

Thursday 7th February 2019
www.st-joanofarc.islington.sch.uk

Newsletter Number 6
www.stjoanofarcpa.org

Dear Parents/Carers,

This is a short newsletter to keep you up to date with school news, as we come towards the end of the half-term.

Basketball Team News

On Thursday 24th January the school basketball team participated in a competition against other Islington schools. We had two teams that competed against 4 schools each and both went on to the quarter finals. Team one got through to the finals and team two missed out by just a few points; finishing fourth overall. The competition was fierce in the final and the game ended in a draw meaning that the game had to go on to sudden death. The team worked well together and emerged victorious to take home the trophy, they will go on to represent Islington at the London youth games in July against other boroughs. Both teams displayed great sportsmanship and their behaviour was impeccable. Special thanks go to Miss Kelly and Ms Squire for training and accompanying the team. Well done to all team players- year 5: Alexander, Kiara, Shevin and year 6: Meghan, Martha, Xavier, Charlie, Leon, Kenzie, Cecilia, Ronan and Matteo.

E-Safety Week – Starting Monday 4th February

This year's theme is 'Together for a better Internet'.

This theme has been chosen as it empowers young people through the choices they make. The focus will be around helping children understand what consent means and the implications clicking 'accept' may have on allowing third parties access to personal information. This campaign hopes to empower young people to take control of their digital well-being and explore the opportunities the internet has to offer in a positive way.

On Monday, the digital leaders led an assembly to launch e-safety week. Each class will partake in activities to support their understanding and guide them towards making positive choices and developing healthy online relationships. The children will also take part in an online safety poster competition based on this year's theme.

Book Week 4th – 8th March

We are delighted to announce that the school will be holding a book week commencing on **Monday 4th March** to celebrate the joy and importance of reading. The children will be participating in a number of reading activities during the week both in their class and as a year group. At 3pm each day, the children will be able to choose to listen to a story read by another adult in a different classroom.

World Book Day is on Thursday 7th March and this year we would like children to come dressed up as a character from their favourite story book. The School Council will be giving prizes for the most creative costumes. We also have a story teller visiting who will be hosting workshops with each class.

We would love parents to be involved in this week as much as possible.

If you would like to come in and read to your child's class or read with a small group, please inform the class teacher. We are particularly keen for children to hear stories being read in other languages, so if you can spare half an hour of your time during Book Week, we would be very grateful.

After the success of last year's competition, we are again opening up the chance to win a book voucher

for a photograph of your child reading in a strange place! Last year we had pictures of children reading in their garden shed, on the tube and London Bridge to name but a few. Entries to be submitted to your child's class teacher by Thursday 7th March. A big thank you to Ms Vassallo and Ms Kelly for organizing this special week.

Our school focus this year – Improving standards in reading

As a school, we are always looking for ways to further develop the achievement for all of the children in our care. This year, we have been working to increase the motivation and attainment in reading.

As part of our initiative to create a love of reading, the school has subscribed to an online resource called My Book Blog for Years 2-6. This is a fantastic resource designed to enhance children's journeys through well-loved stories. It supports children to choose books available in school, libraries and bookshops using blurbs, trailers, reviews, and ratings from other children. Children can then read their chosen books at home or at school and complete the activities on My Book Blog at any time. It is also therefore a fantastic way to complement their computing skills.

The activities on My Book Blog encourage children to blog about their thoughts and feelings and explore the subject matter while also supporting them to fully comprehend the text they are reading and learn new vocabulary. A full list of titles available on My Book Blog is attached. Please note that the books are *not* read online; the books are used alongside the online resource. Children can add desired books to their virtual bookshelf. Class teachers are able to login and monitor progress which can be fed back to parents, as well as see which titles are most popular in order to replenish class libraries.

If you have any copies of books on the book list that you no longer require, please donate them to our fantastic Book Swap area - a special section will be set aside for those titles that can be used with My Book Blog. Thank you for your co-operation and we hope your children enjoy this resource. A link to the blog and further information about the resource can be found below:

<https://mybookblog.org/info/>

Attached is a book list which you might find useful to access in order to increase your child's range of reading material. This is done by year group so is very easy to access.

Our local bookshop, INK84, has a fantastic children's department located at the back of the shop. They also have a list up of books which may interest the more reluctant readers. The staff are also very knowledgeable and have been very supportive in encouraging our school book clubs to try new genres and authors that they may not have come across before.

For some families, reading at home is fraught with difficulty. Where we can provide additional reading opportunities for these children we do but children can never read enough. So, we are looking for regular adult volunteers who can commit to an hour a week to come in and read with one or two children. Volunteers can be parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, neighbours or if you know of a company that allows employees time to support the local community – we'd love to hear from them too.

As a class teacher (many years ago), I was really fortunate to have a volunteer in my class called Dot. She had recently retired and was looking to establish a new routine for herself. The children really looked forward to Dot's Tuesday visit and they were all queuing to read with her. This is a memory that has never left me as a teacher, as she was able to give the children the little bit of extra time, care and attention that they required in order to develop their confidence as a reader. In return, the children in her words 'kept her young'! If you know of a 'Dot' equivalent in the local community, please encourage them to contact us.

If you are able to help with regular reading sessions, please complete the volunteering form at the end of the newsletter or leave your details with the school office and a member of the school's English team will get back to you. All volunteer readers are subject to a DBS clearance which the office will organise.

Lenten Appeal 2019

The focus for our Lenten appeal this year is '**Shine your light**' and focuses on talents. During Lent, the children will identify their own talents and investigate the lives of people who have used their talents to help others. They will then reflect on how they can follow Jesus's teachings and use their talents to make the world a brighter place.

During Lent, the children will be learning about the work of the Catholic Children's Society (CSS), and how we seek to put our faith into action and use our talents to help those in need. A representative from the CCS will visit the children on Monday 11th February to share more about the work the society is involved with.

Your child will receive a collection box and a leaflet with more information. As always, your generosity is greatly appreciated. Please return the collection boxes during the week of 25th March.

Parent Consultations

These will take place on **Tuesday 19th and Thursday 21st March** from 3.40- 6.35pm. Meetings will take place in your child's classroom. Nursery parents, please go to the Green Room for your appointment. Appointments can be made using the online booking system, **from the week beginning 4th March at 10am** you will be sent a reminder about how to log in nearer the time.

If you require support from an interpreter, please leave your details at the school office and we will do our best to help you. For security reasons, entry and exit for parents' evenings is via the main door on Northolme Road.

Pupil Absences

A reminder - please call the school before 9.30, press 1 for the absence line and leave a brief message if your child will be absent for all or part of the day for any reason.

Beginning of the school day

A reminder that the school starts at 08.50am and although the school gates are open from 8.30am, the school is not responsible for children until the official start of the day.

Bikes on and near the playground

A parent recently informed me of a child nearly being hit by a cyclist on the path by the church. Could I please ask that if you are cycling to school with your child that you dismount from your bicycle before arriving in the near vicinity of the school.

Uniform

A reminder that the school uniform policy stipulates plain black, navy or dark grey coats. It is very noticeable the large array of coloured coats now being worn by some children. Whilst I appreciate it has been very cold recently and keeping your child warm is essential, as temperatures rise, school coats need to be reinstated.

Planning Permission Update – Hall improvement works

We are still waiting for planning consent for our proposed building from Islington Council. Our application has had to go to a planning committee which is due to be held before Easter. I will update you of the outcome once I know more information.

Installation of canopy for the Early Years classrooms

In order for the children in classes A and B to have maximum opportunities for outdoor play, we are having a permanent canopy erected over their outside areas. This will enable children to access the

outside classrooms in all weathers. This is being constructed over the half term holiday and is being funded through the Parents' Association's fundraising efforts this year.

Parents' Association

The SJA Parents Association (PA) is a community for all parents and carers of children at SJA. The PA has kicked off 2019 with activities that will bring our school community together and that will raise money for the school to benefit our children.

Our first event of the year is **Quiz Night!** It will be a great way to support the school and meet fellow parents and teachers. Hope to see you there.

Our second event of the year will be **BBQ & Auction Night on 10th May**. Planning is already underway and we need help from parents! In the past parents have donated physical items or 'promises' as lots for the Auction. 'Promises' have been donations such as 'cooking dinner for 8' or 'photography lessons.' We'd love parents to start thinking about any 'promises' or 'items' they may be able to donate this year as we'll be in touch soon to begin building the Auction catalogue.

Visit our website for our [event calendar](#) or join our [PA Facebook group](#) for regular updates on our activities. We welcome all parents to join our next PA meeting on **Friday 1 March** to listen and contribute ideas on how we can best support our school and community in 2019!

INSET DAY

A reminder that the school is closed to pupils on Friday 15th February to allow for staff training and will reopen for pupils on Monday 25th February.

Diary Dates

Please see below for a summary of the diary dates. The full diary is available on the school's website: www.st-joanofarc.islington.sch.uk

Yours sincerely



Miss C Campbell
Headteacher

Reading Volunteer

Please return the completed form to the school office.

Name:

Child's name and Class:

Contact e-mail address:

Day / time available to read in class:

Summary of events to come

February

Friday 8th 3.25pm PA Cake and used uniform stall
7pm PA Quiz Night
Wednesday 13th Year 4/5/6 Cross Country (Finsbury Park)
Friday 15th INSET Day – School Closed
Monday 18th – Friday 22nd HALF TERM
Thursday 28th 9am Year 6 Assembly

March

Friday 1st 9am PA Meeting
Monday 4th From 10am book parents evening appointment
Year 5/6 Hockey Tournament
Wednesday 6th Ash Wednesday Mass led by Class 4J
Thursday 7th World Book Day – children to dress as a character from their favourite book
Friday 8th 9am Year 2 Assembly
Friday 15th 9.15am St Patrick and St Joseph Mass led by Class 4I
Tuesday 19th 3.45-6.30pm Parents Evening
Thursday 21st 3.45-6.30pm Parents Evening
Friday 22nd 3.25pm PA Cake and used uniform stall
Thursday 28th Year 5/6 Rugby Trip
Friday 29th 9.15am Nursery and Reception Mother's Day Assembly

April

Tuesday 2nd 9.30am Year 5 Easter Passion Play - Year 5 parents invited
Year 2 visit to Florence Nightingale Museum
Friday 5th 9.15am End of term Mass led by Class 3G
2pm School Close

