



Newsletter

VOL. 10, ISSUE 4 | DECEMBER 2024

Greek School of Ayia Triada Birmingham

Strive, Learn, Grow in our Community



Message from our Headteacher



Dear Parents, Students, and Friends of our School,

As the festive season approaches, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the incredible achievements and milestones we have shared this year at the Greek School Ayia Triada. From the hard work and dedication of our students, to the unwavering support of parents, staff, and our wider community, we have much to celebrate and be grateful for.

Christmas is a time of joy, giving, and togetherness—a moment to pause and cherish the values of love, kindness, and hope that are at the heart of our school and our Hellenic culture. It is also an opportunity to honor the traditions that connect us to our roots while inspiring the next generation to carry them forward.

As we prepare to gather with loved ones and celebrate the holiday season, I extend my heartfelt thanks to all of you for your commitment to our school's mission and values. Together, we have fostered a vibrant and supportive environment where our children can grow not only academically but also as proud members of the Greek diaspora.

On behalf of the entire team at Ayia Triada, I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, filled with health, happiness, and success. May the light of this season bring peace to your hearts and homes.

With warm regards,
Dr Stella Tryfonos, Headteacher

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ΤΟ ΠΟΙΗΜΑ ΤΟΥ ΜΗΝΑ Χριστούγεννα Στέλιος Σπεράντζας

Στη γωνιά μας κούκλινο
τ' αναμένο τζάκι.
Τούφες χιόνια πέφτουν
ε στο παραθυράκι.
Όσο ανοιέ ξάγρηνο
μένει το χωριό
και χτυπά Χριστούγεννα
το μαμναγισό.
Έρα, έρω, η' Αρχάγγελος
ι δ' ανύμνοι' ανοιέ,
νάρε από την νίτα μας
νού ευωδιά και κούε.
Έρα κι γωνίτσα μας
καρτερεί να 'ρθείς.
Σου έρωσα Χριστούγενμ μου
για να ξεσταθείς.

Upcoming Events

- Christmas Jumper Week 09-15th December
- Christmas Play 15-12-2024
- Christmas Carol Singing Community 16-12-24
- 14-12-24 Cake Sale at school
- Christmas Holidays Break 21/12/24-06/01/25
- Saturday 11/01/25 - Theatre & Sealife





Spotlight Section

DECEMBER 2024



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STUDENTS OF THE

Month

DECEMBER

NURS. & REC.

- Apostolos.O
- Apollo.G
- Lucas.C

YEAR 1

- Florentia.M
- Alexandra.B

YEAR 1 ADV./ 2

- Efthimia.G
- Theo.N
- Alexia.N
- Alexandra L.
- Vasileios A.S.
- Alexandros E.
- Mario F.

YEAR 3

- Philip.G
- Anastasia.S
- Savvas.P

YEAR 4/5

- Zoe.K
- Pavlos Z.
- Peter S.

YEAR 6

- Eraclia.P
- Vangelis.A

PRE GCSE/GCSE

- Mickey.B
- Angeliki.E
- Yannis.C
- Christos S

A LEVELS & ELLINOMATHEIA

- Vangelis F.
- Christina G.



Xmas Around the world



The Greek School of Ayia Triada Birmingham is delighted to once again take part in the annual "Christmas All Around" drawing competition, a wonderful initiative that invites Greek and Cypriot children from across the globe to share their artistic expressions of the festive season. This year, our school is proud to contribute an impressive 41 drawings, each reflecting the creativity, imagination, and holiday spirit of our talented students.

On this page, we are thrilled to showcase some of these lovely drawings, which capture the joy and magic of Christmas through the eyes of our children. We are honored to participate in this global celebration of art and culture and to see our students' work stand alongside those of children from around the world.



Kyriakos Daniels



Margarita Kanellopoulou



Emily Barilec



Adrian Kurdali



Thea Zachariou



Evdokia Antoniou



Alexandros Chalaile



Vasilis Kalisperas



Efthimia Westwood

We have had so many drawings we could not present each one of them! Many many lovely drawings. Well done everyone!





JANUARY
1

ΒΑΣΙΛΟΠΙΤΑ

20
25



Vasilopita is more than a dessert; it is a reminder of generosity, unity, and the joy of sharing moments with loved ones.

Vasilopita is a traditional Greek New Year's cake or bread, deeply rooted in Greek culture and history. It is prepared and shared with family and friends as part of the celebrations for the New Year.

The tradition of Vasilopita is associated with Saint Basil the Great (Agius Vasilios), a revered figure in the Orthodox Church. Legend has it that Saint Basil distributed pieces of bread with hidden coins to help the poor in his community. This act of charity inspired the tradition of placing a coin inside the cake.

The Vasilopita symbolizes blessings, prosperity, and good fortune for the New Year. The cutting of the cake is a meaningful ritual, expressing gratitude and hope for the future.

On New Year's Day, the family gathers to cut the Vasilopita. A cross is traditionally scored on the cake, and the first piece is dedicated to Christ, the second to the household, and then one for each family member.

The person who finds the hidden coin in their slice is believed to have good luck for the year. Beyond its delicious taste, Vasilopita is a cherished tradition that brings families together. It is a way to honour the past, celebrate the present, and hope for a prosperous future.

ΚΑΛΗ ΧΡΟΝΙΑ ΣΕ ΟΛΟΥΣ!!!!

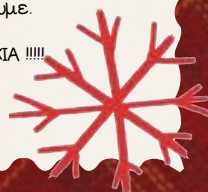


Συστατικά
300 γρ. βούτυρο
Λιρπак, σε
θερμοκρασία
δωματίου +
έξτρα για τη
φόρμα + έξτρα
για τη φόρμα
250 γρ. άχνη
ζάχαρη
1 κ.σ.
κρυσταλλική
ζάχαρη
7 γρ. μαχλέπι
2 γρ. μαστίχα
1/2 κ.γ. τριμμένο
μοσχοκάρυδο
400 γρ. αλεύρι
γ.ο.χ. + έξτρα για
τη φόρμα
ξύσμα
πορτοκαλιού, από
1-2 πορτοκάλια
1 1/2 κ.γ.
εκχύλισμα
βανίλιας
4 αυγά, μεσαία,
σε θερμοκρασία
δωματίου
75 γρ. γάλα
γρήρες
1 κ.σ. μπέικιν
πάουντερ
Για το
σερβίρισμα
άχνη ζάχαρη
βρώσιμες
χριστουγεννιάτικ
ες
ζαχαρόπαστες

- Εκτέλεση
- Ρίχνουμε στον κάδο του μίξερ το βούτυρο και την άχνη ζάχαρη, και χτυπάμε με το σύρμα για 2-3 λεπτά μέχρι να αφρατέψει το βούτυρο.
 - Ρίχνουμε σε έναν ποηκόφτη τη ζάχαρη, το μαχλέπι, τη μαστίχα, το μοσχοκάρυδο και 2 κ.σ. από το αλεύρι, και χτυπάμε πολύ καλά μέχρι το μείγμα να γίνει σκόνη.
 - Ρίχνουμε το μείγμα στον κάδο και προσθέτουμε το ξύσμα πορτοκαλιών και το εκχύλισμα βανίλιας.
 - Μεταφέρουμε τον κάδο στο μίξερ και ξεκινάμε να χτυπάμε σε χαμηλή ταχύτητα.
 - Ρίχνουμε ένα ένα τα αυγά περμιόνοντας να απορροφηθεί το πρώτο για να ρίξουμε το επόμενο.
 - Αφαιρούμε τον κάδο από το μίξερ, ρίχνουμε το γάλα και ανακατεύουμε ελάχιστα με τη σπάτουλα σιλικόνης.
 - Ρίχνουμε σε ένα μπολ το υπόλοιπο αλεύρι και το μπέικιν, τα προσθέτουμε στον κάδο, και ανακατεύουμε ελαφρά με τη σπάτουλα.
 - Αλείφουμε με βούτυρο και πασπαλίζουμε με αλεύρι μία στρογγυλή φόρμα με αποσπώμενη βάση διαμέτρου 25 εκ.
 - Αδειάζουμε το μείγμα στη φόρμα και αλείνουμε καλά με τη σπάτουλα.
 - Τοποθετούμε ένα φηουρί σε τυχαίο σημείο μέσα στο μείγμα.
 - Μεταφέρουμε στον φούρνο και ψήνουμε για 45 λεπτά στην πάνω σχάρα.
 - Αφαιρούμε τη φόρμα από τον φούρνο και αφήνουμε να κρυώσει καλά.
 - Πασπαλίζουμε με άχνη ζάχαρη, διακοσμούμε με χριστουγεννιάτικες ζαχαρόπαστες και σερβίρουμε.

ΚΑΛΗ ΕΠΙΤΥΧΙΑ!!!!

20
25



CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS IN GREECE AND EUROPE

by Dimitrios Valsamakis



There are many differences and similarities in the way Christmas is celebrated in Greece compared to Europe:

Κάλαντα (Carolling): Children walk around their local area, holding triangles (τρίγωνα) which they play while singing the traditional carols (κάλαντα). These vary from region to region, but they have one thing in common; spreading the joy of the nativity story. These are sung for the three major occasions of the festive season: Christmas, New Year and Epiphany (φώτα).

Christmas Decorations: Globally, the most recognised Christmas decoration has been the Christmas tree. This is very common in Greece, with many families adopting this tradition. However some people chose to also decorate a model ship to honour the Greek tradition.

Epiphany (Θεοφάνια): A celebration to mark the Baptism of Christ, celebrated on the 6th of January. Children sing the Kalanta and Priests bless the waters. A cross is thrown into the bodies of water (sea, lakes or rivers) and swimmers race in the cold waters to see who can reach it first.

New Year's Eve (Παραμονή Πρωτοχρονιάς): New Year's Eve marks Saint Basil's day in Greece. Overnight, Saint Basil comes to the houses of the well behaved children and delivers presents. A Vasilopita (Βασιλόπιτα) with a hidden coin (φλουρί) is cut and whoever receives the piece with the coin, is believed to have good luck for the year.





Events & Celebrations

DECEMBER 2024



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CHRISTMAS JUMPER

WEEK

9th-15th Dec 2024



The children of Agia Triada proudly raised an impressive £200 by wearing Christmas jumpers and festive clothing to school throughout the week. This wonderful effort will support two incredible charities: Save the Children and Birmingham Children's Hospital, both of which make a meaningful difference in the lives of children.

We are especially proud to share that, in recognition of our ongoing support, Birmingham Children's Hospital has dedicated several Christmas baubles on their entrance Christmas tree to us this year. This heartfelt gesture reflects the impact of our collective efforts.

A huge thank you to all the parents—your support makes this possible year after year. Together, we are making a difference!

Thank you!

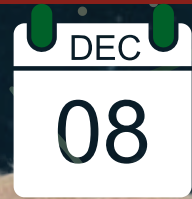


We raised
£200





Staff and Community Christmas Party



On Sunday, 8th December, we hosted an unforgettable Christmas Party for the Teaching Staff, Management Board Members, and Friends of our school and community. This was the first time we organized such an event, and it was a spectacular evening filled with delicious Greek food, lively Greek music, and traditional dancing. The festive atmosphere brought everyone together, creating memories of joy, laughter, and camaraderie. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all the teachers and guests who joined us in celebrating this special time of year. It was truly a night to remember, brimming with holiday cheer and community spirit!



our Christmas Celebration

On Sunday, 15th December 2024, the Greek School of Ajia Triada Birmingham held its annual Christmas Show, "That Christmas Night...", to an enthusiastic audience of nearly 300 people—an incredible turnout, surpassing all previous years. The children's performances brought the story of Christmas to life with heartfelt singing, lively dancing, and moving recitations of poems, sharing the true message of Christmas with all. The nativity scene was a highlight, capturing the spirit of the season with charm and authenticity. The event's success is a testament to the dedication and hard work of Mrs. E. Topalidou and Mrs. M. Georgiou, the leading teachers who coordinated this beautiful celebration.



our Christmas Celebration



So it all went magically and we all enjoyed a lovely Sunday afternoon celebrating Christmas in a nice Christmassy touch for the ending of term. Children enjoyed their participation and parents felt touched by their children performance

At the end all children welcomed Ayios Vasilis and received a small present for christmas

What an amazing Day!

Its beginning to look a lot like christmas..!



How Greeks & Cypriots Celebrate Christmas

Christmas in Greece is a time of joy, family, and deep-rooted traditions that reflect the country's rich cultural and religious heritage. From the bustling streets adorned with lights to the comforting aromas of festive dishes, the holiday season in Greece is a magical experience that combines faith, community, and celebration.



A Time for Faith and Reflection

For many Greeks, Christmas begins with a spiritual focus, as the birth of Christ holds deep religious significance. The season is marked by a 40-day fasting period leading up to Christmas Day, a time for reflection and preparation. On Christmas Eve, churches across Greece hold special services where families gather to celebrate the nativity of Christ with heartfelt hymns and prayers. While Christmas trees have become popular in modern Greek homes, the traditional symbol of the season is the karavaki, or Christmas boat. Illuminated boats are displayed in homes and town squares, honoring Greece's maritime heritage and the role of the sea in Greek life. Streets, homes, and churches sparkle with lights and ornaments, creating a festive atmosphere that fills the air with anticipation.

Greek Christmas Carols: Kalanda

One of the most beloved traditions is the singing of kalanda, or Christmas carols, on Christmas Eve. Groups of children go door-to-door, singing traditional carols accompanied by triangles, while receiving small treats or coins as tokens of gratitude. This heartwarming custom brings neighborhoods to life and spreads the holiday spirit.

A Feast to Remember

Greek Christmas celebrations are incomplete without a sumptuous feast. Tables are laden with traditional dishes like roasted lamb or pork, melomakarona (honey-soaked cookies), and kourabiedes (buttery almond biscuits dusted with powdered sugar). Families gather to enjoy these delicacies, sharing stories and laughter around the table.





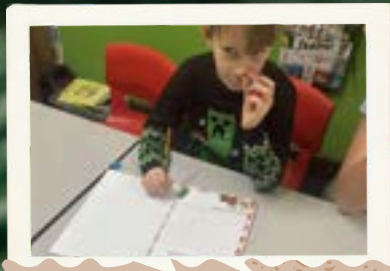
Around the School

DECEMBER 2024

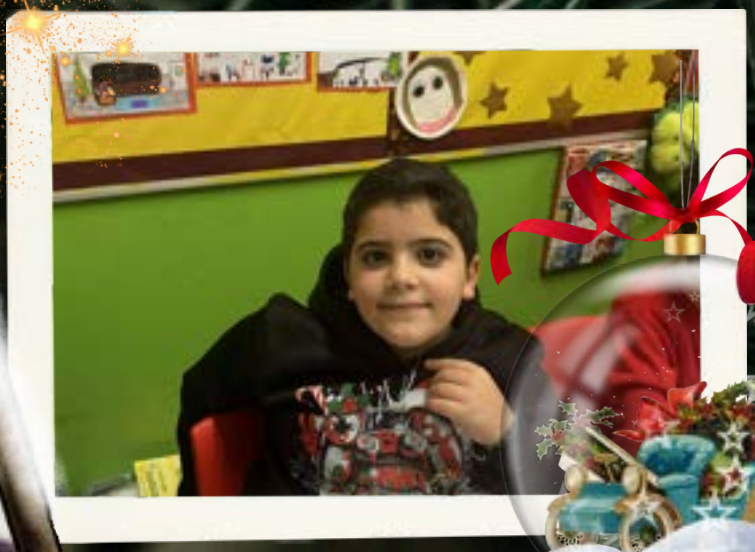


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Year 3's Rising Stars



What an amazing month we had with Year 3. Lots of fun activities! Lots of hard work! We did talk about christmas and Winter! We talked about hot chocolate! And we have also made our own hot chocolate! We wish we had a couple of more Saturdays this December to engages with more fun learning!




END OF TERM
XMAS PARTY AND
CHRISTMAS
CAROL SINGING





Mrs Georgiou
Amazing Classes
having Christmas
Party and
watching the
Crinch in Greek! We
had so much fun!





Mrs Georgiou's
year 1
class



Year 1
advanced &
Year 2

Miss Elli's
Magical
Classes



YEAR 6 Mrs EVI'S Marvelous Saturday Class

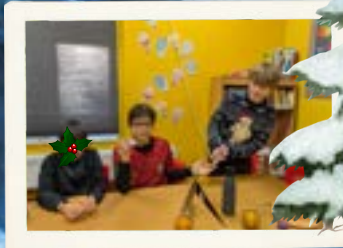
Such a fun filled day for our Y6's!

We had a small class assembly and talked about Jesus's birth and Greek Christmas traditions. The children watched a short video and sang the kalanda!

Writing a xmas letter to a friend abroad, making a decorative craft to gift to their families and eating snacks while watching the Polar Express in Greek was definitely a pleasant twist to any normal day at school.

To top it up, the children had a secret Santa gift exchange and they all received some lovely presents from their classmates!

A day well spent for our hard working Y6 pupils!"





Cultural & Educational Corner

DECEMBER 2024

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Dance Groups

This year our school has been running dance classes led by our Dance Teachers Mrs Sotiria Karafillides and Mr Dimitris Themistokleous.

Dance classes are on Monday 19:30-20:30 for our students, Tuesdays from 18:30-19:00 for the children and then 19:00-20:00 for adults, and on Saturday we also run two groups: one for the school children from 14:00-15:00 (which is for two different age groups) and then from 15:00-16:00 for adults dance group.

It's amazing to see that this year our dance classes are flourishing and both children and adults are enjoying them.

Anyone interested in dance classes can contact our school directly or the class teachers. We are always happy to welcome new students



Greek Youth Ambassador

By Maria Sofia Apostolaki

The first Greek Youth Diaspora Symposium, "Diaspora Dialogues: Connecting Young Voices around the World," took place on 27-28 November 2024 in Athens. It was an exciting event dedicated to exploring the experiences, challenges, and opportunities faced by young people in the Greek Diaspora. The symposium featured inspiring keynote speakers, interactive panel discussions, and networking opportunities with young leaders, members of the Greek Diaspora, and professionals from diverse backgrounds. It provided an excellent platform to share insights, connect with like-minded individuals, and contribute to meaningful discussions on the role of youth in shaping the future of the global community.

The Greek Youth Diaspora Symposium was a truly unique opportunity - allowing me to meet new people, explore my culture and language further, as well as learn new interesting views from other like-minded individuals from around the world. From 16 countries across 4 continents, we all discussed our opinions and thoughts in a series of engaging panels, with thoughtful questioning from the audience. All of this combined with visiting archeological sites like the awe-inspiring Acropolis in Athens made this an unforgettable experience. I am proud to be a Greek Diaspora Ambassador, and would like to thank the Honorary Consul Dr. Nikolaos Batis for this opportunity.



WE LOVE EUROPE

DID YOU KNOW..??



DECEMBER IN EUROPE

That there are many fun facts about Christmas celebrations all over the European countries?

In Poland, families traditionally gather for a 12-course meal on Christmas Eve, which is known as Wigilia.



Celebrations in Germany start early in December on St Nicholas Day (6 December). Here, children leave their shoes outside of their front door and Father Christmas (or Nikolaus) will leave presents if they have been good.



In Austria, naughty children risk bumping into Krampus, a demonic figure that serves as the counterpart of friendly St. Nicholas.



IN SPAIN, THE DECEMBER 8TH FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION BEGINS THE CHRISTMAS SEASON. NATIVITY SCENES, OR "BELENES," ARE METICULOUSLY CRAFTED AND DISPLAYED IN HOMES AND CHURCHES.



A traditional Swedish Christmas Eve includes a smorgasbord of dishes like herring, meatballs, and sausages. Candles and lanterns are lit to combat the darkness of the Swedish winter, and families gather to exchange gifts.



Rights Respecting School

unicef
UNITED KINGDOM



RIGHTS
RESPECTING
SCHOOLS

Bronze
Rights Committed

As a Bronze Rights Respecting School we are committed in upholding all rights of all children, all of the time.

Article 20

Article 20 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) states that every child who cannot be looked after by their own family has the right to be looked after properly by people who respect the child's religion, culture, language and other aspects of their life¹²³. The government must provide the child with special protection and assistance, including making sure the child is provided with alternative care that is continuous and respects the child's culture, language and religion¹.

The rights of the child are enshrined in the "United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child," which was adopted by the United Nations in 1989. The UK signed the convention on 19 April 1990, ratified it on 16 December 1991 and it came into force on 15 January 1992. There are 54 articles.

A child's right to the best possible health, and the health systems that support it



A Christmas wish by our RRSA Teacher Lead Mrs M Georgiou

May this Christmas season fill our hearts with joy and a renewed commitment to the rights and well-being of every child. As we celebrate, let us reflect on the importance of creating a world where every child feels safe, valued, and empowered to reach their full potential. Together, we can build a brighter future by embracing kindness, inclusion, and the spirit of giving. Let this holiday season inspire us all to be champions for children's rights, ensuring that every young voice is heard and every dream has the chance to flourish. Wishing you a joyful, peaceful, and meaningful Christmas.



Merry Christmas

Wishing you joy and cheer this holiday season and a bright new year ahead!

The Management Board, the Headteacher and the Teachers of GSAT.

