



St John's School Newsletter

9th 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 - George - has settled into our class so well. He has grown in confidence to share in our sessions and is speaking more confidently in our whole class sessions. It is lovely to see his enthusiasm for his phonics learning and his knowledge of sounds is growing everyday. He has brilliant creative ideas in his play. We are so glad he has joined our class.

Class 2 - Freya - for her cheery disposition and constant enthusiasm for learning. She is a great learning partner and always ensure that her partner understands her and takes time to understand them. This week Freya has used some great language in her recount of the great fire of London. She has really enjoyed learning new vocabulary and using it in her writing.

Class 3 - Milo - he has shown such enthusiasm throughout the week, in recognising methods to find equivalent lengths in maths, using fantastic adjectives to create verb phrases in English and asking thoughtful and inquisitive questions during our animal and history experiences this week. Milo has worked brilliantly independently, showing great resilience but also alongside his talk partner to create shared work.

Class 4 - Emma - she is a happy and friendly member of class who finds joy in all of our learning! She is an enthusiastic learner who shares thoughtful and interesting ideas. We love that Emma also loves listening to and learning from others, valuing their contributions. In our animal workshop, she shared lots of fun facts, was eagerly involved and asked brilliant questions!

Feeling Good Week

We have had a very busy week with many enjoyable experiences for the children which will hopefully have made them, and staff, feel good!

During the week each class has had a Forest School session with Mrs Maher. They have been outside doing all kinds of activities including learning about animal life cycles, creating faces from natural materials and going on nature scavenger hunts.

On Wednesday we had some very exotic visitors as a range of animals were brought into school by three animal experts. The children were able to touch and hold the animals which came in all shapes and sizes! The animals included a very large snake, owls, a giant cockroach, a chinchilla, and a fire salamander. The children learnt about animal habitats, life cycles and how animals adapt to their environment. Real hands-on learning!



Word Aware

As you know oracy is one the areas that we are developing this year. Part of our development has been the introduction of Word Aware which is a programme aiming to promote vocabulary in children's speech. Further information about the programme has been added to school's website.

Please follow this link to find out more: [word-aware.pdf \(primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com\)](http://word-aware.pdf(primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com))


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


John 10:10

Word of the week

Build a story. One person starts a made-up story with one sentence, such as 'Once upon a time an enormous giant was sleeping when...' Other players then take turns to build on the story. You might have 'Big Red Riding Hood' or 'Goldilocks and the Three Kittens'. What would Big Red Riding Hood do to the wolf?

This week's word for younger children:

Word		Definition	Challenge
cling		To hold very tightly.	What things might you cling to? Why?

Word		Definition	Challenge
cascade		Lots of water flowing downwards, very quickly.	How does the word cascade make you feel?

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.

Planned LSA events

The following school events are being planned by the LSA:

Sunday 11th Feb

Movie afternoon (classes 1&2 - 1:30-3:30) (classes 3&4 - 3:45-5:45)

Tuesday 27th Feb

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

Thursday 28th March

Easter egg hunt after church service

CAN YOU HELP?

Kitchen Helper Needed

Herts Catering will soon be advertising for a person to help in our school kitchen. It is envisaged the role will be for 10 hours a week.

We do not have any further details at present, keep an eye on the HCL website...

<https://www.hcl.co.uk/join-our-team>

Eco Council

Does any parent have a wooden pallet going spare please?

We need 5-7 for various projects including our Bug Hotel.



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. More information to follow.



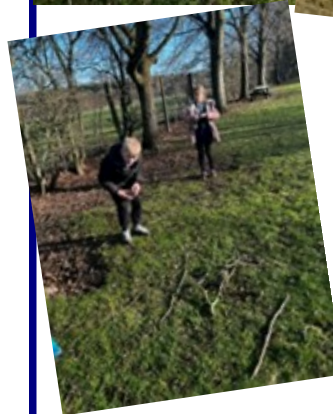
Men United In Song

At Christmas the school choir sang in a joint concert with the Welwyn Garden City Male Voice Choir at St John's Church. The MVC are now involved in a project for Prostate Cancer called Men United in Song. If you know of any gentleman who would love to join this group, no singing experience required, please see the flyer attached.

The project runs from March until May.

OTHER NEWS...

This term Eco-council have researched bug hotel bottles and created our own for the first school. Last week they filled the bottles with natural resources and this week they have hung them or placed them in the forest school.



Class 1 enjoying Forest School



DIARY DATES

Sunday 11th February
Movie afternoon (classes 1&2 - 1:30-3:30) (classes 3&4 - 3:45-5:45)

Week beginning Monday 12th February
Parents' Evenings

Wednesday 14th February
Assembly led by staff and pupils from Knightsfield School - **Postponed**

Friday 16th February
Visit to St John's by Grant Shapps - **Postponed**

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

Next week is the start of Lent, and during our 11am service this Sunday, 'Sunday Club' will be getting ready with a pancake party. We love newcomers, so do give it a try if you've never been before.

To help us get ready for this new season, I thought share one of this month's parish magazine articles, entitled - **What actually is Lent?** Lent is a period of preparation before Easter. Specifically, it's a time of 'repentance' - turning away from the things that harm us, others, and the earth (known as sin) and turning back to God and his way of love.

The first day of Lent is Ash Wednesday when traditionally Christians attend church and have their foreheads marked with a cross of ash as a sign of penitence (being sorry for the things we've got wrong). **St John's Ash Wednesday service is at 10am - we'd love to see you.**

Traditionally, people also demonstrate their 'penitence' by giving up some nice things for Lent (fasting). This is why we have 'Pancake Day' just before Lent, when certain foods were used up so they wouldn't be wasted (it's also why we don't have flowers in church). The 'proper' name for this day is 'Shrove Tuesday' from an old word 'shriving', which means confessing sins and being absolved of them.

Lent is 40 days long, but if you look at a calendar it looks longer. Why is this? It's because we don't count Sundays. Every Sunday is a celebration of Jesus' resurrection, and we don't fast when we celebrate! The length of 40 days was chosen to represent a few things, primarily the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness (which also recalled the 40 years the Hebrews spent in the wilderness).

Finally, what does the word 'Lent' actually mean? The name doesn't really have any special meaning - it comes from an old word meaning 'lengthen' and refers to the time of year (Spring) when the days get longer.

For some ideas of how to make this Lent a special time for you and others around you, you might like to take a look at our parish magazine on our website. Lots of people now 'take up something positive' as an alternative to giving something up. There are ideas for all ages.

Wishing you a transformative Lent

Rev. Kathryn