

From Mr Chappell: So much has been going on over the last few weeks, that it's hard to know where to start! Indeed, when you look back over the year of 2025, so much has been achieved. We have celebrated many successes, including our OFSTED and SIAMS inspections, strong academic attainment, a wide range of clubs offered throughout the year, and, quite simply, children enjoying school.

With all this in mind, firstly, I want to say a **HUGE thank you** to every single member of staff. Every member of our team, works incredibly hard to ensure your children receive the best possible education, alongside as all the other things they do each day: supporting, nurturing and giving their time so generously to clubs and activities beyond school.

This week, the school has been a cacophony of sound, filled with singing and celebration! We have enjoyed several fantastic events, including our whole-school Christmas Service in church, KS1 nativities, and a lovely Christingle Service in church on Wednesday, led by our Year 3 and 4 pupils.

One of the very best things about primary school is seeing the children come together to sing, and this past week has truly been superb. Thank you to everyone who came along to support all these performances. Watching the children grow in confidence - whether performing on stage or speaking so confidently in church - links explicitly to our vision:

'Excellence, Enjoyment and achievement together in a nurturing Christian Community'
'They will soar on wings like Eagles – Isaiah 40:31'

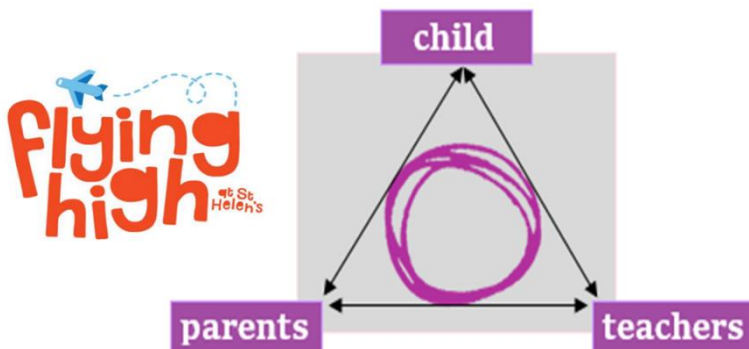


FOSH Christmas Fair: A huge thank you to FOSH for organising such a fantastic and enjoyable Christmas Fair last Friday. Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to the fundraising; all funds raised are reinvested back into the school which directly benefits the children.

Please note that FOSH are already busy planning their next event - a New Year Disco for KS1 and KS2 on Friday 23rd January. Further information will be shared in the New Year, so please keep an eye out.



Value for Term 3: Truthfulness Alongside this newsletter, you will find a home-school values sheet to support discussions with your children at home. The children have had a great term focusing on the value of *Respect*, and we look forward to seeing what next term brings.



Parent / Carer school relationships:

During my time at St Helen's, in a variety of roles, one of the school's greatest strengths has always been the open and honest relationships developed between staff and our parent community. I have always been very open that we don't get everything right, and we truly value parents approaching us directly with any questions or concerns. We kindly ask that these conversations take place in person or by contacting the school directly, rather than through WhatsApp or other

social media platforms. We really appreciate this approach, as it allows us to work together positively and solve any issues effectively.

Admissions for academic year 2026: A reminder that if you have a younger sibling due to start with us next year, or know someone who may be interested in joining our EYFS cohort in September 2026, **the deadline for applications is 15th January 2026**. If you do have a sibling who will be joining us, please use the link below to register for a place if you haven't already done so.

[School Admissions September 2026](#)

Parent / Carers' evening: January 13th and 15th.

Thank you to everyone in Years 1 – 6, who has already booked a Parent/Carer Evening appointment. As you know, we changed the date of these meetings to give you more precise information about your child's attainment and next steps, so that you can better support them at home.

At the end of Term 2, some year groups have completed more formal assessments. During your appointment, teachers will be able to share details of your child's progress and what they can work on next to improve further. You will also receive your child's attendance certificate, so that you are fully aware of their attendance data.

While we understand that children may be absent from school due to illness, we have noticed that, in a small number of cases, attendance is dropping due to inconsistent patterns – such as one-day absences every couple of weeks – which can disrupt learning. Although attendance can be a sensitive issue, please be assured that everything we do is supportive. Even when it becomes necessary to involve the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO), this is done with the aim of supporting families and helping children achieve their potential.

As of today, the whole school attendance stands at **95.88%**. A huge well done to Year 6, who have an impressive attendance record of **97.56%**. Although 95.88 % is slightly lower than our end of Term 1 data, we are still above where we were this time last year and currently above this year's national primary attendance which is 95.07%. Attendance is rightly a big focus in schools and is a key target for the Department for Education (DfE). Research shows that attendance plays a significant role in children's GCSE outcomes, so every day really does matter!

In preparation for OFSTED, I looked at 'career' attendance of all our children - that is, their attendance over their entire time at St Helen's. The results are fantastic: the current Year 5 and 6 cohort have no child below 90%, and 20 out of 60 children have achieved attendance of over 97% across six or seven years. This is brilliant and certainly demonstrates our Flying High ethos! Attendance really does matter!

	Year R	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	All Years
Attendance	90.30%	95.49%	96.27%	96.65%	96.68%	96.98%	97.56%	95.88%

Well done to Amber and Amelie in Year 3, who last week walked for over three hours raising money for the Santa float with the Thornbury Round Table.

Key Dates:	
Monday 5 th January	First day back Term 3
Monday 12 th January	Young Voices Choir Trip to Birmingham Arena.
Parents / Carers Meetings: Year 1 – Year 6	Term 3: 13 th and 15 th January Term 5: 28 th and 30 th April
Wednesday 18 th March	Curriculum Showcase – all classrooms open to all parent / carers.
Monday 15 th June Sports Day	KS1 9:15 am KS2 10:45 am (Reserve Day Tuesday 16 th June.
Tuesday 14 th July	Reports to Parent / Carers
Inset Days:	
Monday 23rd March	
20th July 21st July	
Key Statutory Dates – all pupils to undertake.	
Monday 11th May – Thursday 14th May	Year 6 SATs assessments week
Monday 8th June – Friday 12th June	Year 1 Phonics Tests and Year 2 Phonics re-tests
Monday 1st June – Friday 12th June	Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check



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Friday 19th December

Well done to those children who were awarded a certificate today:

Holly Class: Arthur (Values) & Massimo (Brave Change Maker)

Beech Class: Theo P (Values) & Olive (Brave Change Maker)

Oak Class: Lili (Values) & Rocky (Brave Change Maker)

Ash Class: Gabriela (Values) & Rufus (Brave Change Maker)

Sycamore Class: Obi (Values) & Tessa (Brave Change Maker)

Elm Class: Bonnie (Values) & Bea (Brave Change Maker)

Mr Chappell's award: Everly (Year 6) & Louie (Year 4)

