

Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary

Love - Learn - Believe

Newsletter

Spring issue 5- 30th January 2026

Headteacher: Mrs Hourihan

Deputy Headteacher: Ms Sulis

Diary Dates

Monday 2nd - 12th February- 6D Swimming lessons

Tuesday 10th February - Parent Consultation Evening - 3:30-6:30pm

Wednesday 11th February - Parent Consultation Evening - 4-7pm

Half Term – Monday 16th February to Friday 20th February 2026

Monday 23rd February - 3B History Museum

Wednesday 25th February - Year 5 SPEC Retreat

Monday 2nd March - 3D History Museum

Wednesday 4th March - Year 1 Kew Gardens

Thursday 5th March - World Book Day (Dress as a book character)

Monday 9th March - Barnet Dance Festival - Arts Depot

Wednesday 11th March - Whole School Lenten Retreat day

Dear parents / carers,

Regular school attendance is vital for children's learning, wellbeing, and progress. Our school attendance target is 97%, and current attendance stands at 95%. Attendance is monitored closely in line with Department for Education and local authority guidance.

We celebrate good attendance weekly through our attendance trophies and are pleased that 101 pupils achieved 100% attendance during the autumn term. While we understand that illnesses are more common at this time of year, children should attend school whenever they are well enough. If a child becomes unwell during the day, parents will always be contacted.

All absences must be reported to the school before 9:00am on the day of absence. If we are unable to confirm the reason for an absence, a home visit may be required. Attendance below 90% is classed as persistent absence and will be followed up with parents to offer support, and may involve the Education Welfare Officer.

Please note that holidays cannot be authorised during term time. Requests for exceptional leave will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must be supported by appropriate evidence.

We kindly ask for honest and timely communication regarding absences and thank you for your continued support in working with us to ensure the best outcomes for all our pupils.

Wishing you a lovely weekend.

Mrs Hourihan

**Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School, Great Strand, Colindale,
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On Sunday we hear about how Jesus went onto a mountain and taught his disciples. Jesus told them about the kind of person who makes him happy and who is blessed.



Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12a

God of love, you bless those people who are poor,
who are sad, who are hungry and thirsty and who
are hurt because they stand up for what they
believe in.

Help us to follow in your way.

Amen.

Celebrating Success

STAR OF THE WEEK

DAISIES - Iga
BLUEBELLS -Luwam
1B -Lily
1D -Gabriella
2B - Whole Class
2D -Amelia
3B - Harvey
3D -Joao
4B - Efe
4D -Angel
5B - Oliver
5D -Evelyn
6B - Anaya
6D - Kristine



ATTENDANCE THIS WEEK

DAISIES - 96%
BLUEBELLS -94%
1B - 94%
1D - 92%
2B - 93%
2D -93%
3B - 98%
3D -93%
4B - 93%
4D -98%
5B - 92%
5D -94%
6B - 98%
6D -100%



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School Debate Club

Cicero Debate Competition

We are incredibly proud of our Debate Club members who recently took part in the prestigious Cicero Debate Competition at Kilburn Grange School. Our students tackled a complex and challenging motion: "This House would introduce compulsory military service for school leavers."

It was a demanding topic that required our young debaters to balance difficult concepts like Civic Duty and National Security against the importance of Individual Freedom. Our teams worked wonderfully together, showing exceptional teamwork and resilience as they delivered their points and rebuttals with confidence.

The judges were impressed by their research and their ability to think on their feet. It was a fantastic morning of high-level discussion, and we are already excited and preparing for our next competitive debate!

Well done to all our speakers for representing Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School so brilliantly.



**"I found it really fun because everyone
got a chance
to debate and be really competitive!" — Lilly**



**"I felt very confident being in the floor
debate and throwing the opposing teams off!" — Edy**

FOOTBALL NEWS

Blessed Dominc v Barnfield

The boys showed great improvement in their confidence throughout the game, playing with more belief and determination. Their hard work paid off with two well-deserved goals, scored by Dominic and Daniel, both of whom demonstrated excellent effort.



Parent Consultation

Tuesday 10th February - 3:30-6:30pm

Wednesday 11th February - 4:00pm-7:00pm

Please book your consultation if you have not already done so using the individual booking link that has been sent to you. If you have any questions or need support, please don't hesitate to get in touch.



Parents App Connect

Thank you for downloading our new school app! We're thrilled to see that the majority of our school community are already active and using it. If you haven't activated your app yet, please keep an eye on your inbox for your download email.

We use the Parents App to keep you informed about important school updates, events, messages, and reminders.

Please ensure you have downloaded the app and are logged in so you don't miss any key information.

Through the app, you can receive notifications, view letters, and stay up to date with what's happening in school.

If you are having any difficulties accessing the app or need support setting it up, please contact the school office who will be happy to help.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

Please make sure your child brings their school PE kit every week if they have been accepted for Ninja Warriors, Football, Spykids, Tennis, Dance or Archery after-school clubs.

For safety reasons, children will not be able to take part in the session if they do not have the correct PE kit with them.

Thank you for your support.





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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.



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.

We do this via the 'Governors Fund' where we ask parents to contribute. We don't stipulate or mandate this but instead prefer to encourage all families to contribute what they can.

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.

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.





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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.



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**

Uniform Reminders

We would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of our school uniform expectations.

Please ensure that children come to school wearing their full uniform each day.

- **Trainers should only be worn on PE days and must be plain black or white.**
- **On non-PE days, children should wear black school shoes (not boots).**
- **School socks should be plain grey or white.**
- **School trousers should be grey (leggings are not part of the school uniform).**
- **A school tie should be worn each day.**
- **School coats should be plain blue or black.**
- **Hair below the shoulders should be tied back.**



Uniform is an important part of our identity at Blessed Dominic. As a community, it is important that we all follow these expectations and wear our uniform with pride.

If you are experiencing any difficulties with uniform, please do not hesitate to contact the school—we are always happy to help.

Thank you for your continued support.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about HEALTH & FITNESS APPS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Physical wellbeing apps are useful tools for monitoring and improving our health. They allow us to balance nutrition, set goals, track our activities and sleep patterns, and motivate us to exercise. Nonetheless, there have been some reported drawbacks; this guide outlines some of these concerns and explains how to use fitness apps safely.

LACK OF PERSONALISATION

Many apps take a one-size-fits-all approach, failing to account for the varying ages and abilities of children: a 16-year-old, for example, will have different physical needs to a child of 10. This can create unrealistic expectations and set exercises which may be too advanced for younger children or too simple for older ones.

NOT DEVELOPED BY EXPERTS

Some fitness and wellbeing apps are developed by experts in the field – but a concerning number of them aren't. As such, these platforms may contain inaccurate information. They may present safety concerns by giving incorrect advice regarding physical activities or might include age-inappropriate content which would clearly cause more harm than good.

REDUCED INTERACTION WITH OTHERS

Physical wellbeing apps can remove the social and interactive elements which physical exercise can offer – for instance, meeting people at fitness classes, at the gym or during any other such activities. Research has found that young people generally dislike this aspect of fitness apps, suggesting that they would rather exercise in the company of friends or other like-minded individuals.

DATA AND PRIVACY CONCERNS

Fitness and wellbeing apps tend to collect a lot of personal information from their users, including name, location, date of birth, details of their physical health and more. It's worth keeping in mind that some of these apps may sell this data to third parties. We'd advise that any apps young people download should have the correct legislation in place to protect their safety and privacy while using the service.

ADDITIONAL COSTS

While many fitness apps are free to download, the initial content is quite basic. Users will only receive more helpful content (such as new workouts, nutrition advice or a personalised plan) by signing up to a subscription or paying for extra features. This can incentivise users to spend money on the service – a cost which can quickly mount up.

DEPENDENCY ON THE APP

While physical wellbeing apps can help motivate young users to manage their fitness, there's a possibility that – without being sent frequent rewards and reminders – children could start to lose their natural drive to be active. Young people may also become obsessed with tracking their exercise, health and eating habits; this can have negative effects on their mental and emotional wellbeing.

Advice for Parents & Educators

EXERCISE AND SOCIALISE

Highlight the importance of children enjoying fitness activities with family and friends, rather than always exercising alone. Emphasise the fun they can have by interacting with others rather than solely relying on an app to maintain their regime. Remind them of the importance of staying active, as well as the benefits of doing so with company.

PROMOTE POSITIVE BODY IMAGE

While we want children to be active and healthy, we must also ensure they don't become fixated on how they look and begin take things too far. During childhood and adolescence, the body is still growing and changing. It's vitally important for young people's wellbeing that we promote a positive body image and a healthy relationship with food, empowering them to make informed decisions about their diet and lifestyle.

REVIEW THE APP FIRST

Before allowing someone under 18 to install a fitness and wellbeing app, check its age rating, read its reviews and scroll through its data policy, to ensure its suitability for younger users. You could also try it yourself, to see if it's appropriate for the child's particular needs and decide if you're comfortable with them using it. Ensure that any privacy-compromising features – such as location tracking – are disabled.

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

As with all apps, it's important for parents to familiarise themselves with any controls on the app and to use these on a child's account. The specific settings vary between platforms but – most commonly – these will relate to screen-time limits, disabling or capping in-app purchases, and managing social aspects or features which aren't age appropriate. By utilising these controls, you can help to ensure a child is getting a safe experience.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian Government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/wellbeing-fitness-apps>

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