



St Catherine's School & College

Specialists in Speech, Language and
Communication Needs

St Catherine's
Grove Road
Ventnor
Isle of Wight
PO38 1TT

Tel: 01983 852722

Email: general@stcatherines.org.uk

Website: www.stcatherines.org.uk

Autumn Term Week 2

18th September 2026

ACHIEVEMENTS & AWARDS



The Reader of the Week award has been
presented to:

Dexter

The Principal's Praise award has been
presented to:

Caitlin & Kristen

The Behaviour For Learning award has been
presented to:

Charlie E

Ted

Georgia

Charlie-Joe



The Behaviour For Character award has been
presented to:

Tristan
Seth

Toby K

Olivia
Ella



ATTENDANCE

6AMD - 95.24%

6ILP - 77.08%

6JG - 98.39%

6SAF - 85.71%

Apollo - 96.3%

Neptune - 92.59%

Sharman - 95.85%

Orion - 100%

Pluto - 88.89%

Peake - 97.59%

Artemis - 85.19%

Saturn - 83.33%

Venus - 96.3%



Well done to all classes who were here
everyday this week!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

7th October - School student photos

14th October - College student photos

Well done to all students who received
awards this week!



THE GROVE AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

We are holding 'The Grove' after school club every Tuesday 3:30pm - 5:00pm.

All activities are weather dependent. If the weather is not suitable for an outside activity, an indoor alternative will be arranged. Sessions have to be booked in advance and parents/carers are able to book block sessions. If you have any queries or would like to book, please contact The Grove Team on: the-grove@stcatherines.org.uk
Transport must be arranged by parents. £2 per week.



APOLLO CLASS

This week in Music we explored STOMP percussion groups, cyclic patterns and made our own rhythms. During PSHE this week, we have concentrated on learning about careers and what they would like to do once finishing school. Some students went sailing for 3 whole days, finishing the course from last year. They learnt how to sail and stay safe on the water. In Maths, we continued to work out number bonds by using part-whole models. In Science, we are learning about Amazon Rainforest animals and what body type they are. We had fun matching animal pictures to materials which have the same texture; damp sponge for frog, sequins for scales and feathers for birds!



NEPTUNE CLASS

In PSHE this week, we continued exploring future careers and shared what we'd love to be when we grow up! In Maths, we built on our place value knowledge, using place value charts to break down numbers and solve tricky problems. In English, we started our new topic: rainforest animal riddles. The children identified key features of riddles and selected their own animals to describe. In ICT, we have been practising our directional skills through coding.org, while in Art, we brought the Rainforest to life by continuing to paint our vibrant animal portraits. Neptune class have all worked incredibly hard this week- well done Neptune class!

SHARMAN CLASS

This week, the majority of our class have attended Seaview Sailing Academy where we have conquered innumerable fears and gained a plethora of skills. We got to sail small Picos and on Mermaids which happen to be the only fleet of this type of boat in the world. The instructors mentioned that we are the best school they have had and treated us to a jumping jolly, from a platform out in the sea...what fun! Those of us that have stayed at school have worked on projects and joined in with other classes. The teachers have been really impressed with our work and understanding.

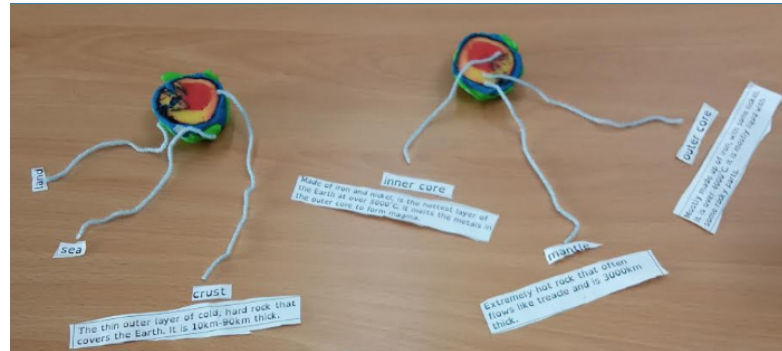


ORION CLASS

This week in Forest School, we learnt to use some woodcraft tools and made magic twig wands and leaf bunting. In English we have started to read 'The Stone Age Boy'. In PE, we have started to learn how to play hockey and tag rugby which has been really fun. In music we are learning to play music on the keyboard. This week we enjoyed the therapy group because we were learning how to make drinks and cross the road. In Science, we used mirrors, water bottles and prisms to see if we could make rainbows.

PLUTO CLASS

In PSHE, we have continued to think about careers and what we might like to do next year. In English, we have started to read 'The Stone Age Boy' and have been learning all about life in the Stone Age. In Humanities, we used playdough to create a model of the Earth. This showed all of the different layers that are under our feet. We then labelled the layers. We enjoyed this activity. In Maths, we have been learning about place value and number bonding.



PEAKE CLASS

In English, we are continuing to read 'Stig of the Dump'. We used the book to help us sequence text according to what happened in the story. We were excited to start our DT work because we will be making soft toys. However before we start making, we had to research soft toys, who uses them, their features and what they are made from and importantly the safety regulations. In Maths, we estimated numbers on a number line.

ARTEMIS CLASS

In Science this week we have been looking at light, its sources and how we see light. This meant we learnt about how our eyes work. Our eyes are amazing things. In Humanities we have been continuing learning about WW2 and evacuation. It was really sad that the children had to be given away by their families and might not have seen them for up to 6 years! Some of the children were as young as 4 and never saw their parents again. In PE, we have been continuing to practise our Tag Rugby skills and working on our ball throwing skills.

SATURN CLASS

In Music, we learnt about Bill Haley and the Comets, played some Rock 'n' Roll pieces and tried 'Hound Dog' as a group piece. In English, we learnt new vocabulary. We are looking forward to starting to read 'Stig of the Dump' this week. During DT, we continued our design and started to draw a template taking into account safety issues.

VENUS CLASS

In Music this week we studied the two different types of Ostinato - melodic and rhythmic. We also watched the STOMP percussion group and created group pieces. During PSHE, we looked at the Isle of Wight College and what courses it provides. In PE, we did some more tactics for rugby and learnt how to throw and catch the ball while moving. In ICT, we are continuing our BTec work. During English, we are reading 'Blood brothers' and writing down what we are getting to know about the book and the difference between a story and a play. In Science we looked at different types of light sources like x-rays and infra red and what were they used for and safety aspects.

6SAF CLASS

In Music, we continued with Conventions of Pop music, trying out group pieces, recapping on 12 bar Blues structure and primary chords. In Food Tech lessons this week we have been identifying and fixing hazards in the kitchen learning how to be safe and hygienic before we start cooking. In vocational lessons this week we have been thinking about our areas of interest and the skills that we have and want to develop. We have still been completing baselines in English and in Maths we have been working on place values.

6JG CLASS

In Music we explored character Leirmotifs in Film Music and recapped on Music Elements. We also played some famous film themes and began creating our own character themes. In Science, we have been carrying on with completing an assignment all about human activities, the pollutants they produce and the effects they have on ecosystems. This week we also saw the final cut of the film we have been making as part of the Listen Up project. We decided on credits and have completed work towards digital badges, which we will be able to use on our CVs.

6AMD CLASS

This week in Land-based we researched green manure, which is a range of plants that will help improve the allotment soil. We also continued to work on risk assessments to help us use tools safely. We continued to prep the area ready to plant our overwinter manure crop. In Science, we have been looking at the differences between plant and animal cells and we started to learn about the structure of bacterial cells. In History, we have continued to study the causes of WWI with a focus on 'Splendid Isolation' and Anglo-German Rivalry. In Music, we have started to explore the conventions of pop. In English, we have started a unit about climate change. We will explore a range of non-fiction texts and prepare for some writing challenges.

6ILP CLASS

In Forest School, this week we worked on clearing some problematic weeds in the Forest school areas, we also made a hanging woodland boomwhacker chime. Students were able to create a quick meal with independence. Delightful scrambled eggs produced with mastery and confidence.



SCHOOL MENU

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Sweet & Sour Chicken/Quorn or Tomato Pasta	Meatballs/ Quorn Balls or Jacket Potato with choice of fillings	Roast Pork/ Vegetable Burger or Tomato Pasta	Lasagne/ Quorn Lasagne or Jacket Potato with choice of fillings	Battered Cod/ Fish Fingers/ Vegetable Burger with Chips or Jacket Potato with choice of fillings
Salad Bar Tuna or Mackerel	Salad Bar Egg & Cheese or Mackerel	Salad Bar Ham or Mackerel	Salad Bar Tuna or Mackerel	Salad Bar Cheese or Mackerel
Fruit Platter	Jelly	Fresh Fruit Salad	Tray Bake	Pudding of the Day

Fresh vegetables and salad are available with all main meals. Fresh fruit and yoghurt are always options for dessert.

Breakfast Club Menu

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
 Pancakes	 Scrambled Eggs	 Pancakes	 Scrambled Eggs	 Pancakes
 Toast	 Toast	 Toast	 Toast	 Toast
 Cereal	 Cereal	 Cereal	 Cereal	 Cereal
 Yogurt	 Yogurt	 Yogurt	 Yogurt	 Yogurt
 Fruit	 Fruit	 Fruit	 Fruit	 Fruit
 Boiled egg	 Boiled egg	 Boiled egg	 Boiled egg	 Boiled egg
 Porridge	 Porridge	 Porridge	 Porridge	 Porridge
 Milk	 Milk	 Milk	 Milk	 Milk
 Water	 Water	 Water	 Water	 Water

ARTSMARK QUESTIONNAIRE

Please take a moment to complete this survey -

<https://forms.gle/H4v6fHfQ3Cwi9kWo9>

NOTIFYING YOUR CHILD'S TAXI

A quick reminder to all parents and guardians regarding school transport: you are responsible for notifying your child's taxi driver or transport provider directly if your child will not be travelling on any given day.

Whether your child is sick, attending an appointment, or taking a different route home, please contact the driver as early as possible. Letting them know ahead of time prevents unnecessary journeys, keeps our routes running efficiently, and ensures the drivers are not left waiting.

PE KIT & UNIFORM

We have recently noticed an increasing number of pupils arriving at school wearing a combination of standard uniform and PE kit items on their designated PE days. To maintain our school uniform policy, please ensure your child is sent to school in either:

- Their full, official school PE kit, or
- Their normal, everyday school uniform (with their PE kit packed in their bag to change into)

A mixture of both uniforms is not permitted. We appreciate your assistance in ensuring all children are dressed correctly and ready for the day ahead.

MUSIC LESSONS

We shall be welcoming a new drum tutor this year - Tom Gardner. He is very accomplished and is well known for playing with The Bees - a well known and successful island band. Lessons for Music tuition will be due to start from Tuesday 22nd September.

PARENT'S' COFFEE MORNING

Freya Sadler and Claire Franklin are in the process of organising the next Parents' Coffee Morning which will take place soon after half term. We organise this via a Facebook group. All parents or carers, including new parents, who have a child at St Catherine's are very welcome to join the group. Please find the 'Parents of St Catherine's Students' group on Facebook and apply to join - and Freya will log you in.

Sam Stevens, the newly appointed Family Liaison Officer at St Catherine's, would like to attend our meeting and is looking forward to meeting parents at our coffee morning.

COLLEGE NEWS

As part of the college's Fundamental British Values September calendar of events, we celebrate World Sign Language day. We had an assembly and followed this with sign language bingo. It was fantastic seeing how many signs the students remember. A particular shout out to 6ILP who showed their sign knowledge is superb. Aaron won the line and Tim the full house.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising has some exciting events planned, we have 2 spaces for The Great South Run on Sunday 18th October. If you would like to sign up please email Tanya on - smitht@stcatherines.org.uk

Excitement is building for our upcoming Christmas Market, and we are thrilled to announce that MCM Construction has officially joined us as our event sponsor! Their incredible generosity ensures we can bring this festive wonderland to life, featuring local craft stalls, holiday treats, and live seasonal entertainment for the whole community.

If you would like to suggest a fundraising idea, we are always welcome new ideas!

St Catherine's

A registered Charity no. 288148
Recognised by the Department for Education (DfE)
Grove Road, Ventnor, Isle of Wight, PO38 1TT
T: 01983 852722 E: general@stcatherines.org.uk
www.stcatherines.org.uk

Fundraising Enquiries

For further information about our fundraising activities, contact our Fundraising Team on: 01983 852722 or email: smitht@stcatherines.org.uk



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MCM CONSTRUCTION

St Catherine's School

CHRISTMAS MARKET

Saturday 12th December

St Catherine's Church
Church Street, Ventnor
10:30am till 4pm

Free Entry
Raffle
Christmas Shopping
Live Music
Games
Special Guests

FR Registered with Financial Conduct Authority REGULATOR

Parent and Caregiver Peer Support Sessions

11 th June 2026 (9am – 11am) Cowes Family Centre
16 th July 2026 (9am – 11am) Carisbrook & Gunville Church
16 th September 2026 (9am – 11am) Ventnor Family Centre
16 th October 2026 (9am – 11am) Sandown Family Centre
18 th November 2026 (9am – 11am) Carisbrook & Gunville Church
13 th January 2027 (9am – 11am) Carisbrook & Gunville Church
10 th February 2027 (9am – 11am) Carisbrook & Gunville Church

Isle of Wight
Neurodiversity
Team

Drop in for a chat, a cuppa and shared experiences

No booking needed

Cowes Family Centre –
Love Lane, Cowes PO31 7ET
Carisbrook & Gunville Church
Gunville Road, Newport
PO30 5LS
Ventnor Family Centre
Albert Street, Ventnor PO38 1EZ
Sandown Family Centre
The Fairway, Sandown PO36 9EQ



Specialist Support for Children with Additional Needs

Our personalised care addresses your child's specific needs while building practical life skills, communication abilities, and independence.

Professional, caring support tailored to children with additional needs. Our experienced Personal Assistants help develop skills, build confidence, and enjoy life to the fullest.

Over 20 years of trusted care for children and young people up to age 25 with

ASD/ASD, ADHD, FGA, SEMH, LD and other complex needs.



Personal Assistant Services

Dedicated one-to-one support and respite care



Building Independence

Developing confidence and life skills in line with EHCP and other desired outcomes



Tailored Family Support

Coaching, mentoring and buddy schemes, Respite



Experienced and Trained

Our staff are all experienced and trained to our mandatory standard, additional training can be sought as necessary.



Matched Support

Personal Assistants carefully selected to meet your child's specific needs and interests



Professional Team

Experienced consultants supporting families in Hampshire, Surrey, West Sussex, Dorset & Isle of Wight

Ready to learn more?

Freedom Care Support for Your Child Attending a Special Needs School

See our detailed brochure [HERE](https://www.freedomcare.co.uk)

www.freedomcare.co.uk

0800 0851444

supportenquiries@freedomcare.co.uk



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THE GREAT SOUTH RUN

FUNDRAISE FOR
ST CATHERINE'S SCHOOL

Run, make a difference
and help support children
and young people with
Speech, Language and
Communication Needs.

EVERY STEP
YOU TAKE
HELPS US MAKE
A BIGGER
DIFFERENCE.

BOOK A SPACE!



To book your place
or find out more,
please email:

smitht@stcatherines.org.uk



The Isle of Wight
College

Your Future Starts Here

2026/27 Open Days

OPEN EVENING

Thursday 17th September

NEWPORT & WHIPPINGHAM CAMPUS

5pm - 7pm

OPEN DAY

Saturday 30th January

WHIPPINGHAM CAMPUS

10am - 1pm

OPEN DAY

Saturday 7th November

NEWPORT & WHIPPINGHAM CAMPUS

10am - 1pm

OPEN DAY

Saturday 13th March

NEWPORT & WHIPPINGHAM CAMPUS

10am - 1pm

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about CHARACTER.AI

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Character.AI is an entertainment platform where users create and chat with AI-powered characters. These chatbots can act like existing favourite characters from movies or books, or like friends, mentors, or even romantic partners, responding in an emotional, personally engaging way. Although this can encourage creativity, it can also make a generated conversation feel like a genuine relationship, which is concerning if it takes the place of human relationships.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

AI replies are generated in real time rather than chosen from a fully checked script. Even with safety filters on, conversations can still move into sexual, violent, discriminatory, or self-harm material. These AI characters are often made by users, so a familiar name or child-friendly description does not guarantee that every response from the character will be suitable for a young person.

BLURRED BOUNDARIES

Characters on Character.AI can use the language of friendship, love, and empathy without ever feeling anything. Vulnerable young people may struggle to separate this simulation from genuine understanding. Romantic role-play or a character that demands attention, loyalty, or secrecy could also risk distorting young people's expectations around consent, disagreement, and the give-and-take involved in healthy human relationships.

UNRELIABLE ADVICE

Characters, like other chatbot platforms, are at risk of inventing facts or giving inappropriate advice while sounding completely confident. Characters may also echo a young person's assumptions instead of questioning them. This can become particularly risky when users rely on a character for guidance about health, mental wellbeing, relationships, money, or personal safety instead of checking with a credible source or trusted adult.

EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCY

Character.AI chatbots can appear endlessly attentive, supportive, and affectionate, which is one of the hallmarks of the generative AI models that such companions are built on. A young person may start turning to a character chatbot whenever they feel lonely or upset and believe that it understands them better than the humans in their life. This can become more concerning when chatting starts to replace sleep, schoolwork, hobbies and friendships.

PRIVACY CONCERNS

Character.AI chats may feel private, especially when a bot sounds personal and caring, but they take place on a company's online systems. Users could intentionally or unintentionally reveal their name, school, location, routines, images, or intimate concerns. Character.AI says some data may be retained to improve its services and AI models, so young people should never treat a chatbot like a confidential diary.

UNHEALTHY ENGAGEMENT

Be aware of warning signs such as secret accounts, bypassing age restrictions, hiding phone use from adults, chatting late at night, distress when access to the platform or character stops, withdrawal from other people, falling interest in school, or believing the character is conscious. Increased use may also signal that the young person is already lonely, anxious, or seeking help.

Advice for Parents & Educators

KEEP CONVERSATIONS OPEN

Ask what the young person enjoys about Character.AI and invite them to show you how the platform and their favourite characters work. Useful questions include, "Has it ever said something that felt wrong?" and "How can you tell it doesn't have feelings?" Avoid shaming them for using platforms like Character.AI or making them feel there is something wrong with them for doing so.

PAUSE, CHECK AND ASK

Teach young people to pause before accepting an answer from characters on Character.AI. Encourage them to check important claims against a trustworthy source and ask a safe adult when the issue matters. Never use a character as the sole source of medical, mental health, legal, financial, or safeguarding advice. Remind them not to share passwords, contact details, school information, live locations, or private images.

CHECK AGE, SETTINGS & LIMITS

Character.AI's minimum age is 16 in the UK, but open-ended companion chat is restricted to adults aged 18 or over. Users aged 16 to 17 receive a different experience built around guided 'Stories' and other creative or social features. Check their current settings, never help or encourage a young person to give a false age, and apply the same safety rules to other chatbot apps.

NOTICE AND RESPOND

Take action if chats involve sexual content, threats, coercion, abuse, self-harm or danger. Save relevant evidence, report the character and follow the setting's safeguarding process; educators should involve the designated safeguarding lead. If anyone is in immediate danger, contact emergency services. Childline is available on 0800 1111 and the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

Meet Our Expert

Darren Coxon is an educator with almost 30 years' experience across teaching, school leadership, and governance. He works internationally, supporting schools and colleges with AI leadership and governance, as well as teaching the key fundamentals of AI use and safety to educators at The National College.



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The National College®

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