

newsletter

December 2023



From the Headteacher

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our final newsletter of the calendar year. Term 2 has been a busy and long one, but it is now definitely beginning to look (and feel) a lot like Christmas at SMRT. Decorations are up and our Year 11s are providing the musical entertainment every morning on B Floor. We have been blessed to be able to hold several rich events this term. Our non-uniform day raised £700 for our partner school in Uganda (Ikoba).

Franklin House Eucharist

Well done to Chaplain Josh, Miss Ainsworth, and Franklin House for an excellent Eucharist on Thursday 7 December. I am including the meaningful poem Hannah (Y11) wrote for the Eucharist.

'Christmas is more than gifts and lights,
It's about a love that shines so bright.
A time to gather, hearts full of cheer,
To spread kindness and bring people near.

It's about the joy in giving, not receiving,
And showing gratitude for all we're achieving.
A time to remember the humble birth,
Of Jesus Christ, our Savior on this Earth.

It's about forgiveness and second chances,
And spreading love in all circumstances.
A time to cherish family and friends,
And make memories that never end.

So let's embrace the true meaning of that day,
And let love and kindness guide our way.
For Christmas is a time to share and give,
And make the world a better place to live.'

The period of advent is an important time to reflect on the great humility and majesty of Jesus Christ. Below is the Anglican Collect from the first Sunday in advent.

ALMIGHTY God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty, to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. Amen.

End of Term Service and Carol Concert

This week we have enjoyed an outstanding carol concert and a celebratory end of year of service. Both events were held in St Mary Redcliffe Church and were very fitting occasions. Last year was my first experience of these events which were superb. This year I was really taken aback by the level of student participation, the depth of thought and reflection, and the richness of talent on display. We have a very diverse school community in so many senses and it is a great credit to all students of whatever faith and none that they were so respectful during these events. I know many students, staff, and parents/carers were blessed by these events. Thanks again to Mr Davies (Head of Music), Chaplain Josh, Mrs Duzniak (Interim Deputy Headteacher), and everyone who helped to organise these events.

Future Talent Group Support for SMRT

In late November we were very grateful to receive 25 high specification laptops and new bags for our students to use. These are a mixture of new and reconditioned machines. This was coordinated by Josh Simpkins and Scott Sarginson from the Future Talent Group (<https://www.futuretalent.io/> and <https://www.linkedin.com/company/future-talent-group>) as part of their company's outreach and charitable work. The laptops were donated by these companies:

- Barnett Waddingham - <https://www.barnett-waddingham.co.uk/>
- Blue Bear Life - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/bluebearlife/>
- Bunch - <https://www.the-bunch.co.uk/>

We are very grateful for this support for our current and future students, who will benefit from this amazing donation. Here is a picture of our Network Manager (centre), Mr Jackson, with Josh and Scott.



Here is some information about sources of mental health support for parents/carers and students over the holiday period, that you might find helpful. **If there is an emergency, or you think that you or your child is at immediate risk of harm, you should call 999 and speak to the police.**

Start of Term

All students return to school after the holiday on **Wednesday 3 January 2023**, as Tuesday 2 January is a staff INSET day.

Year 11 Parent/Carer Evenings

These will take place on 15 and 17 January. It is a critical time for our Year 11 students so please do make the most of this opportunity. If any Year 11 parents/carers still have any concerns or questions after these meetings, or if you were unable to make all the appointments you would have liked, please do get in touch

with your child's teacher, or a member of the relevant pastoral team (Tutor, Deputy Head of Year or Head of Year) for more general issues or if your child is experiencing anxiety around exams.

Dates for the other year groups parent/carer meetings can be found on the school calendar on our [website](#).

Parent/Carer Contact Details

Do make sure the school has your most up to date phone and email details, and that your child's emergency contact list is up to date, as this will assist us in reaching someone, should we need to make contact in an emergency. You can now update your details via Edulink. If you don't have access as a parent/carer, let us know and our Data Team will be able to help you.

Choosing GCSE Options (for Year 9 Students)

After Christmas, Year 9 students will begin the process of selecting their GCSE option choices. This is a lengthy and detailed process, which will include ViP lessons on options, assemblies, information for parents and carers, additional support for key groups of students, and a dedicated section on our school website. We are currently finalising our curriculum offer for 2024 to 2025 and will begin to share information with students, and parents and carers towards the end of January with a view to finalising option choices in Term 5.

Sixth Form News

This is a busy time of the year for students from the Sixth Form Centre as we approach the UCAS deadline and our early entry students work hard to prepare for interviews. 17 of our students have been invited to interviews at Oxford and Cambridge and many others are starting to get offers from first choice universities. We are thankful to all external volunteers, including ex-teachers, parents/carers, and friends of friends, who give up their time to support with mock interviews, so that our students are well prepared. Several of our students are also involved in the Bristol Scholars programme run by the University of Bristol. As well as a guaranteed tailored offer, Bristol Scholars students take part in outreach activities, which include visits to the University and private academic tuition.

Our Sixth Formers have been contributing well to the school and wider community, with lots of our students helping Y7 with their reading, leading on main school assemblies with themes including Black History Month, and helping to prepare GSCE students for their exams. Lots of our students are also helping with a mentoring programme at Bridge Learning Campus, and are also involved in Envision, a social action programme.

Having won the Regional Competition run by the Space, Science, Engineering, and Environmental Foundation (ssef.org.uk), our Space Design Team consisting of Y12 and Y13 students, are now preparing for the National Competition in March.

Y12 and Y13 have planned several different fundraising events including cake sales, music events, and quizzes. We have already raised £1000 this year for various charities, but our two chosen RAG charities are Doctors Without Borders (MSF UK | Médecins Sans Frontières) which is an international humanitarian organisation providing medical care in more than 70 countries, and Aid Box Community, a Bristol-based humanitarian organisation who support refugees.

In school Y12 and Y13 have met with Brook, a sexual health and well-being charity, which included sessions on healthy relationships.

Community News

We wish Mr Morris our School Business Manager a very happy retirement after 9 years' service at SMRT.

We also say goodbye to Mr John Hare (music teacher and brother of Mr Hare, Assistant Headteacher) after 20 years' service at SMRT. Mr Hare and his family have experienced a tough time over the last few years in terms of a serious health condition. We were delighted to hear of the turnaround in this situation which is nothing short of miraculous. We wish Mr Hare and his family the very best for the future and have been inspired by their example of prayer and community. Mr Hider is well known to our students and will continue with us at SMRT.

Ms Howard has returned from maternity leave, and so takes back leadership of PE. Our thanks go to Mr Trott, who was covering her, and we say goodbye to Ms Romero, who was covering Ms Howard's teaching.

We also say goodbye to Mr Oakes (Deputy Head of Year 11), who is leaving teaching for a new challenge, and to Mrs Brooker (DT), who is leaving for a post nearer her home. Miss Jones (Drama) is leaving for a post outside Bristol. We thank them and wish them all well in their next steps. I am pleased that we have been able to recruit replacements for all these roles and will update you in January.

Mr Waldron and Ms Smith (LSAs) and both leaving our learning support team. Mr Waldron will be travelling, and Ms Smith is relocating. We also said goodbye to Mrs Lukins, who was part of our Attendance Team, as she has taken a job closer to home. We wish them all well. Ms Alison Owen (Attendance Officer based in the Sixth Form) has been promoted to Senior Attendance Officer. We therefore look forward to welcoming Miss Megan Fox to our Attendance Officer (Sixth Form) role in January 2024.

Safeguarding and Sources of Support

The school safeguarding team can still be contacted for non-emergency situations at safeguarding@smrt.bristol.sch.uk.

Police

- www.avonandsomerset.police.uk
- 999 in an emergency or 101 for a non-emergency

General support

Childline (support services for children and young people)

- www.childline.org.uk
- 0800 1111

Kooth (online counselling and support)

- www.kooth.com

Off The Record (local counselling service for young people)

- www.otrbristol.org.uk
- hello@otrbristol.org.uk
- 0808 8089120

First Response

First Response is part of Bristol City Council and can offer you support if you are worrying about issues at home, including concerns for the safety and welfare of children (0117 903 6444).

Emergency Duty Social Care Team

If the local office is shut or you require support with any issues at home or in the local community, regarding concerns for the safety and welfare of children (01454 615 165).

Domestic abuse

Next link Plus

- <https://nextlinkhousing.co.uk/>
- 0800 4700280

The Hideout

- www.thehideout.org.uk

Drugs and alcohol

Talk to Frank

- www.talktofrank.com

Mental Health

Young Minds

- www.youngminds.org.uk

Online safety

CEOP (Reporting of online abuse to the police)

- 08001111
- <https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/>

Self-harm (self-injury support)

- www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk

Suicide

Samaritans

- www.samaritans.org
- 08457 90 90 90

Relaxation and stress management for children

<http://www.moodcafe.co.uk/for-children-and-young-people/relaxation-for-children.aspx>

Mindfulness/Meditation for children (<https://www.headspace.com/meditation/kids>)

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

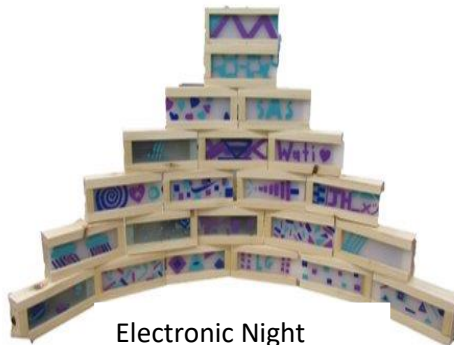
Del Planter, Headteacher

Design & Technology News

I would like to share just a few of the amazing pieces of work that year 9 have completed this year. Our students have made the DT team very proud of all their creative ideas and the quality of work they are producing.



Year 9 – Memphis inspired clock



Electronic Night





Cushions inspired by Morag Myerscough

We have had an exciting term joining up with MFL for their Paella Competition. The House competition to make Yule logs last week was great fun for everyone that took part. We had an amazing workshop to raise the profile of girls in engineering that was a great success.

Flying Start Challenge – After school club Tuesdays is going really well! Here are some of our students testing their models -practicing flight weight.



Coming soon...



Strictly Come Dancing – Behind the ‘Seams’ trip

All textile classes in years 10,11, 12 & 13 will be visiting the Strictly design studios - London in January. They will be able to see first-hand how the dancers’ costumes get created from a design into the real thing. They will also be visiting the jewellery room! I will share photos in the next newsletter of those that are brave enough to try them on!!

Mrs Jordan

Yule Log Competition

Students from all year groups got into the festive spirit with a yule log bake off house competition. There were some fantastic creations, lots of fun was had and lots of mess was made.



Special thanks to Mrs Jordan for organising!

Every student that entered received house competitions points.

However, the top three were:

1st- Chiz I

2nd- Zuzanna K

3Rd- Elisia M

With an extra award for creativity going to Zipporah S for her unique effort of a white chocolate and peppermint flavoured log.



Mr Trott

At the start of next Term, we will be opening the Nomination Period for three Parent Governor vacancies, as our current Parent Governors come to the end of their Terms of Office. Please consider prayerfully over the Christmas period whether you feel called to this important role within the school community.

Bristol Governor Development Service

Guidance on being a governor at your child's school

Parents are in a unique position on a governing body. Not only do they have to work in the best interests of the school, but they have to balance this with their natural desire to see the best outcomes for their own child(ren). The aim of this briefing paper is to offer advice to parents who are new governors and suggest ways of handling some of the tricky situations which may arise.

As a parent and a governor it will sometimes feel that you have to know everything about the school, but can't talk about it; you have to be on everyone's side and you have to be able to juggle all these expectations. As a parent you will already be an expert juggler, but developing your role as a governor will take time. However, there is advice, help and support you can tap into and this guidance should provide some answers to questions you might have about your role.

As a governor you are:

- well placed to understand parents' views and to remind the governing body how matters being discussed affect parents;
- individuals! How you vote on any decision is up to you;
- in a good position to help the governing body to communicate effectively with parents;
- equal in status to all other governors.

Parents who are governors are not:

- expected to gather the views of other parents and take them to the governing body;
- simply expected to represent the interests of parents;
- a link between parents and the governing body;
- expected to vote as instructed by other parents.

What are the good bits about being a governor?

- You have a very privileged and responsible role;
- You have the opportunity to make a difference, not only for your children, but for children in years to come;
- You have the opportunity to make a difference for other parents, and to influence the way in which school works with them;
- You will learn a lot and develop new skills.

How to fulfil your role

- Attend governing body meetings regularly and play an active role in committees and decision-making;
- Learn all you can about the school;
- Attend training sessions;
- Consider how the governing body communicates with parents? Could you help the governing body to improve links?
- How accessible is the school – how easy is it for parents to go into school to discuss things with the headteacher or teachers? Could you give feedback to help the school to be more open and welcoming?
- How accessible are the governors – do parents ever get the opportunity to meet with governors; do they know how to get in touch with the chair of governors if they need to? Could you encourage the governing body to be more visible?

- Learn how the school handles complaints and read the complaints policy. If another parent approaches you with a complaint, advise them to speak to their child's class teacher or to headteacher;
- Be approachable to other parents, but make sure you are clear about your role.
- Always represent the school positively;
- As a governor you are one of a group and must never act alone;
- Always support the decisions of the full governing body. Have your say on decisions in meetings and vote in the way you wish; but then support the outcomes of votes – even if you disagree with them;
- Always, always, always observe confidentiality. You will get to know a lot of highly sensitive and confidential information – don't discuss it with anyone who is not a governor. Remember, a governor can be suspended for serious breaches of confidentiality.

How you can help individual parents

From time to time you may be approached by other parents asking for help, or wanting to make a complaint about something the school is, or isn't, doing.

- Make it clear you can't act for the governing body;
- Don't raise expectations that the school will "put it right" – there may be underlying issues or background that you don't know about;
- Keep an open mind – there are at least two sides to every story!
- You may need to explain why the governing body has made a decision in a certain way, so be prepared;
- Direct the parent to the appropriate person (usually their child's class teacher) in accordance with the school's procedure for handling complaints.

What to do if you experience a conflict between being a parent and being a governor

This can happen – especially if you think the governing body is making decisions which you feel will adversely affect your child(ren).

- If a difficulty arises, take a step back and think things through as objectively as you can;
- If you are concerned, talk to the headteacher or to the chair of governors;
- Make sure you don't break confidentiality when discussing your concerns outside governing body.

Where to get help, advice and support

- From other governors;
- From the headteacher;
- From the chair of governors;
- From the clerk to the governing body;
- Ask for a governor mentor or "buddy" to help you through the first few months;
- Attend the induction training offered by the Local Authority. You'll meet other new governors and will find lots of people who feel just the same as you;
- Phone or e-mail the Governor Development Service (contact details below). They are a small, busy team – so if you can't reach them straightaway, please leave a message and someone will call you back as soon as they can.

Contact: *Governor Development Service*
Tel: *0117 9036900*
Email: *gds@bristol.gov.uk*

Chair of Governors

Dates for the diary

[Click here](#) to visit our website calendar for up to the minute dates.

January 2023	
Tue 2 Jan	Inset Day (School Closed)
Wed 3 Jan	First Day of Term 3
Fri 5 Jan	Y11 Art and Photography Exam
Tue 9 Jan	Start of Term Service 09am- 10am Y13 Parent/Carer Evening
Wed 10 Jan	Textile Trip
Thu 11 Jan	Y13 Parent/Carer Evening 4pm - 6:30pm
Mon 15 Jan	Y12 Internal Assessments Y11 Parent/Carer Evening
Tue 16 Jan	Y12 Internal Assessment start Y9 Assessments start
Wed 17 Jan	Y11 Parent/Carer Evening 4pm-6:30pm
Thu 18 Jan	Y13 Art Exhibition Y7 Gradesheet Home Friends of SMRT Meeting 7pm – 8pm
Fri 19 Jan	Y11 Photographs
Tue 23 Jan	Equiano House Eucharist 8:30am – 10:30am Study Skills Evening 6pm - 7pm
Wed 24 Jan	British Mathematical Olympiad (Round 2)
Thu 25 Jan	Y8 Gradesheet home Y9 Careers Event (Bright Futures)

The full school calendar will be available [Click here](#) on the school website (School Life, Calendar). While correct at the time of publication there are occasional changes to the dates above, so for the latest information please refer to Options Form In the calendar on the website. If you don't have computer access and would like to receive a paper copy of the Newsletter, please contact Mrs Chaibi chaibih@smrt.bristol.sch.uk

St Mary Redcliffe & Temple School, Somerset Square, Bristol BS1 6RT T: 0117 3772100 | enquiries@smrt.bristol.sch.uk

▶ ClickView Parent Info Guide



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Teaching staff can share clips with students to view at home so they can use class time for quality discussions, higher-order thinking and problem-solving.

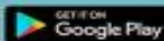


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2. Sign in using your child's school login details.
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