

St John's Primary School Newsletter

10th February 2023

Dear Parents,

We have had an action-packed term with exciting topics incorporating all of the subjects across the curriculum. You can see some of the highlights from the classes in this newsletter. In addition to our focus on Phonics, Writing and Maths there has been an impressive amount of practical work in Science, Art, Design and Technology as well as fieldwork in Geography. Thank you to all of you who were able to come to the Open Afternoon this week to see your child's work—they always love sharing what they have been learning with you. If you weren't able to make it this time, we will have another one in Term 4, on the morning of Friday 31st March.

We also welcomed our governors into school for the day this week. It is always lovely for us to have them in school, share some of the areas we have been working on and let them see the school 'in action' for the day. Thank you to all of the staff who welcomed governors into their lessons and to governors for taking a day out of their busy work schedules to come into school.

We will be in touch with you after half term to give you details on how to make a parent teacher interview appointment during the week beginning 27th February, so do look out for that email. As in the Autumn, we will offer a 'hybrid' of in person and virtual appointments.

We are still advertising for Teaching Assistants at St John's. If you know anyone who may be interested in a teaching assistant role at school, do direct them towards our website where they can find all of the details.

I hope you all have a lovely and relaxing half term break and we look forward to seeing the children again on Monday 20th February.

Kind Regards,

Nicky Hughes

Upcoming dates :

Friday 10th February—Foundation Stage and Year 6 weighing and measuring—School Nurse Team

Friday 10th February—last day of Term 3

Monday 13th—Friday 17th February—Half Term

Monday 20th February—Term 4 starts

Week beginning 27th February—Parent Teacher Interviews

Tuesday 21st February—Year 4 Cake Sale

Friday 31st March—End of Term

Monday 17th April—Term 5 starts

Governor News

by Sally Pearmain, Chair of Governors

This week, governors were invited into school for our annual 'Governor Day'. It is always a highlight of the governing year to spend a full day in school and to have the opportunity to speak to staff and pupils - the chance to enjoy a school lunch is an added bonus! There were so many highlights from the day; from brilliant phonics routines, to impressive writing support, to exciting science experiments, to stop motion animations, to yoga and basketball (to mention just a few) - all delivered with great enthusiasm and care from the staff. We were able to get a real flavour of the diverse and engaging curriculum at St John's.

We thoroughly enjoyed spending time with a range of pupils, who spoke so enthusiastically and eloquently about their curriculum and life in school. They talked excitedly about all of the brilliant things they had been studying and were so pleased to share all of their hard work in their school books. It was brilliant to see the pride in their work, and the children talked so knowledgeably about their learning, as well as the strategies used in class by their teachers to help them make progress.

As governors, we were made to feel so welcome, and it was a really interesting and fulfilling day.

Year 3/4 Football Tournament



Very few members of our squad play football outside of school, some had never really played before so we were incredibly impressed with how their performance improved during each and every game in the tournament. Our goalkeepers were very busy but luckily our defenders got stuck right in with some crunching tackles (safely of course!). Everyone played four games, each 10 mins - so we had some very tired children by the end. Although neither team made it through to the semi-finals, for a first go - we are incredibly proud of them!

Thanks to Miss Curley and Mrs Burgess for taking the children to the tournament.

Year 6 Geography—map reading skills



Year 6 have been honing their map reading skills, learning about the symbols used on Ordnance Survey maps. Yesterday they used those skills to navigate on a local river walk and spot geographical features in the landscape.



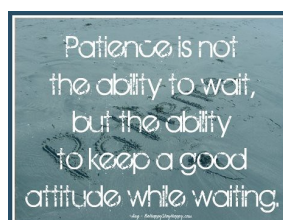
Year 6 were invited to design a road safety sign by Oxfordshire Highways. The winning design and 5 runners-up designs were made into real signs by Milestone Infrastructure and children were presented with their signs last week.

The winning sign will be mounted and displayed outside of the school.

Well done, Year 6, for so many super designs! And thank you to Milestone Infrastructure for the opportunity.

Value of the fortnight

Patience





[Walking with children | 365Alive](#)

Follow the link above to find out more about this pedestrian programme for children and families.



Bearded Dragon visit



Year 3 had an absolutely amazing time this morning being visited by a true Aussie - Spike the bearded dragon. We saw that not only did he have the most regal of poses, he was able to go as flat as a pancake - this being so that he can capture the most sunlight and heat possible. A huge thank you to Marshall and his mum for bringing him into visit.



Year 5 News

...in their own words...

Year 5 have been learning about Ernest Shackleton and his crew in Literacy. Once we knew enough about Shackleton and his crew, we wrote a newspaper article about the ship *Endurance* going missing. The information that we used in the newspaper article was: when they set off, Saturday 8th August 1914. They set off from Plymouth dock. When they were last sighted—December 5th 1914 going to the South Sandwich islands. We put our imaginations to the test by pretending we were interviewing the crew's family members and the Experts.

We really enjoyed using our imagination and writing about one of the crew members for each of us for instance I did Robert Clark and Bella did William Bakewell Percy Blackborrow, Toby did Timothy McCarthy, Sunny did Lionel Greenstreet, Theo did James Wordle and Iona did Walter How.

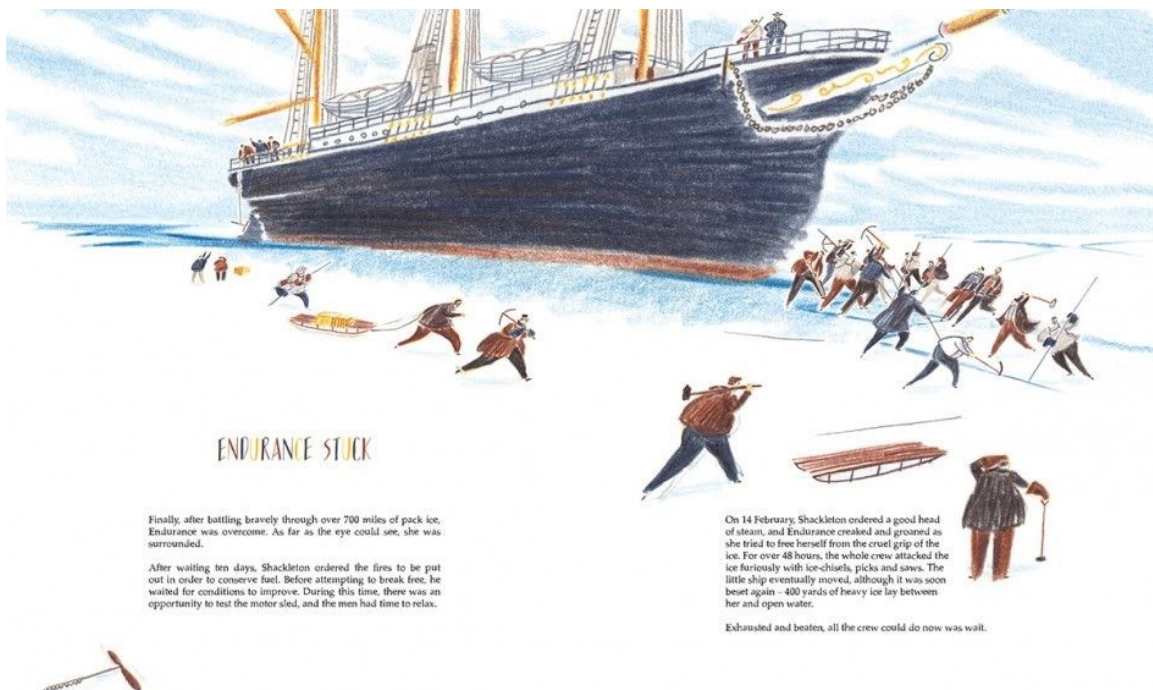
This was only about the *Endurance* going missing and how people thought they would never see them again. We really enjoyed this project and hope you love reading it. We hope we can do another newspaper article about cool people and their fantastic adventures.

On Monday it was a different day. On that day we did some science experiments. The things we did were a tomato experiment, an absorbency test and how strong different types of paper are. The experiments went really well.

The tomato experiment was a hit because some of them were really hot most of the time. I was surprised that the plastic pot kept the most heat in.

The paper strength experiment went really well because most of the paper held over 40+ water drops. Sugar paper in the group was the most sustainable and kept the most without breaks. In other groups, it had about 100 drops of water for each of the other groups' paper.

And the last experiment was an absorbency experiment. We had some weird stuff we had to do to absorb water. One of them was a washable/disposable nappy! It went really well because the most ml of water in my group was around 300 ml of water. In other groups were around 200 ml of water.



Finally, after battling bravely through over 700 miles of pack ice, *Endurance* was overcome. As far as the eye could see, she was surrounded.

After waiting ten days, Shackleton ordered the fires to be put out in order to conserve fuel. Before attempting to break free, he waited for conditions to improve. During this time, there was an opportunity to test the motor sled, and the men had time to relax.

On 14 February, Shackleton ordered a good head of steam, and *Endurance* creaked and groaned as she tried to free herself from the cruel grip of the ice. For over 48 hours, the whole crew attacked the ice furiously with ice-chisels, picks and saws. The little ship eventually moved, although it was soon beset again - 400 yards of heavy ice lay between her and open water.

Exhausted and beaten, all the crew could do now was wait.

Foundation Stage have been learning about Space!

Here are some photos of their junk modelling rockets, which they made collaboratively, and chalk drawings of planets.



Year 4

There has been lots of practical learning in Year 4 this term with their Cracking Contraptions topic. Here are some photos of their buzz wire games which they made as part of the Science learning about Electricity and a cracking contraption with moving parts, using pneumatics, made in Design and Technology. Well done on lots of creative and technical thinking, Year 4!



Making Rain Gauges in Year 1

In Year 1, we cut bottles in half, turned the tops upside down and put them in the bottoms. Then we looked for a nice open space and built a surround to help them stay up right to collect rainwater. We enjoyed using rulers to measure the amount of rain they had caught and were excited to discover that some had frozen. We learnt about insulation as one of the bottles was insulated with grass and soil, and this water had not frozen.

