



NEWSLETTER No. 7

December 2022

Dear Saint John's families,

I am not sure that anyone would have predicted that we would end the Autumn Term in this way! The weather took everyone by surprise and it has been a complex few final days.

Hopefully, many families were able to enjoy some snow play on Monday but it was great to be back into school on Tuesday, with lots of end of term excitements.

In terms of learning, there have been some incredible tasks completed: science experiments and DT construction; story writing and non-fiction explanations; fitness and dance, plus lots and lots of reading of our class books. It has been such a pleasure going into the classrooms and seeing our Saint John's children entranced in their learning or listening to their class teacher read to them.

As well as our classroom learning, we have had a number of special events. The two drama groups were able to perform in front of the school and parents, with some raw talent being directed by Gemma Bolwell. It is also great to see two Year 6 pupils help with the infant drama group with dedication and interest. The Infant Group relayed the story of Rudolph and the Junior Group performed twice in one day, making us all smile as we heard about "The Smelly Sprout"!

The Christmas Service was a wonderful success, despite the change of venue late in the day. Keeping everyone safe seemed the right decision in the end and I am glad that (at time of writing!) no child has broken any bones on the ice! Thank you to the children and staff for each song/poem/rap performed. We hope to produce photos and videos for parents soon.

We continue to think about what we can do to improve arrangements within school.

It may well be that we look at how we can film and even live-stream at school in the future as it was lovely being able to be in our hall. We will also consider other options too, such as Highbury Church.

A group of parents met with Mrs Kimber (Pastoral Lead and SENCO) and me to discuss behaviour policies and practices. There were lots of good ideas shared and we understood some of the areas for development: most importantly, ensuring that parents know all that is already happening at Saint John's! We need to tell you all about: pupil leadership, certificates, pastoral support, school houses and much more...

Next term brings some exciting new ventures. Year 5 will be heading over to Cheltenham College Prep School to use their Science and DT rooms, with experienced teachers working alongside our staff to teach the children new skills. It also seems that Forest School is available and we are thinking about which of the infant classes will go in the Spring and the Summer Term. We have a Science Day planned already and are taking part in an Oracy competition and an Art competition; look out for details next term!

My final comment must be to recognise Mr Brown for all that he has brought to the school over many, many years. His positivity and kindness is evident in all that he does and he will be sorely missed. We wish him all the very best for the future and hope that his new career in painting and decorating goes from strength to strength. Please come back and visit us, Mr Brown!

Have a WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS!! Get lots of rest and times of relaxation. Take care, Mrs B



Written by Sharon Morrow TA



The **Reception** children have been loving all of their Christmas activities. They have enjoyed role-playing the Nativity using the crib figures, plus all of the fun art and craft activities. They have thoroughly enjoyed hearing about the festivals and family traditions that take place at this time of year. They have learnt about the celebrations of Eid, how some children open some presents on Christmas Eve, as it is a German tradition, how some children visit the pantomime and others drive round looking at the lights, plus many families have elves that come to visit! Have a lovely Christmas break!



The **Year 1** children have been enjoying making Christmas cards. They have also been drawing pictures and writing to tell Mrs Burns what they did on the snow day.



As part of their Science unit of work on the 'Everyday Uses of Materials', **Year 2** set up an investigation to test the absorbency of a variety of paper towels and napkins. After their predictions, they worked in small groups to test each material to see how absorbent it was. The children compared results at the end and discussed why they might be different.



Year 3 have been focusing on their 3 and 4 times tables this week. They enjoyed a carousel of activities which helped them become confident in these. Bingo was a particular favourite! Keep practising, Year 3! They have also designed water cycle posters using electric circuits.



During DT, **Year 4** have been putting the finishing touches to their sling-shot cars. They have designed and coloured the bodywork and then stuck it to the chassis. They have enjoyed racing them against each other in the hall.



Year 5 enjoyed showing their end of term History and Geography projects about the Mayas and the Forest of Dean to Year 6 children. They presented a wide range of impressive projects in a variety of formats, such as PowerPoint presentations, information posters and 3D models. The audience were very impressed by the quality and standard of the projects - well done, Year 5! They have also have been busy recycling paper in school! They collected some shredded paper from school office, soaked it in water for just over 48 hours to turn into pulp and then followed a series of steps to make paper. They recorded the entire process in the form of an instructional text during their English lessons and also discussed why paper can only be recycled a few times.



Year 6 have enjoyed completing a "Secret Write". The children simply wrote whatever they wanted to, whether it be poetry, a narrative story or a newspaper report. They really enjoyed the session and were writing for their own pleasure without any constraints. Some children also shared some fantastic work from this session. They also put to use some of their measuring and converting skills learnt in maths to estimate and calculate the perimeter and area of the classroom and school hall.

Thank you so much to everyone who came along to the Christmas Fair. It was a really lovely afternoon, and raised a very healthy £820 for school! Thank you also to all the parents and teachers who helped out, it was very much appreciated - and to Miss Ginns and the choir for adding to the festive atmosphere with their beautiful carols. Special mention to Mr Brown, who not only helped with setting up and clearing up, but spent nearly 2 hours in the freezing cold enduring 'Soak the Teacher'!

And on that note we would like to say a really huge thank you to Mr Brown for all his support over the years. He has been the link between school and the PTFA for over 20 years, and has not only given so much time and effort, but also masses of positivity and encouragement - always finding ways to make things happen. On behalf of all parents, teachers and friends of Saint John's, we would like to wish him all the very best for the future.

Merry Christmas to you all!



The KS2 and Year 2 children enjoyed a day of dressing up as rock stars to promote the use of TT Rock Stars



The whole school had fun wearing their Christmas jumpers.



Even though the snow and ice rather changed our plans, we had a wonderful time together, when the children enjoyed performing in the school hall.



