

St John's VA C of E Primary School NEWSLETTER

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



22/11/24

Welcome message from the Headteacher

The lead up to Christmas!

Dear all,
I hope you have enjoyed the last several weeks. Whilst it is getting darker and colder, our hearts at St John's continues to beat strong. We have had some fun with our special weeks including travel to school week, anti-bullying week and kindness week. The school is looking better each and every day.

The fireworks and remembrance service were incredible. Thank you for chatting to me during this, not only did it show how well we can work together to create a wonderful PTA but also the community spirit coming together.

I have had the luxury to see and smell some Gruffalo crumble in EYFS as well as talk to some of our incredible swimmers in Year 4. The children are thriving, and I have been incredibly lucky to teach several classes in the past two weeks – behaviour is outstanding!

We are continuing to move forwards completing lots of paperwork, completing fire drills, and updating fire extinguishers. Whilst this is all very exciting at a headteacher level, what has been so good is the number of outside groups supporting the school. Last week we had drama from Monk's Walk, a PE specialist day and music sessions in Year 5. The development of the whole curriculum is coming together smoothly.

I thoroughly enjoyed last Friday's Children in Need Day. I was very busy but apparently, we had Spiderman in our school – if only I had been there to see him! The children had a wonderful day and for such a great cause.

Finally, December is approaching, and we need your help! I wondered if there is anyone who has connections to get a real Christmas tree donated to the school – I know many companies work closely with schools and thought this would be great way to create more links. I am a huge lover of Christmas and feel when December arrives, we will all get into the Christmas spirit!

Best wishes

Mr Worton-Geer

Pupil quote of the week: Vienna (Year 2) - *I like where we have new equipment and stuff. I like going to school. I love that we are allowed to have fun.*

Quote from the bible: (Romans 15:13:) *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in faith so that you overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."*

Improvements to the school:

We have been working hard on assist registers and risk assessments this half term.

We also have got out SIAMs report too – see page 2.

I would really appreciate if you could please complete the following survey to help me get a better understanding on how you are feeling about the school one term in. Please be honest as I want to work together to improve our amazing school!

<https://forms.gle/bgSErT7EgsQ3HFCZ>





Academic Highlights

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

SIAMs:

SIAMS report

Both pupils and parents are always eager to see their school reports. It's an opportunity to take a snapshot of where a child is, acknowledge their journey and look to the future.

Schools, themselves, have a myriad of reports about them too. Everyone tends to think about OFSTED, but we also have School Effectiveness Advisor visits and last month a Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) which looks at the school's vision, values and religious responsibilities. These visits are often a key focus for us as governors as well as all the staff.

You can read the latest SIAMS report on our [website](#) and whilst it looks with a spirituality focus, it actually is a great representation of how the school thinks and works together as a community delivering for the children. Seeing someone say "St John's is a school where pupils and adults can thrive. They exude happiness and are proud to belong to this school. Parents value the support on offer as well as the nurturing family feel" is a great thing to read.

As governors, we would like to thank the hard work of the whole staff team, led by Mr Worton-Geer and Assistant Head Mrs de la Croix who also shares the lead for RE with Mrs Miller, not just for getting a great report, but also the hard work they all have put in. It is lovely to see that work being recognised so positively.

Nick Johnson
Chair of Governors, St. John's CofE School, Digswell

PE:

On Wednesday 11th November 2024, we played two matches against Sherrardswood School.

One of our teams won 5-0 supporting our goal of reaching the top of our league. For this game, the player of the match was Max L from Year 5, for some incredible tackles and passing.

The other team also did incredibly well, 5-1 in the end. Mr Draper ran this team and said the team worked incredibly hard. Theo, Year 5, was made player of the match for some incredible saves and amazing team spirit.

Swimming:

Year 4 have just completed 2 weeks of swimming at Hatfield pool. It was incredible to see how much the children improved in those 2 short weeks. They had an amazing time! I am very proud of all their achievements and the way they supported and encouraged each other.

Mrs Norris

Please see our Year 4 report on page 5.



Child Prayer:

Dear God,

Thank you for all the people in school and my friends. Thank you for the food that we can eat. Thank you for keeping us safe from anything bad happening in the world.

Amen

Theo (Year 5)

Volunteer/ donation work:

Fireworks:

What a great turn out it was. I thoroughly enjoyed seeing friends and families of the Digswell village and parish. I want to say a huge thank you for the PTA and all the volunteers who helped and supported. We would not be able to do this without the help of everyone supporting together.

Trees:

We have received 60 trees from the Woodland Trust and many pots from one of our amazing parents – Tora – thank you. We are awaiting the soil, 750kg is arriving this week for the pots for our trees. Additionally, Hugo (another parent) has donated some compost too. EYFS and Year 6 will be working together on this to get them planted before Christmas over the next few weeks. If there are any parents who would like to help plant our trees, please see Mrs Wilkins or Mr Worton-Geer.

Movie morning:

Thank you to everyone who donated, we raised over £490 and will be updating further IT resources in the school. The children had a wonderful time, and it was a terrific way to end the half term.



We may hold these mornings once a term so look out for this!

Donations:

We would love any support or donations to the school. Christmas is coming and we would love every child to create, bring or make a Christmas decoration for our tree in the hall. I want to see how many pupils can support decorating our family tree.

We are also looking at anyone who would like to help with landscaping or help with small projects around the school. Mr Worton-Geer has many ideas and needs help with making these a reality. If you have any ideas or donations that you think the school would benefit from, please speak to Mr Worton-Geer.

Remembrance:



A great turn out for remembering those who have fallen. Thank you everyone who attended and represented the school and their families. Our wreaths are beautiful

and can still be seen at the war memorial in the village. We even made it onto the Welwyn Hatfield times – see link here -

<https://www.whtimes.co.uk/news/24715429.welwyn-hatfield-remembrance-sunday-2024-pictures/>

We were also told that our school donated over £350 – the

highest amount in Primary schools in our local area!

Sign review in Digswell:

The Pupil Parliament team have been busy meeting the local residents helping to celebrate our new sign in the school. It was great to be part of this and connect with our local community.



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Autumn Term 2nd Half:

Friday 22 nd November 2024	Occasional Day
Thursday 28 th November 2024	Year 6 Height and Weight and Reception– School Nurses Team
Saturday 30 th November 2024	St John's Church Christmas Market 10am – 1pm
Monday 2 nd – Friday 6 th December 2024	Art Week
Wednesday 4 th December 2024	Flu Vaccinations – catch up session
Wednesday 4 th December 2024	Monks Walk Community Christmas Concert – 6pm
Thursday 5 th December 2024	Reception and Nursery Nativity Dress Rehearsal
Friday 6 th December 2024	KS1 Nativity Dress Rehearsal
Wednesday 11 th December 2024	Reception and Nursery Nativity – At Christ the Kind Church – 8:50am
Thursday 12 th December 2024	KS1 Nativity – at St John's Church – 6:00pm
Wednesday 18 th December 2024	Rocksteady Concert – 9am – invite only
Wednesday 18 th December 2024	Christmas Lunch and Christmas Jumper Day
Thursday 19 th December 2024	Christmas Disco evening
Friday 20 th December 2024	Last Day - Carol service – St John's Church – 8:50am
Saturday 21 st December 2024– Sunday 5 th January 2025	Christmas break
Monday 6 th January 2025	INSET Day
Tuesday 7 th January 2025	First day back



Year 4 report on swimming:

At Hatfield Pool we did life saving and loads of different strokes, here are some of the things we did:-

Life Saving

In life saving we were taught how to save someone if they fell into a lake or deep water. You would save someone in a lake by finding a long stick and then going onto your stomach and holding the stick out as far as you can. Hopefully they can grab hold of it, but if they are too far away you would need to find something that floats and throw it out to them.

Front Crawl

When we did front crawl, we would kick our legs and scoop the water, bringing our heads to the side to breath. Our body's had to be straight.

Backstroke

When we were doing backstroke we had to have a straight back and have really good kicking legs. Backstroke was a bit harder because we had to keep putting our head up and down.

Butterfly

To do butterfly we would bring our arms up and then hit the water, while wiggling our legs like jelly.

Treading Water

To tread water we needed to do breaststroke legs whilst moving our arms up and down. We tried to do it for 3 minutes!

Diving Board

When we were going off the diving board, we weren't allowed to use goggles because it could be dangerous and we could damage our eyes. Our first try was a bit scary, but it was still fun! One time, Rafferty did an old person jump and fell in saying, "Oh great heavens!" On the second time he did a flip and splashed everyone!

Sinkers

The sinkers were fun to play with and we played a team game where you had to get as many sinkers using your mouth and feet, with no goggles, and put them in a bucket to see who got the most. We played many rounds of this!

Quotes

"I loved the life saving and the diving boards, but I didn't really like the REAL diving!" (Albie)

"I loved it so much and it is my favourite lesson. It is fantastic!!!" (Lexi)

"I really liked the swimming, and I loved going off the diving boards. I feel like I have really improved. It was really fun!" (Myra)

"I like the diving boards, but I didn't really like the pool because it was really cold!" (Frank)

"Swimming was good, but we had to swim really far! We went off the diving board!!!" (Logan)

"Swimming was very fun - I really liked it! My favourite part was backstroke, but what I didn't like was breaststroke because I found it hard." (Ruby)

"At swimming we went on the diving boards - this was my favourite thing! We went in the small pool and it was so hot it felt like a hot tub! Another thing we did was we played sinkies - we did it without goggles- it was really fun but when I opened my eyes it was blurry!" (Jarrod and Alice)



Christmas!

Choir:

Christmas choir at St Johns on Saturday 30th November 2024 –

The choir will be singing at the Christmas market on the 30th November 2024 at 12pm. Please come and spread the Christmas spirit.

On Wednesday 4th December 2024, at 6pm there will be a Monks Walk Community Christmas concert at St John's Church. Please join me if you can to listen to the concert. The choir will also be singing during this too.

Christmas meal, Christmas jumper and Disco information:

We have several Christmas events that are happening including Christmas meal and jumper day on the Wednesday 18th December 2024.

We also have the Christmas Disco run by the PTA on Thursday 19th December – information to follow.

Christmas lights!

Furthermore, I wanted to let you know that **Audrey** in Year 6 is the main winner for the Welwyn Parish Christmas Card competition.

She will be turning on the Welwyn Christmas lights on the 29th November. Her card will be the official parish Christmas card.

Audrey is very excited - she absolutely loves doing art so is very happy to get this award. Well done Audrey for your hard work! Make sure you go to Mr Worton-Geer to collect your house points!



Parish News

November and Christmas

Please see below for dates for November and around Christmas.

Christmas Market - Saturday November 30th, 10am-1pm

Please pop along to the Parish Christmas Market - there are lots of stalls, The Coffee Pot Cafe, outside breakfast BBQ, tombola and grand raffle. This is a super way to support the work of the parish. Some of our children will be singing.

Please do support this if you can.

Confirmation:

When you get to Year 6 and become 11, an important part of being a Christian is confirming your belief.

Adley (Year 6) was Confirmed by the Bishop of Hertford last night on what was a very special evening - pictured with his fellow candidate Sandra at Rye Park. I am very proud of this young man for his dedication to his faith.



If you would like further information about confirmation or baptism, please speak to Mr Worton-Geer or Father Rob who can give you further information.




Is the children's arguing getting you down?


Sign up to our sibling rivalry workshop



This 2-hour workshop will provide parents with strategies and tools to effectively foster positive relationships, promote co-operation and manage conflict between children.

 **Thursday 12th December**

 **7.00pm - 9.00pm**

 **Online via MS Teams**

To book your place, call **Louise** on **0204 522 8700**, email **services@familylives.org.uk** or scan our QR code to use our online referral form



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Reducing Conflict Workshop



This 2-hour workshop explores different types of conflict within family life and provides support in understanding the causes and impact of parental and family conflict on children.



Tuesday 26 November

9.30am - 11.30am

Online via MS Teams



To book your place, call **Louise** on **0204 522 8700**, email **services@familylives.org.uk** or scan our QR code to use our online referral form

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