

Although we were only together for two days last week, it was wonderful to see the school come back to life. There was a real sense of happiness and excitement as the children returned, caught up with friends and reconnected with the adults they know so well. Today marks another important moment, as all of our Reception children are now in school with us. Our St Anselm's family is complete and, from our youngest children in Reception to our oldest in Year 6, we begin the year together as one community.

Our morning handshakes are now a well-established part of life at St Anselm's and last week they provided a particularly lovely way to reconnect after the holidays. People sometimes ask why we place such importance on something as simple as a handshake. For us, it is about much more than saying hello. It is a moment of connection and respect; a way of saying, *"I see you, I welcome you and today is a new beginning."* As a Catholic school, it also has a natural connection to the Sign of Peace that we share at Mass. It therefore felt particularly fitting that we celebrated our first Mass of the academic year at St Vincent's on Friday, asking God to bless and guide us on the journey ahead. Whether through a handshake, the Sign of Peace or simply taking the time to greet someone properly, we are reminded that we belong to one another and that we journey together. During the holidays, I was reminded that these little habits can travel far beyond the school gates. When I introduced one of our children to my mum, they immediately held out their hand and said, "Hello, pleased to meet you." It was completely natural and unprompted – and a lovely example of the confidence, courtesy and respect we hope to nurture in our children. This term, we are also trialling a handshake at the end of the school day. Just as we begin the day by acknowledging each child, we want to close it in the same way: a moment to say goodbye, recognise one another and bring the day to a positive end. These may seem like small things, but perhaps it is these small things that help make St Anselm's so unique. Every child, from Reception to Year 6, has their place within our family; every child is known and valued; and every child has a light to shine.

Keeping Children Safe: Our New Allergy Management Policy

Following new requirements around allergy management in schools, we have developed a new Allergy Management Policy, available on our school website. All staff are also undertaking allergy and anaphylaxis training to ensure they know how to recognise and respond to an allergic reaction. Keeping children with allergies safe depends on all of us working together. We therefore ask every family, whether or not your own child has an allergy, to read our new policy and help us maintain a safe, informed and allergy-aware school community by:

- Ensuring packed lunches and food brought into school does not contain nuts or nut products.
- Keeping us fully informed of any allergies and work with Miss Marshall to complete an up-to-date Allergy Action Plan.
- Ensure all prescribed allergy medication, including inhalers, are in school and in date. If essential emergency medication is not available, your child cannot attend school.
- Children prescribed an EpiPen must have their own in-date medication in school. The school also holds spare EpiPens for emergency use if a child's own device is unavailable or not working; these are a back-up only and do not replace the need for a child's own prescribed medication.

Keeping in Touch

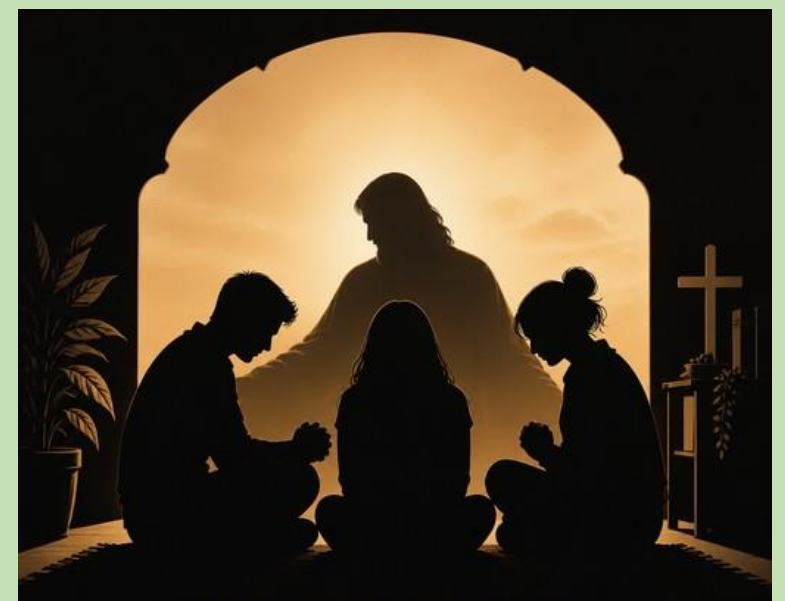
Please ensure that your contact details are kept up to date on Arbor so that you don't miss important information from school. We communicate regularly through emails and text messages, as well as our weekly newsletter, which is published every Monday, emailed to all parents and available on the school website. Please take a moment to check that your details on Arbor, are correct.

'Trust in the Lord... and He will direct your path.' Adapted from Proverbs 3:5-6



In this week's Gospel, Jesus reminds us, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them." These words remind us that we do not live out our faith alone. Whenever we come together in prayer, friendship, kindness and love, Jesus is with us.

As a school family, we gather each day to learn, pray, celebrate and support one another. Jesus calls us to recognise his presence in these moments and in each other. May we remember that when we come together in his name, Christ is at the heart of our community, guiding us to live, learn and grow together in faith.



**Loving Jesus,
thank you for being with us whenever
we gather in your name.
Help us to see you in one another,
to listen with kindness,
to care for those around us
and to grow together in faith and love.
May your presence guide our school
family
in all that we say and do.
Amen.**

Free School Meals – Please Apply This Month

Parents will already have received an email explaining the changes to Free School Meals from September 2026. We would like to highlight a few key points and encourage families to apply. Many more families receiving Universal Credit may now be entitled to Free School Meals. We encourage you to apply even if your child does not intend to have a school meal every day. It is particularly important that applications are made by the end of September to ensure that the school receives the government funding available to pay for eligible free school meals. For some children, registration also brings valuable Pupil Premium funding, which supports interventions, 50% reductions on school trips, help with uniform and other opportunities. If you receive Universal Credit, please apply via this link – <https://forms.gle/Gi2w6N7eJSjeGDB7> even if you are unsure whether you qualify. It costs nothing to check and could benefit both your child and our school.

Uniform Reminder

With the weather still changeable, children may wear either full summer uniform or full winter uniform. Please do not mix the two to create a hybrid version. If children wear black trainers, these must be plain black, with no visible logos or white soles. Earrings and smart watches are not permitted, and hair should be a natural colour. Please also ensure that all uniform, coats, PE kit and other belongings are clearly labelled with your child's name so that lost items can be quickly returned to their owners. Thank you for helping us maintain the high standards of uniform we are proud of at St Anselm's.

Collection arrangements at the end of the day

To help us keep every child safe, parents have been contacted to confirm their child's collection arrangements for this academic year. If your arrangements are the same as last year, please simply confirm this using the Google Form. If there are any changes, please use the same form to let us know the new arrangements. The information provided will be shared with your child's class teacher and used throughout the year to ensure children are dismissed safely to the correct adult. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Uniform – labelling belongings

A gentle reminder to all parents and carers to ensure that every item your child brings to school, including their water bottle, is clearly labelled with their name. On the very first day back, we already had 5 jumpers, 2 coats and a water bottle in lost property. If items are named, they can be returned quickly and easily to their owner. Unlabelled items, however, are much harder to reunite. Thank you for your support in helping us keep belongings safe.

Food Bank

Our Faith Friends continue to coordinate our weekly Food Bank collection, giving our children a simple way to put their faith into action and support those in need in our local community. Each Friday, children are invited to bring one item of food and place it in the Food Bank trolley on the playground. Donations are taken to our local foodbank at St Edmund's Church for local people who need it. Thank you for helping us keep this important child-led act of kindness going strong.

School Meals

Please note that the cost of a school meal has increased from £3.05 to £3.10 per day. Any child in KS2 wishing to have a school meal is required to pay for their food unless they are in receipt of Free School Meals. Payment must be made through Arbor. An email has been sent to all Y3 parents providing information on how to do this. Please note that your Arbor account must be kept in credit at all times in order for your child to access a school meal. Nourish Catering cannot provide meals where an account is in arrears. If you have any concerns about this, please do contact Mrs Walter in the school office.

KEY DATES

Monday 14th September

YR in full time

Wednesday 30th September

Meet with the teacher

Thursday 8th October

Travelling Book Fair

Monday 12th October

Parent Consultation Week – details to follow

Wednesday 19th October

Flu Vaccinations

Tuesday 20th October

Extra-Curricular Afternoon

Wednesday 21st October

YR Welcome Assembly – 2.15pm

Friday 23rd October

End of Term 1

Monday 26th October

Half Term Week – School closed

Monday 2nd November

Inset Day – School closed to pupils

Tuesday 10th November

Individual & Sibling Photographs

Monday 23rd November

New Admissions Meeting – 10.30am

Monday 30th November

Y6 SATS & PGL Meeting – 5pm

Friday 11th December

Infant Nativity – 2pm

Wednesday 16th December

Junior Carol Service – St Vincent's Church 7pm TBC

Friday 18th December

End of Term 2 – school closes 1pm

St Vincent's Family Mass New Time

Following consultation with the parish community, please note that the Sunday Family Mass at St Vincent's is now celebrated at

11.00am

rather than the previous time of 10.30am.

All are welcome ♥

