



NEWSLETTER No. 12

March 2023

Dear Saint John's families,

We find ourselves at the end of the Spring Term with Easter just around the corner and the chance for a two week break for everyone. Well done to all our pupils and staff for all that they have achieved during these past ten weeks; we hope you enjoy looking at the photos celebrating some of the many activities in each year group and across the whole school. Red Nose Day was a lot of fun; it is important to recognise these national events and, where possible, support charities. Next term, on **Friday 5th May**, we will be celebrating the coronation of King Charles III, with an iSingPOP experience and by selling some coronation items. Whether we approve of the monarchy or not, this will be an historical event that our children will refer to when they are older and so we want to mark the occasion.

Please be aware that there are TWO bank holidays next term: **Monday 1st May** and **Monday 8th May**. The children will not be in school on these days.

On **Tuesday 9th May**, our Year 6 pupils will be taking their Key Stage 2 SATs. There are tests each day that week in Maths and English, where we aim for the children to show their learning; it will be their first experience of external tests and prepares them for secondary testing. If you are a Year 6 parent, please ensure your child is in school **every day** for these tests.

I would also like to remind families to be aware of key dates for the end of the summer: **Sports Day** is booked for **Thursday 22nd June** (with a reserve of the 29th) and we are aiming to celebrate with our Year 6 leavers on Thursday 20th July.

The **PTFA (Parent Teacher Friends Association)** will, no doubt, be involved in these events and I know that there will be requests going forward for help and support. Please do be in touch if you are interested in becoming a regular (or even just occasional) participant in our PTFA group.

Next term, we will be welcoming Alison Bennett, who will be joining us to work in Year 5 as a Teaching Assistant, working alongside Mrs Omar and Mr Vaughan.

Also next term, we will be asking for parental feedback about our communication, as we know that we give out information in different ways. We recognise that the variety of ways can be a challenge and so we want to consider how we manage this, whilst also maintaining contact with every one of our parents and carers.

I have mentioned the parent survey which we sent out in the Christmas Term; we were very pleased with the high response. To find that 94% of responders said that their child was safe and happy at school and that 98% felt informed about what the children will be learning was a huge encouragement to our work on both our curriculum and how we help pupils feel valued and cared for in school. There are always areas to work on and, although 92% of respondents said that pupils were well-behaved, there were questions about the procedures for dealing with misbehaviours. We have been working on this as a staff, have met with a parental group and heard our pupils' voice. Please look out for communications about the improvements that have been made next term.

As often happens at the end of a term, we have to say goodbye to some of our community. Mrs Gunn has been supporting in Reception three days a week and we are grateful for the way that she has helped these pupils settle into school life. Thank you. John Ramsden finishes as a governor after decades of commitment to the school. He has been a huge support in governor meetings, but will perhaps be remembered more vividly for his involvement with the children: reading one-to-one with individuals in class (as did his wife, Val) and participating in our residential trip for the Year 5 and 6 pupils. We are extremely indebted to John; he will be missed.

Have a wonderful Easter break.

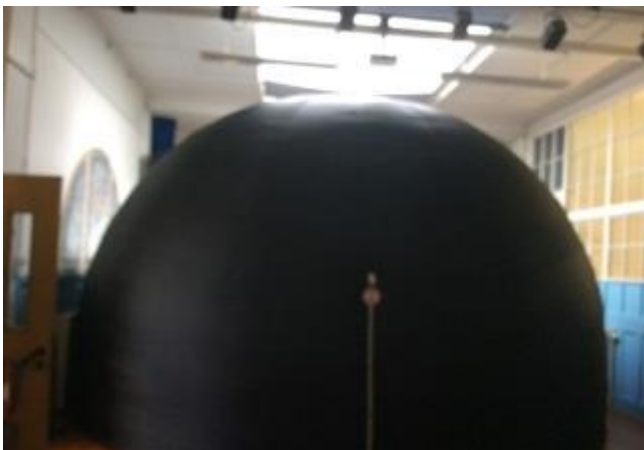
Take care, Mrs Beevers



Written by Sharon Morrow TA



As part of Science Day, **Reception** looked at different constellations of stars. They made some representations of the constellations and used a ruler to join up the stars. The children had an exciting session in the planetarium, where they saw the stars and had a story. They have also been using 'Google Earth' a lot this term in their learning, as their key question has been 'Which planet am I from?' They have also been studying habitats, looking at the Polar regions and a nature reserve in Africa. This was followed up in messy play by looking for habitats in the wild garden. The children were so excited to find worms, ants and woodlice! The children have also been loving the spring sunshine, in between the showers, and have been making the most of outdoor play, from riding without stabilisers in Balanceability to crawling through tunnels in the play garden.



During Maths, **Year 1** have been measuring capacity and investigating the difference between full and empty. The children also enjoyed holding an exhibition of their moving parts sliders to present to Year 4.



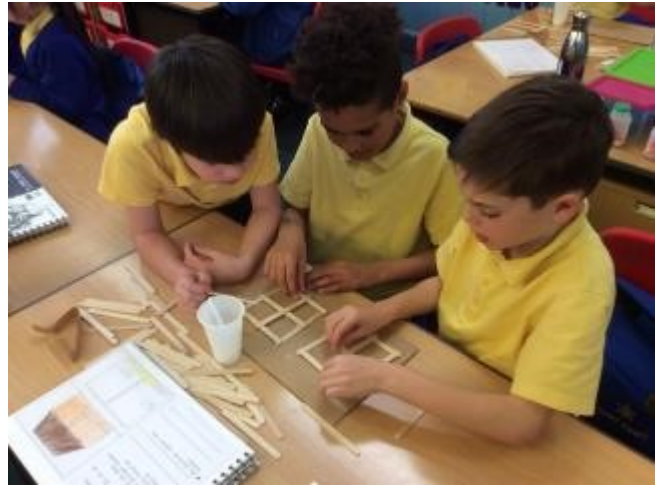
As part of their Talk for Writing work, **Year 2** used lots of actions to help them learn their modelled text called Josie the Farmer. During DT, the children tested the strength of different 3D shapes. They discovered that cylinders are the strongest shape and could balance up to sixty chapters books before collapsing!



Year 3 have been learning all about the features of castles this term. In DT, they were asked to design and build a castle for King Charles III to live in. They have demonstrated brilliant teamwork and creativity when building their final designs and have definitely produced castles that are fit for a king!



During Science, **Year 4** have been testing a variety of everyday objects to see whether or not they would conduct electricity. During DT, the children have been designing and building pavilions.



Year 5 had lots of fun attending a drama session about 'Earth and Space' with Ms Bolwell. During the session, children learnt about the movement of the Earth in relation to the Sun, how it affects the seasons and the length of day and night in different parts of the world. They particularly enjoyed line dancing with the 'American Professor', who was blown away by their enthusiasm for learning and dancing skills!



Year 6 have been investigating what organisms can be found in our school grounds. They then used their scientific knowledge to classify the organisms and created a field guide for our school. The children also enjoyed taking part in classroom debate. They organised the classroom to represent the House of Commons and conducted a couple of debates where they contributed arguments for and against the motions of the day. The children did brilliantly, thinking carefully about what they wanted to say and delivered their points of view with confidence and passion.



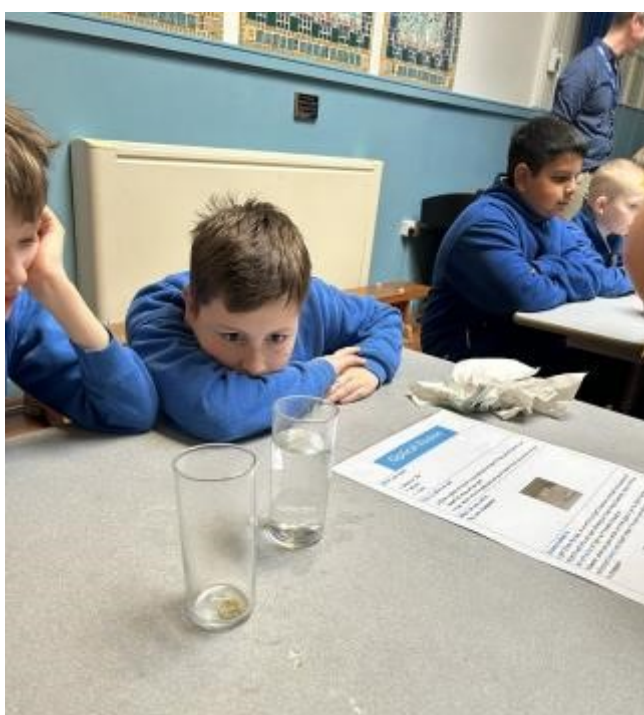
The children had fun dressing in something red for Comic Relief. Thanks to your generosity, we raised £165 for this fantastic charity.







As part of Science Day, the Science Club held an exhibition in the hall where they showed the rest of the school what they had been learning about over the last few weeks.





The KS2 children enjoyed a production of The Parable Keeper, performed by 4Front Theatre at St Luke's Church. The whole school have taken part in our end of term Easter service.



Four pupils from Year 5 were invited to attend a Primary Maths Challenge event at Cheltenham Ladies' College. On arrival, there was a practical problem linked to symmetry ready for them as they settled in. Once everyone had arrived, there were introductions and the children were informed that they were going to work with a teacher from another school for the whole day. There were several rounds of Maths challenges where the children had to use their knowledge, skills and expertise across a range of mathematical concepts as well as working as a team.



The girls' football team enjoyed a tournament at St Gregory's on International Women's Day, despite having to play in sleet and snow! St Gregory's were too strong for them but the team beat Gloucester Road 3-1. Well done to everyone involved!



Many children took part in our "Look Who's Talking" competition! Three children represented Saint John's and now Isaac will represent Cheltenham in the county event! Well done to everyone who had a go!



Some of the children have been attending Infant Drama Club. The Junior Drama Club put on a performance of 'Adventure Beyond the Stock Cupboard' for the rest of the school.

