

St John's VA C of E Primary School

NEWSLETTER

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



12/09/25

Autumn Term 1

Value: Love

Welcome message from the Headteacher

Start of a new year!

Dear all,

It has been a great first week and half back and the weather most of the time has been pleasant. It was great to see everyone coming back from their holidays and I am glad that children have settled in well. We have had a busy Summer preparing for this new academic year – see below for some photos.

I want to assure you that I am always about if you would like to come and share some good news or want to discuss any worries. It is vital to have an open relationship as we help the journey of your children at our school. I strongly feel that we are a family at this school, never forget we are here to help you as well as the children.

Over the last few days, we have been preparing for the year including organising sports events, forest schools and working on the parish event diaries. We also have the PTA events that are happening in Autumn and many more. We have been developing the structure of our leadership team putting more emphasis on phase leaders and the leadership structure giving you more contact people to help with any queries you may have.

We are working with more outside agencies this year to develop our after school provision and clubs. Thank you for your patience on this – Autumn is always a very long term and trying to get the ball rolling takes time without causing clashes of hall and playground spaces. We are looking to introduce STEM club and chess club and I have had meetings this week to arrange this. Please look out for the details in the next coming weeks. STEM club is aiming to start in Spring.

We have been interviewing the Year 6's this week for their roles as House Captains and Vice Captains and they have been preparing and presenting their slides. Staff members have also been voting for their head boy and head girl too. I am very proud of all the children who have taken part – they all have stepped up heading from Year 5 understanding their role in the school and the importance of preparing for Year 6.

I have been in and around the classes each and every day which has been nice. I have made my way over to EYFS (Reception and Nursery) to see our newest family members. It is great to see many children settling in so quickly. It is a huge step for children who are younger to join a school.

I hope you all have a lovely weekend.
Mr Worton-Geer

Pupil quote of the week: Amy (Year 4): The learning has been really fun because we are learning new things like learning about our new book. It is good that we are reading it every single day.

Quote from the bible: John 15:9-10: As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love.

Improvements to the school:

We have had several improvements so far:

- The internet speed has been increased with a better connection and cheaper tariff!
- New pathway created coming into school
- New Staffroom/DT room
- New Sensory playground
- New Nursery roof
- New KS1 boys toilets
- OPAL training to staff (outdoor playing and learning) more information to follow.
- Some Nursery posters are around the village and more signage will be on its way.



Highlights

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

Attendance:

Week commencing 2025

Year	Percent	Place
Nursery	N/A	
Year 1	98.3%	Joint 3 rd
Year 2	100%	Joint 1 st
Year 3	93.1%	5 th
Year 4	98.4%	2 nd
Year 5	98.3%	Joint 3 rd
Year 6	94.4%	4 th
Year R	100%	Joint 1 st

Sports

This year we are going to be having whole class festivals throughout the year. Football and netball fixtures will start at the end of September and we are looking forward to taking children to events. We always appreciate any support with sporting events and travel. If you need support with travel, please ask myself (Mr Worton-Geer) and we will aim to support as best we can. Most of our events will be at Monk's Walk which will be walking events. I am working closely with other headteachers to ensure that we have the best PE provision with the most inclusion of children. There will be inclusive festivals as well as competitions.



New Playground and New Toilets:

We have worked hard this summer working on funding for two further projects. The Inclusion playground for all has had stage one completed with the support from the WGC local grants as well as the toilets supported by the St Albans Diocese. Both projects have turned out incredibly well. We are looking at our next stage for the playground where we would like some help to build a mud kitchen and lay some bark down. We have been given a donation of around £2000 from the kind donations from Mrs Philbey's collection. We also aim to plant a tree in honour of the great Mrs Philbey.



Child Prayer:

Dear God,

Thank you for our lives, our food, our school and our friends. We are happy being back at school and we thank you for looking after us over the summer. Thank you for the teachers for helping us with our work.

Amen

(Year 4- Ishaan)

Calendar

Wednesday 17th September	Year 1 Phonics Workshop – 08:50am (School Hall)
Wednesday 17th September	Year 1 Phonics Workshop – 14:50pm (School Hall)
Thursday 18th September	Year 3 TT Rockstars Launch – 08:50am and 15:00pm (School Hall)
Thursday 18th September	Reception/Nursery Parent Tour – 14:00pm
Saturday 20th September	Reception/Nursery Parent Tour – 10:00am
Monday 22nd September	Year R Numbots Workshop – 08:50am and 15:00pm (School Hall)
Tuesday 23rd September	Safeguarding training for volunteers 09:00-10:00am and 14:00-15:00pm (Hall)
Thursday 25th September	Year 4 & 6 Woodhall Estate trip
Monday 29th September	Reception/Nursery Parent Tour – 16:00pm
Thursday 2nd October	Year 3 & 5 Woodhall Estate trip
Wednesday 8th October	Spanish Day
Thursday 9th October	Harvest Festival at St John's Church
Thursday 9th October	Reception/Nursery Parent Tour – 14:00pm
Monday 13th October	Year 4 swimming starts (10 day block)
Wednesday 15th October	Year R Reading Meeting – 14:30pm
Monday 20th October	Reception/Nursery Parent Tour – 09:00am
Wednesday 22nd October	Parents Evening
Thursday 23rd October	Parents Evening

Staffroom/ DT room:



The staffroom has been updated to include a prep table for DT cooking as well as a new oven and appliances. I am looking forward to seeing children taking part in cooking and following new recipes. We thank Mrs Cole and Miss Draycott who have spent many hours working hard putting this together and designing it.



Autumn 1st half term -PSHE- Keeping safe

Across the school we will starting our new topic called 'Being me in my world '.

The children will be involved in a weekly class lesson at their own level of understanding.

The children record their weekly discussions and learning in a class ' floor book', which is accessible to them in their classrooms.



Being Me in My World

Academic Highlights

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

Nursery:

We have been enjoying getting to know our new friends in Nursery this week. The children have loved building tall towers, pouring water into different containers, digging in the sand and watching the cars zoom down the track. We have been sitting and listening to Miss Gee read us stories at snack time and have been very good at singing nursery rhymes together!



Reception:

Reception have had a lovely first week at school. They have been learning how to make friends, how to play together and how we share our toys. They have been brilliant at all three. The children have had lunch with their buddies and have really enjoyed exploring the environment. They especially loved the woodland area. Well done Reception, we are going to have a great year!







Year 1:

We've had a wonderful start to Year 1, with the children settling in beautifully and embracing new routines with enthusiasm. This term we have begun learning simple Spanish greetings, which the children have enjoyed practising with each other. In art, we have been exploring different types of lines and using them to create imaginative pieces. Our English lessons have been inspired by the book *Not a Stick* and the children have impressed us with the sentences they have written, full of creativity and flair. It has been a positive start to the year, with the children showing resilience, curiosity and a happy attitude towards their learning.



Year 2:

Year 2 have had a wonderful start to the year. In Science, we are learning about materials. The children went on a material hunt around the school grounds and we learnt about different uses for materials discussed. Here are some examples of their work.

Draw and label the object	Materials used	Other objects made from these materials
	Metal	Screw
	Plastic	Water bottle
	Wood	Chair
	Fabric	Sofa

Year 3:

Year 3 English lessons began with some drama, inspired by the front cover of our new book. In this scene, a group of boat crew and passengers react to the violent eruption of a volcano just a few miles away.



Year 4:

Year 4 have had a wonderful time settling back into life at St John's. We've nominated our Pupil Parliament members for the new year and become very familiar with Times Tables Rockstars!



Year 5:

Year 5 have had a great first week settling back in, they are all loving the new larger classroom and their 'new' Teacher and TAs...

The first basketball session was a great success, and new skills have been learnt already.

Eloise Year 5 "I'm so glad Year 5 is finally here, because I am ready for it and can't wait"

Year 6:

Year 6 have had a fantastic first week back! The children have already had a very successful forest day and have also been preparing house captain presentations for their houses. During forest school, they learnt lots of new skills and created nature art.





Parish News

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

Parents of Year 6 pupils

If your child is interested in being Confirmed this autumn they are invited to join Fr Rob at St John's Church, Monks Rise on Saturday 6 September at 10:00am.

The Confirmation Service will take place on Wednesday 5 November, 7:30pm at All Saints, Stevenage.

If you would like further details please email info@digswellparish.org.uk

Harvest Festival Thursday 9th October – 8:50am

Harvest festival is fast approaching, and we will be again donating food to our local food banks. Please can you bring food on the day of the festival which will be at the church. Families and friends are welcome to come. This will be for Years 1-6. The school will be open for Reception and Nursery as normal. We will send out reminders nearer the time.

Parish Nativity –

HOLD THE DATE SUNDAY 7th DECEMBER 10am -
This will be the first Nativity made up pupils of the schools of Digswell and the surrounding area and the local church. More details to follow in the upcoming weeks.

Christmas Market Saturday 29th November 2025

St John's Church is having its annual Christmas Market where there will be food, stalls and many Christmas festivities. We welcome all families to attend and enjoy the start of the Christmas period. We look forward to seeing you there.



St John's School Carol Service Fri 19th Dec 8.50am

This is the last day of school where we will be inviting all children (including Reception and Nursery) to a Christmas carol service. We invite family and friends to this event where we celebrate the end of term and Christmas.

On Saturday 13th September

we celebrate the anniversary of the dedication of our Parish Church of St John, Digswell

way back in the 12th century with our

+Annual Patronal Cream Teas

In the Church. 1.30pm-4pm. £5 per person.

All are very welcome

Then on **Sunday 14th September** also at St John's we host our

Patronal Festival Service at 10am

followed by brunch

Our preacher this year is the catholic priest of Knebworth

Canon Daniel Cronin.

See Below:

All once again are welcome



Fr Daniel was born in south London at Kings College Hospital, and brought up in Willesden Green where he was ordained to the Priesthood in May 1977 by Cardinal Basil Hume, O.S.B. His first appointment was to Our Lady Queen of Apostles. In Woodhall Lane, Welwyn Garden City for three years, then on to Kensington, Director of Clergy Education, Westminster Cathedral, St Mary's Hampstead and now at St Thomas More, Knebworth for the last 18 years. During his appointment to Westminster Cathedral he was the Master of Ceremonies to three Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster and Chancellor of the Diocese. Next year he will celebrate his Silver Jubilee as a Canon of the Metropolitan Chapter. He has published six anthologies, the latest being 'Hope Springs Eternal' which includes a welcome contribution from

The Rector of Digswell. Please do support your parish church on both or either of these occasions.

Fr Rob

QUIZ NIGHT

Rally your team, test your trivia skills, and enjoy a brilliant evening out. There'll be plenty of laughs, a touch of competition, and it's all in support of our school. Who will take home the glory?

»»» **FRIDAY 3RD OCTOBER** «««
QUIZ STARTS AT 8PM

**ST JOHNS SCHOOL
DIGSWELL**

**TICKETS COST £10 PER PERSON
TEAMS OF UP TO 8 PEOPLE**

BAR WILL BE OPEN



The Friends of St John's

GLOW DISCO

**FRIDAY 24TH
OCTOBER**

DISCO TIMES:

Nursery & Reception	3pm - 4pm
Years 1, 2 & 3	4:15pm - 5:45pm
Years 4, 5 & 6	6pm - 7:30pm

**GET YOUR TICKETS
NOW!**



Family Lives Free Autumn Term Parenting Groups

Bringing Up Confident ADHD/ASD Children (6 weeks) Online group
Friday 26th September to 7 November 9.45am to 11.45am OR

Tuesday 14 October to 25 November 7.00pm to 9.00pm

If your child has ADHD/ASD, or you think they might, join our free online group where you will receive support from other parents and gain a comprehensive understanding of ADHD/ASD and learn strategies to improve life at home and at school.

Less Shouting, More Cooperation (6 weeks) Online group
Thursday 2 October to 13 November 9.30am to 11.30am

Do you feel you are constantly nagging or shouting at your child to get what you need? Are you tired of losing your cool and want a calmer house? Join our free online group to learn how you can change the way you communicate with your child, respond better, and feel more in control.

Dads Together (6 weeks) Online group

Wednesday 5 November to 10 December 7.00pm to 9.00pm

Calling all Dads - join our free online group, come along and receive support from other dads and learn how to change the way you communicate with your child, respond better and feel more in control.

Anxiety around ADHD Online Workshop
Autumn term dates to be confirmed

Reducing Conflict Online Workshop
Autumn term dates to be confirmed

Sibling Rivalry Online Workshop
Autumn term dates to be confirmed



SCAN ME!

For more information, please contact Louise on **0204 522 8700/8701**, or email services@familylives.org.uk. Please scan our QR code for our referral form.



FRIENDS FANTASTIC FIREWORKS

**St John's School,
Digswell**

SAT 8TH NOVEMBER 2025

**ROCK
STEADY**

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IGNITE THEIR SELF-BELIEF

- Children learn to play an instrument in their very own band.
- Fun and inclusive in-school band lessons. No music theory involved.
- Follow their musical journey in your Backstage account.
- Exam-free, Ofqual-regulated Trinity music qualification.
- Instruments provided and no experience necessary.

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PLACE ONLINE**



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Taught by professional musicians

Rocksteady band leaders are highly trained musicians who make learning music fun.

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Improves wellbeing, confidence, social skills and academic achievement.

Progress at their own pace

Your child can achieve an exam-free, Ofqual-regulated Trinity music qualification!

End every term on a high note

Watch your child shine as they perform in their end of term concerts.

"Her confidence has grown so much. It has helped her in all aspects of her life."

Louise

"My son actually wants to go to school on his Rocksteady days. It has given him an alternative to academic learning."

Michelle

"I've seen him flourish socially and have friends across the year group."

Bekki

£44.68 per month (no payment in August).
Money back guarantee for the first month. Cancel at any time.

**START THEIR
MUSICAL JOURNEY**



0330 113 0330
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TRINITY
COLLEGE LONDON
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