



Friday 23rd October 2020

Our first half term is complete and we are so proud and grateful to have had this time, back in school, with the whole community working together to learn and grow.

Over half term, I am looking forward to spending more time with my own family and hoping for some bright, sunny skies so that we can get out and about and enjoy the wonderful nature which we are so lucky to see around us.

Whole school news

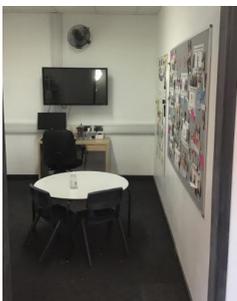


'Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it'

This week in school, the staff have been showing their gratitude by writing each other cards of thanks. Every adult who works in our school received a card from a 'secret sender' and these messages of thanks were read out during three virtual Collective Worships.

It was a completely uplifting experience to hear so many reasons why we are grateful to those we work with. It was an opportunity for us to model our Christian Values by showing our care for members of our school community, our wholeness as a staff and our love for each other.

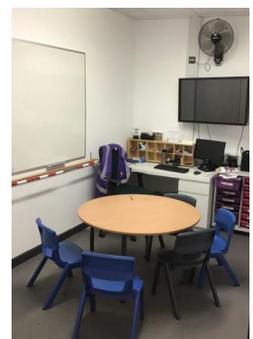
We are absolutely positive that these messages of thanks will continue with the children! My highlight from these sessions was to see the children in the 'Hedgehogs' class and the 'Bear Cubs' class clapping when they heard their own teachers mentioned!



More work taking place in school

Earlier on this year, we let you know about two new group rooms which have been built upstairs by a new member of our school team, Mr Whalley. These have been a very welcome addition to our Year 3s and Strive team. During half term, we will be working on creating two more rooms upstairs in our cloakrooms for further intervention work in Year 2 and an office base for our wonderful Mrs Kent. We are very grateful that we have

such a wonderful school with lots of space to be able to support the children and staff here so positively.



Kingsgate Church say thank you!



KINGSGATE
COMMUNITY CHURCH

The staff in school were very lucky to receive a 'Thank You' from Kingsgate Church this week in the form of two very large trays of fruit and cake. They sent these to share their gratitude for all we have been doing for our community during this difficult time.

Their thoughts and appreciation has been warmly received by all - and a welcome treat for staff during this final week of half term.



Blended Learning

We are very pleased to share that our staff are training and will be ready to lead our school's vision of 'blended learning' should we need to teach remotely in the future. All children from Year 1 to Year 6 should have accessed Google Classroom - with those in Reception using Tapestry - so that they are the 'expert' when being given work and when accessing live lessons from home. We have hope that this won't be necessary but know we need to be ready for anything.



A massive thank you to Mr Hurford and Mr Hollingsworth for supporting us all in this journey.



Raising Standards Leader - Positive PiXL news!

At the start of this half-term, the children in Years 2-6 resiliently worked through a set of short quizzes to see what areas of learning needed the greatest focus during this half term. Through careful planning, hard-working children and a fantastic school culture all year groups have managed to make exceptional progress in these areas. In Years 5 and 6, the children have recently completed a set of 'impact' assessments to help measure the progress they made - with both year groups exceeding expectations and their results being above the national picture at this time. Well done to all children for their focus and hard work completing these - and a big thank you to the staff for helping the children make progress.



Parents Evenings

We will be sharing our plans for parents evenings with everyone shortly. We are planning to hold these meetings with you all before the end of next half term and, in the current climate, these will be virtual. We look forward to sharing our children's successes with you all.

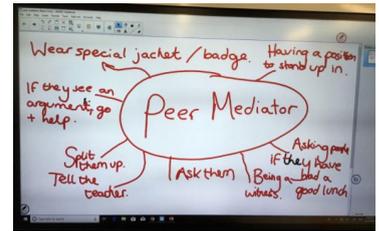


In and around school

Year 5 taking the lead!

I have had a wonderful message from our Year 5 teachers about how the children would like to incorporate an important role into their day and within their responsibilities. They have discussed what it means to be a 'Peer Mediator' and discussed how important this is to ensure positive break and lunchtimes.

We are incredibly proud of the children who are keen to make their 'free time' in school a great place to be.



Drama Queens!

Year 5 have thoroughly enjoyed immersing ourselves within reading lessons recently, especially when practicing our inference skills!

There were many giggles whilst role playing various emotions and we really enjoyed making inferences from picture books to create our very own story all together on a big roll of wallpaper! We even had to use our inference skills to work out what items from the past were! We were very shocked at how big the first mobile phones were and outraged by how the old televisions weren't flatscreen!



Powerful learning in Forest School

Over the last few weeks everyone has worked hard on developing relationships with their new teachers and classmates, making connections with nature and learning to be present in the moment. Our new children in the The Hedgehog and Bear Cubs class are natural outdoor learners and their enthusiasm for life is infectious. This term has also seen the launch of 'Muddy Moments' which gives weekly online updates of what we have been doing, how we apply the Christian values and our Learning Powers to Forest School. To celebrate the end of our first half the term we have slowed things down with mindful conversations and marshmallows on the fire. I hope you all enjoy half term and manage to get outdoors for some Autumnal fun.

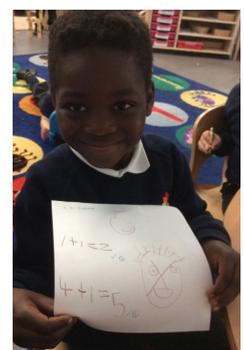


Addition



Mathematics in Reception

Miss Woodcock is incredibly impressed with her class's maths so far this year. Particularly Noah who has shown what a fantastic mathematician he is by writing his very own addition calculations independently already. Well done, Noah, you are a superstar!





Baking Off in Reception

This week, reception has continued their learning of the story 'The Little Red Hen'. We have learnt the story off by heart and have recited it together in teams! The little red hen made bread in the story so our Hedgehogs and Bear Cubs made bread too!



Making bread was great fun!

The children enjoyed using their senses to explore the ingredients and could follow instructions to make their dough.

They then took their dough home to bake! What a success!



A message from Mrs Foster, Head of School

It's hard to believe that our first half-term is complete already...we have worked together as a school community brilliantly to ensure a high-quality education for the children of St. John's within a Covid-safe environment. I would like to say a huge thank you to all the staff, children, parents and wider school community for making this happen. The encouraging words, 'For, with God, nothing is impossible,' have been spoken and thought many times!

My highlights of the last two weeks, which definitely deserve a mention are:



Our service for other schools across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire in supporting them with ideas for their own remote learning plans - thank you to Mr Hurford for 'leading the way' in ensuring that we provide the highest quality of education for our children, whether they are at home or in school, and to Mrs Ross for sharing these ideas so effectively with Literacy Leaders from other schools - we have received thanks for our service from the Local Authority.

Our Reception teachers, celebrating the successes of their children day-in-day-out; sharing their children's achievements with us and being very proud of their classes and the progress they are making - thank you Mrs Woodcock, Mrs Kosiorek, Mrs Page, Mrs Pugh and Mrs Salisbury, there is just so much joy to share in Reception!



Seeing the teaching and learning (from a distance!) in classes across school, whilst supporting our new teachers in learning more about the 'St. John's way' - not only have the new teachers been an absolute pleasure to work alongside, the teaching and learning seen has been just incredible. I couldn't be prouder!



Our very own 'film crew' (complete with 'film stars' too!). Mrs Kent and Mr Hollingsworth have many hidden talents and have been managing the staging, lighting and filming for our very own St. John's film to share with all prospective parents and children for Reception 2021 next year. They are such a professional team and it has felt like we have been in the midst of a real 'film set'! Staff and children have made excellent 'film stars' too - who knew that we would need film making skills to succeed in education in 2020?!



There is no doubt that, 'together, we have achieved, learned and grown', already this year and this is just the beginning of our journey! I'm sure that everyone is ready for a well-earned week of rest now and would like to wish you all a lovely half-term break before we embark on the next half-term of adventures!

Take care and stay safe.

Mrs Foster

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the staff who work here at St John's. It is testament to their determination and professionalism that the return to school this term has been so positive and as close to 'normal' as possible. Many staff are working in new and challenging times and they have risen to the challenges with amazing spirit and are delivering excellent opportunities for the children here to learn on a daily basis.

I hope that everyone in our school community manages to rest and recuperate over the half term break and we look forward to welcoming everyone back when the term resumes on Monday 2nd November.

Mrs Harwood and all at St John's.