

THE RED SWEATER LETTER

A newsletter from St. John's Middle School



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TRAIN WITH US!

Message from Head of School

By Mrs A. Elwell

Welcome to November/December Newsletter.

It's been a busy few weeks at St John's Middle with the excitement of the countdown to Christmas well underway. We hosted a Christingle service last week for pupils and their parents, which allowed us to think about helping others and different ways we can bring light into other people's lives this Christmas. There was a magical moment when the lights were turned out and the beautiful church was lit up by the pupil's Christingle candles. However, I must admit to being relieved when the candles were all extinguished and we had managed another year without any mishaps.

Putting the sentiment of bringing light to others into action, we have been busy distributing "winter warmer" parcels and Christmas food parcels to our local community with huge gratitude to the Basement project in Bromsgrove for supplying the produce. The parcels have been gratefully received.



Continued ...

Our Key Stage 2 pupils have been to see the pantomime this week and Key Stage 3, who deemed themselves too old for the pantomime, voted to go festive bowling. In my opinion you are never too old for the pantomime but we listened to our pupil voice. A great time was had by all! This week has also seen Year group Christmas dinners, with our prefects assisting in the serving, this took some organisation and our admiration goes to our small catering team who took it all in their stride.

On Friday we even managed to fit in a visit from our local MP Sajid Javid who spoke to our Key Stage 3 about democracy and the workings of parliament. It was very engaging and the children's behaviour was impeccable as they had the opportunity to ask their questions. I was immensely proud of their intelligent and insightful questions.

On the final day of term we are looking forward to our concluding celebration of the season, our school church carol service is one of the few times our whole school can come together as a school family and pause for a moment and be thankful for our blessings. A perfect end to an action packed term.

I would like to take you the opportunity to wish you all a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year

Dates for the Diary

Return to School
3rd January

Pastoral Drop-in
16th January

STEM Day
24th January

Year 5 Young Voices
26th January

Poetry Slam
27th January

Half Term
20th-24th February



Collective Worship

By Miss C. Russell

Advent is a between-time, a liminal space; where we stand on the edge, watching and waiting for the moment when eternity enters into mortality; divinity into humanity; perfect, infinite love into the broken and finite.

We can't fully know what it was really like, those 2022 years ago, for a young, unmarried woman, faced with the question of whether she would say yes to God's great plan of salvation, to say to carrying this miraculous child who would form a bridge between heaven and earth; bringing with it the more immediate realities and fears of being an as-yet-unwed mother in a time when the penalty for such could be death by stoning.

And yet Mary says yes...yes to the angel, yes to carrying Jesus, yes to all the unknown joys, and fears and hopes and troubles to come. Advent brings us too a chance to say yes, to step out in hope into something new, to put our fears and worries aside and just trust that our 'yes' can bring something new to birth for us also.

In our collective worship we are thinking about perseverance and how we can learn about this through the stories and traditions of advent and Christmas. We light our advent wreath and reflect on how the Christmas story can bring us Hope, Joy, love and Peace.

On Wednesday 7th December all Year 5 and 6 pupils took part in our Christingle Service at St John's Church. Parents and carers were invited to join us for this service.

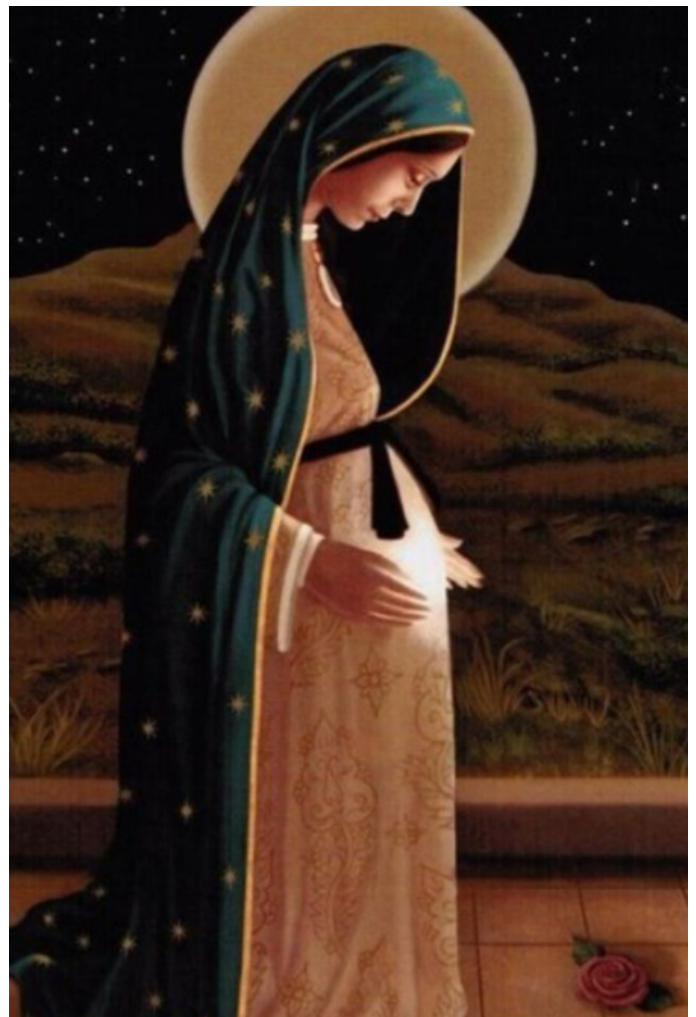
Today, Friday 16th December, we rounded off the term with our Christmas Service, exploring the nativity through carols, poems, musical performances and drama.

May your Christmas be filled with the joy of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, the worship of the wisemen and the peace of the Christ child.

Journeying through advent towards Christmas...

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel;
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell Thy people save,
And give them victory o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.



Attendance & Epraise points

Class	epraise Points	Attendance
5AAL	6616	97.3%
5SW	6041	95.7%
5CGO	6140	96.2%
5MJ	6395	96.4%
5CW	6626	98%
5AKE	6546	92.3%
6ALK	5934	95.7%
6GM	6057	96.3%
6KD	5302	94.1%
6BC	5581	96.1%
6RSE	5512	94.2%
6CSS	6160	91.9%
7PM	6172	95%
7JAB	5834	95.3%
7WW	6189	96.5%
7MH	5803	96%
7JD	6168	97.1%
8JCD	5589	90.7%
8NCE	4622	93.3%
8MF	5127	97.6%
8KLN	4788	96.9%
8MC	5092	94.7%
8MMO	5678	97%

Christmas Cookies



Method

STEP 1

Tip the icing sugar, vanilla extract, egg yolk and butter into a mixing bowl, then stir together with a wooden spoon (or pulse in a food processor until well combined). Add the flour and mix to a firm dough. Shape the dough into two flat discs and wrap them. Chill for 20-30 mins. Heat oven to 190C/fan 170C/gas 5 and line two baking sheets with non-stick baking paper.

STEP 2

Roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface to about the thickness of two £1 coins. Cut out Christmassy shapes (use a cutter if you like) and place on the baking sheets. Using the tip of a skewer, cut a small hole in the top of each cookie. Bake for 10-12 mins until lightly golden.

STEP 3

Lift the biscuits onto a wire rack to cool. Meanwhile, mix the icing sugar with a few drops of cold water to make a thick, but still runny icing. Colour with edible food colouring, if you like. Spread it over the cooled biscuits, decorate with edible balls and thread with ribbon when dry.

Ingredients

- 140g icing sugar, sieved
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 egg yolk
- 250g butter, cut into small cubes
- 375g plain flour, sieved

To decorate

- 200g icing sugar, sieved
- edible food colouring, optional
- edible gold and silver balls
- approx 2m thin ribbon cut into 10cm lengths



Heads of Year Message

By Ms R. Bourne - Head of Year 7



Winter is well and truly here and Christmas preparations have been celebrated throughout the school! We cannot believe how quickly this term has flown by and already our Year 7's seem to have matured so much, working towards preparation for that final year and the next step, High School.

Just one week left until Christmas Day and thanks to Epraise our pupils have all achieved positive points. Our rewards events are always highly sought after and pupils are encouraged to earn points at every opportunity and to think about the choices they make in order to avoid potential demerits. This year Year 5 went to see 'Beauty and the Beast' pantomime, Year 6 saw 'Cinderella' pantomime and KS3 went Ten Pin Bowling at Hollywood Bowl!

A reminder regarding equipment, please ensure your child is bringing in a pen, pencil, ruler, rubber and colouring pencils or glue sticks would be a recommendation for their Christmas lists too!

Our Christmas dinners (12th/13th) went down a treat and Christmas Jumper day (8th) was as popular as ever, with all the children smiling throughout the day bringing Christmas cheer into our corridors! Of course whilst we embraced festive finery on particular days, we asked that full school uniform was adhered to for the remainder of the term and to wrap up warm!

On that note, may I take the opportunity of wishing all our families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to welcoming our pupils back in January 2023.



*BE A
RAINBOW
IN
SOMEONE
ELSE'S
CLOUD*



P.E Update

By Mr M. Cowdery - Head of PE

It's been another busy few weeks within the PE department. All pupils have now completed their first four units encompassing our indoor athletics and gymnastics topics as well as two games topics. Looking forward to January, we will be covering our dance, healthy lifestyles and then two more games topics. It is our focus to offer a wide and diverse variety of opportunities to all of our pupils and to foster positive relationships with being active and healthy.

We recently held our annual House cross-country events for which we had an incredible 107 pupils choosing to participate. Windsor house emerged victorious by the smallest of margins over Tudor, with Stuart and Hanover coming third and fourth respectively. Children were selected from this competition to attend the District cross-country event which was held at Bromsgrove School this year. Against some of the finest runners from across the local area our pupils performed admirably. Special mention to George Ogden in year 6 who was our highest finisher and will now compete at the regional finals in the new year.

Fixtures have continued throughout this term with teams competing in friendly fixtures as well as county and national competitions. Particular praise must go to the U13 Girls football team who overcame King's School on penalties to progress into the 5th round of the national cup. This represents an incredible achievement and means they are now in the final 32 for the competition. Well done to the girls for acquitting themselves so well and to Miss Kendall for her management and coaching work.

Our extra-curricular clubs have proved extremely popular and will recommence in January. We are very lucky to have so many members of staff who are willing to give their time to offer these opportunities and enhance the experience of our pupils whilst at St John's. We have launched two new clubs within the last week to further increase our offer. A Key Stage 3 badminton club will run on a Wednesday morning and we are delighted to welcome Legacy Martial Arts who will offer a KS2 clubs on Friday afternoons. We are always looking for new opportunities to develop what is already an extensive range of extra-curricular clubs.

Finally, we are very pleased to welcome Miss Biddle to our department team. She has joined us as a PE Apprentice and will be able to offer additional support for pupils within curriculum time as well as lead small groups within school and at external events.

From myself and the entire PE department I'd like to wish each and every one of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Under 13's Girls Football

By Miss A. Kendall

The under 13's girls football team have reached the 4th round of the ESFA National Cup after a brilliant 12-0 win away to West Park School in Derby.

509 schools across the country entered this cup, so it is a huge achievement to get down to the last 64 teams.

The girls played against King's High School from Warwick. It was a tough game, but our girls managed to come through victorious and have made it to the final!

Well done girls!



Tweets from @sjmspe

Follow




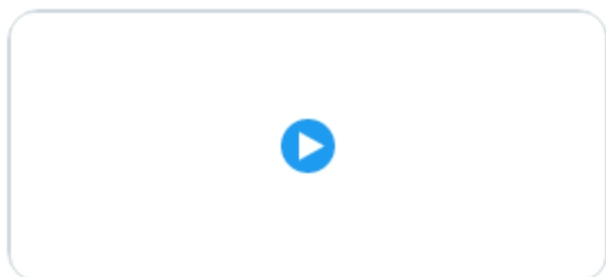
St John's Middle ... @... · Dec 12 
Last event of this year, Year 7 Girls indoor 5-a-side football. Our girls battled through to a semi final playoff and won on penalties. After a 0-0 draw in the final the result was decided by goals scored in previous rounds meaning we finished 2nd. Well done to all involved!



10




St John's Middle P... @... · Dec 8 
Congratulations to our 72 District Cross-Country runners who competed at Bromsgrove School on Tuesday. Special mention to our highest finisher George O who finished 6th in the Y6 Boys event. [#StJohns](#)



5



St John's Middle P... @... · Dec 5 
We sent a team of year 7 boys to the District indoor 5-a-side competition this evening. They came a respectable 3rd well done to eventual winners Parkside Middle



BDA Dyslexia Friendly Quality Mark



By Mr. D. McEvilly - Lead SENDCo for The Spire Church of England Learning Trust

'I was so impressed with the level of diligence, commitment and dedication displayed by the whole team. Clearly SEND provision and inclusivity is central to the ethos of the school.'
(BDA Assessors report, December 2022)

We are extremely pleased to be able to share with the school community that following a successful verification assessment by the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) on the 30th November 2022 St. John's have been awarded the prestigious Dyslexia Friendly Schools Quality Mark.

The Quality Mark is only issued to schools or organisations that can demonstrate that they provide high quality education for the dyslexic learner and students with additional needs. St. John's, demonstrated that they understand the needs of, provide appropriate resources for and have support strategies in place for students who have or possibly have dyslexia within the school community.

Becoming a dyslexia friendly school takes a minimum of two-years and requires the involvement and engagement of all of those within the school, and a review of the schools' approaches to teaching and learning; monitoring and assessment; adaptation; and high-quality practice. The assessors were delighted to report that St. John's 'met the criteria for the Dyslexia Friendly Quality Mark Award (and then some!!)'



Primary Maths Challenge

By Miss K. North - Head of Maths

Congratulations to our selected Year 5 and Year 6 pupils who took part in the Primary Maths Challenge on Friday 11th November! The PMC is designed to promote enthusiasm and confidence in maths, rooted in problems which can be solved in many different ways. Pupils loved the challenge and certificates will be awarded in the upcoming celebration assembly. Huge congratulations to our gold award winners...

Leo Shih	Casper Clayton	Evie Proudman	Nancy Clayton
Jake Jenkins	George Ogden	Brishen Seymour	Leo Addiscott
Annika Maraj			



Rock hero status:
Tanaka Chimutanda
Luca Lamorte



SBHS Eisteddfod

By Mr L. Boyd - Head of Year 8

On Thursday 10th November, our Year 8's visited South Bromsgrove High School to watch their annual Eisteddfod production. It was a brilliant afternoon of music, drama, art and dance which included many of St John's pupils. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all of our Year 8 pupils and Year 8 staff. We can't wait to go again next year where hopefully many of our current Year 8's will also be on stage.

Anti-Bullying week

By Mrs K. Gallinagh - Deputy Headteacher

14th-18th November 2022 was Anti-Bullying Week. On Monday 14th we started the week by showing our individuality by wearing odd socks. We continued through the week by talking to the pupils through assemblies and form time discussions about the importance of being kind; kind with our actions and with our words. Teachers have also taken this opportunity to discuss the term 'bullying' and what it means.



All pupils were introduced to this year's Anti-Bullying Ambassadors. These are a group of pupils from Year 6, 7 and 8 who have been trained to support children when they are having troubles in and around school. Our Ambassadors wear a special pin badge so everyone knows who they are and can access support quickly. The key message from this year's Anti-Bullying Week is to 'Reach Out'. We want all of our pupils to feel confident with the many different ways they can reach out for help.

Knife Crime Assembly

By Mrs K. Gallinagh - Deputy Headteacher

14 - 18 November 2022 was Knife Crime Awareness, for West Mercia Police

Monday 14th, PCSO Simon Gallagher, was in school to talk with KS3 pupils around the dangers of Knife Crime and how to keep safe.

On Wednesday 23rd November, KS2 pupils had an assembly delivered by PCSO Simon Gallagher - making sure they also understand how to keep safe.



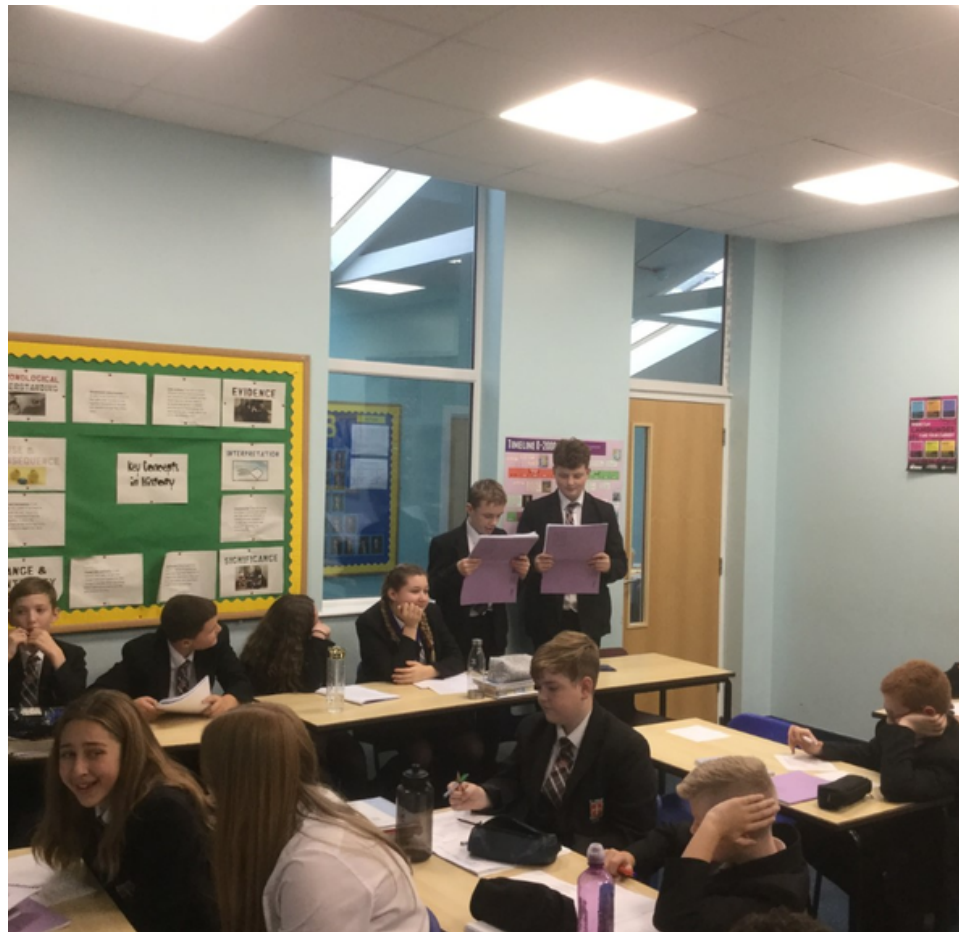
The Anti-violence bee was at The BirdBox Wednesday 15th November from 9-11am. "The Anti-violence Bee was originally commissioned by Greater Manchester Police, and it is made up of thousands of weapons taken from the streets of the city."



Normans and King Charles I

By Mr. N. Edwards - Head of History

Year 7 pupils have been learning about the Feudal system. With King William on the chair, to show how the Normans ruled over the English. The peasants should look quite sad, whilst sat on the floor. Year 8 pupils are putting King Charles I on trial. We can see some different individuals playing the role of King and delivering speeches to the courtroom. We then compared our mock trial with the actual trial of King Charles I and all classes reached the same verdict (To execute the king). Showing how harsh our Year 8's can be! 😊😊



Christmas present ideas for keen readers

By Mr. N. Edwards - Head of History

Dear Parents/Guardians

RE: Christmas present ideas for keen readers

I have created a list below of books which have been recommended by the Historical Association. Please see a list of book names, authors and the topics they connect with, including the year group they are studied. I've also added some miscellaneous suggestions. I hope they are of value:

Year 6 – The Chessmen Thief – Barbara Henderson

(Vikings)

- The Swallow's Flight – Hilary McKay Macmillan 10-13
- The Valley of Lost Secrets – Lesley Parr Bloomsbury 10-13 (WW1&2)

Year 7 – The Queen's Fool – Ally Sherrick

(Tudors)

Year 8 – The Royal Rebel – Bali Rai

(Migration)

- Lightning Strike – Tanya Landman (Industrial Revolution)

For anyone interested in girl's football:

- Dick, Kerr Girls: The Perfect Shot – Evie Ainsworth
- Our Beautiful Games – Lou Kuenzler

Best wishes for a happy Christmas and restful New Year
Mr N Edwards - Head of History



On Friday 9th December, Sajid Javid visited St John's to give an assembly to the pupils about democracy and the workings of parliament. It was very engaging and the children asked some interesting questions.





Christmas at St. John's Church

By Rev. Ray Khan



Christmas is for Children, the anticipation of the day, the joy and energy as they open presents, if we are honest we too get a buzz as we see our children open their gifts and share in their joy. This picture of Christmas is true for most families, but not for all! So we should not forget the struggles of other families at this time. Can I encourage you to make a gift to a charity that helps families or even a donation of food/ toiletries to NewStarts Food Bank opposite Homebase. Let us spread the love and joy of the season to others.

Christmas is a time of generosity and joy and these things connect us to that first Christmas when God gave you the most amazing gift of all - the gift of life, love and hope wrapped in a baby boy. Those who have received that gift know of the joy, love and life that they have received, but even more the joy that God has when we receive his gift into our lives. So my hope and prayer is that this Christmas you and your family may know that gift of love that God offers to all

Merry Christmas!

The Basement Project

By Mr.D. Owen - Assistant Head

We had a visit on Monday from Jerry Robinson, Marina Keegan and Nina Wilkes from The Basement Project who have supplied 160 food hampers and some winter warmer packs, for some of our families who we have contacted today to let them know they can be collected.



Reminders!

Just a quick reminder to be safe when crossing the road. Now it is getting darker when going home from school it can be difficult to see you in your blazers and dark coloured coats.

Please do not forget the advice we have issued about the dangers of playing on frozen waters.

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



THINKING OF TEACHING?
ARE YOU A GRADUATE?

THEN TRAIN WITH US!

TEACHER TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

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ACHIEVE

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

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