

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER



NEWSLETTER DATED FRIDAY 30TH JANUARY 2026

Dear Families,

As we journey through the darker months of January, I continue to be deeply impressed by the way our children are approaching their learning with such enthusiasm, resilience, and joy. Even on the coldest and greyest of days, the classrooms are filled with light — the light of curiosity, kindness, and a genuine love of learning that reflects our shared values as a Catholic community.

Thank you all for your wonderful contributions to *Blue Monday* and *Zoo Monday*. These have brought such positive energy, smiles, and rays of hope to our Monday mornings this term. It has been a joy to see the children arriving with excitement and creativity, reminding us that small acts can lift spirits and strengthen our sense of togetherness.

We are now looking forward to *Shoe Monday* (children invited to wear their favourite pair of shoes) on Monday 2nd February, followed by the much-anticipated *Kazoo* (*each child gifted with their own kazoo – please do not buy a kazoo*) on Monday 9th February. These moments of shared fun play an important role in nurturing joy and connection within our school family.

This coming week also marks a very special milestone for our Year 4 children, who will be heading off on their first residential away from home to Braeside Adventure Centre in Devizes. This is an exciting opportunity for them to grow in independence, courage, and friendship. We cannot wait to hear all about how they rise to new challenges, support one another, and experience success through love, prayer, and plenty of laughter. We are always so grateful to the committed and passionate staff team who give up their own time to support such an important event for the children.

This week we have had safe delivery of our reading shepherds hut which has landed on the school field. Going forward this will allow all children to have access to a safe space to read and relax on the school field during their lunchtime. We are always so grateful to the Friends of St John's who have supported with the cost of the purchase of this provision for all children. We are excited about the new opportunities this will offer!

Before I close please ensure you check your diaries and are able to attend the online parent/grandparent zoom workshop on Monday 9th February at 7pm. This will be a wonderful opportunity for you to be upskilled in managing to live alongside the demands of the technical

world and how to support your child. I cannot encourage you enough to engage with this opportunity – Richard Pomfreet is an incredible national consultant and speaker – I guarantee you will come away with some new skills and/or knowledge! During the school day children in KS2 will be working alongside Richard but the parent zoom meeting is for every parent – including those with the youngest children. The link can be found on the attachment.

As always, thank you for your continued support, encouragement, and partnership. Together, we help our children to grow not only in knowledge, but also in faith and character.

With every blessing,

Mrs O'Rourke

Upcoming Dates

Wednesday 11th February – Year 3 and 4 Multiplication Workshop at 8.45am

Thursday 12th February – Year 6 SATs Information Evening for Parents at 5.30pm in School Hall

Thursday 26th February – Year 3 and 4 Multiplication Workshop at 8.45am

Friday 6th March – 2.30pm Parent Café with Wiltshire Parent Carers Council

Sunday 8th March - St John of God Feast Day

Friday 22nd May - Sports Day

Saturday 27th June - St John the Baptist 150th Celebration – being celebrated at St Augustine's Catholic College

Friday 3rd July – Whole School Pilgrimage

Friday 10th July from 4.30pm – 7.30pm – Summer Fayre

Friday 17th July – End of Academic Year School Mass

Morning Supervision and Parental Responsibility (8:30–8:40am)

As a Catholic school community, the safety and wellbeing of every child entrusted to our care is of the utmost importance.

We kindly remind families that between 8:30am and 8:40am, children remain the responsibility of their parents or carers. During this time, there is no formal staff supervision available on the school grounds.

Parents are asked not to leave their children unattended before 8:40am. To support parents with an earlier drop off parents are very welcome to book their child into our excellent Breakfast Club provision – please contact the school office team for more information.

This policy is in place to ensure the safety of all children and to support our staff in providing appropriate supervision at all times. We appreciate the cooperation of our families in helping

us maintain a safe and caring environment, grounded in mutual respect and shared responsibility.

Fundraising Events

As many families are aware the children at St John's are incredible ambassadors for living out the Catholic Social Teaching theme of Option for the Poor and Vulnerable. The children will independently come up with their own ideas for raising money to support charity work that they are passionate about. Recently this has included a Fossil and Stone sale for Dorothy House led by a group of LKS2 boys and a Drawing Competition for Blue Cross Animal Charity. These small sales are always overseen by an adult during the lunch time provision and celebrated during Friday Celebration Assembly. Thank you to all the families for supporting the children who are becoming wonderful change makers!

Reading Breakfast with Families

We are warmly inviting parents and carers into the school hall on the following dates to enjoy a relaxed start to their day with coffee/tea and croissants with their child and sharing some high quality books together. We look forward to welcoming you into school to share your love of reading and power of the word!

Year 2 – Thursday 5th February from 8.40am – 9.30am

Year 1 - Tuesday 17th March from 8.40am – 9.30am

EYFS – Wednesday 22nd April from 8.40am – 9.30am

Sunday Children's Mass

Once again this year we are delighted to be working in partnership with St John the Baptist parish and all children are warmly invited to join our celebration of Mass. Miss O'Mahony will be organising readers and singers. Everyone is welcome!

Sunday Children's Masses:

Term 4 – 22nd March 2026

Term 5 – 10th May 2026

Term 6 – 28th June 2026 - St John The Baptist Church 150th Anniversary Celebration Mass

Celebrating Our Children at Sunday Children's Mass

Following Sunday's Children's Mass, we were delighted to receive a lovely message from a parishioner, praising the children who took part as readers, singers and musicians.

They described the Mass as an *uplifting and prayerful experience*, and commented on how confidently and reverently the children participated. The parishioner also shared how impressed they were by the children, describing them as wonderful ambassadors for their school and families.

Moments like this show how our children are living out our Catholic values by **serving others**, **sharing their gifts**, and **playing an active role in parish life**. We are incredibly proud of all the pupils who took part, as well as the families who supported the Children's Mass and helped make it such a meaningful celebration.

Please join us in congratulating the children and thanking staff for supporting them in growing as confident, faith-filled members of our school and parish community.

Norovirus (Winter-Vomiting bug)

Cases of Norovirus in England have increased by 61% over the last 2 weeks. Key advice to help reduce the risk in school and early years settings is to maintain high standards of hand hygiene and environmental cleaning. It is important that children and adults wash hands regularly with warm soapy water. Alcohol gels do not kill norovirus.

If children or staff have symptoms of norovirus (diarrhoea and/ or vomiting) they should not attend the school or early years setting and should not return until at least 2 days (48 hours) after diarrhoea and vomiting have stopped.

More information is available on the NHS website here [Diarrhoea and vomiting - NHS](#). Further advice can be found using this link [Managing specific infectious diseases: A to Z - GOV.UK](#)

Phunky Foods

The Phunky Food ambassadors led an assembly on Monday to share their learning about a healthy lunch box. They learnt that a healthy lunchbox will give them energy to move and learn, keep them feeling fuller for longer and the importance of drinking plenty of water.

NSPCC- Over the last few weeks, all classes have completed lessons from the NSPCC learning about the speak out stay safe campaign.

Year 2,5 and 6 had workshops. They learnt that they have the right to be kept safe and how to get help or which trusted adult to talk to.



Youth Parliament

This week, Toby and Thomas from year 6 visited Walwayne School to attend a Youth Parliament meeting. The boys, alongside many other representatives from other primary schools, were given the opportunity to ask questions to three members of our town council, one being our Mayor.

Toby and Thomas both asked very precise questions and were praised for their level of maturity and ability to think and speak with great passion about subjects they felt strongly about. Well done Thomas and Toby!

Shepherd's Hut

On Wednesday afternoon, we took delivery of a Shepherd's Hut! This Shepherd's hut has very kindly been paid for by the Friends of St John's. It will be positioned on our field and will be open to all children every day during lunchtime. This space is going to be used as a reading cabin. We are very excited to see it in action and see our children enriching their play with it! Thank you to the Friends of St John's, and all the parents who kindly donate to their pot!



Inclusion and SEND Drop In Meetings for Parents

If parents have already spoken with their child's class teacher and would now find it useful to make an appointment with Mrs O'Mahony our inclusion lead please do contact Mrs Burden in the school office who will be able to offer a time and date for you to meet.

Thank You to Longleat

We would like to say a heartfelt thank you to **Longleat** for their generous donation of toys for our children. These resources will be used both in school and at home, supporting children's learning through play and helping them develop their understanding of transport and imaginative exploration.

The toys will be enjoyed in a range of learning spaces, including our new sandpit, and will also be shared with families so children can continue their learning at home. This thoughtful donation reflects our Catholic values of generosity and community, and we are very grateful for Longleat's support of our children and school.



Wednesday Word

Please find below the link to this week's copy of the **Wednesday Word** which can be copied and pasted into your browser. This week's word is HAPPINESS.

<https://www.paperturn-view.com/wednesday-word/good-news?pid=MTA101634&v=163.4>

Birthdays

During Celebration Assembly or in the classrooms, we celebrated all children who have had birthdays and presented them with a St. John's birthday pencil.

Pupils

William F	Thea R
George B	Steve S
Scarlet A	Cloe M F
Toby F	Mylo G
Litiana V	Lihle N
Milan J	



Motivation Mondays

Our recent **Motivation Monday** was a huge success, with children and staff enjoying a zoo- and animal-themed day that brought lots of smiles during the winter weeks. These small, fun moments help keep everyone motivated while teaching and learning continue as usual. Mr Somerville even got in on the action with an animal tail outfit!

Thank you to all our families for embracing Motivation Mondays so enthusiastically. The children are already looking forward to **next week's Shoe Monday (2nd February)**, and we love seeing the creativity and positivity these days bring to our school community.



The following pupils have achieved these Doodle Streaks in Doodle Maths since September 2025:

365 Days	Amelia M
100 Days	Alex S
	Oskar G
50 Days	Daniel NA
	Adam L
	Saffron S

Here is the Top Doodling Class at St John's Catholic Primary School for the last seven days:
Joy Class 59% of pupils in the green zone

Doodle Maths

At our school, we are committed to providing high-quality resources that support every child's learning. One of these resources is Doodle Maths, an online programme that the school invests a significant amount of money in each week to support children's mathematical development.

Doodle Maths is designed to build confidence, reasoning skills and enjoyment in maths. Our school data clearly shows that children who engage with Doodle Maths for a short amount of time each day, or every other day, are noticeably more confident and secure in their mathematical understanding.

However, we have also noticed that a significant number of children are not currently using the Doodle Maths app. As a school, we want to ensure that our resources are being used effectively and are making a positive impact for all pupils. We are therefore reflecting on this and strongly encouraging every family to support their child by helping them to use Doodle Maths regularly at home.

Even 10 minutes a day can make a real difference.

If you would like any further guidance, support with logging in, or advice on how to help your child get the most out of Doodle Maths, please do not hesitate to speak to your child's class teacher, who will be very happy to help. Thank you for your continued support in helping your child develop confidence and enjoyment in mathematics.

PINS (Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools)

Join your PINS (Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools) Facilitator for a relaxed informal information and support session with tea, coffee and biscuits.

Your PINS Facilitator is a parent carer themselves.

There is a PINS Parent Carer Sessions on Friday 6th March at 2.30pm at St. John's School. Please see the attached poster for more information.

Lost Property

Lost property will be put on tables in the outside classroom on Friday 6th February. Please check if your child has lost anything. All unclaimed items will then be given to the Uniform Shed.

