

Hope Peace *Joy* Love



Becket Keys Church of England School

12th December 2025

IN THIS ISSUE



Celebrating God's Greatest Gift

At the heart of Christmas is a simple yet life-changing truth: God loves us so much that He gave His Son, Jesus, so we could spend eternity with Him (John 3:16). This verse is often called "*the heart of the Bible*" and "*the gospel in miniature*" because it captures the very essence of God's love and His plan for us.

The Apostle John reminds us throughout Scripture that love is

central to God's nature. He writes:

- "*Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends*" (John 15:13).
- "*Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God*" (1 John 4:7).

This Christmas, remember: Jesus is the greatest gift. His coming is the ultimate expression of God's love. A love that brings hope, peace, and joy to all who believe.

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BECKET KEYS
Church of England School

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We would like your book donations please!

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Friends of Becket Keys

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Careers Information

Interesting opportunities for students. Visit Cambridge University, work for the railway or attend a Medicine Conference.

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Reflect on these questions:

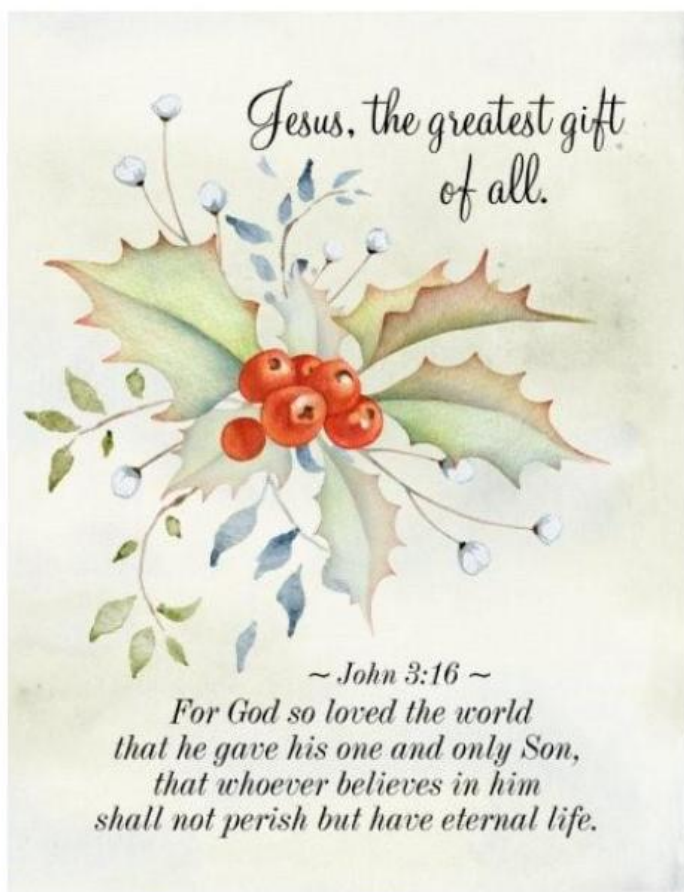
- Who are the people you love most?
- What would you be willing to give up for them?
- How great must God's love be to give His only Son for us?

The Christian message of Christmas is so significant that it marks the beginning of a new era. We have a story to tell: God became human and made His dwelling among us. Heaven coming to earth in the form of a baby boy. However, you share it, through words or actions, this story alone makes every Christmas wonderful.

This message shines brightly at Becket Keys. The question we keep asking is: Are we ready? Ready for what truly matters? How much time are we spent talking with and listening to God? How much have we invested in reading His Word? Are we ready, like the shepherds and wise men, to drop everything and seek the newborn King? Are we ready, like the first Christians, to speak boldly about our faith and share the story? Are we ready to make Christmas all about Jesus?

Let us pray:

Father in heaven, thank You for the gift of Your Son, Jesus. Thank You for loving us so deeply and wanting us to share eternity with You. Help us to believe, to live in Your love and to share this Good



News with others. Fill our hearts with peace and joy this Christmas. Amen.

Slow down this season. Reflect on God's eternal love and encourage others to share in His gift. This is what brings everlasting joy.

I pray that the Prince of Peace will spread His love and joy over you and your family this Christmas and always.

May the Spirit of Christmas bring you peace.

May the joy of Christmas bring you hope.

May the message of Christmas reveal God's amazing love.

Amen.

Mrs Sharp
Deputy Headteacher

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Please Remember.....

Thursday 18th December is a half day for students. They will be leaving school at 12.40pm. There is no lunch service on that day, however the usual offerings will be available at break time.



BECKET KEYS
Church of England School

Gift a Book for Christmas

You may remember from previous years our highly successful 'Gift a Book for Christmas' initiative. Last year we received hundreds of donations from students and families who were having a clear out in preparation for the new books they would be receiving on Christmas Day. These books have since been enjoyed by our students who have been discovering the 'gifts' in their form room book swaps and the school library.

If you did not encounter it last Christmas, below is everything you need to know to get involved.

We all know that as avid readers, we can end up with too many books to store. I know that my own bookcase can end up overflowing, and it becomes difficult to even see what I have. Then, for Christmas I often receive new books, and there is nowhere for them to go. Like most people, many books will only be read once, and then they sit gathering dust. Our hope is that in this festive period, when you are preparing your homes for Christmas, you may take the opportunity to see if you have any books that are ready for a new home and to be loved and enjoyed by others. These may be books that have been read, and will not be read again, or books that your children are now too old for, as they have moved onto more exciting reading challenges. If you have any books that are in good condition and are suitable



for ages 10 and up, then please consider gifting them this Christmas to the school. We also have mini libraries in the Sixth Form and the staff room, so adult fiction is also greatly appreciated.

If you really want to treat us, we would love to receive copies of top Young Adult fiction books from 2025, which can be found easily on bookshop websites. You could also look back through the newsletters of the last 12 months and choose from the many books we have featured and recommended, as these are popular amongst students.

If you are able to donate any books, we would be hugely appreciative. If you want to be really festive, you could wrap them or put them in a gift bag, but we will take them unwrapped too. You just need to send them in with your son/daughter to place under one of our Christmas

trees. These can be found in Reception, the Main Hall and the Sixth Form area.

After Christmas these will be shared between the classroom book swap areas and placed in our library, where students will be able to find all the new books they can enjoy in 2026. It means that the Christmas spirit can continue into the new year. This will make 2026 the year for going on adventures in between the pages of something students have never read before.

Miss White
Literacy and Library Lead

[Book for Secondary School Students](#)

[Waterstones- YA Fiction](#)

Your local independent bookstore in Brentwood:

[Chicken & Frog](#)

Student Achievement

Alex Wright – Year 8



Alex Wright recently took part in a swimming gala in Chelmsford where he won a bronze medal for 100m breaststroke.

Last weekend he also competed at Harlow and won three medals!

Two silver medals
200m IM
100m breaststroke
One bronze medal
50m front crawl

Alex has been swimming for a few years but only joined the club two years ago.

Well done Alex!



Many thanks to all those who have generously donated books for the library!

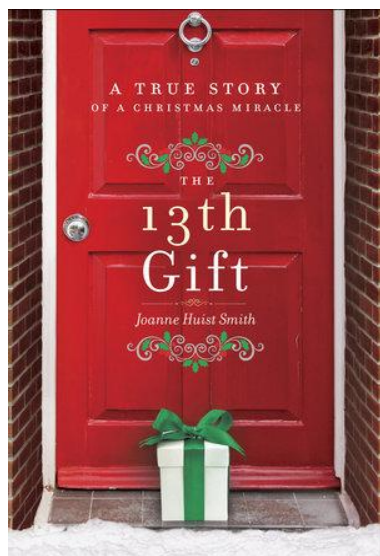
We would be delighted to get some more!

Local Church Services

Along with this newsletter is a flyer for the Christmas services and events at the local churches in the area.

Please remember to check on the individual parish websites for up-to-date details.

Festive Reading Recommendations



The 13th Gift

Joanne Huist Smith

This is a heartwarming Christmas story about how a random act of kindness transformed one of the bleakest moments in a family's history into a time of strength and love.

After the unexpected death of her husband, Joanne Huist Smith had no idea how she would keep herself together and be strong for her three children, especially with the holiday season approaching. But 12 days before Christmas, presents begin appearing on her doorstep with notes from their "True Friends." As the Smiths came together to solve the mystery of who the gifts were from, they began to thaw out from their grief and come together again as a family. This true story about the power of random acts of kindness will warm the heart, a beautiful reminder of the miracles of Christmas and the gift of family during the holiday season.

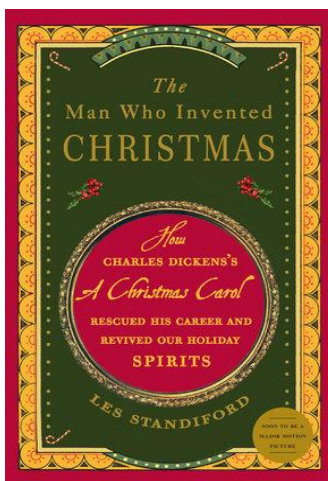
The Man Who Invented Christmas

Les Staniford

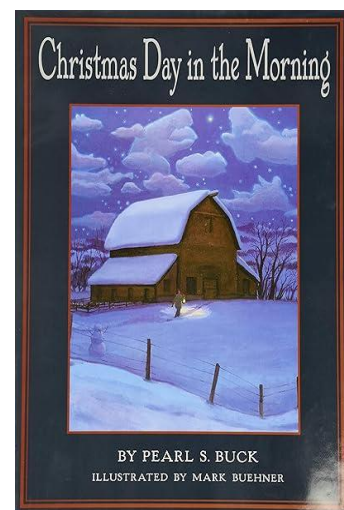
As uplifting as the tale of Scrooge itself, this is the story of how Charles Dickens impacted the Christmas holiday in the Western world. It is now a major motion picture.

Just before Christmas in 1843, a debt-ridden and dispirited Charles Dickens wrote a small book he hoped would keep his creditors at bay. His publisher turned it down, so Dickens used what little money he had to put out *A Christmas Carol* himself. He worried it might be the end of his career as a novelist.

The book immediately caused a sensation. And it breathed new life into a holiday that had fallen into disfavour, undermined by lingering Puritanism and the cold modernity of the Industrial Revolution. It was a harsh and dreary age, in desperate need of spiritual renewal, ready to embrace a book that ended with blessings for one and all.



With warmth, wit and an infusion of Christmas cheer, Les Staniford whisks us back to Victorian England, its most beloved storyteller, and the birth of the Christmas we know best. *The Man Who Invented Christmas* is a rich and satisfying read for Scrooges and sentimentalists alike.



Christmas Day in the Morning

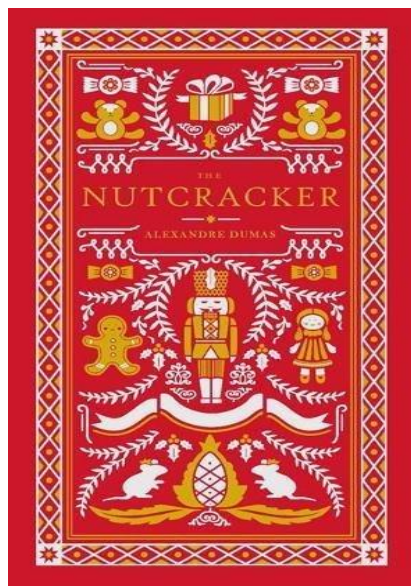
Pearl S. Buck

From Pulitzer and Nobel Prize-winning author comes a heartwarming story that illustrates the true meaning of Christmas.

Rob wants to get his father something special for Christmas this year, something that shows how much he really loves him. But it is Christmas Eve and he does not have much money to spend. What could he possibly get? Suddenly, Rob thinks of the best gift of all...

The acclaimed author of nearly a

hundred books for children and adults, Pearl S. Buck captures the spirit of Christmas in this elegant, heartening story about a boy's gift of love. Originally published in 1955, this timeless story will be a welcome addition to your holiday collection.



The Nutcracker Alexandre Dumas

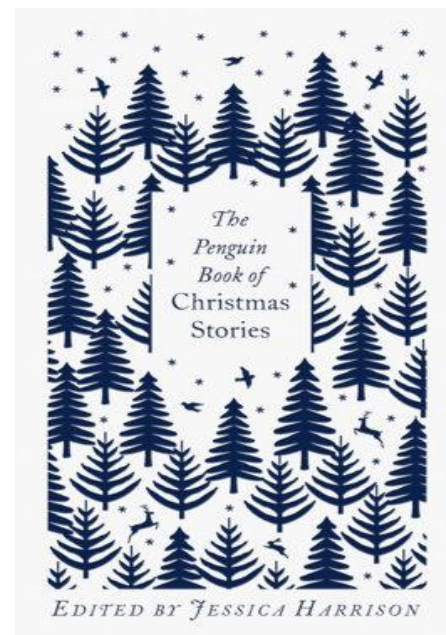
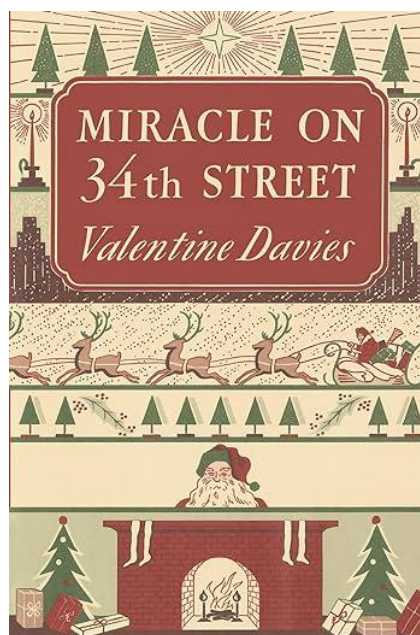
The nutcracker doll that mysterious Godfather Drosselmeyer gives to little Marie for Christmas is no ordinary toy. On Christmas Eve, at the clocks strike midnight, Marie watches as the Nutcracker and her entire cabinet of playthings come to life and boldly do battle against the malevolent Mouse King and his armies. But this is only the start: read on for a tale of enchantment and transformation, enter a world by turns fantastical and sinister, a kindom of dolls and spun-sugar palaces, and learn the true history of the brave little Nutcracker.

Adapted from a dark fairy-tale by Eta Hoffmann, Alexandre Dumas'

romance of childhood imagination inspired Tchaikovsky's world-famous ballet.

Miracle on 34th Street Valentine Davies

For a little girl named Susan Walker, Christmas could be any other day. She doesn't believe in Santa Claus or magic or miracles of any kind. But when she meets Kris Kringle and tells him what Christmas gifts she most wishes for, Susan finds herself hoping that maybe, just maybe, he is the real thing. Based on the original holiday classic, *Miracle on 34th Street* is a timeless, heartwarming children's book about generosity, imagination, and the spirit of Christmas... if you just believe.



The Penguin Book of Christmas Stories Edited by Jessica Harrison

This is a collection of the most magical, moving, chilling and surprising Christmas stories from around the world, taking us from frozen Nordic woods to glittering Paris, to New York, an English country house, bustling Lagos to midnight mass in Rio and even outer space!

Classic tales from writers including Truman Capote, Shirley Jackson, Dylan Thomas, Saki and Chekhov, as well as little-known treasures such as Italo Calvino's sideways look at Christmas consumerism.

Featuring santas, ghosts, trolls, unexpected guests, curmudgeons and miracles, here is Christmas as imagined by some of the greatest short story writers of all time.



Think you are up for the challenge? This term's task is called **Nasty Negatives** – Give it a try!

Every time you finish a challenge you will have learnt or practised something important. Not only that, but just for fun, show **Mrs. Conway** and she will put your name into the prize draw.

That means the more challenges you complete, the more you learn and the more chances you have to **win a great prize!** The draw closes on Thursday 18th December 2025.

Click the following link to complete on any device.

[Nasty Negatives!](#)

So, get started, give it your best, learn lots and keep those entries coming!

Mrs Conway
Head of Mathematics

Chess Club



Chess Club is going from strength to strength and we now have over 30 students wanting to play each week. However, the members are sad as they do not have enough boards to play with!

If you have a chess set at home in a cupboard that you no longer need or if you are able to donate a board for this friendly club, then please send them to Reception. The Club are practising for their next tournament and so these boards are urgently needed!

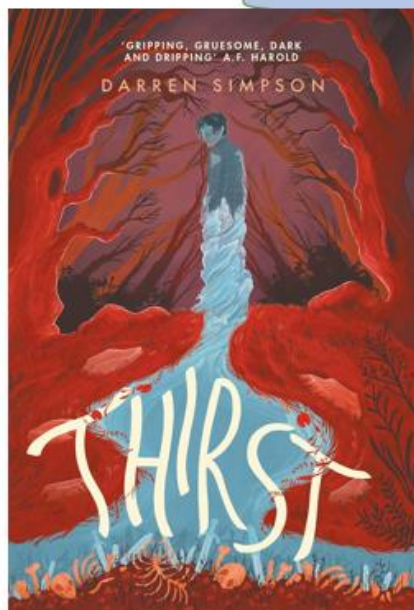
Remember Chess Club is every Tuesday lunchtime in Library B. All are welcome, whatever your level of expertise.

Thank you!

Mrs Lobo
Chess Club



Book of the Month - December



Nobody talks about the strange happenings in Maimsbury. No one speaks of the hooded figures glimpsed in the woods, nor the children's game that went so horribly wrong. But most of all, nobody dares whisper their doubts about the river they have worshipped for centuries.

Like everyone in Maimsbury, Gorse is used to the sacrifices made every spring to the River Yeelde. The life of a farm animal - in return for a year of plenty - seems a fair trade. That is, until a tragedy leads Gorse to a blood-curdling discovery.

Because this year is a Brim Year, and after giving so much, the river needs more than an animal's life to sate its thirst...

Remember you can find 'The Book of the Month' in the school library

RET

CREATIVE WRITING COMPETITION 2025-6

Entries of prose fiction, non-fiction or poetry

Memento

Celebrate your writing across the six schools in the Russell Education Trust.

This year's challenge is to select a memento. Choose one as the starting point for your writing to feed your imagination.

Word limit: 1000 words.

Entries must be uploaded to [SatchelOne](#) by 9th January 2026.

Two school winners will be selected from each category: KS2-3, KS4 & Sixth Form.

All Trust-winning entries will be published in a book. The overall winner will gain a writer's visit for their school.



Your writing can take any form you would like. This is an opportunity to be as creative as you like.

A memento must feature somewhere in your writing. It should be the item which sparks the idea for your writing.

A memento is an object kept as a reminder of a person or event.

You can pick a memento that you have at home, or come and see an English teacher to see some of the examples that they have.

This writing must be typed on a word document.

Friends of Becket Keys Fundraising





Help out when you check out

Collect FREE donations for **FRIENDS OF BECKET KEYS** every time you shop online.

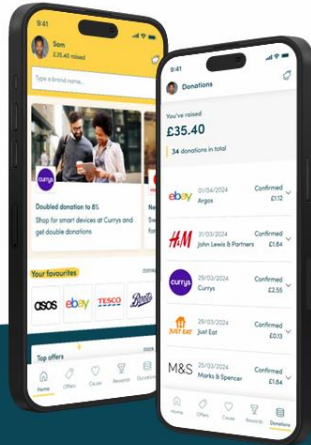



Join, shop and raise here:
[easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/becketkeysschoolbrentwood](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/becketkeysschoolbrentwood)



The easyfundraising app

Shop with thousands of retailers, get handy reminders as you browse and track your donation progress all in one place.
 Available on iOS and Android.

Scan the QR code to download the app

GET IT ON Google Play | Download on the App Store

If you are organised and already doing your Christmas shopping online. Why not see if you can help raise some funds for Friends of Becket Keys through your online purchases in a few easy steps?

Click [here](#), then:

- Click 'Sign up and support this cause'.
- If new to Easyfundraising then set up an account.
- Browse the hundreds of online shops who participate in the scheme and go shopping! As long as you go into the online sites through the Easyfundraising site, you will register a donation to FoBK. You can even get an App for your phone! It will not cost you a penny!

If already a member, then why not refer a friend? FoBK will get a bonus when each person you refer makes a purchase.

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/becketkeysschoolbrentwood>

Careers Events for Students

'Think Cambridge' opportunity for Year 10-12

4 to 13 February 2026

Bookings for the 'Think Cambridge' webinar series are now open!

This series aims to inspire students to apply to Cambridge. The sessions will cover a range of topics, including:

- an introduction to applying to, and studying at, Cambridge
- stories about student life from current students
- advice on how to prepare to apply

[Think Cambridge | Undergraduate Study](#)



Interested in Medicine?

Get Into Medicine:

Sunday 7th December from 9am - 1:30pm

Saturday 13th December from 9am - 1:30pm

[Get Into Medicine Conference Sign Up - Medic Mentor](#)

Get Into Dentistry:

Sunday 11th January 2026 from 9am - 1:30pm

[Get Into Dentistry Conference Sign Up – Dental Mentor](#)

All aspiring doctors and dentists in years 10-12 are invited to register.

These conferences offer tailored advice for medicine and dentistry, covering a range of crucial topics:

- Understanding Medical/Dental Career
- Skills Needed in Medicine/Dentistry
- Extra and Super curricular Activities
- Accessing Work Experience
- Application Timelines
- Personal Statements
- Medical/Dental School Interviews
- UCAT Entrance Exam
- Accessing Scholarships

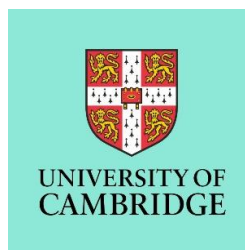
Events for students

Students may wish to explore events offered by Cambridge Colleges and departments.

These include things like webinars, in-person events, residential visits, competitions and more!

Head to the website below to see what's on. There are plenty of upcoming events suitable for students in the early stages of exploring their university options.

[Upcoming events | Undergraduate Study](#)



INVESTIN

GAIN THE ULTIMATE WORK EXPERIENCE THIS SUMMER

1 and 2-week programmes for students aged 15-18

Register now with code **EARLY15** for 15% off Summer Experience Programmes!

- ✓ Work with **top professionals** and explore **real workplaces**
- ✓ Gain a **qualification** in work experience to boost your university application
- ✓ Experience **university life** on-campus at UCL

Explore Our Career Programmes

- Art & Design
- Architecture
- Computer Science
- Dentistry
- Engineering
- Entrepreneurship
- TV & Filmmaking
- Forensic Science
- International Politics
- Investment Banking
- Law
- Media
- Medicine
- Psychology
- Veterinary Science
- Career Discovery (Ages 12-14)



REGISTER NOW

Early-bird ends on the 31st December

SIGN UP NOW

Join our Summer School Webinar on Monday 15th December

info@investin.org

+44 (0) 203 488 5089

www.investin.org



Have you ever thought about a career in the rail industry? If not, **why not?** Here are some of the exciting opportunities that are on offer.

Why rail deserves a look

Earn while you learn: Apprenticeships mean students get a wage, real experience, and nationally recognised qualifications — no debt, no waiting.

Solid pay & progression: Did you know qualified train drivers can earn £50k–£70k+? And that is just one pathway — engineering, technology, customer service, and leadership roles all offer brilliant long-term prospects.

Secure futures: With an ageing workforce and a national skills shortage, rail is crying out for fresh talent. Students who join now are stepping into a future-proof career.

Not just “train people”: Rail careers are diverse — from tech-savvy engineers to people-focused station managers, there is something for every interest.

Scan to Learn More & Apply:



Leaving School or College this Summer and looking for an Apprenticeship?

A small selection of some of our exciting opportunities. Sign up to the Apprenticeship Hub to receive invites to our Apprenticeship Hub Live sessions and access to the Apprenticeship Hub Padlet.

Latest apprenticeship opportunities

Showcasing some of this week's latest apprenticeship opportunities in Essex

[Apprenticeship Opportunities →](#)



Homework Club is available for all students.

Every afternoon after school students can stay for a supervised session until 4.20pm and complete their homework in C11.

Using Homework Club is just one way we provide for students who do not want to leave site at 3.10pm.

There are a large number of extracurricular clubs that your son/daughter can attend at Becket Keys. Full details are available on the school website here:

<https://www.becketkeys.org/extra-curricular>.



BECKET KEYS
Church of England School



Tell us what you think!

Complete our survey

Over the past year, Essex County Council been working closely with the local community on Sawyers Hall Lane to make the streets around local schools safer. Based on our feedback, they have:

- Installed a new pedestrian guardrail to improve safety.
- Installed a new raised table to slow down traffic on one section of the road.
- Made the footway widening permanent and added pencil-shaped bollards.
- Added safer tactile crossing points.
- Cleared overgrown vegetation.
- Recruited a new School Safety enforcement officer to address safety concerns. The officer encourages any driver who parks illegally or inconsiderately to be cautious and considerate and offers information on alternative ways for parents/carers to get to and from school, where practicable. They have the powers to enforce if necessary.
- Promoted the three "park and stride" sites at William Hunter Way car park, Chatham Way car park and Doddington Community Church, encouraging parents and carers not to park on the streets immediately surrounding the schools.

We would now like to hear from you about these changes. We also want to understand more about how you travel day-to-day. Your feedback will help us improve the way local people experience the streets and explore further ways to make them safer for everyone. Please click the link or scan the QR code below:



[Sawyers Hall Lane Safer Streets | Safer, Greener, Healthier](https://letstalkessexsustainabletravel.co.uk/sawyers-hall-lane-healthy-school-streets/surveys/sawyers)
<https://letstalkessexsustainabletravel.co.uk/sawyers-hall-lane-healthy-school-streets/surveys/sawyers>

If you would prefer a printed copy of the survey sent to you by post, please email us at sg.h.routes@essex.gov.uk



Reminder!

School Uniform

It is important to all of us that every student who attends Becket Keys looks smart in their uniform at all times. All students are required to wear shoes and not trainers.

Girls in Year 7-9, should have their long hair completely tied up. Girls in Year 10-11 can have their hair half up/ half down. Black, purple or neutral coloured hair ties please. If boys have long hair, they too need to have it tied up.



Now that the weather is getting colder, please remember that all students will be in need of a **COAT** – Plain **BLACK** without coloured flashes, logos or slogans, no 'fashion items', no 'puffer' jackets. Please see the website, if you need more details about the school dress code.

Winter PE Options



Becket Keys
Hoodie



Becket Keys
Games Top



Becket Keys
T-Shirt



Thermal/Long
Sleeve underlayer



Becket Keys
Tracksuit Bottoms



Becket Keys
Leggings



Must be worn
together



Becket Keys
Skort



Gripped gloves



Extra socks



Warm Hat

As winter approaches, we want to ensure that you are prepared for your PE lessons. We are not always lucky enough to have an indoor spaces, so please come prepared to be outside with the above kit. In extreme weather, we will endeavour to use a classroom space as an option.



Please remember that all correspondence to the school must come through the school office email:

office@becketkeys.org

Your message will be forwarded to the member of staff concerned.

You can also send a message via the contact page on the website:

<https://www.becketkeys.org/contact-staff>

You can reply directly to any message you receive from the school via Bromcom, just click the reply button and it will go to the office.

Students can contact their teachers via Satchel One if they have any queries regarding their lessons or homework.

Please do not email staff directly as any message received in this way will not receive a response.

Many thanks for your understanding.

Brentwood Foodbank
Together with Trussell

Help support your food bank this Christmas

Donate food
Donate an item or two from our shopping list, ensuring we can provide food for people facing hardship in your community.
If collecting festive food, please deliver before 24th November.

Donate money
Help to cover the costs of storing and distributing food, as well as developing sustainable projects.

Shopping list

- Christmas Cake
- Christmas Puddings
- Christmas Cakes/Biscuits
- Chocolates/Sweets
- Selection Boxes
- Biscuits for Cheese
- Sponge Puddings (syrup/ chocolate/jam)
- Tinned Custard
- Tinned Rice Pudding
- Tinned Fruit
- Tinned Salmon
- Tinned Ham
- Pickles/Cranberry Sauce
- Packet Stuffing
- Jelly's
- Carnation Milk

Ending hunger together

info@brentwood.foodbank.org.uk
Facilitated by Doddinghurst Road Church. Registered Charity in England and Wales (1171227)



The School Community Prayer Group hosted by our Headteacher, Mr Scott-Evans, is every Wednesday at 8.45am. This is a short meeting where we pray together for local and national events and for any intentions of those in our school family. All are welcome. If you have any prayer intentions, please send them into the school via the office email: office@becketkeys.org.

Sports News

PE Extra Curricular - Oct to Dec

Day	4.1 Lunchtime (11:50-12:30) 4.2 Lunchtime (12:40-1:20)	After-School (3:10-4:30)
Monday	Year 10 and 11 Basketball Club	Year 9, 10 and 11 Rugby
Tuesday	TUP Badminton	All Years' Mixed Recreational Football Year 7 Netball Year 8 & 9 Boys' Basketball
Wednesday	Year 7 Netball – Invite Only GCSE Theory Intervention	Year 8, 9, 10 & 11 Netball Year 7 Basketball
Thursday	TUP Basketball	Year 7&8 Rugby
Friday		All Years' Running Club All Years' Hockey Club



Keys:

- Astro
- Sports hall
- Main Hall
- Drama Hall
- Field
- Playground



Rookie Lifeguard Programme (8-12 years) National Lifesaving Academy Awards (12 years+)

• Lifesaving Theory • Lifesaving Survival and Rescue Skills • CPR, AED & First Aid

Lifesaving sessions will be held every Wednesday

TERM TIME ONLY

Times: 7pm to 8.30pm. Cost: £5

Venue: Shenfield High School, Alexander Lane, Shenfield,
Essex, CM15 8RY

For more Information, please email:
info@theswimstars.co.uk

Safeguarding lives in,
on and near water



LOST PROPERTY

Please make sure that **EVERY** item of uniform, PE Kit and equipment is named. There are over a thousand students at the school all wearing the same uniform.

There are many items that we are unable to return as we do not know to whom they belong.

Lost Property can be collected from Reception.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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YEAR 11 STRATFORD UPON AVON TRIP
FRIDAY 12TH DECEMBER – SATURDAY 13TH
DECEMBER 2025

*

A LEVELS CERTIFICATE PRESENTATION AND
AWARDS EVENING
TUESDAY 16TH DECEMBER 2025

*

LAST DAY OF TERM
STUDENT HALF DAY
THURSDAY 18TH DECEMBER 2025

*

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY
FRIDAY 19TH DECEMBER 2025 –
FRIDAY 2ND JANUARY 2026

*

INSET DAY
(NO STUDENTS IN SCHOOL)
MONDAY 5TH JANUARY 2026

*

FIRST DAY BACK FOR STUDENTS
TUESDAY 6TH JANUARY 2026
PURPLE WEEK

*

TERM DATES CAN BE FOUND ON THE
SCHOOL WEBSITE HERE:
[Becket Keys](https://www.becketkeys.org)

Becket Keys Church of England School

Sawyers Hall Lane
Brentwood, Essex
CM15 9DA
01277 286600

www.becketkeys.org
office@becketkeys.org
finance@becketkeys.org

X:

@BecketKeys
@MrScottEvans
@BecketKeys6th
@BecketKeysMusic
@BecketKeysPE
@BecketKeysArt
@BecketKeysSci
@BecketKeysDT
@BecketKeysExams
@BecketKeysTrips

[Facebook: Becket Keys Church School](https://www.facebook.com/BecketKeysChurchSchool)