



19 December 2025

# NEWS & VIEWS

Be the best you can be.

Headteacher: Mr Jamie Foster  
& Deputy CEO



## Headteacher's Comment:

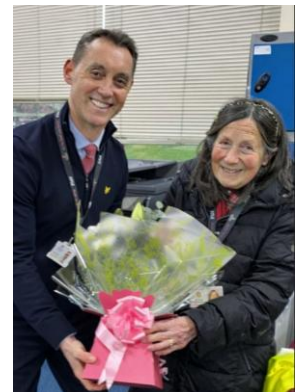
As we come to the end of a busy and successful term, it has been a pleasure to see the positive atmosphere across the school, reflected in the wide range of enrichment, leadership and celebration featured throughout this edition.

This term also marks the retirement of Sandra Freese, who leaves St Martin's after 18 years of dedicated service as a midday assistant. Sandra has made a lasting contribution to the life of the school and we thank her sincerely and wish her a long, happy and well-deserved retirement.

Our Christmas dinners have been another highlight of the final week of term. With over 1,000 festive meals served, I would like to thank our catering team for their professionalism, efficiency and good humour in ensuring pupils enjoyed a positive end-of-term experience.

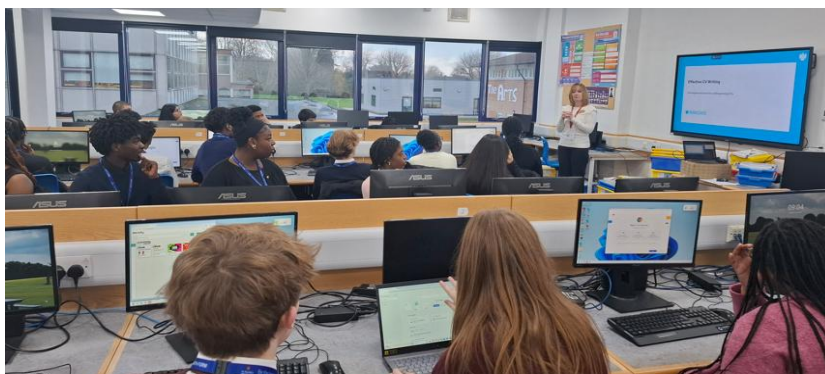
As this edition also highlights, pupils have continued to engage enthusiastically in opportunities beyond the classroom, from careers education and sporting success to leadership and community events. These experiences are central to our commitment to developing confident, well-rounded young people.

On behalf of everyone at St Martin's, I wish our pupils and families a joyful and restful Christmas. We look forward to welcoming **all pupils back on Tuesday 6 January** for the start of the new term.



## Barclays CV Writing Workshop

On Monday, all Year 12 pupils took part in a two-hour CV writing workshop led by Barclays Life Skills. During the session, pupils learned about the purpose of a CV, key elements to include, and common pitfalls to avoid. They then had the opportunity to begin drafting their own CVs, which will be used in their mock interviews in March 2026 as part of our 'Work Ready' careers programme. This initiative is designed to equip pupils with the skills and confidence they need to thrive at St Martin's and beyond, ahead of their Work Experience in July 2026.



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## Drama Spotlight on Year 7

The Drama Department is delighted to celebrate the fantastic achievements of a number of our Year 7 pupils who have recently taken to the stage and screen. This term, we would like to give a special shout-out to:

- **Amelia C**, who performed in *The Little Mermaid* most recently at Thameside and is just about to start rehearsing for *Moana*. Her favourite show to perform in was *Matilda* at the Towngate.
- **Izzy G** and **Mikail A**, who are currently performing in *The Nutcracker* at the Colosseum in London.
- **Alice L**, who featured in *Wicked: For Good* most recently and has starred in a number of short films and been a body double in *The Conjuring*!



We are incredibly proud of their hard work and commitment beyond the classroom. If your child has been involved in a theatre or film project and would like to be featured in our next spotlight, please do get in touch — we would love to celebrate more pupil achievements next term.



## Year 7s Join the Junior Leadership Team

Year 7 pupils were introduced to the Junior Leadership Team in a recent assembly. From there, they were given the chance to apply to be a member of the team. The responses we received were fantastic — after one term, they clearly want to make their mark on St Martin's. And so, on Wednesday 17 December, the pupils were told they were successful and received their badges to officially welcome them to the team! We were joined by Head Girl Isabelle who is supporting the JLT. Our Year 7s will work with pupils and staff across the school, representing their peers to help St Martin's truly be *the best it can be*.



Year 7s JLT: **Brooke Y, Orlando W, Nathan P, Jasmine D, Ayaan R, Violet T, Muna E, Titoluwa K, Harry B, Erin F, Evie C, Michael C, Stanley B, Isabella W, Hetty F, Seb E, Cameron T, Sabrina S, Marcus Y, Caleb H, Angel O, Amelie W.**



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## Primary School Basketball Festival

Recently, we were delighted to welcome over 100 Year 6 pupils from our local primary schools to take part in our annual Primary School Basketball Festival run with our partners at Brentwood Fire. Due to the huge demand, we ran two sessions — one in the morning and one in the afternoon — giving even more children the opportunity to get involved.

Throughout both sessions, pupils took part in a series of fun, competitive and skill-based basketball activities designed to build confidence, teamwork and enjoyment of the game before embarking on competition games. The atmosphere was brilliant, with every child showing great enthusiasm, energy and sportsmanship.



A special thanks to our outstanding Fire Academy pupil leaders, who helped run the event. They took on roles as referees, coaches and activity leaders, supporting the younger pupils, demonstrating skills and making sure every match ran smoothly. Their professionalism, encouragement and leadership were a real credit to our school. We would also like to thank the primary school staff for their support in making the event such a success.



## Essex U16 Rugby

Congratulations to Bori S and Katie C, both in Year 11, who represented Essex U16 Rugby last weekend v Kent RFU. The side was split into 2 teams (gold & red) with both our girls being named CAPTAINS.

We are so proud of you #RoleModels #SAINTS



## Dates for the Diary

- 05.01.2026 – INSET Day (closed to pupils)
- 06.01.2026 – Production Rehearsals
- 07.01.2026 – Production Rehearsals
- Year 13 PPEs commence
- Year 10 & 12 Uni visit
- 08.01.2026 – Year 11 Parents' Evening – In person
- Year 10 & 12 Uni visit

### Word of the Week Week 14 solstice



**noun:** The time of year when the Sun is at its highest or lowest point in the sky at noon, marking the longest or shortest day.

**Sentence:** The winter solstice (shortest day) is around December 21st.



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For PE fixtures please follow twitter @StMartinsSchPE for further PE updates

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# SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

Christmas 2025 Issue

Our Newsletter for Christmas provides some information around online safety, access to foodbanks and other support over the festive period as well as support for victims of domestic abuse. We have also signposted to mental health support, but if you would like to learn more and are interested in accessing free online courses, then please look here: [Southend, Essex and Thurrock Children's Getting Help Service](#)

On behalf of the whole Team here at St Martins, may we wish you a peaceful Christmas and New Year and we look forward to welcoming students back on Tuesday 6 January 2026.

## Online safety



Sort your Settings is a campaign by Essex Police to help make devices safer for children and young people. It provides information on how to set parental controls for many of the devices used online, as well as safety advice for social media use and using AI safely. For further information please see here:

[How to make your child's devices safer | Essex Police](#)

You can also access further advice and information around keeping your family and children safe on line for the Essex CC endorsed duo 'The 2 Johns' whose website can be accessed here: [Parent/Carer Area - eSafety Training](#)



## Emotional wellbeing

Christmas can be an extremely difficult time for many parents as well as students. To help support you over the Christmas period, MIND have some helpful tips which can be accessed here:

[Christmas and mental health](#)

Students will still be able to access online the Kooth counselling services [Home - Kooth](#) as well as the podcasts on how to look after your mental health and activities to boost wellbeing

If you or anyone you know is feeling isolated this festive period, support and connection can be found here. You can still feel lonely when surrounded by others:

[Tackling Loneliness This Festive Season: How the Essex Map Can Help – The Essex Alliance](#)



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## **Children and young people - 24/7 CRISIS SUPPORT**

A mental health crisis means your child is very distressed and worried and you require urgent support in managing them:

- They might want to hurt themselves or someone else
- They might be feeling actively suicidal
- They might hear strange noises or feel that people are watching them or wanting to hurt them.

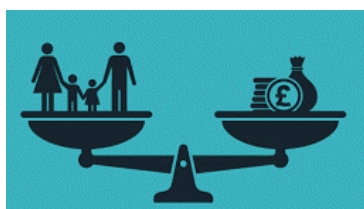
### **If you feel your child is in crisis and in need of urgent mental health support**

We are a 24 hour 7 day a week service.

**Monday – Friday 9.00AM – 5:00PM** Call SET CAMHS - Freephone **0800 953 0222**

**After 5:00PM** if your concerns escalate about your child outside of these hours please call Mental Health Direct on freephone **0800 995 1000** (Out of Hours / Weekend or Bank Holidays).

**If it is an emergency, immediate danger to life/safety dial 999 or visit Accident and Emergency (A&E).**



## **Welfare issues**

If you are struggling and need to access support from the Foodbank, further information can be found here:

[Contact Us | Brentwood Foodbank](#)

For Christmas financial support in Brentwood and Billericay, contact **Citizens Advice** for general help (Billericay: 0808 278 7877) and check Essex County Council's **Essential Living Fund** (0300 7900124) for food/bills, alongside local food banks and the **Salvation Army** for gifts.

## **Support for victims of Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse, whether towards a female or male partner, can significantly affect the children who live in that environment. Exposure to violence, coercion or ongoing emotional manipulation disrupts a child's sense of safety and can influence their behaviour, relationships and engagement in learning.

Hestia is a London-based charity that supports adults and children in crisis, delivering frontline services and campaigning nationally on issues such as domestic abuse, modern slavery and mental health. They have created the Bright Sky app, a free and discreet tool that helps people recognise signs of abuse, access specialist support and record concerns safely.

For further information, you can access the website here: <https://www.hestia.org/brightsky>



## **St Martin's Safeguarding**



Mrs McGorrell  
DDSL



Mrs Tatman  
DDSL



Mrs Wilson  
DDSL



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