

# St John's Walworth Primary School

## Monthly Newsletter – November 2018

*Dear St John's,*

We have had a very busy and productive start to the school year at St John's. Christmas is fast approaching and the end of the Autumn term. Please read on to see some of our news and some dates of future events for your diaries.

### **Parent Teacher Meetings**

Thank you to all of the parents and carers who attended meetings with their child's teacher this month. If you weren't able to attend please book an appointment before the end of this term. These will be the first report meetings this year, so we urge you attend so that your partnership with teachers is established and insights about your child's learning are shared from the beginning of the academic year.

### **Mobile Phones**

A big thank you to all Year Six children and their parents. Children have been handing their phones in to the office when they arrive each morning and collecting them at the end of each school day, as requested in our last newsletter. We are delighted that we have been able to trust the children to follow this rule.

### **School Ambassador**

Belated congratulations to Adora Owoh one of our appointed Year Six ambassadors. Unfortunately I forgot to add her to the list in October's newsletter. She is a fantastic role model and an excellent ambassador – keep up the great work!

### **Southwark Memorial Dedication Ceremony**

On Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November, our new school choir performed publically for the first time in Walworth Square. They were invited by the Mayor of Southwark, Catherine Rose and by Andrew Nunn, the Dean of Southwark Cathedral. They were well received and they sounded beautiful. The adults who escorted them were very proud.

### **Assemblies and Workshops to Develop Children's Understanding of the World**

This month the children have had the chance to participate in a variety of workshops and assemblies

which help them to develop their understanding of the world. On the 13<sup>th</sup> November Year 6 children participated in a workshop entitled 'Friends versus Friendly – Growing Against Violence', which informed children about how to avoid being recruited by gangs. A road safety assembly took place on 8<sup>th</sup> November for KS1 children. This Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> November all of the children participated in an assembly about the challenges that young people with disabilities face and next week the NSPCC will deliver assemblies to the whole school and run workshops with Year 5 and 6.

### **Drama Club**

Our drama club started last Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> November. All twenty places have been taken. Their drama tutor, Ellie Fulcher was very impressed with the children and reported that their first session went very well. The children are working towards the Nativity performance which will be shared with the whole school and parents in St John's Church on the **21<sup>st</sup> December 2018** (further details on the next page).

### **Reading Through Developing Oracy**

This month the school has been included in a Southwark funded programme called 'Reading Through Developing Oracy'. Our Year 5 and 6 teachers and LSAs from Year 1, 3 and 6 have all been fortunate enough to attend workshops where strategies for developing children's vocabulary and ability to express themselves eloquently have been explored. Recent research has demonstrated that if we increase children's 'word power' and their interest in reading a diverse range of texts, then they make significant progress academically. The programme continues in the new year and will be further developed at St John's by Nicola Bishop who will be working with us as a consultant for the duration of the Spring term.

### **Teaching Partnerships**

Over the past term we have been very lucky to work with professional colleagues who have been supporting us on our journey towards improvement. New ideas and different approaches are being welcomed by all of our teaching staff and confidence is growing as we see the children engaging with their

learning with enthusiasm. Claire Gillespie from St Francis Primary School, Nicola Bishop from the Literacy Tree and Neil Carter founder of the Primary Shakespeare Company have all contributed so much to our team – thank you!

### **Assessment Weeks**

Over the next two weeks all of the children from Year 1 to Year 6 will be assessed. Next week assessments for reading, maths, spelling and grammar will take place. From the **10<sup>th</sup> December** children's writing will be assessed. The assessments will help the teachers to see what the children have learnt so far this year and what still needs to be taught. Throughout this year assessments will happen at the end of every half term so that we can track every child's progress accurately.

### **Nativity Performance**

On **Friday 21<sup>st</sup> December** (the last day of term) the children will perform in St John's Church. The choir will sing songs that they are currently rehearsing, as will children from every class. Children from our newly formed drama club will perform scenes from the Nativity. **We would like to invite all parents and carers to attend from 1.30pm until 2.30pm.** We hope that this will be a wonderful end to the term and an enchanting beginning to the Christmas holiday. ***Those of you who would like to take your children home directly after the performance are welcome to do so.*** We hope to see you there.

### **Christmas Fayre**

The school's Christmas Fayre will be on **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> December**, in the school grounds, from **3pm – 5pm**. A range of events and stalls will provide fun and festive experiences for children including food, crafts, games and Santa. We hope that you can attend, buy some small Christmas gifts and enjoy some food. All proceeds will be used to purchase books which support our Literacy Tree Curriculum. We hope that this event can celebrate the community's faith in the school and the continuation of the improvements that we are working so hard to achieve.

### **Further Christmas Events in School**

The school's Christmas lunch will be on **Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December**, children can wear a Christmas jumper on that day if they would like to. Lessons will continue as normal.

On **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> December** the children will have their class parties. Each teacher will inform you of the particular arrangements for their class in due course.

### **Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Company**

From January, Year 3 and Year 5 children will have the opportunity to explore dance with the highly regarded Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Company. Professional dancers will work with the children each Wednesday afternoon throughout January, February and March. On the **20<sup>th</sup> March 2019** the children will perform what

they have learnt and devised for parents/carers. We are very excited about this opportunity.

### **Breakfast and After School Clubs**

We are currently finalising plans to launch St John's Walworth Primary School Breakfast and After School Clubs. The next stage will be to recruit staff to run the clubs. We have applied and have been fortunate to have received funding from 'The Magic Breakfast', a government funded project, which will help us to keep the cost of attending low. Further details will be published in due course.

### **Maths Workshops for Parents/Carers**

The strategies that we use to teach maths, particularly the four operations (+, -, x, ÷) can seem very unfamiliar or unfathomable to parents and carers. Research shows that children who receive support at home make the most progress in school we are running three workshops for parents to try and de-mystify our teaching methods and improve every child's opportunity for success.

The three workshops will be held on:

**16<sup>th</sup> January – Year One and Year Two**

**17<sup>th</sup> January – Year Three and Year Four**

**18<sup>th</sup> January - Year Five and Year Six**

**All workshops will be from 3.30 – 4.30pm**

### **After School Sports Clubs (from January 2019)**

From January we will be trialling two sports after school clubs. On **Mondays a club for Year 3 and 4** children, which will focus on dodgeball and basketball. On **Thursdays a Year 5 and 6** football team. The clubs are open to girls and boys and both will cost £3 per session. Both sessions will be run by a qualified coach. A letter will be sent out next week inviting you to apply for a place for your child. If there is enough interest then we will run the clubs from January.

### **Black History Assemblies**

All classes have been exploring themes around Black History. From January each class will present their thoughts, feelings and knowledge about Black History during our Friday assemblies. The staff team decided that extending this focus beyond the limits of Black History Month (October) was important for our school. We look forward to seeing the children's presentations next half term.

***Thank you for reading some of our news. We hope that you have a restful weekend and enjoy the time you spend with your children.***

*Matthew Velada-Billson*

**Head Teacher**