

THE RED SWEATER LETTER

A newsletter from St. John's Middle School



Message from Mrs A. Elwell

Headteacher

It is hard to believe that we have already reached half term and it looks as though the weather is going to be very kind to us for the break ahead!

It has certainly been an incredibly busy half term across the school. I would especially like to commend our Year 6 pupils for the resilience, determination and positive attitude they demonstrated throughout their recent SATs. They fully embodied our school values and made us all very proud.

Our Year 5 pupils had an amazing experience at Oakerwood, and as I write this, our Year 8 pupils are enjoying what sounds like an equally fantastic time at Arete. Earlier this half term, our Year 8 pupils also returned from an unforgettable trip to Iceland, full of incredible experiences and memories that I know will stay with them for years to come. These opportunities create lasting memories and help develop confidence, independence and teamwork.

We were also delighted to welcome an author into school this half term, continuing our celebration of the Year of Reading and inspiring pupils with a love of books and storytelling. Pupils also thoroughly enjoyed our immersive planetarium experience, which brought learning to life in a truly memorable way.

Alongside this, we have continued to enjoy great sporting success, as well as a range of exciting educational visits and opportunities including trips to the Black Country Museum, Warwick University, and the start of many transition events as pupils prepare for the next stages of their journeys. It has also been lovely to celebrate pupils' achievements through special events such as our Pizza Party reward celebration and Tea with Mrs E, which have been wonderful opportunities to recognise effort, success and positive contributions across the school community.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support throughout such a busy and successful half term.

I wish everyone a wonderful half term break. Enjoy the sunshine, take the opportunity to relax and recharge, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back for another action-packed half term ahead!

Mrs Elwell
Headteacher

"EVERY
LESSON
IS A STEP
CLOSER
TO YOUR
GOALS."

Collective Worship

By Miss C. Russell- Head of Music and Worship

This term we have been focusing on our value of integrity and thinking about what it means to do the right thing even when no one is watching. We have reflected on the story of Daniel in the Lion's Den and on The Birth of Moses. We have also marked the church's yearly celebration of Ascension and prepared ourselves for the festival of Pentecost on the first Sunday of half-term. Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit fell upon the disciples gathered in prayer, is also traditionally known as Whitsun, a name which looks back at the pre-reformation practice of those who had been baptised at Easter, wearing their white robes every Sunday during the seven weeks of Eastertide, and on Pentecost, which marks the end of the Easter festivities, they would lay these white robes aside and join the congregation as a whole. Hence Whitsun - White Sunday.

(Pentecost, a retelling - Andrea Skevington)

From the fields it came: the first sheaf of barley cut for that year's harvest. It was carried high through streets crammed with visitors, and on to the Temple. And then the priest offered it to God, giving thanks for the good land, and for the gift of harvest. For that day was the celebration of the first fruits. It was Pentecost.

Meanwhile, the disciples were all together, waiting. Then, suddenly, it began. It started with sound – a sound like the wind – but this was no gentle harvest breeze. This was a shaking and a roaring: a sound of power, whooshing and howling about the house, rattling every door and shutter. The sound seemed to come down from heaven itself, and filled the house as the wind fills sails. Then, the disciples watched wide-eyed as something that looked like fire came down, and tongues of flame peeled off it and rested on each of them without burning them. All of them were filled, for the Holy Spirit had come. And as it happened, their tongues were loosened, and they began to speak as the Spirit gave them words. These words were not Aramaic, their own language, but in languages that were unknown to them.

A crowd had gathered by the house because of the extraordinary sound, but then they heard voices. There were pilgrims in Jerusalem from all over the known world, and they recognized the words the disciples were speaking.

“He’s talking Egyptian!” said one.

“That one’s talking my language,” said a visitor from Crete – and the same was true for all. Each person heard God’s praises in their own tongue.

“What can it mean?” they asked each other. But others among the crowd joked that the disciples had been drinking.

The Twelve heard what they were saying, so Simon Peter stood up to speak to the crowds. “Listen, I’ll tell you what’s happening. We’re not drunk! It’s too early in the day for that! This is God’s promise come true. Do you remember what one of the prophets wrote long ago?

I’ll pour out my Spirit on everyone – young and old.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
young men will have visions, and old men dreams.

All who follow me – men and women – will
be given my Spirit, and there will be wonders!

Year 5 Planetarium Visit

On Monday 27th April the Black Hole Planetarium arrived in school for a Year 5 workshop. The workshop was designed to enhance the children's learning in Science lessons about Earth and Space. The children were thrilled by a tour around our solar system, explored the possibility of life elsewhere in the universe and found out more about the recent Moon mission. Finally, the children experienced the night sky with all of the stars that are visible from Earth. We talked about the constellations and how to spot certain stars in the night sky.

It was a fantastic experience for everyone involved.

"I thought the planetarium was very inspiring because all of the facts about space really interested me. I really enjoyed seeing the stars all around the dome." Emily, 5AKE

"The planetarium was so fun! I thought it was super cool that one day we might find life on Mars!" Sylvie, 5AKE

"We found out a lot like how big space is and how long it takes to get to the different planets. It was the best experience ever!"

Author visit

On Wednesday 22nd April, we were visited by author, ghostwriter and former professional footballer Seth Burkett. Seth delivered two inspirational assemblies to our pupils about his journey to becoming a writer and footballer, including a powerful message about the need for perseverance and the importance of overcoming failure. Seth also worked with some English groups in the morning, helping them to develop their creativity. Many of our pupils were so inspired by Seth that they stayed behind after his assemblies to speak to him and ask for his autograph. We hope Seth's message has resonated with the students and that he has inspired them to enjoy reading and writing for pleasure as well as to never give up and work hard in pursuit of their dreams!



Year 5 Oaker Wood Residential Trip

From Sunday 19th–Tuesday 21st April, our Year 5 pupils enjoyed an exciting residential trip to Oaker Wood Leisure Centre.

During their stay, the children took part in a wide range of outdoor activities, including paintballing, monkey climb, woodland krypton, low ropes, pizza making, and much more. Each activity challenged pupils to step outside their comfort zones, and they rose to the occasion wonderfully, showing excellent perseverance, teamwork and resilience throughout.

Evenings were just as enjoyable, with pupils spending time playing on the field with friends, chatting around the campfire, roasting marshmallows, and warming up with hot chocolate. These moments helped strengthen friendships and build confidence and independence.

The children's behaviour, enthusiasm and positive attitudes made staff extremely proud. We are incredibly proud of each and every one of them for embracing the experience so fully.



SATs Week

Last week, our Year Six pupils showed remarkable effort and resilience as they completed their SATs tests.

Throughout the week, they truly embodied our school values: showing love by encouraging and supporting one another, demonstrating perseverance through their focus and determination, and acting with integrity by giving their very best in every test. They also showed forgiveness, both towards themselves and others, recognising that mistakes are part of learning. We are incredibly proud of the maturity, dedication, and positive attitude they displayed throughout the tests.

Well done, Year Six!

Pizza Party!

On Friday 15th May, we invited a select group of pupils and their families to attend a special pizza party celebration.

Pupils and their parents/carers enjoyed the opportunity to make pizzas from scratch, choosing their own toppings and working together to create some delicious results. The event provided a wonderful opportunity for families and staff to come together in a relaxed and enjoyable setting.

The pizzas looked fantastic, and it was lovely to see pupils showing enthusiasm, creativity and teamwork throughout the morning. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the event such a success.



Year 8 Iceland Trip – St John’s Middle School

At the end of the Spring term, 35 Year 8 pupils, accompanied by four members of staff, took part in an unforgettable educational visit to Iceland. The trip provided an incredible opportunity for pupils to experience geography beyond the classroom, exploring some of the most dramatic and unique landscapes in the world.

Highlights of the visit included Þingvellir National Park, where pupils were able to see firsthand where the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates meet, bringing their learning about plate tectonics vividly to life. Pupils also took part in an exciting glacier hike, learning about glacier formation and movement while developing resilience and teamwork skills.

Visits to the Hellisheiði Geothermal Power Station and the Secret Lagoon helped pupils understand how geothermal energy shapes Iceland’s landscape, economy and everyday life. These experiences linked closely to curriculum learning about renewable energy, sustainability and how people adapt to their physical environment.

Our guide, Karen, was fantastic throughout the trip and played a key role in bringing each location to life, helping pupils to understand the landscapes in an engaging and accessible way.

Pupils conducted themselves exceptionally well throughout the visit and were positive representatives of the school. Staff were proud of their enthusiasm, resilience and the way they supported one another throughout the experience. The trip was not only academically enriching but also strongly supported pupils’ personal development by building confidence, independence and teamwork.

Overall, the Iceland trip was a hugely successful and memorable experience, leaving pupils with lasting knowledge, skills and memories that will stay with them for years to come.



Tea with Mrs E!



On Wednesday 20th May, we were delighted to invite a group of pupils to enjoy “Tea with Mrs E”! These pupils were chosen in recognition of their fantastic attitude towards learning and their consistently positive contribution to school life – a truly well-deserved honour.

The afternoon was filled with smiles as they tucked into a delicious selection of cakes and enjoyed drinks with Mrs Elwell. It was a lovely opportunity to celebrate their hard work, commitment, and the brilliant example they set for others.

We hope they had a fantastic time – we are incredibly proud of each and every one of them.

Keep up the amazing work!



Year 7 and 8 visit to Warwick University

A group of 15 pupils from Years 7 and 8 enjoyed an inspiring trip to the University of Warwick’s Science and Engineering Department. During the visit, they took part in three challenging problem-solving workshops and explored the university campus on a guided tour. Pupils asked thoughtful questions about university life and future study options, and demonstrated excellent enthusiasm, perseverance, and teamwork throughout the day. Activities included exploring the properties of the Möbius strip and its link to the Klein bottle, investigating symmetry and reflection alongside undergraduates, and tackling a range of engaging mathematical challenges. The professors were highly complimentary about the pupils’ attitude and approach.

The visit ended with a quiz to test their learning—why not try the same question they faced: how many squares are there on a chessboard? (It’s not 64!)

Year 8 Black Country Museum Trip

The Year 8 trip to the Black Country Living Museum was a fantastic educational experience for everyone involved. During the visit, students had the opportunity to meet an expert guide and explore the fascinating Newcomen Engine, recognised as the first steam engine.

The group also learned about life and working conditions in the mines during the Industrial Revolution, gaining a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by workers at the time. In addition to the educational activities, students thoroughly enjoyed spending time on the fair, which added to the fun and memorable experience of the day.

Year 8 Pupil A.C in 8MC wrote:

On our trip to the Black Country Living Museum, we had some very good experiences. First, we met our guide and went to see the Newcomen engine (The first ever steam engine). We then learnt about what happened in mines and saw a show which explained to us about the dangerous gasses found in the mines. I personally enjoyed listening to the bits about the mines and especially the demonstrations.

The trip was a really good experience and developed my knowledge of the Industrial Revolution.

Year 5 Wise Up

During this half term, the Year 5 pupils who did not attend Oaker Wood Leisure enjoyed two exciting days of activities led by Wise Up in school. The children took part in Mission Possible, a fun spy-themed team-building experience that encouraged communication, cooperation and problem-solving skills.

They also explored a range of bush craft activities, including shelter building and fire lighting, where they learned valuable outdoor survival skills in a safe and engaging environment.

The pupils approached every activity with enthusiasm and determination, embracing the opportunity to work collaboratively, develop new skills and step outside their comfort zones.



SENDIASS Workshops and Webinars

[SENDIASS](#) provide free workshops and webinars for parent carers and professionals/practitioners. These workshops can help build knowledge and skills for families with a child or young person with SEND and any professionals that support them.

Spaces are still available for the summer term.

Workshops currently available for parent carers:

[Autism and Me \(developed by autistic young people\)- HW SENDIASS](#)

[How to check an Education Health and Care Plan \(EHCP\) - HW SENDIASS](#)

[A Guide to SEND Support- HW SENDIASS](#)

[Supporting Young People with SEND: Preparing for Adulthood- HW SENDIASS](#)

[Supporting your child to cope with change \(transitions\) HW SENDIASS](#)

[Understanding Dyslexia - HW SENDIASS](#)

[How to have an effective meeting - HW SENDIASS](#)

Huge Well Done Harriet



We are incredibly proud to share that one of our pupils has achieved amazing success for her team, Starz Academy Vixens! She will now go on to represent her team at St George's Park in June, where she'll compete against other UK winners! In an unforgettable final, her team was 2-0 down with just 3 minutes to go. Showing true determination and resilience, Harriet scored twice to bring the game level and take it to penalties. Holding her nerve, Harriet then scored the winning penalty—securing victory for Starz Academy Vixens and making them tournament champions! 🏆

A huge congratulations—what a fantastic achievement! 🌟

Well done Evan!!

A huge well done to Evan on achieving his green belt in martial arts. This is a fantastic accomplishment that reflects his dedication, discipline, and hard work. We are all incredibly proud of his progress and look forward to seeing what he achieves next.



P.E. update

Mr. Cowdrey- Head of P.E.

County Cup Champions!

A huge congratulations to our Under 11 girls' football team, who have been crowned Worcestershire County Cup champions! In an exciting final against Witton Middle School, the team secured a thrilling 3-2 victory, with the winning goal coming in the very last minute of the game – a fantastic display of determination and teamwork. Well done to all of the girls involved. We are incredibly proud of your achievement!



The Year 7 Netball team came second in the District Competition. The girls played some excellent netball and only missed out narrowly to a very strong Aston Fields team.

P.E. update Continued

Mr. Cowdrey- Head of P.E



This group of KS3 girls attended the “Worcs Girls Can” festival at David Lloyd Gym. They were involved in a range of activities including Cardio Tennis and Yoga.

Our KS2 Girls not only won their district competition but also won the overall county competition for Sportshall Athletics beating teams from across Worcestershire!



KS2 Boccia players after their 2nd place in the recent competition. They now qualify to represent our district in the Summer School Games.



Dates For The Diary

10th June - Twycross Zoo

17th June - Year 8 Group Photograph

15th/16th/18th June - Year 6 Bonterre Farm Trip

19th June - Year 8 Prefect Trip

23rd June - Year 7 Commandrey Trip

24th June - St. John's Picnic

26th June - Year 8 Careers Day

2nd July - Year 6 Theatre Group Visit

3rd July - Launchpad trip to Cadbury World

6th July - Sports Day

9th July - FUN FEST

13th July- Transition Day

16th July - Year 8 Leavers Event

Social Media

Our social media pages are officially live!
Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to stay up to date with our latest news and celebrations.

April & May

KS2

Wildlife Anagram

BADLY RID

Ideas for April/May

At home:

- Count butterflies during a walk
- Create a 'nectar café' by planting honeysuckle and evening primrose

At school:

- Write a poem or short story about a bird

Season: spring

Invertebrates are emerging from winter hibernation, flowers are blooming, and evenings are getting lighter!



Worcestershire Wildlife Trust

What can you see?

What do you enjoy about Springtime?

Did you know...

Cuckoos fly to Africa over winter. Slow worms aren't worms or snakes – they're legless lizards!

Slow-worm



Matthew Lissimore



Robin Couchman

Snake's-head fritillary



Bee-fly



Cuckoo

Jon Hawkins

April & May

KS3

Wildlife anagram

COMET ESSY

Ideas for April/May

At home:

- Record how many different types of wildlife you can see in your garden.

At school:

- Write a haiku or short story about nature.

Season: spring

Invertebrates are emerging from winter hibernation, flowers are blooming, and evenings are getting lighter!



Worcestershire Wildlife Trust

What can you see?

What do you enjoy about Springtime?

Did you know...

Hazel dormice spend ¾ of the year asleep. Golden eagles have a wingspan of over 2.25m!

Hare



Russell Savory



Bob Coyle

Peacock butterfly



Yellowhammer



Smooth newt

Alan Price