

Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary

Love - Learn - Believe

Newsletter

Autumn issue 11 - 21st November 2025

Headteacher: Mrs Hourihan

Deputy Headteacher: Ms Sulis

Diary dates

Monday 24th November - 1B Class Assembly at 9.05am
Monday 24th November - Parents of Year 3 and 4 timetables workshop 2:30pm
Wednesday 26th November - Sleep workshop for parents 2:30pm
Wednesday 26th November - 3D Class Assembly at 9.05am
Friday 28th November - 6B Collective Worship at 2.45pm
Monday 1st December - 4B Collective Worship at 2.45pm
Tuesday 2nd December - 4D Collective Worship at 2.45pm
Wednesday 3rd December - 5B Class Assembly at 9.05am
Wednesday 3rd December - 2D Collective Worship at 2.45pm
Thursday 4th December - 1B Collective Worship at 2.45pm

Dear Parents,

Today is the Jubilee for Schools Celebration Day. As part of our assembly, the children watched the Celebration Day film via the livestream, joining in solidarity with other Catholic schools.

The children wrote messages of hope on postcards, which were placed in their class 'Jar of Hope' on the prayer tables. Throughout the year, they will have opportunities to share these messages with their classmates, helping to create a lasting legacy for this Jubilee year.

We also marked Anti-Bullying Week with Odd Socks Day on Monday, along with anti-bullying workshops across the school.

On Tuesday, we welcomed our Barnet Learning Network Inspector, who visited to look at writing across the school. We also shared our writing with Annunciation and St Agnes to celebrate successes and exchange good practice.

Thank you to everyone who donated to and supported the second-hand uniform sale, which raised £158.

Tickets for Santa's Grotto are now available to purchase via ParentPay. We are also welcoming donations of hot chocolate, milk alternatives, cookies, and cupcakes (all nut-free), as well as any Christmas decorations to help create this special and much-loved event for our children.

We are pleased to share that, thanks to the hard work of our PTA, we have secured sponsorship for a Christmas tree. We invite children to make a decoration for our school Christmas tree, which they will be able to place on it at the start of Advent when it arrives.

As we look ahead to Christmas, please add the dates for our nativities and concerts to your diaries. Please note that Years 3 and 4 will be performing the Easter Story in the spring term.

Finally, many thanks to those who supported the litter-picking initiative last weekend, helping to keep the streets around our school clean demonstrating our CST Care for creation in action.

Wishing you a lovely weekend.

Mrs Hourihan

**Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School, Great Strand, Colindale,
London NW9 5PE**

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Website www.blesseddominicprimary.co.uk



**WHAT'S
NEW?**

WEEKLY NEWS

Celebrating Success

Star Worker

Daisies - Olivia
Bluebells -Whole Class
1B - Petros
1D - Zion
2B - William
2D -Karlye
3B - Alexa
3D - Cashandra
4B - Whole Class
4D -Joshua
5B -Maria
5D -Jasmine
6B- Gabi
6D - Noah



Team Player

Daisies - Paisley
Bluebells -Whole Class
1B - Emilija
1D - Hannah
2B - Whole class
2D -Omalley
3B - Elijah
3D - Meagan
4B -Aliza and Aubree
4D -Matteo
5B -Jaida
5D -Whole class-
6B- AJ
6D -Roham



Star Handwriter

Daisies - Ernesto
Bluebells -Whole Class
1B - Yanis
1D - Musa
2B - Cedirc
2D -Aurora
3B - Nicolas
3D - Oscar D
4B -Callum
4D -Madison
5B -Raphaella
5D -Jeleana
6B- Felicity
6D -Alessia



Star Reader

Daisies - Janora
Bluebells -Whole Class
1B - Heart
1D - Prince
2B - Mario
2D -Frankie
3B - Aliza
3D - Joao
4B - Isreal
4D -Osias
5B -Daniel
5D -Francesc
6B- Cillian
6D -Abigail



ATTENDANCE

Daisies -93%	Bluebells -98%	1B -98%	1D -97%	
2B-100%	2D-96%	3B-100%	3D-95%	4B- 99%
4D - 92%	5B -98%	5D - 99%	6B -99%	6D -92%



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WEEKLY NEWS

PINES AND NEEDLES

We're excited to share that Blessed Dominic Primary School has kindly been donated a beautiful Christmas tree by Pines and Needles. As part of their gift, they are also offering parents 10% off Christmas trees from their London pop-up stores and online shop.

Discount Code: SCHOOL10

Follow @pinesandneedles for festive activities at local stores, and visit www.pinesandneedles.com for full details and all store locations across London.

CHRISTMAS DATES

Tuesday 9th December – Reception Nativity 9.30am

Tuesday 9th December – KS1 Nativity 2.00pm

Wednesday 10th December – KS1 Nativity 2.00pm

Thursday 11th December – Christmas Jumper Day & Christmas Lunch

Monday 15th December – Nursery Nativity 9.30am

Wednesday 17th December – 5B and 6B Carol Service 7.00pm Church

Thursday 18th December – 5D and 6D Carol Service 7.00pm Church

***Details to follow about tickets for these events**

**Note Year 3 & 4 will be performing the Easter story in March 2026*



The School Jubilee Celebration Day 2025

The School Jubilee Celebration Day 2025 took place today, organised by Catholic organisations such as CAFOD.

This special day invited schools to celebrate the Jubilee Year of the Catholic Church by reflecting on achievements, making a meaningful "Jubilee Pledge," and looking ahead with hope.

Schools were encouraged to use the provided resources to mark the occasion through activities such as assemblies, classroom displays, and reflections on the year's themes of hope, justice, and peace. Today, we celebrated with a whole-school assembly, coming together as a community to reflect, give thanks, and look forward with hope.



Anti-Bullying Workshops

On Monday, all pupils took part in special Anti-Bullying Workshops run by OpenView Education. These fun, interactive sessions helped children understand what bullying is, how to respond safely, and how we can all help make our school a kind and caring place. KS2 enjoyed a lively workshop on recognising bullying and handling conflict.

EYFS & KS1 took part in a story-based session with puppets, focusing on kindness and friendship.

Other year groups watched an interactive theatre show exploring the theme through live performance.

The workshops supported our safeguarding work and linked with national Anti-Bullying Week.



OpenView
Education
LEARNING THROUGH THEATRE





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easyfundraising



Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School are using easyfundraising to raise some extra funds - for free!

We'd love you to help us by collecting free cashback donations for Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School every time you shop online - all courtesy of the retailer you shop with. The simplest way to do this is to install the free easyfundraising app. You can use it to shop with all of the participating 8,000+ online retailers who will give us free money and it's available for android or iOS devices.

This month only, with their Free £2 App-eal, if you register to support us via their app, we'll get a bonus £2! Please get the app now and use it for all your Black Friday and Christmas shopping. It would make such a difference. Thank you! Visit https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/easyfundraising-app/?causeld=398886&utm_campaign=pmc&utm_source=email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=app-eal-nov-em

Santa's Grotto – Thursday, 11th December

Children will have the chance to meet Father Christmas and receive a small gift. Please make a £3 donation via ParentPay to support this special event.

Thank you for your continued support — it helps us make these exciting Christmas surprises possible for the children!



Second-Hand Sale



A big thank you to everyone who has kindly donated good-quality second-hand school uniform, books, and Christmas jumpers. Your generosity is truly appreciated and is already making a wonderful difference to our school community.

These donations help support families through our second-hand sale, promote sustainability, and spread a little extra joy as we move into the festive season. We are so grateful for the enthusiasm and kindness shown by our school families—your support means so much to us!

Thank you once again for your continued generosity and wonderful community spirit!
And a big thank you to our 'Parents Group' for organising the event and we raised £158.

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Community Litter-Picking with Our Local MP

A big thank you to all the children who joined our local MP, David Pinto-Duschinsky, for a community litter-picking session in our local area. We are incredibly proud of the pupils who gave up their spare time to take part. Their dedication, enthusiasm, and positive attitude made a real difference, helping to keep our neighbourhood clean and showing wonderful care for the environment. Below are some photos from the event:



Our pupils setting off with litter pickers and gloves, ready to tidy the local area



Children working together as a team—great cooperation and energy!



A proud moment with David Pinto-Duschinsky, celebrating everyone's hard work.

Thank you also to the families who supported the event. Your encouragement helps foster the strong sense of responsibility and community spirit that our school values so highly. Well done to everyone involved!

Road Safety Week

This week in school, we took part in Road Safety Week. The children learnt how to stay safe when walking, cycling, and travelling near roads. Through discussions, activities, and class assemblies, we encouraged everyone to think carefully about how to Stop, Look, Listen, and Think! Together, we can help our pupils become confident, responsible, and safe road users.



Class 2D learnt how to cross safely at the zebra crossing.



Year 6 crossing the road safely





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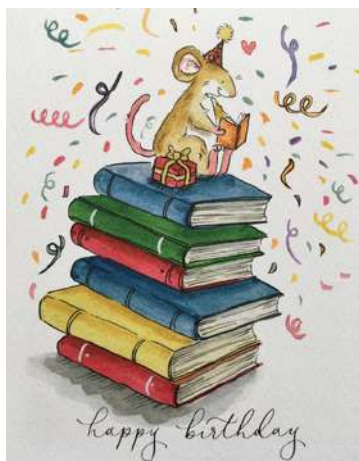


Birthday Celebrations

While we love to celebrate each child's special day, we kindly discourage gift bags and food items being brought in. We have a lot of children with allergies so as a community we need to help keep each other safe.

Instead, we encourage children to bring a book to share with the class, which can be added to the class library as a lasting memory of their birthday.

Thank you for your support in keeping celebrations simple, inclusive, and focused on learning!



Keep Your Children Safe This Autumn. BE BRIGHT, BE SEEN

The clocks have gone back resulting in darker evenings and reduced visibility for drivers. We encourage all pupils to stay active and enjoy outdoor activities safely.

Help your child to "Be Bright so they can Be Seen" by wearing bright colours during the day and reflective clothing or accessories after dark. When purchasing a new coat, consider one with reflective strips for added visibility.



December Camp 2025

Non Stop Action are very excited that bookings are now open for **December Camp 2025!**

We are running Multi Sports at Moss Hall Junior School (N3 1NR), **Football, Dance** and **Multi Activity Camp** at Millbrook park school (NW7 1JF).

December Camp will run from Monday 22nd - Tuesday 23rd December. Secure your Early Bird discount by booking before Saturday 29th November!

Head to our website to book now:

<https://www.nonstopaction.co.uk/>

Kind Regards,

Cameron Smith Holiday Camp Manager



Governors' Fund £60 per Pupil Contribution



Each year, our school's Governing Board asks families to contribute to the Governors' Fund, which supports important projects and improvements not covered by our regular school budget.

This year, the suggested contribution remains £60 per pupil.

The fund helps us enhance our school environment and resources — for example, improving playground areas, upgrading IT equipment, and supporting enrichment opportunities for pupils.

A huge thank you to all the families who have already contributed — your generosity makes a real difference to what we can offer our children. If you've not yet had the chance to donate and would like to, contributions can be made via Parent Pay.



Safeguarding

The wellbeing of our children is of paramount.

Should any person (parent or staff) have a concern regarding a child's wellbeing, please inform one of the school safeguarding team:

- Mrs Sowa - DSL & SENCo
- Mrs Hourihan - Headteacher
- Ms Sulis - Deputy Headteacher
- Ms Smart - Assistant Head

In cases where school staff have concerns, they have a duty to discuss the issue with Social Services to seek further advice. This is the statutory obligation of all schools.



Attendance

Regular attendance plays a vital role in your child's learning and overall development. Every school day counts!

Unfortunately holidays cannot be authorised during term time and authorised absences can only be granted in exceptional circumstance. Please contact the office if you need to request an exceptional leave of absence. These will be considered on a case by case basis.

FPNs (Fixed penalty notices) can be issued for unauthorised absences and the fine is up to £160 per parent.



Uniform reminders

- Ensure ALL items of uniform are clearly labelled.
- School bags should be the school bag, plain blue or black.
- Long hair should be tied back.
- Your child must wear the school PE kit on their PE day
- School shoes (NOT boots) should be black and are to be worn every day except on PE days.
- School trousers should be charcoal grey only.
- School Uniform is available to order and buy through our 'Parent Pay' shop on our website.



SAFER SCHOOL STREET

IN OPERATION

**8.15AM – 9.15AM
& 2.45PM – 3.45PM**



**WE REMIND ALL FAMILIES TO USE THE
FREE PARKING AVAILABLE
AT THE RAF MUSEUM**

**WHICH HAS BEEN MADE AVAILABLE
EXCLUSIVELY FOR BLESSED DOMINIC
PARENTS AND CARERS DURING
DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP TIMES**

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI VIRTUAL FRIENDS

Artificial intelligence has seen significant development over the recent months, with companies releasing new AI-based software or adding an AI element to existing apps (such as Snapchat). One form of AI that has become especially popular has been the 'AI friend' or 'chatbot'. There are now numerous 'virtual friend' apps available, with other successful platforms likely to adopt it soon.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

CONTENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

AI chatbots may not always recognise when content is age inappropriate or harmful and should be filtered out. As a result, there's a possibility that children could be exposed to offensive language or explicit material while conversing with their virtual friend. The companies producing such AI solutions are also unlikely to take responsibility for any content that their algorithms generate.

REDUCED SOCIAL CONTACT

An excessive reliance on chatbots for social interaction could potentially cause a child to begin reducing the amount of face-to-face communication they have, leading to social isolation. If young people become dependent on chatbots to provide companionship, it could possibly hinder the development of their real-life social skills.

LACK OF SENSITIVITY

Chatbot software isn't always sophisticated enough to pick up on subtle emotional cues or recognise signs of distress in children, as most humans would. It might therefore fail to respond appropriately. AI misinterpreting what it's being told or replying insensitively to a young user who's already struggling could potentially impact a child's emotional wellbeing or exacerbate any existing emotional issues.

UNINTENTIONAL BIAS

AI companions are only as reliable as the information they've been programmed with. The algorithms they use, therefore, may unintentionally promote bias, stereotypes or discriminatory behaviour. As many chatbots originate from the US or UK, for instance, they can display a distinctly western-centric worldview. This could lead to children developing skewed attitudes and behaviours if they interact with the AI consistently.

COGNITIVE LIMITATIONS

Although many are now undeniably advanced, AI-powered chatbots still have limitations in terms of understanding complex concepts, context and nuance. Depending heavily on chatbots to help with learning or solving problems may stunt the development of a child's own powers of critical thinking, their creativity and their ability to engage in open-ended discussions with other people.

PRIVACY CONCERNS

Chatbots typically collect data about users, including personal information and conversations. This is ostensibly to improve their performance as they gradually learn about our behaviour – but many experts warn that there may be significant risks associated with how this information is stored and used (for instance, the possibility of potential breaches or misuse by third parties).

Advice for Parents & Carers

CHAT ABOUT CHATBOTS

If a child is already expressing an interest in AI apps, then a relaxed, natural chat should help you to discover which ones they're aware of and how they're using them (or are planning to). Discuss these options with children and perhaps do your own research to ensure that you think they're suitable. Once you're totally happy, you could sit and explore the range of AI chatbots together.

CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

If a child is keen to engage with AI chatbots, encourage them to do so in a safe environment, ideally in a shared space, so you can easily keep an eye and ear on their progress. Set up appropriate content filtering measures in advance – and gently remind them that you'll be close by and ready to help with any questions or concerns that may arise.

FIND A BALANCE

Work alongside children to establish the right balance in terms of how they might use AI-powered chatbots – and when it's appropriate. It's important to make sure that children still get plenty of opportunities to learn to solve problems for themselves, as well as building their interpersonal skills through face-to-face conversations with friends, family members and teachers.

TAKE CONTROL

As with any form of app or game, when it comes to AI chatbots we'd strongly recommend that you consider employing parental controls (either on the device being used or within the software itself) to manage which apps children can download and interact with. This is particularly important for younger children, who may be more at risk of being upset or frightened by inappropriate content.

RECOGNISE THE RISKS

It's unlikely that most children will have even considered the potential risks attached to having a virtual companion. So it's probably wise to explain some of the possible hazards and challenges of AI chatbots to them. Emphasise that AI isn't a real person (however much it might sound like one) and may occasionally tell them something inaccurate or skewed by bias.

Meet Our Expert

A Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), Gary Henderson is the Director of IT at a large boarding school in the UK, having previously taught in schools and colleges in Britain and the Middle East. With a particular interest in digital citizenship and cyber security, he believes it is essential that we become more aware of the risks around technology, as well as the benefits.



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