

Sports Spotlight

"Be who God wants you to be, and you will set the world on fire." - St Catherine of Siena

WELCOME NOTE

MRS JOHNEEN MCPHERSON

Dear Parents,

This special edition is designed to update families about sport at St Catherine's. I know that PE, fitness and competition are important to the girls and that you are very interested in the best possible provision for your daughters.

Firstly, I'd like to say how pleased I have always been to see St Catherine's girls' eagerness to participate in PE lessons, and their excellent team work when it comes to any game. Over the years, it has been clear that the pupils also very much value the support and encouragement they receive from the dedicated PE team.

Earlier this year - after discussion with SMT and Governors - a new strategy for PE development began. The appointment of a Director of Sport was the first step, enabling a united Prep and Senior approach, in keeping with the new shape of the School. Since taking up this post in September, Miss Feenan has been committed to reviewing provision and bringing about change. We've included a section in this newsletter to properly introduce all the team so that you know who is working hard to improve sports provision at St Catherine's.

A key goal has been to develop the fixtures programme. In September, we changed the timetable so that most year groups have sport together and, with our recent move to My School Portal, we will now be able to use SOCS to facilitate the organisation and management of fixtures going forwards. This functionality, which will be in place by January will improve our ability to connect with other schools and to plan fixtures.

As you will appreciate, fixtures are usually planned by schools a term or more in advance which means more fixtures will be in place in 2024. Nevertheless, there have already been a number of games for the girls this term, and this newsletter includes highlights of their commitment - and the fun they've had.

Another goal is to review the range of activities. Of course, a balance must be found between having a wide variety of sports and activities, and committing to the development of a few popular sports. In talking to the girls it is clear that there are many opinions about this; just this week, when speaking with a group of Lower School girls about PE, some were welcoming a half term of football and others were missing their netball (though there are still clubs for them). The addition of rowing machines, circus skills, volleyball and badminton have added more variety for the girls this term. And I think you will find that 'variety' is also the right word once you see the features inside about netball, football, swimming, dance, trampolining and much more.

I hope you enjoy this celebration of the girls' sporting activities and achievements; there will be further updates as the year goes on.

With best wishes
Mrs McPherson





SPORT AT ST CATHERINE'S

It is an exciting time for Sport at St Catherine's! I am so proud to be the Director of Sport and to be responsible for delivering a new vision for Sport at St Catherine's. I am committed to developing and implementing a vibrant and holistic sports programme that not only hones skills, but also instils a lifelong love of physical activity, teamwork and positivity. I truly believe there is a sport for everyone and that finding one that suits you has a powerful effect on wellbeing and happiness. The most important, and enduring outcome which a school can promote is attitude. A positive attitude towards health and exercise, together with an understanding of its value and a habit of being active are things which will sustain pupils throughout their lives. Sport and PE lessons should be fun, engaging, challenging, progressive and something to look forward to, regardless of ability.

A successful Sports Department must offer a curriculum that meets the needs of its students and which is relevant and stimulating. We have therefore redesigned our curriculum in Year 7 - 11 and moved from teaching three sports to five sports in the Autumn and Spring Terms. This will provide pupils with a more diverse range of sporting experiences and opportunities. This term has also seen the exciting addition of some high quality rowing machines, which have been generously donated by FOSC. These will be used in both lessons and co-curricular clubs and we are very excited about the development of rowing at St Catherine's. We will be teaching cricket in the Senior School during the Summer Term and we are looking forward to introducing more new sports into the curriculum in due course. We are also expanding our fixture list and challenging ourselves against new opponents. Last week was a particularly busy week for sport at school and the girls enjoyed all of the fixtures taking place.

Zoe Feenan, Director of Sport

WHAT'S NEW IN SPORT?

We are super excited that our new rowing machines have arrived. Year 7 and Year 9 have co-curricular rowing clubs in which they are currently working on basic technique and building stamina.

The biggest misconception about rowing is that it is an upper-body-only exercise. In fact, rowing engages up to 86% of the body's major muscle groups, so you're working your arms, shoulders, core, back, glutes and legs.

DID YOU KNOW?

Rowing can help develop strength in individual body parts such as the arms, legs, and core, improve cardiovascular health, and increase endurance. Also, rowing is a low-impact workout that is easier on joints than high-impact exercises like running.



Some of our Year 7 pupils enjoying the new lunchtime rowing club.



MEET THE TEAM

Mrs Walters

When did you join St Catherine's?

I have been at St Catherine's since 2018.

Which sports do you specialise in?

I specialise in any invasion games, for example: football and netball. I also teach a range of other sports and activities.

What do you think is the best thing about these sports?

I love the team element involved in these sports. I love working as a team and the physical and competitive aspects involved.

What is your greatest sporting achievement?

I represented Surrey County in football and well as playing for Barnet FC, including playing against QPR at Loftus Road. I ran the London Marathon in aid of Cancer Research; training for this whilst having two small children and a job felt like an achievement in itself! Fun fact: I was also a ball girl at Wimbledon.

What is your sporting ambition?

I am training for a half marathon.

What do you enjoy most about being a PE teacher at St

Catherine's? *I love the enthusiasm of the girls in lessons and how encouraging they are to each other. I also love teaching a range of sports/activities to enable them to discover an activity that they love.*

What three words sum up the character of sport at St Catherine's?

Teamwork, enjoyment, competitive.

Which sports person do you most admire and why?

Emma Hayes (manager at Chelsea WFC). She has raised the profile of women's football, as well as women's sport in general. She is passionate about equality and raising the standards of the women's game by being outspoken about problems in the game such as access to facilities etc.

Nelson Mandela said 'Sport has the power to change the world'.

Do you agree? Do you have any experiences of what sport can achieve?

Sport is a mirror of society: it can bring people together, working towards a common goal, it can strengthen ties and celebrate common ideals, such as fairness, hope and enjoyment. I saw this while doing charity work in Zimbabwe where we organised football and volleyball tournaments with children that were living on the streets.

If you had to choose one thing that you want pupils to experience or achieve through sport at St Catherine's, what would it be?

Fulfilment.



MEET THE TEAM

Mrs Mercer

When did you join St Catherine's?

I have been at St Catherine's since September 2020.

Which sports do you specialise in?

I specialise in netball, cricket and athletics, and also teach a range of other sports at St Catherine's.

What do you think is the best thing about these sports?

I've always loved team sports and the way you are working to create and problem-solve together. The friends I've made in sports teams are some of the best, as you are put under pressure together and go through lots of highs and lows together week in, week out.

What is your greatest sporting achievement?

I played Country Cricket for Kent from U11-U19 into Academy level, have played at Lords Cricket Ground and walked through the Long Room. More recently, my netball team was promoted into Regional 2 league.

What is your sporting ambition?

I'm currently getting myself back to full fitness after having a child so that I can continue to compete with my netball team.

What do you enjoy most about being a PE teacher at St Catherine's?

Showing pupils that they can achieve and improve their skills, especially when they have a preconceived idea that they might not be able to.

What three words sum up the character of sport at St Catherine's?

Endeavour, Togetherness, Enjoyment

Which sports person do you most admire and why?

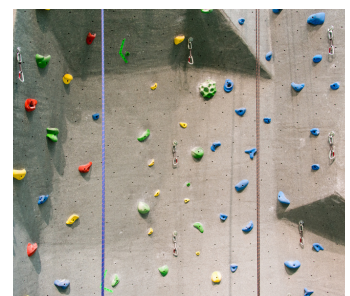
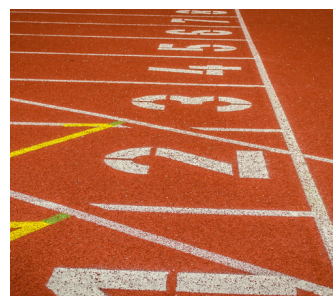
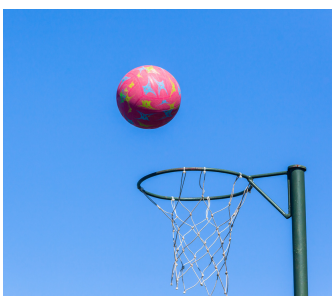
Dame Kelly Holmes has been a hero of mine since winning Double Gold in the 2004 Olympics. I also have great admiration for Leah Williamson: leading the Lionesses to European victory and then working hard to rehab and come back to full fitness after an ACL injury made her miss the World Cup.

Nelson Mandela said 'Sport has the power to change the world'. Do you agree? Do you have any experiences of what sport can achieve?

Sport can bring people together who would not normally meet. It forces cooperation and encourages resilience. There is always a puzzle that needs solving, whether that is as a team on a netball court or on your own at the bottom of a climbing wall. It boosts confidence and improves mental health. What sport can achieve is endless, which is what makes it so valuable.

If you had to choose one thing that you want pupils to experience or achieve through sport at St Catherine's, what would it be?

Above all, enjoyment of physical activity that they can take through into their adult lives.



MEET THE TEAM

Miss Uren

When did you join St Catherine's?

I have been at St Catherine's since January 2023.

Which sports do you specialise in?

I specialise in swimming teaching and coaching, and teach a range of different sports as well.

What do you think is the best thing about these sports?

I have always loved swimming and, when I was younger, I used to compete at regional level and spent many hours swim training alongside my running training. I think I spent more time in the water or on poolside than I did anywhere else.

What is your greatest sporting achievement?

I recently ran a half Marathon for Macmillian Cancer Charity. I ran 2:24:00 for 800m and sub 20min for 5k.

What is your sporting ambition?

I would love to compete in a Crossfit Competition next year and also build up to running a Marathon.

What do you enjoy most about being a PE teacher at St Catherine's?

I really enjoy teaching the girls new sports, and seeing them develop a love for exercise. All the girls have such a positive mindset, which makes the lessons really enjoyable to teach.

What three words sum up the character of sport at St Catherine's?

Enjoyable, Competitive, Positive.

Which sports person do you most admire and why?

My sister Emma Uren as I get to see how much hard work and dedication goes into her rugby.

Nelson Mandela said 'Sport has the power to change the world'. Do you agree? Do you have any experiences of what sport can achieve?

Yes, I do agree with this. Sports brings people together and spreads laughter and smiles.

Yes, I do agree with this. Sports brings people together and spreads laughter and smiles.

If you had to choose one thing that you want pupils to experience or achieve through sport at St Catherine's, what would it be?

For each girl to find a sport that she enjoys, and can take part in outside of school, so that she can feel the sense of achievement that sport brings.



“ SPORTS BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER AND SPREADS LAUGHTER AND SMILES. ”

MEET THE TEAM



Mr Frangos

When did you join St Catherine's?

I joined St Catherine's in September 2023.

Which sports do you specialise in?

I specialise in rugby, football and cricket. I also teach a wide range of other sports including hockey, tennis and netball.

What do you think is the best thing about these sports?

Rugby is a fantastic sport as it teaches all the right personal skills and sporting etiquette needed in sports. No matter how the game has gone, at the end of the match you shake hands and speak with the opposition. Referees are also well respected in rugby - something I feel football can learn from.

What is your greatest sporting achievement?

I have represented Cyprus in rugby.

What is your sporting ambition?

To run a marathon. I've run four halves so far and I'm trying to build up to a full one.

What do you enjoy most about being a PE teacher at St Catherine's?

The girls' attitude and willingness to learn.

What three words sum up the character of sport at St Catherine's?

Resilient, inclusive, and enjoyable.

Which sports person do you most admire and why?

Jason Robinson OBE, rugby world cup winning player in 2003. Jason did not have an easy childhood, however he did not let this hold him back. In fact he used this to motivate himself to get into sport and went on to become one of England rugby's most exciting players. Not only did Jason play for England rugby union winning the world cup, he also played for England rugby league very successfully.

Nelson Mandela said 'Sport has the power to change the world'. Do you agree? Do you have any experiences of what sport can achieve?

Sport certainly does have the power to change the world; this is something I agree with very strongly. I did some charity work for the Wooden Spoon society. Their aim is to positively transform the lives of vulnerable children and young people through the power of rugby. I was amazed by how sport could put a smile on the faces of the children.

If you had to choose one thing that you want pupils to experience or achieve through sport at St Catherine's, what would it be?

I would like every pupil to feel that they have achieved something in PE at school. I strongly stress to the girls that something you think is small might be very big to another pupil, so always encourage each other.



MEET THE TEAM

Ms Charlton

When did you join St Catherine's?

I have been at St Catherine's since September 2023.

Which sports do you specialise in?

My main sport is netball but I enjoy coaching lots of other sports too.

What do you think is the best thing about these sports?

The best thing about netball is that it is a team sport that benefits all fitness levels in a fun way. It's not just about having agility, endurance, and coordination, it is a sport that helps build friendship and confidence too.

What is your greatest sporting achievement?

My greatest sporting accomplishment would be when we played the cup game against our rival university last year and we beat them! I received the first bottle of prosecco of the season and player of the week for being the most hardworking player who always shows enthusiasm and positivity.

What is your sporting ambition?

My sporting ambition would be coaching professional athletes or netball players, specialising in sports nutrition. I want to inspire the next generation to understand that sport isn't just about ability, it's also about how we fuel ourselves to train better and perform to the best of our ability.

What do you enjoy most about being a PE teacher at St Catherine's?

What I enjoy most is all the great people I have met. The students and teachers are all so lovely. I admire how all the girls show great enthusiasm for sport, making it so enjoyable to teach.

What three words sum up the character of sport at St Catherine's?

Enthusiasm, dedication and positivity.

Which sports person do you most admire and why?

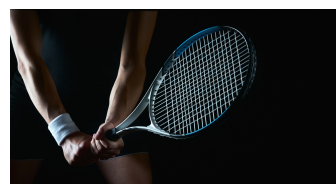
Serena Williams is such an amazing athlete. I admire her passion and love for sport - it is so inspirational. A quote that sticks with me is when she said, "I just went on court with a ball, a racket and hope." From these humble beginnings she went on to become one of the greatest tennis players of all time. She is admirable.

Nelson Mandela said 'Sport has the power to change the world'. Do you agree? Do you have any experiences of what sport can achieve?

Yes, 100%! Sport has the ability to change you mentally, physically and emotionally, and it is the bridge between fitness and fun. When you play a sport it encourages dedication, discipline, and commitment. Sport is such an amazing thing, and it definitely has the power to change the world.

If you had to choose one thing that you want pupils to experience or achieve through sport at St Catherine's, what would it be?

I want St Catherine's pupils to grow a passion for sport and to realise just how much it can help in every area of life. I want them to be able to increase their fitness levels and ability, while having fun. Sport teaches lessons like discipline, teamwork, self-confidence, and accountability; these are all great life skills that I hope to bring out in the pupils at St Catherine's. I want the girls to achieve high levels of sport so they are able to pursue careers in sport, if they want to.



MEET THE TEAM

Ms Feenan

When did you join St Catherine's?

I have been at St Catherine's since January 2021.

Which sports do you specialise in?

I hold coaching qualifications across a diverse spectrum of sports, ranging from the conventional, such as swimming and football, to the more unique disciplines like handball and boxing. While I find joy in coaching various sports, rugby holds a special place in my heart, especially when it comes to introducing girls to the game for the first time.

What do you think is the best thing about these sports?

Rugby is a great sport for girls as it promotes physical fitness, teamwork, and empowerment, fostering confidence and resilience.

What is your greatest sporting achievement?

My rugby team was the first ever women's team to play at Kingsholm Stadium, it was the semi-final of a national cup game which we unfortunately lost.

What is your sporting ambition?

I'm currently training to take part in an event called HYROX. It involves eight 1km runs with a workout in between each run. I recently competed in the Turf Games over the Summer, which is a CrossFit competition, taking part in the team events.

What do you enjoy most about being a PE teacher at St Catherine's?

I love witnessing pupils progress, master new skills, and gain confidence. One distinctive aspect of St Catherine's is the numerous girls who generously dedicate their free time to volunteer and assist in coaching younger pupils. It's fantastic to observe the dynamic interactions and relationships among pupils, and each week, I see our pupil coaches flourishing in confidence under the guidance of their teacher.

What three words sum up the character of sport at St Catherine's?

Inclusive, developmental and fun

Which sports person do you most admire and why?

My current favourite sports person is Katie McCabe, the Ireland football captain and Arsenal player. Although she is prone to the odd yellow card, her commitment and passion cannot be faulted and she leads by example, always giving 100% on the pitch.

Nelson Mandela said 'Sport has the power to change the world'. Do you agree? Do you have any experiences of what sport can achieve?

Sport possesses the ability to transcend boundaries, foster unity, and instill positive values. I have made numerous friends throughout the years through playing sport without which our paths would probably never have crossed.

If you had to choose one thing that you want pupils to experience or achieve through sport at St Catherine's, what would it be?

Enjoyment and sport for life. I want the girls to leave St Catherine's having enjoyed a really positive experience of sport, fostering a lasting enthusiasm for lifelong participation in sports.



I WANT THE GIRLS TO LEAVE ST CATHERINE'S HAVING ENJOYED A REALLY POSITIVE EXPERIENCE OF SPORT, FOSTERING A LASTING ENTHUSIASM FOR LIFELONG PARTICIPATION IN SPORTS.



Our Sporting Stars

Rosie in Year 8 was chosen by Swim England to take part in Middlesex swim camp recently, which included a lecture from Anna Hopkins, British Olympic gold medal-winning swimmer. She also met Adam Peaty, Olympic gold medallist and eight time world champion, in the summer.



Our Sporting Stars

On Sunday 5 November, Grayce represented St Catherine's at a trampolining competition in Chessington in the Year 7-8 Girls Novice category. "When it got to warm-up time, my routines went well. I was up second when competing, and I did my set routine first, and then my voluntary afterwards. I felt that the competition was a fun experience for me, and I was proud to represent St Catherine's in sports".



I came 11th out of 57 competitors, and I am happy with my overall scores and results.



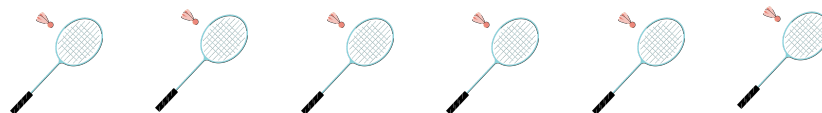
Poppy in Year 9 rows for Molesey Rowing Club



Lilie in Year 9 placed first in a recent dressage competition



Harshini in Year 7 plays for Osterley Badminton Club



Lea in Year 11 representing Great Britain in the Acrobatic World Championships

Pupil Leadership

Every week some of our Year 9 pupils volunteer to help with Prep swimming lessons during their lunchtime.

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'It's really fun to work with the younger pupils. I really enjoy helping them to improve their swimming and become more confident in the water' Hannah, Year 9

'I like having the Year 9 girls in our lessons, they are very helpful and kind' Stella, Year 3

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Pupil Leadership

Congratulations

We are delighted to announce our new Sports Prefects. Congratulations to Tia Branson and Maree Cummings. Here are their reflections on their new roles:



As Sports Prefects we have the honour of guiding and seeing each pupil's progress and achievements. We are lucky that in this school, sport is a supportive community where everyone has a chance to experience the thrill and excitement of running on a track, diving off a block and high fiving your teammates after a goal in netball. We enjoy every aspect of sport and are always up for a new challenge. We look forward to future achievements from St Catherine's pupils. If you ever need any help or have any ideas please come and find us in the common room.



Sports Leaders Club

Over the last seven weeks, the Year 5 and 6 girls have been spending Thursday lunchtime engaging in Sports Leaders Club, where they have enjoyed participating in a variety of different activities ranging from relays to football, competing individually and in teams. Over this period they have acquired the skills and attributes required to lead their own activities and, once ready, each girl has taken turns to run their own activity each week. This week Sophie was particularly impressive in successfully running a game of tag netball and banana tag. Well done Sophie!

Maree, in Year 12, leads Sports Leaders with Mrs Mercer.



“

We love coaching the Year 8s as it's lots of fun. It helps us develop our netball knowledge as well as gaining experience as coaches.

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Our Year 9s also volunteer to help coach at after school netball.

Prep Netball

Year 3 and 4 played a netball match against Twickenham Prep School. It was a close match and the girls had improved hugely since their last match. They were very lucky to have some cheerleaders in the form of Year 2 with some beautiful banners.

GOOD LUCK! SCORE SOME GOALS

WISH YOU LUCK YEAR 3

GET IT GIRLS, YOU CAN DO IT!

Year 5 and 6 have had a number of games since the beginning of this term, including matches against St Augustine's Priory, Newland House and Jack and Jill School. The girls have developed a much greater understanding of positional play, team work and the role of different positions.

The results are as follows:

Year 5

St Augustine's - win

Year 6

Jack and Jill - win

St Augustine's two teams - one win and one loss
Newland House two teams - two losses



Year 9 Netball Report

St Catherine's Year 9 netball A and B teams played against Radnor House.

As captain of the B team I am really proud of our performance and how we worked together. Although the final result was 12 - 8 to Radnor, we put up a great fight and we held our own. With a mix of resilience, perseverance and determination, we put all our effort into the final quarter and really brought the score up. It was a tough game and the opposition played very strongly but in the end I think we should all be proud of our performance.

We had a few obstacles like the rain and next time we should aim to take our time with the ball and look for the best options.

Well done to the girl of the game who was Clarissa and overall well done to everyone who played.

Clarissa & Mandipa

Our A team were victorious against Radnor with a score of 12 - 7 in a hard fought match. As the captain, I was extremely impressed with the level of playing. We worked well on our communication and our passes. Congratulations to Gemma who won 'Girl of the Game'. Going forward we will be working on our footwork and obstruction as well as looking forward to future fixtures this term against Harrodian, St Augustine's Priory & Hollyfield.

Thank you to Ms Feenan & Mrs Walters who helped to umpire and coach us. And a thank you to the teachers who came out despite the rain to support us.

Tia



More Netball

Just before half term while the sun was shining, the St Catherine's girls took part in House Netball. Each year group worked together in their Houses to organise, warm up, coach and compete against the others for the much sought after "House Netball Champion" title. It was wonderful to see the natural leaders emerge to warm up and set up drills before the main games began. The girls all showed fantastic sportsmanship and team spirit by cheering from the sidelines and on court, shaking hands and selecting a girl of the game for each team. Congratulations to Year 10 and Year 11 Cavell for both winning their tournaments, and the overall winners will be announced in assembly.



It was brilliant to have the Year 7A & B teams out against Radnor School for the first game of the season. The girls have all been training hard and we have some pupils who are very quickly learning the rules of the game. The A team worked really well defensively with Harshini and Lily in the circle slowing down the shooters and snatching rebounds. Emilia, Joanna and Imogen worked tirelessly to get the ball into the circle for Holly and Paula to shoot. The B team really improved on their spacing as the game progressed and the accuracy of passing helped them bring the ball down court quickly. It was a great match and we look forward to the next one.



WELL DONE GIRLS!

KEEP IT UP!



Netball: A Journey Through Time

Netball is a sport with the power to change lives and inspire communities. It is greatly loved, not only within our school family at St Catherine's, but throughout the wider world! Netball has prospered because women controlled it as their game outside of male influence. This is great to see and one of the reasons we wanted to delve into its history.

The origins of netball can be traced back to 1891 when Dr James Naismith created the sport of basketball. Initially, too many people were injured when playing and therefore he modified the game to make it safer for everyone. Although netball was originally intended for men, in 1892 it was adapted for female students with the aim of protecting their etiquette. Netball was first played in England in 1895 at Madame Ostenburg's College. In the first half of the 20th century, the sport's popularity grew exponentially, with the game being played in many British Commonwealth countries. In 1995, netball became a recognised sport of the International Olympic Committee. The game has continued to grow since then with thousands of children and adults playing both professionally and recreationally every week.



INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT NETBALL

ORIGINALLY KNOWN AS WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

A NETBALL COURT IS 30.5M LONG AND 15.25M WIDE

A POPULAR TEAM SPORT PLAYED IN OVER 80 COUNTRIES

TEACHES SPATIAL AWARENESS

REQUIRES GREAT HAND/EYE COORDINATION

A SPORT THAT PROMOTES INCLUSIVITY AND DIVERSITY

AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND DOMINATE INTERNATIONALLY

In conclusion, netball is a fascinating and highly engaging sport that has captured the hearts of millions of players and fans around the world. From its origins in the late 19th century to its status as a popular competitive sport today, netball has evolved and grown in many ways. This fast-paced game requires skill, strategy and teamwork, making it a thrilling experience for both players and spectators. The unique rules and positions in netball contribute to the dynamic nature of the sport, keeping players on their toes and constantly adapting their skills and tactics. As you delve deeper into the world of netball, you will discover the sport's rich history, the incredible athleticism of its players, and the sense of community it fosters. If you are a seasoned netball enthusiast or even just starting out, there is always something new to learn and appreciate about this captivating sport. Whether you're cheering from the stands or stepping on to the court, netball is sure to leave a lasting impression.

By Chloe and Pippa , Year 10



Swimming

Years 4, 5 and 6 have competed in two swim galas this term. An intermediate gala and a Swim Squad gala. The girls won both galas and swam brilliantly. We were so impressed with the girls' support for one another, how well they listened to instructions, and the competitiveness they displayed. It was also very clear how much they enjoyed themselves! It can seem an intimidating environment to perform in, with the number of spectators and the noise, but the girls really shone.



ISA Swimming

On Friday 17 November St Catherine's swim squad went to the Surrey Sports Park in Guildford to compete in the ISA regional swimming qualifiers. Everyone did very well, with Mia in Year 11 finishing first in 100m backstroke, and Chloe and Beatrice in Year 10 winning silver in 100m freestyle. We saw many medals being won in the front crawl and medley relays including two golds for Year 9-10, and silver for Year 11-13 and for Year 8. Mia Year 11, Chloe Year 10 and Rosie Year 8 won places at Nationals. Well done to everybody who competed!

Pippa, Year 10

GOLD Y11 100M BACKSTROKE

GOLD Y9-Y10 MEDLEY RELAY

GOLD Y9-Y10 FREE RELAY

SILVER Y11-13 MEDLEY RELAY

SILVER Y8 MEDLEY RELAY



Table Tennis

The table tennis table has added to the excitement and laughter at lunchtime. The girls are enjoying learning new skills and playing something new and competitive at break.



Swimming: A Journey Through Time

ANCIENT CIVILISATIONS

The history of swimming dates back thousands of years; the earliest depictions of swimming can be traced to ancient Egypt, where drawings on tombs and artefacts illustrate people swimming in the River Nile. The Greeks and Romans also embraced swimming, considering it an essential skill and incorporating it into their education and military training. The Greeks built elaborate bathing facilities, known as "palestrae," which included swimming pools for exercise and leisure. Competitive swimming made its debut in the ancient Olympic Games, with events such as the "stadium" and "pygme" races.



MIDDLE AGES

During the Middle Ages, interest in swimming waned in Europe, largely due to religious and cultural factors that discouraged public bathing. However, in other parts of the world, such as Japan, swimming continued to be an integral part of life. The Japanese developed various swimming techniques, including the "samurai swim," which resembled the modern breaststroke.

19TH CENTURY

As the 19th century dawned, swimming gained recognition as a valuable life skill, particularly with the rise of the industrial revolution and increased urbanisation. Swimming schools and clubs proliferated, emphasising both recreation and safety. In 1844, two Native American swimmers, Flying Gull and Tobacco, showcased their skills in London, introducing new techniques and strokes.

RENAISSANCE

The Renaissance period saw a resurgence of interest in swimming in Europe, spurred by a renewed appreciation for physical fitness and the human body. Swimming regained popularity in England, where indoor "baths" became social hubs. In the 18th century, the National Swimming Society was established in London, promoting swimming competitions and establishing rules.

20TH CENTURY AND BEYOND

The 20th century witnessed significant advancements in competitive swimming. The front crawl gained popularity, and swimmers began to break records at an unprecedented pace. Swimming became a staple in the modern Olympic Games. Legendary swimmers like Johnny Weissmuller, who later gained fame as Tarzan, and Michael Phelps, the most decorated Olympian of all time, left an indelible mark on the sport.

WOMEN IN SWIMMING

Although swimming was included in the Olympic Games in 1896, women weren't allowed to compete until 1912. Even when women's events were finally included, there were more opinions about what they should wear than about their ability in the water. Women were expected to wear "modest" clothing, making it much more difficult for them to reach their full potential. Since then lots of women have managed to reach their full potential by helping each other. For example, Annette Kellermann made a swimsuit that revealed the lower half of her legs which was extremely controversial at the time. It gained popularity quickly so she made her own line of swim wear just for women.

Another inspiration is Gertrude Ederle who made swimming history by becoming the first woman to swim the English Channel (21 miles). She completed it in 14.5 hours, beating the five men who had done it previously.

She was crowned "Queen of the Waves" in New York City in September, and went on to teach swimming to deaf children, having experienced hearing damage herself from swimming the Channel.

by Tia and Poppy, Year 9



Football

I am thrilled to announce that this week we have had the first football fixture of the year, and we're set to host many more in the coming months. The girls' football skills have truly impressed me, and I eagerly anticipate further development throughout the year.

The after-school football clubs have gained remarkable popularity, providing a platform for the girls to focus on refining their passing and shooting accuracy. In the upcoming weeks, the emphasis will shift towards honing defensive skills.

Excitingly, we've added six new football goals to our inventory. Among them, four are smaller five-a-side goals, catering to both younger and older children. These prove advantageous for the younger girls as they are easier to defend than the larger goals. Meanwhile, the older girls benefit from the practice of shooting into the smaller goals, enhancing their precision. Additionally, we have two larger goals designated for fixtures involving Year 7 and above.

Mr Frangos



Aerial Circus Skills

Some of Year 11 were lucky enough to have NIX Academy come in for their lesson to teach some aerial circus skills. The girls were treated to two instructors teaching them some aerial hoop and silks performance skills. After a thorough warm up and stretch, each girl took to the silks to learn the hammock knot straddle and bow and arrow skills. They then moved on to the hoop/lyra to learn full mounts and dismounts and the under bar splits. All of the girls worked really hard and had a fantastic time. They were pushed out of their comfort zones and all had brilliant resilience throughout. We are really hoping to have NIX Academy back into school again soon.



Cross Country

Well done to the Prep girls who competed at last week's Richmond Borough Cross Country Competition.

The girls showed real grit and determination on a tough course with an uphill finish! Good luck to the Senior girls competing this week!

A reminder that cross country club runs every Tuesday lunchtime for Seniors and Friday lunchtime for Prep. We would love to see you there.



Bollywood Dance Club

Bollywood Dance Club takes place on Mondays after school until 4 December.



“

THE MUSIC IS REALLY COOL - ELOISE, YEAR 7

IT WAS GREAT TO TRY SOMETHING NEW - FREYA, YEAR 7”



The School Field

In 2019, the importance of sport led to an application for an all-weather pitch in place of the current field. Unfortunately, this process was not successful - our application was rejected and we also lost on appeal.

Given the need to use the site effectively for the girls, this was very disappointing. We were advised at the time to wait before making another application and, as you will know, we are now waiting to hear news about a new Music and Art building.

Once this new project is underway, the School aims to return to the development of the field and in the meantime we are maintaining this very busy part of the school.



Does your daughter excel in sports outside school...

Please let her Form Tutor know so that we can celebrate her achievements within the school community too!

THANK YOU

We ask. You answer. We listen.



We asked some girls: What do you most enjoy about PE at St Catherine's? What are you most proud of in PE this term? How do you feel about the wide variety / inclusive approach in PE? What could be 'even better' about PE at St Catherine's?

"I enjoy all the different sports we can do, especially rowing"
Year 7

"I really enjoy learning badminton and football. I would love to have more football fixtures"
Year 9

"I am so proud of getting on to the netball and football teams"
Year 8

"I love all my PE and Swimming teachers. They teach you really good ways to learn and remember things so that it is fun and you understand what you need to do"
Year 4

"Having a wide range of sports is great! Whether you want to win a gold medal, or just want to have fun, sport is for everyone!"
Year 7

"I loved being part of the ISA swimming team and am really looking forward to taking part in more galas, competitions and matches"
Year 9

I LIKE PE BECAUSE YOU GET TO DO LOTS OF EXERCISE
YEAR 2

In Swimming, I know that I need to work on my technique when diving because the teachers tell me things I need to think about.
Year 5

"I enjoyed being a part of the netball team"
Year 8

"PE is very enjoyable as there are lots of options available that cater to your own tastes"
Year 12

In Sixth Form, we have quite a lot of PE activities that we can choose from, but particularly badminton, which I find fun
Year 12