

St John's VA C of E Primary School

NEWSLETTER



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

24/04/26

Summer Term 1 Value: Faith

Welcome message from the Headteacher

First two weeks of Summer!

Dear all,

I hope you all had a great Easter break. I had a great time away and being able to eat cheese again has definitely helped! The school has been busy for the past two weeks, with working towards our end of year goals and ensuring that all children are prepared for assessments including phonics, Multiplication Times Tables check and SATs. The school have also been pushing on handwriting. Please can you work on handwriting with your children as part of their homework. It is important that we focus on fundamental skills.

This half term our value is faith. An incredible moment happened at school during the Easter break. As we know, we sadly lost Mrs Philbey last year. Her family donated a new cherry blossom tree that began to blossom. It is currently in the inclusion playground. They also donated a Christmas tree in our sensory gardens. During Easter camp, the children were completing an Easter Egg hunt. A child was searching around the Christmas tree and to their surprise they found a cluster of real eggs. Faith is what we need in our lives to keep going each day when times get hard. I truly believe this event was very symbolic and reminds us of the importance of life.

This term, we have several activities and sporting events coming up. As the weather gets better, we will continue to develop our outside area. We are beginning to create a team to look at the field as a project. It is important that we get this prepared so that we do not have another desert like last year. We will continue to take part in sporting events; we have a few football days coming up with Tottenham Hotspur coming in to do some class sessions as well as preparation for our Sports day in Summer 2nd half.

The school continues to develop over time; we are currently working hard on ensuring the budget reflects projects that we will be working on this year. We have been awarded the grant for our new front office, thank you to the diocese for allowing this to happen. We will be working on starting this project in the next few months. Watch this space! We are hoping this will not affect the daily running of the school. Additionally, we are going to continue to work on the promotion of our school. We are very fortunate that we have very good numbers for Reception next year. We thank everyone for promoting our school and keeping our school tidy. In particular I want to say thank you to Molly and Jacob who during the Easter break came and tidied our sensory garden with their parents. Thank you for your hard work!
Have a great weekend - Mr Worton-Geer

Pupil quote of the week- Solomon (Year 6): I enjoy school because this week I saw the eggs. School is more than just learning Maths and English.

Quote from the bible- John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Improvements to the school:

We have had several improvements so far:

- We have been awarded a grant from the Diocese to help pay for our new office and front of school – a total of £69,000. This will include moving the bike shed and opening the carpark to add more spaces.
- We are updating our software for iPads using a new system called Jamf. This will be set up over the next half term. This will further improve our filtering and monitoring systems in school.
- We have a new anonymous box that will be placed in the school hall. This will allow all children and staff to write notes to myself anonymously about anything they feel so that we can support all children even if they are unsure how to discuss matters with staff.
- The new fences have been painted blue as well as new signage which has been put out at the front of the school and at the back gate.
- Our financial year end is looking promising with a surplus amount. This would then leave us to have some more projects that we can start this year- very exciting!

Highlights

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

Parish Cafes

One of the ways in which school families can support the parish is to support the two cafes which feature every week.

Fridays

St John's Church, Monks Rise. 9am-12 Noon

Saturdays

Christ the King Hub, 75 Haldens. 10am-1pm

Both have hot and cold drinks and breakfast snacks on offer and are dog friendly.



Neurodiversity week

During the week of 16th-20th March the whole school took part in 'Neurodiversity week'.

The school's inspiration for this week came from a book called 'Lyla's story' which tells the story of a young girl who struggles to communicate using words but finds strength and success by using art as her form of communication.

Each class created a beautiful, collaborative butterfly, with each child decorating a small part in their own style.



Attendance:

Week commencing 13th April 2026

Year	Percent	Place
Nursery	98.33%	3 rd
Year 1	97.41%	4 th
Year 2	96.67%	6 th
Year 3	98.75%	2 nd
Year 4	95.56%	7 th
Year 5	93.72%	8 th
Year 6	96.76%	5 th
Year R	98.93%	1 st

Lockdown procedure:

On Friday 22nd May 2026 at 9:30am, we will be practising our lockdown procedure as part of our emergency planning. As this is the first time the procedure has been practised for a few years, we wanted to inform you in advance.

This practice is in line with current national guidance that schools are expected to follow. A lockdown is a precautionary measure used when the school needs to secure the site, for example in response to a potential intruder. During the practice, external doors will be locked, and pupils will be directed to a safe area within their classroom, away from windows. In some cases, this may be a cupboard or breakout space. In rooms without these facilities, pupils will be asked to position themselves out of sight.

We recognise that this can feel unsettling, so children will be fully prepared in advance. The procedure will be discussed calmly and appropriately in class, in assemblies, and by staff beforehand to ensure pupils understand what is happening and feel reassured.

Many schools practise lockdown procedures regularly, sometimes termly, and in some areas even more frequently. Our priority is to meet our safety responsibilities while ensuring that children are supported and informed in a sensitive and safe way.

If you would like any further information or have any concerns, please speak to Mr Worton-Geer.

Child Prayer:

Dear God, Thank you for all the lovely things in life, thank you for always supporting us on our journey at school and keeping us safe when we are out in the world. Please keep protecting us.

Amen (Year 6- Penelope)



Calendar

Tuesday 28 th April – Friday 1 st May	Year 5 Residential Trip to Fellowship Afloat
Friday 1 st May	Year 3 Forest School
Monday 4 th May	Bank Holiday
Thursday 7 th May	School Class Photos
Friday 8 th May	Year 4 Forest School
Monday 11 th May – Thursday 14 th May	Year 6 SATs
Thursday 14 th May	End of Year Eucharist in school – Year 3-6
Friday 15 th May	Year 6 Party and Dress down day - £2 donation
Friday 15 th May	Year 5 Forest School
Friday 15 th May	Year 3 Class Trip
Tuesday 19 th May	The Bishop visiting the school
Wednesday 20 th May	Reception Class Trip
Friday 22 nd May	Year 6 Forest School
Monday 25 th May – Friday 29 th May	May half term
Monday 1 st June	First day back
Monday 1 st -Friday 5 th June	MTC test – Year 4
Friday 5 th June	Year 6 Forest School
Thursday 4 th June	Reception height and weight, hearing and vision – NHS
Thursday 4 th June	Year 1 and 2 Safari Stu
Monday 8 th – Friday 12 th June	Phonics Screening week
Friday 12 th June	INSET Day
Wednesday 17 th June	Spurs Football coaching Years 1 -6 -weekly
Friday 19 th June	Year 5 Forest School
Monday 22 nd -Friday 26 th June	Assessment Week
Thursday 25 th June	Year 4 trip to Knebworth
Monday 29 th June -Friday 3 rd July	Sports week
Wednesday 1 st July @3:30-5pm	Open evening
Friday 3 rd July	Sports Day and picnic lunch
Friday 3 rd July	Parent play with OPAL during picnic lunch
Friday 10 th July	Year 3 and 4 Forest School
Thursday 9 th July	Transition day for Hertfordshire
Friday 10 th July	Reports due home

Academic Highlights

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

Nursery:



Since returning after the Easter break, I have been getting to know the children through a range of engaging activities. For example, we played a game where the children rolled a ball to one another and shared their name along with their favourite food or colour. The children also enjoyed talking about what they did over the Easter break and expressing this by drawing

pictures.

In phonics, the children have been introduced to the sound 'p' and have been using their robot arms to segment words linked to different pictures. In Maths, they have been recapping counting to 10 and 20, as well as focusing on recognising and continuing repeating patterns.

Year 1: Year 1 have made a fantastic start to the term, returning after Easter full of energy and enthusiasm. Our new Thursday drama sessions are already a firm favourite, with children embracing performance. We were also pleased to welcome Hertfordshire Cricket back to revisit last term's skills, in PE we have begun athletics, focusing on developing a strong sprinting technique. Outdoors - with Carol's much-appreciated help - we have refreshed the flower beds and planted vegetables and seeds - setting the stage for plenty of growth in the weeks ahead. We've also made chocolate crispy cakes in DT, celebrated Mrs Cox's 60th and enjoyed Forest School!



Year 3:



Before Easter in Year 3 we were looking at the stations of the cross. The children had time to reflect on the artwork of each station and consider what it might have been like for Jesus.

Year 5:



Over the last couple of weeks, Year 5 have been busy creating and building motorised locomotives. They have used many skills learnt through Maths, Science, Art and DT. We have had fun (and some disasters!). Now in the last phase, the children need to put their personal finishing touches to their designs. Three of the locomotives (along with their designers) will take part in a celebration event when we return from our residential. The competition is heating up!!!

Reception:



We have had a wonderful few weeks back in Reception and we have been enjoying the warmer weather very much, spending lots of time in our outdoor area. We have been practising our writing lots, going over the sounds that we have learnt so far over the year and using those in our writing. This week, we have been reading 'Jack and the beanstalk' in Drawing Club and writing some

super sentences. Today, we have planted some broad bean seeds, talking about what they need to grow and learning the new word 'germinate'.

Year 2:



In Geography, Year 2 have started their new unit of learning all about the UK. We used maps to locate the 4 countries of the UK and their capital cities. We also identified the surrounding seas and oceans. We learnt about the climate and different landscapes across the UK. We can't wait to continue our learning and find out more!

Year 4:



Year 4 have made an excellent start to the Summer term! We have begun new units in each of our subjects, including work on 'The Selfish Giant' by Oscar Wilde in English. We have also been practicing our athletics skills in PE with Mr O'Neil from Monk's Walk, as well as helping to complete our new art mural outside of the Year 5 classroom. I'd also like to say a big well done to the Year 4 Hockey team who represented the school on 22nd April!

Year 6:



Year 6 have been hard at work since returning from Easter, we are so proud of the effort they have been putting in. Recently, we began reading a new book in English called 'Rain Player' where it describes an ancient game of Pok-A-Tok. Year 6 have completed some amazing game instructions - we thought you may want to try! Here is Solomon's super instructions



Parish News

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

Sunday 19	Easter Three Audio Service for This Week <i>a link is sent</i> 9:30am All Age Worship St John's Church
Monday 20	8:30am Morning Prayer
Tuesday 21	ST GEORGE 8:50am Collective Worship at St John's School 10:00am Eucharist at Christ the King Hub 7:30pm Christ the King Hub Working Group <i>via Zoom</i> 8:30pm Compline – <i>a link is sent</i>
Weds 22	8:30am Morning Prayer 10:30am Internment of ashes at St Albans [Fr Rob] 12 Noon St George's Lunch at the Cowper Arms
Thursday 23	12 Noon Clergy Chapter Meeting 8:00pm Standing Committee <i>via Zoom</i> 8:30pm Compline <i>a link is sent</i>
Friday 24	8:30am Morning Prayer 9:00am Coffee Pot at St John's Café
Saturday 25	7:45am Fr Rob presents <i>Thought for the Day on BBC Radio 4</i> 8:30am Morning Prayer 10:00am Hub Café at Christ the King Hub
Sunday 26	Easter Four Weekly Audio Service <i>a link is sent</i> 9:30am Parish Eucharist at St John's Church 11:00am Anglican-led All Age Worship at Digswell Village Church
Monday 27	8:30am Morning Prayer 7:30pm Parochial Church Council Meeting <i>via Zoom</i>
Tuesday 28	8:50am Collective Worship at St John's School 10:00am Eucharist at Christ the King Hub 7:30pm Diocesan Online Safeguarding Forum <i>via Zoom</i> 8:30pm Compline – <i>a link is sent</i>
Weds 29	8:30am Morning Prayer
Thursday 30	8:30pm Compline <i>a link is sent</i>

The Church of England Parish of Digswell Welwyn Garden City

Compline/weekly worship available on Soundcloud Channel
Morning Prayer is via Zoom
Please ask us for details 210425

May 2026

Friday 1	8:30am Morning Prayer 9:00am Coffee Pot
Saturday 2	8:30am Morning Prayer 9:15am A Moment of Healing [St John's Church] 10:00am The Hub Café
Sunday 3	Easter 5 Audio Service for This Week <i>a link is sent</i> 9:30am Parish Eucharist at St John's Church
Monday 4	BANK HOLIDAY 10:00am Morning Prayer
Tuesday 5	8:50am Collective Worship at St John's School 10:00am Eucharist at Christ the King Hub 7:30pm Bible Study on 1 Corinthians <i>via Zoom</i> 8:30pm Compline – <i>a link is sent</i>
Weds 6	8:30am Morning Prayer
Thursday 7	LOCAL ELECTIONS TAKE PLACE TODAY. 9:00am Tea Toast and Toddlers at Christ the King Hub 8:30pm Compline – <i>a link is sent</i>
Friday 8	8:30am Morning Prayer 9:00am Coffee Pot at St John's Café
Saturday 9	8:30am Morning Prayer 10:00am Hub Café at Christ the King Hub
Sunday 10	Easter 6 Audio Service for This Week <i>a link is sent</i> 9:30am Parish Eucharist at St John's Church 11:00am Anglican-led worship at Digswell Village Church
Monday 11	8:30am Morning Prayer 11:00am Assembly at Homerswood School [Fr Rob] 2:00pm DVC Bible Study Group 7:30pm Be Together – at the Rectory – all welcome
Tuesday 12	10:00am Eucharist at Christ the King Hub 10:45am Lay Leader of Worship Review at CTK Hub [Fr Rob] 8:30pm Compline – <i>a link is sent</i>
Weds 13	8:30am Morning Prayer
Thursday 14	FEAST OF THE ASCENSION 8:50am Eucharist at St John's School 12 Noon Chapter Meeting at Christ the King Hub 7:30pm Sung Eucharist at St John's Church 8:30pm Compline <i>a link is sent</i>
Friday 15	8:30am Morning Prayer 9:00am Coffee Pot at St John's Café 9:30am Parish Safeguarding Meeting 10:30am Parish Book Club at Coffee Pot
Saturday 16	8:30am Morning Prayer 9:15am Extended Ministry Group at Christ the King Hub 10:00am Hub Café at Christ the King Hub
Sunday 17	Sunday After the Ascension Audio Service for This Week <i>a link is sent</i> 9:30am All Age Worship St John's Church
Monday 18	8:30am Morning Prayer 6:30pm St John's School Governors at St John's School [Fr Rob]
Tuesday 19	Bishop of Hertford visits Parish today 8:50am Collective Worship at St John's School 10:00am Eucharist at Christ the King Hub 12 Noon WGC church leaders meeting 8:30pm Compline – <i>a link is sent</i>
Weds 20	8:30am Morning Prayer 9:00am Meeting at Knightsfield School [Fr Rob] 1:00pm St John's School Meeting at Rectory [Fr Rob]
Thursday 21	9:00am Tea Toast & Toddlers at Christ the King Hub 8:30pm Compline <i>a link is sent</i>
Friday 22	8:30am Morning Prayer 9:00am Coffee Pot at St John's Café
Saturday 23	7:45am Fr Rob presents <i>Thought for the Day on BBC Radio 4</i> 8:30am Morning Prayer 10:00am Hub Café at Christ the King Hub
Sunday 24	Feast of Pentecost. Wear something red Sunday Audio Service for This Week <i>a link is sent</i> 9:30am Parish Eucharist at St John's Church.
Monday 25	BANK HOLIDAY 10:00am Morning Prayer





The Friends News

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

 <p style="text-align: center;">The Friends of St John's School, Digswell</p>		Target: £10,000																								
		Total so far: £7466.50																								
<p>Dates for the diary for half termly meetings are:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday 29th April 2025</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday 24th June 2025</p>		World Book day																								
		Sport's day																								
<p style="text-align: center;">Reps for each class</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 33%;">Roshni Bharij</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Nursery</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Vacancy</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Natalie Burnett</td> <td>Reception</td> <td>Nicola Pattison</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fiona Hetherington</td> <td>Year 1</td> <td>Sarah Box-Hashem</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Claire Dixon</td> <td>Year 2</td> <td>Chantelle Newman</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kelly Butler</td> <td>Year 3</td> <td>Lauren Bowman</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jo Jamieson</td> <td>Year 4</td> <td>Lisa Robson</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lee Pocha</td> <td>Year 5</td> <td>Natalie Burnett</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sarah Dolton</td> <td>Year 6</td> <td>Roshni Bharij</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Roshni Bharij	Nursery	Vacancy	Natalie Burnett	Reception	Nicola Pattison	Fiona Hetherington	Year 1	Sarah Box-Hashem	Claire Dixon	Year 2	Chantelle Newman	Kelly Butler	Year 3	Lauren Bowman	Jo Jamieson	Year 4	Lisa Robson	Lee Pocha	Year 5	Natalie Burnett	Sarah Dolton	Year 6	Roshni Bharij	Father's day projects
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<p>These are the cake sale dates</p> <p style="text-align: center;">R - 8/5/26 N - 22/5/26</p> 		Mother's day projects																								
		Christmas bazaar £1966.50																								
<p>Our future events that we would like to run and will need support are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Christmas Fair - Christmas Cards - Mother's Day project - Father's Day project - Sports Day - Year 6 Show - Odd shoe day 		Fireworks £2200																								
		Anonymous Donations £1000																								
		Tesco Grant £1000																								
		Quiz night £1300																								

Inclusive online dance sessions for children and adults (ages 5+)



[Para Dance UK](#) at Communities 1st offers

inclusive dance sessions for those with disabilities, all ages and abilities, featuring various styles like street and folk. They focus on fun, physical activity and community.

Join their fun weekly online sessions for adults and children, with instructors adapting to all levels. They also run local groups that foster a sense of family and belonging, plus an online after-school club for kids to explore dance.

- Adults Inclusive Dance – Mondays 10am (13 April to 20 July).
- Primary After School Inclusive Dance Club – Wednesdays 4.15pm, (15 April to 22 July)
- Young Adults Inclusive Dance Club – Wednesdays 5pm (15 April to 22 July)

All classes are via Zoom. *Classes will not run on Bank Holidays, during May Half Term, or during the week of 1st June.*

Cost: £10 per person, per year

Please contact paradance@communities1st.org.uk to make a booking, or for any other enquiries.

'What I wish my parents or carers knew...': a guide for parents and carers on children's digital lives (Children's Commissioner)

The Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, has published a guide to help parents and carers navigate the challenge of managing children's everyday online habits. Written with direct input from children and young people, including teenagers consulted in schools and the Commissioner's Youth Ambassadors. The guide is designed to make difficult conversations easier and more regular.

The guide covers setting boundaries around phone use, talking about harmful content, and building ongoing communication that goes beyond a one-off conversation. The voice of young people runs through it, including this from one teenager: "Don't be afraid to be firm... If you are worried your child is seeing harmful content and you don't know what they're watching and it's affecting their behaviour, just take it that you know best, they don't."

The downloads can be found here: <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/resource/what-i-wish-my-parents-or-carers-knew-a-guide-for-parents-and-carers-on-managing-childrens-digital-lives>



Compline for this evening NEW

<https://soundcloud.com/user-844410332/compline-thu-23-april-m4a>

It is led by Dr Lesley Haire, Lay Leader of Worship.

This week we have had St George's Day!

Please remember the members of the **Standing Committee** who meet this evening at the Rectory.

Pop along to **Coffee Pot** tomorrow between 9am and 12 noon or to the **Hub Cafe** on Saturday between 10am and 1pm.

Fr Rob is LIVE in the Radio 4 studio at Broadcasting House, London on Saturday morning for **Thought for the Day** around 7.45am.

Sunday's service at St John's is at 9.30am and you are warmly welcome to our Parish Eucharist followed by refreshments.

The 11am All Age Service at Digswell Village Church is also Anglican-led this weekend.

A few parish members marked **St George's Day** with lunch at the Cowper Arms yesterday.

It was as ever a lovely occasion.

Start reading the next book for the Parish Book Club which meets on Fri May 15th at 10.30am

It's the *Instrumentalist* by Harriet Constable.

Listen Again

Compline for every night of Eastertide during April

<https://soundcloud.com/user-844410332/gen-compline-easter-26-apr-m4a>

Tuesday's Compline

<https://soundcloud.com/user-844410332/compline-tue-21-apr-26-m4a>

This week's Audio Service

<https://soundcloud.com/user-844410332/audio-service-19-apr26-m4a>

Please continue to pray for world peace at this time.

