



NEWSLETTER No. 12

May 2026

Dear Saint John's families,

Am I right that the weather influences how we feel? It seems that both the sunshine and smiles have arrived over these last few days and that the prospect of a half term week of good weather has lightened everyone's mood! Perhaps I am just looking forward to a chance to relax in the garden or wander in my local park. I do hope that families have taken advantage of the various events that are happening during half term, many of which we have put on Dojo. Some do cost a little, but some are free and available to all. To be honest, enjoying time in Sandford or Pittville Park - or taking the bus to Robinswood Hill or Cleeve Hill - or visiting the Wilson Art Gallery and Museum seems a good way to spend the week. I know that some families have to double up with children due to work commitments and I am always delighted to hear how often parents/carers support each other in this way.

As we look towards the end of the year, there are lots of fun activities for the children, including those to which parents/carers are invited. Please do put these in your diary as children love having someone to join us; if you cannot make the event, then do arrange for a family friend to come in your place. We love meeting grandparents/aunties/uncles/godparents who come and celebrate with us!

Our Celebration of Learning event at Highbury is always a highlight as it gives every child the chance to stand up in front of an audience. There is always a lovely variety and we watch the children develop those presentation skills over the years. When I arrived here, we were coming out of Covid, and all public performances were impossible; yet now, with the Reception children coming to the top of the school, we can see how well they have been able to learn and practise those key skills. They will stand them in good stead for their future!

Dates for your diary:

HALF TERM starts on Friday 22nd May at 3.15pm

Monday 1st June: Term 6 starts at 8.45am

Monday 8th June at 2.15pm: Open Classrooms

Thursday 18th June at 9.30/9.45am: Sports Morning

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

Wednesday 15th July 6-7.30pm: Leavers' Disco

Thursday 16th July at 2pm: Leavers' Service:

Friday 17th July: School finishes at 2pm

Next year dates:

Please be aware that we have put term dates for both the 2026-27 and the 2027-28. This will help with organizing your holidays, particularly in light of finding cheaper arrangements. We want to remind parents that holidays during term are not authorised and five days out of term time result in the school contacting GCC who will pursue this, potentially with a fine. Most importantly, families need to prioritise children's education and there is clear evidence in research and with individual children in our school and other local schools where low attendance impacts learning and development. Please be aware of this as you make decisions for the years to come.

We will also try to publish the events of the year early in September so that families can put these in the diary.

I hope that you have a really relaxing half term and enjoy lots of time outside and with family and friends.

See you on Monday 1st June at 8.45am! Mrs Beevers



Written by Sharon Morrow TA



In RE, **Reception** have been learning about the story of the Creation and the children used musical instruments to perform the story. They made loud noises for the animals and quiet sounds for the sea, sun and stars. It was great fun and a good way to remember the story. In Maths, they have been making repeated patterns, using natural materials to create and complete a repeated pattern. The children spent Messy Play imagining they were on a camping trip. They built the camp fire and pretended to make hot chocolate and toast marshmallows. Finally, they had a super trip to Cheltenham Children's library, where they listened to stories, went on a scavenger hunt and looked at lots of books!



Year 1 have really enjoyed all their enrichment activities recently - their trip to the library was great and the children participated in a variety of activities including a scavenger hunt for different types of books, writing stories, colouring and listening to stories. A visit from Chris Hunt, a gold medallist at the Paralympics, was very exciting and the children enjoyed their fitness session with him. The children have also loved their weekly Forest School sessions at Cheltenham College over the last two terms.



Year 2 have been busy developing their athletics skills this term. The children have been focusing on running and jumping techniques, as well as practising throwing for distance and accuracy. The children also enjoyed a wonderful visit to Cheltenham Children's Library. The librarian explained how to become members and borrow books before reading us a very funny story. The children then took part in a range of activities including exploring the library, completing a scavenger hunt and creating their own comic books.



Year 3 had a fantastic Ancient Egyptian Day! The children explored the fascinating world of hieroglyphics, learning how Ancient Egyptians used symbols to communicate, then created their own hieroglyphic messages. They also used their imaginations to design Egyptian gods and then carefully crafted their very own amulets, just like those worn for protection in Ancient Egypt. It was a fun and creative day, full of exciting learning!



Year 4 practised their debating skills in History this week while learning about how Britain became part of the Roman Empire. The children debated whether British tribes should resist the Roman invasion or accept Roman rule and they came up with some excellent arguments on both sides, leading to a lively and thoughtful debate! In Music, the children have been learning about motifs. They enjoyed exploring what a motif is by listening to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony before using glockenspiels to play the motifs from a song called Here Come the Romans. They are looking forward to performing this piece during the 'Celebration of Learning' at Highbury.



Year 5 have been learning about lines of symmetry and reflection in Maths. The children have been identifying lines of symmetry in regular and irregular shapes while also completing reflections of shapes and co-ordinates using their knowledge of mirror lines. In science, the children's plant cuttings have really been busy developing roots; surprising us with how quickly they can grow. We also had a lovely visit to the Children's Library this week where the staff had organised a range of activities for the children to enjoy.



During Art and as part of their World War II topic, **Year 6** enjoyed producing some silhouette artwork depicting German bombing raids during the Blitz. They also thoroughly enjoyed a morning at Sandford Park at the end of SATS week - all the children displayed a very positive attitude to the tests and should be very proud of themselves.



On Friday 15th May, Saint John's welcomed sporting royalty to our community in the form of double Paralympic medal winner Chris Hunt-Skelley MBE. Chris won the Gold medal in the Tokyo Paralympics in 2020, making him the best in the world at his sport at that time. He followed that up with the Bronze medal in the Paris Paralympics in 2024. Many staff throughout the day spoke of the privilege it was to be in the presence of someone who we watch compete for their country on an international level. Chris himself was a credit: he was humble, down to Earth and hugely inspiring. Chris motivated the children with his stories of success, overcoming failure and building resilience.

Following this, he delivered an engaging sponsored event which the children loved taking part in. They were able to ask any questions they wanted to ask, as well as take part in his fitness circuit. As part of the build-up to this event, we asked our families to sponsor their children which would help to support school but also Chris with the next step of his journey. We were overwhelmed with the level of financial support offered by our families and we can confirm the grand total of £500 raised. We would like to extend a massive thank you, on behalf of Chris and Saint John's, for your engagement and generosity with this event!



On Tuesday afternoon, members of our Judo club took part in a competition against other schools. They battled extremely well and came out in 3rd place, winning the bronze medal. Right at the end of the day, our team had a chance to play the winners and actually beat them!

Well done to everyone involved and thank you to the families who support with travelling to and from these kinds of events.



Our Celebration of Learning was brilliant and it was lovely to see so many of our school community joining to watch the children present this term's learning!



Thank you so much for everyone's support with the PTFA events this term! It was so much fun seeing everyone's crazy hair and the event raised an amazing £139.55! We also just had a fantastic disco that raised the school £470! We could not have done it without everyone's support, especially the parent volunteers!

If you were wondering where this money gets spent, every single penny gets put back into the school. The PTFA helps with classroom budgets, pay for the chicks for the living egg experiment, supplies ice lollies on Sports days and so much more!

Please do consider getting in touch and getting involved.

Bonjour

Willkommen



CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF
TWINNING IN CHELTENHAM

FREE
ENTRY

Sandford Park Summer Festival

in Cheltenham

11AM
-5PM

SUNDAY
31ST MAY

*A world of fun
for everyone!*

LIVE MUSIC & DANCE
FANCY DRESS COMPETITION
CHILDREN'S GAMES
ARTS & CRAFTS
CLASSIC CARS
FOOD STALLS
BEER & WINE
AND MORE!

Fundraising for the new children's playground

With thanks
to our sponsor



FRIENDS OF
SANDFORD PARKS
www.fosp.uk

Registered Charity Number 1203191

 Bovis Homes
Est. 1885

The Friends of Sandford Parks present....
Sandford Park Summer Festival

*A world of fun
for everyone!*

FUN FOR THE KIDS

FANCY DRESS COMPETITION @ 12 noon

Sparkles, Space & Superheroes

- get dressed to impress
- Ages 3-5, 5-7 and 7-12

MUSIC & LAUGHTER

- from the fabulous Music Man

GET GLITTERED

- with the Glitterbomb Glitter Artists

GAMES & RACES

- old skool playground fun

FOOD & DRINK

Tasty hot food and snacks

Home-made cake stall

Coffee & Tea

Beer, wine, soft drinks

FUN FOR THE FAMILY

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT - including a silver band, choir, steel drums and Ukrainian music & dance

CLASSIC CARS - an amazing collection of rare vintage vehicles

SHOPPING - from arts & crafts to gift food, something for everyone

GET INVOLVED - a range of volunteer stalls supporting Cheltenham's community

CELEBRATING CHELTENHAM'S 75 YEARS OF TWINNING

With music, dance, food and drink from around the world, this year's festival has an international flavour as we celebrate 75 years of twinning friendship with Göttingen and 70 years with Annecy.

Profits from the Festival will go towards an exciting new Children's playground for Sandford Park. It's a huge task - our target is £100,000 but we're already over halfway there! With your further support, we can make this happen! If you're able to, please scan the QR code to donate via whydonate.com. Thank you!



Registered Charity Number 1203191