

## Fundraising

World Mental Health Day  
#HelloYellow

Total Raised £80.40

Thank you for your support.

## Message From Antonia

Dear Families and Friends

Well, it has been a very strange, but action – packed half-term. The pupils generally, have returned really happily back into school and ready to learn. We have been pleased to see them and they have been glad to see their friends. We have also welcomed some new pupils to St John's and they have settled in well.



Staff and children have had to adapt to surroundings that look very different, working in Bubbles and playing in more confined spaces. Despite that, learning and activities have continued and pupils have made some great progress. We have a comprehensive risk assessment which you can find on the school website which explains all the measures that we are taking to maximise safety during the pandemic. So far there has been one COVID case in school and the close contacts of that pupil have self isolated.

To help with us planning, **please inform the school during half term if your child has a positive diagnosis of COVID 19. You can use the Pupil Absence line to do this.** If your child has to self isolate then we have home learning plans tailored to their needs. We have found that the children maintained and developed many of their skills through the lockdown and are now making progress again.

This term we have welcomed Matt Ricketts, who is covering maternity leave, as a new teacher to the school in our Secondary Department and we also welcomed 12 new Learning Support Assistants to St John's. Some of you will have talked to Nicky Baines who is our new temporary receptionist.

We said good bye this week to Jeff Beales who has tended our gardens and been a cleaner at the school for 18 years. He is retiring and looking forward to spending time looking after his own garden! We wish him well in his new adventures and he has promised to return to help us out.

I hope you all have a happy and safe half term  
With best wishes

## Term-time Absence

If you wish to request permission for your child to take absence during term time, please obtain a form from the School Office. This should be completed and returned at least 4 weeks prior to the intended absence.



## Pupil Absences

If your child is unwell and cannot attend school, please ensure you contact the school by 7:30 am EVERYDAY that your child is unwell by calling **01234 345565** and **selecting option 1** for the pupil absence line. Please leave brief message including your child's name, class and reason for absence.



**Please also remember to advise Transport.**

## Reminder

If you haven't already done so, please could you return your child's home learning consent form. If you require another copy please contact the school office.



## Message from Local Advisory Board (LAB)

The LAB Board meets at least every half term to discuss and review the performance of the school, its staff and its pupils and any other issues affecting the well-being and running of St John's. We are now successfully meeting via Zoom rather than face to face at St John's.

It was time this term to elect our LAB officers and we were very pleased to confirm Simon Broomfield as Acting Chair. Long standing LAB member, Mike Bonney, was confirmed as Interim Vice chair. Laura Sherwood-King has stepped in to the Lead Safeguarding role.

At our last meeting we discussed the Head of School's report which indicates that our pupils have made an incredibly successful transition back into full time schooling and we have a 79% attendance rate already despite the current challenges. We reviewed the detailed policy documents now in place to protect pupils and staff from Covid-19 risks and we supported Antonia's efforts to monitor and maintain staff and pupil well-being over the next academic year.

WANTED—NEW LAB members

We were delighted to welcome new staff LAB member Joe Gibson and we are **urgently seeking new LAB members with key professional skills especially: legal expertise, surveying and facilities management, safeguarding qualifications and HR professionals. If you or a family member or friend is able to support us in any way please contact LAB Chair Simon Broomfield via the school office ASAP.** Without a full complement of LAB members, St John's cannot continue to run so successfully.

You can find our latest and past LAB meeting minutes and updated school policy documents on our web site shortly after each meeting <https://www.st-johns-school.co.uk/about-us/local-advisory-board>

## Joe Gibson—Class Teacher & new LAB Member

I joined St John's on a temporary LSA contract in 2009 and qualified as a teacher in 2013. I was awarded a distinction in my Masters in SEN and Inclusion in 2018. Over the years, I've been lucky enough to work across the school, from Key Stage 2 through to FE. It remains my privilege to work with our amazing young people - our pupils inspire me every single day.



There have been so many highlights in my time as St John's - our FE camping trip, all our forest school sessions, riding the train to Marston Moretaine with my class, filling the Church of the Transfiguration full of bubbles for a whole school sensory story - the list goes on, but perhaps my proudest achievement has been running the Paris marathon in 2015 to raise funds towards music therapy.

My passions include communication, story-telling, learning outside the classroom, and teaching functional independence skills with some of our most complex learners. I live in Bedford with my wife, our baby daughter, two cats and a tortoise named Florence. Outside of work, my hobbies include running, hill walking and cooking (which I have been reliably told has improved with age).

Please do check out my Youtube channel - DIY Sensory Stories - for story telling ideas to try at home.

## Hello Yellow



On Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October, we took part in 'Hello Yellow' for Young Minds charity. This is a charity that supports young people with Mental Health difficulties and promotes positive mental wellbeing.



Pupils and staff wore yellow to celebrate and we did things that make us feel happy. We did some activities including Yoga, dressing up & doing nice things for our friends.



## Happy Retirement

This week we bid farewell to Jeff Beales who has been a member of the site team at St John's for 18 years. We would like to thank Jeff for all his hard work over the years and wish him a restful retirement



## Our New Sunken Trampolines

Over the summer holidays, we had 2 new sunken trampolines installed in one of the smaller playgrounds. We used funds from various charitable donations received from; Howdens, Bedlam, Phoenix Golf Club and an another large anonymous donation, and we thank them very much! We are hoping to start using them next half term and we cannot wait! Please look out for permission forms coming out to soon! We hope they will provide sensory support, strategies to support calmness and for some to learn safe trampoline skills.

## New Cookery Room



During the summer term, we had a new kitchen / cookery room installed in the Babbage building. This room provides individual work stations for up to 10 pupils at a time where they're provided with a set



of equipment each, to allow them to work on their cookery skills independently and at their own pace. The room also has a seating area, similar to a café where pupils can experience what it's like to sit, eat and for some, work in a café environment. This space will allow pupils to begin to understand how to use kitchen equipment safely, wash up and complete basic cooking skills.

# Information

## Training Course with ADHDwise

Following the October sessions run by ADHDWISE there will be an opportunity to book for a further six week course.

The course will be run on the following dates from 9.30am-12pm with a 20 minute break:

- Sunday 8 November
- Sunday 15 November
- Sunday 22 November
- Sunday 29 November
- Sunday 6 December
- Sunday 13 December

This is the first time BBPCF has arranged training during the weekend and we realise that it may not suit everyone. However, feedback from the trainer is that it has worked well in other areas & we want to make this opportunity available to as many families as possible.

We are expecting a high demand for this training. Places will be offered on a first come first served basis and you will need to commit to being able to attend all sessions. Please email [communications@bbpcf.org.uk](mailto:communications@bbpcf.org.uk) to book your place



St John's School is a registered referral agent for



If you would like to speak to someone in

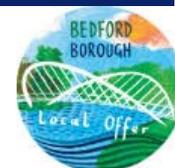
confidence about help from the

Foodbank, please ask Mel Wooding or

telephone 01234 247224

## Bedford Borough Local Offer

Bedford Borough's Local Offer is a 'one stop shop' where parents and young people with Special Educational Needs and or disabilities can find clubs, activities, FREE virtual bitesize training/ information sessions for young people, parents and professionals and services to support them and their families.



The SEND team have recently uploaded a range of useful information and documents in the documents are on annual reviews, personal budgets, assessment paperwork and the SEND Panel including dates for 2020-2021.

You will also be able to find information about local schools and childcare as well as the latest Policies and Procedures. There is a helpful Advice and Guidance section which shows you who to contact for support or to ask any questions

<https://localoffer.bedford.gov.uk/kb5/bedford/directory/home.page>

## Dates for the Diary

Monday 2nd November —Pupils Return to School

Wednesday 4th November—Consultation Evening

Friday 13th November– Children in Need

Friday 11th December—Christmas Jumper Day for Save the Children

Thursday 17th December—Last Day of Term

