

30th January 2026

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<https://www.stjohnandstnicolasschools.org.uk/>

Executive Headteacher: Keith Harvey

Dear Parents and Carers,

This week has been a busy one for me with lots of interviews – news about this below. Interviewing gives an opportunity to see our children in a different context and I have been very impressed with the politeness and focus that I have seen from our children across the schools. It has made me feel very proud. Next week, I am really looking forward to seeing our Year 5 and 6 children participating at Young Voices, which I am sure will be an amazing experience as always.

Staff News

As mentioned above, we have had interviews this week for three posts. We welcome Mrs S Hill back to our federation – she will be working as a teaching assistant at St Nicolas School. Miss Pattenden will be joining us as a higher-level teaching assistant working at both schools on a Monday and Tuesday. Both will be starting after half term. We have also had our SENCO interviews this week and I will let you know the outcome of this in next week's update.

Parking at Both Schools

There have been a couple of incidents this week, in terms of parking, which I would like parents to be aware of:

- On Wednesday, at St John's, a parent alerted me that a car parked outside the school on Old Newtown Road was left with a child in a car seat inside the car, while the parent went into school to drop off their child. This is a concern to me, as it leaves the child in a potentially dangerous situation. If this was you, I would ask you to reconsider this in future.
- We have also had complaints from Link House, next to St Nic's, where some parents have been parking at the end of the day. This is a private car park and should not be used.

Newbury Town Civic Awards

Attached with this update is a poster regarding making nominations for the Newbury Town Civic Awards. If you know someone, who is deserving of an award, please do make a nomination.

National Storytelling Week

Next week is National Storytelling Week. There will be lots of events going on in both schools, including the Travelling Book Fair, which will be available from Tuesday for the following week. Please do come and see the books available and remember that a portion of the takings will come to the schools to purchase books.

In each school, there will be a competition for children to participate in as follows:

St Nic's – Picture + Story Starter Competition

Children are invited to create an illustration and write a short story or opening inspired by it.

The winning entry would then be used as the writing stimulus for the following week's *Writer of the Week*.

St John's – Character Creation Challenge

Children are invited to create and draw a brand-new character and write:

- Character's name
- A short paragraph about their character

There would be small prizes for winning entries.

Attendance

Congratulations to Cherry Class at St John's with 98.6% attendance and 6N at St Nic's with 100% attendance. Both classes have won our attendance aardvarks for this week (6N for the third week in a row!).

Attendance at each school last week was as follows:

- St John's: 94.9%
- St Nic's 95.9%

Across the two schools, there were 43 children late last week, which is an increase on the previous week. Please ensure your child is in school, on time, each day.

Breakfast & After School Clubs

We have the following spaces available at our Extended Day clubs:

St John's

Breakfast Club - spaces on Tuesday and Friday

After School Club - spaces on Monday and Friday

St Nic's

Breakfast Club - spaces every day - book and pay via ParentPay

After School Club - spaces every day

If you would like to book any spaces, please contact finance@stjohnandstnicolasschools.org.uk

Just a reminder that we have a notice period of 3 term weeks if you wish to cancel a session.

Writer of the Week

Well done to Vira and Aadita in Year 4, who were this week's writers of the week. The inspiration for next week is below:



Year 2 Homework

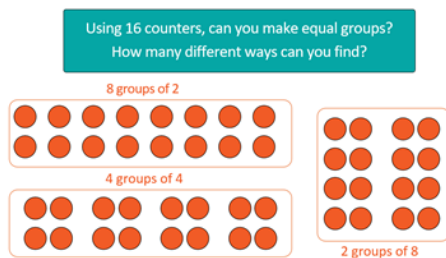
Maths

This week we have started multiplication. Information on how we teach this can be seen on the sheet we sent home on Monday.

The children have learnt what an equal group means and how to make equal groups. We have looked at adding equal groups and the multiplication symbol.

You can help support your child by practising counting in 2s, 3s, 5s, and 10s

Can your child get out 16 coins, buttons, counters etc and see how many equal groups they can make? Can they write number sentences to show this?



[The array](#) Play this game and familiarize your child with rows and columns in an array.

Play the following online game to get your child to recognise an array: [Arrays with Repeated Addition - Gameshow quiz](#)

Spellings

In spellings this week we are looking at words ending in -y (igh sound) e.g. cry, fry, dry and seeing what happens when we add ing, ed, est, ies ,s etc

Cries, cried, dries, driest, drier etc.

We have looked at the contraction doesn't- does not

Common exception spellings- any. many, busy, should

Drawing Club

Drawing Club is a way of igniting joy and a love of stories with the early years and follows Greg Bottrell's beliefs and passions. Your child will be using their imagination to create new characters, settings, and events for this story. They will be adding marks, codes, labels, and messages to their work and realising that they are writers! Each week we will choose a different story or an animation, this week our story is:



They will also be learning some exciting new vocabulary with actions. This week's vocabulary list is:

Unfamiliar
Surprising

Pitch black
Grimy
Cavity
Laser
Keepsake
Sightseer

See if they can teach you the actions!

Phonics Books for the Week

Reception: [https://parents.fft.org.uk/S13 At Dusk](https://parents.fft.org.uk/S13_At_Dusk)
<https://vimeo.com/692003360/7c1d68fd7c>

Year 1: [https://parents.fft.org.uk/S48 Yig-s Trombone](https://parents.fft.org.uk/S48_Yig-s_Trombone)
<https://vimeo.com/731076444/7f1bc401e1>

Year 2: [https://parents.fft.org.uk/YR2 Anna-s Homework](https://parents.fft.org.uk/YR2_Anna-s_Homework)

Upcoming Dates

Tuesday 3 rd February:	Travelling Book Fair starting in both schools
Tuesday 3 rd February:	Young Voices – Y5/6
Thursday 5 th February:	Celebration worship 10.10am

Yours sincerely,

Keith Harvey
Executive Headteacher