



## NEWSLETTER No. 3

October 2023

Dear Saint John's families,

We have just returned from Highbury Church having had a lovely time together, sharing the children's learning. Although it was a bit of a squeeze, we fitted in and we were delighted that so many parents and carers were able to join us for the event, either in person or via the live-link.

The celebration of learning involved our Reception children singing their Counting Conker Song and Year 2 telling us "The Story of Pirate Tom". Year 1 showed us wonderful pictures of their pumpkins and Year 3 displayed their stone-age creations. Both used different media to produce effective pictures, all with autumnal colours. Year 4 and Year 5 focused our minds on the history learning they had been doing this term. As we walked back to school, pupils were pointing out the architecture around Cheltenham; our town is a rich tapestry of different eras! We also heard about the Maya civilisation and their culture, as well as seeing artwork completed by both classes. Finally, Year 6 presented their photography artwork: an incredible display of intricate, detailed work that considered light and shadow as well as composition and texture.

Revd Boyd introduced us to his orangutan, Orla, who was a little nervous to start with but relaxed as our Saint John's children said, "Hello!" I felt very proud of how the children engaged with their presentations and how they watched and listened so attentively!

Revd Boyd wrote this to me: *Thank you for coming to Highbury. It was a real joy to be able to share in the learning of the children. The behaviour of the pupils was excellent over such a sustained period. I appreciate that the school braved the rain and at least had a dry return. Please pass on my congratulations to the students for their courage. As you mentioned, it is such a big, nervous thing to do and it was visible for all to see the progress in confidence from year to year.*

Here is the link for the recorded event:

[https://m.youtube.com/live/IAIK-\\_tfEsk?feature=share](https://m.youtube.com/live/IAIK-_tfEsk?feature=share)

This will stay on the private section of the church website as a recording; perhaps some families will have the fun of watching it together over the weekend! I will also try to put together an iMovie of the photos and videos to put on our website and to send on Dojo.

As always, our children have had many other fun opportunities with a number going out on trips: one highlight was that all KS1 and KS2 classes went to the Literature Festival. They heard authors and illustrators talk about their books and we all felt inspired to read!

We are grateful to the PTFA and to St Luke's Church Hall who provided some finances to make these kinds of experiences possible. Please do ensure you have dates in your diary for the PTFA events at Saint John's:

Christmas Fair: Saturday 2nd December from 1pm - 3pm.

PTFA Disco: Friday 26th January 6.30 - 8pm

PTFA Disco: Friday 17th May 6.30 - 8pm

I know that there will be requests for help too.

Next week, our Year 6 class will be going on their residential. This is an important milestone for them and will be a brilliant chance to bond together as a class, be challenged by the activities, prepare for secondary school independence and, most of all, have a lot of fun! Mr Jones and Miss Morrow will be with them for the four days (Tuesday to Friday) and Mr Vaughan will be there for Tuesday/Wednesday and I will be there for Thursday/Friday. Please be aware that the internet is not very good there, so responding to any emails might be tricky. (Plus I hope that we, as teachers, will be able to join in with many of the activities too!)

Have a good weekend and enjoy some rest to help with the energy needed for our final week before half term.

Keep safe, Mrs Beevers



Written by Sharon Morrow TA



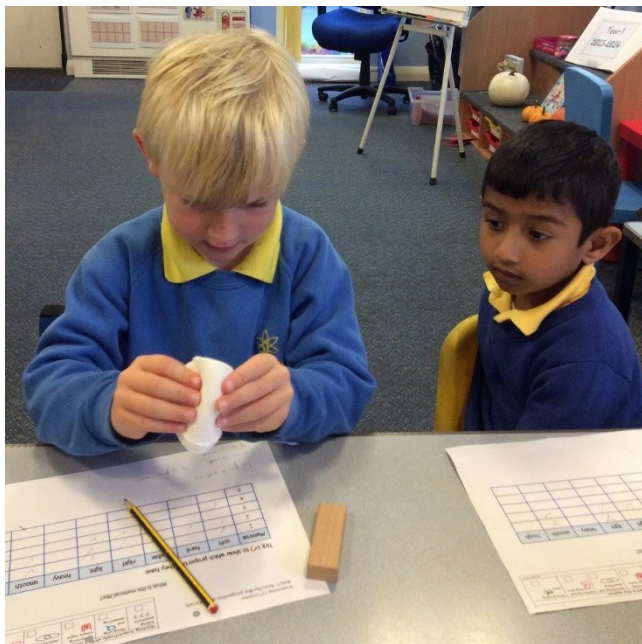
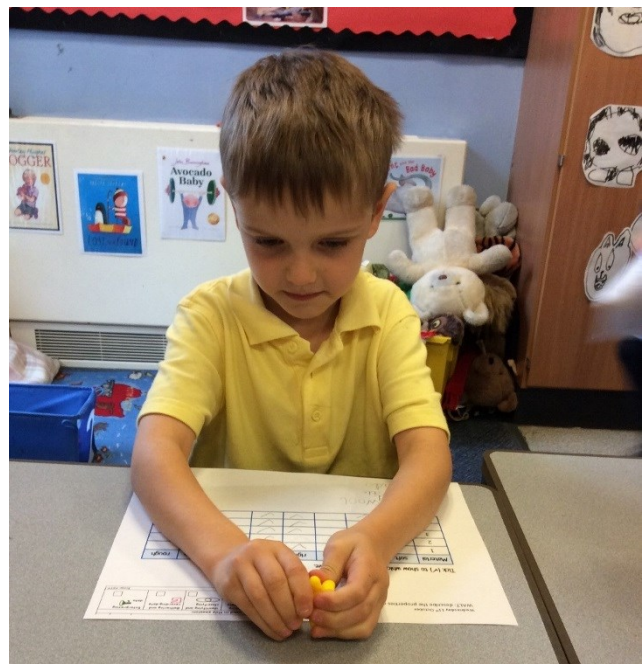
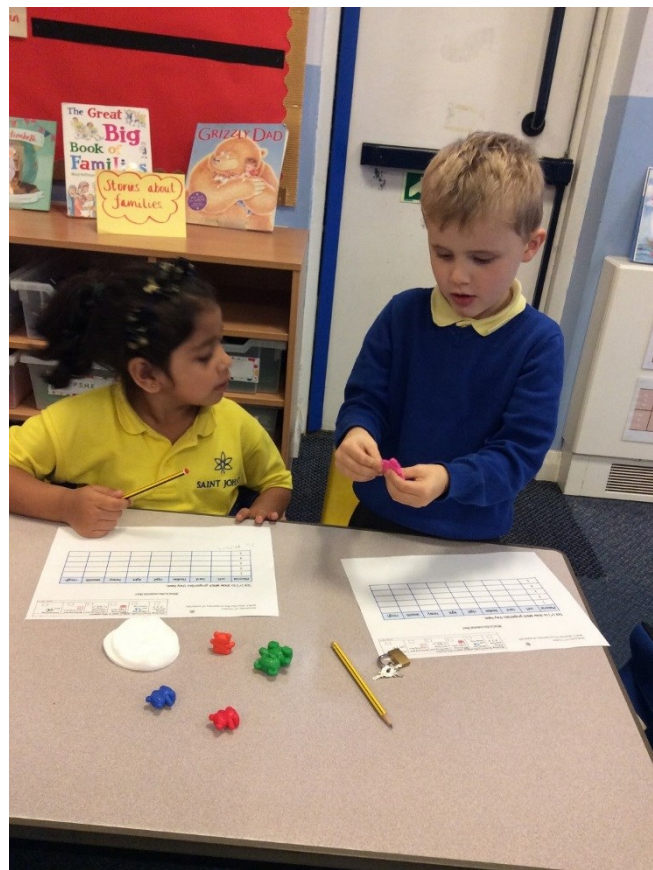


This week, **Reception** have been using lots of natural materials in their work. During Maths, the children were sorting equipment into sets and then explaining the sorting rule. In RE, as part of their 'Being Special' topic', they have been learning that Christians believe that God knows them even before they are born and has their names written on the palm of His hand. The children then decorated hands to demonstrate this.





**Year 1** have been looking at different materials and thinking about their properties. The children touched each material and considered whether it was hard or soft, smooth or rough, rigid or flexible, light or heavy. They then filled out the results in a table.





**Year 1** and **Year 2** went to the Literature Festival last week to see Michael Rosen perform some of his poems and read some new books that he has just written. The children loved hearing him perform his poem called Chocolate Cake. It was so funny! They also enjoyed having their picnic lunch at the festival and saw the Gruffalo walking around too!



**Year 4** had a great afternoon putting their class-based learning into real life when they went on a fieldtrip of the local area. Having learnt about the features of different periods of architecture, the children explored their local area looking for these features. The afternoon finished with sketching Georgian properties located along the Evesham Road.





**Year 3** really enjoyed their visit to Cheltenham Literature Festival. They watched the author, Pamela Butchart, introduce her books and explore the characters from them. They enjoyed their talk so much that they requested to have her books in the reading corner and are now enjoying her stories for themselves! The children also celebrated Mental Health Awareness Day by trying different activities to keep their minds healthy. A particular favourite was Pokémon themed yoga!



The Saint John's girls' football team thoroughly enjoyed a tournament held at Charlton Kings Junior School. It was the first time the girls had played together, and for some of them, the first time they had ever played a competitive match! They showed great determination in all the games and, although they lost narrowly to Holy Apostles and Greatfield Park, they defeated Gardners Lane and kept a clean sheet in that match. We hope to arrange more games!





**Year 5** enjoyed their Maya Day by exploring various aspects of Maya life, including food, clothing and entertainment in the form of a ball game called Pok-a-tok. The children were surprised to learn that, when playing this sport, players were not allowed to use their hands or feet - only their heads, shoulders, elbows, wrists and hips. They also had a go at playing Pok-a-Tok themselves and found it incredibly challenging! Fortunately, no rules such as sacrificing the members of the losing teams to gods were in place and the game ended peacefully! On the day, the children also had fun learning about the journey of cocoa beans during Maya time to the chocolate bars as we know today! They also tasted various traditional Maya foods, including corn tortillas and different flavours of chocolate, such as; mint, orange, milk, dark and white.





**Year 6** had an amazing time at the Cheltenham College Hockey Festival. Saint John's "Saxons" played against three other local schools in small teams to put together some of the hockey skills taught over the last five weeks. Great fun and sportsmanship was shown by all, with the children impressing with their hockey skills. The children enjoyed a delicious lunch provided by the college, which was served in their spectacular dining hall.

