

Be who God wants you to be and so set the world on fire.



St. Catherine's
RC Primary School



Spring Term 2 Newsletter – April 2026

A message from Mrs Quiligotti

Welcome to the second of our spring term newsletters, where we are delighted and proud to celebrate the many wonderful learning experiences and opportunities our children have enjoyed in recent weeks. It has been a vibrant and enriching time across the school, with memorable trips and visits, the excitement and creativity of World Book Day, and the thoughtful commemoration of Holy Week. Throughout this half-term, the season of Lent has been a key focus for our school community, encouraging reflection, kindness, and spiritual growth among our children.

A particular highlight has been the beautiful reflections led during Holy Week, where the events of Jesus's final days on earth were shared creatively by our Key Stage Two in such a poignant and meaningful way. These moments were especially powerful for our younger children, helping them to engage with and understand the significance of this important and sacred time in the Christian calendar.

This week, we have also shared our annual reports with parents; we hope you have enjoyed reading them and that they demonstrate how well our staff know each child, as well as the excellent progress being made. Thank you, as always, for your continued support, and we wish all of our families a very blessed and peaceful Easter.



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Whole School



This half-term...

It has been a busy and exciting half-term across the whole school, with children enjoying a wide range of enriching experiences. Our Year 5 and 6 choir members had the fantastic opportunity to visit the MOBO Awards Fringe Festival, where they explored behind the scenes and learned about the many careers involved in delivering such an event. We also marked World Book Day in a wonderfully creative way, with children dressed as a word, showcasing fantastic imagination while developing their vocabulary. Nursery and Reception enjoyed a visit to the airport visitor park, while Nursery children also experienced a tram ride, helping to bring their transport topic to life. Some children in Years 5 and 6 also took part in a Waste 2 Waves workshop, exploring plastic pollution and working together to create a sculpture for the Didsbury Arts Festival. We loved welcoming parents into school for our parent Easter crafts session too and thought all of the final crafts were superb!

There have been many other highlights, including our Book Fair and an engaging trip for Year 5 to Styal Mill. Year 4 pupils took part in robotics workshops, while Reception children built confidence through Bikeability. Year 2 children also enjoyed a memorable visit from some exotic animals - take a look at some of the photos on our Facebook page! Finally, our Holy Week reflections brought the whole school together, providing meaningful opportunities for children to reflect and learn about this important time in the Christian calendar.



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Lent



During this Lenten season, our school community has taken part in a range of meaningful activities to deepen our faith and understanding. We marked Laetare Sunday by reflecting on ways to rejoice during Lent, reminding us of the hope and joy at the heart of this season. Our Key Stage Two pupils thoughtfully led Holy Week reflections, with each class preparing a focus on a different event; EYFS and Key Stage One children then toured the school and church to experience these moments and learn more about the final events of Jesus' earthly life. Across the school, pupils participated in key stage Celebration of the Word assemblies and phase prayer stations, providing valuable opportunities for reflection and for growing closer to Jesus. We were also proud to award our Faith badges to children who have demonstrated this core value in an exemplary way. During Holy Week, we also gathered for a reverent Mass, celebrated by Father John and Father Quiligotti, bringing us together in prayer as a community.

Children in each phase have put their faith into action by organising different activities to fundraise and support those in need. Examples have included collecting Easter eggs for Burnage Food Bank, wearing pyjamas to raise money for charity and selling knitted chicks with creme eggs to raise money for Francis House.



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Nursery



This half-term...

What a busy half-term we have had in Nursery! We have thoroughly enjoyed our topic, 'Journeys and Transport!' Our focus texts, 'The Journey Home from Grandpa's' and 'Whatever Next' have taught us lots about different transport!

In maths, we have been learning about sizes and measures. The children have been encouraged to use language such as tall and short, long and short, heavy and light and full and empty. We have been comparing measures too!

We have continued to learn new sounds in phonics and have been practising how to write these. The children are getting better at using sounds to label their pictures too!

We enjoyed getting out and about on our tram journey and our visit to Manchester Airport Runway Visitor Park too! We had a fantastic time watching the aeroplanes! We also loved travelling by coach too!



Our children say...

"We have been learning about empty and full. It's called capacity."

"In 'The Journey Home from Grandpa's'. there is a car, a fire engine and a helicopter."

"We went on the tram. We went forwards and backwards!"

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Reception



This half-term...

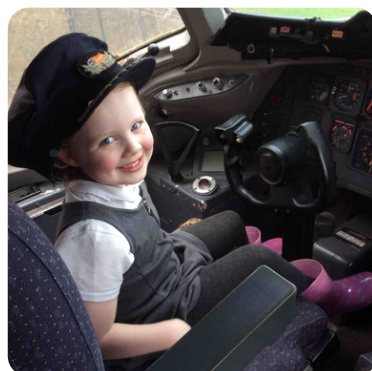
This half-term has been super busy for Reception! We went on our school trip to the Runway Visitor Park and it was amazing! We learnt all about airports, aeroplanes and the different roles of the cabin crew. We also learnt about how police officers and firefighters keep us safe.

Our topic, Journeys and Transport, has been one of favourites. In Literacy, we have looked at two focus texts, 'The naughty bus' and 'How to catch a star.' They provided us with lots of opportunities to apply our phase 2 and 3 phonics knowledge.

In maths, we have been applying our stem sentences for doubling numbers up to 10. We have been sorting numbers into more or less than 5 and can identify odd and even numbers.

We enjoyed our bikeability sessions. We used balance bikes to show how we can navigate with speed and control. We understand the importance of wearing a helmet and using the brakes.

In Religion, we have been learning about Holy week and the Religious season of Lent. The children enjoyed making palms and acting out Palm Sunday.



Our children say...

"Pilots can fly aeroplanes all the way to Greece!"

"4 is made of 2 and 2, 2 and 2 make 4."

"The naughty bus is fast and speedy!"

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Year 1



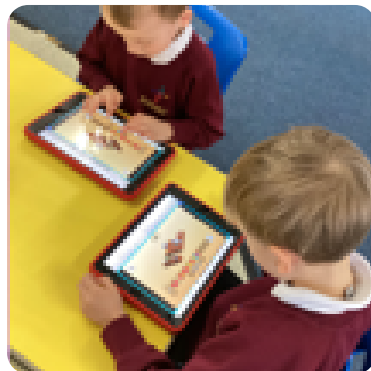
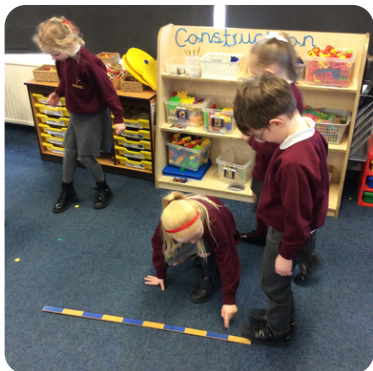
This half-term...

In History, we have been learning about space exploration and the life of Neil Armstrong. We have used a variety of sources to research his achievements and understand how he made a significant impact on history. To launch our topic, we had our very own 'Space Day', where we dressed up and proudly shared what we already knew about space.

In Maths, we have been learning about measurement. We began by measuring height and length, and then moved on to exploring mass and volume. We took part in lots of practical lessons, where we investigated and measured different objects around us to develop our understanding.

In Computing, we have been looking at programming, coding and robotics. We have had lots of fun inputting basic directions up, down, left, right to make an object or shape move. We have enjoyed working collaboratively!

In Art, we have been looking at the Artist Philip Sutton and his large and highly coloured paintings of landscape, flowers and people. We have created our own rainforest paintings and added materials to layer and make the picture more 3D!



Our children say...

"I would love to be like Neil Armstrong and go to the Moon one day, his footsteps are still there."

"I know that there are 100 centimeters in 1 metre, that is a lot!"

"I really like blending colours together and using different sized paint brushes."

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Year 2



This half-term...

In Science this half-term, we invited some weird and wonderful animals to join us. We got to hold them and learn all about their habitats, how they grow and what they eat. We got to meet a tortoise, a tarantula, a python, a skunk, a chameleon and an owl!

In History, we kicked off our topic with a Teddy Bear Hospital with nurses from the University of Manchester. We have learnt a lot about Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole who were nurses that changed nursing for the better. Not only have we learnt all about the wonderful things they did but also about how they were treated.

In Literacy, we have been exploring the text 'Major Glad, Major Dizzy' by Jan Oke. This story follows two Victorian toy soldiers—Major Glad and Major Dizzy—who are lost under the floorboards of a London house in 1870. They remain there for 140 years, witnessing changes in the house above them before eventually being rescued. We wrote a diary entry from the perspective of Major Glad.

In Mathematics, the children have really impressed us with their understanding of multiplication and division. We used the method of drawing arrays to support our understanding of multiplication and drew 'sharing people' to help with division. We also explored fractions and how this links to division.



Our children say...

"My favourite animal was the owl because it flew up onto our display - I think it wanted to stay!"

"I loved the Teddy Bear Hospital that we did because we got to dress up as doctors and nurses."

"I loved the Fractions and Dominoes lesson- pizza is my favourite."

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Year 3



This half-term...

As part of our new writing unit, children stepped into the role of archaeologists. During their 'dig', they discovered a map of the Mount Vesuvius volcano, and details of a recently excavated amphitheatre. Children concluded that their new book must be linked to the ancient city of Pompeii - and they were absolutely right! The text is 'Escape from Pompeii' by Christina Balit.

This term's PE unit has been Dance and we have been exploring 'Machines.' We have looked at parts of machinery like cogs, pistons and levers and made up our own choreography to push, pull and spin our bodies!

In PSHE, we have been exploring the difference between positive and negative behaviours. Children acted out a range of scenarios to help them understand emotional and physical bullying, recognise different forms of pressure, and consider how to build resilience.

In Geography this term, the children have been diving into the explosive world of volcanoes. They have explored how volcanoes are formed, investigated the dramatic 'Ring of Fire', and discussed why people choose to live near these powerful natural features. The class also learned about the famous eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD, linking their geographical knowledge to real historical events.



Our children say...

"I loved digging for clues in Writing because I felt like we were real archaeologists discovering history!"

"I liked learning how to stay strong in PSHE and be resilient when things get tricky."

"I really liked cogs and pistons in Dance. It made me feel like a real machine!"

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Year 4



This half-term...

For our Writing lessons this half-term, the Year 4 children went intergalactic and used all their powers of persuasion when creating speeches to put to the Zodiac Council Elders. This was all based around the book 'Who Let the God's Out'. Each child wrote a speech as Virgo about why they should be chosen to go on the quest down to Earth to take the ambrosia to Prisoner 42. The children were coached in their oracy skills and practised how to speak in front of audiences.

In science, we have covered the water cycle and states of matter, creating mini water cycles in a bag and testing the speed of the melting process when timing ice cubes at different temperatures.

In Art, the children have excelled in creating impasto paintings, mixing flour and paint, based on Van Gogh's 'sunflowers'. They looked into the spectrum of colours and how we can create them.

In Computing, the children loved creating Scratch shark games by using coding.



Our children say...

"I have loved playing tennis in PE having rallies with my friends."

"I liked being able to use the laptops creating cool games where the sharks ate the fish."

"We've done lots of fraction work in Maths. I just love Maths. Give me more!"

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Year 5



This half-term...

This half-term has been dominated by our study of Victorian life. Our Reading and Writing lessons have been dedicated to 'Street Child' by Berlie Doherty. The book tells the story of Jim Jarvis, who inspired the work of Dr Barnardo. Complementary lessons in History have seen the children consider the impact of the Industrial Revolution on Manchester. Our local history study culminated in each class visiting the extraordinary industrial heritage site, Quarry Bank Mill (Styal).

In Maths, we have continued to work on decimals - using our place value knowledge to support us with adding and subtracting decimal numbers. We have begun our study of Space in Science. The children modelled the orbit of the planets in the Solar System on the playground!

In Religion, we have recently considered words from the scripture of Joel 'Come back to me, with all your heart', which inspired the hymn of the same name. Our Easter Crafts session saw the children use tissue paper to create a 'stained glass' window to frame a cross. Another highlight was the Spanish Cafe (covered in more detail later in this newsletter).



Our children say...

"The visit to Quarry Bank Mill was my favourite trip."

"I enjoyed learning about the planets with the planet song and by acting out orbits on the playground."

"The Spanish Cafe was fun! I enjoyed dressing-up as a waiter, serving some food and trying some of the leftovers!"

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Year 6



This half-term...

This half-term in English, Year 6 have explored both fiction and non-fiction writing by creating a narrative based on an explorer and writing a non-chronological report about the Amazon rainforest, developing their skills in description, organisation and factual writing.

In Maths, the children have covered a broad range of topics including measure, angles, 3D shape and nets, as well as translation and reflection across four quadrants, helping to strengthen both their reasoning and spatial awareness.

In Science, pupils have been learning about electrical circuits, where they investigated how circuits work and identified the different components needed to make them function successfully.

In Religion, we have been focusing on conscience and sin, encouraging thoughtful discussion about choices, responsibility and how our actions can affect ourselves and others.

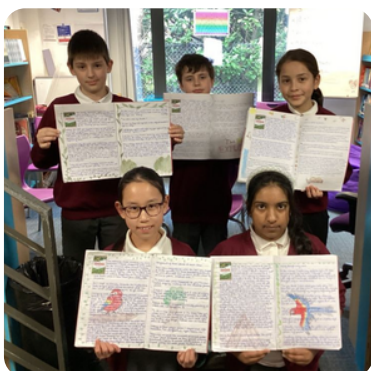


Our children say...

"My favourite thing about this half-term has been 'The Explorer' writing."

"World book day was my favourite because it was fun seeing everybody dressed up"

"Our Science experiments have been lots of fun this term as we have been building electrical circuits."



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Pupil Leadership



It has been another busy half-term for our pupil leaders! Our Planeteers have been instrumental in leading a 'litter picking' initiative around the school grounds; introducing a rota, equipment and even promoting this during worship. I think you'll all agree that the playground and surrounding area is looking much neater and tidier!

It has been a busy Lenten Season for our GIFT, Caritas and Prayer leaders - leading us all in prayer and reflection on many occasions. Readings during Masses and Celebration of The Word sessions have been led by our Faith leaders. Our Year 6 GIFT and Caritas members have also been busy creating resources to put in our peace garden. These resources can be used to help children with spontaneous prayer and reflection when utilising a quieter space in the playground.

Some of our School Council members were delighted to take part in raising money for the Easter Chick Appeal in aid of Francis House Children's Hospice. As part of the Lenten fundraiser in Years 3 and 4, the children worked incredibly hard - and the response was amazing. We sold all 300 chicks in just three days raising a total of £600! It has been a hugely successful effort for a truly wonderful charity and a very worthwhile cause.



Our Pupil Leadership Groups

School Council
Growing in Faith Together (GIFT)
Team
Caritas Ambassadors
Planeteers
Sports Leaders
Prayer Leaders

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Spanish



In Spanish this half-term, children have been working on the following topics:

Year 1 - learning about Chinese New Year and animals

Year 2 - learning fruit and practising a role play in a Spanish fruit shop

Year 3 - learning the days in Spanish and how to say what the date is.

Year 4 - learning about the Water Cycle and also practising their Spanish writing and memory skills.

Year 5 - children have told their Spanish pen friends their favourite food and drink. They created great Spanish menus for the Café and hosted the Café beautifully. It was fantástico!

Year 6 - children have been learning about the weather and produced a television weather forecast. They are so creative! Estupendo!

For our Spanish Exchange, all children have now met their Spanish pen friends via Google Meets. This time, they talked about their favourite food and drink.

Final details regarding the exchange have been sent home and we can't wait to go. Fun plans have also been put in place for the Year 5 children not going to Spain so the children should all have a fun and enriching week.



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Sports



It has been another fantastic half-term of sport at St Catherine's, with many pupils showing determination, resilience and excellent teamwork. The girls' football tournament has now finished. Congratulations to all of the girls for their effort, commitment and teamwork throughout the competition - we are incredibly proud of you all

Our boys' football team have continued to train hard this half term - well done to all involved.

The Inspire boys' football team have shown great resilience and determination, and we are very proud of how they have represented our school in their competitions.

Cross country has now come to an end. A huge well done to everyone who has taken part this year - you have all demonstrated fantastic perseverance and effort. The Year 3 and 4 boys and girls teams have done incredibly well this season; the girls finished overall 1st and the boys finished overall 2nd of all all Manchester schools. They have all supported each other brilliantly during the races and really enjoyed each and every event. We are looking forward to next season! Thank you to the wonderful parents who support our Cross Country events too - we are very grateful!

In Inspire gymnastics, congratulations to the children who have pushed themselves out of their comfort zones, challenged themselves and competed in gymnastics for the first time. For Excel gymnastics, well done to all pupils who have worked hard to learn their routines and returned to school with gold, silver and bronze medals—an incredible achievement! Both teams represented St Catherine's in an exemplary manner, and we are extremely proud of everyone's determination and commitment. Well done to our netball team, who attended two separate events this half term to begin their tournament journey. We look forward to seeing their continued progress.



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Parent and Teacher Association (PTA)



A heartfelt thank you to everyone who supported the PTA's St Patrick's event - your generosity helped raise nearly £380. Your continued support truly makes a difference.

We're excited to be hosting our upcoming "Break the Rules" Day on the 17th April, and can't wait to see all the creative ways students choose to break the rules (while secretly hoping things don't get too chaotic). Looking forward to a fun and memorable day—thank you for your support.

However, the Easter Disco, originally scheduled for 24th April, has been postponed so that all Year 5 students can be included. Please rest assured that every effort is being made to reschedule this much-loved event.

Lastly, the PTA is also beginning to plan our upcoming AGM, which will take place soon, and we warmly encourage anyone interested to come along, share ideas, and help us welcome new volunteers to the team. Together, we can continue to build a strong and supportive school community.



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