



St John's School Newsletter

16th February 2024

Values of this half term

Wisdom and Truth

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



Beacon Pupils

Class 1 - Tilly - has grown in confidence so much this term. She comes into school with a smile each morning and is so interested in all of all of our topics. Her phonics skills are showing in her reading and writing and she knows most of the tricky words we have learnt. We love it when she has the confidence to share her ideas in the classroom. Keep up the good work Tilly!

Class 2 - Gracie - for her continued effort in her learning. She has been concentrating on ensuring her handwriting is the best it can be and we have noticed an increase in the quality of her sentences. Gracie really enjoyed our Great Fire of London workshop and shared many facts with our visitors. Gracie has developed into an active learning partner who is able to listen to her partner as well as input her own ideas.

Class 3 - Callum - he has approached all our learning with such enthusiasm and fantastic focus. He has used his skills and imagination in English to create a fantastic setting, worked hard both independently and in group work during our science investigation and been a fantastic contributor to our class discussions with his thoughtful and reflective ideas. Excellent hard work and fantastic attitude to your learning Callum.

Class 4 - Dylan - A lovely member of class who has really started to find his voice and come out of his shell. Sharing fantastic ideas and contributions in our lessons and working well with his learning partner. We've been really impressed with the effort he puts into all learning, and the great progress he is making. Dylan played brilliantly in the badminton tournament this week, showing great sportsmanship when cheering on and consoling his team mates. Well done!

Exhibition of the children's artwork

The children have been creating pieces of art to be part of a school Art Exhibition. Their artwork is being collected from school this week and will be professionally mounted ready for the exhibition.

The exhibition itself will be held in the school hall after pick up on Tuesday 27th February 3.15 - 4.00 p.m. You will be able to purchase your child's art for £8, some proceeds of which will go to the school. You will be able to pay by cash or card. The LSA will be serving refreshments during the exhibition.

If you are unable to come to the art exhibition itself then your child's artwork will be available for you to view and purchase, if you would like to on the following dates:

Thursday 29th February 3.15 - 4.00 p.m.

Friday 1st March 9.30 - 10.00a.m. (after Celebration Assembly.)

Please do come along to the exhibition if you are able to, it is Mothering Sunday on 10th March, the paintings would make lovely gifts!

Calm in the storm - Half term challenge!

As a church school one of the areas we have been thinking about is Spirituality, quite a challenging subject in many ways. One dimension of this that we have been reflecting on in Collective Worship is the story of Jesus calming the storm and relating this to our own lives. We have explored the things in school we can do and the places we can be to find the 'calm in the storm' when we might be finding things challenging.

As a half term challenge, we would like the children to make a picture, take a photo or find an image that would link with this. We would like to display them around school and to use them as part of our presentation during Collective Worship.

The challenge is entirely optional but if you would like to take part and do create something please either bring it into school or send it via email to admin@stjohns561.herts.sch.uk


"I came that they may have LIFE and have it abundantly"


John 10:10

Word of the week

What would you do? Think up small problems that your child might encounter such as getting lost, finding a mobile phone, losing money etc. Ask your child what would they do? Why? Ask other people what would they do and why. Which one is the best? Why? All of this is good practice with reasoning skills which are really important for lessons such as science as well as learning social skills.

This week's word for younger children:

Word	Definition	Challenge
clogged 	When something is blocked up.	This one is disgusting! At home find out what happens when drains get clogged .

Word	Definition	Challenge
clutching 	To hold something really tightly because you are afraid or worried.	What and why would you want to clutch onto something?

Reminders

Absence Reporting

Please ring the School Office on 01707 322589 or email admin@stjohns561.herts.sch.uk BEFORE 8.50am if your child is absent from school. We ask that you ring or email **daily** until your child returns.

Lateness

Please note, if the gates are closed, and your child needs to come through the main entrance, they will be marked as late.

Requests for Absence

Please collect a request form from the office and return it giving at least two weeks notice of any planned absence.

Parking

Morning drop off is a particularly difficult time. Please do not park on the yellow zig zags. So traffic runs smoothly, ensure adequate gaps are left between cars for traffic to pass around you safely. Parking is available by the Church or Community Hall.

Parents are not permitted to use the staff car park between 8.45 and 3.15 unless they have a pre-booked appointment with a member of staff. Children should not be dropped off or collected in the car park.

Free School Meals

To check your eligibility and register please visit...

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/at-school/free-school-meals/free-school-meals.aspx#reception>

Safe Staff - Mrs Boylan, Miss Ng and Mrs Gammon are our Safeguarding Leads, ensuring all staff are well trained in safeguarding matters. Our strong emphasis on nurture means that we have a very joined-up approach to keeping our children safe - the same staff support our children from Breakfast Club, through lunchtimes and at ASC so information is easily shared and we know our pupils well. Our Safeguarding policy is [here](#), and Mrs Boylan is always at the gate in the morning if you would like to talk.

Hall Hire

If you are thinking of holding a party or gathering do consider hiring our school hall. It is a great space with everything you need to hold a lovely event. Please contact the school office for further details.

Meet the teacher

It has been great to see parents during our on-line or face to face meetings with teachers this week. If you missed your appointment, would you please contact the school office or see the teacher at pick up to make arrangements to have your meeting.

Names on clothes

Half term would be a great time to please check that all uniform has your child's name on it. It is always so helpful when the names help us to return the uniform to the correct child! Thank you!

LSA NEWS

Pre-loved Uniform

Thank you for all the donations of uniform that we have received over recent months. We have now have a large stock which is available for parents usually at the LSA cake sales. For now we do not need any further donations unless they have the school brand on them.

LSA Cake sale & Cinema afternoon

Once again, many thanks to member of the LSA who have organised events for the school. We had a very successful Cake Sale last Friday.

Many thanks to parents of children in class 3 who donated the cakes and to the parents and family members who came along to buy them. We love our cakes at St John's!

On Sunday many of our children were treated to a cinema afternoon in the school hall. The children came with their blankets, cushions, bean bags, cuddly animals and pyjamas. They loved the pizza and popcorn that were served during the films. Once again, many thanks to the LSA who organised and were present at the event.

Planned LSA events

The following school events are being planned by the LSA:

Tuesday 27th Feb

Art show of the children's work in the hall 3.15 – 4.00 p.m

Saturday 23rd March

LSA Quiz Evening-more information to follow.

Thursday 28th March

Easter egg hunt after church service

TESCO Stronger Starts

Please vote for St John's next time you are in any of these stores...

Hatfield Extra AL9 5JY

Hatfield Rise Express AL10 8FH

Shire Park Express AL7 1TW

Welwyn Express AL6 9EQ

Welwyn Garden City Exp AL7 2BQ

The project that receives the most votes will receive £1,500, your support would really help us to create our School Garden and enhance Science, Design and Technology for all our pupils.

OUR WEEK

Great Fire of London Workshop

Class 2 enjoyed their Great Fire of London workshop provided by the North Hertfordshire museum. They took part in a bucket chain as well as observing a costume of a Fireman from 1666. They had a lovely day taking part in a variety of themed activities.



Mothering Sunday - 10th March

The school choir have been invited to sing in St John's Church as part of their Mothering Sunday service. We will also be inviting all children to lead prayers and readings. A letter was sent out to Choir members yesterday.



DIARY DATES

Week beginning Monday 19th February
Half term break

Monday 26th February
Children return to school

Tuesday 27th February 3.15-4pm
Art exhibition of children's work in the Hall

Wednesday 7th March
World Book Day— we are not dressing up as book characters this year—a letter will be sent out soon with information about the day's activities.

Sunday 10th March
Mothering Sunday

Wednesday 13th March
'Rhyming Bible' performed by Saltmine Theatre

Thursday 21st March
Rock Steady Concert

Tuesday 26th March
School concert

Thursday 28th March
9am Easter Service as St John's Church - all parents welcome.
Easter Egg hunt after Church Service

Thursday 28th March
End of the Spring term 1.30 p.m.

A message from Rev Kathryn

Hello

Before we all head off on our half-term holidays, I wanted to trail St John's up-coming **All-Together Mothering Sunday service at 11am on 10th March.**

We're really looking forward to the school choir singing with us again, and children of all ages getting involved with the readings, prayers and other parts of the service. Mum's, dad's, grandparents, carers, family friends - we'd love you to see you.

To get you in the mood for this special service, here are a few fun facts about Mothering Sunday:

Mothering Sunday is the fourth Sunday of Lent. Although it's often called Mothers' Day it has no connection with the American festival of that name.

Traditionally, it was a day when children, mainly daughters, who had gone to work as domestic servants were given a day off to visit their mother and family. Most Sundays in the year churchgoers in England worship at their nearest parish or 'daughter church'. Centuries ago it was considered important for people to return to their home or 'mother' church once a year. So each year in the middle of Lent, everyone would visit their 'mother' church - the main church or cathedral of the area. Inevitably the return to the 'mother' church became an occasion for family reunions when children who were working away returned home. (It was quite common in those days for children to leave home for work once they were ten years old.) And most historians think that it was the return to the 'Mother' church which led to the tradition of children, particularly those working as domestic servants, or as apprentices, being given the day off to visit their mother and family. As they walked along the country lanes, children would pick wild flowers or violets to take to church or give to their mother as a small gift. Today, many of us still give flowers, chocolates and other gifts to those who play a mother role in our lives (I'm hoping for a giant Dairy Milk chocolate bar if my children are reading this!)

Another thought is that the name comes from one of the Bible readings for that day, which refers to motherhood in a different way. 'But the Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all (Galatians 4:26)

Mothering Sunday has also known been known as Refreshment Sunday (I think we should bring this back!) because the fasting rules for Lent were relaxed that day. Originally, both Old and New Testament lessons on mid-lent Sunday made a point of food. For example, the Gospel reading from the New Testament told the story of how Jesus fed five thousand people with only five small barley loaves and two small fish.

The food item specially associated with Mothering Sunday is the Simnel cake. A Simnel cake is a fruit cake with two layers of almond paste, one on top and one in the middle. The cake is made with 11 balls of marzipan icing on top representing the 11 disciples. (Judas is not included.) Traditionally, sugar violets would also be added. Why Simnel? The name Simnel probably comes from the Latin word *similawhich* means a fine wheat flour usually used for baking a cake. However, there's a legend that a man called Simon and his wife Nell argued over whether the cake for Mothering Sunday should be baked or boiled. In the end they did both, so the cake was named after both of them: SIM-NELL (hmmm!)

I hope you all have wonderful half term rest, and look forward to seeing you soon.

Rev. Kathryn

