

The St John's Journal



Issue No: 02

Friday 11th February 2022

'Together we have the roots to grow and the wings to fly!'

THANK YOU!

The words 'Thank You', again really are not enough! Despite it being a relatively short half term, it has been a challenging one for the school community with many children, families and staff either being unwell or having to isolate. Yet again, I am extremely grateful to you all – staff, governors, parents and children for your continued understanding, patience and support.

STAFFING UPDATES

As you already know, we have had many staff absences this last half term, but we have managed to remain fully open apart from that one half day where we needed to close early, and we have on the whole provided consistency for the children by only using our regular well-known supply teachers and our own higher level teaching assistants to cover those absences.

I am pleased to say that we are now have nearly everyone back in school, fit and well. Miss Brimson and Mrs Moss remain off unwell and we send them our very best wishes. We are most fortunate that Mrs Willis and Mrs Budd are able to provide most of the cover for Rowan and Ash Class. Unfortunately, yesterday evening, I too have succumbed to a positive test result, but I am continuing to work from home.

We have said thank you to Mrs Light for her contributions to Twilight Club, which she has done for many years. For personal reasons, she has stopped running these sessions, but we still see her every day as she is one of our midday supervisors.

Shortly, we will also be saying thank you, goodbye and good luck to Mrs Williams, who has been teaching in Willow Class. Mrs Williams has been successful with an application for a permanent teaching post in another school, and we do wish her all the best for the future. Our loss is their gain. Mrs Williams will finish with us on 25th March and Mrs Willis will teach Willow Class for the final two weeks of the Spring Term leading up to Easter. We have started the recruitment process to find a great teacher for Willow Class for the Summer Term. We will keep Willow Class parents updated with any developments.

VACANCIES

We currently have vacancies for a Year 3 teacher (see above) and an After School Club Assistant. Please see the vacancies page of the school website for more details <https://www.stjohnsfrome.co.uk/vacancies> .

We are also keen to hear from anyone who may be able to work as a Midday Supervisor. If this is of interest, please contact the school office for more information.

GOVERNORS

On behalf of the board of governors I would like to say a huge thank you to Mrs Marsland and her staff for all of their hard work, dedication and adaptability in the face of significant COVID related disruption and absences since the beginning of term. It has been a very challenging time but as a result of their considerable efforts it has been possible to keep school open and for day to day school life to continue largely as normal ensuring minimal disruption for the children and their learning. Thank you too to the wider school community - children, parents and carers - for your understanding and support. I know it has been appreciated.

The Board of Governors has a number of vacancies for Foundation Governors. If you know of any colleagues, friends or relatives who might be interested in joining the Board and participating in the strategic leadership of the school please ask them to email the main school address with their name and contact details so that we can arrange to speak to them and provide more information about what is involved.

Claire Levene Plumb (Chair of Governors)

THIS LAST HALF TERM: LOTS TO CELEBRATE

Despite all of the challenges, we have had a great half term and as always really do have a lot to celebrate:

Share My Work and Curriculum Information Sessions

Thank you for joining us at these sessions. It was really lovely to watch and listen to children taking so animatedly to their parents and grandparents about their learning. I also know that you found the curriculum information sessions really helpful; thank you teachers for the time you put into preparing these for us.

We did promise that we would offer some catch up sessions for those parents and children who were unable to attend due to isolating. I sincerely apologise that they have not yet happened, but we do have them scheduled for immediately after half term; please see details on the Parents Evening Letter also being sent out today.

Brand New Reading Books

We have successfully applied for a grant, which has given us £6000 towards phonic decodable reading books, which has also released money from the budget to replace 'book band' books (the reading scheme we use after our phonic scheme). We have also used some of our Scholastic Book Fair vouchers to purchase high quality texts for Key Stage classes to read as part of their 'Challenge Reading Lists'. With so many lovely brand new books, we do ask that you take care of them. We appreciate that sometimes accidents do happen, but books and water bottles really do not mix! We have already had a couple of the new books badly damaged, which is very sad, as the damage could have been avoided.

Playground Update

The playground game table tops have arrived in school and the House Captains are putting together boxes of equipment and resources that can be used at these tables in the newly designated quiet areas. We have also had three playground marking companies come into school and meet with Mrs Conway and the House Captains to discuss their requirements for the front playground. Once we have the third quotation, we will be able to select the contractor and move swiftly with this work being completed. I know this will make a huge difference to children's playtimes.

Children's Mental Health Week

This last week, we have been discussing children's mental health. The children have thought about and talked about where they get their support from and what they need to grow. Here are some of the hot air balloons from Year 1 showing where they get support from.



In Reception:

The Gingerbread man topic- we wrote our own stories, made our own real gingerbread people and experimented with gingerbread in different liquids.

Chinese New Year- we've loved learning all about the celebrations for Chinese New Year and the stories behind the 12 animals. We also made our own dancing dragons and Chinese lanterns.

The new reading books - everyone is delighted with these and we're all practising our reading skills with them.

We also visited St John's Church.



In Year 1:

We have been learning about winter and performed our very own winter dances in PE. We enjoyed our focus texts: 'Beegu' and 'Lost and Found', inspiring us to be fantastic writers. We learnt about Sir Benjamin Baker in history and built our own bridges in DT. It was interesting to learn how houses have changed over time and got creative in art making our own model houses. We decorated them using our colour mixing skills. Our introduction to word processing in computing was lots of fun! As scientists we investigated which material was most suited to make an umbrella and have explored lots of properties of materials. In maths we have worked with numbers to 50.



In Year 2:

This half term in Year 2 we have:

Enjoyed learning lots of new football skills from our football coach. We have listened carefully and worked hard to learn how to stop the ball with our feet, turn direction with the ball and defend.

Read and enjoyed our focus text 'Traction Man Is Here!' by Mini Grey. Both classes were so excited when he arrived in school and have enjoyed creating characters and stories around his adventures. We have learned about story structure and created story mountains to plan our writing carefully.

Developed our mapping skills in **Geography**, learning about bird's eye view, compass points and keys as important features of maps. We used this to draw our very own map of school for Traction Man and we mapped his journey around Frome.

Learned about past and present real-life heroes. In **History** we learned about the work of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole, understanding the changes they made with hospital care. We discovered what challenges they faced and how they overcame these.

Investigated different materials in **science** through several experiments where we explored the different properties of materials and used our findings to understand the suitability and use of these in the world around us.

Learned multiplication and division, building our knowledge of the 2, 5 and 10 times tables. We have understood how to answer these calculations using written methods as well as understanding the relationship between \times and \div

Learned digital photography skills as part of our **computing** lessons. We have learned about the different digital devices that take photos, as well how to frame and take a clear photo.



In Year 3:

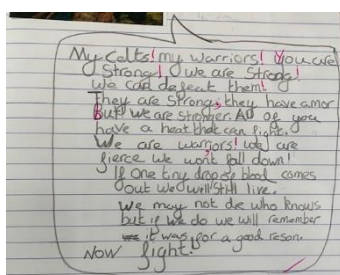
We have enjoyed learning about our skeletons in Science, and how to eat well.

In RE, we have been learning about important elements of the Jewish religion, and then comparing with Christianity.

We had a lot of fun singing and dancing with Mrs Marsland to 'The Music Man'. We made videos which you can see on SeeSaw.

We have learned how to create 'branching databases' in Computing.

In English, we have been looking at Roman myths and legends, and about Roman soldier formations. We have been learning about Boudicca's speech to her warriors, and writing our own versions. We have also been writing our own Roman myths, including one of the Roman gods, and we're looking forward to publishing them next week.



In Year 4:

Our highlights have been:

Our trip to the Boulder Rooms. Making sandwiches in DT. Reading 'How to Train Your Dragon'. Learning about the Vikings and doing Viking Dance in PE, in particular using a Viking God to create a dance. Doing our sound investigation in the playground. Building spaghetti and marshmallow towers in Jigsaw to show how we can work as a team. Making dragon eyes and Viking shields in Art and DT. Making our own top trump card about our own dragon.

I really loved the Boulder rooms. (Summer) (Shannon) (Gray)

I have enjoyed doing art activities linked with Rowden House. (Nancy)

I have enjoyed reading the book 'How to Train Your Dragon' and all of the work we have done in it. (Betty) (Rowan)

The house captains have enjoyed being part of the playground talks with external visitors.

I have liked learning about the Vikings, why they invaded and how they lived. (Oliver)

I really enjoyed maths, multiplication and division. (Ava)

I have liked writing. (Skye)

I have liked PE. (Maisie C)

I have enjoyed everything this half term. (Emily)

I liked designing and making Viking shields. (Frankie)

I have enjoyed making sandwiches with Mrs Fear. (Summer)



NEXT HALF TERM: LOTS TO LOOK FORWARD TO

'Share My Work' Catch Up Sessions

As I have already mentioned, we are holding these immediately after half term. These will only be 'Share My Work Sessions'; teachers will not be available to present the curriculum information. However, those presentations should be on Seesaw for you to look at. These sessions are also only for those parents who were unable to attend in January; please do not book on again if you have already been in. The sessions will be restricted in numbers as we will have to spread out more due to mixed classes and year groups.

Faith Week

Our Faith Week was originally planned for the last week of this half term, but due to staff absence, we decided to postpone it. It will now also be the week immediately after half term. The theme for Faith Week is 'Love' and the teachers have planned some fantastic activities for your children.

World Book Day

World Book Day also falls in the first week, immediately after half term. We will celebrate World Book Day on Thursday 3rd March. Over half term, please could you share some great books with your children, and help them decide which book they 'love' the most. Please take a photo of them holding their favourite book and send it in on Seesaw or Tapestry. On World Book Day, we have decided that this year that we will not dress up, but focus on the enjoyment of reading whole books rather than specific characters. This widens the choice for children whose favourite books might be a poetry or non-fiction book. Teachers will show the photos sent in on screen and children will have the opportunity to talk to their class about their chosen book, trying to explain why they love it. They will also make bookmarks, and be encouraged to design them based on their favourite book. At the moment, I can't quite decide whether my favourite book remains 'Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire' or 'The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse.'

Parents' Evenings

We will also be holding our parent consultation meetings immediately after half term. These meetings will again be virtual meetings; you will have had a letter about how to books these with this newsletter.

We also have some interesting learning ahead of us:

Reception	'Terrific Tales'
Year 1	'Marvellous Me'
Year 2	'The Wonderful World of Roald Dahl'
Year 3	Continuing 'What did the Romans Leave Us?'
Year 4	Continuing 'Journeys'
Acorns	'Hope and Dreams'

After Faith Week, our Christian Value for this half term is a value shared with other faiths and non-faiths and is 'Self-Control'. In Collective Worship, as we head towards the end of term, we will also explore the Easter Story.