

St John's VA C of E Primary School

NEWSLETTER



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

06/03/26

Spring Term 2

Value: forgiveness

Welcome message from the Headteacher

Another great start to the half term!

Dear all,

What a great start to another half term with the children working incredibly hard in their handwriting and maths fluency skills. Additionally, I have had the opportunity to speak to children about how they are going to develop over this half term, what they have chosen to give up for lent and our core value of forgiveness this half term. I have spoken to the children about what I have given up, cheese, something that I love. We spoke about the difficulty of lent but also the importance of building resilience. The children have taken away what they would either like to give up (some very ambitious giving up gaming for 40 days) while others discussed doing positives for others for 40 days like playing with a new friend or being supportive at home.

Stage one of the front of the school works has been completed; new signage is being made and we are excited to hear from the diocese if we are able to move to stage 2 and 3. Stage 2 will be developing the carpark to create additional parking spaces as well as moving the bike shed and path from the car park. A new bin store will also be created. Stage 3 (the most expensive but most exciting) is for the new office to be moved to my current office. This will allow access from the new gate system rather than walking through the playground. We have another month to go before we find out if we can get some funding to support us on this project. I will keep you posted.

We have also been looking at developing our OPAL, our TAs had training last Friday with our OPAL manager, and we are excited to see this developing further. We have built new welly racks for Year 1 and 2 which gives them their own space. This will also give KS2 more space for their wellies. We would like the children to play on the field and forest, we are aware the field needs time to recover and have some plans in place.

Children have continued to work hard with their upcoming assessments that will arrive in the summer term. There will also be some teaching changes, Mrs Athill will be leaving the profession after Easter. We wish her the very best of luck and are very grateful for all the hard work she has put in at St John's Primary School. Please see below staff changes.

Have a great weekend - Mr Worton-Geer

Pupil quote of the week- Leo (Y1) - We had PE yesterday, and we did gymnastics. It was really fun. At lunchtimes I like playing with my friends.

Quote from the bible- [Matthew 6:12](#) - And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Improvements to the school:

We have had several improvements so far:

- The new front gate system is in place with the new Paxton system, please ensure to use the new gate. The carpark gate has now been moved up to the courtyard.
- We have developed our TA staff in OPAL with training last week. Our Play team are eager to continue to develop lunch times.
- New signage for the carpark, front entrance and back entrance is beginning to be worked on, any ideas would be greatly appreciated.
- Miss Donnelly will be joining the school in Year 2 and 3.
- Miss Gee will be in Reception in the Summer term overseeing the EYFS unit
- Miss O'Sullivan will be joining the school in Nursery in the Summer term.





Highlights

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

Staff changes for Summer:

To ensure continuity for our pupils, we have been actively recruiting new staff. We are pleased to welcome **Miss Donnelly** and **Miss O'Sullivan** who will join our team after the Easter break, and **Mr Beaumont**, who will join us in July. As a result, there will be some adjustments to staffing across the school. Please note that all TAs will remain the same in the five classes. Year 1 will continue as it is for the remaining part of the year.

Miss Gee will be going into Reception for the Summer term as she knows the children well and their learning outcomes, ready for the end of EYFS profiling. She has been working with Reception throughout the year already and will continue to oversee all of EYFS as they continue to work as a unit in the afternoons.

Summer 1 Staffing (this academic year- April - May)

Year	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Nursery	Miss O' Sullivan				
Reception	Miss Gee				
1	Mrs Scott			Mrs de la Croix	
2	Mrs Levy			Mrs Backman	
3	Miss Donnelly	Mrs Miller			

During this time, Miss Donnelly will also be spending time in Year 2 on a Thursday and Friday, getting to know the class in preparation for Summer 2, as well as supporting Year 3. If Mrs Backman needs to go on maternity leave earlier, we will move to summer 2 staffing sooner.

Summer 2 Staffing (this academic year- June - July)

Year	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Nursery	Miss O' Sullivan				
Reception	Miss Gee				
1	Mrs Scott			Mrs de la Croix	
2	Mrs Levy			Miss Donnelly	
3	Miss Donnelly	Mrs Miller			

Mr Beaumont will be available throughout the weeks in July to support with any maternity if cover is required. We recognise that staffing changes can feel significant, and we want to reassure you that every decision has been made with the best interests of the children in mind. Our priority is to maintain consistency and ensure that each class continues to receive high-quality teaching and support.

[Amazon Wish list](#)

We have created our amazon wish list if parents would like to buy items for the school – this would be greatly appreciated. The link is found [here](#). Throughout the year we will update the wish list.

Attendance:

[Week commencing 23rd February 2026](#)

Year	Percent	Place
Nursery	100%	1 st
Year 1	96.9%	5 th
Year 2	98.7%	2 nd
Year 3	94.7%	8 th
Year 4	98.1%	3 rd
Year 5	95.3%	7 th
Year 6	95.6%	6 th
Year R	97.5%	4 th

Keeping Safe - Healthy Me - PSHE

This half term the focus for our PSHE lessons across the school is **Healthy Me**

This unit explores the relationship between physical and emotional health; nutrition, sleep, exercise and hygiene; emotional wellbeing; drug education (including medicines); keeping safe; understanding habits and making healthy lifestyle choices.



Mrs de la Croix will be leading a whole school collective worship on this theme in the first two weeks of the new term with the help of our Governor Victoria Robinson.

SEND Coffee Morning

<https://events.hertfordshire.gov.uk/local-offer/send-drop-in-coffee-morning-stevenage-1>



On Friday 13th March, we would like all pupils and staff to wear an item of clothing that is yellow and all donations will be collected at the gate on the Friday in sponsor of the Big Yellow Friday. This is raising money for charity to support children with life long liver disease. Please see this link for more information on the Big Yellow Friday. <https://childliverdisease.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/BYF-2026-Fundraising-Pack-v2.pdf>

Parent Consultations Schedule:

Please wait for the Arbor email to book your slots

Tuesday 24th March – Year 1 and Year 6

- **Format:** Face-to-face
- **Time:** 3:00pm–6:00pm
- **Location:** Library Mrs Scott and Miss Brady will be attending their National Professional Qualification training on Wednesday, so Year 1 and Year 6 will hold their consultations on Tuesday.

Wednesday 25th March – Nursery, Reception, Years 2–5

- **Format:** Face-to-face
- **Time:** 3:00pm–6:30pm (break 5:00–5:30pm)
- **Location:** Hall

Thursday 26th March – Reception to Year 6

- **Format:** Face-to-face and online
- **Time:**
 - 3:00pm–5:00pm face-to-face
 - 5:30pm–6:30pm online appointments only
 - (Break 5:00–5:30pm)

If you would like to arrange sibling appointments on the same day, Thursday may be the most convenient option. Throughout all consultation evenings, Mr Worton-Geer and Mrs de la Croix will be available and moving between spaces should you need to speak with them.

Child Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for everything you have made, Amen. (Sienna – Year 1)



Calendar

Monday 9 th -Friday 13 th March	Science Week
Wednesday 11 th March	Year 1-6 Science Workshop
Thursday 12 th March	Book Look Day- 2:45pm
Friday 13 th March	Forest School – Year 4
Monday 16 th -Friday 20 th March	Year 6 Residential trip to Essex Outdoors
Friday 20 th March	Forest School – Year 3
Monday 23 rd -Thursday 26 th March	Mock SAT's Week (Year 6)
Tuesday 24 th , Wednesday 25 th and Thursday 26 th March	Parent Consultations
Friday 27 th March	Forest School – Year 2
Friday 27 th March	Last day of term – finish 1:30pm
Monday 30 th March – Friday 10 th April	Easter Holidays
Monday 13 th April	INSET Day
Tuesday 14 th April	First day back for children
Tuesday 28 th April – Friday 1 st May	Year 5 Residential Trip to Fellowship Afloat
Monday 4 th May	Bank Holiday
Monday 11 th May – Thursday 14 th May	Year 6 SATs
Friday 15 th May	Year 6 Party and Dress down day - £2 donation
Monday 25 th May – Friday 29 th May	May half term

Mobile phones:

DfE publishes additional mobile phone guidance for schools

The Department for Education has published updated supporting materials linked to its January 2026 Mobile phones in schools guidance. The non-statutory guidance comes into effect from 1 April 2026, with the expectation that schools operate as mobile phone-free environments by default. St John's Primary School is a mobile phone-free environment for children. Mobiles are only to be brought to school for children who walk home in Year 5 and 6 with permission. When these phones are in school, they are to be turned off and only turned back on when leaving the school at the end of the day.

Read more here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools>

Charity Donations:

Congratulations to Jarrod in Year 5 for raising £42.01 for the charity of Cancer Research UK by selling his rock collection. Jarrod has donated his funds from selling rocks to assist with lung cancer research in particular. We are extremely proud of him. He thanks all those that bought his rocks and gems.

Academic Highlights

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

Nursery:



In Nursery, we have been learning some new sounds! We have been thinking of words that begin with 's' and 'a', searching for them in the environment and practising the correct formation of these letters. We have enjoyed joining in the singing assembly with the whole school to get ready for the Easter service at the end of term!

school to get ready for the

Reception:



Reception have been holding a weekly morning reading session throughout this half term. This week we had 21 parents who joined us to share a book with the class. Thank you for all your support.

Year 1:



Year 1 had a fantastic start back after half term and thoroughly enjoyed celebrating World Book Day thus Thursday. The children arrived in a wonderful array of book character costumes and spent the day immersed in stories and sharing

their love of reading with one another. As part of the day, we linked our learning with DT, by sewing our own monster puppets, inspired by *Little Monsters* by David Walliams. The children learned simple sewing techniques and were delighted to use their handmade puppets to retell the story. It was a joyful day filled with creativity, storytelling and a shared celebration of books. 📖 ✨

Year 2:



We have had a wonderful start back to the term in Year 2. The children are demonstrating enthusiasm about the new topics we are learning and are really trying their best in lessons. They have really enjoyed our History

topic so far learning about the first flight. The children have really impressed me with the way they retained our learning from the first History session and could recall lots of facts about the Wright brothers and how they are significant today. We had great fun acting out the first flight in class!

Year 3:



Not only did lots of book characters come to life on World Book Day – so did the sun! Year 3 enjoyed the CBBC live lesson and completed the reading passport challenges. In the afternoon they

began making a non-fiction pop-up book about Italy, learning about its location, flora and climate.

Year 4:



Year 4 have had a busy start to March! We've stepped up our rehearsals for the Easter play and we can't wait to perform this at St. John's Church in a couple of weeks. World Book Day took place this

week and it was lovely to see everyone dressed up as their favourite book characters. Can you find Mr Draper (Where's Wally) in this photo?

Year 5:

Year 5 thoroughly enjoyed dressing up for World Book Day...there were some amazing characters! Mrs Norris and Mrs Bell took on the theme of police officers (PC Sunshine 1 & 2). Although this is from the Mr Men book it is also representation of the Mini Police sessions that Year 5 are taking part in. They were so engaged in the first session where they learnt more about how the police operate. This course will continue for 8 weeks where the children will engage in different activities and hopefully meet a trained police dog!



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Year 6:



Year 6 have had a wonderful first week back. Friday, we had forest day where the children planted trees in our forest area, practiced starting a fire and played games. In the photo below the children are creating a 'mudcastle'! We are now looking forward to our residential trip which is coming up very soon.



Parish News

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

March 2026

- Sunday 1** Lent Two
Audio Service for This Week *a link is sent*
9:30am Parish Eucharist at St John's Church
- Monday 2** 8:30am Morning Prayer
2:00pm Lent Study Group at Digswell Village Church
- Tuesday 3** [Fr Rob leads a Lent Retreat on the Island of Iona from today]
8:50am Lent School Eucharist at St John's School
10:00am Eucharist at Christ the King Hub
7:30pm Lent Group Meeting *via Zoom*
8:30pm Compline – *a link is sent*
- Weds 4** 8:30am Morning Prayer
- Thursday 5** 9:00am Tea Toast and Toddlers at Christ the King Hub
8:30pm Compline – *a link is sent*
- Friday 6** 8:30am Morning Prayer
9:00am Coffee Pot at St John's Cafe
10:30am Lent Group at Coffee Pot
- Saturday 7** 8:30am Morning Prayer
9:15am A Moment of Healing [St John's Church]
10:00am Hub Café at Christ the King Hub
- Sunday 8** Lent Three
Audio Service for This Week *a link is sent*
9:30am Parish Eucharist at St John's Church
11:00am Anglican-led Worship at Digswell Village Church
- Monday 9** 8:30am Morning Prayer
7:30pm PCC (if required for finance matters pre AGM) *via Zoom*
- Tuesday 10** 8:50am Collective Worship at St John's School
10:00am Eucharist at Christ the King Hub
12:00 Meeting with Headteacher of Monks Walk [Fr Rob]
7:30pm Deanery Synod Meeting
7:30pm Lent Group Meeting *via Zoom*
8:30pm Compline – *a link is sent*
- Weds 11** 8:30am Morning Prayer
1:00pm School Assembly at Harwood Hill [Fr Rob]
- Thursday 12** 8:30pm Compline – *a link is sent*



- 12 Noon Clergy Chapter Meeting
- Friday 13** 8:30am Morning Prayer
9:00am Coffee Pot at St John's Cafe
10:30am Lent Group at Coffee Pot
- Saturday 14** 7:45am Fr Rob presents *Thought for the Day* on BBC Radio 4
8:30am Morning Prayer
9:00am Diocesan Synod Meeting today [Fr Rob]
10:00am Hub Café at Christ the King Hub
- Sunday 15** Lent Four/Mothering Sunday
Audio Service for This Week *a link is sent*
9:30am All Age Worship St John's Church
- Monday 16** 8:30am Morning Prayer
2:00pm Lent Study Group at Digswell Village Church
- Tuesday 17** ST JOSEPH OF NAZARETH
8:50am Collective Worship at St John's School
10:00am Eucharist at Christ the King Hub
6:00pm St John's School present their Easter Play at St John's Church
7:30pm Lent Group Meeting *via Zoom*
8:30pm Compline – *a link is sent*
- Weds 18** 8:30am Morning Prayer
- Thursday 19** 9:15am Tea Toast & Toddlers at Christ the King Hub
12:30pm WGC Anglican Incumbents meet at the Rectory
8:30pm Compline *a link is sent*
- Friday 20** 8:30am Morning Prayer
9:00am Coffee Pot at St John's Cafe
10:30am Lent Study Group at Coffee Pot
- Saturday 21** 7:45am Fr Rob presents *Thought for the Day* on BBC Radio 4
8:30am Morning Prayer
10:00am Hub Café at Christ the King Hub
- Sunday 22** Lent Five Passiontide begins
Weekly Audio Service *a link is sent*
9:30am Parish Eucharist at St John's Church with dramatic reading of the Passion
11:00am Parish Annual Meetings at St John's Church
1:00pm Holy Baptism at St John's Church [Selina]
3:00pm Holy Baptism at Christ the King Hub [Fr Rob]
- Monday 23** 8:30am Morning Prayer
9:00am Homerswood Assembly [Selina]
1:30pm St John's Governor Training at St John's Church
2:00pm Lent Group at Digswell Village Church
6:00pm Knightsfield Annual Meeting [Fr Rob]
6:30pm St John's School Governors
- Tuesday 24** FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION [Tr]
8:50am Collective Worship at St John's School
10:00am Eucharist at Christ the King Hub
10:00am Year 2 St John's pupils visit St John's Church
11:00am Year 5 St John's pupils visit St John's Church
1:15pm Year 6 St John's pupils visit Stations of the Cross
4:00pm Knightsfield Trustees Meeting [Fr Rob]
7:30pm Lent Group *via Zoom*
8:30pm Compline – *a link is sent*
- Weds 25** 8:30am Morning Prayer
9:15am Homerswood Anticipating Easter Service at St John's Church
2:00pm SILENCE at St John's Church
- Thursday 26** 8:50am St John's School Anticipating Easter Service at St John's Church
1:45pm Harwood Hill School Anticipating Easter Service [also St John's]
8:30pm Compline *a link is sent*
- Friday 27** 8:30am Morning Prayer
9:00am Coffee Pot at St John's Cafe
10:30am Lent Group at Coffee Pot
- Saturday 28** 8:30am Morning Prayer
10:00am Hub Café at Christ the King Hub
- Sunday 29** Palm Sunday -SEE HOLY WEEK CALENDAR



The Friends News

Here is some useful information that is happening with the Friends.



Dates for the diary for half termly meetings are:

- Wednesday 25th March 2025
- Wednesday 29th April 2025
- Wednesday 24th June 2025

These are the cake sale dates

- Yr 2 - 13/3/26
- Yr 1 - 17/4/26
- R - 8/5/26
- N - 22/5/26



Our future events that we would like to run and will need support are:

- Christmas Fair
- Christmas Cards
- Mother's Day project
- Father's Day project
- Sports Day
- Year 6 Show
- Odd shoe day

Target: £10,000

Total so far:
£7466.50

World Book day

Sport's day

Father's day projects

Mother's day projects

Christmas bazaar
£1966.50

Fireworks
£2200

Anonymous Donations
£1000

Tesco Grant
£1000

Quiz night
£1300

The Friends of
St John's School, Digs Well

**SCHOOL
DISCO!**

DATE: FRIDAY 1ST MAY
More details to follow

**£5 per child includes water and squash.
Tuck shop.**

GOLDEN TICKET
Tuesday 24th March

**Wonka
Bar**
Sale

After School In The Playground
Pre Orders Taken

£2.50 per bar.
Will you find one of the 10 Golden Tickets
and win a prize??



Is your child in
Reception or Year 6
at primary school?

Have they been
measured as part of
the National Child
Measurement
Programme?

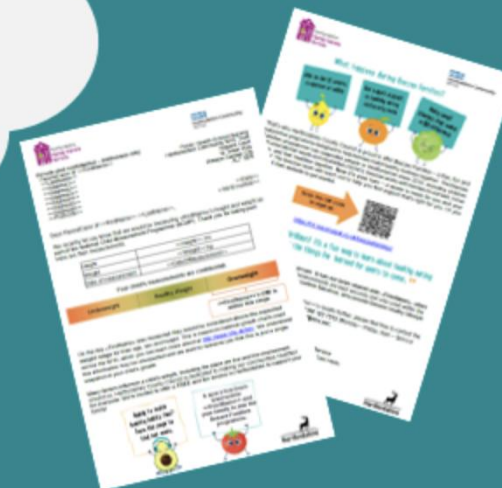
We'd love to hear from you!

Please complete our survey about the letter you received for the National Child Measurement Programme. Any feedback will mean we can continue improving our communications and better meet the needs of your child.



Scan the QR code or type in the
survey link

<https://surveys.hertfordshire.gov.uk/s/NCMPfeedback/>



**We Need
Your Help!**



LENT 2026

in Digswell Parish



Week one	BREAD	
Week two	COINS	
Week three	SHOES	
Week four	OIL	
Week five	COATS, TOWELS AND THORNS	

info@digswellparish.org.uk

INCREDIBLE YEARS PARENTING PROGRAMME



A program for parents and carers of children aged 4 - 11 years in Welwyn and Hatfield, who are struggling with their child's behaviour at home.

Does your child display anxious, aggressive, argumentative, destructive behaviour and or refusal to follow instructions? Then this course is for you. This supportive program aims to develop parenting strategies tailored to you and your individual family's needs.



"This program is transformational in helping coach, support and gently challenge unhelpful thoughts or behaviours. Could not recommend more for parents of children of any age or background"

8th January - 26th March '26
Every Thursday
10am -12pm
(apart from half term)

Swallow Dell School,
Blackthorn Road, Welwyn
Garden City, AL7 3JP

Scan the QR code
to book now!

