



ST MONICA'S NEWSLETTER

Friday 9th January, 2026

A Happy New Year and a warm welcome back to school to all of our pupils, families and staff members. What a week of difficult weather conditions to welcome everybody back to school! I would like to thank pupils and families for taking extra care when travelling to school, especially on Monday and Tuesday. Despite the weather, lots of superb learning started and our pupils got stuck into exciting new units of work across the school.

I would like to thank all staff who helped prepare the school site, with particular thanks to Mr Cooney, who came in on Sunday and at 5:30am on Monday and Tuesday, to ensure the school grounds were safe and ready to open.

Please be aware that Timon Avenue can be especially hazardous during icy weather. We have contacted Sefton Council to request that the road be gritted in the future for the safety of our families, but they said this cannot happen. As this is a public highway, we are unable to carry out gritting ourselves as this would bring legal and liability risks, so all we can do at this moment is to ask for your support and to work together.

We ask that families work with us by avoiding driving on Timon Avenue during icy conditions wherever possible. If we had the authority to do so, we would close the road in these circumstances. Thank you for your continued cooperation and support in keeping everyone safe.

2026: Our Year of Reading

We are proud to announce that 2026 is the Year of Reading in the UK and in our school, and we are starting the year with a real push to strengthen daily reading habits across all year groups.

We ask that all pupils read at home for at least 15 minutes every day, in addition to the reading that takes place in school. Reading little and often builds fluency, vocabulary and confidence. It also supports children as they progress through the wider curriculum. If your child has a reading record, please ensure that each read is recorded, including the date and pages read. An adult signature is requested at least three times per week, and reading records will be checked regularly by staff and our Reading Ambassadors. If a child has three stars or more, they will receive a gold star in their record. Our aim is to make reading a daily habit, an enjoyable routine, and a lifelong skill for every child.

Thank you for supporting us as we make 2026 a fantastic year for reading. We have great plans for World Book Day and a range of activities is planned for the year by our Reading Lead, Mrs Gilbertson, who cannot wait to make this the best year yet!





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Online Safety Saeguarding update

Many of our older pupils received tablets and phones for Christmas, and this means a traditional spike in activity as pupils join the online world. I would like to make parents and carers aware of our safeguarding concerns about social media apps such as TikTok or Snapchat.

In one case this week, a pupil was messaged on TikTok by an unknown adult as their privacy settings were not on. The child told a trusted adult, and we had a positive ending, but it is very concerning nonetheless. Upon further discussions with pupils, direct messaging from unknown adults can be a regular occurrence if privacy settings are not set.

In response, a special safeguarding assembly was held for Year 6 pupils today, alongside follow-up discussions in classes. These sessions focused on the real dangers associated with social media, including contact from strangers, inappropriate content, and the limitations of privacy settings.

Based on many years in education, my strong professional advice is to steer children away from these platforms entirely. Apps such as TikTok and Snapchat are not designed with children's safety as a priority. Children are not equipped to manage the risks they may encounter, and it is increasingly difficult for parents to monitor usage effectively as the apps are purposefully made difficult to understand, especially the privacy settings and deleted messages.

If your child has access to social media, I strongly urge you to review and apply the strictest privacy settings available, or to consider removing these apps altogether. Taking time to review this online safety guidance could be one of the most important safeguarding steps you take as a parent:

[All social media, privacy guides](#)

Thank you for your continued support. If anything happens to your child online, please speak to me direct and I can see if this is part of a wider picture and how we can support you. The key aspect is to keep our families updated and our children safe. Tonight, please take some time to read all messages in your child's phone and check all privacy settings so you can be reassured your child is safe.





Headteacher's Hot Chocolate

Each week, pupils who have lived out our values and have demonstrated the “St Monica’s Way” are selected by their class teacher. They are celebrated in assembly and then enjoy a hot chocolate and a chat with Mr Gouldbourne to celebrate their inspirational week.

Mr Gouldbourne	Michael Holt for being an outstanding learner and remembering his key facts about reptiles from his Science lessons. On top of this, he brings a lovely positive smile to our school everyday. What a superstar!
Ms Tohill	Annie McGreavy for being an all round PE superstar always helping others, listening to and acting upon how she can improve, performing her best and as a very high standard.
Miss Byrne	Vincent Kearney for showing kindness to his friends, listening carefully, and following the rules. You are a superstar!
Miss Andrews	Elsie Groves - for consistently trying her best in all areas of the curriculum and being such a kind friend to all. Well done Elsie, I'm so proud of you!
Miss Horder	Aura-May Evans for showing resilience during our phonics lessons. She always follows the rules and tries her best! What a star!
Miss Hatcher	Carlo Shiels - for having a lovely smile all week and asking super questions in all of his lessons. He always tries his best and does so with a winning smile.
Miss Tew	Cillian has been a mature and conscientious learner: well done for showing integrity in your learning. Keep it up!
Mrs MacDonald	Estelle Garry - For showing determination in all her studies but particularly in maths where she is giving 100%. You are a star!
Mrs Chorzepa	Peyton Wherry- for consistently striving to do her best and working very hard across the curriculum. What a sensational, kind and caring pupil.
Mrs Reardon	Archie Perry for fantastic effort in English - he has tried so hard with his ideas and use of inverted commas. He has also shared his ideas confidently in class.
Miss Gibbons	Joshua Tone for outstanding resilience and attitude in lessons. Josh is a fantastic mathematician and has shone brightly with his times table knowledge. Well done, Josh - Keep it up!
Mrs Ware	Maggie Bain - nominated by Mrs Hough for her resilience in overcoming her fears. What a star you are Maggie! Well done.
Miss Thomas	Jimmy R because he is aspirational. He loves to share his love of learning with the class. This week he has worked extremely hard and always shows aspiration to get even better. A superb pupil.
Mrs Gilbertson/ Mrs Birch	James Hendry for consistently trying his best in everything that he does and being a kind and helpful friend to all.
Miss McGuckin	Jaydan Swan-Keig - for showing aspiration in all of his lessons but especially for his hard work in his Maths and for being able to explain his methods. Well done superstar!
Miss McGiveron	Jacob Ordish McCann for making a positive start to spring term and for his valuable contributions during lessons.
Mr Lynch	Aiva Taafe - For showing amazing commitment and determination in all of her work. She is a role model in Year 6.



Nursery - by Miss Byrne



Nursery have been exploring the beautiful winter artwork of Claude Monet, taking time to look closely at his use of colour, light and atmosphere.



Inspired by Monet's snowy scenes, the children then created their own winter artworks using chalks, experimenting with soft lines, shading and texture. This creative activity encouraged careful observation, artistic expression and lots of imaginative thinking, resulting in a lovely collection of unique winter pictures that the children were very proud of.



Reception - by Miss Andrews and Miss Horder

Reception have settled back into school brilliantly after Christmas and have been full of enthusiasm for their learning.

We have begun exploring our new topic of Winter, learning about seasonal changes and investigating ice through hands-on activities. The children have also enjoyed creating wintry scenes in art, experimenting with colour mixing to make lighter and darker shades.

As part of Understanding the World, we talked about how people and animals keep warm during winter.

To finish the week, the children worked together to prepare a delicious vegetable winter soup, using our fine motor strength to chop the vegetables, we thoroughly enjoyed tasting our finished soup!





Year 1 - by Miss Hatcher and Miss Tew

The children explored the four countries that make up the UK: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. They learned to recognise these countries and locate them on a map and in an atlas. Pupils enjoyed pointing out where each country is and talking about places they may have visited or heard about.

Through map work and discussion, the children developed their understanding of what a map and an atlas are used for and how they help us find places. They also practised using simple geographical language such as country, map, UK, and location.

The children showed great enthusiasm and confidence during these lessons, and it has been wonderful to see their curiosity about the world around them growing.



Year 2- by Mrs Macdonald, Mrs Chorzepa and Miss Partington

A Mysterious Visitor in Year 2! 🐉

Year 2 had a very exciting start to the day when we discovered some mysterious clues in our classroom. When we arrived in the morning, there were huge three-toed footprints on the floor and a large egg waiting for us! We also noticed a claw poking through the ceiling, along with a tail and a long tongue hanging down.

The children were full of amazing ideas and decided it must be a dragon who had visited during the night. The excitement and imagination of the children was brilliant to see, inspiring superb writing. Mr Gouldbourne came to see the mystery and had to check the CCTV to see how the dragon got into school!





Year 3 - by Mrs Reardon and Miss Gibbons

This week in Science, Year 3 have been looking different forces and identifying pushes, pulls and twists. We looked at contact forces and thought about the effect forces can have on an object, including speeding it up or changing its shape.

Do you think a bigger force required to make a ball spin or to stop the same spinning ball from spinning?

New Years Resolution:
Can the children learn to tie their own laces? Many thanks.



Year 4 - by Mrs Ware and Miss Thomas

Year 4 pupils have made an enthusiastic and impressive start to their dance lessons in PE. Working with the exciting theme of 'Spy', they were challenged to copy and then create their own actions in response to different ideas, thinking carefully about how movements could be adapted by using changes in space.

The children demonstrated excellent body control through effective tilting actions and a wide range of low and high travelling movements, helping to bring their spy-inspired sequences to life.

They also showed strong rhythm and coordination by successfully keeping their movements in time with a clear count of 8. It was wonderful to see such creativity, focus, and teamwork on display as pupils explored and developed their dance skills.





Year 5- by Mrs Gilbertson/ Mrs Birch and Miss McGuckin



Year 5 began their new science topic on Forces. We learned about friction, discovering that it is the force between two surfaces rubbing together and exploring when it is useful and when it can be a problem. The children carried out an investigation to find out how adding oil changes the amount of friction between two surfaces. We learned that adding cooking oil made the jelly cubes slippery, creating less friction, which made them harder to grip and lift. This hands-on investigation helped the children clearly understand how friction affects movement and encouraged careful observation and scientific thinking. After the ice on Monday and Tuesday, friction is definitely a topical science unit!



Year 6- by Miss McGiveron and Mr Lynch

This week, our Year 6 pupils have been learning about the Annunciation and have expressed their understanding through diary writing from Mary's point of view. This thoughtful activity encouraged the children to reflect on feelings, responsibility and faith, while also developing their writing skills. The children explored how Mary may have felt when the angel Gabriel told her she had been chosen to be the mother of Jesus.

A key focus of the work was Mary's strong faith and trust in God. Despite the challenges ahead, Mary chose to believe and accept God's plan. The children reflected on how her faith gave her courage and reassurance during a difficult and life-changing moment. Through this work, Year 6 demonstrated empathy, maturity and a deeper understanding of how belief and trust can help people face challenges. We are very proud of the thoughtful and reflective diary entries they produced.

