



MAY 2026

GSAT Newsletter



Greek School of Ayia Triada Birmingham

Strive, Learn, Grow
in our Community

Message from our teachers



Dear parents, students, and friends of the Greek School of Ayia Triada Birmingham,

We warmly welcome you to our May newsletter!

May has been a vibrant and exciting month for our school community, filled with a wide range of activities and new experiences for our children. From cultural celebrations and creative projects to engaging lessons and school events, our students have had many opportunities to learn, grow, and enjoy their journey through Greek education and heritage.

At the same time, May marks the beginning of an important period in the academic calendar, as many of our students prepare for and begin their examinations.

We would like to extend our very best wishes to all students sitting their Ellinomatheia, GCSE, and A Level exams. Your hard work and dedication are truly commendable, and we are confident that your efforts will be rewarded.

We wish not only our own students but all young people undertaking exams everywhere the very best of luck and success.

Remember to stay focused, believe in yourselves, and take pride in how far you have come. Thank you, as always, for your continued support and commitment to our school community.

With warm regards
Eleftheria Kaparalioti-Sonia Phocas



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ΤΟ ΠΟΙΗΜΑ ΤΟΥ ΜΗΝΑ



Στίχοι: Διονύσιος Σολωμός
Μουσική: Μίμης Πλέσσας

Του Μαγιού ροδοφαιίνεται η μέρα,
που ωραιότερη η φύση ξυπνάει
και την κάνουν λαμπρά και γελάει
πρασινάδες, αχτίνες, νερά.

Άνθη κι άνθη βαστούνε στο χέρι
παιδιά κι άντρες, γυναίκες και γέροι
ασπροεντύματα, γέλια και κρότοι,
όλοι οι δρόμοι γιομάτοι χαρά.

UPCOMING EVENTS

EXAM DATES

ELLINOMATHEIA EXAMS LEVELS A1-C2:

- 19/5, 20/05, 21/5 A1/A2/B1/B2/Γ1/Γ2

A LEVEL

- PAPER 1: 18/5
- PAPER 2: 02/6
- PAPER 3: 12/6

GCSE

- SPEAKING: 21/04
- READING & LISTENING: 10/05
- WRITING: 17/6

FAMILY FUN DAY: 26TH MAY 2026

END OF YEAR SCHOOL TRIP 20TH JUNE

EPAS Accreditation Event! 30TH June 2026



STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

NURS. & REC

Elza T
Electra K
Nektarios W
Charis K
Doula S
Angelos F
Koralia T
Kyriaki M

YEAR 3

Anastasios M
Thea G
Adrian K
Anthi Maria K
Alexandra L

YEAR 4 & GCSE

Giorgos K
Jason Z
Christina G
Antonis M.

YEAR 1

Theodoros.S
Alexandra.A
Maximos.K
Kostantinos.T
Georgia.A

YEAR 4/5

Athanasios S
Savvas P
Philip G
Ephraim S

YEAR 1 ADV. & 2

Efthymia G
Angelina B
Aggelos
Alexandra B.
Christina D.
Evdokia B.
Anastasia K.
Mariam D.

ELLINOMATHEIA

Katerina M
Anastasia S
Fotios M
Kyriaki A
Christina G
Irida K
Poseidonas K

LEVEL 1

Maia R
Alex R

DANCE

All the children
who Danced on
May Day
Festival- Huge
Well done

HARBORNE STUDENTS

Emily B
Sebastian D
Alexandra N.M.
Ariana G.





A month full
of action

Ετοιμάσαμε βαλίτσες και φύγαμε!

This year's school trip took our students to the beautiful island of Crete, where they spent an unforgettable week in Rethymno. The group departed from Birmingham on 27th April, full of excitement and curiosity for the adventure ahead.

Throughout the week, the children enjoyed exploring the town, taking part in activities, and experiencing the warm Cretan hospitality. The trip was truly incredible — the students had a wonderful time, created new friendships, and made memories they will cherish.

The return on 4th May was filled with emotion, as everyone said goodbye to Rethymno and the experiences that made this journey so special.



AIRPORT

→ ✈ Arrivals

↑ ✈ Departures

Little Explorers at the Minoan Palace



One of the highlights of our trip was the unforgettable visit to Knossos, the heart of the ancient Minoan civilisation. The children were captivated from the moment they entered the archaeological site, walking through the restored palace, the grand staircases, and the famous frescoes that brought the myths of King Minos and the Minotaur to life. They explored the labyrinth-like corridors with curiosity, asking questions and showing genuine interest in how people lived thousands of years ago. The visit continued at the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, where the students admired original artefacts, pottery, jewellery, and the iconic bull-leaping fresco, deepening their understanding of Minoan culture. It was a truly inspiring educational experience that sparked excitement, wonder, and a love for history. We are also grateful to our guide, Mrs. Gesthimani Kalogiannaki, whose clear explanations supported the children's enthusiasm and helped them connect even more with the ancient world.

A Meaningful Visit to Arkadi



Another important stop on our trip was the visit to the historic Arkadi Monastery, one of the most symbolic landmarks of Crete. The children were deeply impressed by the beauty of the monastery and the peaceful atmosphere surrounding it. As they walked through the courtyards, the old stone buildings, and the small museum, they learned about the powerful history of Arkadi and its role in the Cretan struggle for freedom. The story of bravery and sacrifice captured their attention, and many students asked thoughtful questions, showing genuine interest in understanding the past. The visit offered them a meaningful connection to Greek heritage and helped them appreciate the strength and resilience of the Cretan people. It was a truly enriching experience that left a lasting impression on everyone.

Europe Day in our School

LET'S CELEBRATE YOU



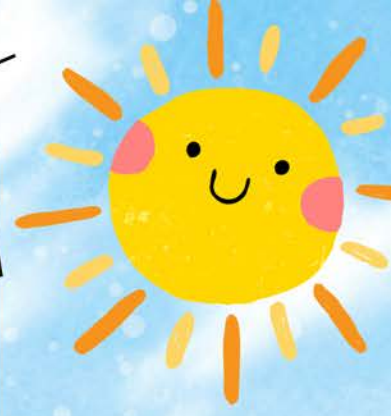
On 9th May 2026, our school proudly celebrated Europe Day with the support of our Junior and Senior Ambassadors, who organised a range of engaging presentations, activities, and games to mark the occasion. Students took part in an informative presentation exploring the history and importance of Europe Day, as well as the values of unity, peace, and cooperation across Europe. The celebrations continued with creative colouring activities and interactive games that encouraged teamwork and cultural awareness. One of the highlights of the day was our very own Eurovision voting experience, where students watched performances of the competing songs and voted for their favourites. Following a fair and democratic voting process, Italy was proudly chosen as our school's winning entry.



9	10	12
Austria 9	Austria 11	Sweden 1
Bulgaria 8	Estonia 5	Italy 11
Austria 9	Germany 11	Germany 11
Albania 8	Bulgaria 11	Estonia
Sweden 9	Denmark 9	
Switzerland 8	Belgium	
France 5	Croatia 8	
Israel 8	France 1	
Belgium 8	Italy 8	



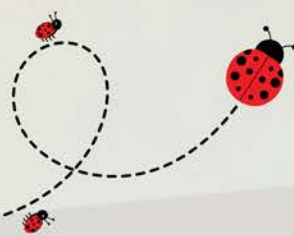
MAY DAY FESTIVAL



Every year, our community proudly celebrates May Day (Πρωτομαγιά) in Birmingham, bringing together Greek and Cypriot families from across the city. This year's celebration was filled with colour, music, and tradition, as children and adults joined in dancing, singing, and enjoying the festive atmosphere. The students of our school took part with great enthusiasm, performing traditional dances and learning about the customs that connect us to our roots. It was a beautiful day of unity and joy, reminding everyone of the strength of our culture and the importance of keeping our traditions alive.



EXAMS



EA
AH
NO
MA
OEI
A

This year, the examination period began on 21st April with the Speaking examinations. This was followed by the Ellinomatheia examinations, which took place from 19th to 21st May. In addition, May also marks the beginning of the GCSE and A Level examination period for 2026. From 19th to 23rd May, the Ellinomatheia examinations were successfully held at our school. All our pupils and learners of the Greek language arrived well-prepared and confident, ready to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

The examinations were led by Mrs. Magda Koutomeriti and Mrs. Maria Georgiou and Dr Stella Tryfonos who were delighted to witness the commitment and determination of all candidates. It was truly rewarding to see students giving their very best throughout the process. We warmly congratulate all our learners on their hard work and outstanding effort. We are extremely proud of each and every one of them!



GOOD LUCK!!!





OUR SCHOOL LIFE



Just Me

Embracing Difference



On Saturday 16th May, as part of our commitment to our RRSA goals, we organised a special ME DAY in school. During the day, we focused on the importance of mental health and wellbeing, linking our learning to Mental Health Awareness Month and to Article 24 of the Rights of the Child, which reminds us that every child has the right to good health and support for their wellbeing.

Throughout the day, we celebrated the fact that every child is unique and special. We talked about embracing differences, respecting one another, and being proud to be ourselves. Children explored how everyone has the right to feel valued, included and respected for who they are.

We also reflected on the important values of friendship, kindness, and community. Through discussions and activities, the children learned that by supporting each other and celebrating our differences, we can create a happy, caring, and inclusive school where everyone feels safe and welcome.



Embracing Difference

May
16

2026 - 2029
Rights Respecting Schools
UNITED KINGDOM
unicef
Silver Rights Aware

GREEK SCHOOL AYIA TRIADA BIRMINGHAM

Building my future step by step

ME DAY!!

Everyone is different!
We Embrace the difference in our School!

Teachers: Mrs Despoina Takirdiki Mrs Maria Georgiou
Coordinator: Dr Stella Tzifonias

Mental Health and Me



Mental Health

Everyone has feelings. Everyone is different. Everyone belongs.

Today we are learning about our feelings, our differences, friendship, kindness and asking for help when we need it.

What is mental health?



What does it mean?

Mental health is how we feel inside.

Sometimes we feel happy. Sometimes we feel worried. Sometimes we feel sad. Sometimes we feel excited.

The boy in the book



The story is...

In the book, the boy lives in a blue world. But he likes yellow.

He feels worried because he thinks being different might be bad.

Has anyone ever felt nervous about being different?

We are all different



We are all different

We can be different in big ways and small ways.

- Our names.
- Our families.
- Our languages.
- Our favourite foods.
- Our hobbies.
- Our feelings.
- Our personalities.

Different does not mean wrong.

Accepting ourselves

Accepting me

Before we accept others, we need to accept ourselves.

It is okay to be quiet.
It is okay to be loud.
It is okay to like different things.
It is okay to feel different sometimes.
I am allowed to be me.



Friendship

Friend!

A good friend helps us feel safe.

A good friend:

- listens
- shares
- includes others
- says sorry
- is kind with their words



When friendship is not kind



What to look for?

Some behaviour is not okay.

- Name-calling
- Leaving someone out on purpose
- Laughing at someone
- Pushing or hurting
- Bullying someone all the time
- Making someone feel scared

This can be bullying

Speaking up is brave

Everyone has feelings. Everyone is different. Everyone belongs.

Tell someone!

In the book, the boy feels better when he is not alone.

When we feel worried, sad or scared, we can talk to:

- a parent
- a teacher
- a friend (Someone we trust)
- Childline

Speaking up is brave.



Nursery Reception

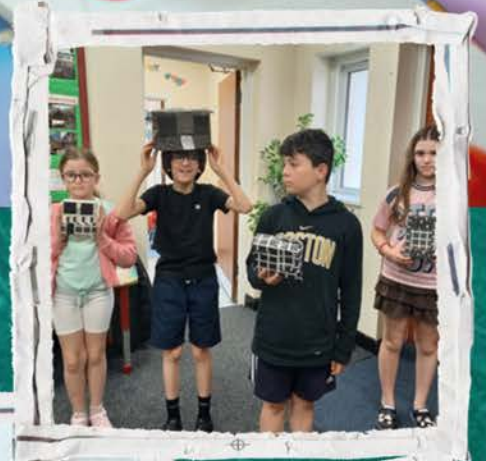




Monday Tuesday

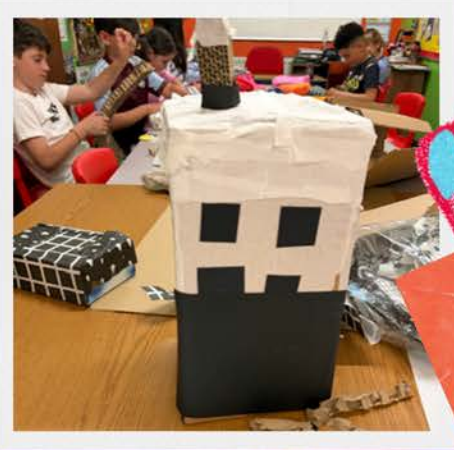


Years 1-2



Year 4

With Year 4 we did the book of Despoina Eracleous and we explored different concepts related to the book along with the history of Buffer zone, the houses and the situation that exists there, children's rights as well as we talked about their dream house. We wrote about Cyprus and spoke and watched different little clips about the history of Cyprus as well as the beauties, customs and traditions of Cyprus.



Year 5&6



The children of Years 5 and 6 at our Greek School worked extremely hard during their Monday and Saturday lessons, showing great enthusiasm and dedication in all their activities. To celebrate Europe Day, the students enjoyed playing a fun and educational "Europe Monopoly" game, where they learned interesting facts about European countries, cultures and landmarks while working together and having a wonderful time. It soon became clear that the game had turned into their favourite break-time activity, and it was truly a joyful and proud moment watching the children play together while speaking in Greek, combining learning, teamwork and language practice in such a natural and enjoyable way.



Harborne Groups

We've been having a wonderful time with the children in Harborne every Thursday! This month, our learning and discussions have focused on family – our "Οικογένεια" – exploring family members and creating family trees together. Alongside our learning we've enjoyed lots of dancing, singing, story reading and many other fun activities!



Our annual walk to the lake



With the arrival of the first warm and sunny days of spring we continued our lovely annual tradition of organising our first excursion to the lakeside and parks giving the children the opportunity to enjoy outdoor games and activities. This year, we were fortunate to have a beautiful first day of May and the children thoroughly enjoyed their walk to the park. Taking advantage of the wonderful weather and open space we also practised some Greek dancing in the field attracting the attention of many visitors in the park who stopped to enjoy the lively Greek music and traditional dances. It was a wonderful day filled with joy, laughter, exercise and pride in sharing our Greek culture with the wider community.



HISTORY & CULTURE



Mesozoic

Royal Garden Party invitation



The Lord Chamberlain is
commanded by His Majesty to invite
Doctor Stella Tryfonos

to a Garden Party
at Buckingham Palace
on Tuesday, 12th May, 2026 from 4 to 6 p.m.



This year, for the third time, our Headteacher had the distinguished honour of being invited to the Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in recognition of her longstanding and dedicated voluntary service with the Commonwealth. She attended the prestigious event on 12 May 2026 accompanied by her husband, enjoying a memorable occasion during which she also met members of the Cyprus High Commission delegation, as well as the Head of the Cyprus Educational Mission, Mrs Loi.

Her invitation is not only a personal honour, but also a recognition of the important work she has carried out over the years through her voluntary contribution and commitment to the community. At the same time, it reflects the wider contribution of our school towards Commonwealth causes, promoting values of service, cultural understanding, education and community engagement. Significantly, she remains the only Cypriot teacher to have ever received invitations to such Royal events in acknowledgement of her voluntary service and contribution to public life.



Every year, His Majesty Charles III organises these special Garden Parties to celebrate and honour individuals who have offered outstanding public service and support to their communities. These events recognise people from all walks of life whose dedication and contribution have made a meaningful impact on society.

Traditionally, the Sovereign hosts three Garden Parties during the summer at Buckingham Palace and one at the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Scotland. Historically, Garden Parties replaced the formal presentation parties once attended by debutantes and gradually evolved into an important way of recognising and rewarding public service across the United Kingdom.

Guests are nominated through a long-established network that includes Lord-Lieutenants, societies and associations, Government Departments, local authorities, the Armed Services, the Church and other faith organisations. Through this process, the Royal Household aims to ensure that invitations reflect a broad and representative cross-section of the community.

The Royal Garden Party remains one of the most elegant and meaningful traditions of British public life – a celebration of dedication, service and community spirit in the beautiful surroundings of the Palace gardens.





May
19

ΓΕΝΟΚΤΟΝΙΑ The Pontian Genocide



19 ΜΑΪΟΥ
GENOCIDE
ΓΕΝΟΚΤΟΝΙΑ
ΤΩΝ ΕΛΛΗΝΩΝ ΤΟΥ ΠΟΝΤΟΥ

Η Γενοκτονία των Ποντίων, 1916-1923, με περισσότερους από 350.000 νεκρούς αποτελεί τη δεύτερη μεγάλη γενοκτονία του αιώνα μας.

353 000

A Story of Memory: The Pontic Greek Genocide
Many years ago, in the early 1900s, people from different cultures and religions lived together across the Ottoman Empire. Among them were the Pontic Greeks, who had lived for thousands of years along the shores of the Black Sea, in a region called Pontus. They had their own traditions, language, music, and a deep love for their homeland. When the Young Turks came to power in 1908, they wanted to reshape the empire. Over time, their ideas became more extreme, focusing on creating a country for one group of people. This brought fear and hardship to others, including the Pontic Greeks and Armenians.

As World War I began in 1914, life grew very difficult. Many Pontic Greeks were forced to leave their homes. Families were separated, and people were sent on long, dangerous journeys known as death marches, where they had little food, water, or protection. Others were placed in forced labour battalions, working in very harsh conditions.

Between 1916 and 1923, these events became part of what we now remember as the Genocide of the Pontic Greeks. Thousands of innocent men, women, and children suffered greatly, and many lost their lives. Villages were destroyed, and survivors were forced to flee to other countries, leaving behind their homes, memories, and way of life.

In 1922, the destruction of Smyrna and the defeat of the Greek army marked another tragic moment in this difficult time. Soon after, in 1923, the Treaty of Lausanne led to a population exchange between Greece and Turkey. This meant that many Pontic Greek families had to start again in a new land, carrying with them only their memories, traditions, and hope.

Even though this chapter of history is very sad, it is important to remember it. Today, the descendants of the Pontic Greeks keep their culture alive through their language, music, dances, and stories. By learning about their past, we honour those who suffered and remind ourselves of the importance of kindness, respect, and peace.

This story teaches us that every culture and every person matters, and that by remembering history, we can help build a better future for everyone.



Την πατρίδα μ' έχασα,
έκλαψα κι επόνεσα
λύουμαι κι αροθιμώ,
ν' ανασπάλω κ' επορεύω!

ΑΓ. ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΕΛΕΝΗΣ

ST. CONSTANTINE AND

ST. HELEN

ΑΠΟΛΥΤΙΚΙΟΝ

Τοῦ Σταυροῦ σου τὸν τύπον ἐν οὐρανῷ
θεαδόμενος, καὶ ὡς ὁ Παῦλος τὴν κλῆβιν οὐκ ἔξ
ἀνθρώπων δεζόμενος, ὁ ἐν βασιλεῦσιν,
Ἀπόστολός σου Κύριε, Βασιλεύουσαν πόλιν τῆ
χειρὸς σου παρέθετο· ἦν περίσωζε διὰ παντός ἐν
εἰρήνῃ, πρεσβείαις τῆς Θεοτόκου, μόνε
φιλόανθρωπε.

About Saints Constantine and Helen.
Saints Constantine and Helen, also known as
Constantine and Helen, Equal-to-the-Apostles
and Emperor Constantine and Empress Helen,
made early and important contributions to the
Orthodox Christian Church. They are celebrated
together because Helen is Constantine's
mother.

Emperor Constantine

Referred to as a "sovereign to the Christians" Emperor Constantine was known for his beliefs. He was the son of Constantius Chlorus, a ruler of a portion of the Roman Empire, and Helen, the Empress who was also a Christian alongside her son. Constantine was born 272 and he became Emperor when his father died in 306. In 312, he learned that his opponent, Maxentius, began marching to Italy. Shortly after that, Jesus Christ appeared to him in a dream and told Constantine about the cross and its significance. After the dream, he ordered that his victory banner be inscribed with the Holy Cross and the Name of Jesus Christ. On October 28, he officially marched and entered battle against Maxentius and won. He rode to Rome waving his victory banner proudly and was declared to rule Rome West, while his brother-in-law, Licinius, was to rule Rome East. Under Constantine's rule, Christianity really took root. In 325 he organized the First Council of Nicaea and he addressed the assembly personally.

Empress Helen

Helen's story with Christianity really begins after Constantine emerged victorious from the battle against Maxentius. During this time, she traveled to the Holy Lands in Jerusalem. During her travels, she is credited with finding the True Cross. Legend says that she was tipped off to the cross's existence because she found the aromatic herb, basil, growing in the shape of a cross. Each year on September 14th, Orthodox Christians remember the cross on September 14th on the Feast Day of the Elevation of the Cross by taking home some fresh basil.

May
21

ΑΓΙΟΥ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥ &
ΕΛΕΝΗΣ:

Στις 21 Μαΐου, η Ορθόδοξη
Εκκλησία τιμά τη μνήμη του
Ρωμαίου αυτοκράτορα
Κωνσταντίνου Α' του
Μεγάλου και της μητέρας
του Ελένης.



Dance Groups

This year, our school is especially proud to see our dance programme thriving and growing stronger than ever. We are delighted to have vibrant and active dance groups, with a particularly large and enthusiastic group meeting every Tuesday, bringing together both children and adults in a shared love of Greek dance and culture.

Our dance classes are led by our dedicated Dance Teachers, Mr. Dimitris Themistokleous (Coordinator) and Mrs. Sotiria Karafillides, who inspire and guide our students with passion and commitment.

Classes take place throughout the week as follows:

Monday: 19:30-20:30 (students)

Tuesday: 18:30-19:00 (children) and 19:00-20:00 (adults)

Saturday: 14:00-15:00 (school children - two age groups) and 15:00-16:00 (adults)

It is wonderful to see both children and adults enjoying the classes, developing their skills, and strengthening their connection to Greek heritage through dance.

Our school is also very proud to play an active role in community events, where our dance groups frequently participate and represent us with enthusiasm and pride.

Anyone interested in joining our dance classes is warmly encouraged to contact the school or speak directly with our dance teachers. We are always happy to welcome new members into our growing dance community.





The Rights of the Child

ARTICLES OF MAY 2026

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK

Mental Health Awareness Week occurs every year in May and is an ideal time for us all to think about mental health, tackle stigma, and discuss how we can create school environments that protect our mental wellbeing.

The week is based around a different theme each year, and previous themes have included nature, kindness, and body image. It is hoped that as many people as possible will have conversations about mental health and the everyday things that can affect it. Our mental health clearly links to Article 24 of the CRC but, if you think about it, many of the other rights that children and young people are entitled to, also contribute to good mental health. See how many connections you make to different rights in this week's activities.

Article 24 (health and health services):

Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food, and a clean environment and education on health and well-being so that children can stay healthy

Article 33 (drug abuse):

Governments must protect children from the illegal use of drugs and from being involved in the production or distribution of drugs. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative social and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as defined in the relevant international treaties, and to prevent the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances.

Resources: RRSA Website- Articles of the week

Read Blue by Sarah Christou or Ruby's Worry by Tom Percival.

Who could you talk to if you felt sad or had a worry? Don't forget to remind children that they have a right to have their voice heard and to be taken seriously by adults.



Greek School of Ayia Triada Birmingham is proudly the first ever supplementary school to have been accredited SILVER AWARD and it is a SILVER Rights Respecting School currently working towards GOLD

Mental health matters

Grace Hunt, UNICEF UK Youth Campaigns Officer, introduces Articles 24 & 33



Click [here](#) to watch on  YouTube



OutRight is UNICEF UK's annual youth campaign focused on children's right to the best possible health. It raises awareness that many children worldwide lack access to basic healthcare and vaccinations. Through free activities, campaigns, and events, the programme encourages young people to learn and take action to help ensure all children can access the healthcare they need.



Did you know?

Cyprus and Cyprus Presidency

Cyprus is a beautiful island country in the eastern Mediterranean Sea, known for its sunny weather, golden beaches, and rich history. It is also a place where different cultures and traditions meet, making it unique and special. Cyprus has been a member of the European Union (EU) since 2004, joining together with other European countries to promote peace, cooperation, and shared values.

One very important role that Cyprus has taken on is the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. This is a special responsibility that rotates between EU member states. When a country holds the Presidency, it helps organise and lead meetings, suggests ideas, and works with other countries to make decisions that benefit Europe as a whole. Cyprus first held this important role in 2012, and it was a moment of great pride for the country.



A key fact about Cyprus is that it is one of the oldest inhabited places in the world, with a history dating back over 10,000 years.



During its Presidency, Cyprus worked hard to support important topics such as economic growth, cooperation between countries, and improving people's daily lives across Europe.

For children, this shows how even a small country can have a big voice and make a difference. Being part of the EU allows Cyprus to work together with other nations to solve problems, protect people's rights, and create opportunities for the future.

Today, Cyprus continues to play an active role in the European Union, reminding us that teamwork, respect, and collaboration can help build a stronger and more peaceful world.



ANCIENT SALAMIS
NORTH CYPRUS

