

St John's VA C of E Primary School

NEWSLETTER

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



17/01/25

Welcome message from the Headteacher

First Fortnight back!

Dear all,

It has been a great two weeks of learning at St John's VA C of E Primary School. The weather has been cold but this has not stopped the school moving in the right direction.

Firstly, seeing the children coming back has been a delight, they are full of energy and ready for another busy term. The children have been working hard in writing and it has been great to see the huge uptake in Rock Steady this term too. Subject boards around the school are being worked on and we are looking at updating our website for curriculum this half term too.

I have been in to see each class over the past two weeks and the level of engagement is incredible. Children are confident to talk to me about their learning and engaging in various topics. It is great that learning is being completed at a high standard and children are feeling confident with talking about what they have learnt.

Year 5 and 6 have sent their Seesaw home-learning codes home allowing the children to copy work from home and send into school. Particularly in Year 5, this has worked very well. The plan to continue to grow this system is around April time (the new financial year) the next order of iPads for Year 3 and 4 should take place to complete the KS2 set. The aim is by the end of next year the whole school will be set up – sorry this is taking a while but we want to ensure it is done correctly.

We also have a few workshops coming up for phonics, MTC (Multiplication Times table Checks) and SATs. To think that we only have 7 months left of this academic year shows how hard the children have worked already.

This term we have started Forest School for all year groups. Year 6 and 5 have worked incredibly hard on clearing the site and getting it interactive. At the front of the forest area, we have a sensory area and a worship area. We are working on putting up more chalk boards, mirrors and instruments around the forest. We thank everyone for the support with this huge project and continue to support any donations.

Best wishes
Mr Worton-Geer

Pupil quote of the week: Ravi (Year 6): I love the staff, how kind they are. Last week I enjoyed the forest school because it was something new and it was really fun.

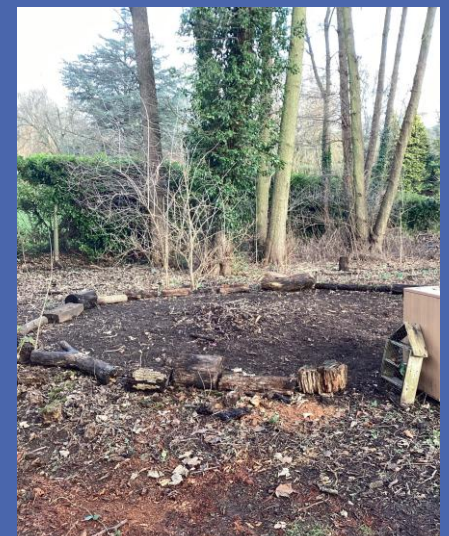
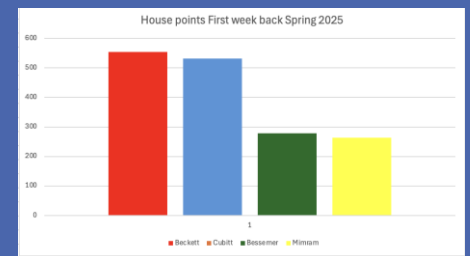
Quote from the bible: (Romans 12:12) ~" Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer."

Improvements to the school:

The forest has been developed and cleared further with new chalk boards created and a new den area. Our sensory element has been ordered.

We have updated our school internet infrastructure including new switches, and updating to Windows 11.

We have also developed our school boards with the focus on curriculum topics showing the journey from EYFS to Year 6.



Academic Highlights

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

Attendance:

Week commencing 6th January 2025

| Year | Percent | Place |
|---------|---------|-----------------|
| Nursery | 100% | 1 st |
| Year 1 | 90.8% | 6 th |
| Year 2 | 99.1% | 2 nd |
| Year 3 | 97.9% | 3 rd |
| Year 4 | 99.1% | 2 nd |
| Year 5 | 97.2% | 4 th |
| Year 6 | 96.3% | 5 th |
| Year R | 96.3% | 5 th |

PE:

Archery:

What a great event taking part with 8 of our children shooting arrows at Ridgeway school. It was very competitive, but our children did a great job. Well done to Grayson, Ella, Adley, Zena, Maia, Isis, Solomon and Kaylan for taking part.

Future events:

This term, we have badminton, rapid cricket, football, netball, indoor athletics, chess, tag rugby, footgolf and many more. Please look out for emails.

Forest school:

In Forest School we painted huge wooden boards: first with primer, then with black chalk paint. When the paint had dried, we took it to the woodland area to make a hut where you could draw on it with chalk. While some people were painting, others were cleaning/clearing the wooden area as Mr Worton-Geer had ordered a fire pit from the generous donation. - Audrey (Year 6).

In forest school, we were clearing out the forest to make room for our worship area (WP) and space for boom whackers. We had to rake all the frozen ground and leaf debris and then had to shovel it all into a wheelbarrow. We then took it away and started raking some more. - Ava (Year 6)



Child Prayer:

Dear God,

I pray that you would bless this school and continue to make peoples dreams come true. Help us with our learning this year and keep us together when times are tricky.

Amen (Lili, Year 6)

Volunteer/ donation work and competitions.

Year one outside area:

Whilst the forest area is being worked on, we also are beginning to develop the outside area for Year 1. Currently we have a canopy that will be put up in due course and are looking at further developing the outside area here too.

Here is Year one's wish list:

Round logs
Large building blocks
Acrylic painting easels
Shed
Water tray
Den building kits
Storage boxes

The forest area:

We are working very hard on the forest area and we need your help. Here is a donation list that we would love your support with:

- Pots
- Pans
- Pallets – the bigger the better
- Trash can lids
- Waste tubes
- Plastic pipes
- Logs of all sizes
- Big stones
- Old kitchen units

Each year group will spend a Friday morning with Mr Worton-Geer on forest schools. Please look out for your classes email for when it is their turn. On these days, please ensure children are wearing old clothes that will get dirty and a spare pair in case we need to get changed. They will be outside for the morning session.

Art competition:

Artists are at the heart of everything we do at the Royal Academy of Arts — we believe in nurturing and celebrating the next generation of artists. Taking inspiration from the Summer Exhibition, the Young Artists' Summer Show is a free, open submission exhibition for young artists aged 4–18 years studying in the UK. The project is generously supported by Robin Hambro, a passionate advocate for the importance of access to art, and the benefits of encouraging the arts, for children and young people.



The school will be signing up the whole school to take part. If children want to create work from home and bring them in, they will go towards this competition. Class teachers will also be adding to the portfolio from lessons in school. This will be needed by the end of Spring term – before the Easter break. These artworks are then judged by a panel of artists and arts professionals with selected artworks displayed online and on-site at the Royal Academy of Arts.

Calendar

| | |
|---|---|
| Tuesday 21 st January 2025 | Collective worship – Joy (in school) |
| Wednesday 22 nd January 2025 | Phonics (Year 1 and 2) Workshop 8:50am and 2:45pm |
| Friday 24 th January 2025 | Forest School Year 4 |
| Tuesday 28 th January 2025 | Collective Workshop –St Pauls (in school) |
| Wednesday 29 th January 2025 | MTC (Year 4) Workshop 8:50am and 2:45pm |
| Friday 31 st January 2025 | Forest School Year 3 |
| Tuesday 4 th February 2025 | Collective worship -candlemas (in school) |
| Friday 7 th February 2025 | Forest School Year 2 |
| Tuesday 11 th February 2025 | Collective worship -What is Baptism (in school) |
| Friday 14 th February 2025 | Forest School Year 1 |
| Monday 17 th – Friday 21 st February 2025 | Half- term |

Mental Health

Hertfordshire parents!

Hertfordshire's Children and Young People's Mental Health Services (CYPMHS) system wants to understand what parents and carers need when they are faced with supporting their child or young person's poor emotional wellbeing.

It can be difficult to understand why they might be experiencing low moods, anxiety or self-harming behaviours, how to cope as a family, or knowing the strategies that could help at home. In preparation for commissioning a new service, we want to make sure parents and carers feel supported, have professionals and peers to speak to and share experiences with, all while knowing they are far from alone.

[Complete the survey here](#)

Parish News

Save the Date

Tuesday 4 March. 12 Noon onwards
Parish Pancakes at the Cowpers Arms.
 Everyone welcome all day.
 Pancakes £1.50 each.

Next All Age Service Dates
 At St John's

Sundays 19th Jan and 16th February
 9:30am

All the family welcome followed by refreshments.

Parish Book Club

Friday 21 Feb. 10.30am-11.30am
 At Coffee Pot at St John's
Horse by Gerladine Brooks

Coffee Pot

Every Friday at St John's
 9am-12 Noon

Nursery availability:



We continue to develop our school and still have spaces available for nursery slots for the morning and the afternoon. If you are interested in extending your child's hours or know a family who is interested in joining our school family, please send them to this link [here](#) or contact the school office.





PARISH OF DIGSWELL FORWARD PLANNER 2025 as at 040124

Sundays: 9:30am Parish Eucharist at St John's Church
Tuesdays: 10am Parish Midweek Eucharist at Christ the King Hub followed by coffee morning
Fridays: Coffee Pot at St John's Café. 9am-12Noon
All Age Worship: Every 3rd Sunday at St John's

January

Wednesday 1 NAMING OF JESUS service followed by fizz
 Sunday 5 EPIPHANY SERVICES
 Friday 17 Parish Book Club at Coffee Pot
 Sunday 19 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Service at St John's (4pm)

February

Saturday 1 9.30am Extended Ministry Group (Rector)
 Sunday 2 CANDLEMAS SERVICES
 Thursday 13 PCC Meeting via Zoom
 Friday 21 Parish Book Club at Coffee Pot
 Wednesday 26 12-2pm Preparing for Lent. Soup & Sandwiches at Rectory

March

Tuesday 4 Parish Pancakes at the Cowpers
 PCC Meeting via Zoom
 Wednesday 5 ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES
 Saturday 8 Diocesan Synod Meets
 Friday 7 First of 5 Lent Group at Coffee Pot (10:30)
Also on 14, 21, 28, and 4 April
 Monday 10 First of 5 Lent Groups at Digswell Village Church (2pm)
Also on 17th, 24th, 31st March and 7th April.
 Tuesday 11 First of 5 Lent Groups via Zoom (7:30)
Also on 18, 25, 1 & 8 April
 Sunday 23 Parish Annual Meetings
 Sunday 30 MOTHERING SUNDAY (Summertime Begins)

April

Thursday 3 8.50am St John's School Holy Week Service
 1.45am Harwood Hill Holy Week Service
 Saturday 5 9.30am Extended Ministry Group (Rector)
 Saturday 12 7.30am St John's Spring Concert. James Beddoe and friends.
 Sunday 13 PALM SUNDAY SERVICES
 Thursday 17 MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICES
 Friday 18 GOOD FRIDAY SERVICES
 Saturday 19 Cream Teas at Coffee Pot 1.30pm-4pm
 Sunday 20 EASTER DAY SERVICES
 Monday 28 PCC Meeting via Zoom
 Tuesday 29 St George's Lunch at the Cowpers Arms

May

Friday 2 Parish Safeguarding Officers Service at St Alban's Cathedral
 Saturday 3 Keld Ensemble Concert
 Wednesday 14 Parish Bible Study via Zoom
 Friday 16 Parish Book Club at Coffee Pot
 Monday 26 Cream Teas at the Rectory
 Thursday 29 ASCENSION DAY

June

Monday 2 7:30pm Bible Study via Zoom
 Sunday 8 PENTECOST SERVICES
 Saturday 14 Diocesan Synod Meets
 Friday 20 Welwyn Harmony Concert at St John's
 Saturday 21 Parish Book Club at Coffee Pot
 Thursday 26 St Alban Pilgrimage in St Albans
 Saturday 28 PCC Meeting at Rectory
 9.30am Extended Ministry Group (Rector)
 Welwyn Garden City Music Society Concert at St John's

July

Saturday 5 Parish Summer Breakfast at Christ the King Hub (10am-1pm)
 Monday 7 7:30pm Bible Study via Zoom
 Friday 18 St John's Church of England School Leavers' Service, 8.50am
 Friday 18 Parish Book Club at Coffee Pot

August

Saturday 2 Transfiguration Cream Teas at the Rectory 1.30pm-4pm
 Tuesday 5 Feast of the Transfiguration Service
 Wednesday 6 FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

September

Monday 1 7:30pm Bible Study via Zoom
 Friday 12 Beginning of School Year Eucharist at St John's (8.50am)
 Saturday 13 Patronal Weekend Afternoon Teas at St John's (1:30pm-4pm)
 Sunday 14 10:00am Patronal Service followed by Lunch
 Preacher: TBC
 Thursday 18 PCC Meeting via Zoom
 Friday 19 10:30am Parish Book Club at Coffee Pot
 Sunday 21 HARVEST FESTIVAL

October

Monday 6 Parish Bible Study via Zoom
 Saturday 11 Diocesan Synod Meets
 Friday 17 10.30am Parish Book Club at Coffee Pot
 Sunday 19 STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY
 Sunday 26 Winter Time Begins

November

Sunday 2 ALL SOULS SUNDAY
 Sunday 9 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICES
 Sunday 16 SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY

Friday 21
 Sunday 23

Saturday 29
 Sunday 30

December

Wednesday 3 Advent Soup and Cheese Disussion Group (Rector)
 Thursday 4 PCC Meeting via Zoom
 Sunday 7 4pm Parish Christingle at Christ the King Hub
 Wednesday 10 Advent Soup and Cheese Disussion Group (Rector)
 Sunday 14 11am Parish Carol Service
 Wednesday 24 CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES
 Thursday 25 CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES
 Sunday 28 11am Joint United Service at DVC

January 2026

Thursday 1 NAMING OF JESUS service followed by fizz