

# THE RED SWEATER LETTER

A newsletter from St. John's Middle School



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## Message from Head of School

By Mr. K. Medway - Deputy Head

As we reach the end of the first half of the Spring term it has been wonderful to see visitors beginning to return to school, presenting even wider opportunities to embellish our pupils' already impressive offering of clubs. The poetry slam recently gave our Year 7 pupils a chance to immerse themselves in performance poetry and an opportunity to speak and perform publicly, building their confidence and having a lot of fun in the process.

With the recent announcements that COVID restrictions may soon be lifting, we look forward with hope that assemblies and all of the other enrichment opportunities which add to the full St John's experience can return. We do, however, remain cautious and all decisions are carefully considered to ensure that pupils can flourish and learn in a safe, welcoming environment.

Once more there are lots of exciting events and opportunities ahead which we will continue to share with you via ParentMail. We look forward to what the second half of the Spring term brings, including World Book Day in the first week back and hope everyone has a great break and returns rested, relaxed and ready to continue to 'Give of their best' in all that they do.

# Collective Worship

By Miss C. Russell

As we continue to explore our termly value of forgiveness we are also preparing for Ash Wednesday which this year falls on Wednesday 2nd March.

We are looking forward to being able to return to St John's Church for our Ash Wednesday service after a 2-year gap due to the pandemic. In this service we will think about what it means to say sorry and receive forgiveness, and about how we respond to temptation (exploring the story of Jesus' temptation in the desert from the fourth chapter of the Gospel according to St Matthew). As part of this service pupils will be invited to receive some ashes (made from burning last year's palm crosses). Those who choose to come take part in this aspect of the service will receive the ashes on their foreheads along with the words 'reject evil, choose good'. This reminds us that God's mercies are new every morning (Lamentations 3:22-23) and that when things go wrong we can always choose to turn towards the right way and know we will receive forgiveness, repentance and a warm welcome back.

Many Christians will choose to give something up for Lent, perhaps chocolate, sweets, unkind words, or fizzy drinks. Others may choose to take something up, perhaps some daily quiet reflection time, or doing something nice secretly for others.

Perhaps this year you might want to think about taking part in the 40 Acts of Kindness <https://40acts.org.uk>. Pupils who wish to take part will have the option of collecting a pupil-friendly 40-Acts card to follow during Lent, each day giving a suggested act of kindness as we move through Lent towards Easter. There is also a lovely family 40-Acts Wall Chart which can be found [here](#).

If you decide to take part please do tweet some of your 40-Acts and tag @stjohnsmiddle! so we can journey through this season together.

#40Acts



## Approaching Ash Wednesday and Lent

*"God, be merciful to me  
because of your faithful love.  
Because of your great compassion,  
erase all the wrongs I have done.  
God, create a pure heart in me,  
and make my spirit strong again.  
Your help made me so happy.  
Give me that joy again.."* (Psalm 51:1,10, 12)

**Miss Russell**  
**Head of Collective Worship**

# Attendance & Epraise points

Class	epraise Points	Attendance
5KLH	7041	97.2%
5SW	6144	97.8%
5CGO	6361	98%
5MJ	6884	97.9%
5CW	6691	95.3%
5AKE	6655	97.3%
6LF	7032	97.7%
6GM	6051	98.8%
6KD	5922	96.8%
6BC	6111	97.7%
6RSE	6075	97.9%
7WW	5247	95.1%
7PM	5471	95.2%
7MMO	5116	95.8%
7ALK	5742	95.7%
7MH	5160	96.5%
7JD	5485	98.1%
8JCD	6086	94.8%
8NGE	6120	93.8%
8MF	5195	95.4%
8KLN	5085	94.2%
8MC	5473	97.8%
8CSS	5009	93.7%

## Ingredients

- 175ml vegetable oil , plus extra for the tin
- 75g natural yogurt
- 3 large eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 200g self-raising flour
- 250g light muscovado sugar
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ fresh nutmeg , finely grated
- 200g carrots (about three), grated
- 100g sultanas or raisins
- 100g pistachios , finely chopped (or slivered if you can get them)

### For the icing

- 100g slightly salted butter , softened
- 200g icing sugar
- 100g full-fat cream cheese
- 100g fondant icing or marzipan
- orange food colouring

# Carrot Patch Cake



## Method

### STEP 1

Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Oil and line a 900g loaf tin with baking parchment. Whisk the oil, yogurt, eggs and vanilla in a jug. Mix the flour, sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg with a good pinch of salt in a bowl. Squeeze any lumps of sugar through your fingers, shaking the bowl a few times to bring the lumps to the surface.

### STEP 2

Add the wet ingredients to the dry, along with the carrots, raisins and half the pistachios. Mix well to combine, then scrape into the tin. Bake for 1 hr 10 mins or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. If any wet mixture clings to the skewer, return to the oven for 5 mins, then check again. Leave to cool in the tin.

### STEP 3

To make the icing, beat the butter and sugar together until smooth. Add half the cream cheese and beat again, then add the rest (adding it bit by bit prevents the icing from splitting). Remove the cake from the tin and spread the icing thickly on top. Scatter with some of the remaining pistachios. Dye the fondant or marzipan orange by kneading in a drop of food colouring. Roll into little carrot shapes, then use a skewer to make indentations and poke a few pistachios in to look like fronds. Top the cake with the carrots, then serve. Will keep in the fridge for up to five days (eat at room temperature).

# Heads of Year Message

By Mrs C. Hirons - Head of Year 6

As we head towards half term it's lovely to see the light returning to our days and small signs of spring erupting around us.

It certainly feels like a long half term, but there have been so many fantastic things happening around school that we have been able to celebrate. Just last week the pupils were reminded about internet safety with our 'Safer Internet' assembly. Towards the end of last week, we were delighted to welcome back Spoz and Dreadlock Alien into school to deliver their 'Poetry Slam' competition to Year 7.

This week we also highlighted mental health week with our 'Dress to Express' day and the pupils were introduced to the Well-being Ambassadors who will be working alongside staff and pupils to support the mental health of others.

Unbelievably, we are now almost half way through the school year so please could you take this opportunity to check with your child that they have the correct uniform and equipment ready for their return to school. Also, please can you remind your child that chewing gum and any large bags of sweets are banned items in school and will be confiscated if they are found to have them. In addition to this pupils should only be wearing PE kit on their PE days or if they have an after-school club which involves sport of some kind. If your child doesn't attend one of our after-school clubs then maybe this is the time to have a look at the wealth of clubs available and encourage your child to join. It is a great way to make new friends or find a new interest.

On our return to school, we will be celebrating World Book Day on Thursday 3rd March, there will be lots of fun activities on that day but pupils will also be encouraged to dress up as a famous book character. Maybe over half term you can get your thinking caps on, we love seeing just how creative you can all be and it's one of our favourite events of the year.

So, all that remains is to wish you all a restful half term break and thank you for your support in helping your child and our pupils 'Give of their best'.

“

*BE A  
RAINBOW  
IN  
SOMEONE  
ELSE'S  
CLOUD*

”

# Cyber First Competition

By Fjola O'Donell

The CyberFirst Girls competition is a regional competition about cyber security and computing. St John's originally had two teams attempt to make it into the regional final but only one made it, coming in 8th! 7000 girls took part in the regional qualifier with only 12 teams making it to the final.

We were all so excited on the day but so nervous. The competition was really high and the questions really hard but we are very proud of how well we did. We worked really well as a team and it was an amazing experience, something we will never forget. We had such a fun day and gained some great learning experiences. Miss Jarvis did an amazing job of organising it and we couldn't have done it without her.

We wish good luck to girls who take part in the competition in the future, we know you will have a wonderful time.



# Children's Mental Health Week

Children's Mental Health Week 2022 took place from 7-13 February. This year's theme was Growing Together.

We encouraged children (and adults) to consider how they have grown and how they can help others to grow.

95% of school staff (across the UK) have witnessed an increase in anxiety amongst pupils this school year.

Children's Mental Health Week 2022 featured in the media throughout the week; with television, radio, print and digital coverage.

The week gained widespread support from parliamentarians across England, Scotland and Wales. On social media, over 200 political stakeholders shared messages of support, including a supportive video message from the Minister for Children and Families, Will Quince MP.

*"Schools across the UK (and the world!) took part in the week. From photos of your Dress to Express days, to photos of your Support Balloons, to videos of you sharing how you grew together, it was great to see so many of you embracing the theme this year. Thank you to everyone who got involved. So far 580 schools have told us about how they took part, reaching 170,000 children and young people, and over 35,000 adults."*

We raised an amazing £265.81 for 'Dress to Express' in support of Children's Mental Health Week..

Thank you to all those who donated.

# Safer Internet Day

Safer Internet Day is celebrated globally in February each year to promote the safe and positive use of digital technology for children and young people, and to inspire a national conversation about using technology responsibly, respectfully, critically, and creatively. Safer Internet Day 2022 was on 8th February and celebrated the theme 'All fun and games? Exploring respect and relationships online'. Coordinated in the UK by the UK Safer Internet Centre, Safer Internet Day is celebrated in over a hundred countries coordinated by the joint Insafe/INHOPE network, with the support of the European Commission, and national Safer Internet Centres across Europe

# Year 7 Poetry Slam - 10/02/2022

On Thursday 10th February, Year 7 pupils took part in a Poetry Slam. The day was led by two poet laureates, Spoz and Dreadlock Alien, culminating in the winning group being chosen to perform against other schools at the Palace Theatre, Redditch later in the year.

This has always been a favourite amongst our pupils and was once again enjoyed by all!



# Clip N' Climb

You, the wall, no limits

**Excitement. Thrills. Adventure.**

- Qualified, friendly instructors
- For people with disabilities of all ages
- No experience needed

**2.30pm-4pm**

**Sundays**

**20th February,  
6th, 13th, 20th,  
and 27th March**

Bromsgrove Sports & Leisure Centre,  
School Drive, Bromsgrove B60 1AY  
*Parents and siblings are welcome to attend and take part.*

**Only £25 per child**

**Limited spaces available**

Contact the sports Development team for  
more information on 01527 881356 or  
email [sd@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:sd@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)



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District Council  
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