

St John's Walworth Primary School

Monthly Newsletter – December 2018

Dear St John's,

We have had a very busy term during which numerous changes have occurred, many of which have been documented in the last three newsletters (*please see our updated school website*).

Although all of the staff are looking forward to the Christmas holiday, we are united in our ambition to continue improving every aspect of school life.

My work throughout this first term has enabled me to understand what needed to change at St John's, to formulate plans and new systems, and to share and agree those plans and systems with all of the staff. I am pleased that we have achieved a sense of clarity, and that confidence in our continuing improvement is high.

The New Year will see the consolidation of all of the initiatives that have been reported in previous Newsletters and the continuation of further developments: From January the offer of free bagels for every child who arrives at school between 8.45am and 9.00am will begin; we will have after school clubs from Monday to Thursday (sports, drama and choir); our new Pastoral Manager, Vanessa Mincher will oversee children's well-being, working closely with Mary Sears; new approaches to planning, assessment and teaching will enliven the curriculum and support children's learning across the school.

I would like to thank all of the parents, children and adults who work at the school for welcoming me to St John's, I have enjoyed getting to know many of you and I have appreciated the warmth and support that I have been offered.

I look forward to returning in January with a new lease of life and to continue the work which I have started. I hope that you all have a wonderful Christmas and a successful new year.

Please read on to see messages from each year group and some other important news.

Matthew Velada-Billson

(Head Teacher)

Reception

It has been a very busy and successful term for pupils and staff in Reception. We are very proud of your children's effort and work, and how well they have settled into the school and class routine. Children have faced new experiences and changes with maturity, in particular moving to our new classroom. Children are making good progress in reading and writing words independently and with their phonics.

Please, keep valuing the special time you spend with your children, reading stories with them and encouraging them to discover the pleasure of reading. Reading is the foundation of all learning at school and an early commitment to reading will have an impact on the rest of their lives.

On behalf of the Reception team, we would like to thank you all, parents, pupils and friends of St John's, for your continued support and trust, and to wish you a restful Christmas and a New Year of health and happiness.

Year One

The last fifteen weeks have been some of the most demanding but rewarding of my professional career. The children are very good. They are funny, interesting and proud to be St John's boys and girls. Many of them get involved in their daily school life and what I see is truly amazing. Parental support is very good. I could not do what I do without the support of mums, dads and wider family members. I enjoy the benefits of good parenting and look to build upon it to produce outstanding young people.

I look forward with genuine enthusiasm and excitement for spring term. I ask that you all enjoy the Christmas holiday break and that the children return to us safely in the new term and New Year refreshed and ready to take best advantage of another term's learning opportunities.

Miss C. Thomas

Year Two

It's been a glorious autumn term with our successful trip on the River cruise and to Southwark Cathedral. The adults and children have worked relentlessly to make this term a brilliantly successful one and the children are making good progress in their learning.

We give all Glory to God and say thank you to all our parents for your supportive role. It's been a pleasure working with you this term. We appreciate your supportive effort towards making these children's dreams come true. We look forward to continuing working with you in spring term.

From Ms McDonald and me, have a lovely and restful Christmas break.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR IN ADVANCE. Mrs Umoren

Year Three

We have made it through this first, marathon-length, term, all a little older, a lot wiser and still in one piece! We've built Stonehenge and painted a Monet; we've travelled millions of years back in time to find sedimentary, fossil-laden rocks; we've polished the moon to a mirror-finish with tears of pure sadness; we've redesigned the route map for the Tour de France and analysed it all with bar charts. Every day we have persevered, got a little stronger, smarter and better. It is now time to enjoy the fruits of our endeavours and to think of those lacking companionship during this most festive season. Wishing everyone a merry Christmas, god bless you all, from the Year 3 team.

Year Four

It is almost the end of the autumn term and it has been a pleasure teaching the children of St Stephen's class. The pupils have worked hard and I hope to see this continue in the spring term too, where we intend to work on areas they have found challenging and move them on in their learning.

Thank you for all your support with attendance and homework this term. I know it can be hard but please remember that it is essential for your children to be at school every day, before 9 am. In the spring term, we shall be studying a broad topic, 'Different places, similar lives' which will cover learning in History, Geography, DT, Art and PSHE. The children will be swimming on Thursdays – please ensure your child's swimming resources are ready for the new term.

May I take this opportunity to wish you a very Merry Christmas from Ms Cheryl, Ms Mo and myself and we look forward to seeing you at our Christmas performance in the coming week.

D. Ward-Anderson

Year Five

This half term the children have been on an exciting cross curricular learning journey. In science they

have learnt about solids, liquids, gases and irreversible changes and made bread. In maths and English we continue to use our creative minds to produce amazing work. Please look at our blog page for further information on the topics we will explore in 2019.

Thank you for your support this term.

We wish you a Happy Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

Miss Oben, Sandra and Mary.

Year Six

The autumn term has been like a whirlwind, with most of the children grappling to come to terms with being in year 6-the 'the year of the 'dreaded SATs.'

Most of them are, however, starting to settle down, focus and work hard, having realised that there is so much work to do and a lot of ground to cover. Boosters are now in full swing for the children who require it to achieve the required progress.

As the new term approaches, I look forward to a positive learning experience for all children.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a merry Christmas and a prosperous new year.

Gloria Adesina and Shelly (Year Six Team)

SEND Support from January 2019

Jonathan Wren will be our new Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator from January 2019 and will be based here on Thursday and Fridays. Jonathan holds the National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators and previously worked as a SENCO at another Southwark school. He is currently studying for a Masters degree in advance practice for Speech, Language and Communication Needs at University College London's Institute of Education and City University. He is thoroughly looking forward to working with the children, families and staff of St Johns Walworth.

Mrs Nicol-Dundas

It is with regret that we announce the retirement of Mrs Nicol-Dundas who has taught at St John's Walworth Primary School for 27 years. Mrs Nicol-Dundas first joined the school in January 1991 as a class teacher and was later promoted to Deputy Head Teacher in 2007. We would like to thank Mrs Nicol-Dundas for her service to the school and the community and for her dedication to children's advancement through education. Throughout the period of time that she has been teaching she has touched many children's and families lives and I know that she is highly regarded for her commitment and dedication. She will be missed, but her legacy will undoubtedly remain. We wish her every success and happiness in the years to come.