

St John's VA C of E Primary School

NEWSLETTER

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



25/09/26

Autumn Term 1

Value: Love

Welcome message from the Headteacher

A busy learning curve for all!

Another busy two weeks where children have begun to settle in more. Nursery and Reception are doing a great job coming into school and although it must be very hard to start the day early for 3 and 4 year olds, the team have been working incredibly hard with the children coming in. I too have had the pleasure of seeing the classes in and once the children settle, they are full of imagination and ideas. They are a very kind group of children. Thank you to the staff who have helped this transition and to the parents who have supported their children settling in.

I have attached in the newsletter a survey regarding the speed limit survey that the local area has received. I urge each and every parent, neighbour, family member, cousin, and other relatives to complete this survey. It mentions a range of roads that need to be considered 20mphs and in particular the road outside our school but also minor roads that you may walk down including Digswell Lane and all of the roads in Halden's. I have heard many times how there have been near misses as well as parents being hit by parts of lorries and cars. We want to encourage our children to travel to school via walking and scooting but we need to ensure our roads are safe first. Thank you to the parents already who have raised this survey with me. If class reps can ensure this survey is sent out on their groups I would be very grateful. We are also hoping that the council will come to our school on the 6th October to meet with parents and children to discuss our views. More details to follow.

Additionally, I want to say a huge thank you to parents for completing the school survey. I have spent a while reflecting on the results of this survey and breaking down what is working well and what needs to be improved. A few common themes raised for areas to work on. I will be sending out a separate letter regarding this as I feel it has a lot of value of your views and actions the school needs to consider. Whilst it is very difficult to meet everyone's wishes, I will be working on ensuring we develop the areas that have been flagged up.

Parents evening will soon be with us at the end of this half term, please look out for details of when we will send out meeting times. We are eager to share information with you about how your children are settling in. Additionally, please feel free to check our school website on the class pages for further details.

Our sports partnership with our local school continues to grow, there has been a change in sports premium and funding. In some areas, partnerships have closed. We at St John's value PE and the skills they learn in these events and for this year continue to work within the partnership until the new School Sports model is fully implemented. The DFE has stated this should start this academic year, I will keep you updated. Handwriting continues to be a major factor at our school, it is a foundational skill that I would like every child to continue to practice. Our timetables in every class include daily handwriting lessons. Please encourage children at home to write. Finally, we have a busy next few weeks with preparation for Harvest festival and other events. Children have developed our forest school area further and we are excited to see how OPAL and forest school grows this year.

Pupil quote of the week- Ava (Year 5): This week has been really good because Year 5 have been able to do Bikeability. We were allowed to go on the roads and learn how to be safe.

Quote from the bible- 1| 1 John 4:18 *There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.*

Improvements to the school:

We have had several improvements so far:

- We have had a new member join our team working in Early Years called Mr Martin. He will be working across Reception and Nursery.
- We have a new SEND supporting app called Widget that helps turn words into images. Look out for these around the school.
- We are hoping to get some new fish for the fish tank that is in Year 3!
- We are planning Black History Month with staff and children. If any children would like to help with this planning, please speak to Mr Worton-Geer.



Highlights

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

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.

Social Media:

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.

Youtube: <https://youtube.com/shorts/6OBtkSibRWM?feature=share>

Instagram:

https://www.instagram.com/digswellstjohns?igsh=MXB6Nm1qaHc3dHE2eQ%3D%3D&utm_source=qr

Attendance:

Week commencing 14th September 2026

Year	Percent	Place
Nursery	99.3%	2 nd
Year 1	95.9%	7 th
Year 2	99.7%	1 st
Year 3	96.7%	5 th
Year 4	96.3%	6 th
Year 5	97.3%	4 th
Year 6	92.1%	8 th
Year R	98.3%	3 rd

Garden work:



We would like to say a huge thank you to Molly and Jacob for giving up last weekend to help clear out our sensory garden. It has been a huge job, and it is beginning to look incredible. If there are any more parents who would like to help, please let us know. We will have a tidy Friday coming up nearer the end of this half term. We also would like to develop our river side project too. We have secured a £2500 grant to sort this area. If anyone has any ideas, please can you let me know. We would be eager to get some parents on board with this.

Cross country – Year 5

Year 5 took part in the cross-country event across our local schools. This was a hard event where over 100 boys and 100 girls took part. We done very well colleting points for our team. I was very impressed with all pupils who took part even if they weren't keen runners. Well done team!

Black History Month

Ava-Rose and Eva have been working incredibly hard these past few weeks on creating a show to share with people famous black people and to teach those who are watching what these people did. They are very excited to show their class and hopefully their parents and the rest of the school. We are excited to see what happens here.

We are working together on some activities about black history month.

Please also visit our website for out racism charter that is located under the policy page here:

<https://www.digswell.herts.sch.uk/school-policies>

Child Prayer:

Dear God, you love us you give us food to eat and water to drink. You forgive us over and over again. So God please help us to love you back and our friends and families.

Amen (Year 5 - Marcus)



Calendar

Monday 28th September

Reception and Nursery tour 4pm

Tuesday 29th September

Monster Phonics day – dress up Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and 2

October

Black History Month

Friday 2nd October

Year 2 Forest School Day

Wednesday 7th October

Spanish Day

Thursday 8th October

Harvest Festival service @ st John's Church

Thursday 8th October

Reception/ Nursery parent tour – 2:00pm

Friday 9th October

Year 1 Forest School Day

Monday 12th October

Year 4 Swimming sessions week

Wednesday 14th October

Reception reading meeting 2:30pm

Friday 16th October

Year 6 Forest School

Monday 19th October

Reception/ Nursery parent tour – 2:00pm

Tuesday 20th October

Book look afternoon 2:30pm

Wednesday 21st October

Parents Evening

Thursday 22nd October

Parents Evening

Friday 23rd October

Year 5 Forest School Day

Friday 23rd October

Last day of half term

Monday 26th – Friday 30th October

Half term week

Monday 2nd November

First day back at School

Tuesday 3rd November

Collective worship – bible Sunday – in school

Wednesday 4th November

Flu Vaccinations

Saturday 7th November

Fireworks Night

Sunday 8th November

Remembrance Sunday at the memorial – 12:30pm

Wednesday 11th November

Collective worship – Remembrance Day (school) 10:50am

Friday 13th November

Non-School uniform day – Children In Need

Monday 16th – Friday 20th November

Anti Bullying Week

Monday 16th – Friday 20th November

Road Safety Week

Academic Highlights

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

EYFS



Nursery have been having a wonderful couple of weeks getting to know our new friends and our new school. We have been enjoying exploring our outdoor area and seeing what things we have to play with inside the classroom. We have been reading the story 'Little Rabbit Foo Foo', thinking about the rules at school. We are so proud of how well our youngest children are settling in!

KS1



Year 2 have had a fantastic week and have made a brilliant start to the new school year! We have been exploring the work of the wonderful artist Yayoi Kusama, discovering her famous use of colour, patterns and dots. The children had lots of fun creating their own artwork inspired by her distinctive style, showing fantastic creativity and enthusiasm. It has been lovely to see their confidence, imagination and positive attitudes shining through!

Lower KS2

Year 4 have had a very busy start to the school year. We have had lots of learning experiences already, including some fun activities. We started with a paper aeroplane building challenge. We have also made topographical sculptures of mountain ranges in geography, layering cardboard to show the varying heights. We made 'poo' in science to demonstrate the functions of the organs in our digestive system. The children have particularly enjoyed drama sessions on Thursdays. Last week, we enjoyed our first forest school of the year, where the children learned some whittling skills, made art out of natural resources and had fun building dens.



Upper KS2

Year 5 have thoroughly enjoyed learning how to play tag rugby over the past 3 weeks, when a sporting coach from Monks Walk came in to train them. They played short matches this week and showed off what they had learned!



Parish News

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

Donations:

If you wish to contribute to a donation, please see the new link:

<https://givealittle.co/c/ba0580ac-0010-48cd-be88-35d9d2fdcd98>



Sunday Oct 4

9.30am

Harvest Festival

Join us once again to support our local food bank as we pray for all farmers and those in the food industry

Save the Date

Sunday Nov 1

10.30am Memorial Service for the departed.

We will be remembering our loved ones once again during All Souls and All Saints. Do join us and note the time.

Don't forget there is always a warm welcome at either of the Parish Cafes.

Coffee Pot

Fridays

9:00-12 noon

St John's Church, Monks Rise

The Hub Cafe

Saturdays

10:00-12:30pm

CtKHub, Haldens

TEA, TOAST and TODDLERS

Time: 9:00-10:30 am

Toys, craft activity, messy play and plenty of toast!

When: First and Third Thursday of the Month

Where: The Hub at Christ the King, Haldens

We are looking for volunteers to help once a month with refreshments, setting up the toys, helping with the craft activity and welcoming all who come along.

Please email us at info@digswellparish.org.uk for more information.

Here is the collective worship list for school visits on Tuesday's:

Sept

29 Ben- governor (St Michael and All Angels)

Oct

8 Harvest Service in Church Selina Fr Rob

13 Fr Rob (Stewardship)

20 Selina (Value - Love)

Nov

3 Bibles Fr Rob

11 Remembrance Selina

19 Fr Rob (Value -Hope)

24 Lee - governor (Feast of Christ the King)

Dec

1 Advent Eucharist Fr Rob

10 Selina Advent



The Friends News

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



The Friends of St John's School, Digswell

Target: £20,000

Total so far:
£0

Summer Fete

World Book day

Sport's day

Sponsored
Bounce event -

Christmas
bizarre

Fireworks

Anonymous
Donations
£1000

Grants

Quiz night



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

We have updated our webpage on the school website. Please come and visit to see how we have spent the money so far:

<https://www.digswell.herts.sch.uk/the-friends-association>

Reps for each class

Vacancy	Nursery	Vacancy
Roshni Bharij	Reception	Vacancy
Natalie Burnett	Year 1	Nicola Pattison
Fiona Hetherington	Year 2	Sara Box-Hashem
Claire Dixon	Year 3	Chantelle Newman
Kelly Butler	Year 4	Lauren Bowman
Jo Jamieson	Year 5	Lisa Robson
Lee Pocha	Year 6	Natalie Burnett

CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION

The Chairman of Welwyn Parish Council is seeking a beautifully festive Christmas card design to serve as the official Parish Council card for 2026.

The competition is open to all Reception/KS1 and KS2 children in the Parish (Digswell, Oaklands, Mardley Heath and Welwyn).

The design should be created on A4 paper, with any Christmas-related theme, and must lay flat (no glitter or 3D stickers).

Entries will be divided in to two categories:
Reception/KS1 (age 4-7) and KS2 (age 8-11)

Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd in each category and the overall winner will have their design printed as real Christmas cards with some to take home too!

We will also invite the winner to help switch on Welwyn village Christmas lights on Friday 27th November 2026.

Please submit your entries to the Parish Offices, Lockleys Drive, Welwyn by 3pm on **16th November 2026**. Be sure to include your name, age, and a parent or carer's phone number so we can reach out to the winners.



Made with AI

Digswell Needs You!

Could you make a difference in your local community?

Welwyn Parish Council has a vacancy for a Parish Councillor to represent the Digswell Ward.

This is your chance to have a real say in the future of Digswell, represent local residents, and help make a positive difference!

Why become a Parish Councillor?

-  **Represent Digswell residents**
Listen to local people and ensure Digswell's voice is heard.
-  **Help shape the future**
Influence planning, transport, and development.
-  **Support your community**
Work with local groups on projects that matter.
-  **Protect what makes Digswell special**
Help protect our green spaces, environment, heritage and distinctive character.
-  **Turn ideas into action**
Make a real difference with your ideas.
-  **Learn and develop**
Gain new skills and experience.

You don't need to be a politician. What matters most is that you care about Digswell and want to make a positive impact!

Could you be Digswell's next voice?

Closing date: 19th October

 clerk@welwyn-pc.gov.uk

 01438 716 667



Hertfordshire County Council wants to hear your views on where 20mph speed limits may be appropriate in Welwyn Garden City.

Lower traffic speeds can make streets feel more comfortable for a wider range of users. They can help people cross roads more easily, support independent journeys to schools and local facilities, and encourage more people to consider walking, cycling or using public transport for shorter journeys. It can make it easier to pull out of driveways and side roads in their cars.

We are not considering 20mph limits on key distributor routes such as Stanborough Road, Bessemer Road, Broadwater Road, Black Fan Road and Chequers.

Our Right Place, Right Pace approach recognises that different roads serve different purposes. Some roads are places where people live, walk, wheel, cycle, shop, access schools and spend time, while others play an important role in helping people travel between communities.

We are asking residents, businesses, schools and local communities to help shape how a future 20mph scheme could look in their area by telling us if, and where they believe lower speed limits are most appropriate. We also recognise that views differ on where 20mph limits should be used and that not every road will be suitable.

By completing the survey, your feedback will help us understand local priorities and inform the potential development of a 20mph areas for Welwyn Garden City [click here](#) [Take survey](#)



Parents and Carers talk about self-harm and recovery

Please join us at an information
session to learn more about
self-harm and get practical ideas
and strategies to help your child
towards recovery

Where: Online over Zoom.

When: Tuesday 6th October, 7pm to 9pm

For more information or to book your
place:

Call: 01992 58 69 69

Email: contact@carersinherts.org.uk

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

Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

1 day Champion course designed specifically for Hertfordshire
Parent/Carers of 8 to 18 year olds.

FREE



MHFA England

You will learn:

- An understanding of common mental health issues and how they can affect young people
- The ability to spot the signs of mental ill health in young people, and guide them to a place of support
- Knowledge and confidence to advocate for mental health awareness
- Skills to support positive wellbeing

Friday 13 Nov 2026 9.30am to 4pm	Peartree Spring Primary School, Stevenage, SG2 9GG	Parents/Carers	Parking available on roads near venue
Friday 12 Mar 2027 9.30am to 4pm	Hobbs Hill Wood Primary School, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 8ER	Parents/Carers	Parking available on site

To book your place please email schoolsmh@hertfordshire.gov.uk
Places are limited to two representatives per education setting