

THE RED SWEATER LETTER

A newsletter from St. John's Middle School



WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

[Page 1 & 2](#)

Head of School Message

[Page 3](#)

Collective Worship

[Page 4](#)

Epraise Points

Snack Recipe

[Page 5](#)

Heads of Year Message

[Page 6](#)

World Book Day

[Page 7](#)

Art and Music Afternoon

Peter Bunzl

[Page 8](#)

Worcester Cathedral

Mock Trial Visit & Competition

[Page 9](#)

Eco Day

#WakeUpWednesday

[Page 10](#)

PE Update

[Page 11&12](#)

SEND Information

[Page 13](#)

Strike Dates

Twitter

TRAIN WITH US!

Message from Head of School

By Mrs A. Elwell

Welcome to the final Red Sweater Letter of the spring term. It only seems like yesterday that we were celebrating Christmas and here we are about to break up for the Easter holiday.

This is one of my favourite times of the year as the nights are lighter, the weather hopefully begins to show signs of improvement and the wildlife springs into life. The season of optimism!

As we approach the Easter holiday, we look back at everything our school community has achieved over the last term. Just in the last few weeks alone, we have held a successful bake off competition with cake sale raising money for the Primrose Hospice. Following on from World Book Day, we have hosted Peter Bunzl (author of Cogheart) to help inspire our budding authors. Additionally, all year groups have been involved in an eco-enrichment afternoon, planting trees around school donated by the Wildlife Trust.



Continued ...

We have continued to participate in numerous sporting competitions and hot off the press, we were crowned Poetry Slam winners 2023 at the Palace Theatre Redditch last night. A fabulous achievement!.

This morning we have concluded the Spring term with our traditional Easter church service, where we reflected upon the Easter symbolism of new beginnings and this afternoon we have held celebration assemblies, where we have celebrated the efforts and successes of the School community.

It is now time to have a well-deserved break and enjoy the Easter holidays, recharging our batteries ready to come back to an action packed summertime "giving of our best."

Have a lovely Easter

Dates for the Diary

Return to School
Monday 17th April

Year 7 Oakerwood
23rd - 25th April

Junior Maths Challenge
Thursday 27th April

Black Country Museum
Friday 28th April

Bank Holiday
Monday 1st May

Bank Holiday (King's Coronation)
Monday 8th May

SATs Week
Tuesday 9th - Friday 12th May

Year 5 Oakerwood
Friday 19th - Sunday 21st May

Year 8 Arete
Monday 22nd - Friday 26th May

Half Term
Monday 29th May - Friday 2nd June



Collective Worship

By Miss C. Russell

"He is not here; he has risen, just as he said." Matthew 28:6

We rounded off this term with our Holy Week and Easter Service at St John's Church. Pupils from Years 6 and 8 performed the Passion Narrative, our school choirs performed, we sang hymns and songs, and everyone was invited to take part in a prayer activity, leaving their worries, joys and pains on the cross.

"After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me." Matthew 28:6-10

When we return from the Easter Holidays we will be moving on to explore our value of INTEGRITY, and preparing to celebrate Pentecost and our prayer week.

The Coming - R.S. Thomas

*And God held in his hand
A small globe. Look he said.*

*The son looked. Far off,
As through water, he saw
A scorched land of fierce
Colour. The light burned
There; crusted buildings*

Cast their shadows: a bright

Serpent, A river

Uncoiled itself, radiant

With slime.

On a bare

Hill a bare tree saddened

The sky. many People

Held out their thin arms

To it, as though waiting

For a vanished April

To return to its crossed

Boughs. The son watched

Them. Let me go there, he said.



Epraise points

5CW	16348
5SW	15643
5MJ	15155
5CGO	15020
5AKE	14953
5AAL	14850

6GM	15154
6ALK	14640
6RSE	14631
6CSS	14063
6BC	13968
6KD	13733

7PM	15275
7JD	14866
7JAB	14549
7MH	14136
7WW	13527

8MF	14128
8MMO	13623
8JCD	13317
8MC	12420
8KLN	12102
8NGE	11382

Easter Egg Cheesecake



Method

STEP 1

Oil a 20cm deep springform cake tin and line with baking parchment. Tip the digestive biscuits into a food bag or the bowl of a food processor and crush or blitz to a fine crumb. Mix with the melted butter, then press into the base of the prepared cake tin and chill for 30 mins.

STEP 2

Roughly chop half the chocolate mini eggs. Beat the soft cheese with the icing sugar and vanilla until just combined using an electric whisk. Clean the beaters, then beat the double cream to stiff peaks in a separate bowl. Gently fold the whipped cream into the soft cheese mixture along with the chopped chocolate mini eggs. Spoon the cheesecake mixture over the biscuit base, then smooth the surface with a palette knife or spatula. Chill overnight.

STEP 3

The next day, carefully release the cheesecake from the tin (you may need to run a cutlery knife around the edge to loosen it) and top with the remaining whole chocolate mini eggs to decorate.

Ingredients

- vegetable oil, for the tin
- 200g digestive biscuits
- 80g unsalted butter, melted
- 250g chocolate mini eggs or leftover Easter eggs
- 400g full-fat soft cheese
- 150g icing sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla bean paste
- 400g double cream

Heads of Year Message

By Ms R. Bourne - Head of Year 7

Well our Spring term has certainly raced by! Despite the awful weather we are slightly heartened by lighter nights budding daffodils – lets' hope some prolonged sunshine is just around the corner!

Thank you to those parents who attended our Parents' Evenings, it is always a pleasure to talk about the progress our pupils are making and to put faces to names. The relationship between school and home is all important as we jointly support your children in their learning journey here at St John's. As we've repeatedly told pupils, now is the time to really impress, with behaviour and learning taking top priority in the run up to trips and rewards events. Encouraging all pupils to work independently and diligently is the key focus in preparing them for their next step, be it the next key year group, key stage or indeed school.

With points building on Epraise, our pupils are encouraged to earn as many positive points as possible and avoid those dreaded demerits. With this in mind please do remind them to bring in their planner, a reading book, a general notebook and the all-important pen, pencil, ruler and rubber to ensure they are equipped for the day. Remember that failing to prepare is preparing to fail! That includes recording and completing homework to set deadlines.

As we head towards the holidays may I take this opportunity to wish all of our families a happy Easter and a well-deserved break. We look forward to welcoming your children back in April for our final and most favourite term.

“

*BE A
RAINBOW
IN
SOMEONE
ELSE'S
CLOUD*

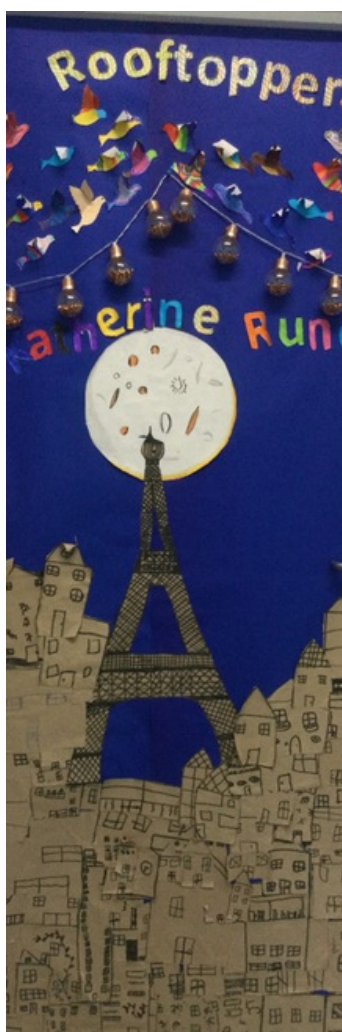
”

World Book Day

By Miss K. Devey - Head of English

On Thursday 2nd March, St John's once again did a fantastic job celebrating books and authors as part of World Book Day! Lots of pupils and staff alike dressed up as book characters for the day and loads of pupils brought in wooden spoons they had decorated to look like a book character, as well as pebbles they had painted in the theme of children's books!

During the afternoon, the whole school was off-timetable and each class took part in the decorate a door competition. The standard was unbelievably high and the school now looks beautiful, with all of the finished decorated classroom doors on display!

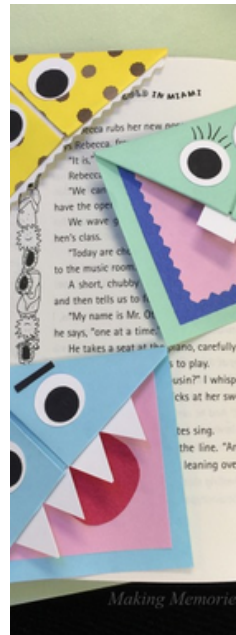


Music and Art Afternoon

By Mrs K. Hall - Head of Year 5

A few weeks ago, we welcomed two classes of Year 4 children from Millfields to join us for a fun afternoon of music and art. It was a great afternoon and a real treat for us to invite visitors into our wonderful school - we have really missed this over the last few years. Mrs Davenport and Miss Gower organised and delivered an exciting and creative art activity. The children enjoyed making bookmarks to take back to Millfields with them - we hope they are being used every day! Miss Russell held a drumming workshop in the hall using our Djembe Drums. I was so impressed with the rhythms that were being created. It was also a delight to see some fantastic Year 8 children supporting our visitors.

Thank you to everyone involved and I'm really looking forward to welcoming more Year 4 children later in the year.



Peter Bunzl - Author Visit

By Miss K. Devey - Head of English

On Friday 24th March, Peter Bunzl (bestselling author of the Cogheart series) visited school for the day. Peter delivered workshops with two Year 6 classes and gave talks to KS2 and KS3, when he explained all about his journey to becoming an author. Additionally, he took part in a question and answer session and completed book signings for pupils who brought in their own copies of his books. The children were really inspired to meet such a successful author in real life!

Peter was so impressed with the Cogheart inspired 'decorate a door' design Miss Sedgwick's class had created on World Book Day that he had his photo taken with it! He even shared this snap to his own social media account!



The Year 7 Poetry Slam group (Phoebe Howard, Noah Dixon, Max Ash, Chloe Warman, Holly Ray, Orla Alekna) won the Worcestershire Poetry Slam final Wednesday night at the Palace Theatre.
Congratulations all on the much deserved win!

Worcester Cathedral

By Mr. N. Edwards - Head of History

Over two days in March all of Year 7 visited Worcester Cathedral. Both days were action packed with activities around the topic of King John, whose body is buried within the Cathedral. Pupils enjoyed; writing with quills, a tour of the Cathedral, producing their own King John tombs and role-play tasks to develop their knowledge of King John.

Below is a photo of one of the role-play activities, in which we see John's son Henry III donating money to the Cathedral, due to his happiness at the way his father's tomb has been treated.



Mock Trial Competition

By Mrs C. Woodward - Class Teacher

On Saturday 11th March our Mock Trial team took part in the Worcestershire and Herefordshire heat of the national competition at Worcester Magistrates' Court. This competition is open to Year 8 and Year 9 pupils and we have been practising weekly from November. Our team had to prosecute and defend a case of alleged possession of an offensive weapon, in this case, a lump hammer, in a public place without reasonable excuse. We studied the case and spent time drafting and redrafting our speeches, questions and possible answers. We also spent time learning the roles of different people in a court room (including Lawyer, Usher, Magistrate, Legal adviser and Witness). On the day of the competition we saw that there were nine schools there (including only one other middle school). Thus, most of our competitors were Year 9 pupils which was a little scary! We kept having to be reminded that they were only one year older than us. We prosecuted the case against a team from Prince Henry's High School and defended against a team from The Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School. We developed our confidence and many skills in this process and we did enjoy the experience.

Our team consisted of: Joshua Whelan, Lucy Steiner, Jacob Welling, Annaliese Cartmell, Alistair Cox, Ekam Gill, Lucy Knowles, Katie Eva, Leo Hopley, Lois Thompson, Tana Marafu, Harry Sealey and Sophia Boyd. Our Court Artists were Abaan Kiyani and Josie Watson. Our Court Reporters were Abigail Venn and Lola Parr.

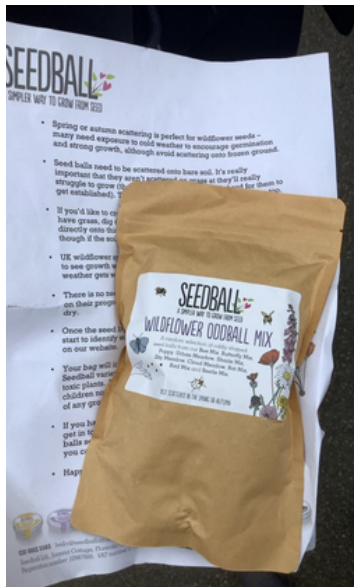
We would like to thank Mrs Hall, Mrs Woodward and our link Magistrate, Brent Robinson for preparing us for the competition and accompanying us on the day.

Visit to Worcester Magistrates' Court

By Mrs C. Woodward - Class Teacher

On Monday 27th February our Year 8 Mock Trial team had a visit to the Magistrates' Court in Worcester. This was in preparation for the Mock Trial Competition. We spent the whole morning there and it was really interesting to see a court in action. We listened to a variety of cases and were intrigued to find out the verdicts. Seeing the court room and how the Usher, Lawyers, Legal Adviser and Magistrates acted helped us with our nerves for the competition itself! We would like to thank our link Magistrate, Brent Robinson for organising the visit and Mrs Hall and Mrs Woodward for accompanying us.





Eco Enrichment

By Miss R. Sedgwick - Class Teacher and Miss S. Watts - Class Teacher

On Tuesday 28th March, we held a whole school Eco-Enrichment afternoon. Students took part in a variety of class-based activities including rock painting, seed sowing, garden design and debate work.

Around the school, other activities took place and various students had the opportunity to: plant a number of trees on the school grounds, complete a litter pick, build bird boxes, cook a healthy and sustainable meal, clear a section of our school grounds and sow a wildflower patch. This means we have been able to make our official certificate of pledge to the #KeepBritainTidy 'Big School Clean Up', take part in the RHS #BigSeedSow nationwide campaign and work towards being able to apply and achieve our RHS Levels in accreditation with goal of being awarded our Royal Horticultural Society plaque. On top of this, we have also achieved points towards our first Woodland Trust Bronze 'Green Tree Schools Award' with a goal of working up the levels to achieve our official Woodland Trust plaque.

It was lovely to see how invested in our environment the children are and how keen they are to make small changes, not only to the school, but to the world around them.

Well done to all those that took part!

#WakeUpWednesday

By Mr. B Clements - Head of Computing

We can access new music and movies in seconds. We can get products delivered to our door the very next day. We can chat or play games with people on the other side of the planet. For all of the remarkable benefits the digital age has brought us, however, it's also presented us with a whole new raft of pressures and anxieties that, in truth, we're all still learning to cope with. From continual notifications inflaming a fear of missing out to the risk of public embarrassment or slanging matches on social media, today's children and young people have stresses to manage that previous generations simply never encountered. Our #WakeUpWednesday guide examines these uniquely modern worries, highlighting ways to reduce the anxiety that digital devices can bring. In the guide you'll find tips on reducing push notifications from apps, avoiding social media arguments and spotting when a child's been upset by something online.



Worcester Cathedral

By Mr. N. Edwards - Head of History

Although it has been a relatively short half term we have still had plenty going on within the PE department to keep everybody busy. In between the snow, rain and freezing temperatures the children have found opportunity to excel themselves once again.

At the start of the month our KS3 rugby team entertained Parkside Middle School in a pulsating encounter here at St John's. Although the game ended in an 8 tries to 6 win for Parkside it was an excellent showing of determination and resilience by our boys who left the field with heads held high. Any disappointment was put to one side however when our Year 8 mixed touch rugby team claimed first place in a competition hosted at Bromsgrove School. It was a lovely way for our coach, Steve Husbands, to finish his time coaching at school. We would like to thank Steve for his efforts over the past five years and wish him the best for the future.

There was disappointment for the year 8 Boys in the County Cup football where they lost 5-0 to Blessed Edward High school, ending the hopes of reaching the final for a second year running. However, it was much more positive for the Year 6 Boys and KS3 Girls football teams who both reached the County Cup finals in their respective competitions. The girl's game in particular was a thrilling affair which was eventually decided on penalties. We are incredibly proud of the pupils' achievements and cannot wait for the final.

There have been plenty of other friendly football fixtures throughout the half term with teams from year five, six and seven all representing the school in games across the local area. We are very proud to be able to offer children this chance to represent us and the sterling job they do.

Rearranged District Netball competitions took place during the last two weeks and our year six team claimed bronze medals in their competition, only just missing out on second. The year seven team played with bravery and commitment during their event but didn't quite reach the top three. We would like to thank our netball coaches Lorraine and Caitlin for their dedication to the teams and helping with their development.

We've had KS2 pupils finish second in an In2Hockey festival and taken some of our gifted year 5 pupils to a Talented in PE afternoon. 82 of our year 5 pupils have now completed their level 2 Bikeability awards. They received training on how to safely travel on roads and to use their bikes effectively. We view active travel as a hugely important component of leading a healthy and active life and are pleased to be able to support this. It truly has been a busy few weeks.

As we finish our winter sports clubs and look ahead to the exciting opportunities available in the summer term I would like to thank all of our amazing staff for devoting their time to running sessions, our wonderful pupils for their commitment and to you, the parents and guardians for your ongoing support. Have a wonderful Easter Holiday



SEND Information

By Mr. D. McEvilly - Trust SENDco and Ms M. Jarvis - Assistant SENDco



AUTISM WEST MIDLANDS COURSES

Autism West Midlands are the leading charity in the West Midlands for supporting autistic people. It is their aim to provide specialist support and advice to autistic people of all ages and their families who are living in the West Midlands and surrounding areas, enabling them to meet their full potential.

Autism West Midlands have a wide range of courses which are always being updated. They have the following courses coming up soon:

- Dads Support Group – 30th March & 27th April – 7pm-9pm
- Autism and Sensory Differences Webinar – for Herefordshire and Worcestershire Parents and Carers – 17th April – 9:30am – 11am
- Autistic Parents – Virtual Support Group – 17th April – 6pm-7:30pm
- The Annual Review of an EHC Plan – Online Parent Workshop – 18th April 6pm
- Autism and the Teenage Brain – Webinar for West Midlands Parents and Carers – 28th April 9:30am-10:30am
- Autism and Communication Webinar – On-line Training for Herefordshire and Worcestershire Parents and Carers – 2nd May – 9:30am-11am

These courses can be booked, and further courses found on their website: autismwestmidlands.org.uk

NEW WEBSITE HEREFORD AND WORCESTER DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION

Hereford and Worcester Dyslexia Association (HWDA) have recently launched their new website – www.hwda.org.uk

With their new website they are hoping to increase awareness of Dyslexia. In addition, they aim to make people aware of HWDA and how they support children and young people with dyslexia and related difficulties. On their website they now have free resources and links for further support to families.

The HWDA updated website is more accessible than previously as they have added videos and spoken text. They will keep updating it regularly so put it in your favourites.

SENDIASS

Looking for independent advice? SENDIASS are the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Information, Advice and Support Service (IASS) covering Herefordshire and Worcestershire. SENDIASS have a dedicated team of advisors offering legally-based and easily accessible information and advice about special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). In addition to this they offer a wide range of parent support courses.

<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/sendiaass>



SEND Information cont ...

By Mr. D. McEvilly - Trust SENDco and Ms M. Jarvis - Assistant SENDco

NEW SURVEY LAUNCHED TO HELP IMPROVE THE LIVES OF AUTISTIC PEOPLE IN WORCESTERSHIRE

A survey was launched by Worcestershire County Council on Monday 27 March which aims to get the views and experiences from autistic people, families, provider organisations, professionals and everyone in our local communities. By completing the survey you will be helping to shape a new Autism Strategy, that will help support autistic people in Herefordshire and Worcestershire in their everyday lives.

The new All-Age Autism Strategy will be developed in line with the National Autism Strategy. It will focus on 7 priority areas:

- Improving understanding and acceptance of autism within society.
- Improving autistic children and young people's access into education and support positive transitions into adulthood.
- Supporting more autistic people into employment.
- Tackling health and care inequalities for autistic people
- Building the right support in the community.
- Improving support in criminal and youth justice systems.
- Keeping safe.

The survey can be found here:

[CLICK HERE](#)

and will close on 14th May 2023.



ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Did you know Microsoft online provide free tools to help pupils with reading? Immersive Reader provides a full screen reading experience to increase content readability. Immersive Reader is designed to support students with dyslexia but anyone who wants to make reading on small screens easier can use this digital learning too

Raising Attainment with Microsoft Learning Tools

Free tools for Microsoft Office to support learners who experience difficulties with reading. Available for OneNote and Word (Online, Desktop and iPad). Not all tools exist in every version. For more information visit: www.onenote.com/learningtools

To start Immersive Reader select the 'View Tab' and 'Immersive Reader'. To make adjustments see the 3 panels below.

Text size, Spacing and Themes
Adjust the font size, font style and colour themes to customise and differentiate reading.

Choose a voice, adjust the voice speed and click or tap the Play button to hear text spoken aloud in a distraction free, immersive environment. Combine the above with text-to-speech to aid comprehension and independent reading.

Syllables and Parts of Speech
Use Syllables to break words into smaller parts to help improve word recognition. Colour code words into nouns, verbs and adjectives to aid grammar.

Line Focus and Picture Dictionary
Improve readability, concentration and reading speed with Line Focus by reading one (or more) line of text at a time. Picture Dictionary aids reading and comprehension by seeing and hearing a word simultaneously.

Consider using Line Focus, Picture Dictionary, Themes and Speech in combination to provide a multi-sensory and inclusive reading experience.

Version 1.1, April 2018 © Microsoft. The property of Microsoft. All rights reserved. Microsoft is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and other countries.

Microsoft Scotland

Please may we remind you to not park down Watt Close. It is a private road which is also shared with BT. The bollards have been placed there for the safety of children and staff.



PGCE SCHOOL DIRECT PRIMARY + EARLY YEARS INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING

The Spire is now a lead provider for teacher training and in September we welcomed a new cohort of trainees. They are all doing extremely well. We work very closely with partner schools and this means we are able to train and effectively “grow our own” teachers. Our programme is very successful and last year all of our trainees gained employment. We are now recruiting for September 2023 and January 2024. If you are interested in a career in teaching please have a look at our website or contact Sarah Marsh.

email: ttenquiries@st-johns-bromsgrove.worcs.sch.uk
tel: 01527 832376

Tweets from @stjohnsmiddle

Follow



St John's CE Middle School Academy
Retweeted



Goodreads @goodreads · Mar 29

What's the book you can't stop thinking about right now?

834 1,155



St John's CE Middle School Academy
Retweeted



Action for Hap... @actionha... · 22h

Life is happier when we get outside, move more & stay active

Join us for Active App



THINKING OF TEACHING?
ARE YOU A GRADUATE?

THEN TRAIN WITH US!

TEACHER TRAINING PARTNERSHIP



COLLABORATE

LEARN

ACHIEVE

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: www.thespirelearningtrust.co.uk

ttenquiries@st-johns-bromsgrove.worcs.sch.uk

@TheSpireCE