SAINT JOHN'S

NEWSLETTER No. 4

November 2026

Dear Saint John's families,

It was a real highlight celebrating our diverse culture as part of our Diwali Day. I loved seeing so many of our children coming to school in their traditional clothes, made with beautiful colours and materials, and talking about their cultural home experiences with family and friends. Saint John's is a very special place: not many coming to the Cheltenham Festival for horse-racing would imagine that we have such a wonderful mix of cultures right in the centre of the town! Thank you to the many families who took time to organise their children's clothes - and a special thanks to the family of two of our children whose parents and grandparents provided precious objects for display and engaging talks about Diwali, alongside copious amounts of clothes for children to try on. The photographs do not quite do justice to the buzz and excitement expressed by the children that day.

Another highlight of my week was meeting two ex-pupils. One left Saint John's only a few years ago, but has entered college to study for a child care qualification and hopes to return for work experience as part of their course. It is always lovely to see our pupils finding their "place" in adulthood and with career plans. The other ex-pupil was at Saint John's in the 1960s. Susan brought photos and shared stories, commenting that "I loved being at school and it is clear that it is still a place full of happy children." She was struck how calm it was, in light of all that she reads about schools in the media!

Apologies that the newsletter is a day later than planned: I imagine a number of our families were impacted by Microsoft's outage. I have to admit that I rather enjoyed not having emails on Friday … but it was good to have Dojo (and the phone!) as means of communications. Hopefully, we will be back to normal on Monday.

Please do keep track of event happening in the next few weeks: note the dates on the right hand side and keep a close eye on Dojo! You would not want you or your child to miss out!

Take care, Mrs Beevers

WHOLE SCHOOL DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Please note that SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED for INSET:
Friday 27th November and Monday 30th November

Monday 16th - Friday 20th November: Anti-Bullying Week

Wednesday 18th November: School Photographs

Thursday 26th November: Non-uniform: bring tombola gifts

Saturday 5th December: 1-3pm Christmas Fair

Wednesday 9th December: 1.30pm Nativity at Highbury

Tuesday 15th December: School trip to the Pantomime

Thursday 17th December: 2pm Christmas Service at St Luke's Church, GL53 7JJ

Friday 18th December: School finishes at 2pm

Monday 4th January: SCHOOL CLOSED for INSET

Friday 15th January: 6pm School Disco

Thursday 11th February: 9.30am Celebration of Learning

Friday 12th February: School closes at 3.15pm

Thursday 4th March: World Book Day (costumes!)

Friday 12th March: **9am Open Classrooms**

Friday 19th March: Red Nose Day (wear red!)

Tuesday 23rd March: 2pm Easter Service at St Luke's

Thursday 25th March: Mad Hair Day (wear mad hair!)

Monday 3rd May: SCHOOL CLOSED for BANK HOLIDAY

Wednesday 26th May: 9.30am Celebration of Learning

Thursday 27th May: School finishes at 3.15pm (Fri = INSET)

Friday 11th June: Sports Day

Monday 21st June: 2pm Open Classrooms

Friday 2nd July: Summer Fair in the late afternoon

Wednesday 14th July: 10.30am Y6/KS2 Show at Highbury

Tuesday 20th July: 2pm Leavers' Service at St Luke's

Wednesday 21st July: School finishes at 2pm

2026-27 YEAR: Starts on Monday 6th September 2026






Written by Sharon Morrow TA

Reception's key text this term is 'The Gingerbread Man'. The children had such fun decorating some delicious gingerbread men and took them home to eat. In Maths, they have been recognizing features of shapes. In particular, circles and triangles. The children linked this to their gingerbread man story and made shape pictures. Their challenges this week have included making a face out of playdough, making waves and seeing what happens, learning how to fringe paper and going on a jungle adventure!







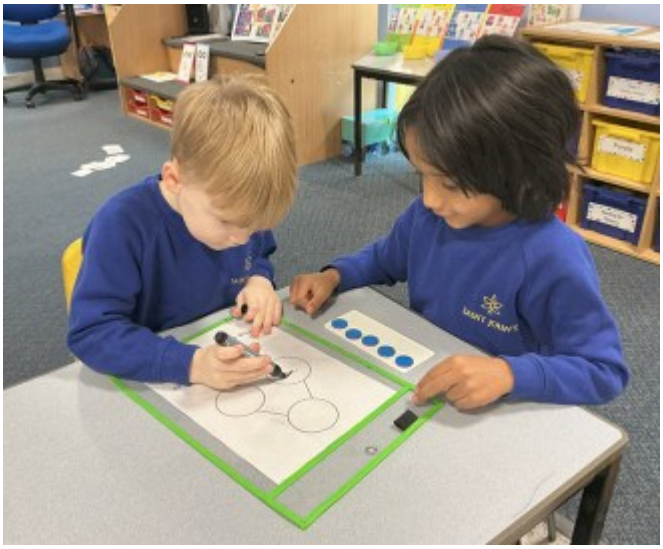






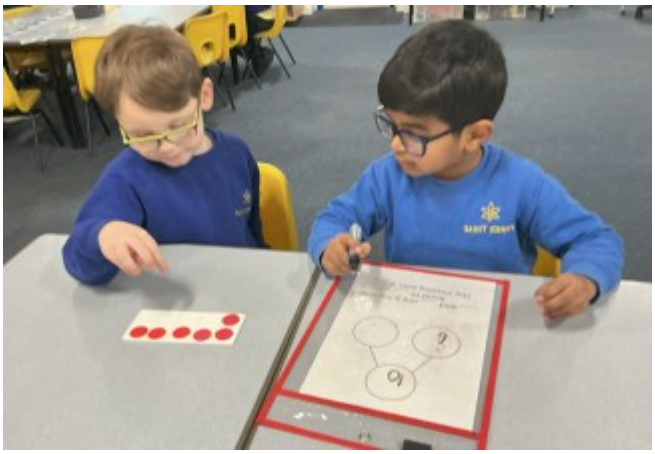


Year 1 have had another busy and exciting couple of weeks! In Maths, the children have been exploring addition and subtraction, using their knowledge of number bonds to help them find missing parts and solve problems. In Design and Technology, they have started their new unit on mechanisms. The children enjoyed exploring and sorting objects with different types of mechanisms before focusing on slider mechanisms and investigating how they move. They have also had lots of fun celebrating Diwali - learning about this special festival and creating their own colourful Rangoli patterns. What a lovely few weeks of learning and creativity!















Year 2 have enjoyed the start to their science unit of work on Microhabitats. The children worked in pairs to classify minibeasts in different ways including how they moved, whether they could fly or not and how they looked. They learnt that not all minibeasts are insects. The children enjoyed celebrating Diwali in school and really enjoyed looking at some decorations and trying on some clothes that people might wear to celebrate Diwali. In class, children had the chance to make Rangoli patterns using 'loose parts' like numicon, counters and shapes. They were challenged with making their patterns symmetrical.















We have been very busy in **Year 3.** The children have started their discussion unit in Writing, where they had a debate about whether or not children should have pets. It was lovely to see them challenging their perspectives and listening to each other's point of view. The children have also started Yoga in PE. They have enjoyed learning new poses, challenged their flexibility and calming our minds.















Year 4 have been busy learning in lots of exciting ways! During Target Time, the children have been enjoying a range of fun, educational games to help them practise and improve their times tables knowledge. It has been lovely to see them so enthusiastic as they develop their multiplication skills through play. The children have also been learning all about the Hindu festival of Diwali. They enjoyed exploring some of the special items associated with the celebrations and had great fun trying on traditional clothing. They were creative, by designing their own Rangoli patterns, using their knowledge of geometric shapes and symmetry. The finished designs were wonderfully imaginative, with some fantastic use of pattern, shape and colour! Well done, Year 4, for your enthusiasm, creativity and hard work!















To begin their new writing unit, **Year 5** completed a drama activity where they performed War of the Worlds by H.G.Wells. All of the children took part, taking on the roles of different characters, Martians or even buildings and trees, which allowed them to understand the main plot points of the story quickly. They will use the sci-fi classic as stimulus for their own narratives. During Diwali Day, Year 5 were lucky enough to be invited to the local Hindu temple. The children had a wonderful morning watching prayers and understanding a little more about this religion. The helpful volunteers talked about the different Gods and some of the stories connected with them. The children also had the opportunity to play some instruments and even rock the baby Krishna in his crib.















In Geography, **Year 6** children have been learning to use 6-figure grid references as well as plotting the course of both the River Severn and the Sharpness Canal with a focus on their impact on the expansion of Gloucester. The children learnt very important life-saving and water safety skills at swimming this week. The learnt about the dangers of open water and what to do if they fell in - from shouting to raise the alarm to floating on their back to conserve energy.















The Christmas fair is fast approaching and the PTFA are working like little elves to get it all ready for everyone. We hope to see you there on December 5th 1-3pm at the school where there will be games, Santa, tombola and more! We will be hosting a non school uniform day on November 26th for tomboys items (letter to follow)

Places available on a drop in or permanent basis at OSCA after school and breakfast club.

Contact Annette for more information and bookings

oscastjohns@yahoo.co.uk



St Lukes

Faithfuel

Our Wednesday lunchtime group which looks at the Christian faith together, including videos and games!



Seedlings

Our Thursday morning baby and toddler group, meeting 10-11.30 each week. A warm welcome, tea & coffee, and songs & stories



Acorns

Every Sunday morning we have provision for children with a led Sunday School session for those in Primary School, with games, songs and crafts. This takes place during our 10am service.



Seasonal Services

We are always delighted to welcome the children of Saint John's for Harvest, Rememberance and Christmas.

