

Newsletter



13th February 2026

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Reflection

Beloved friends, brothers and sisters in Christ,

On Wednesday, 18th February, we begin the holy season of Lent with Ash Wednesday.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent: a 40-day period of penance, prayer, and fasting in preparation for Easter. Throughout the Church, it is observed as a day of abstinence and fasting, with the imposition of ashes on the faithful's foreheads as a sign of repentance, mortality, and conversion. The liturgy highlights our human frailty before God and calls us to inner renewal with the words: "Remember, man, that you are dust, and to dust you shall return," or "Repent and believe in the Gospel."

Lent is a 40-day liturgical season of penance, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving that prepares us for Easter by recalling our Baptism, fostering ongoing conversion, and inviting us to imitate Christ's 40 days in the desert.

This Lent, let us take time to reflect deeply on the Good News and open our hearts and minds to the practices of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. Lent offers abundant graces; let us support one another in our schools and communities so that we may experience the blessings of this holy season, begin well, and faithfully sustain our Lenten practices.

I wish you a blessed Half Term Break when it comes. May it be a restful time for you and your family.

Canon Victor Darlington

Archdiocese of Southwark Episcopal Vicar for the Southeast Area; for CARITAS Southwark, Racial & Cultural Inclusion and Justice & Peace, and for Education.

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Director's Message

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you all for all the work you have completed over the last half term. We have 52 schools recognised for their contribution to the achievement of disadvantaged children in their care, this is a great accomplishment and one in which we all should be very proud. Added to which seven of our schools have been asked to be part of the RISE fortnight on Attendance, Achievement and Best Start standards. All leaders are invited to sign up and visit these schools to see the best practice in these areas and I know that the Heads of those schools would welcome familiar faces on their open days.

Our first Senior Leaders Briefing was so very well attended, thank you so very much for coming out. We will have our next [SLB on the Wednesday before the end of term, 25th March 2026](#) at the same time of 8am to 8.30am. Please let us know in advance what you would like discussed. We have admissions queries to research before that date and so that will form part of the agenda.

Census has been completed and we are delighted to have had 99% return rate before the deadline. Thanks to Sam Gower for supporting schools to achieve this great return rate.

Thank you sincerely for everything, your kind words prayers and support have meant so very much this half term and has kept me going on the busiest of days and nights. I would also like to thank my team; they have been invaluable as I settle into the role. And to Canon Victor, the boss! He has encouraged and motivated me to do my very best, I will continue to do so in the coming months and years ahead. It has been a busy half term in schools for a variety of reasons, so please make sure to get a good rest, half terms come so fast but never last long enough, enjoy the time you have.



Colette Doran-Hannon
Diocesan Schools Commissioner

London RISE Education Fortnight

St Philomena's High School for Girls, Carshalton (as part of The Avila Partnership) and Ursuline High School, Wimbledon have been chosen to take part in the London RISE Education Fortnight between 9th March and 18th March 2026.

This is a collaborative pan-London initiative dedicated to showcasing and sharing exemplary educational practices that are making a positive impact on children's learning and development across all age phases. The schools will be hosting free of charge visits for other education professionals and sharing their best practice.



St Philomena's High School for Girls will be focusing on Attendance and holding sessions on Thursday 12th March and Thursday 19th March.

Ursuline High School will run sessions on Inclusion and Attainment on Tuesday 10th March and Tuesday 17th March.

To book a place, please visit:

[St Philomena's High School for Girls](#)

[Ursuline High School](#)

[Or visit the London RISE Education Fortnight microsite for further details](#)

The Big Lent Walk

For Lent, our Susan Elderfield has challenged herself to complete The Big Lent Walk!

Susan would love to join some of our schools on their walk whilst raising money for CAFOD. Please email susanelderfield@rcaos.org.uk with the date of your CAOD Big Lent Walk.

If you would like to donate, please find Susan's JustGiving page here [Susan Elderfield's fundraising page is fundraising for CAFOD](#).

Claire Williams will be taking photos of Susan on her Big Lent Walk. We are happy to share these with the schools Susan walks with.

Watch CAFOD's film to find out how the money you could raise on the Big Lent Walk will make a difference to communities in Bangladesh affected by climate change - cafod.org.uk/blwschools

The Easter Project 2026!



SPRINGS
DANCE COMPANY

EASTER PROJECT

"From the first few minutes of the workshop I knew that Springs had something special about them. They just had a way of engaging every child with enthusiasm, passion and hard-work. It was faultless"

Head Teacher, Easter Project at St Andrews School, Streatham.

Springs Dance Company's much-loved Easter Project workshops bring the narrative to life through movement, imagination and joyful participation.

"The team have been amazing with the children and had every single child engaged and on board... calm, fun and inspiring!" — Deputy Headteacher, Great Horwood Primary School.

Our Easter workshops can be delivered as a one-day experience or a longer project, and can even culminate in a pupil sharing or performance. A perfect way to enrich RE learning this Spring!

- Now booking for Spring–Summer 2026 and beyond
- touring@springsdancecompany.org.uk
- 07775 628 442
- Find out more: springsdancecompany.org.uk/join-in



Getting Inspection Ready for 2026 - WorkNest

This free one-hour webinar on **26th February at 2pm** is designed to help employers reduce risk. WorkNest's Health & Safety experts, including a former HSE inspector, will break down what inspectors are really looking for in 2026, where businesses most commonly fall short, and what you can do now to protect your organisation.

You'll leave with a clear understanding of how to embed inspection readiness into daily operations, reduce the likelihood of enforcement action, and demonstrate compliance with confidence all year round.

[Register here](#)

St Ursula's School - Events



St Ursula's School
I AM AN URSULINE : TODAY, TOMORROW, ALWAYS

**YEAR 6 VIP
GOLDEN TICKET
ACTIVITY DAY!**

· FREE BREAKFAST · LEGO ROBOT COMPETITION ·
· SCIENCE EXPERIMENT · MATHEMATICS TREASURE HUNT ·
· DRAMA GAMES · PRIZES · FREE LUNCH ·

SATURDAY 28TH FEBRUARY · 9 AM - 2PM



**SCAN THE QR
CODE TO REGISTER
YOUR INTEREST**

PLEASE NOTE: ALL PARENTS AND CARERS ARE WELCOME TO STAY THROUGHOUT THE DAY, BUT YOU ARE ALSO FREE TO LEAVE THE PREMISES AND RETURN LATER FOR THE AWARDS CELEBRATION.

**Year 5
Transition
Events**

**Maths Challenge
30th June**

**Science Fayre
6th July**

**Key Stage 2 Literature
Quiz 8th July**

At: St Ursula's Convent
School



Contact Miss Groves on: mgroves@stursulas.com
Book your place by Thursday 21st May at the latest!

Southwark Catholic Youth Service

The Southwark Catholic Youth Service has a number of upcoming activities for youth and young adults. For regular updates on forthcoming events, sign up to its network at www.tinyurl.com/scysnetwork. For queries on youth activities email youth@rcaos.org.uk



Prayer and Reflection Days

New Story Theatre Company offers prayer and reflection days to Catholic primary schools in the diocese. They support pupils' spiritual growth using scripture, storytelling, creative activities, music, liturgical dance and drama. They work with a class of 30 KS2 pupils and their teacher to deliver a spiritually enriching day based on each school's theme and focus.

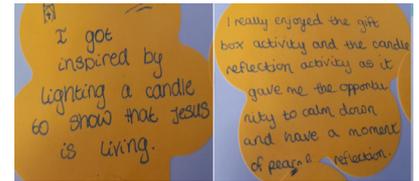
Martin was a primary school teacher in our diocese before starting his own business. He has already led reflection days in two of our schools and received excellent feedback. Fees are negotiable depending on what is being delivered but you would be looking at approximately £200 for the day. If this is something you would be interested in, please contact him directly via martin@newstorytheatrecompany.co.uk

Prayer and Reflection Days for Catholic Primary Schools



We provide opportunities for prayer and reflection to support pupils' spiritual growth using scripture, storytelling, creative activities, music, liturgical dance and drama.

We plan and deliver prayer and reflection days based on school themes and focus.



For further information and pricing, please contact: martin@newstorytheatrecompany.co.uk

Recruitment

To advertise any school [vacancy](#) with us for free, please email clairewilliams@rcaos.org.uk

Class Teacher, St Peter's Catholic Primary School

Woolwich

Closing date: 13th February 2026

Headteacher, St Peter & St Paul Catholic Primary School

Orpington

Closing date: 23rd February 2026

Chief Finance Officer, St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Closing date: 23rd February 2026

Chief Operating Officer, St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust

Closing date: 23rd February 2026

Premises Manager, Bishop Thomas Grant School Streatham

Closing date: 25th February 2026



Deputy Headteacher, Our Lady of Grace Catholic Primary School

Charlton

Closing date: 27th February 2026

Headteacher, St Francis Catholic Primary School

Peckham

Closing date: 27th February 2026

Headteacher, St Thomas' Catholic Primary School

Canterbury

Closing date: 2nd March 2026

Headteacher, St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Brentwood)

Hornchurch

Closing date: 6th March 2026

RISE Theatre

From the team that brought you God's Planet
RISE Theatre presents...

TREASURE WITHIN

A theatre production on
CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING
for primary schools - Summer Term 2026

Treasure Within's immersive theatrical story follows a school child who is set a unique homework assignment - to find 7 treasures (Catholic Social Teaching principles), in 7 different locations, and apply them to their own lives.

Costs & Booking

'Treasure Within' will take the whole school off timetable for the day to immersively explore the theme through live performances, music, workshops & classroom activities.

Email admin@risetheatre.co.uk to reserve your 2026 date today!

Price Per School

School size under 125 children -	£549
Under 325 children -	£599
Under 450 children -	£649
All other schools -	£699

Discounts available when 3 or more schools book consecutive dates from the same local area or academy

Costs for the day (based on school size)

£549 – under 125 pupils

£599 – under 325 pupils

£649 – under 450 pupils

£699 – over 450 pupils

Group discounts available when 3+ schools book together in the same area or academy.

Summer Term 2026 - Bookings now open!

Please email admin@risetheatre.co.uk to reserve a date.



Events & Training

All sessions are available to book on our website: www.rcaoseducation.org.uk/et

Spring 2026

Marketing Training with AmplifiED Schools Marketing – Secure Admissions, Celebrate Success, Build Community

Tuesday 24th February 2026. 4-5.30pm.
Zoom

Governors' Gatherings

Wednesday 25th February 2026. 4-5pm
Zoom

Clerk to Governors Forum

Thursday 26th February 2026. 2-3pm
Zoom

Effective Support and Challenge for Governors

Wednesday 4th March 2026. 5.30-7pm
Zoom

Diocesan Chaplains Retreat

Thursday 5th March 2026. 10am-3pm
Walsingham House at Abbotswick

Racial Justice and Inclusion in Education

Thursday 5th March 2026. 4-5.30pm
Zoom

Catholic Social Teaching – Next steps to Really Live it Out

Tuesday 10th March 2026. 4-5.30pm
Zoom

Directors Training Day

Wednesday 11th March 2026. 1-4pm
Zoom

The Way of Beauty: The Evangelising Power of the Arts in Education and Catechesis

Friday 12th March 2026. 10am-4pm
Amigo Hall, SE1 6HR. £25

Induction for New Foundation Directors, Governors and Clerks

Tuesday 17th March 2026. 5.30-7pm
Zoom

New to Catholic Schools

Tuesday 17th March 2026. 9.30am-4pm
Education Service, Orpington, BR5 2SR

Senior Leaders Briefings

Wednesday 25th March 2026. 8-8.30am
Zoom

Aspiring to Governance

Wednesday 25th March 2026. 5.30pm-6.30pm
Zoom

St Oscar Romero Feast Day Mass

Thursday 26th March 2026. 12.30pm
St George's Cathedral

What Should you Expect from your CEO Reports

Thursday 26th March 2026. 5.30-7pm
Zoom

Save the Date!

Good Shepherd Mass (secondary and Sixth Form Colleges) - 28th April 2026

Deputy Headteachers Conference - 19th May 2026

Celebration of Service Mass - 17th June 2026

Beginning of Year Mass - 25th September 2026

Headteachers Conference - 19th & 20th November 2026



St Augustine’s Catholic Primary School – Caring for God’s Creation

This week, St Francis Class from St Augustine’s Catholic Primary School, Tunbridge Wells has been embracing the spirit of their class saint by learning how to care for the world around them. Inspired by St Francis’ love for nature, the children have been busy helping to look after the birds and tending to our school garden.



[Continue reading.](#)

Activities at St Thomas’ Catholic Primary School



St Thomas’ Catholic Primary School in Canterbury performed the nativity story at their local parish church of St Thomas of Canterbury and was a resounding success.

[Continue reading.](#)



**Kent
Catholic
Schools’
Partnership**



‘Academies in Christ’
of the Archdiocese of Southwark

KCSP GOVERNANCE
CONFERENCE 2026
JOIN US

17 MARCH 2026: ST SIMON STOCK CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL, MAIDSTONE, ME16 0JP

Session 1: CSI Inspections, Catholic Education, and the updated Religious Education Directory (RED) - KCSP
Chair of the Trust Board Q&A

Session 2: Supporting disciplinary panels and the legal requirements - HR Connect

25 MARCH 2026: ST ANSELM’S CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL, CANTERBURY, CT1 3EN

Session 1: SEND strategy and the changing landscape - KCSP
Chair of the Trust Board Q&A

Session 2: The new Ofsted framework and its implications for governance - NGA

Book your place [here](#) or via the QR code




Agenda for both events:

Arrival from 16:30

Session 1 starting at 17:00

Networking at 18:00

Chair Trust Board and LGC Chair Q&A at 18:15

Session 2 starting 18:30

CSI / Ofsted Q&A 20:00

Finish 20:30

