



# CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

Becket Keys Church of England School is preparing for its final week of the Advent Term. Preparations are all go for four special festive events in our final week.

Students and staff are looking forward to our Christmas Carol Concert on Monday 16th December with our choir and orchestra preparing to perform alongside the excellent professional Tilbury Brass Band. Tickets have sold quickly, but at the time of writing some remain. At only £2.50 (with profits going to our school charities) why not treat yourself to a ticket and come along for a little bit of festive musical entertainment? You cannot beat a brass band at Christmas, can you? You should be able to buy a ticket during the day on Monday – give the office a ring to check.

The Christmas Disco Party is on Tuesday 17th December. Starting at 7pm, this promises to be an great night for Y7 and Y8. Light refreshments, an excellent local DJ and plenty of Christmas Lights – this FOBK (Friends of Becket Keys) event should be a big hit.

At lunchtime, students will enjoy a special Christmas lunch prepared by our very own professional chefs. A traditional turkey roast with all the trimmings will be followed by Christmas ‘pud’ and then a



*Christmas Eucharist on Wednesday at St Thomas' Church*

rousing rendition of the Twelve Days of Christmas led by Mr Hughes and a Christmas ‘sing off’ led by Ms Endicott! We are looking forward to this day tremendously. Again, tickets are still available at £3 for lunch and £5 for the disco.

Wednesday is our Christmas Eucharist up at our parish church, St Thomas'. We will leave school from 10am and would like parents to walk with us for this special occasion. Please come along if you are able to; you can park in our car park. Alternatively, you can join us up at church at 10:45. The service will last about an hour and then you

are welcome to stay for a drink in the Church Centre.

On Friday, our last day of term, the school day will conclude with Collective Worship and students will depart as usual at 3:20pm. Teachers will walk to the High Street after school and visit local shops and cafés to present Christmas cards and gifts to local companies that support our school or are regularly frequented by our students.

We hope to see you at one of our special events next week; it would be great to have you with us to celebrate Christmas at Becket Keys Church of England School!

# FROM MONDAY...



## **ON MONDAY WE START CASHLESS CATERING**

After a long wait, we are finally ready to start cashless catering!

Please follow the instructions sent home this week and log on to our cashless catering website (there is a link from [www.becketkeys.org](http://www.becketkeys.org)). You need to create a username and password then follow the instructions to load up some credit. You will need the code that is on the letter we have sent home with your son/daughter. We have now sent it home twice. Most recently we sent it home on fluorescent pink paper!

Your child will only be able to spend a maximum of £5 per day in the Bistro and you will be able to see (in due course) what they have been purchasing.

No cash will be accepted anymore and no credit will be allowed – (ie students will not be allowed to go overdrawn!). So please keep your son/daughter's account well topped up.

## **OTHER NEWS**

### **PARENTAL FEEDBACK**

Thanks for all your feedback via the OfSTED website! It has been great to see your passionate support for our school being presented to OfSTED via this website. If you have not responded yet – please log on today:

Visit OfSTED's '[parent view](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk)' website: [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk)



### **CHARITY HEROES OF BECKET KEYS!**

The following students have all raised in excess of £50 for charity already this year! We'd like to pay tribute to them today in our newsletter. The desire to put other people first is an essential characteristic of Becket Keys Church of England School students.

Cleo Cooke, Jade Jordan Dinnadge, Grace Higgins, Sophie Morgan Haywood, Tom Middleton, Georgina Podd, Fern Williams, Grace Burrell and Phoebe Marshall.

We are also pleased to announce our charities for the year: St Francis Hospice and Teenage Cancer Trust

### **MATHEMATICS HEROES OF BECKET KEYS!**

Our mathematics team are practising regularly on Thursday lunchtimes for the UKMT Mathematics Team Challenge (see <http://www.ukmt.org.uk/team-challenges/> for more details).

Malakai Brann, Georgina Podd, Bethany Hancox and Josh Rees have made it into the team and will be competing against many of the country's top performing grammar schools and independent schools at Cambridge University on Tuesday 1st April.

Malakai achieved the highest score out of all the year 8s that took part in the school challenge. Ethan Hornett just missed out and came 5th highest.

### **DAVE WARRINER MEMORIAL FUND**

In memory of Dave Warriner, a number of parents, staff and governors have contributed to a fund that will be used to buy a bench for the school grounds in his memory. We would like to purchase the best quality bench possible and are aware of a number of families who said that they wanted to contribute, but have not yet done so. We would like to order the bench after Christmas so please do contribute, if you are able to do so, via the school office.

### **AN OUTSTANDING FREE MUSICAL EDUCATION?**

Russell Group Universities look for a commitment to music when deciding between some of the top students for their universities. Often they will specifically seek out students who are experienced choristers. With this in mind, we are constantly encouraging our students to look at joining a church choir. However, it is not just for a better chance of university entrance. We also know how much fun it is to be in a choir, how rewarding it can be and the importance of receiving such a high quality music education alongside any individual lessons or school music lessons a young person may have. Furthermore, the positive role models provided by older men and women in a choir setting is self-evident.

With all this in mind, we strongly encourage you to read the letter from the Director of Music at St Thomas' Church on the following page.

## A letter from Sam Adams, Director of Music (St Thomas' Church, Brentwood)

Some fifteen years ago I was a Year 7 pupil walking the corridors of the buildings which Becket Keys is now proud to call its own.



Before that, I was a pupil at St Thomas' Infant and Junior Schools. There are many things which shape our lives and certainly the schools we go to and the education we receive is an important part of what makes us who we are. We are very lucky to have so many wonderful opportunities available to us and so many wonderful people around us who care enough to nurture our talents and our interests. When I was just seven years old, I took up an opportunity that was going to change my life forever - I joined St Thomas' Church Choir! At the time I wasn't especially good at music and I didn't really sing, but it was the start of a journey that would lead me to where I am today.

I had no idea when I joined the choir what I was letting myself in for. My friend Jonathan went to church but I didn't go very often. He persuaded me to join but I had only really heard or seen a choir on the TV at Christmas singing carols. I joined anyway and for the first few months I was a 'probationer'. Everything was new to me. I was put into a team and one of the older choristers looked after me, helping me to follow the music (which seemed like a foreign language at the time!). There was only one rehearsal during the week and Sunday was of course a busy day with a service in the morning and another in the evening. Often we had a morning or evening off when the Girls' Choir or a different choir sang instead. Having a boys-only choir was good because it was easy to make friends and we often played football and took part in other activities together. After six months I completed my probationary period and I was admitted to the choir as a Junior Chorister. It was a proud moment and I felt a real sense of achievement. Above is a picture of me and my friend Jonathan on the day of our admission! That's me on the left (see pic)!

After a year I had experienced a lot of 'firsts'. My first Christmas as a Chorister was magical. I remember singing carols at the White Hart in the High Street (now Sugar Hut!). I enjoyed being part of the big carol service at the church (and enjoying lots of mince pies afterwards!). I remember singing for some weddings and other special services. I even got a bit of pocket money to say 'thanks' for my good attendance and commitment! After a while, it became apparent that this wasn't like any other group out there for young people. There was something special and different about being part of a choir.

Aside from the clear benefits of teamwork, friendship & a bit of pocket money, the choir offered something greater. There was a sense that what we were doing was more than just an activity - we were doing something worthwhile that made a difference to people's lives. The music at St Thomas' Church helps to inspire and take the congregation to a place where words alone simply cannot. Furthermore, I knew that I was part of a living and breathing tradition which spans back several centuries. I was part of living history, just like the Royal Family are.



After a few years I could read music and I enjoyed it all so much. I even started learning the piano and this led to playing the guitar and drums too. As I grew older and became one of the more senior choristers, so it was my turn to nurture and look after the younger ones which was a real privilege. Being a chorister developed my confidence and helped me in my school studies as not only were my reading skills improved but my concentration levels were very good. I don't think I realised at the time how much I was learning and how mature I was becoming by being in the choir. Looking back I can see what a positive impact it has had on my life and how it has shaped the path I took.

Fast-forward a decade or so and in 2012 I took over as the Director of Music at St Thomas' Church. I also teach music at a Church of England school and sixth form college in Romford. I am so grateful for the opportunities I had when I was younger and so glad that I joined the church choir. It was an opportunity I took and it has changed my life. I now have the privileged responsibility to nurture and inspire our young singers in the same way. I would like to welcome you all to consider joining and giving it a go! If you are musical, enjoy singing, or if you're curious to find out more about joining one of the choirs at St Thomas' Church, please encourage your parents to get in touch. Thank you for reading!

**Mr Adams / 01277 500122 / [stthomasdom@gmail.com](mailto:stthomasdom@gmail.com)**

## LOST PROPERTY

The following items are not named. Please contact reception to collect:

2 Becket Keys Blazers  
Becket Keys PE top  
Becket Keys Hoodie  
Blue/white snowflake woollen hat  
Union Jack boot key ring with key  
2 black scarves  
Green bottle  
Blue bottle  
Blue pencil case  
2 Atmosphere black Jackets  
Striped Scarf  
'Animal' Pencil Case  
Black Campri Gloves  
Blue/black Ozu jacket  
Black Next coat  
Black Jogging Bottoms  
'Streetcode' pencil case  
1 Thinsulate glove  
Triangle Highlighter Pen  
Long Keyring chain with 2 keys on  
Gold Birch padlock  
Silver padlock  
2 keys - one yellow, one very small on a keyring  
4 unnamed plastic cake boxes left over from cake sale

## NEARLY NEW ITEMS FOR SALE

Contact office (proceeds to school fund)

Boys' Blazer size 28"	£10
Purple Reversible PE top (2) 26/28"	£5
Skort 22/24"	£5
Jumpers (4) size 30"	£5
Jumper size 28"	£5
Grey slipover size 28"	£5
Grey slipover size 30"	£5
Boys' trousers age 11/12	£5
Boys' s/s shirts age 9/10	£2.50
Boys' l/s shirts age 9/10	£2.50

Students wishing to wear hats, gloves and scarves must wear black, grey or purple items only please.

Shoes need to be polished please - especially for our big events next week! Students should do this themselves!

In response to requests from parents, staff and students we are now letting students come home in their PE kits as long as they are worn smartly and completely. We hope this will help.

## UNIFORM



## ABSENCE LINE

We are pleased to inform you that we now have a dedicated Student Absence line.

If your child is absent from school due to illness please phone 01277 286612 before 8.30am on every day of absence.

You will be able to leave a short message on the answer phone stating your son/daughter's name, form and reason for absence.

You can also notify us of absence by emailing: [office@becketkeys.org](mailto:office@becketkeys.org)

## CLUBS CANCELLED

The following clubs are cancelled for the last week of term:

- Mandarin Chinese
- Friday homework club
- Science club
- ICT club

### CONTACT DETAILS



Becket Keys C.E. School  
Sawyers Hall Lane  
Brentwood  
Essex  
CM15 9DA

T: 01277 286600

[office@becketkeys.org](mailto:office@becketkeys.org)

[www.becketkeys.org](http://www.becketkeys.org)

@BecketKeys

## PRAYER

Our prayer meetings are on Tuesdays at 11:30am. Anyone from the Becket Keys Church of England School community is welcome to join us (parents, other relatives, friends of the school etc).

Please send any prayer requests to: [office@becketkeys.org](mailto:office@becketkeys.org). If you wish to join our prayer mailing list to receive a regular update of issues to pray for, you can also email us.

The whole school will be saying daily advent prayers over the next few weeks to help us all reflect on the true meaning of Christmas and to prepare our hearts for Christ's coming.

## LIBRARY BOOKS

Our library is being catalogued on Wednesday and Thursday next week ready to be properly opened for business in the new year. Please can students return all books that have been borrowed?

We would also love to receive any good as new books before Wednesday so that they can be added to our library. If you are having a pre-Christmas clear out – please bear us in mind!

### Dates for your Diary

16th Dec	Cashless Catering Starts Christmas Concert
17th Dec	Christmas Lunch Christmas Disco
18th Dec	School Christmas Eucharist St Thomas' Church 10:45

You can keep up to date with a daily tweet from Becket Keys by following us on Twitter: @BecketKeys.

