St. John's C of E School

NEWSLETTER

www.st-johns.croydon.sch.uk

LOVE - LEARN - FLOURISH

LOVE: 1 Corinthians 13: 4 - 8 Love is patient, love is kind...It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails...

OCTOBER 2026

A BIG THANK YOU & A HAPPY HALF TERM!



A huge thank you to all our families for your generous Harvest donations! As you can see from the photo, we collected a wonderful selection of items, and we are so grateful for your kindness and support. We wish everyone a lovely, restful half term and look forward to welcoming the children back to school afterwards. Just a little reminder that winter uniform should be worn when the children return after half term. Enjoy the break!

RED SCARF AWARD

Well done to the following pupils who have recently been awarded the Red Scarf Behaviour Award! Parents/Carers of children who have been awarded the Red Scarf can collect their **FREE** hot drink from our Olive Branch Café!

Mole - Oliver
Hedgehog - Lyla
Dolphin - Florence
Dragonfly - Tara
Caterpillar - Isla
Chameleon - Joella

WELCOME, COACH ISAIAH!

Many of you will already have seen Coach Isaiah helping to run our after-school clubs this term. We are delighted to officially welcome him to our school community - please do take a moment to say hello and give him a warm welcome!





AND ALSO WELCOME TO MS ALLISON!

We are also delighted to welcome Ms Allison to St John's, who has joined our school team as a TA. Her specialism is in Maths, and she has already settled in wonderfully. We are very pleased to have her as part of our St John's family!

MR WEDDELL JOINING AS DEPUTY HEAD IN JANUARY!

We are delighted to announce that our new Deputy Head, Mr Tom Weddell, will be joining St John's in January! He impressed the panel, staff and children with his warmth, understanding of our school's values and commitment to children's learning. We look forward to welcoming him to the St John's family and building on our school's many strengths together.



PANTOSAURUS AT ST JOHN'S!

After the half term, children will be taking part in age-appropriate Talk PANTS sessions from the NSPCC. Using the friendly dinosaur Pantosaurus, these lessons help children learn important messages about staying safe, respecting personal boundaries, understanding that their body belongs to them, and knowing who they can talk to if they are worried about anything.

At school, we believe that keeping children safe is something we do in partnership with families. The Talk PANTS programme supports these conversations in a positive, child-friendly way, helping children build confidence and develop the skills they need to recognise when something doesn't feel right and seek help from a trusted adult.

We encourage parents and carers to continue these discussions at home. The NSPCC has a range of helpful information, videos and activities designed for families, which can be found on their website.

If you would like to find out more about the programme or discuss any aspect of the lessons, please do not hesitate to contact the school. We are always happy to answer questions and support families.



ROAD SAFETY WEEK

As part of our ongoing commitment to sustainability and sustainable travel, our school will be focusing on Road Safety Week from 16th-20th November.

Throughout the week, we will be raising awareness of the importance of staying safe on and around our roads.

We encourage parents and carers to support these messages at home by reminding children about safe road-crossing practices and the importance of being alert near traffic.



A BLESSING FOR OUR FURRY FRIENDS!

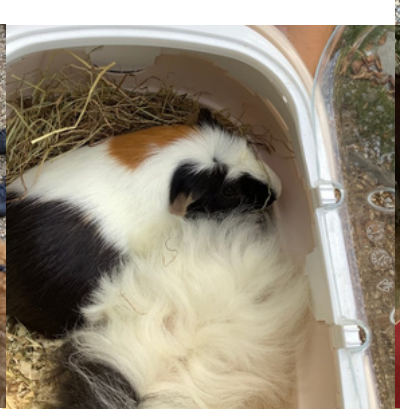
October kicked off with our annual Animal Blessing service, and many of the pupils were excited to see their pets joining them in the church. Receiving a blessing during the service were a wonderful variety of animals, from dogs and cats to guinea pigs, and even a pet spider! It was lovely to see so many different pets taking part and to share this special occasion with our school community.

Anna in Chameleon deserves a special mention for making the effort to bring her pet cats along to the service, despite having an injured foot! We were also delighted to welcome back a familiar face; Mrs Martin brought her dog, Noche, along to join in the fun!

The Animal Blessing service is always a lovely opportunity to celebrate the important place animals have in our lives and to come together as a community. Thank you to everyone who brought along their pets and joined us for the service. It was wonderful to see so many families taking part and a great way to start the month of October!








MRS REID'S OCTOBER HIGHLIGHTS!





As she continues to settle into St John's, Mrs Reid has been enjoying the opportunity to spend time with pupils across the school and experience the many aspects of school life that make our community so special.

This half term, she has enjoyed visiting a range of activities, including the Wednesday lunchtime Chess Club, where she was impressed by the children's concentration, strategic thinking and enthusiasm. A special well done to Chidi and Eliana, who both put her chess skills to the test with a challenging game!

Our morning Collective Worships have also been giving her a glimpse of the talented singers and musicians at our school. Well done to Caterpillar and Chameleon classes for the recent worships led by you. A lot of hard work went on behind the scenes, co-ordinated by Mrs Hudson, Miss Hook and Mrs George. As these were your final class-led Collective Worships, they were a particularly special and emotional occasion for everyone involved.

STEPPING BACK IN TIME!







This month, Year 3 and Year 4 had the chance to bring their history learning to life through two hands-on workshops, exploring very different periods of the past.

Year 3 travelled back to the Stone Age, learning about the three main periods: the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic. They learned how people lived and survived, handled imitation fur and took part in games related to their learning topic.

Year 4 stepped back into Ancient Rome for a full day of activities. Dressed as Romans, with some fantastic homemade shields, they made ink and wrote letters, crafted brooches and wax tablets, and blended herbs and spices to create essential oils for the skin. There was time to get active, too! Out on the field, the children marched together like a Roman army, putting themselves in the shoes of Roman soldiers and getting a sense of the discipline involved. A big thank you to our wonderful parent helpers, who joined in with the activities and helped make the day a success!



"It was fun being in the Roman Army because you get to use a bow and arrow and charge around and find the Celts!"
Joelle - Frog

"It was really fun. We had a person who was a soldier and he was really strict!"
Joelle - Frog



"The fur was fluffy and felt like real animal skin!"
Georgie - Hare




"The animal skin she gave us felt like it could be used for carpets or covers!"
Chester - Hare





"There were lots of tables with daily jobs. They were fun but hard to do!"
Arianna - Frog

GROWING TOGETHER



Have you ever wondered who looks after all the plants, flowers and growing spaces around our school?

Behind the scenes, Angela and her dad, Geoff, have been caring for the school's outdoor spaces, maintaining the Growing Area, tending the Ark playground planters (please help look after them by not sitting on them!) and caring for the various tubs and containers around the school grounds. Although Angela only intended the gardening to be a short-term arrangement, she enjoyed it so much that it has blossomed into a fully fledged hobby that she has continued for the past three years!

Children are always welcome to visit the Growing Area and help with watering. There are lots of interesting plants to discover, including lavender and Lamb's Ear, a plant named for its soft, woolly leaves that is a great sensory plant for the children to touch.

Over the summer, Angela and Geoff made some rather unusual friends by the willow tree. A group of yellow jacket wasps became regular visitors, feasting on the aphids living on its branches. While wasps often have a bad reputation, they play an important role in the garden ecosystem and soon became quite accustomed to seeing Angela and her dad around!

Much of the work Angela and Geoff do throughout the year is focused on preparing for Plant Together Day in May. All children take part, helping to plant and create colourful displays around the school. During the summer term, pupils then help by watering and caring for the plants they have helped grow.

At the far side of the field, we also have our compost heaps. These play an important role in reducing waste and creating nutrient-rich compost for the garden. Food waste from the Frog Bins can be added to the compost heaps, but please remember that only food should be placed there. All other rubbish should go into the Hippo bins.

As we move into the colder months, preparations are already underway for winter. Bulbs and wildflower seeds will soon be planted, ready to bring a burst of colour in the spring. Although the gardens may seem to be sleeping over winter, plenty of work is taking place behind the scenes to ensure another beautiful year of growing at our school.









Y2 BRING THE GREAT FIRE OF LONDON TO LIFE!

Year 2 have had an exciting start to their new topic, the Great Fire of London! To prepare for their learning, the children carefully designed and built their own Tudor-style houses, thinking about what buildings looked like in 1666.

Once their creations were complete, it was time to take learning outdoors! The houses were taken to the playground, where Warren, our school caretaker, set them alight in a carefully managed demonstration.

Watching the houses burn helped the children begin to understand how quickly the fire could spread through the narrow streets of London.



It was certainly a memorable way to introduce this fascinating period of history, giving the children a real sense of the events they will be exploring over the coming weeks.

Dear Father,

You designed the earth and sky,
The soaring birds, the butterfly,
The fish that swim within the sea,
The roaring lion, the buzzing bee.
You made the creatures, great and small,
Furry or feathery, you made them all.
Each has a place, each has a part,
Each is precious to Your heart.
So help us care for all we see,
From tiny ants to towering trees.
With gentle hands and hearts that care,
May we show your love to all, everywhere.

Amen

Diary Dates

Fri 23rd October
INSET DAY

Mon 26th - Fri 30th October
HALF TERM

Mon 2nd November
INSET DAY

Tues 3rd Nov
START OF AUTUMN TERM 2026

Weds 4th Nov
Y5 SPACE DOME WORKSHOP

Tues 10th November
YR DIWALI DANCE WORKSHOP

Weds 11th November
Y2 GREAT FIRE OF LONDON WORKSHOP

Mon 16th - Fri 20th November
ROAD SAFETY WEEK

Fri 13th November
HARE COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Tuesday 17th November
Y6 TRINITY MUSIC CONCERT

Wednesday 18th November
Y1 TOY MAKING WORKSHOP

Friday 20th November
HEDGEHOG COLLECTIVE WORSHIP
YR POST OFFICE TRIP

Friday 27th November
Y4 PIZZA MAKING
YR BIRTHDAY BEAR CELEBRATION

GIRLS ONLY SOCCER SCHOOL

PALACE FOR LIFE

CRYSTAL PALACE ACADEMY TRAINING GROUND

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Technical coaching & ball mastery
- Small-sided games & tournaments
- Fun football challenges & competitions
- Medals, prizes & daily awards
- Qualified FA & UEFA coaching staff



WHEN

Friday 30th October
9:00am – 3:00pm
Ages: 5–14 yrs (Years 1–9)

WHERE

Crystal Palace Academy
Training Ground
Copers Cope Rd
Beckenham
BR3 1NZ

BOOK NOW

online zoom session



Date: 4th November 2026
Time: 1:00pm - 1:45pm
Topic: Supporting Attention Needs in the Home Setting

Join Zoom Meeting:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3702413475?pwd=G2x3by2ctgXt8C3DbGNbqmncOcNNLI.1

Meeting ID: 370 241 3475
Passcode: 042272

This parent session, led by a Speech and Language Therapist, will explore simple, practical strategies that can be used during everyday routines and activities at home to support attention, listening and participation

Allen Speech & Language ASL

online zoom session



Date: 23rd November 2026
Time: 1:00pm - 1:45pm
Topic: Embedding Communication Friendly Strategies In The Home Setting

Join Zoom Meeting:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3702413475?pwd=G2x3by2ctgXt8C3DbGNbqmncOcNNLI.1

Meeting ID: 370 241 3475
Passcode: 042272

This parent session, led by a Speech and Language Therapist, will explore simple, practical communication approaches that can be naturally embedded into everyday routines, play and family interactions to support meaningful experiences for the child.

Allen Speech & Language ASL

SJSA
ST JOHN'S SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

DONATIONS PLEASE

Santa needs your help!

Can you donate any new or nearly new **toys, teddies, gifts, Christmas clothing, books, toiletries or games** that will be suitable for our Wrap-a-Gift or Nearly New stalls?

For our Wrap-a-Gift & Nearly New Toy Stalls!



Give toys a second life this Christmas!

We are very happy to receive pre-loved items for our nearly new stall. Before donating, please ensure items are:

- Clean & in good condition
- Safe, working & free from damage.
- Complete with no missing pieces.
- Do not contain button batteries.

Donations can be placed into the SJSA drop-off box by the main gates Tuesday 3rd November - Friday 27th November. **Thank you!**

RAFFLE PRIZES
Could you donate a raffle prize or know a business that could? A great way to advertise while supporting our school community! Get in touch with the SJSA or your class rep

SHOP ONLINE? RAISE FREE FUNDS FOR OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY
It costs you nothing extra!
Scan to support us
easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/sjsashirley

sjsashirley@gmail.com
@sjsa.shirley
St John's School Association - SJSA

Please let your class rep know if you can help run a stall at the fair!