



NEWSLETTER No. 3

October 2024

Dear Saint John's families,

As I read through this newsletter, I am struck by the creative, practical and fun ways that our teachers engage our children in their learning. Rare are the times when classes sit listening to a teacher lecture from the front and many are the occasions when they are able to act out, talk through and work together on a concept to reach understanding.

As I show around visitors, I am very proud of the interactions that I see within school. It is clear that relationships between staff and pupils are strong and there are many ways that children are able to approach an adult to ask a question, raise a concern or share a joy!

Our Cheltenham College students have begun their community action programme, arriving every Wednesday afternoon to read or play with children in the younger years. This is a wonderful chance for the sixth formers to see a different school environment and experience "work" as they consider their career paths. They provide support in each classroom and are lovely role-models, showing care and consideration for others and ensuring that our children are able to observe their positive behaviours.

We also have a number of adults who read with other year groups and we are very grateful for their commitment to our classes, coming every week and spending two or three hours helping our children with their reading.

Other regulars are Rev Boyd and Rev Wheaton who lead our collective worship on Tuesday and Wednesday, plus Matt, Alice and members of Youth for Christ who offer Faithful club on a Wednesday lunchtime.

Choir has started and Thursday mornings are a delight, listening to the group singing a range of fun songs, preparing for various events at the end of term. Please do join them at 8.15am on a Thursday; just come to the front entrance. Add on drama, judo, language and sports and there is lots going on!

Please read the back page for PTFA events. We are most grateful to this brilliant group who work hard to ensure that the children have the chance to enjoy fun activities, whilst also raising money for the school. This money is spent on a range of fun things: trips to The Wilson, Literature, Music or Science Festival visits, events like iSingPOP, e-safety, the Planetarium or the dance experience coming up soon. All of these types of enrichment mean that all of our children have the fun of doing things they might not be able to do otherwise!

I wanted to give you an update on the premises, as I know some parents have been asking. Mrs Mayhew and I have been in daily contact with those at GCC who decide upon and run school projects, as well as negotiating plumbers, heating engineers and flooring experts. We continue to wait for confirmation of timings (and costings) for the work needed but it is good to see that the toilet areas have improved with some simple solutions.

Connected to this, we are delighted to say that Max Wilkinson MP, is coming to visit the school in early November as he has heard about our plight! He is keen to support us in our desire to improve the premises.

There are also various organisations that offer grants and I would be keen to see if there is someone within our school community who has the time to apply for the various offers. In addition, please note that we are currently advertising for a caretaker/handyman on Gloucestershire Schools Vacancies :

<https://ww3.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schoolvacancies>

Please do be in touch if you know someone who might be interested in this role.

I hope you all have a lovely weekend; let's hope that the weather holds and we can enjoy some bright sunshine!

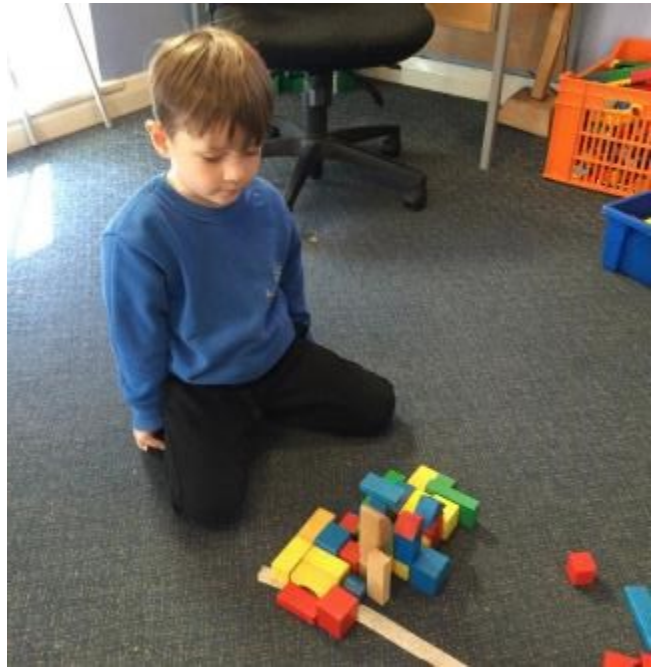
Take care, Mrs Beevers



Written by Sharon Morrow TA



During Maths, **Reception** have been learning about sorting, using different objects such as pinecones, sticks and shells as well as the compare bears. The children have been enjoying the sunshine in the garden, having lots of fun playing with the hoops, making Mobilo models and zooming cars down the pipes. During PE, they made different shapes with their bodies, played the runner bean game and pretended to hop like bunnies.



Year 1 are continuing to enjoy their Drawing unit of work in Art. The children have been looking at different artists and the way they use lines to mark-make. They looked at the work by Wassily Kandinsky and his famous painting of circles. The children discussed the use of colour and shape and painted their own versions using water colours. They are working hard in phonics to identify the long vowel sounds in words. The children use whiteboards on a daily basis to practise this skill!



Year 2 are enjoying their Art unit on drawing. The children had lots of fun drawing shells and pine cones, exploring and experimenting with mark-making to create textures. They are excited for their next lesson, where they will be drawing cuddly toys.



Year 3 enjoyed planning and completing an investigation to compare the characteristics of different rocks. The children showed good teamwork when carrying out their investigation and made accurate conclusions after analysing their results. They also used drama in PSHE to explore strategies for solving different problems. They threw themselves into this activity and have assured Miss Sanders that they will use their skills to help them solve problems in the future.



Through the use of drama, **Year 4** have been learning how particles make different states of matter. The children explored how gasses have lots of space to move around, whereas solid particles are tightly packed together and cannot move. As a finale to their work on place value, the children carried out number investigations that allowed them to apply skills they have learnt about 4-digit numbers. They involved finding all 24 outcomes to the numbers that can be created when using 4 different digits, as well as challenging each other to find the largest / smallest numbers possible when using only certain digits.



In **Year 5**, children have been learning lots of interesting facts about the gods and religious beliefs of The Mayas. According to their creation story, the first humans were created out of wood and mud but then the gods decided to use maize dough to create the modern humans. They also learnt that Mayas had lots of different gods responsible for different tasks. For example, they had 'Kukulcan' for resurrection and reincarnation and 'Chac' to bring rain to make the crops grow. The children have also been busy planning a scientific investigation to answer their enquiry question 'Which materials make the best thermal insulators? Over the coming weeks, children will be exploring ways to communicate their findings using charts and graphs.



Year 6 have been continuing their Fitness unit of work in PE with determination - positive mental attitude has been a key element this week. The children have been trying to think more positively about what they can accomplish, pushing themselves to go that little bit longer, to not give up and to make their targets. They have responded well and it has been fantastic to see them encouraging and supporting one another through these activities.



Exciting PTFA events coming your way starting with the first Bake Sale of the year on Monday October 21st after school - make sure you bring your pennies as it is cash only, and let us know if you can bring in any baked goods to donate. We will be at the gates collecting any donations on the morning of the 21st!



We also have a date for the disco, which we know everyone is excited for. Keep Friday November 15th free, mark it on your calendar and get your dancing shoes ready!

We have places available at breakfast club on a Monday, Wednesday and Thursday morning.

If anyone is interested please email Annette at oscastjohns@yahoo.co.uk or text on 07505411558



PTFA
Bake Sale
Cash only!
October 21st 2024
3:15pm
In the
playground

IF YOU ARE ABLE TO BAKE OR BRING ANY BAKED GOODS TO DONATE PLEASE GET IN TOUCH WITH A PTFA MEMBER
EMAIL: PTFA@ST-JOHNS-PRI.GLOUCS.SCH.UK

The poster is designed with a light beige background. On the left side, there is a vertical stack of five chocolate chip cookies. The top right corner features the PTFA logo. The main title 'Bake Sale' is in a large, bold, grey font with a drop shadow. Below it, 'Cash only!' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The date and time are listed in a medium-sized, grey font. The location 'In the playground' is also in a grey font. At the bottom, there is a call to action in a small, black, sans-serif font, followed by the email address. The bottom right corner has four dark brown circles arranged horizontally.