



NEWSLETTER No. 6

November 2024

Dear Saint John's families,

We are in the final few days of November and the weather has begun to turn colder. The flurry of snow brought great excitement, of course, with all children loving the chance to see a white layer on the ground and to try and catch a snowflake in their mouths at break time. For some of our children, this was the first time seeing snow! As ever, I was struck by the diversity of backgrounds and cultures from which our children come.

We are delighted that we were able to secure discounted tickets for the pantomime at The Everyman Theatre. My thanks to Mr Allison for helping this to happen! Our KS2 classes (Year 3, 4, 5 and 6) will have had the fun of going into the theatre, engaging with Aladdin and beginning to understand those cultural references such as:

"Oh no, you can't; Oh yes, you can.."

"It's behind you..."

Plus the changing of roles, exaggerated costumes, silly jokes, interactive songs and ultimately, Tweedy!

As well as the pantomime, we will have the chance to see our Drama groups perform their plays and our Infant Nativity. Parents of Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, please make sure you have **Tuesday 10th December at 1.30pm** in your diary. Actually, we hope that you have 9.15am in your diary as we will need parents/carers to walk with the children to Highbury Church for the dress rehearsal in front of the rest of the school. A reminder that the children performing in the afternoon can be taken home directly from the church (in costume even!) as we have found that they are pretty shattered at that point. However, we will bring all of the infant children back to school for those who need to pick up at 3.15pm or from OSCA.

Any more questions, please do contact your child's teacher.

This week, we celebrated Advent by lighting the first of four candles. In these final four weeks of school, we are focusing on four values that are at the centre of this time Advent as we look towards Christmas:

- Hope
- Peace
- Joy
- Love

We will be talking to the children about how we can see these values in our world and how we can bring them into the lives of others in our attitudes and actions.

Our Christmas Fair is on Saturday 7th December from 1-3pm. Do read the details at the back of the newsletter; these include requesting tombola prizes in exchange for coming to school in home clothes on Monday!

We have our St Luke's Christmas service on Tuesday 17th December at 10am. Any family members are welcome to join us and, again, we will need help walking to the church please!

Finally, please do remember that we have Christmas Dinner on Wednesday 18th December and we encourage everyone to wear a Christmas jumper on that day. The rest of the clothes should be uniform, but wear a Christmas jumper instead of the school jumper or cardigan! We love a bit of fun on that day!

Decorations will go up around the school ready for next Monday as we begin December so we hope that this will help us get into a festive mood!

Finally, please look at the information about our Speaking Competition: Look Who's Talking. Details are on the back page. Previously, we have had winners!!!

Have a good weekend; please keep warm in the cold weather and safe as the evenings get darker.

Mrs Beevers



Written by Sharon Morrow TA



Reception children have been celebrating World Nursery Rhyme Week. They have focused on a specific nursery rhyme each day, learning extra verses, including a second verse to Incy Wincy Spider! The children have loved singing along to Five Currant Buns, Twinkle Twinkle, Incy Wincy, The Big Ship Sails and Old MacDonald. During Maths, the children have been learning one less than and sang Five Little Specked Frogs, each time taking one away. They have used tens frames to show different compositions of the number 3. They have been learning about the properties of circles and triangles and have made shape pictures. Finally, the children have been having lots of fun outside making handprints in the snow and frost!



As part of their Geography work, **Year 1** used Google Maps to look at our local area. The children found Saint John's School and the roads around it. They also located the shops opposite school and then drew their maps using some symbols. During Maths, the children played an addition and subtraction game in pairs, putting their mathematical skills to the test.



During **Maths**, Year 2 have been focussing on subtracting 2-digit numbers. The children have had lots of fun working with a partner to work out the answers using dienes. They are getting very good at exchanging a ten for 10 ones to help them subtract numbers across a 10.



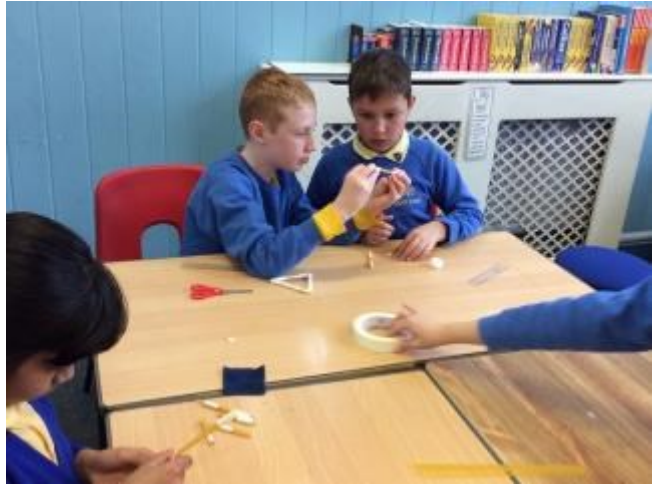
Year 3 loved wearing their own clothes for Children in Need. There were some fantastic 'dare to be different' outfits and lots of great discussions centred around celebrating what makes us all unique. In DT, the children have been designing electronic posters. They enjoyed learning how electrical circuits work and had fun experimenting with switches.



Year 4 spent a sunny afternoon learning hockey skills as part of their current Games unit. The children have been working hard to dribble the ball with control, pass the ball using push passes and block the ball using their stick. As part of their work on the local area, the children have been learning how to use 4-figure grid references. They combined this new skill with previous learning on physical and human features.



Year 5 have had lots of active learning this week during Science and DT. The children are learning about forces: gravity, water resistance and air resistance. In DT, they are learning all about bridges, so they designed and built Truss Bridges using spaghetti.



During Geography, **Year 6** have been looking in detail at the Gloucester Docks. The children were tasked with using different maps to identify the uses of the warehouses in the docks during the 1860s. They discovered the different types of cargo arriving and departing from the docks; this drove the local economy. During Art, the children have been attempting to replicate a portrait in a photorealistic style. They used a grid structure to help with composition. Working square-by-square improved the placement of the features, so the portrait looked in proportion and allowed the finer details and colour and tone that they observed to be replicated more accurately. Finally, during Science, the children have been looking further at electrical circuits and how components within the circuit share the power from the battery. After looking at circuit diagrams and thinking about how the components would work, the children created their own electrical circuits to observe these in action.



Wow! What an amazing week for PTFA events last week! We hope everyone enjoyed the disco as much as we enjoyed putting it on for you all! **THANK YOU** to everyone who came and who volunteered to help - we couldn't have done it without you! We raised a whopping £371 at the disco and we saw so many happy children and parents. The face painting was very popular, as was the tuck and shop, where we almost sold out of everything! The children loved shopping and dancing! Also, thank you to everyone who ordered Christmas cards and gifts that the children worked hard on creating, the PTFA will get £97 back from all those sales as well. The next big event we are working on is the Christmas Fair on Saturday December 7th from 1pm-3pm. We will have a Santa's grotto, lots of stalls to buy from, games, food, mulled wine, tombola, raffle and more! If you are able to help out by donating your time, baked goods or any raffle prizes, please do get in touch with us at the PTFA! We have a non uniform day coming up on Monday December 2nd in exchange for some tombola items - please see Class Dojo for more information! Again, thank you all so much for all the support in helping us help the school!



ptfa@st-johns-pri.gloucs.sch.uk

Below is a photograph of some of the shoeboxes which we were able to give to Teams4U to take to Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Bosnia and Romania.

See teams4u.com/shoebox-appeal/ for more details.



FRIENDS OF SANDFORD PARKS

invite you to join them for:

A Celebration of Christmas

Friday 6th December 6 pm

St. Luke's Church

College Road 



Cheltenham Singing Group

St. John's School Choir

Seasonal Readings

Carol Singing

Free Entrance

Mince Pies & Mulled Wine

Info: www.sandfordparkfriends.co.uk

DONATIONS FOR THE MAYOR OF CHELTENHAM'S 2024/25

CHARITY APPEAL
Reg. Charity. No. 1118165



Christmas AT St Luke's Cheltenham

Sun 15th Dec 10am Community Carols

Tues 24th Dec 4pm Crib service
7pm Traditional Carols & Communion

Wed 25th Dec 10am Christmas Celebration



LOOK WHO'S TALKING! 2025

An Oracy Competition for Gloucestershire's Infant, Junior and Primary Schools

Our school is very excited to be taking part in the 'Look Who's Talking!' competition, along with lots of other schools in Gloucestershire!

What is oracy and why is it so important?

Oracy is the ability to express ourselves clearly and communicate with others effectively, through spoken language.

By teaching our children to become more effective speakers and listeners, we are all helping to give them the tools they need to better understand themselves, each other and the world around them.

How will the competition work?

Your child will get the chance to talk to their class for two minutes, about any subject that they choose and then a 'Star Speaker' will be chosen. Star Speakers from every class will then get to talk in front of the whole school. Those winners will then go on to the next stage and will represent our school in the competition, with lots of other local schools! The grand final will be on 04.04.25, which you can come to, if your child is a representative for our locality.

what can your child talk about?

Children can talk about absolutely anything that they choose to, for up to two-minutes. They can use any props that they wish to, which will help with their talk, but just cannot use any technology, so no Powerpoints slide shows please.

How can you help them at home?

- ★ First of all, please help them to think about what they would like to talk about. The more interested they are in the subject, the more passionate their talk will be! What are they interested in? What excites them? It might be a toy, their pet, a book, something they have seen on TV, their favourite sports team, something they have learned about from you at home - or anything else! It really can be anything at all!
- ★ They will need to plan and rehearse their speech, so please listen to them practice and give them lots of encouragement!
- ★ Make sure they are speaking with big voices, nice and clearly, so everyone can hear their talk and learn about their chosen topic.

Thank you for your support!

