



# NEWSLETTER No. 10

February 2025

Dear Saint John's families,

We find ourselves at half term and, as always, I am very proud of all that we have achieved this term. The January term can be challenging with grey days and cold weather but we have been warm in school and there has been a brightness in our classrooms with all the learning that has been happening!

The photographs in this newsletter tell the story of each year group over the last couple of weeks but the highlight for me has to be the Celebration of Learning at Highbury on Thursday. It was brilliant seeing the children show some elements of their work, as well as focusing on the presentation to an audience. As adults, we know that being able to speak confidently and clearly is an important life-long skill and the various opportunities we provide at Saint John's ensures that our Year 6 pupils leave with those skills developing well. Thank you to the parents/carers who came to join us, especially those who helped us walk to and from Highbury; I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did! Thank you also to the staff who prepare for these events; there were some lovely creative moments. And a big well done to all the children, of course.

Last week, it was great to take a small group of children, with Mr Allison, to the Cricket event at Leisure@ in Cheltenham. Having our own minibus means that we do not always have to ask parents to take children to these types of events; travelling in a bus might seem such a simple thing, but for some of our children is hugely exciting! Again, Mr Allison and I were very proud of the way that the children behaved and how well they did at the event. This is also the case at the various matches which have happened over the last few weeks: Saint John's does very well considering we are a small school without huge amounts of outside space. Still, with the weather improving, trips to Forest School at Cheltenham College and our regular visits to the Cricket Ground are not too far away!

## Crazy Hair Day

There were an incredible number of intricate and amazing hair styles for our Crazy Hair Day: what a lot of fun! Thank you to those who brought in their donation; this will add to the funds raised through the disco. The PTFA team and staff discuss what the money can provide for our children, so if you would like to influence these decisions, please do join the PTFA team. They are always looking for volunteers to help.

## Maths / Science Day

Mrs Seabrook put together some exciting activities for the classes to do today and the children have been able to enjoy tasks, both individual and in groups, with the chance also to think about when Maths and Science are used in everyday adult life. It has been a great way to finish the term!

There are a couple of things that it seems important to mention to families.

Firstly, the cost of school dinners will rise (by 14p) on 1st April. This is not a school decision but is directed by the caterers and will be across the county. Please can I remind parents and carers that school dinners should be paid for via ParentPay and that the school should not carry any debt for this. Perhaps a reminder on your phone ensuring a regular amount of money is put into ParentPay may avoid any difficulties with this?

Secondly, the Cheltenham (horse-racing) Festival will take place from Tuesday 11th to Friday 14th March. Cheltenham is filled with visitors, many of whom enjoy spending time in central town as much as at the racecourse itself. We would strongly encourage families to consider making arrangements for dropping/picking up children rather than any child walking home during these days and please note that traffic will be busy. Leaving home earlier will be important for us all!

Have a lovely half term, Mrs Beevers



Written by Sharon Morrow TA



**Reception** class have had a lovely time playing outside in the sunshine! The children have been wrapped up in their coats and hats but have loved having the space of the garden and play area. They have also been enjoying their Balanceability sessions on a Friday, plus the class 'bike time' during the week. During Maths this week, the children have been representing numbers on a tens frame and finding one more and one less than a number. They have also been celebrating 'Lunar New Year, which this year is the Year of the Snake. The children made hats, learnt why the years are named after animals and made lanterns.



**Year 1** enjoyed a fantastic visit to the Wilson Museum. It was a great way to end their history unit of work on Toys from the Past. They got to see a selection of dolls, most of which were over hundred years old! The oldest toy was a cat, which was two hundred and fifty years old! The children played with a selection of toys from the past including moving toys, puzzles and toys that made sounds. They ended the morning by each making a spinning toy.



**Year 2** have been enjoying learning about explorers in History. The children have been learning about Robert Falcon Scott's Terra Nova Expedition which included Edward Wilson, who was born and lived in Cheltenham. This week, the children have ordered the events of the Terra Nova Expedition and thought about how Antarctic expeditions are different today. In Gymnastics, the children have continued to use shapes to create balances. This has led to linking travelling actions and balances using apparatus.



**Year 3** have been enjoying getting hands-on with their learning. They have learnt about Max Ernest's art, which used the frottage technique, and loved collecting lots of different textures to use in their own art. During Maths, they have been learning how to use a ruler and explored this new skill by measuring lots of different items in the classroom. During Computing, the children have been learning about animation and have created their own flip books before using iPads to produce their own animations.



As part of their learning about life during Ancient Greek times, **Year 4** took part in a drama session with Gemma Bolwell, learning about the myth Demeter and Persephone which explains how the seasons came about. The children got to showcase their homework projects to several classes this week. They had to create a campaign encouraging people to either be a Spartan or an Athenian. The children were clearly very proud of their efforts and spoke animatedly about them to other children. As part of their learning on Internet Safety, Year 4 went to Isbourne Valley Primary school to watch a drama production called 'In the Net'. The production highlighted the importance of staying safe on the internet, the posting of pictures and cyber-bullying.



**Year 5** have been really enjoying their Art topic this term. They made collagraph plates and used them for printing. It was messy but lots of fun! Thank you, parents, for sending in items to add to their collagraph plates. During English, the children wrote some excellent 'Tales of Fear'. They shared their tales with the class, and the children all agreed one child's tale deserved to be the 'Wow Work' title. Well done, Arafat.



During History, **Year 6** have been learning about the Battle of Britain and the important role that Cheltenham businesses played in supporting this. After their learning, the children played a game outside that helped simulate the chaotic battles that took place in the skies above us. During Science, the children have been investigating how they can manipulate shadows depending upon the distance and angle of a light source. During Art, they have been experimenting with chiaroscuro, a technique that uses light and dark to help create three-dimensional looking images.



Thank you all for the support with the Winter Disco! We raised an amazing £345 for the school and cannot wait for the next disco in May - stay tuned for the date. We hope you all enjoyed showing off some crazy hair styles as much as we enjoyed seeing them!



Please join us at the Strand for the next PTFA meeting on February 25th at 7:30 pm - we would love to meet more parents, family and friends of the school



## Non-Stop Cricket

A team of ten Saint John's pupils thoroughly enjoyed a festival of indoor cricket at the Leisure Centre, competing against several other local primary schools. The children showed great improvement as they became more familiar with the game and, by the end, several were asking when they could do it all again!



## Bishop's Cleeve Girls 3 - Saint John's Girls 0

The girls were in action again on a bitterly cold afternoon, with a biting wind, on a pitch made heavy by recent rain. The first half was keenly contested and ended goalless but Cleeve scored twice in quick succession after the restart. Saint John's were unlucky not to pull one back when a shot was only parried by the Cleeve goalkeeper but didn't quite cross the line. A late third sealed the game for Bishop's Cleeve but the girls deserve great credit for their resilience, enthusiasm and application.



## Glenfall 0 - Saint John's 1

The boys first team continued their fine run of form with a hard fought win against an excellent Glenfall side. Saint John's enjoyed the best of the early exchanges and some good chances went begging before one was converted to give the visitors the lead midway through the first half. Glenfall began to get on top after half-time, making the most of the advantage of playing down the slope, and Saint John's had to mount a rear-guard action. The Saints' goal led a charmed life at times but some excellent defending ensured a clean sheet was kept and all 3 points claimed.



A wonderful Celebration of Learning at Highbury Church.











Wacky Hair Day

