

# St John's VA C of E Primary School

*Finding the light in ourselves and each other (John 8:12)*

**20/09/24**

## Autumn 1: Issue 2



### Welcome message from the Headteacher

*Rock'n'roll fortnight!*

Dear all,

It has been a brilliant fortnight of settling into school. Children have been working incredibly hard – with writing I have seen some fantastic pieces of work across the school. I have even learnt how to make some toast with Year 1 following their instructions.

We have had an incredible rock and roll assembly last week to launch Rocksteady. Within 15 minutes of the letters going out, the spaces were filled. This was the fastest sign up Rocksteady has ever had! We are seeking to see if we can have the afternoon session too to ensure more children can take part.

I want to say a huge thank you to everyone filling in the Google forms, it is really important to hear your views and support. This is very valuable for myself and the team to ensure that we are doing the best for our children.

Reception have settled in well, having lunch with their buddies. It is great to see them say good morning and hello throughout the day.

Our first eucharist service went well with prayers made by Year 5 and Year 6 went up for their blessings. It was great to see family members at the service too.

It has been great to see parents and families at the beginning and end of the day. I am slowly getting to know names of pupils and parents.

We are working hard on sports events and festivals too, please look out for these. Finally, at the end of the newsletter there is a to do list, if anything please read this section.

Best wishes

Mr Worton-Geer

Pupil quote of the week: Grayson (Y6) – "Over the past two weeks we have had a good time because we have now become Year 6's and we have a lot more responsibility. We are using TTrockstars and Seesaw.

Quote from the bible: John 15:12-13 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

### Improvements to the school:

Rocksteady is up and running. This will be on Wednesday's in the morning for those who have managed to sign up. We are looking at expanding this for next half term.

The school are moving the PE equipment into the school hall area, new equipment will be ordered shortly.

We have also begun to put a big order of sports equipment into the school too.

The website is being updated weekly to reflect changes to policies and calendars. We will update you here for any changes that you may want to check.

Additionally, we are looking at getting more iPads for the school and an easier system to run the devices more smoothly. Year 6 have had training and letters will follow. Year 5 will be the next class to start using Seesaw.

# Academic highlights

Here is some useful information that is happening in the school.

## PE:

**Swimming:** Thank you Years 4-6 for completing the survey. From the results, we will be sending all of Year 4 for two weeks intensive swim in the Autumn term – a letter will come out shortly.

During the Summer period, another two week intensive course or weekly sessions (depending on availability) will then be opened up for those not meeting the national standard.

**Earrings on PE days:** Please come to school on your PE days without earrings, this helps to reduce earrings being lost. If you have only recently had your ears pierced, please speak to the class teacher.

## PSHE - Keeping Safe Focus

The focus for this half term for children in Reception to year 6 is '**Being me in this world**'

Last Friday the focus for the half term was shared through a 'launch assembly' which Mrs de la Croix led.

The children were encouraged to think of how we can work together by using kind hands and kind words each day.

Each week the children will continue to explore this theme through their weekly PSHE lessons

## TTrockstars and Numbots:

Part of our homework is to practice our times tables on TTrockstars or Numbots. TTrockstars is for Years 3-6 (in the summer, Year 2 will also be taking part in this). Numbots is for Reception to Year 2. These workshops will be run by Mr Worton-Geer who has a wealth of knowledge on how to practice times tables, number fluency and is currently the Maths lead. Please could you fill out the below survey if you wish to take part in a workshop and when. The workshops shouldn't take more than 20 minutes.

<https://forms.gle/J8S8JYoUkhxmQfPS8>

## Rock steady Assembly:

Our workshops and assembly went incredibly well with many children taking part. We are excited to see where this will take the school in the near future.



## Staffing:

We are advertising a role of Teaching Assistant that can be found here:

[https://www.teachinherts.com/find-a-job/view/teaching-assistant\\_97047.htm](https://www.teachinherts.com/find-a-job/view/teaching-assistant_97047.htm)

This is to support our children and the day-to-day role of the school.

## Volunteer/ donation news:

We are looking to tidy up our forest area. Are there any parents who would be willing to support the school with this? Please speak to either Mr Worton-Geer or Mrs Wilkins.

We also have been donated 60 small trees that are coming in November, we are looking for some pots. They need to be around 20cm tall. If you have any, please could we have them for our forest area.

Any DBS'd volunteers who would be interested in supporting with sports festivals, please speak to Mr Worton-Geer.



# Extra curricular activities

Sports festivals for the term:

This half term, we are aiming to complete the following events, please look out for your Year group email to see if your child has been chosen for the event.

- *Year 6 netball training – team selected already – Monday's until half term after school at Stanborough netball courts.*
- *Whole class -Year 5 running event Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2024 am – Monks walk*
- *Whole class - Year 3 multisport event Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2024 pm*
- *Year 5 and 6 – team selected- football fixture night – Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September and Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October – after school at Monk's Walk*
- *Year 4 – girls – team selected – Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October am – Monks walk.*
- *Year 4 boys – team selected – Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October pm – Monks Walk*
- *Whole class – Year 6 – Boccia, Table Tennis, Curling and Archery – Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024 – pm*

Code of conduct for festivals and competitions:

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Spectator's / Manager's</u></b> <b><u>Code of Conduct</u></b> <i>(Spectator = Parent, School Representative, Siblings, Staff and Volunteers)</i></p> <p>All Spectators are welcome to attend any of the primary sports provision events <b>outside of school hours</b>, and those at Gosling sports park unless otherwise informed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat everyone with <b>Respect</b></li> <li>• Cheer in a <b>Positive</b> manner for all competitors</li> <li>• <b>Respect</b> the decisions of officials / volunteers</li> <li>• <b>Do not interfere</b> with the play or competition</li> <li>• Be <b>Courteous</b> and <b>Respectful</b> to other spectators, all competitors, coaches, event organisers and officials</li> <li>• Exercise <b>Self-Control</b> at all times</li> <li>• <b>Respect</b> the rules and regulations of the facility</li> <li>• <b>Refrain</b> from the use of foul or profane language</li> <li>• <b>Refrain</b> from the use of physical force of any kind</li> <li>• <b>Obey</b> the non-smoking policy for all public areas unless otherwise informed</li> </ul> <p>You are the guest of the facility that you are attending and will be asked to leave if you fail to follow the code of conduct.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>PLAYERS/ PERFORMERS</u></b> <b><u>Code of Conduct</u></b></p> <p><b>All Students are expected to give their best and be gracious in defeat and victory.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat everyone with <b>Respect</b></li> <li>• Cheer in a <b>Positive</b> manner for all competitors</li> <li>• <b>Respect</b> the decisions of officials / volunteers</li> <li>• <b>Do not interfere</b> with the play or competition</li> <li>• Be <b>Courteous</b> and <b>Respectful</b> to other players and performers, coaches, event organisers and officials</li> <li>• Exercise <b>Self-Control</b> at all times</li> <li>• <b>Respect</b> the rules and regulations of the game</li> <li>• <b>Refrain</b> from the use of physical force of any kind</li> <li>• <b>Accept</b> the decisions of the referees and officials</li> <li>• <b>Shake hands</b> with your opponents after the match/ performance</li> <li>• <b>Thank</b> the officials and organisers of your event.</li> <li>• <b>Enjoy the experience win or lose!</b></li> </ul>	
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## School policy updates -

Policies that are being updated in the next week are:

- Attendance Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Sports premium 23/24

- Sports premium 24/25
- Pupil premium three Yearly Strategy
- PSHE policy
- Safeguarding Statement.

## Parish News

### Harvest Festival Service

We need a Big Push to Support the Foodbank - non-perishable goods to be brought to the church. Please start collecting food and bringing it into classes ready for our Harvest festival at St John's on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

### Harvest Festival Parish Service

This is a family service on Sunday 6 October at 9.30am to which everyone is welcome.

### Supporting Parish Cafes

One of the ways parents can support the parish in a joyful way is to go along on Fridays and Saturdays to either of the Parish cafes.

Fridays - 9am-12 Noon at St John's Church.

Saturday - 9.30am-12.30pm Christ the King Hub opposite the shops at Haldens.

### All Age Worship

Every third Sunday of the month the 9.30am service is for all ages. Lots of fun for all the family with refreshments afterwards, all are welcome.

### Baptisms

We have had a record number of baptisms this summer. If any family would like to arrange a baptism for their child(ren) please get in touch with the parish

viainfo@digswell [parish.org.uk](http://parish.org.uk)

## Local news

### Calling all Key Stage 2 pupils in Hertfordshire!

[Hertfordshire Heroes](#) is encouraging all Key Stage 2 pupils in Hertfordshire to take part in our annual Christmas Art Competition by 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024. This year, we invite children to create artwork to bring cheer to military personnel for their chance to win a day of adventure hosted by the UK military's operational headquarters, Northwood HQ. A winner will be chosen from each year group in Key Stage 2. The theme this year is honouring the 80th anniversary of D-Day. The artwork will be shared with those serving in the Armed Forces who are working away from their families at Christmas to help bring them some cheer.



Once you have completed this, please hand this in to the office for the attention of Mr Worton-Geer who will later decide the class winners.

**Our theme this half term is: Love.**

**Dear God,**

**Thank you for letting us love ourselves and one another. Thank you for the lovely staff and the kind people that I get to play with. I have really enjoyed being at school this year so far.**

**Amen**

**Pray written by Ravi (Year 6)**

# Calendar

## Reception and Nursery:

School tour dates for admissions 2025/6.

Reception and Nursery tour dates:

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> September – 2pm

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September 4pm

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2pm

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October 9am

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November 9am

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2pm

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December 9am

Year 6's will help as tour guides after an initial introduction by the headteacher.

## The rest of the half term:

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2024 – 2:45pm – Year 5 Teacher Meet – in the hall

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2024 – 2:45pm – Year 6 Teacher Meet – in the hall

Week of the 30<sup>th</sup> September – Year 5 and 6 Bikeability

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024 – Year 4 Bikeability

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024 – Harvest Festival at St John's for 8:40am

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024 – Spanish day – information to follow

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024 – School photographer – individual photos

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024 – whole school-book look – 2:45pm – 3:25pm

Thursday Reception and Reading parent workshop – 2:30pm

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> and Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024 – Parent consultation evening – face to face

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024 – Last day of term

## Road awareness:

Mrs Martin's school ( St Michael's C of E Primary) are currently working on road safety. Their project as well as our own local area project is to reduce traffic through our village which is highly important.

If you wish to complete the following to support Mrs Martin's school, I am sure she will appreciate it.

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/consultations/transport-and-highways/safer-routes-to-school-proposals-in-oaklands-and-woolmer-green.aspx>

## Black History Month

While black history is celebrated all year round, [Black History Month](#) is marked annually in the month of October. It recognises and values the inspirational individuals and events that have shaped the black generation. During Black History Month, we remember and celebrate the important people from the past and also those who contribute to and help our society today.

In October, lessons, classes and assemblies will be focused on black history month.



## Helpful resources:

# St John's VA C of E Primary

Finding the light in ourselves and each other (John 8:12)



Please visit our website or scan the QR code below to find out about our 15 or 30-hour Nursery provision as well as our Reception admission.

As this is one of the most important decisions that you will make for your child, it is a pleasure to introduce you to our school, where we live and breathe our aspirations 'to soar on wings like eagles' to succeed (Isaiah 40:31).



Contact us to find out more about St John's VA C of E Primary School- Digswell.

01438 714283

<https://www.digswell.herts.sch.uk>

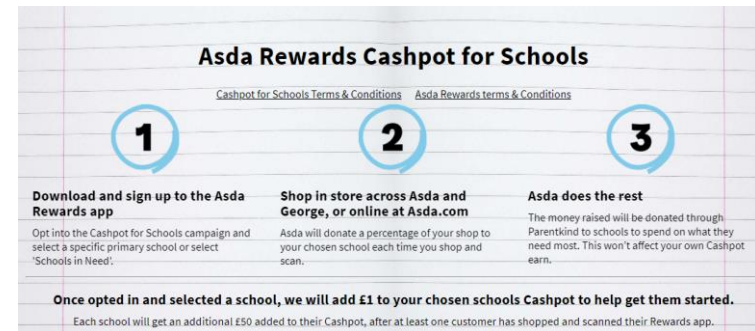
email: [admin@digswell.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@digswell.herts.sch.uk)

St John's VA C of E Primary School, Hertford Road, Digswell, Hertfordshire, AL6 0BX

### ASDA CASHPOT FOR SCHOOLS

Between 2nd September and 30th November 2024, every time customers shop with Asda using their Rewards app, the supermarket will donate 0.5% of the value of their shop to their chosen primary school. To support our school:

1. Download the Asda Rewards app and sign up
2. Select your St John's Digswell (search using the school postcode AL6 0BX)
3. Shop in-store or online at Asda.com



### EASYFUNDRAISING

Friends of St. John's is now registered with easyfundraising. This means you can raise free donations for us every time you shop online. Over 7,000 brands will donate to us when you shop through easyfundraising at no extra cost to you. These donations add up and make a big difference. Please sign up and support us—it's free and only takes a moment.

[www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/fostjdigswell](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/fostjdigswell)

### SCHOOL LOTTERY

Did you know we have a school lottery? Join today to support our school and have a chance to win a weekly cash prize of up to £25,000. There's also a guaranteed weekly prize for a St. John's supporter—the more participants, the bigger the prize!

[www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/st-johns-digswell](http://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/st-johns-digswell)

### TEXTILE RECYCLING BANK

Friends of St. John's has arranged a textile recycling bank at school for used clothing and textiles. We earn funds by weight, promoting sustainability by keeping textiles out of landfills. Collected items are either reused or converted into insulation and cleaning materials.

Drop off clean, bagged items in the green bin behind the school building, next to the bike/scooter store.

# A letter from an author:



3 Westleigh Gate  
Uplawmoor  
East Renfrewshire  
G78 4BB

To everyone at St John's CofE Primary School,

I hope you're excited about the new school year and are looking forward to discovering lots of wonderful new stories in your class or school library!

When I was your age, I was an avid reader. My friends often complained that I wasn't listening to their chat and they were right, sometimes I wasn't! But it is a brilliant feeling, isn't it, when you're enjoying a story so much you don't want to put it down? What's your favourite book? If you haven't found one yet, keep looking. Somewhere, in a bookshop or on a library shelf, is a story you'll love forever.

Books are so special and so important. Occasionally, real-life can get boring, but not when we can lose ourselves in exciting stories. All we have to do is jump aboard that magic carpet, or into that flying car, and we can go on wonderful adventures without ever leaving the building! And sometimes real-life can get sad or difficult. Reading stories can help us realise that we're not alone and that lots of other people have been through the same problems and come out the other side. Also, the whole time we're reading we are developing empathy, that vital ability to stand in other people's shoes. Reading fiction actually makes us kinder people, so be readers.

I write children's fiction because for me, the stories I read as a child are the ones that had the deepest impact. Ann Holm's *I am David* was the first book to make me cry. *The Borrowers* made my imagination soar. *The Silver Sword* and *The Eagle of the Ninth* got me interested in history. SF Said, the brilliant author of *Tyger*, said it beautifully: *the books we love when we're young stay with us forever, and make us who we are.*

I have been a published author since April 2015, when I won the Kelpies Prize for my debut novel, *The Mixed-Up Summer of Lily McLean*, although I actually decided when I was about eight years old that I wanted to be a children's author. It took a very long time for me to feel brave enough to send my work to publishers. If you are interested in becoming an author, don't be like me. Enter competitions and get your writing in front of an audience. Be confident and don't give up. Keep practising and improving and you will get there.

It is, by the way, great fun being an author. I love visiting schools, libraries and festivals and talking to children about reading and writing. I really enjoy signing books in bookshops. The writing is sometimes the difficult bit, the part where I have to sit down at my desk and get on with it, no excuses allowed. Being a published author doesn't happen without hard work, but if you really, really want something, you have to do your absolute best to make it happen!

I've had nine children's novels published now, including *The Titanic Detective Agency* and *Guardians of the Wild Unicorns*, which was nominated for the Carnegie Medal! *Euro Spies* came out in April 2023 and is a spy caper set in six European cities and is packed with clues to solve and codes to crack.

My latest novel, *Ice Cream Boy*, came out in May this year. I began writing *Ice Cream Boy* soon after my mum's death from Alzheimer's disease and that aspect of Luca's story feels very personal. It was not an easy subject to write about, particularly for children, and I didn't want to write a depressing book! So, my main character, 12-year-old Luca, is a fast-talking joker who is often in trouble at school, but is determined to save his family's Glasgow ice cream shop by inventing the best ice cream in the world.

If you read any of my novels, please write or email and tell me what you think.

Keep reading!  
Best wishes, Lindsay Littleson

