Erin is a super star in everything we do, she is kind to everyone and shows respect to all adults and children. Keep up the hard work and positivity - we love having you as a part of Holly class!
Cherry	Parker	For your responsibility in the dinner hall this week - You have supported the lunchtime staff to clear up the Christmas dinners and you have been such a huge help. We also loved your Santa costume which got everyone in the Christmas spirit!
Hazel	Ollie S	Ollie is our star this week in Hazel class. Ollie is a true pleasure to have in the classroom - he has a cracking sense of humour, a great work ethic and he is extremely kind to all. This week, we have been proud of Ollie's aspiration and attitude towards his work. He wants to challenge himself all the time and we are very impressed! Well done, Ollie! Keep it up.
Rowan	Rayyan	Rayyan is the star of the week in Rowan class for his wonderful work on fractions in maths lessons. He has demonstrated aspirational learning in understanding fractions and has also supported others who have needed a little help with this too. Well done Rayyan.
Birch	Bently	This week, Bently has shown a fantastic attitude to learning and a noticeably positive improvement in his emotional resilience. He has worked hard to stay calm and focused, even when others say unkind things. We are incredibly proud of his progress.
Hawthorn	Penny	Penny is our star of the week! This week she has shown super aspiration in her learning, making huge progress in her maths and reading assessments. We are so proud of the learning behaviours she shows at all times - she is a true super 6! Well done Penny!
Maple	Ella	Our star of the week is Ella. She has risen to our challenge to increase the amount that she is reading, and is now quizzing regularly and showing great aspiration. Well done Ella, keep reading!