

THE RED SWEATER LETTER

A newsletter from St. John's Middle School



Welcome to the first Red Sweater Letter of this academic year. As we reach the end of our first half term, I want to take a moment to reflect on what has been a wonderfully positive and action-packed start at St John's. We've been delighted to welcome our new Year 5 pupils, as well as a number of children who have joined us in other year groups. It's been a joy to see how quickly they've settled in and become part of the St John's family, we're so pleased to have them with us.

Already this term, pupils have enjoyed a wide range of enriching experiences: trips to Lakeside, Witley Court, and Habberley Trail, numerous sporting fixtures, sports leaders training, and our exciting house events are already well underway. The big question now is, who will come out on top this year: Windsor, Stuart, Tudor, or Hanover?

It was lovely to welcome parents to school for the parental drop-ins and coffee mornings, and we've been proud to appoint our new pupil leaders. A huge congratulations to all those who were successful in their applications, your commitment to representing your peers and your school is commendable. We've also marked important events in school life, including Mental Health Awareness Day, where the school was a sea of yellow as we showed our support and raised awareness together. And who could forget the brilliant launch of this year's Times Tables Rockstars, where pupils and staff! – transformed into rockstars for a high-energy, guitar-fuelled timetables challenge in the hall, led by the ever-enthusiastic Mr Foxall and cheered on by the crowd!

All of this, of course, has taken place alongside the hard work and focus in the classroom, where pupils have made a strong start to their learning. It's no surprise that everyone looks ready for a well-earned rest! I hope you all have a wonderful, safe and restful half term, and come back refreshed and ready for another exciting term ahead, with all the Christmas festivities to look forward to.

Finally, a reminder that firework tickets are selling fast, if you're planning to attend, please make sure you purchase your tickets soon to avoid missing out, as we are close to capacity.

With best wishes,
Mrs Alison Elwell
Headteacher

"A NEW
SCHOOL YEAR
MEANS,
NEW
BEGINNINGS,
NEW
ADVENTURES,
AND NEW
CHALLENGES"

Message from Mrs. Hall

Head of Year 5

I would like to start by saying it has been a pleasure to welcome back all of our students, and especially the new Year 5 pupils. They have adapted brilliantly to middle school life and I cannot believe that we have completed our first half term.

Every year I am impressed by our pupils and their ability to fall back into our school routines so quickly. Everyone is looking very smart for the start of this new academic year with correct uniforms and footwear. As always, it is very important that all items of clothing, including ties, are named so that they can be returned to the correct place if lost. It is also important to name aprons for use in DT and Art lessons. If you have any questions about uniform, please contact form tutors.

As a school, we are continuing to promote reading and we are encouraging everyone's love of books. Earlier this term, I was delighted to help hand out certificates and prizes for those people completing the summer reading challenge. There will be more reading challenges throughout the year for you to get involved with. Please support your child to read at least three times a week and remind them to change their library books regularly. It is also important for parents to sign the pupils' planners each week. There are lots of rewards on offer at the end of every term for pupils completing these expectations.

At St John's we group all of our pupils into houses – Hanover, Windsor, Tudor and Stuart. The children now know more about the houses and they have all been practising their chants! This year we are excited to be launching lots of house competitions. All of the different subjects will be launching puzzles, competitions and chances for everyone to get involved. All entries will receive house points and winners will be announced by our house captains in Key Stage assemblies. Remember to look on the bulletin for your next chance to get involved!

It is great to see so many pupils who are coming to school organised and ready for the day with their water bottles, planners, reading books and pencil cases. As a quick reminder, these must be taken to every lesson. Now the weather has begun to change, a named coat would also be advisable.

With the summer holidays now a distant memory, and the mornings and evenings are beginning to get darker, we ask all pupils to remember to be safe and be seen when travelling to and from school, especially when crossing roads. Thank you.

Collective Worship

By Miss C. Russell- Head of Music and Worship

“When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf, do not go back to get it. Leave it for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.” Deuteronomy 24:19

This half term we have been reflecting on our value of love, and how we can use this value to help us best live out our vision to be a school where care and concern for others is key. Our collective worship this half term culminates with our celebration of the Harvest. As we prepare for this service we are turning our hearts and minds to think about what it means to be truly thankful for all that we have, and to consider how best we can offer open-handed generosity in sharing with those around us. As part of this celebration pupils are invited to bring in donations of tinned and dried-goods with which to support local organisations working to alleviate food poverty in our town.

This year our harvest collection will support the Basement Project and New Starts, both of whom are local charities working within our local communities, and operating food banks, amongst their other provision.

As part of our Harvest celebration we will explore the story of Elijah and the Widow from 1 Kings 17:8-16, where through his prophet Elijah, God miraculously provides for the widow and her son. We will reflect on what this tells us about trusting God for what we need, and how this can also help us extend generosity to others.

Elijah went to Zarephath. He went to the town gate and saw a woman there gathering wood for a fire. She was a widow. Elijah said to her, “Would you bring me a small cup of water to drink?” As she was going to get the water, Elijah said, “Bring me a piece of bread too, please.”

The woman answered, “I promise you, before the Lord your God, that I have nothing but a handful of flour in a jar and a little bit of olive oil in a jug. I came here to gather a few pieces of wood for a fire to cook our last meal. My son and I will eat it and then die from hunger.”

Elijah said to the woman, “Don’t worry. Go home and cook your food as you said. But first make a small piece of bread from the flour that you have and bring it to me. Then cook some for yourself and your son. The Lord, the God of Israel, says, ‘That jar of flour will never be empty and the jug will always have oil in it. This will continue until the day the Lord sends rain to the land.’”

So the woman went home and did what Elijah told her to do. And Elijah, the woman, and her son had enough food for a long time. 16 The jar of flour and the jug of oil were never empty. This happened just as the Lord said through Elijah.

Witley Court

On Tuesday 23rd September we attended our annual trip to Witley Court and gardens. It was lovely to see all of the year 6 pupils sitting in the sun making observational sketches of the building and taking photographs. Pupils were, 'shocked how big it was' and thought 'how amazing it would have been to live there'.

Pupils will now be taking their drawings back to the classroom to add detail and perfect learning about line and colour. We look forward to seeing their end results!



Times Table Rockstars Year 6

On Monday 13th October, we officially launched Times Tables Rockstars with an exciting Key stage 2 assembly. As the children entered and exited, they were greeted with live music performed by our own rockstar hero, creating an electric atmosphere! It was fantastic to see so many children dressed up as rockstars in support of the launch – the hall was full of wigs, leather jackets, and sunglasses!

The highlight of the event was the epic on-stage teacher battles, where staff went head-to-head to prove who knew their times tables best.

To mark the launch, a Battle of the Bands competition is now underway to find the top form group in each year. The competition is live and will run until Friday 31st October – who will be crowned the ultimate Rockstars?



Year 8 trip to Lakeside

Early in the term, the Year 8 pupils had the opportunity to do some adventurous outdoor activities at the Lakeside Campus of Worcester University. They tested their nerves on the leap of faith - a 10m high jump (roped up of course), sped down the zip line and they took on the challenging climbing wall. In addition, on the lake they took part in some canoeing, needing to work together to keep in a straight line! This proved harder for some than others! All in all, it was a great trip, where pupils built personal resilience, developed teamwork skills and pushed themselves to challenge their limits.

World Mental Health Day

World Mental Health Day 2025 – A Bright and Meaningful Celebration

On Friday 10th October, our school proudly celebrated World Mental Health Day 2025 – a day dedicated to raising awareness and breaking the stigma around mental health. Pupils and staff came together in a sea of yellow, symbolising hope, positivity, and support for mental wellbeing.

From yellow socks to dazzling accessories, our school was bursting with colour and creativity. Pupils were encouraged to wear yellow and bring in donations to support mental health charities. The response was truly heartwarming, with fantastic outfits and thoughtful ideas from across the school showing how much everyone cared.

We're thrilled to announce that Windsor House raised the most donations on the day – a huge congratulations to them! Their team spirit and efforts were inspiring, and their contribution will go a long way in supporting mental health initiatives, along with all donations from our other school houses.

Thank you to everyone who took part, donated, dressed up, and helped make the day so special. Let's continue to support one another and keep the conversation around mental health going – not just today, but every day. Well done St. Johns!

Miss Kelly



Poppy Sale

We are selling Poppies from the 3rd November until the 11th November.

A suggested donation of 50p for poppies.

We also have a limited amount of snap bands for sale for £2



P.E update

Mr. Cowdrey- Head of P.E

Sports Leaders

The Year 7 and 8 Sports Leaders have been receiving leadership training to enable them to deliver increased opportunities to the school and wider community.



Football

There have been some fantastic fixtures and competitions so far. Year 7 Boys won their first County Cup fixture against Blessed Edwards 2-0 and the Year 6 Boys had two resounding wins against Parkside in a friendly recently. The KS2 Girls competed at the Utilita Tournament and finished in a very respectable position. They also won the District competition and will go on to represent Bromsgrove in the next round of fixtures.



Cross Country

We had an amazing 234 pupils compete in our House Cross Country competition. Children were then invited to represent the school at the District Cross Country event. Highlights included Flynn Glover finishing 5th in the Y5 Boys event, Gabby Jordan was 5th in the Y5 Girls race. Harriet Spearman Williams finished 2nd in the Y6 girls race and Lennon James came 8th in the boys. In year 7 Edward Hickman 5th and Ethan Webley 8th performed brilliantly. Well done to all pupils who took part.



P.E update Continued

Mr. Cowdrey- Head of P.E

Rugby

The KS3 boy's rugby team had their first fixture playing against Bromsgrove School and Aston Fields in a mini festival. The boys did brilliantly well, winning one game and losing the other in a close contest.



KS3 Ten Pin Bowling

Some KS3 pupils took part in a Ten Pin Bowling competition at Perdiswell bowling centre. The children had a fantastic time and although they didn't win the competition they all played extremely well.



Habberley Trail Visit

We took a small group of KS2 children on a visit to the Habberley Trail in recognition of the hard work and effort they have made to the start of this academic year. The children enjoyed a variety of exciting outdoor activities and developed their skills in team work and communication. They had a fantastic time on the roundabout swing, played games of Connect 4 basketball, and experienced the thrill of gravity-defying slides. The water squirter bridge added a splash of fun, while the twister swing provided lots of laughs. They also took on several balance challenges, testing their coordination and confidence along the trail. The children encountered friendly animals including sheep, goats, and miniature ponies, which added a lovely touch to the experience. To top off the day, everyone enjoyed a well-deserved ice cream treat. It was a memorable and action-packed trip filled with smiles, adventure, and plenty of outdoor fun.



Lunch Club

We have extended our lunch time provision and set up a brand-new Lunch Club that offers a range of engaging, team-based activities led by a dedicated member of staff.

The activities are varied and range from fast-paced football skills sessions and collaborative challenges that focus on developing their confidence and resilience and practice communication and team work skills. Activities vary daily and are carefully planned to encourage cooperation, listening, and positive peer interaction.

We look forward to seeing the children develop new skills, make new friends, and most importantly—have fun!



Launchpad

Launchpad started the Halloween season a little early with a very kind donation made by ASDA Bromsgrove. The pupils had a lot of fun carving some great faces in them!



Well done Sidney!

Mum has reported; over the last few weeks, Sid has been carefully building a model of one of his favourite mines in Cornwall. He sent a photo of it to the site, and they shared it on their social media! Sid has been completely overwhelmed by the lovely and encouraging messages he's received from the community.

Sid also started off the summer holidays, writing a letter to His Majesty The King. He wanted to raise awareness about protecting heritage sites – especially Chatterley Whitfield Colliery, a place that means a lot to him.

And he received a reply from The King! His family are so proud of him – it's been an unforgettable few weeks for Sid.

Congratulations from all of us at St John's!



Check this out! 10 year old Sidney visited Geevor with his family back in the summer holidays and on several occasions over the last few years, as a budding mining enthusiast Sidney decided to create his own model of the site. I think you'll agree with us that it looks amazing!

Mum (Emma) said "It is made entirely under his own steam, just looking at pictures we've taken. He used cardboard and metal taken from old Hornby rails to replicate the pulley. He's had no guidance from us at all and has been working on it on and off for weeks. He really wanted us to share this with you, as he is really proud of his efforts, as are we!"

Well done Sidney!



Informative Assemblies

This term, our pupils have benefited from some informative and engaging assemblies.

South Bromsgrove High School

South Bromsgrove High School visited Year 8 to deliver an assembly about the transition to high school, offering valuable information and what to expect.

Photography Club Assembly

As part of our extracurricular clubs, we run a Photography Club for pupils interested in developing their creative skills behind the camera. This term, Mr Jones, who leads the club, delivered an assembly to share everything pupils need to know if they're interested in joining. It was a great opportunity for students to learn more about what the club involves and how they can get involved.

Flu Vaccinations – NHS Visit

The NHS will be visiting school on 14th November to administer the flu vaccine to all pupils. Parents and Guardians are kindly asked to complete the consent form as soon as possible to ensure your child can receive their vaccination.

Year 6 Height and Weight

The NHS will be coming into school on 5th November for year 6 height and weight. Parents are asked to fill in the consent form as soon as possible

Dates For The Diary

Fireworks Night 5th November 2025

Back by popular demand!

Get ready for a night of sparkle, sound, and celebration! Bring the Noise will be lighting up the sky with an unforgettable firework display at St John's Middle School. Expect:

- Dazzling fireworks
- Glow sticks galore
- Delicious food & refreshments

Tickets available **now!**

Don't miss out – it's going to be a blast!

Christmas events

- 1st December: Year 5 Visit to Swan Theatre Worcester for the Sleeping Beauty Pantomime
- 4th December: Year 7 Bowling Trip
- 5th December: Year 8 Bowling Trip
- 15th December: Christmas Dinner at Bromsgrove School
- 16th December: Year 6 Visit Swan Theatre Worcester for the Sleeping Beauty Pantomime

Christmas Service

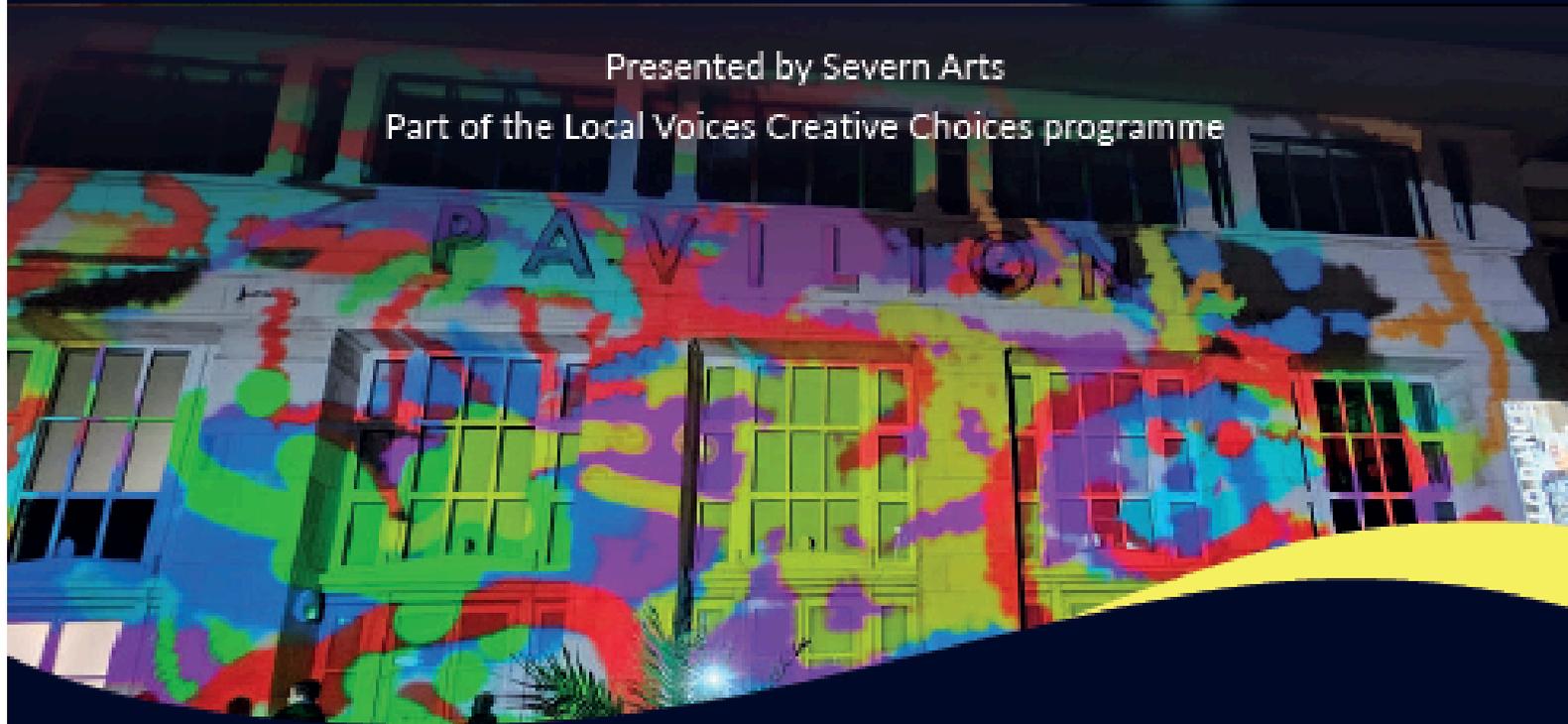
- 15th December 11:00am- Year 5 Christmas Service
- 17th December 9:30am - Year 6 Christmas Service
- 17th December 11:00am - Year 7 and 8 Christmas service

These services will be held at Bromsgrove School. Further information will follow

BRIDGES OF LIGHT.

Presented by Severn Arts

Part of the Local Voices Creative Choices programme



Worcester City Centre

Free to Attend

**29 and 30
October
6pm-9pm**

Bridges of Light is a new, two-day light festival, with a focus on communities, creativity and collaboration.

Through high quality light artwork, we invite you to share in our community stories. Visit our light installations, take part in our interactive artworks, grab a bite to eat, and enjoy Bridges of Light with family and friends.

Visit our website to discover more about Bridges of Light - meet the artists, explore their work, and find out how to navigate Worcester City Centre during the festival.



Share your videos and photos by tagging @SevernArts and using the hashtag #BridgesofLightWorcester

Funders and Supporters



GLOW IN THE DARK DODGEBALL



<<< SIGN UP HERE

5:00pm to 6:00pm
for Years 3-4

6:00pm to 7:00pm
for Years 5-6



FREE THROUGHOUT NOVEMBER
EVERY TUESDAY
STARTING 4TH NOVEMBER

Community.rubery@pandesports.com

Waseley Hills High School, School Rd, Rubery, B45 9EL

JUNIOR NETBALL CLUB

JOIN
NOW

EVERY
SATURDAY



Session one commences Saturday
8th of November

FREE THROUGHOUT NOVEMBER

10am till 11am
Years 3 - 6

11am till 12pm
Years 7 - 11

Sign Up Via QR Code Above

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