

# St John's VA C of E Primary School

## NEWSLETTER



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

08/05/26

### Summer Term 1 Value: Faith

#### Welcome message from the Headteacher

#### Another two weeks of learning, fun and the sun!

Dear all,

It has been a wonderful two weeks of sunshine, which has truly been a welcome gift. During this time, we have been working incredibly hard to continue developing our school further – please see our improvement section for more details.

We are very grateful to be in a position where we can benefit from the investment and support of the diocese. We are also fortunate for the ongoing dedication and work of our parish community. In return, we will continue to support the local parish and will be collecting donations at our next church service. The money raised will help the diocese to continue supporting our school, as well as others within the community.

I was fortunate to attend the Year 5 residential trip last week where we spent time working together and completing activities. The children have gained the skills of resilience, determination and cooperation. I am very proud of all of year 5 and the staff who took part, not only did we have a great week, but I have enjoyed spending time with the class learning about them as individuals and also what they have learnt during the week. Well done all! I hope the parents also had a great week too!

I have been visited the classes to see many children working incredibly hard on their handwriting and focusing on building their fundamental skills up – this is something the new OFSTED framework is looking at. I am very impressed that everyone is taking their next steps and developing this further.

OPAL continues to grow from strength to strength, Mrs Davies-Golder and I continue to go through the framework with lots of upcoming changes. We would be very grateful for any donations to the school for lunch time equipment as previously mentioned. We are also very grateful for a group of parents helping with their children in the sensory garden, this is looking incredible, and we are very thankful for the hard work that has been put into this.

With SATs taking place next week, I want to say how incredibly hard Year 6 have worked. I am asking you to keep going for just one more week — you have all done a fantastic job, and I am proud of every single one of you.

Remember, SATs are only tests. Each and every one of you is an amazing individual, and that is far more important than any result. It is easy to become overwhelmed by the education system's focus on grades and outcomes, but I truly believe that doing your best is all anyone can ask of you.

The most important thing is that you try your hardest and continue to believe in yourselves. I know every one of you is capable of achieving the results you deserve. Keep being resilient, stay positive, and remember — you can do this.

**Pupil quote of the week- Maya (Year 6):** Everybody is different, and valued for whole they are. I like the school because all of the teachers are there to support us.

**Quote from the bible- John 20:29:** "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

#### Improvements to the school:

We have had several improvements so far:

- We have ordered 12 new iPads, 6 for class teachers and 5 for SEND use. We have also got another one for Year 5 as our numbers in the class have increased.
- We have ordered some new laptops for teachers and TA's.
- We have been working on our inclusion art piece of work that will be completed soon and will be outside the Year 5 classroom.
- The playground has been fixed where there has been some sinking occurring. We have also filled in any further gaps that needed completing too.
- We have finalised this years financial budget aiming for a balanced budget. But we are aware of costs increasing.
- We will be getting two more interactive boards for our interventions room – our aim is to get these up as soon as they arrive.
- Again, I want to say a huge thank you to the diocese for supporting the school with our office project. We are very excited to get this starting soon.



# Highlights

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

| <p><b><u>Amazon Wish list</u></b></p> <p>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 <a href="#">here</a>. Throughout the year we will update the wish list.</p>   | <p><b><u>Attendance:</u></b><br/><b><u>Week commencing 27<sup>th</sup> April 2026</u></b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Percent</th> <th>Place</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Nursery</td> <td>100%</td> <td>1<sup>st</sup></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 1</td> <td>98.6%</td> <td>2<sup>nd</sup></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 2</td> <td>88.7%</td> <td>8<sup>th</sup></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 3</td> <td>98%</td> <td>3<sup>rd</sup></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 4</td> <td>89%</td> <td>7<sup>th</sup></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 5</td> <td>96%</td> <td>6<sup>th</sup></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year 6</td> <td>96.7%</td> <td>5<sup>th</sup></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year R</td> <td>97.9%</td> <td>4<sup>th</sup></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>   | Year            | Percent | Place | Nursery | 100% | 1 <sup>st</sup> | Year 1 | 98.6% | 2 <sup>nd</sup> | Year 2 | 88.7% | 8 <sup>th</sup> | Year 3 | 98% | 3 <sup>rd</sup> | Year 4 | 89% | 7 <sup>th</sup> | Year 5 | 96% | 6 <sup>th</sup> | Year 6 | 96.7% | 5 <sup>th</sup> | Year R | 97.9% | 4 <sup>th</sup> |
|--|--|-----------------|---------|-------|---------|------|-----------------|--------|-------|-----------------|--------|-------|-----------------|--------|-----|-----------------|--------|-----|-----------------|--------|-----|-----------------|--------|-------|-----------------|--------|-------|-----------------|
| Year   |  | Percent         | Place   |       |         |      |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |
| Nursery  | 100%   | 1 <sup>st</sup> |         |       |         |      |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |
| Year 1   | 98.6%  | 2 <sup>nd</sup> |         |       |         |      |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |
| Year 2   | 88.7%  | 8 <sup>th</sup> |         |       |         |      |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |
| Year 3   | 98%  | 3 <sup>rd</sup> |         |       |         |      |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |
| Year 4   | 89%  | 7 <sup>th</sup> |         |       |         |      |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |
| Year 5   | 96%  | 6 <sup>th</sup> |         |       |         |      |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |
| Year 6   | 96.7%  | 5 <sup>th</sup> |         |       |         |      |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |
| Year R   | 97.9%  | 4 <sup>th</sup> |         |       |         |      |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |
| <p><b><u>Social Media:</u></b></p> <p>We have begun to explore the world of social media in order to help support promote the school and share with our community including our podcast. Please can you update your photo and video consent for social media – found on Arbor.</p> <p><b>Youtube:</b> <a href="https://youtube.com/shorts/6OBtkSibRWM?feature=share">https://youtube.com/shorts/6OBtkSibRWM?feature=share</a><br/> <b>Instagram:</b><br/> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/digswellstjohns?igsh=MXB6Nm1qaHc3dHE2eQ%3D%3D&amp;utm_source=qr">https://www.instagram.com/digswellstjohns?igsh=MXB6Nm1qaHc3dHE2eQ%3D%3D&amp;utm_source=qr</a></p>  |  |                 |         |       |         |      |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |
| <p><b><u>Trips and residential:</u></b></p> <p>We would like to remind parents and carers that for all trips and residential, we will continue to keep you informed of any delays or changes to expected return times via <b>Seesaw or Arbor</b>. If a trip or residential is running late, updates will be shared as soon as possible through these channels. During residential visits, we will also continue to post updates, news and photographs when staff are able to do so.</p> <p>Please note that in line with our <b>school policies and procedures</b>, the use of <b>trackers (including AirTags), smart devices, or any other electronic devices</b> by pupils is <b>not permitted</b> on trips or residential. These items can interfere with safeguarding arrangements and staff supervision.</p> <p>If a pupil is found to be in possession of a tracking device or unauthorised electronic equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/carers will be contacted and may be asked to collect their child.</li> <li>• The child may be unable to continue attending the trip or residential.</li> <li>• Any prohibited device found may be confiscated and may be disposed of in accordance with school procedure.</li> </ul> <p>Thank you for your continued support and cooperation in helping us ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils.</p> | <p><b><u>Lockdown procedure:</u></b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>If you would like any further information or have any concerns, please speak to Mr Worton-Geer.</p> |                 |         |       |         |      |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |     |                 |        |       |                 |        |       |                 |

## Child Prayer:

*Dear God, Thank you God for everything, I love you God for everything you have done.  
Amen (Reception - Eric )*



## Calendar

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> May – Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> May | Year 6 SATs  |
| Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> May                               | End of Year Eucharist in school – Year 3-6                 |
| Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> May                                 | Year 6 Party and Dress down day - £2 donation              |
| Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> May                                 | Year 5 Forest School                                       |
| Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> May                                 | Year 3 Class Trip  |
| Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> May                                | The Bishop visiting the school                             |
| Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> May                              | Reception Class Trip                                       |
| Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May                                 | Year 6 Forest School                                       |
| Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> May – Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> May   | May half term  |
| Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> June                                 | First day back   |
| Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> -Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> June         | MTC test – Year 4  |
| Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> June                                 | Year 6 Forest School                                       |
| Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> June                               | Reception height and weight, hearing and vision – NHS      |
| Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> June                               | Year 1 and 2 Safari Stu                                    |
| Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> – Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> June       | Phonics Screening week                                     |
| Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> June                                | INSET Day  |
| Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> June                             | Spurs Football coaching Years 1 -6 -weekly                 |
| Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> June                                | Year 5 Forest School                                       |
| Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> -Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> June       | Assessment Week  |
| Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> June                              | Year 4 trip to Knebworth                                   |
| Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> June -Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July   | Sports week  |
| Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> July @3:30-5pm                    | Open evening   |
| Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July                                 | Sports Day and picnic lunch                                |
| Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July                                 | Parent play with OPAL during picnic lunch                  |
| Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> July                                | Year 3 and 4 Forest School                                 |
| Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> July                               | Transition day for Hertfordshire                           |
| Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> July                                | Reports due home   |
| Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> July                               | Rocksteady Concert – 9am                                   |
| Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July                                | Year 2 Forest School                                       |
| Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July                                | Year 6 Leavers Party                                       |
| Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July                             | Leavers Service and Celebration at St John's Church 8:50am |

# Academic Highlights

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

## Nursery:



This week the children have been learning about growing and in Literacy they focused on the story Jasper's Beanstalk. We discussed how beans grow with the help of sunlight and water. Furthermore, for Understanding the World, the children planted cress seeds and talked about what plants need to grow.

In Maths, the children sorted objects by colour and size, and we also explored different types of seeds. Last week we made patterns by printing fruits.

## Year 1:



Year 1 have had a wonderfully few weeks! In RE we've been exploring Islam, asking thoughtful questions and making links in our learning. In maths, we've been grouping, sharing and doubling as we begin to explore multiplication and division, so any practise counting in 2s, 5s and 10s at home would be hugely beneficial. Phonics remains a big focus as we approach the screening check after half term and the children have particularly enjoyed tackling the rather entertaining "alien words"! In science, we've been getting our hands dirty planting vegetables and flowers in our outdoor planters - we're looking forward to watching them grow.

## Year 3:



In Year 3 we have been learning about the Egyptians. We have been preparing paper to look like Papyrus paper for our Egyptian scrolls. Next week we will be drawing and painting our Egyptian art work on there.

## Year 5:



Year 5 had a wonderful week at their Residential! They were all brilliant - they had fun, but they also supported and looked after each other. From sailing, kayaking and high ropes to night walks and quizzes. I am so proud of them all!

## Reception:



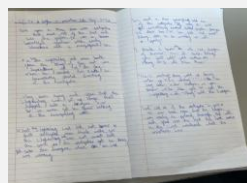
This week, we had a special visitor in to Reception and Nursery. Olivia's mum came to talk with us for National Deaf Awareness Week. We watched an episode of Peppa Pig where we see how George has a difficulty hearing and talked about how deafness can affect people in varying degrees. We thought about how people can communicate in different ways and how best to communicate with people who are deaf. We learnt a bit of sign language, to sing along to 'Five little ducks' and introduced our sign of the week.

## Year 2:



The children have been using their imagination and descriptive writing skills to describe a monster that lives beyond the wall, as we start our writing unit based on Roald Dahl's The Minpins.

## Year 4:



It's been another busy couple of weeks for Year 4, we have been continuing with our progress with Decimals in Maths and creative writing in English. In PE, we've had a recent trip to Monk's Walk to take part in an Archery competition - well done to Viola, Ella and Gracie-Mae for finishing in the top three! We have also been learning about Sound in Science, where we used balloons to test how sound travels through different objects!

## Year 6:



Year 6 have been working incredibly hard preparing for their SATs, but we have also made time for some fun along the way! In RE, the children took part in an activity called "Conscience Alley," where they had the opportunity to develop and practise their debating skills. They impressed us all with how confidently they used their knowledge of the story of Moses to support their ideas and arguments.



# Parish News

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

## All Age Worship

Once a month pupils can connect with Selina and Fr Rob at the Parish's All Age Worship - always on the third Sunday of the month at 9.30am. There are some familiar songs, activities for the children and a great cafe follows. Children of all ages are welcome. Next up is May 17th.

## Book Club

It would be great to welcome parents to the monthly parish Book Club during this Year of Reading. It meets at Coffee Pot every third Friday at 10.30am. Next up on Fri May 15th at 10.30am is *The Instrumentalist* by Harriet Constable.

## Midweek Eucharist

Need a bit of peace and quiet - some time for reflection.

**Every Tuesday** at 10am at Christ the King Hub there is a short Eucharist followed by refreshments to which everyone is welcome.

## Feast of the Ascension:

A date for your diary. Thursday 14 May 7:30pm  
Sung Eucharist at St John's, followed by fizz.

## SUMMER BREAKFAST Saturday 4th July 10 - 1, Christ the King Hub

We will be having a raffle and tombola and would be very grateful if you are able to donate a prize. Please bring tombola items to any church service or cafe and speak to Heather for details as to how to donate a raffle prize.

## Listen Again.

### Tuesday Compline

<https://soundcloud.com/user-844410332/compline-tue-28-apr-26-m4a>

### Thursday Compline

<https://soundcloud.com/user-844410332/compline-thu-30-apr-26-m4a>

## This Week's Audio Service

<https://soundcloud.com/user-844410332/audio-service-26-april-26-m4a>

## Compline for each night of Easter (April)

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





# The Friends News

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



The Friends of St John's School, Digswell

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

Dates for the diary for half termly meetings are:

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2025

### Reps for each class

| 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    |

These are the cake sale dates

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

### About Carers in Hertfordshire

We are a charity that provides information, advice and support to unpaid carers - people looking after a partner, relative or friend, who is ill, elderly, has a physical or learning disability, or misuses substances.

We support carers of all ages - young people and adults - living, working or caring in Hertfordshire. Our services are free to carers and bereaved carers, who can access support for three years after the death of the person they looked after.

We provide services to carers to help them with their caring role or have a break from caring, to improve their health and wellbeing, and to have a voice in shaping health and community services.

We are partly funded by Hertfordshire County Council and the NHS in Hertfordshire. In partnership with them and other local organisations we work to ensure unpaid carers are identified, informed, supported and heard.

#### Carers in Hertfordshire

The Red House, 119 Fore Street, Hertford, Herts, SG14 1AX.

Tel: 01992 58 69 69 Email: [contact@carersinherts.org.uk](mailto:contact@carersinherts.org.uk)

[www.carersinherts.org.uk](http://www.carersinherts.org.uk)

### Our support for parents and carers.

We have a team of Carer Engagement Workers who can provide advice and information and also support you to speak up.

We also:

- Give you a chance to meet and talk to other parents, carers and staff who understand;
- Give you the opportunity to represent your views to the authorities that commission and manage Children and Young People's Mental Health Services (CYPMHS) in Hertfordshire;
- Provide free training and learning opportunities; and
- Offer a Carers' Passport Discount Card that gives savings in shops, restaurants and other venues (contact us to apply for one today!)



## SEND News

Keeping you up-to-date with Hertfordshire's SEND information (including HAND)



<https://sendnews.hertfordshire.gov.uk/30-april-2026#healthystart>

Parenting courses:

<https://directory.hertfordshire.gov.uk/Search?CategoryId=111&SM=ServiceSearch&SME=True>

### NHS Healthy Start payments have increased from 6 April 2026 (ages 0-4)

If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4, you may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk. The amount of money you receive for Healthy Start payments has increased.

If you're eligible, you'll be sent a Healthy Start card with money on it that you can use in some UK shops. The benefit will be added onto this card every 4 weeks.

You can use your card to buy plain cow's milk, fresh, frozen and tinned fruit and vegetables, pulses and infant formula milk.

You can also use your card to collect:

- Healthy Start vitamins – these support you during pregnancy and breastfeeding
- vitamin drops for babies and young children – these are suitable from birth to 4 years old

Find out if you qualify and register online.

Link: [https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/?dm\\_i=5ESZ%2C1EC9Y%2C5IMFKA%2C5QQIE%2C1%2C0%2C0%2C0](https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/?dm_i=5ESZ%2C1EC9Y%2C5IMFKA%2C5QQIE%2C1%2C0%2C0%2C0)

