

St John's VA C of E Primary School

NEWSLETTER

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



24/10/25

Autumn Term 1

Value: Love

Welcome message from the Headteacher

A very long but enjoyable half term!

Dear all,

It has been nearly 8 weeks of learning, and the children have done an incredible job of being resilient and determined to get through to the end of the half term. Thank you to everyone for being supportive of the school this half term; staff have done an incredible job of building up learning for our learners.

This year we continue to develop on reflecting on our value of love. Next half term we will be looking at the value of hope. We have a lot planned for next half term including the Pantomime. We are hoping it will run smoothly but we are very eager to have some volunteers to help with the journey – please see the email from Miss Draycott.

We have had parent consultations this week, and I am glad to see so many parents. I hope that the online booking system has worked well for you as well as the option for teams and meet teachers online. This hybrid model should allow better communication. Please do let me know if you have any questions.

We continue to prepare for the winter months getting the school into a tidy state. Last Friday we had 10 parent volunteers help with jobs around the school including putting up a fence, laying out bark in the inclusion playground that has been funded by Mrs Philbey's donations, and we were able to clear around 100m of the river side path – children were very excited to be down there including finding several toads. I want to say a huge thank you to all parents who took part in this. It is great to show our school family working together.

We have taken part in many sporting events, and I know that some classes have been very busy on trips, sporting events and swimming. Thank you to the parents and staff with working together for a busy period – the curriculum is being met and we are pleased with how we can offer such a wide range of extra-curricular activities. By condensing swimming into two weeks, it allows deeper learning and better progress. We hope you have a great half term.

Mr Worton-Geer

Pupil quote of the week: Jessica (Year 5): We went to tag rugby and we had a great time. I really enjoyed taking part and I scored two rugby tries.

Quote from the bible: (Romans 12:10). "Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves"

Improvements to the school:

We have had several improvements so far:

- We will be looking at moving a down pipe from the main building due to regular blockages.
- We are reviewing our front school entrance system and currently are awaiting quotes for this.
- We are planning the Christmas festivities – we will be sending out more information next half term.
- The river side is clear for 100m and children can now access this safely.
- The fence by the forest has been put together again.
- The inclusion bark area has been developed, we are waiting to build a new mud kitchen if anyone has any great ideas – please speak to Mr Worton-Geer.



Highlights

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

Attendance:

Week commencing 13th October 2025

Year	Percent	Place
Nursery	100%	1 st
Year 1	96.19%	5 th
Year 2	97.24%	4 th
Year 3	96%	6 th
Year 4	99.35%	2 nd
Year 5	95.17%	7 th
Year 6	97.78%	3 rd
Year R	95.6%	8 th

Year 5 Girls Tag Rugby:

On Thursday 16th October, the girls in year 5 went to tag rugby. There were 5 games and 3 other schools taking part. The games were tough, but we got through it all. We only lost one match and won the other 4. We all did really well in our first match against Homerswood which was tough but we did win. In the second match we were against Oaklands and won again. In our third match we had a practice against each other. In our fourth match we went against St Micheals, and we won again. In our final match we were against Welwyn St Marys but unfortunately lost. Overall, we did very well playing as a team. At the end of the festival there was a medal given to the star player from each team. The children and staff knew who this was going to be. We were all very nervous who would get the award, but I got the award for hard work and teamwork. I am very pleased with this – I am very proud of how our team did together. Year 5 – Penny.

Black History Month: Honouring Legacy, Inspiring Futures

How Did Black History Month Start?

- In the United States in 1926, a man called Carter G. Woodson introduced a week-long event to recognise and celebrate the history and significant achievements of Black and Mixed Heritage people.
- Woodson was a historian. He published many books about Black history and he devoted much of his life to encouraging others to learn about the achievements of Black and Mixed Heritage Americans.
- Since 1976, people living in the US have celebrated Black History Month every February.

Carter G. Woodson

How Did Black History Month Start?

- Black History Month has been an important event in the UK calendar since the first official Black History Month in 1987.
- A number of people were involved in campaigning for greater awareness of Black history in the UK.
- Akyaba Addai-Sebo played a significant role in the introduction and organisation of the first Black History Month in the UK.



Rosa Parks (1913-2005)

- Rosa Parks was a civil rights activist. She lived in the United States at the time of **segregation**. The laws in place at the time stopped Black people from having equal rights.
- segregation** – When laws are in place to separate groups of people from others (e.g. because of their race) and treat them differently, and was then arrested by the police.
- People in the local community were angered by how Parks was treated. Many Black people began to **boycott** the buses in the city of Montgomery, where Parks lived, to protest against the segregation laws. This boycott was one of the first steps to end segregation in the United States.
- boycott** – To refuse to take part in or buy something, in order to protest.



Lilian Bader (1918-2015)

- Lilian Bader (born Lilian Bailey) joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force on 28th March 1941 during the Second World War.
- She qualified as an instrument repairer, becoming one of the first women to work in this role. By the end of 1941, she had gained the rank of Acting Corporal.
- Lilian Bader was one of the first Mixed Heritage British women to join the British Armed Forces.



Football Fixtures

On the 21st of October 2025 St John's played two football matches. We played Homerswood and Oaklands Primary School. Our first match was against Homerswood and We won 4-0, with goals coming from JJ, Zayden and two from Hope.

Next we played Oaklands and won 3-2, with goals coming from George, Hope and Harry this time. In goal, Max L made some great saves, and the defensive line made lots of tackles. The midfielders played extremely well, and the forwards scored bunches of goals. A great performance all-round!

Child Prayer:

Dear God,

Thank you for our safe school and that we do not starve. Help the poor and homeless in this season of Autumn and Winter as it becomes colder. Let us all share love and help those who are less fortunate.

Amen (Year 5- Ollie)



Monday 27 th -Friday 31 st October	Half Term
Monday 3 rd November	First Day Back
Tuesday 4 th November	The 2 John's Online safety workshops
Friday 7 th November	Year 4 Forest School Day
Monday 10 th – Friday 14 th November	Anti-Bullying Week
Monday 10 th November	Flu Vaccination Day
Tuesday 11 th November	Remembrance
Friday 14 th November	Year 3 Forest School Day
Monday 17 th November	Reception and Nursery Open Day
Tuesday 18 th November	School Photographs – Photo Individual
Monday 17 th – Friday 21 st November	Maths Week
Monday 17 th – Friday 21 st November	Road Safety Week
Monday 17 th November	Reception and Nursery Open Day
Tuesday 18 th November	School Photo Day – Individual
Thursday 20 th November	Year 6 Whole Class – Tag Rugby @ Monk's Walk
Friday 21 st November	Flu Vaccination – Catch Up Session
Friday 21 st November	Children in Need – Non-uniform
Monday 24 th November	Year 6 Weight and Height Check - NHS
Thursday 27 th November	Year 3 Whole Class – Football @ Monk's Walk
Friday 28 th November	Occasional Day – No School
Monday 1 st -Friday 5 th December	Art Week
Monday 1 st December	Non-Uniform day – Donation of Chocolate and Wine
Thursday 4 th December	EYFS Nativity Dress Rehearsal
Friday 5 th December	KS1 Nativity Rehearsal
Friday 5 th December	The Friends – Christmas Fate
Monday 8 th December	Panto Day
Wednesday 10 th December	EYFS Nativity @ Christ the King
Friday 12 th December	Local MP Visit
Friday 12 th December	Forest School – Year 2

2 John's Online Safety –

On Tuesday 4th November 2025, we will be having the 2 John's in all day to support our school with online safety including workshops for children.

Staff and Parents. The layout of the day is:

10:00-10:45am – Year 1 and 2 children workshop – early break

10:45-11:55am – Year 3 and 4 children workshop

1:30-3pm Year 5 and 6 children workshop

3:30-4:45pm – Staff workshop

6:00pm – 7:30pm Parent workshops – children will have films in classes supported by the PTA

Academic Highlights

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

Nursery:

What a fantastic couple of weeks we have had! Making bread, jumping in puddles, celebrating Diwali and making fireworks pictures and diya lamps and having hot chocolates to warm us up after mornings in the sensory garden. We are so proud of our fabulous nursery class for settling in so well and we are so excited for the next half term!



Reception:



This week we have been celebrating Diwali. We were so fortunate to have Mrs Bharij visit us and tell us all about the festival of light. We tried on traditional dress, jewellery and listened to the story of Rama and Sita. Mrs Bharij also gave all the children a gift to take home. Thank you for making our learning so much fun.

Year 1:

What a busy and brilliant half term it's been! The last two weeks we've enjoyed a Geography Day exploring maps, compasses and the differences between human and physical features, as well as rural and urban areas. In DT, the children designed and made pencil pots for a Year 1 audience - ensuring their creations were both practical and appealing. In Maths, we've been mastering number bonds within 10 and finishing with bonds to 10 - great to keep practising at home! We're all ready for a well-earned rest, but so proud of how brilliantly the children have stepped up. Wishing all our families a restful and happy half term!



Year 2:



Year 2 enjoyed making rangoli patterns to celebrate Diwali on Monday. We used brightly coloured tissue paper to make our designs pop with texture and colour. We saw lots of different creations from the children and they were all very proud of their work.

Year 3:

In Year 3 we have been busy in Design and Technology. We designed a face or flower made of fruit, vegetables or both. This enabled us to practise our cutting, peeling and grating skills.



Year 4:



It's been a very busy end to the half-term for Year 4! We've spent the last two weeks visiting Hatfield Swim Centre each morning, working on our swimming skills and learning about water safety. Everybody has done an incredible job! We also visited Woodhall Estate which provided the pupils with more opportunities to participate in outdoor learning.

Year 5:

Year 5 (along with Year 4) have been attending a drama workshop in school on Friday mornings. They are thoroughly enjoying these sessions with Sam; it's a joy to watch them flourish and really get into the characters/roles. "I really like the drama sessions as it is great fun, and Sam teaches us lots of new games" (Zviko) "They're good and fun. Definitely worth it!" (Guille)



Year 6:



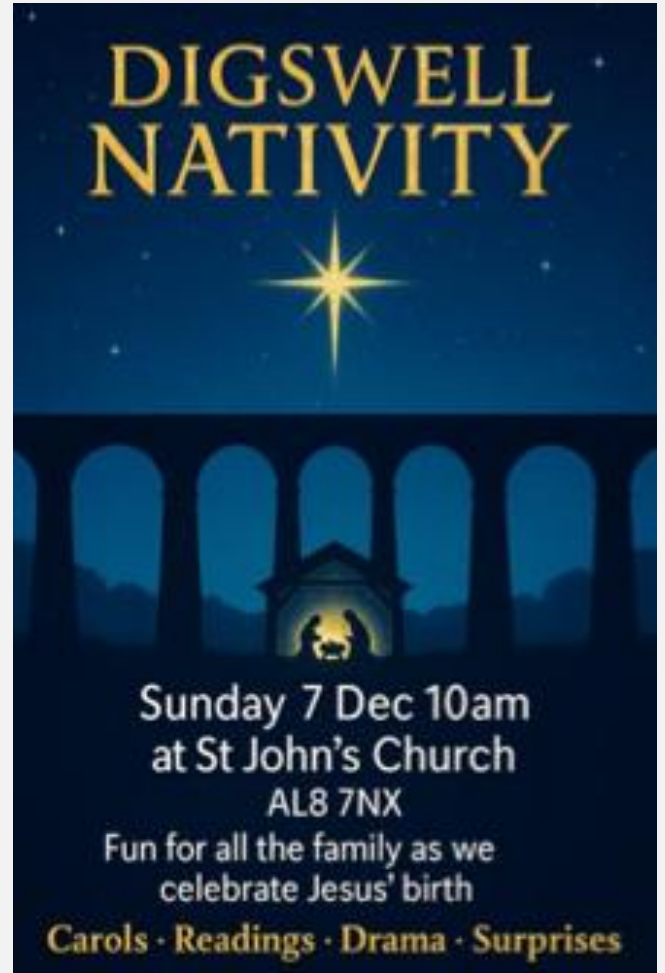
Year 6 have had a great few weeks. Last week we enjoyed our trip with Year 4 to the Woodhall Estate where we spent the day outdoors creating dens, completing scavenger hunts and more! This photo shows some of the boys finding a spotty red mushroom!

Parish News

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

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.



Parents of Year 6 pupils

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

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

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



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.





Hertfordshire Community
NHS Trust

Parent / Carer Motor Development Information Sessions

Places are now available to book on our Autumn Term 2025
information sessions for parents and carers

Supporting your child's motor skills development

When do children develop particular motor skills, such as riding a bicycle or using a pen? How can you help your child to develop these skills? What can you do if your child is struggling with a skill?

This session is for parents or carers of children aged between 4-8 years old who would like to understand more about their child's motor development and how to support this. The session will share information about the typical ages when children develop different motor skills. It will explain how to breakdown an activity such as pulling on a jumper into simple steps to help your child complete this independently. You will also get advice on activities and simple things you can do at home to support your child's motor development.

BOOK YOUR PLACE:

Monday 24th November 11.00-12.00 <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1363921649369>

Thursday 4th December 10.00-11.00 <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1363924307319>

We are also offering parent information sessions on understanding sensory preferences and supporting self-regulation. To find out dates of these and other training opportunities please visit our CYP Therapies – Occupational Therapy Service webpage

<https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services/childrens-occupational-therapy//>



Innovative



Caring



Agile

Children & Young
People's Therapies
Service

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