



NEWSLETTER No. 11

May 2026

Dear Saint John's families,

Welcome back to the Summer Term! How lovely to see the weather and temperature improve and to have the chance for us all to be outside more and more.

There have been lots of photos shared on Dojo of fun that children are having outside in parks, gardens and even the lido! There are so many great activities to do outside, many of which cost very little or are completely free.

For example, this weekend is the Jazz Festival and throughout the next three days, there will be music playing in Montepellier Park. In particular, there will be school bands playing on Saturday and Sunday between 10 and 2pm with music that is accessible to all ages. Our Years 3, 4 and 5 went to a schools event and enjoyed the opportunity to engage with professional musicians and take in the atmosphere.

<https://www.cheltenhamfestivals.org/our-projects/schools-at-festivals/jazz-for-schools>

Check out the programme for other exciting events!

Our Year 2 pupils have been swimming this term. It is great that we can arrange this opportunity for some of our youngest children to gain confidence in water and learn skills that are important for both now and in the future. They have responded really well to the sessions so far, showing our values of being

Ready, Respectful and Responsible

Some of our Year 6 pupils also went to the Lido for their Heidi's Heroes session. Mr Vaughan enjoyed taking them to this important event. He is also delighted to be organising a number of sports competitions. Some of our Year 6 pupils have been doing "Bikeability", with sessions on the road to ensure they are safe and know how to handle a bicycle around traffic and on busy roads. Finally, we have had two students with us helping out with sports in the afternoons; they have loved their time here!

All in all, lots to offer with sports of all different kinds; there are so many ways to keep healthy and have fun!

Dates for your diary:

Monday 4th May: Bank Holiday – School closed

Friday 15th May : PTFA Disco at 6.30pm

Friday 22nd May : Celebration of Learning at 9.30am

HALF TERM starts on Friday 22nd May at 3.15pm

Monday 1st June: Term 6 starts at 8.45am

Monday 8th June : Open Classrooms at 2.15pm

Thursday 18th June: Sports Morning

Friday 10th July: Summer Fair at 5.30pm

Wednesday 15th July: Y6 & KS2 Show at Highbury at 10.30am

Wednesday 15th July: Leavers' Disco at 6 / 6.30pm

Thursday 16th July : Leavers' Service at 2pm

Friday 17th July: School finishes at 2pm

There are a number of events coming up which request a donation. The money collected will either be going towards our PTFA funds or to a charity. The PTFA funds ensure that our children enjoy various fun activities: trips, visitors and providing extra exciting resources across the school.

Donating to charities ensures that those involved in the charity gain from the financial support they are given, but it also encourages children to think of others and be generous towards them. Our "challenge" from our SIAMS inspection was to help our children understand injustice in the world and to see how they can help make things better. Supporting charitable organisations is part of that learning. We hope that families will understand the importance of this.

I wish you a really lovely bank holiday weekend. I hope the weather holds and we are able to enjoy being out and about. I might even see some of you at the Jazz Festival!

Take care, Mrs Beevers



Written by Sharon Morrow TA



Reception have had an amazing start to the term, as we have been hatching chicks and having daily cuddles with them! They have grown rapidly and now have feathers on their wings and are starting to get tail feathers. The children have loved the whole experience and will hopefully remember it for many years to come. The children have been learning about which animals hatch out of eggs and which are born live. They have painted their favourite animal or bird and have done a really careful and precise job. In Maths, the children have used lots of Spring time objects to help them with addition sums. They used little chicks and eggs to share between nests, plus rabbits and lambs to share between fields and then wrote the addition sum!



Year 1 have enjoyed using the outside space for their learning. The children used the front garden to find all of the different kind of plants growing there. They each had a label which they needed to put next to a plant. As part of their multiplication unit of work, the children are learning about arrays. They went into the playground and worked in their maths groups to organise the cones into different kinds of arrays.



Year 2 have had an exciting start to the summer term. The children have been reading *The Tin Forest* and have been exploring the thoughts and feelings of the main character. They worked well in small groups, creating freeze frames to help sequence and understand the story. In Art, the children have been learning how to mould clay using their hands and clay tools. They applied these skills to create their own clay models, showing care and concentration throughout the process.



Year 3 have been busy beginning their exciting new topic on Ancient Egypt! The children explored Egyptian artwork and created their own aged-looking sketchbooks by painting the pages with coffee to give them an ancient, parchment-style effect. In Science, the children carried out an experiment using celery and food dye to investigate how plants transport water. They loved watching the coloured water travel up the celery and learning how water moves through the stem to help plants stay healthy.



Year 4 have enjoyed some hands-on learning experiences since returning after Easter. A highlight was visiting the Reception class to meet and hold the newly hatched chicks. The children were very excited but showed great care and respect when handling them. In Art, the children have been exploring shades and tints, experimenting with adding white and black to colours to create different effects. They have developed their creativity and understanding of colour. Well done for a great start to this term, Year 4!



Year 5 recently visited the SkillZone Safety Centre in Tuffley, Gloucester. The centre has a mock town complete with houses, shops, roads, trains and railway crossings. It provided the children a safe environment in which to explore some scenarios that they may encounter as they are given more freedom to explore the world around them. In groups, they explored the centre, guided by the wonderful staff who spoke to them about possible hazards and how they could keep themselves safe in these situations. In science, the children have been dissecting flowering plants to identify and learn about the reproductive parts that allow them to reproduce. They have also taken their artwork outside to not only enjoy the sun but also to use our school for some observational drawing. Their unit this term is architecture, so our Victorian school offers some great features for them to draw.



Year 6 enjoyed an exciting start to the term's history topic when they were evacuated to Winchcombe Station. The children experienced the thrills of travelling on a steam train alongside the horrors of war when they had to take shelter in the air raid shelter. They learnt valuable skills like how to put out fires as well as the importance of singing songs to keep up morale. The children enjoyed a hands-on experience handling WWII artefacts. They had to try and work out what the artefacts were and what they could learn about the period. Then they selected five items that they felt represented the impact of the war on everyday people living in Cheltenham at the



EXCITING NEWS!

On Friday 15th May, we are excited to announce that Saint John's will be visited by a double Paralympic medal winner in Judo. Chris Hunt-Skelley MBE will be leading a talk about his journey, hardships, overcoming challenges and his hugely successful career competing at the very highest level of his sport. He will also lead the children in a number of activities in a workshop throughout the school day.

You can read more about Chris' life and career here: <https://chrishuntskelley.co.uk/>

NEXT STEPS:

You will have received a letter home today explaining the visit. The day will host a sponsored event, which the children will compete in, led and designed by Chris himself. We want the children to be sponsored by as many people as possible and the money raised will be split two ways:

60% of funds will go straight back into Saint John's to help us to put in place the best possible opportunities and experiences for your children.

40% of funds will go to Chris, for supporting his training and career.

Even though these athletes are at the top of their field and they represent their country, unfortunately, most do not receive enough funding to support their training and events. Days like this support these amazing athletes for their future.

This video was shown to the pupils to explain the day:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0epDG9BkdFs>

This website is our Crowdfunder page and contains the link for payments donated and also has a link to a podcast where you can hear more about Chris' inspirational story: <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/st-johns-cofe-primary-school-fundraiser>

We can't wait to welcome Chris to our school! Please sponsor your children and support both the school and Chris' future.

How do I donate and sponsor my child?

There are two ways in which someone can donate. Firstly, they can sponsor in cash, which the pupil can take to their teacher along with the sponsor form.

Secondly, they can donate directly to the online crowdfunding page. This is set up for the school, and a QR code will be generated to take them directly to where they can select the school.

We recommend that all sponsors are made aware that they should put a note in the comments/supporters' section of Crowdfunder, identifying the pupil's first name and class to match the funding to the pupil on the Crowdfunder site.

Additionally, they must also record the donation on the sponsor form to make it easier for the thank you rewards to be organised and issued to qualifying pupils.



We are super excited about some of the PTFA events that we run / help out with that are coming up soon!

Important dates to remember:

Friday May 15th - School Disco

Thursday June 18th - Sports Day

Friday July 10th - Summer Fair

We are desperate for more PTFA members, especially as this year comes to a close and some families move on. The PTFA runs on friendly parent volunteers and sadly won't be able to continue to help the school if more parents don't join!

For more info email the office who will put you in touch with us!

VISITING YOU SOON



Help Us Empower the Next Generation!

Every pound you donate to Sports For Champions UK CIC directly fuels unforgettable school visits from real Olympic and professional athletes! These visits inspire pupils with powerful stories of resilience, determination, and dreams turned into reality.

Your support doesn't just raise money – it raises ambition, confidence, and belief in what's possible.

Let's show our children that with hard work and heart, anything is achievable.

**Donate today –
be the spark that lights a
champion's fire!**



When you reach your fundraising target by asking safe sponsors you know, I'll be proud to thank you with a signed photo to celebrate your achievement!

2020 Tokyo Paralympic Gold Medalist (-100 kg)

Chris Hunt-Skelley

Judo