



St John's School Newsletter

16th January 2026

Values of this half term

Wisdom & Truth

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through me."
John 14:6



Maths visit

On Thursday we were visited by 7 teachers as well as 2 course leaders from 4 other schools. They were visiting as part of some training given by the Matrix Maths Hub. The local Maths Hub is part of a national network whose aim is to spread excellent practice in Maths. The focus on Thursday was teaching Maths in mixed year groups which, at St John's, our teachers are experts in! It was a privilege to welcome colleagues from other settings to see good practice at St John's.



Spring School Census

Thank you to the 78 children who enjoyed a delicious school meal yesterday, and special mention to our Cook, Mrs Taggart for preparing them single-handedly.

Every meal taken helps our budget going forward.

Welcome

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to Harrison who recently joined Kingfisher class. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

Beacon Pupils

Robins - Frankie has been working hard in our learning sessions this week. He is flying with his phonics and thoughtfully spotting our new digraphs and trigraphs in words. In our maths sessions he is able to explain his thinking using good mathematical language and is able to show how numbers are made up of smaller numbers. He has shown he is able to reflect when things are more challenging and is thinking more carefully about his friends this week.

Starlings - Rory for an excellent attitude and perseverance in his learning. He has written some fantastic adjectives to describe the Great Fire of London and contributed with enthusiasm to his group and partner work. In Maths Rory has completed number investigation and shown good knowledge of numbers to 20. Rory is a fantastic learning partner showing kindness and patience with his group. He has been a great role model for a positive learning attitude.

Kingfishers - Harry has shown real enthusiasm throughout our topics, from sharing well-evidenced comprehension of our text Beowulf to identifying and explaining key links and patterns in our maths fraction topic. It has been excellent to hear the discussions he is having to explore his learning with his talk partner and seeing this translate into his work. Well done Harry.

Sandpipers - Lillia is a sweet and thoughtful member of our class who is a wonderful friend. We have seen amazing resilience and perseverance from her when she's faced with tricky learning. She has really impressed us with her great understanding of decimals, using the base ten to help her visualise the place value then working well without them! Lillia has enjoyed our book, Cloud Tea Monkeys, writing brilliant complex sentences and description and sharing her ideas with the class. She worked hard to create a fun, vibrant pop art piece in Art and showed great understanding of pollination in Science too. Well done!

"I came that they may have life, life in all its fullness."

John 10:10

Fundraising at St John's

BUILDING FUND

The first is the Building Fund which was introduced last year and again at the start of term. This is an on-going fund for the development of the school buildings, recent developments have included the new children's toilets and cloakrooms, the external steps to the hall and Sandpipers class, repairs to the flat roof and the fencing and tarmac in the Robins class outdoor area. Diocese fund these projects but as a school we contribute 10% of the cost. For this fund we would appreciate monthly contributions or one-off payments. Further details are available on the school website.

MISSION 26-26

This is a fundraising venture led by the LSA with the aim of replacing the play equipment on the main playground. The cost is considerable, one quote being around £35,000, for example. LSA fundraising events between now and the end of 2026 will go towards this goal but any suggestions for match funding and donations from companies and other donors would be much appreciated. Please speak to Mrs Boylan, Faye Dave (chair of the LSA) or other LSA members about this.

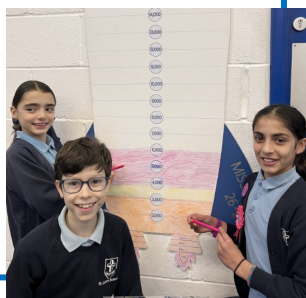


Mission 26-26

Due to the huge efforts of the LSA and the generosity of parents we have now reached a total of £6,000

What a tremendous achievement - thank you all!

Please look out for further events and opportunities for fundraising this term.



Food bank Donations

We would like to replenish our collection of food to donate to the local food bank. We would appreciate donations of dried or tinned food items. If you are able to make a donation, please bring in the item(s) on the following dates:

Friday 23rd January Sandpipers class

Friday 30th January Kingfishers class

Friday 6th February Starlings class

Friday 13th February Robins class

Many thanks.



Finer Diner

Children with exemplary manners during lunchtimes are given a Best Behaviour slip.

Those slips are put into a hat and four children are then invited to have lunch with Mrs Boylan on a Friday.

This is a lovely way to end the week with a chance to share their news with Mrs Boylan in person.

Today the children were

Freddie - Robins

Dougie - Starlings

Pippa - Kingfisher

Anna - Sandpiper



Weather Alerts

Should we need to close the school for any reason, staff will contact Parent/Class Reps who send a WhatsApp message to each family. We will update via email, on our school website and via Google Classroom

We would then update you regularly.



National Reading for Pleasure Year 2026

This year is 'National Reading for Pleasure year,' an initiative organised by the government and the National Literacy Trust. Given this and World Book Day in March we would like to share top tips to help you to support your child's reading for pleasure

Top tips for parents

Read together.

Whether your child is discovering picture books or reading independently, sharing stories will give you a chance to spend valuable time together, relax and bond over things you both find interesting.

Find time to share stories.

Life is busy! But if you can try and find 10 minutes a day to read with your child, no matter their age, it can make a big difference. Choosing the same time to share stories each day will help reading become a normal part of your daily routine.

Bring stories to life.

It can sometimes feel embarrassing to do but your child will love you using different voices and sound effects to bring stories to life. Audio books are also great for this!

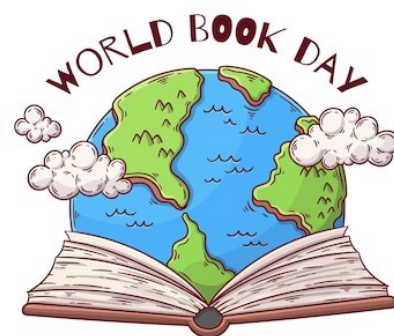
All reading counts.

Tapping into your children's interests is a great way to get them reading, learning and having fun. If they love football, read the sports pages of a newspaper together; if they love dinosaurs, find a roar-some magazine to explore; or if they enjoy baking, find a recipe book.

Find inspiration at your local library. Discover a wide range of free books, ebooks, audio-books, comics and more to borrow and take home from your library, as well as engaging events for the whole family to enjoy.

World Book Day - Thursday 5th March

Just some advanced notice about World Book Day. This year we will **not** be asking that the children dress up as characters from a book. Instead we are asking that the children bring in a copy of their favourite book and a teddy to read to. Further details of our plans for the day will be shared with you nearer the time.



Attendance

As you know good attendance at school is vitally important for children's' development - social, emotional as well as academic. Good attendance is viewed nationally as being 95% or above.

We appreciate that this is the time of year when there are all kinds of illnesses going around but at present we have many children whose attendance is considerably lower than 95%

Our aim is to work with families to support them to ensure good regular attendance for their children. The following link is a blog on the subject of attendance produced by the DfE.

[DfE external document template](#)

Sickness Reporting

A reminder to please ensure you ring the office **each** day your child is absent by **9.10am**

You can find our Attendance Policy on our website.

School Meals

As the kitchen needs meal choices by 9.30am, please either ring the school beforehand and pre book a choice or send in a home packed lunch if your child misses morning registration for any reason.

Payments / Balances

Trips/Events/Workshops/Swimming/Meals

Please check your account(s) and clear any unpaid invoice.

If you have difficulty making payment, and have not already contacted Mrs Boylan, please do so.

Site Safety Message

The safety of our children is paramount. Parents are **not** permitted to use the staff car park between 8.30 and 3.30 to turn around, drop off or collect your child.

Staff, deliveries and emergency vehicles must be able to access the car park at all times of the day.

Parents must use the pavement alongside Lemsford Road and into the side gate by Treetops - not walk through the car park at any time.

Children that are late should come to the main office using the pavement only, never through the main gate/car park.

Also, please ensure car wheels are not on pavements, blocking pedestrian walkways.

Nut Free School

Children are still bringing nuts into school. As we are a nut free environment, packed lunches and snacks must not contain nuts.

Sandwich filling containing nuts, such as Nutella® and chocolate nut spread are not permitted.



Breaktime snack

A reminder that breaktime snacks should only be a piece of fruit/vegetable or plain biscuit. Chocolate or crisps are not allowed.

Grapes in School

A gentle reminder that grapes are to be cut in half lengthways.



Please label school uniform so it can be reunited with your child.



Parking

We would strongly encourage parents to park in the public carpark at Lemsford Village Hall on Brockett Road rather on the road beside the school, whenever possible. By parking outside the school, traffic is being impacted and it is difficult for cars to drive past. The Village Hall car park is large and is close.

We would appreciate your support with this.



show you care, park elsewhere



DIARY DATES

22 January - 6.30-8pm Full Govs Meeting
5 February - House Teams Biscuit Baking Event to raise money for Mission 26:26
6 February - LSA Café, Kingfisher Class
9 February - start of Feeling Good & Mental Health Week
10 February - Meet the Teacher *
12 February - Meet the Teacher*
13 February - Careers Talks given by parents
16-20th February - Half Term Break
5 March - World Book Day
6 March - LSA Disco*
12 March - Salt Mine Theatre to visit
13 March - LSA Café, Sandpipers Class
9th March - start of Science Week
19 March - Full Governing Body at 6.30pm
23 March - Rock Steady Concert*
24 March - Music Concert*
27 March - End of Term (1.30 finish)

Big Garden Bird Watch

This year's Big Garden Bird Watch is taking place on 23rd - 25th January.

In school the classes will be taking part in activities relating to the Big Schools' Birdwatch 2026.



St John's Church - Candle Mass Sunday 1st February

If any families would like their child to lead the readings or prayers at the Candle Mass service on Sunday 1st February would you please let Mrs Boylan or Revd Kathryn know.

Hello!

Collective Worship – Continuing Our Gospel Journey

This week in Collective Worship we continued our journey exploring the four different Gospels (the books in the Bible that tell the story of Jesus' life and teaching) and how each writer tells that story in their own distinctive way.

Together, we met Matthew, who helps us see Jesus as someone firmly rooted in the story of God's people, and deeply interested in how we live our lives day by day. The children engaged so thoughtfully with these ideas and made some great connections with their own lives.

Next week, we'll be moving on to Mark — the speediest of the Gospel writers!
Christingle Service (with pizza!) – Sunday 18th January, 3.00pm

You're very warmly invited to our Christingle service on Sunday 18th January at 3.00pm at church.

Christingle is one of the loveliest all-age services of the year — full of light, colour and hope. We make Christingles together using oranges, candles, red ribbon and sweets, with each symbol helping us tell the story of Jesus as the Light of the World in a way that children can really engage with. After a short, relaxed all-age service, we'll head over to the Annexe for a pizza party.

Rev'd Kathryn

