

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

Hob Moor Road, Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8QL

Telephone: 0121-783-7232

Website stberns.co.uk

BlueSky: [@stbernsprimary.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/stbernsprimary.bsky.social)

e-mail: enquiry@stberns.bham.sch.uk



Newsletter 7
5 December 2025

At St Bernadette's Catholic School, you will find us caring, hardworking and co-operative. We follow the ways of Jesus using our talents and gifts to make our school special. We show respect to all and welcome you.

Assistant Headteacher's Message

As we continue our journey through the season of Advent, I have been struck by the wonderful sense of anticipation and preparation that fills our school. Advent is such a meaningful time for us as a community, inviting us to reflect, to wait with hope, and to prepare our hearts for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. Seeing the children embrace this season with such enthusiasm is always a highlight of this term.

Across the school, preparations are well underway. Nativity rehearsals in EYFS and Key Stage 1 bring a lovely energy to the building, and we are very much looking forward to welcoming parents into school to enjoy the performances. Our Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are also working hard as they prepare for their carol service at Holy Family Church, and it is a privilege to watch their confidence grow as they rehearse.

Our Year 3 and Year 4 children are preparing to lead us in our end-of-term Mass, and their thoughtful approach to this responsibility has been wonderful to see. Moments like these remind me how fortunate we are to share in the faith journey of our pupils.

Alongside our liturgical celebrations, we have a range of joyful Advent activities taking place—Christmas Jumper Day, Christmas Dinner, and the creation of the children's own *bambinelli*. We are very pleased that Fr Fretch will be joining us in school to bless the *bambinelli*, helping us all to remain focused on the heart of the Christmas story.

As we move closer to Christmas, I hope these shared experiences continue to bring a sense of peace, joy and community to us all. Thank you for your ongoing support; it is greatly appreciated. Wishing you and your families a blessed and joyful Advent!

Mrs Hill

The Gospel from St Matthew will be shared with us at Mass on Sunday

Matthew 3:1-12

About that time John the Baptist came and began preaching in the desert area of Judea. John said, "Change your hearts and lives because the kingdom of heaven is coming soon." John the Baptist is the one Isaiah the prophet was talking about. Isaiah said:

"This is a voice of a man

who calls out in the desert:

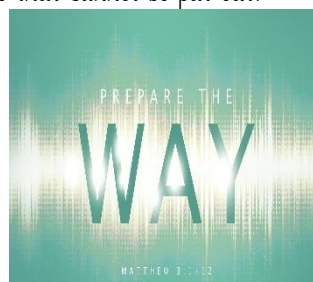
'Prepare the way for the Lord.

Make the road straight for him.'"

John's clothes were made from camel's hair. He wore a leather belt around his waist. For food, he ate locusts and wild honey. Many people went to hear John preach. They came from Jerusalem and all Judea and all the area around the Jordan River. They told of the sins they had done, and John baptized them in the Jordan River.

Many of the Pharisees and Sadducees came to the place where John was baptizing people. When John saw them, he said: "You are snakes! Who warned you to run away from God's anger that is coming? You must do the things that show that you have really changed your hearts and lives. And don't think that you can say to yourselves, 'Abraham is our father.' I tell you that God could make children for Abraham from these rocks. The axe is now ready to cut down the trees. Every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

"I baptize you with water to show that your hearts and lives have changed. But there is one coming later who is greater than I am. I am not good enough to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He will come ready to clean the grain. He will separate the good grain from the chaff. He will put the good part of the grain into his barn. And he will burn the chaff with a fire that cannot be put out.



Light a candle to offer a prayer

We light a candle and offer our prayers for members of our school community and their loved ones:

Mrs Heffernan



Our Young Disciples from Year 4 have shared their ideas for this week's Gospel reflection

In this Sunday's Gospel, John the Baptist tells everyone to "change your hearts and lives" because Jesus is coming soon.

He reminds us that Advent is a time to get ready, not just on the outside, but in our hearts.

John says we should show our faith by producing "good fruit," which means being kind, helping others, and making good choices. He also reminds people that someone greater—Jesus—is coming to fill our lives with the Holy Spirit.

This Advent, we can "prepare the way for the Lord" by trying our best to live like Jesus and bring hope and joy to others.

Confirmation

On 4th December, our Year 6 children received the Sacrament of Confirmation in a truly lovely service with Bishop David Evans. The whole celebration felt very special, and our pupils were so reverent and respectful — a real credit to themselves, their families and to our school.

We were also happy to celebrate with two members of our parish, who were confirmed alongside our Year 6 children. It was wonderful to see our school and parish community come together for such an important moment.

We are so proud of all our confirmandi. They approached the day with maturity, excitement, and genuine faith. We pray that the gifts of the Holy Spirit continue to guide them as they grow.



Diary Dates

Monday 8th December

Life Bus in school
Choir singing at Heartlands Hospital
Sleep workshop

Tuesday 9th December

Life Bus in school
Year 1 Nativity for parents – 9:30am

Wednesday 10th December

SEND Coffee Morning with Educational Psychologist 9am
Year 3 Mass in school – 9am
Life Bus in school

Christmas Dinner Day

Christmas Jumper Day (over school uniform)

Thursday 11th December

Life Bus in school
Afternoon Tea with the residents of Arun Court
Y5 Confessions in school

Forest School – Hub

Friday 12th December

Reception Nativity for parents – 9:30am
Blessing of the Bambinelli with Fr Fretch
EYFS & KSI Christmas Craft – 2pm

Tuesday 16th December

Nursery Nativity for Red & Green Group – 9:30am

Wednesday 17th December

Whole School Mass led by Y3 & Y4 – Holy Family Church
9:30am

Nursery Nativity for Yellow & Blue Group – 9:30am

Y5 & Y6 Carol Service – Holy Family Church 6pm

Thursday 18th December

Christmas Craft Day

Y4 Confessions in school

Friday 19th December

Break up for Christmas Holiday

Christmas Party Day (more information to follow)

Monday 5th January 2026

Staff Training Day – school closed for pupils

Tuesday 6th January

School open for all pupils

Epiphany – The closing of the Jubilee Doors

Wednesday 7th January

Whole School Mass – Holy Family Church 9:30am

Thursday 8th January

Reception Maths Open Morning – 9am

Friday 9th January

Y6 Maths Open Morning – 9am

Safeguarding Reminder

Please remember that if you have any concerns regarding the safeguarding of a child, members of the public are able to make an anonymous referral to the safeguarding team within Birmingham City Council. Parents should call 0121 303 1888 and share their concerns with a duty social worker.

As we approach the festive season, we are very much looking forward to welcoming you into school for our Christmas performances:

- Year 1 Play for Parents – 9th December, 9:30am
- Reception Play for Parents – 12th December, 9:20am
- Nursery Play (Red and Green Groups) – 16th December, 9:30am
- Nursery Play (Yellow and Blue Groups) – 17th December, 9:30am

This year, instead of asking for a cash donation, we are running a Reverse Advent Calendar to support families in need. For each Christmas event, we are inviting parents to donate a toiletry item such as:

- toothpaste
- toothbrush
- shower gel
- shampoo
- soap
- sanitary products

In return for your kind donation, you will receive a programme and a raffle ticket for that performance.

All items should be new and unopened. Your generosity will help us to support members of our wider community at what can be a difficult time of year. If you are unable to attend a performance but would still like to contribute, donations can be sent into school with your child.

Thank you, as always, for your support.

Reverse Advent Calendar

We are uniting with all the schools in our diocese to support **Father Hudson's Caritas** through our **Reverse Advent Calendar** appeal.

This year, we are kindly asking for donations of **non-perishable food items**, such as:

- Dried foods (e.g. pasta, rice)
- Sauces
- Tinned foods
- Biscuits
- Crisps
- Suitable Christmas food items

Please send any donations into school by Wednesday 10th December.

We really appreciate your kindness and support, and thank you in advance for any donations you are able to contribute.



SEND

If your child has a SEND need, you should have received an email to fill in our questionnaire. We would really appreciate your time to give us some feedback.

Hub parents:

You're invited to join your child for Forest School and Music

sessions! 🎵 🌳

Please check your emails to see which date your family has been invited to. Thank you!

Beacon Workshop

You are invited to a Beacon School Support at 2.15pm-3.10pm on Monday 8th December 2025. We will be looking at ways to 'Help Your Child Sleep Better'. We are aware that sometimes there is anxiety around going off to bed for some children. Also we hear how some children wake in the night and this disturbs the family sleep too. We hope you can attend as Beacon always have very practical ideas for how to help parents/carers.

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

On 8th December, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, a very special feast day honouring Mary, the mother of Jesus. This celebration reminds us that Mary was chosen by God in a unique way. From the very first moment of her life, Mary was free from sin so that she could one day become the mother of Jesus.

This feast is not about Jesus' conception, but about Mary's, and how God prepared her with a pure and loving heart. It shows us how important Mary is in God's plan and why she is such a wonderful example of faith, trust and openness to God.

For our children, this feast helps us reflect on the qualities Mary showed—kindness, obedience, courage and a willingness to say "yes" to God. It encourages us to think about how we can follow her example in our own lives, especially during Advent as we prepare for the birth of Jesus.

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is a joyful reminder that God works through ordinary people in extraordinary ways, and that each of us is called to share God's love in the world.



Book Fair

We are delighted to share that this year's Book Fair raised an amazing £705.00. Thanks to the wonderful support of our families, the school will receive £282.00 **in commission** to spend on new books through Scholastic.

This contribution will make a real difference to our children. It will help us to refresh classroom libraries, provide new and exciting reading materials, and continue to foster a love of books across the school. Thank you to everyone who visited the Book Fair and helped to support our reading community.



Year 5 and 6 Carol Service

This very special night will take place at Holy Family church on Wednesday 17th December at 6pm. All of our Year 5 and 6 children will be celebrating the Christmas Story through songs and readings. It is a time when all of or St Bernadette's community, both old and new come together for a very special celebration. More details will follow.



ATTENDANCE

If your child is not in school, you must notify school on each day of their absence. As a school, we have a legal duty to ensure we know where every child is each day. For this reason, we will also carry out Home Visits for Safe and Well Checks.



SCHOOL FUND FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2025 TO 2026

Parents are requested to make a donation of £10.00 per child or £10.00 per family to our school fund.

This donation will go directly towards:

- Workshops and hands-on learning activities
- Food tasting and cultural experience days
- Visitors such as authors, theatre groups or scientists
- Whole school events and celebrations

Please donate via www.parentpay.com

Thank you for your continued support.

Year 4 Multi-Sports

Year 4 had a great time at Nechells Sports Centre for their multi-sports event! The children tried different activities, showed great teamwork, and cheered each other on. Everyone had so much fun being active, learning new skills, and enjoying a morning with their friends.



Come along to EcoPark for our family focused 'Tree Day' on Saturday 6th December 12-3pm. Listen to our storyteller, make tree poems, decorate our orchard trees, make natural crafts and have a go at green woodworking. Everything is FREE. Register for free tickets at

www.bbcwildlife.org.uk/events





Second Sunday of Advent 7th December 2025

Peace is a central theme of the Advent season but the main focus of the second week of Advent. One of the prophecies about Jesus calls him "the Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6-7).

The second candle which is purple will be lit at mass on Sunday. It is called the Bethlehem candle and is a reminder of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem. This candle represents love and peace - both God's love for us and ours for him and others.

An Advent Prayer

Heavenly father, your son, Jesus,
is your greatest gift to us, a great sign of your love.
Guide us as we strive to walk in that love together,
As a school, this Advent.
As we prepare our hearts for Christmas,
Bring us closer to each other and to your son.

Beauty and the Beast Pantomime at Sutton Town Hall during December.



Saturday 6th December 12.30pm

Friday 12th December 6.30pm

Saturday 20th December 6.30pm

Tuesday 23rd December 12.30pm

Wednesday 24th December 4.30pm

Sunday 28th December 12.30pm

Wednesday 31st December 12.30pm

We are incredibly proud of Isla in Year 6, who will be taking to the stage in a pantomime production of *Beauty and the Beast* at Sutton Coldfield Town Hall —a fantastic achievement and an exciting opportunity for her!

Tayah and Amily will also be performing in the Beauty and the Beast Pantomime throughout December.

If families are in receipt of free school meals, you are able to buy discounted tickets for them and their families. The dates above are the times when the girls will be performing. It would be lovely if any families could go and support and watch what I am sure will be a fantastic show.

Well done girls and good luck!

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION-FUNDED

HOLIDAY CLUBS IN BIRMINGHAM

2025/26

MORE INFORMATION

Did you know that as well as free school meals during term time, your child can also benefit from Department for Education-funded spaces at holiday clubs in your local area?

Thanks to the Holiday Activity and Food Programme, known in Birmingham as 'Bring in on Brum!', your child can experience holiday clubs filled with fun, learning and healthy meals at no cost to you!

If your child is aged between 4-16 years old* and is eligible to receive benefits-related free school meals, they're entitled to access Bring it on Brum! holiday clubs.

With a wide range of activities such as sports, arts and crafts, cooking, dance, music and more, there's something for everyone! Plus, every session includes a nutritious meal to keep them energised and happy throughout the day.

Each club offers a unique programme depending on its location and type—there's so much to explore!

Not eligible? Many clubs also offer paid places, so every child has the chance to join the fun.

*See website for full eligibility criteria.

IMPORTANT DATES

SPRING

Bookings open: 24th March 2025

Holiday clubs open: 14th April 2025 -
25th April 2025

SUMMER

Bookings open: 30th June 2025

Holiday clubs open: 21st July 2025 -
29th August 2025

WINTER

Bookings open: 1st December 2025

Holiday clubs open: 22nd December 2025 -
2nd January 2026

All dates exclude bank holidays and weekends.

HOW TO BOOK

- 1 Get your unique BIOB/ HAF code from your child's school
- 2 Go to our website bringitonbrum.co.uk
- 3 Follow our handy [How to Book Guide](#)
- 4 [Sign Up](#) for 'Bring it on Brum!' updates.



Birmingham
City Council



Department
for Education

MORE INFORMATION:
bringitonbrum.co.uk





EAST BIRMINGHAM FOOTBALL COACHING COURSE



AT: ARCHBISHOP ILSLEY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

VICTORIA ROAD, ACOCKS GREEN, BIRMINGHAM, B27 7XY (Use Shirley Road entrance B27 7XU)

STARTING: TUESDAY 6TH JANUARY 2026

Tuesdays: Group 1: School Years Reception & Year 1.....5.00pm-6.00pm
Group 2: School Years 2 & 3.....6.00pm-7.00pm
Group 3: School Years 4, 5 & 6.....7.00pm-8.00pm

Dear Parents,

I am pleased to inform you that, due to the huge success of our football courses over the last **25 years**, we are allowing up the football coaching programme for the season starting in January 2026. The course will run for approximately 12 weeks and the programme is for boys and girls aged between 4 and 12.

About our Course

- The unique practice techniques are specifically designed to work with children of all abilities, ranging from the absolute beginner to the more advanced player.
- The course is run by **F.A qualified coaches**, who are **DBS** checked, and hold an advanced premier skills qualification, they are currently working with children, enabling them to learn essential football techniques, building **CONFIDENCE**, improving **FITNESS** and providing the most important ingredient **FUN!**
- Children will be fully supervised at all times, although parents are welcome to stay and watch.
- Each child will be provided with a football for individual practice and their progress will be recorded each week.
- It is an **indoor** course held in the sports hall, therefore children may wear trainers and sportswear.
- **Ex Premier League Birmingham City, West Bromwich Albion and Fulham player Geoff Horsfield** quotes, "I've coached on these courses with the team and they are fantastic in the way they deliver their coaching sessions!"
- **Ex England World Cup star and Sky Sports pundit Paul Merson** quotes, "I have presented trophies to the children on these courses and it's great to see the smiles on their faces and sense of achievement!"

Presentation of trophies and award

- On the final week of the course, we hold a presentation, whereby **EACH CHILD WILL RECEIVE AN ENGRAVED TROPHY.**
- Children also have a chance to win many other special individual awards and trophies for various skills, including '**premier league**' and '**penalty shoot out**' competitions.
- Parents and friends are most welcome to attend the presentation and watch the children being presented with their awards, as this encourages a fantastic atmosphere.

The cost of the course is £9 per week; payment is made every 4 weeks, with the first payment of £36 due on week 1. **Please Note: With a high response expected and limited places available, bookings will be confirmed on a first come, first served basis.** *Mark Frith* (course co-ordinator) www.soccercoachinguk.co.uk

TO RESERVE PLACES PLEASE TEXT:

ARCHBISHOP ILSLEY + CHILD'S NAME + AGE + GROUP NO. (1, 2 or 3)
and receive confirmation by text to:

07827 322780