

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER



NEWSLETTER DATED FRIDAY 16TH JANUARY 2026

Welcome to the New Term and New Year

Dear Families,

Happy New Year and welcome to the start of a new term and a new calendar year. As we begin this season together, we hope that the Christmas period offered your families time for rest, joy and reflection, and moments to celebrate the light and hope of Christ with those closest to you.

It has been a real pleasure to welcome the children back to school. They have returned calm, settled and eager to learn, and they look extremely smart. Thank you for your continued support with high standards of uniform and presentation; this helps to foster a sense of pride and belonging within our school community.

Although we are only at the beginning of the term, it has already been a busy and positive start, with many successes evident in classrooms and across school life. We are proud of the way our pupils live out our school values each day through kindness, respect and care for one another.

Wellbeing, Hope and Light in the Winter Months

The winter months, with their shorter days and darker mornings, can sometimes be challenging. Research reminds us that many people may experience feelings of tiredness or low mood during this time of year. As a Catholic school, we are called to be a community of hope, compassion and light, ensuring that no one feels alone and that everyone feels supported.

With this in mind, we have planned a series of simple, joyful activities to help lift spirits and remind us that even in darker seasons, there is always light, laughter and togetherness.

Monday Mood Boosters – Our Planned Activities

Blue Monday – Monday 19th January

Monday 19th January is often referred to as Blue Monday. To mark this day positively, children and adults are invited to wear one blue item of their choice, such as blue socks, a jumper, trousers or a small accessory. *Normal school uniform should be worn alongside this item.*

This activity provides a gentle opportunity to acknowledge emotions, encourage conversation and remind our children that we care for one another.

Zoo Monday – Monday 26th January

On Zoo Monday, children are invited to wear one animal- or zoo-themed item, such as an animal jumper, animal-print socks, a headband or a hat. This is an optional and fun way to bring a sense of joy and creativity into the school day, *while still wearing school uniform.*

Shoe Monday – Monday 2nd February

For Shoe Monday, children may come to school wearing their favourite pair of shoes or trainers. These should be suitable for safe movement around school. *All other aspects of school uniform should be worn as normal.*

Kazoo Monday – Monday 9th February

Our final themed Monday before half term will be Kazoo Monday. Children will be challenged to learn a simple kazoo tune, which they will then have the opportunity to play together to the whole school on the last day of term. This shared experience will be a joyful way to celebrate confidence, creativity and community.

Starting Each Week with Positivity

We hope that these small gestures will help to create a positive start to each school week, strengthening relationships and nurturing wellbeing. As a Catholic community, we believe in walking together, supporting one another and sharing joy, particularly during times that may feel more challenging.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support and partnership. Please keep our school community in your prayers as we journey through this term together.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs O'Rourke

Headteacher

Winter Weather Preparedness

As we move further into the winter months, we kindly ask parents and carers to ensure that children come to school prepared for outdoor play in all weather conditions. Outdoor play is an important part of the school day, even in colder or wetter weather.

Please make sure your child has:

Spare socks

Spare trousers

Waterproof all-in-one suits or waterproof outerwear

Wellington boots that are water proof – not fashion wellington boots

Having these items available allows children to stay warm, dry and comfortable, ensuring they can fully enjoy their playtime and learning experiences throughout the day.

Parking Safety Reminder

We would also like to remind everyone about the importance of safe and considerate parking around the school. Parking in surrounding streets must not block roads, driveways or access points. Obstructed roads create serious safety risks, particularly for pedestrians and emergency vehicles, and can put children's lives at risk. We have asked for the community police to monitor the school parking once again.

Thank you for your continued support in keeping our children safe, comfortable and happy this winter. Working together makes a real difference.

Upcoming Dates

Tuesday 20th January – Year 3 Reading Breakfast

Sunday 25th January – Children's Mass at 10.30am

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

Is your child an Attendance HERO?



We have an increasing number of children arriving between 8.40 and 8.45am – these children are missing the first 5 mins of school every day.

School starts at 8.40am.

All children should be on the playground ready to **go in at 8.40am.**

We close the gates at 8.45am and ask all parents arriving after this time to go to the school office to sign their child in.

We want to work together to ensure that every child is an **Attendance HERO.**

If you would like any support, please contact Mrs O'Mahony via the school office.

Epiphany Mass

On our first day back – Tuesday 6th January, we celebrated the Feast of Epiphany as a whole school with an uplifting Mass at St John's Church. It was wonderful to be joined by parents and parishioners and those joining us via the livestream. The children sang, read and participated with great enthusiasm – thank you! It was a wonderful start to the new year.

Following this Mass, Mrs O'Rourke received an extremely encouraging email from an ordained Deacon serving in Wigan who complimented the children on their beautiful singing to the lovely music. He was also impressed that the children sang the full Mass setting. He hopes that the Head Teacher of the school in which he works as a voluntary chaplain will be inspired by the children's singing of the Mass at St John's. He wished to thank the staff and children.

Epiphany Blessing Of Classroom Doors



In various parts of the world, Epiphany is marked by the time-honoured tradition of chalking the doors. During the week, the Three Kings (members of our chaplaincy team) visited every classroom to bless each door.

The letters represent the initials of the Magi - Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar - who came to visit Jesus at his birthplace. The “+” signs represent the cross, while the “20” at the beginning and the “26” at the end mark the year.

This inscription is a request for Christ to remain with all who work and learn within that room throughout the year.

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 3 – 25th January 2026

Term 4 – 22nd March 2026

Term 5 – 10th May 2026

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

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.

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

Toria W	Jowin J
Oskar H	Joanna D C
Sebastian O	Arthur R
Travis V	Lena S
Elijah D	Nancy E
Luke S	Victoria G
Alexander G	Jadon K
Cassidy H	Albert W



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 WITNESS.

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

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 3 – Tuesday 20th January from 8.40am – 9.30am

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

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

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

Year 6 Reading Breakfast

We were delighted to welcome families into school recently for our **Year 6 Reading Breakfast**. Pupils and their families enjoyed spending time together reading, sharing favourite books and talking about stories in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

Reading breakfasts are a lovely way to promote the **joys and benefits of reading**, helping children to develop a lifelong love of books while strengthening the important partnership between home and school. It was wonderful to see how engaged the children were and how much they enjoyed sharing this time with their families.

We are pleased to announce that our **next Reading Breakfast** will take place on **Tuesday 20th** for **Year 3** pupils and their families.

We look forward to welcoming you into school for another enjoyable morning celebrating reading together.



Would you like to be a Volunteer at St. John's School?

If you have some free time, maybe a morning or afternoon a week and you would like to volunteer in school, please contact the office for more details.

Activities vary and can include walking pupils to the Clarendon Pool for their swimming lessons, helping pupils with their maths or listening to them read. You may wish to accompany pupils on their school trips.

Volunteers find this very rewarding and enjoy interacting with our lovely pupils at St. John's. You will need to have a valid school DBS which can be applied for via the school office.

Term Dates 2027/28 Consultation – We Value Your Input

It's very helpful for Wiltshire Council to receive a broad range of views from parents, teaching staff, and other stakeholders on the dates for the school terms and holidays.

These perspectives allow them to make informed decisions that work best for school communities.

Please could we encourage parents and staff to take part in the consultation before it closes. Every response matters and helps shape the future calendar in a way that reflects the needs of everyone.

You can access the consultation here:

[School Term and Holiday Dates 2027/28 Consultation – Fill in form](#)

Price Rise For School Lunches On Aspens Select Website

Please see the letter from Aspens Select which is attached to this newsletter regarding the small increase in price of the school lunches from £2.50 to £2.65 per day starting in March 2026.

Leaders in Faith Award

Congratulations to the following pupil who has earned this award:

Silver Award: Edward R



OPAL Updates

Some fantastic new developments have begun all thanks to our incredible caretaker, Mr Browne. He has finished digging the area that will be our new dig pit and has begun work for our sand pit. More updates to follow, but an enormous thank you to Mr B!



Our children have been embracing the seasons with creativity, resilience and enthusiasm and continue to impress us with their wonderful ideas.

Thank you to everyone who managed to contribute to OPAL Bingo! Don't forget, you can still donate anything you think would be beneficial for play times throughout the year.



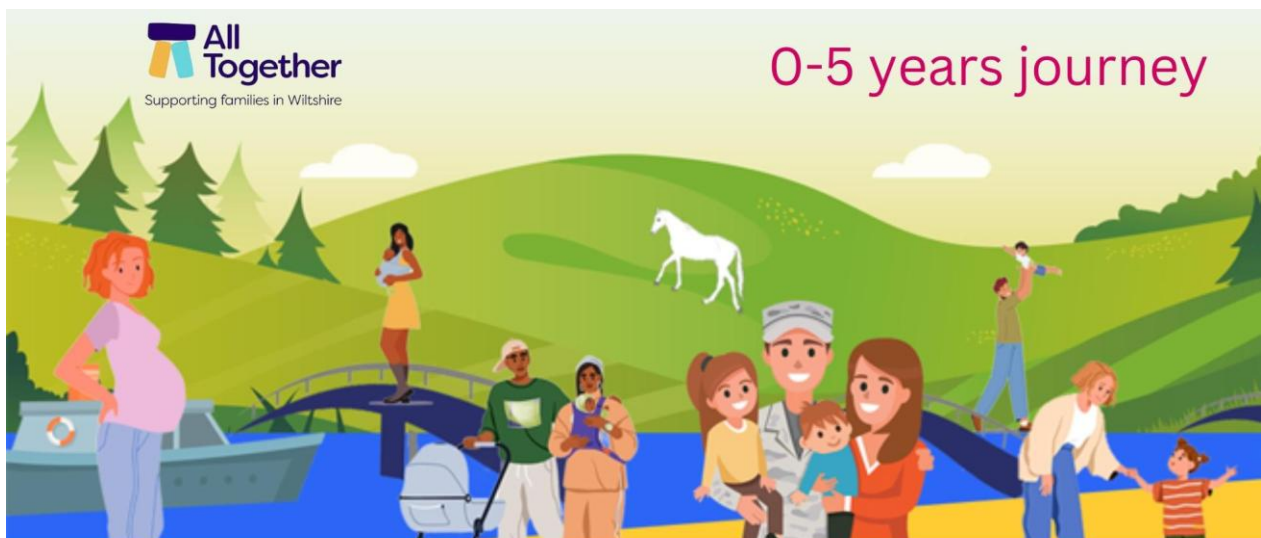
doodlelearning
By Discovery Education

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

1500 Days	Finley T
750 Days	Daniel G
	Lottie H
	Tabitha A
250 Days	Riona R
100 Days	Lucas N-A
	Gabriela G
	Choppy W
50 Days	Nathania E

Here are the Top Doodling classes at St John's Catholic Primary School for the last seven days:

DoodleMaths: Peace Class 48% of pupils in the green zone)



Who will you see and when, from pregnancy to your child starting school?

Explore the website to learn about services available to support parents and carers in Wiltshire, along with advice at each stage of your journey. Visit wiltshiretogether.org.uk/0-5-journey or scan this QR code

