Love God. Love your neighbour as yourself:
Be the Good Samaritan. Luke 10. 25-37

ST LUKE'S NEWS

DECEMBER 2025

Our Vision Statement

Inspired by Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, we live out our love for God through collective worship and meaningful opportunities for spiritual growth. Rooted in God's unconditional love, we treat everyone with respect and compassion, nurturing a safe, loving, inclusive school where everyone belongs. Learning together, we flourish and reach our full potential. We empower each other to make positive change for the community we share.

At St Luke's, we ***Love, Include, Flourish****, and* ***Empower*** *– our* ***L.I.F.E.*** *principles****.***

Headteacher's Update

Dear Parents and Carers,

Christmas at St Luke's is always a magical time, and this year has been no exception. Our school has been filled with music, celebration and a wonderful sense of community over the past two weeks. Last Wednesday, our talented Year 1 and Year 2 children treated us to a delightful performance of '*The Nativity*'. Their enthusiasm, confidence and joy truly captured the spirit of the season. Our youngest children from the Early years also impressed with their beautiful singing.

Last Friday, our KS2 pupils shared their carol singing, filling the hall with traditional Christmas favourites sung with sincerity and pride. Our school choir also represented St Luke's so wonderfully at the St Luke's Centre (photos below) and Old Street Underground station where they performed and raised money (£101 cash) for Growing Hope in King's Cross. We are extremely proud of them for using their gifts to support others. Our special thanks go to Mr Jones and Mr Grey for helping to coordinate these events for our school.





Last Thursday we also enjoyed a fantastic Christmas Fair, full of festive cheer and supported so generously by our whole community. And, as always, our annual Christmas service for Years 2–6 at Wesley's Chapel on Wednesday was

a beautiful and meaningful event—one that reminds us why Christmas at St. Luke's is such a special and treasured time.

As we approach the end of term, we often find ourselves saying goodbye to valued colleagues.

Farewell to Monica Russell

I recently wrote to you about Monica Russell, our School SENDCO, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Assistant Head, who has secured a new role with Waltham Forest Local Authority. This new position will allow her to use her expertise as a caseworker, supporting children and families across the borough. Monica has given 24 years of outstanding, wholehearted and exemplary service to St Luke's. Monica leaves with our warmest congratulations, deepest gratitude and very best wishes as she begins this exciting new chapter. Monica will return after the Christmas break for a further week of handover with her last day being Friday 9th January.

We would like to invite families of children with an Education Health and Care Plan to meet Rebecca Wieckowska on Thursday 8th January at 9:15am. Rebecca will be overseeing the SENDCo role in the interim working in school on a Thursday and Friday.

Message from Monica

After 24 years at St Luke's, it's time for me to move on and do something different. I'm very sad to be leaving this amazing school, and I will miss all the children, families, and staff. St Luke's has been a huge part of my life, and I'm grateful for every experience and relationship formed along the way.

At the same time, I'm excited for the opportunity to take on a new challenge, still working with children and families, but from a slightly different angle.

Thank you all for your support, kindness, and memories over the years.

Farewell to Lorna Green

We also say goodbye to Lorna Green, our Child and Family Support Worker, who leaves us after this term to focus on family priorities outside of school. We thank Lorna for her care, commitment and contribution to St Luke's, and we wish her all the very best.

Senior Leadership Team – Roles and Responsibilities

To support clarity for families, below is a summary of our Senior Leadership Team from the Spring term and the key areas each member leads:

Name	Role	Key Responsibilities
Tom O'Donnell	Headteacher	Strategic and Operational leadership, Safeguarding Oversight, School Vision and School Improvement
Keith Grey	Assistant Headteacher	English Lead, EVC Lead and Curriculum
Bisi Damolekun	Assistant Headteacher	Maths Lead, Assessment Lead

Miriam Macallan	EYFS	Phase leadership, EY SENDCO, Early Reading and Phonics
Lisa Harrington	Curriculum	RE
Hannah Bryant	School's Business Manager	Finance, Premises, Staffing
David Bello	Advisor	Curriculum and Teaching and Learning
Rebecca Wieckowska	SEND	SENDCO Years 1-6

As we look ahead to the Christmas holidays, I want to thank every child, family and staff member for contributing to a truly joyful and memorable Christmas season at St Luke's. This school is at its very best when we come together—and this festive period has been a beautiful reminder of the strength, warmth and generosity of our community.

Wishing you all peace, joy and rest as we move towards the Christmas break.

Warm regards,
Tom O'Donnell



Safeguarding Update

Whole School Staff Training on 5th January 2026. Keeping our children safe is at the heart of everything we do at St Luke's. As part of our ongoing commitment to maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding, we will be dedicating our INSET day on Friday 5th January to whole-school safeguarding training. This important training will be led by Anastasia Soola Georgiou, Principal Officer for Safeguarding in Education, who works closely with schools across the borough to ensure that all staff are confident, up-to-date and well equipped to protect and support children.

Our annual safeguarding training covers essential areas including:

- Understanding statutory guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education*
- Recognising signs and indicators of abuse, neglect and concerns affecting children's welfare
- Online safety, including current risks and how to support children in navigating the digital world safely
- Staff responsibilities, including reporting procedures and the role every adult plays in safeguarding
- Updates on local processes, multi-agency working and how schools collaborate with wider services
- Safeguarding culture, reinforcing the importance of vigilance, professional curiosity and child-centred practice

This annual training ensures that every member of staff—teachers, support staff, office staff, lunchtime supervisors and extended school teams—maintain a clear and consistent understanding of what to do if they are worried about a child. It also helps us continue to strengthen our safeguarding systems and to keep children's safety and wellbeing at the forefront of our work.

Thank you for your continued partnership in keeping our school community safe. If you ever have safeguarding concerns, please do speak with a member of the team. Our safeguarding leads and wider staff are always here to help. More details on key staff can be found below:

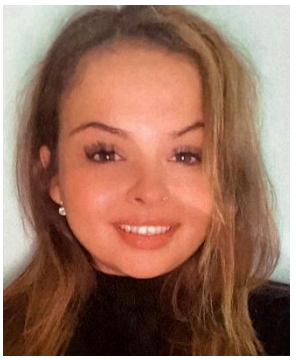
Designated Safeguarding Lead: Tom O'Donnell



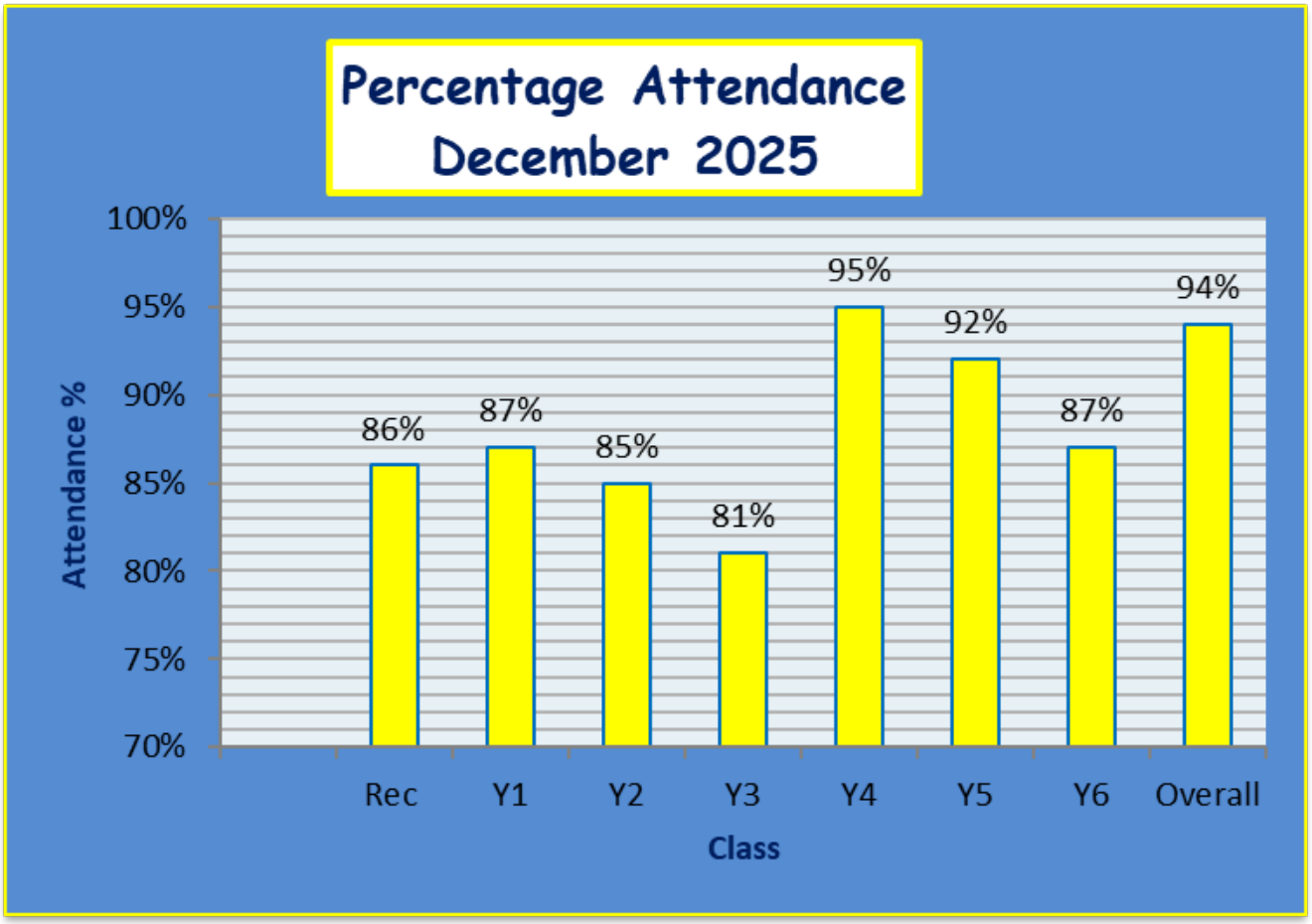
Deputy Safeguarding Leads: Anisa Lucey, (Learning Mentor, Attendance and Welfare Officer), Keith Grey, (Assistant Headteacher, English/Curriculum Lead and Year 6 teacher) and Vicky Hills (Extended Day Lead)







Attendance matters



Good attendance is essential for children's learning, progress, and wellbeing. Being in school every day helps children build strong routines, develop positive relationships, and access the full curriculum. Even short periods of absence can lead to gaps in learning and make it more difficult for children to re-engage on their return.

There are **190 school days** in the academic year when children are expected to attend school. In comparison, families have **175 days outside of term time** available for holidays, family time, and appointments.

Please be aware that the local authority regularly monitors attendance and follows up with the school, including with Anisa and myself, regarding patterns of absence and term-time holidays. This is part of their responsibility to ensure children receive their full entitlement to education.

We appreciate that family time is important and thank you for your continued support in prioritising attendance by arranging holidays during school breaks wherever possible. Strong attendance plays a vital role in helping children achieve their best and feel confident and settled in school.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Tom O'Donnell and Anisa Lucey





Environmental and Naturehood Update

Happy Winter Solstice everyone☀️☀️☀️
It's almost the winter solstice, the shortest daylight day of the year, which is on 21st December 2025. As we say goodbye to the beautiful autumn and welcome winter, a season of hibernation and also gentle, slow growth, we have
been thinking about the wildlife who brave this season outside and how we can help the birds and other creatures through the colder months when food is scarce 🦅🐿️.
We have been keeping our bird feeder topped up with wild bird seed and the children have enjoyed making bird feeders from old apples, pears and sunflower seeds to hang up in the trees 🙂.

Years 5 and 6 classes enjoyed a rainy afternoon in the Eco Pod, making lavender seed pouches for scent and relaxation and potting up spider plants (grown as house plants here) which are known to help purify air 🙂.

During lunch and after school Naturehood Clubs, the children have continued to plant out an array of winter flowering plants and a variety of spring flowering bulbs in the playground planters.

Many children have engaged in planting onion sets and garlic bulbs, which will steadily grow throughout the winter and spring months and be ready to harvest in the summer, as well as raspberry canes and a grape vine which will grow and bear delicious, organic fruits in years to come.

We are now planning ahead for the growing seasons.
Many children have contributed to a long list of food plants they would like to sow from seed, care for, watch grow and then harvest next year 🍅🥒🌶️🍆🥗🥕🌽.
Exciting 🙂



Artis at St Luke's

My name is Sarah, or Swoosh, as the children know me as! I am the Artis Creative Learning Specialist at St Luke's working weekly with your child(ren) with a focus on drama. This term we've delivered engaging sessions across Early Years to Year 2 that support key curriculum outcomes in communication and language, personal, social and emotional development, and understanding of the world.

In Early Years, drama activities inspired by *The Gruffalo* used movement and sound to develop listening skills, confidence, and early solo speaking, encouraging children to express themselves creatively and verbally.

In Year 1, a focus on storytelling helped pupils sequence ideas, develop character and voice, and work collaboratively, strengthening both literacy and oracy skills.

With Year 2, drama was used to deepen pupils' historical understanding of Rosa Parks through techniques such as freeze frames and thought tracking, enabling them to explore empathy, different viewpoints, and critical thinking in line with the history curriculum.

Alongside this, the Nursery sessions have used drama to build focus, concentration, and confidence within a nurturing environment.

Strong, positive relationships have developed with many of the children, creating a safe and joyful space where they feel confident to take creative risks. The enthusiasm and enjoyment shown in lessons highlights how the performing arts provides an inclusive and engaging approach to learning, allowing children to access the curriculum through imagination, movement, and play. I look forward to working next term with the children from St Luke's and seeing their engagement and creativity come to life.

About Artis

We are the creative learning specialists...

Artis is a creative learning charity that enables children to sing, act and dance their curriculum. Artis works weekly with your child(ren) using music, drama and movement to bring to life classroom themes – and develop children's curriculum knowledge and support oracy and wellbeing. Our mission is to nurture creativity in every child, everywhere, and shape a thriving society.

To find out more about how we work with your school, and others around the country, visit **artisfoundation.org.uk**

Sports coach Update

Hi all,

As we come to the end of the term and look ahead to the Christmas festivities & New Year, when I reflect on what has been a very positive few terms. The children's attitude to learning and the enjoyment they have shown has been both rewarding and encouraging to see.

I kindly ask that parents remain aware of the days their child has PE and ensure they come to school wearing their PE kit on those days.

Wishing you all a blessed and restful break, and let us continue to ask God to order our steps.

All the best,
Mr Bennett



Dates for your Diary

Key dates	Event
January 2026	
Monday 5th January	INSET DAY-School closed to all
Tuesday 6th January	Term begins for Reception-Year 6 children Nursery is closed due to home visits
Wednesday 7th January	Nursery children return
	More dates to follow……

*Please note that key dates are also available via the school's electronic calendar which is accessible through our website by following the link below:
https://www.st-lukesislington.co.uk/diary/grid/2025/12/

After-School Clubs and Enrichment at St Luke's

Day of the week	Club/Enrichment	Year groups	Selection	Cost involved	Club Coordinator/Lead	Venue
Monday	Multi-Sports	Years 3-6	Open to all	Yes	Mr Bennett	St Luke's
	Maths Able and Talented	Year 5/6	Selected	No	Mrs Damolekun/Jill Nicholls/Stephen Barber	St Luke's
	History	Year 5/6	Selected	No	Mr Grey/Mike Greenwood	St Luke's
	Young Women's Group	Years 5-6	Open to all	No	Vicki Hills/Nick Crivello	Soapbox Youth Centre
Tuesday	Football Development Squad	Years 3-6	Selected	Yes	Mr Bennett	St Luke's
Wednesday	Arsenal Double Club	Years 3-6	Open to all	No	Vicki Hills/Henry Milton (Arsenal)	Vibast Community Centre
Thursday	Maths Able and Talented	Years 4 and 5	Selected	No	Mrs Damolekun/Jill Nicholls/Stephen Barber	St Luke's
	Debate It	Years 5-6	Selected	No	Natalia Guitterez/ Hogan Lovells Volunteers	St Luke's
	Drama	Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3	Open to all	Yes	Sarah Mackenzie (Swoosh)	St Luke's

Friday	Choir (Lunchtime) Drama	Years 5-6 Years 5-6	Open to all Open to all	No No	Nick Jones Vicki Hills/Nick Crivello	St Luke's Soapbox Youth Centre

If you would like more information or wish to enrol your child, please speak to Vicki Hills. We are always looking to expand our offer, so if you have links, partnerships, or personal interests you would like to share with our children, we would love to hear from you.

REMINDERS

Nursery applications

If you know any families who have a child who was born between: **1 September 2021 – 31 August 2023** they are eligible for a space in our lovely Nursery. Please do put them in touch with us.

Uniform

Thank you for adhering to our expectations around school uniforms. Our policy and updated guidance can be found here:
https://www.st-lukesislington.co.uk/uniform-information/
Please note the school has two Lost Property crates stored in the Family Kitchen. If your child has lost any items of clothing last term or this term, please contact the office who can give you access to our Lost Property crates. We also have lots of spare uniform that has been donated available in our Family Kitchen. Please do check what we have on offer before buying replacement items for your children.

Scooters and Bikes

Bikes and scooters should not be ridden in the playground. Please be aware all bikes and scooters parked in the playgrounds are left at your own risk, we do not take responsibility for any that are lost or stolen. We would advise you to put your child's name on them.

Birthday cakes and party bags

Please note we are a Healthy School and cannot give out birthday cake and party bags in the classroom.
Parents can however give out cake and bags outside their child's classroom at hometime.

Free School Meals

Islington Council offers free school meals to all Primary school age children. If you are in receipt of a benefit and you register on the Islington website you may also be entitled to a food voucher in the holidays - which total £15.00 a week per child. Please register here:

https://www.islington.gov.uk/children-and-families/help-with-childcare-and-family-costs/free-school-meals-and-uniform-grant

PUPIL CONTACT DETAILS

We are constantly updating our pupil records. Please call on 0207 253 3880 or pop into the school office to provide us with your **email address** if you have one.

We now require a minimum of three contacts for your children

It is very important that we have up to date contact information in case of an emergency.

Also, please inform us if you have changed address or phone number recently.

Thank you.

Contact us: Tel – 020 7253 3880 Email – admin@st-lukes.islington.sch.uk
Website www.st-lukesislington.co.uk X (Twitter) @stlukesoldst

Instagram @stlukesoldst