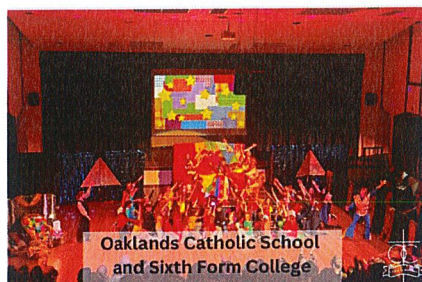
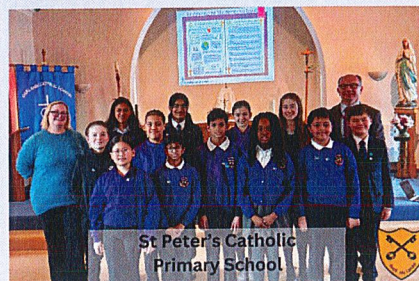
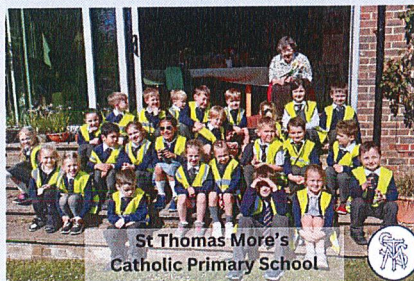


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THE COMMUNITY CORNERSTONE

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE PASTORAL AREA



VOLUME 7, July 2025

A Note from Mr Quinn

Dear Parishioners,

This is now likely to be my last editorial as I will be leaving Oaklands at the end of this term to focus on the CEO role for Edith Stein Multi Academy Trust. I find myself reflecting on my time here with a blend of gratitude, pride, and a hint of sadness. This decision to move on was not made lightly, as Oaklands has been part of my life since September 2007. It is a unique Catholic school, enriched by a vibrant and resilient community that has profoundly shaped both my professional and personal journey.

Throughout my tenure, I have had the honour of witnessing the remarkable growth and evolution of our school. Our recent Catholic Schools Inspectorate inspection is a testament to our collective efforts, as very few schools achieve outstanding results across the board. While leading a school comes with its challenges, the triumphs have been numerous. I take great pride in the spiritual culture we have cultivated, one that is deeply rooted in the teachings of the Gospels.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to every member of our school and wider community. It has been a privilege to collaborate with my fellow Catholic Headteachers, many of whom have worked alongside me throughout this

journey, for their professionalism which has been invaluable. I also appreciate the support from our clergy, who play a vital role in the sacramental life of the school. Together with our governors, their guidance and commitment to our shared values have strengthened Oaklands and inspired us to aim high. Most importantly, to our students, they are the reason we all strive for excellence. Their energy, curiosity, humour, and courage have continually inspired me. Watching them grow not only academically, but as kind, thoughtful young people is often the antidote when considering the latest Department for Education missive.

I have had the privilege of appointing hundreds of dedicated teachers and support staff whose expertise and commitment have continually inspired me. While I may not have always been able to provide the financial rewards they deserve, their hard work has been deeply appreciated, I have been blessed by a troupe of outstanding colleagues. The true strength of this school lies in the collective spirit and unwavering support that colleagues extend to one another and to the students they nurture.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to parents for entrusting your children to the school under my leadership. The partnership between school and home is critical in any successful school. Your prayers, support, and faith in the vision have played a crucial role in shaping Oaklands into what it is today. Our achievements would not have been possible without your love and encouragement.

Leaving any position is not easy, but you have to accept the inevitability of it, when you start something at some point it has to finish, transitions are a natural part of any journey. I am comforted by the knowledge that the school is in a strong position, supported by a passionate staff, a dedicated governing body and clergy, and a caring community of students and families. I am confident that the future holds continued growth and success. I will forever carry with me the lessons, the memories, and the relationships I have formed here. This school has shaped me as much as I have shaped it, and I leave with a full heart and a deep sense of gratitude.

Thank you once again for your trust, your kindness, and your support over the years. It has been the honour of my career.

Mr Quinn, Headteacher
Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College

Recently at Oaklands

Performing Arts @

Oaklands

Waterlooville Music Festival

The Waterlooville Music Festival was a fantastic experience for our students. Their hard work shone through in a truly commendable performance, receiving enthusiastic applause. The festival's vibrant

atmosphere and supportive audience created a memorable platform for their talents. A brilliant opportunity for our young musicians, some of whom performed for the first time.



Summer Music Concert

The Performing Arts summer music concert was an absolute delight! The diverse programme showcased remarkable talent, from the stirring concert band pieces to captivating solo vocal performances, and monologues. Each act brought energy and passion to the stage, making for an unforgettable evening. The overall atmosphere was one of joyful appreciation for the arts. A truly inspiring display by all involved!

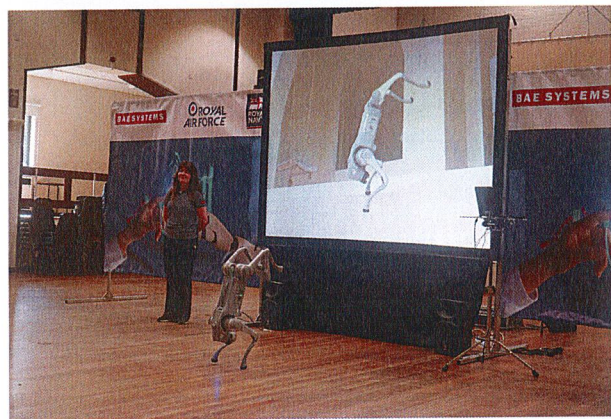
Isla, who played the piano in the concert, said 'I enjoyed playing at the school concert because it is a way of showing everyone that playing music is a fun experience and you get to socialise with other people playing different instruments'

School Show 2026 Announcement

Oliver! is coming to Oaklands Catholic School on the 11th-13th February 2026. Watch this space for more information!



STEM Careers Showcase



On 7th May, our Year 7 and 8 students were treated to an AI-mazing experience as the annual STEM Roadshow returned to Oaklands. Working in collaboration with BAE Systems and the Royal Navy, this year's showcase focused on the fascinating world of artificial intelligence.

Students had the unique opportunity to explore the real-life capabilities of AI through engaging, hands-on activities. The session kicked off with an innovative music video and song writing brief that demonstrated how AI tools can enhance creative processes.



There was also a demonstration where students explored AI prompts by guiding a blindfolded Mr Osborne through a maze, showing the importance of clear instructions when communicating with artificial intelligence systems.

The excitement reached new heights when students were introduced to Lexi, the AI-powered compu-dog. Lexi delighted everyone with her clever tricks, showcasing how AI can be programmed to respond to commands and interact with humans in entertaining ways.

The STEM Roadshow continues to be an essential part of our curriculum enrichment program, inspiring the next generation of innovators and problem-solvers.



Annual Schools'

Mass



On a bright and joyful day, five of our students had the unique opportunity to attend a special Diocesan Schools Mass at St John's Catholic Cathedral in Portsmouth. They joined pupils and staff from across the Diocese of Portsmouth in a beautiful celebration of faith, unity, and community.

The Mass was celebrated by Bishop Philip Egan, who warmly welcomed everyone and reminded the young people of the importance of staying rooted in their relationship with Christ as they journey through life. His message encouraged students to grow in faith, hope, and love, as they witness God's presence in their schools and beyond.

The liturgy was enriched by reverent hymns and a moving, reflective dance that invited everyone into a deeper moment of prayer and connection with God. The sense of togetherness was palpable, as voices from many different schools united in praise and worship, showing the vibrant life of our Catholic family.

Following the Mass, the celebration continued in the park opposite the cathedral, where students enjoyed time to relax, play, and share ice cream under the sun. Laughter and conversation filled the air as friendships were formed and memories made - truly a reflection of the joy and community found in Christ. This day was not only a celebration of our shared faith but a reminder that we are all part of something greater - a diocesan family walking together with Jesus at the centre. Our students returned uplifted and inspired, grateful for the

experience and the chance to connect with others who share the same mission of living out their faith with joy.

News from

St Peter's

CST Ambassadors in Training

Eight pupils from St Peter's Catholic Primary School were hosted by students from Oaklands Catholic School for training in how to become Catholic Social Teaching (CST) Ambassadors. This was very much a student-led initiative, the first in a number of sessions to be run with the aim of deepening students' knowledge of CST and consider how it can be lived out in practical ways. The session also looked at leadership skills, where the Oaklands students coached the St Peter's pupils on how they can guide their school peers in worship and practical acts centred on CST.

Our thanks go to the Oaklands staff who facilitated this session, Mrs Newbiggin and Mrs Semple, and of course to the Oaklands Student CST Leaders.



Year 4's Great British Quiche Off Day!

What an exciting day Year 4 pupils had at school for our Great British Quiche Off! The children had a fantastic time sampling and taste testing a variety of delicious quiches, scoring them based on flavour and presentation. They also enjoyed creating beautiful salads and working collaboratively to make a special group quiche for our esteemed staff judges Mrs Knight and Madame Moncorger.

Throughout the day, our budding chefs learned valuable skills such as chopping, slicing, and grating, using the safe bridge and claw techniques to cut, slice, and dice vegetables with confidence. A huge well done to all of the children for their enthusiasm and creativity, and a special thank you to all the volunteers who helped make the day a success.

Congratulations to our Year 4 Star Bakers: Joshua, Sophie, Seb, and Ellodie, who worked brilliantly together as a team!



Young Voices

The Equality And Rights Advocates (EARA) team at St Peter's have been planning a special project to revamp the Buddy Benches in the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 playgrounds.

Before they started, these were plain benches which were not being used for the correct purpose - to be a place to go for those who can't find a friend. The EARA team have added a brightly-coloured label to make the benches stand out, and rules for how to use the Buddy Bench correctly. The rules of the Buddy Bench were shared with the whole school during assemblies, where the EARA team acted out different scenarios of people using the bench (some correct and others incorrect) and the children had to guess which were the correct uses.

Everyone now know how to use the Buddy Bench if they are feeling left-out or lonely, or what to do if they see someone else sitting on the bench because they feel this way. Hopefully this will be a useful spot for children and help them to build new friendships.

Thank you to the EARA team and their staff coordinator Miss Sheppard!



Lately at
St Paul's



First Holy Communion

St Paul's Catholic Primary School worked with the parish of St Colman's and St Paul's to deliver a First Holy Communion programme using the resource 'I belong'. We have been running this joint programme for the last five years. There are 12 preparation sessions that run from October to June for one hour after school at St Paul's school, including 4 parent sessions. We have 6 catechists, all of whom are St Paul's staff, and our parish priest Father Andrew.

On Saturday 21st June and Sunday 22nd June forty-two children from the parish of St Colman and St Paul made their First Holy Communion at St Colman's Church, where they received our Lord for the very first time in the presence of their family, friends and catechists. Father Andrew, along with his altar servers and St Paul's music ministry led beautiful services across the weekend.

Of the forty-two candidates twenty-one were children from St Paul's.

Thank you to everyone who made this a holy and memorable occasion for our children.

On Monday 23rd June the children from St Paul's were invited to come, dressed in their clothes from the celebration, into the hall for a very special Celebration of the Word dedicated to all those children who received the Eucharist for the very first time. The children had a small gathering afterwards to celebrate together which included lemonade and cupcakes!

If you are interested in your child embarking on this programme in October 2025 you can now apply. Application forms are available via the parish office, St Colman's Church or St Paul's Catholic Primary School.

There will be an information evening on Tuesday 14th October at 5pm at St Paul's Catholic Primary School.

Democracy Day: 'Your Voice, Your Choice' in Action



St. Paul's marked Democracy Day with a meaningful assembly focused on British values, setting the stage for a day of participation and choice. Teachers campaigned enthusiastically, presenting their activities and asking children to vote for those they wanted to take part in.

On ballot papers, children voted for five activities they were interested in and enjoyed four of their top picks during the day. Activities included making friendship bracelets with Mrs Thomas, wacky water races led by Miss Cammiade and rocket launching with Mr. Lorca, and many more.

Local MP Amanda Martin joined the celebrations and toured the school with school council representatives. She spoke about her role as a member of parliament, the importance of democracy and encouraged children to use their voices to positively impact their local community.

The day ended with children voting for their favourite event, putting democracy into action once again. The winning activity was celebrated as the highlight of the day.

Next up, St. Paul's children will have the exciting opportunity to visit the Houses of Parliament, where they will learn more about the workings of democracy first-hand.

St. Paul's Democracy Day demonstrated the power of choice, respect, and participation, reminding everyone that every voice matters.



Annual Feast Day

Picnic



St. Paul's Church joyfully celebrated its annual Feast Day with a special school Mass led by Father Andrew. Students, staff, families, and parishioners gathered to honour the life and mission of St. Paul the Apostle in a spirit of unity and faith. The Mass featured student-led readings, prayers, and hymns, creating a meaningful and reverent atmosphere.

As part of our feast day Father Andrew and the altar servers blessed our newly installed rosary prayer garden. This will be used for children to actively prayer the rosary and to be specifically for the months of Mary - May and October.

After the service, the celebration continued with a vibrant picnic on the school grounds. A highlight of the event was the Red Tent event hosted by the Rapid Relief Team (RRT), who generously served six-hundred freshly cooked burgers to attendees. Their support added a festive and welcoming spirit to the day, and the delicious food was enjoyed by all. We also had a visit from our local Police community officer who arrived with a police van - the children, staff and parents enjoyed being locked up!

Father Andrew thanked everyone for their participation and extended special appreciation to RRT for their generous contribution. "Today reminds us of St. Paul's message to live in faith and support one another," he said.

The Feast Day concluded on a sweet note, with ice cream served to all pupils. This much-loved tradition continues to strengthen the bonds within the St. Paul's community, celebrating faith, fellowship, and shared joy.



At St Thomas More's



Spreading Joy in the Community

As you may have read previously, this year each class at St Thomas More's has a particular month when they are invited to put their Faith into Action by way of a project that will make a positive difference to others.

In March, Neptune Class chose to share their gifts of generosity and compassion by bringing joy to members of our local community. They planned doorstep visits to those who were housebound, unwell, or simply in need of a friendly face. To make their visits extra special, the children spent their free time creating paper spring bouquets, each one decorated with scripture.

The children gave up some of their lunchtimes to make the bouquets and asked the school community to nominate people who would appreciate a visit. When the children went out to deliver the flowers, they were met with lots of smiles and the children enjoyed having little chats with people they met. Along the way, they also handed out flowers to people they passed - people out dog walking, people sat in cafes and people sat on benches in the park.

There was one particularly special moment when one lady they visited told them that she was soon to celebrate her 96th birthday, so all the children sang 'Happy Birthday' to her before they left.

The experience was so heart-warming that the children and staff are already looking forward to doing it again!

Acts 20:35: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'



Celebrating Success

- With Snow!



As with most schools, at St Thomas More's we have a House system. Children have House Patrons who serve as role models to the children, in our case, Claudette Colvin, St Oscar Romero, Mahatma Gandhi, and St Therese of Lisieux, and we celebrate the successes of all our pupils who strive to demonstrate our school values and achieve their best in all aspects of school life. The House system also gives our pupils the opportunity to be rewarded for efforts and achievement in all areas. Although it is important for children to have intrinsic motivation, rewarding them once in a while encourages them to try that little bit harder to do their best in all things.

Last term, Gandhi was the winning team having accumulated the highest number of house points, and as their reward, they were treated to a springtime snowstorm!

Children squealed with laughter and delight as they dashed through the playground where a machine sprayed soft, fluffy foam high into the air, mimicking real snow. For some children, this was their first time experiencing anything close to snowfall.

One excited child shared, *'I've only ever seen snow like this in Hungary. Never here!
It's brilliant!'*

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