

Friday 17th July 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

This is the last parent update for this academic year and I reflect on a very positive year for our schools. I am really proud of what the children have achieved, both academically but also across all other areas of school life. In particular, this week, I have been so impressed with the Year 2 and Year 6 children and the plays that they have performed. It is not just the singing and acting that I have enjoyed but also the togetherness and friendship that both year groups were clearly demonstrating on stage. I wish the Year 6 children every success as they move on to their new schools – they have been a special year group for me and I will very much miss them.

Sponsorship



This newsletter is proudly supported by Ken Dowling Property, a boutique estate agency based in Newbury. If you or someone you know is thinking about moving home, Ken Dowling Property would be delighted to help.

For every property sale completed following an introduction through the school newsletter, £1,000 will be donated directly to the school to support its pupils and future projects.

Staffing

As is usual at this time of year, we say goodbye and thank you to some members of staff:

- Mrs Patel, who has performed a number of roles with us, including specifically this year training to teach leaves us at the end of this term, as she looks to start her teaching career. She has been a fantastic member of staff, who has shown real commitment to St John's and we will miss her.
- Mrs Hunt, who has been at St Nic's for the past two years will be leaving us to continue her career at another school. I would like to thank her for everything that she has done to support the school and wish her well in her new role.
- Mrs Johnson, who has worked at St John's for the past 7 years, will be leaving at the end of this term to take up a role in another school. There will be many children, who Mrs Johnson has influenced during her time at St John's and I would like to thank her and wish her well for the future.
- Thank you also to Mr Hill, who is leaving us to head to University in September. He has provided some very good support to several children at St Nic's this year and we will miss him.

Lunchtime Controller Role

Both schools are looking to appoint a lunchtime controller to join our teams from September. If you are interested in one of these roles, or know someone who might be, please direct them to our website, where they will find the full details:

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

Meet the Teacher

We will be holding meet the teacher sessions very early in the Autumn Term. These are an opportunity for parents to come into school at the beginning of the year and meet their child's new teacher. Essential information such as P.E. days and information about reading and homework will be shared during these times. The sessions will take place at the following times:

- Thursday 3rd September (note this is the first day back): Year 3 and 6 sessions for parents at 3.30pm
- Friday 4th September: Year 4 and 5 sessions at 3.30pm
- Monday 7th September: Year 1 and 2 sessions at 8.45am (children will be taken to the playground during the session).

School Uniform

With the hot weather over the past few weeks, our uniform rules have been relaxed. However, from September, we will be expecting full and correct uniform from all children. Please ensure that your children have the correct clothing so that they are able to follow the uniform policy. In particular:

- All footwear worn by children should be plain black (as much as possible) – shoes or trainers
- P.E. kits for Years 1 to 6 should only be worn on P.E. days. If children have before or after school sports clubs on non-P.E. days, they should still wear their school uniform during the school day.
- Jewellery should not be worn in school. The only exceptions to this are as follows:
 - Children may wear a watch that does not have Internet or Bluetooth connectivity
 - Children with pierced ears may wear stud earrings. However, these must be removed or covered by the child for P.E. lessons.
 - Religious necklaces may be worn if there is prior discussion with the class teacher. However, these must be removed for P.E. and swimming lessons and must be kept tucked inside school uniform at other times.
 - Hair that is longer than shoulder length (boys or girls) must be tied back at all times in school.

School Start and Finish Times

From next year, we will be having a strong push on children's punctuality. This academic year, there have been 1913 children late across our two schools and a further 215 children late after the registers have closed (30 minutes after the school start time). This represents nearly a full term of school lost across our 2 schools, simply due to lateness.

From September, the gates at both schools will be closed at the school start times and any children that have not arrived in school by that time will need to come to the school office, where the lateness will be recorded. If any child receives three late marks, this will be followed up by the senior

leadership team and we will identify ways that we can support to ensure your child is in on time every day.

For information, the school start times are as follows:

- St John the Evangelist: 8.45am – gates are opened from 8.40am until 8.50am – any arrival after 8.50am will be marked as late.
- St Nicolas School: 9am – the gate is opened from 8.40am and will be closed at 9am. Any arrival after 9am will be marked as late.

Church Services

Next Monday, our leavers' services for the two schools take place.

St John's children should be dropped at St John's church for 8.45am for the leavers' service, which starts at 9am (breakfast club children will be walked to the church). After the service, parents are welcome to come back to St John's, where the Year 2 children will be ringing the school bell to mark the end of their St John's journey.

The St Nicolas service also takes place on Monday, starting at 2pm. Parents are welcome to join us. Following the service, parents are welcome to collect their children. Remaining children will be walked back to school.

After School Club – last day of term

After School Club will finish at 4.15pm at both schools on Tuesday 21st July.

September Fun Day

To replace our Summer Fair, which sadly had to be cancelled due to the heat, Friends of St John's and St Nic's will be holding a September Fun Day. This is likely to take place on Saturday 19th September. Full details of the event will be sent out in early September.

Attendance

Well done to Poplar class at St John's with 95% attendance for the year and 5S at St Nic's with 97% attendance for the year.

The St John's attendance for the year is 94.1%. This is below the national averages for primary schools and means that we will need to work harder on attendance next year. Research shows that children with the best attendance – 98% and above – are those that do the best in school. There were 38 children at St John's with attendance at 98% or above.

At St Nic's, attendance for the year is 95.3%, which is just in line with national averages. We still think that we can do more to improve our attendance, but well done to the 104 children with attendance at 98% or above.

Crucially, across our 2 schools, there are 70 children, whose attendance is below 90%. This means that these children have missed at least nearly 4 weeks of school across the year. If this were to happen every year of their school life, they would miss nearly one and a half years of school.

Please make sure that your child arrives in school, on time, every day.

Bronze Reading Award

Well done to Yalini M, in Year 4, who has successfully achieved the bronze reading award.

Great British Summer Savings

The government have asked schools to highlight that there are family savings that they have put in place for the summer holidays. To find out more go to <https://summersavings.gov.uk/>

Free Racing Tickets | Wednesday 26th August | Newbury Racecourse

Newbury Racecourse will be hosting a Schools' Celebration Raceday on Wednesday 26th August.

This day will see school-age pupils and two family members invited to enjoy a day of racing – and a host of entertainment and activities – during the summer holidays for free.

Further information (and a video) is available here - <https://newburyracecourse.co.uk/racing/news-and-information/pupils-parents-to-enjoy-racing-for-free-this-august/>

They've already had parents & pupils request more than 3,000 free tickets and complimentary tickets can still be requested here: ow.ly/ebKZ50ZcaqH

School staff and teachers are also eligible for a pair of free tickets and these can be accessed here: ow.ly/r7CE50Zcav8

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 Omar the Bees and Me.



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

Collaboration; Apiarist; Proposal; Customary; Biosphere; Luscious; Vital; Drone

See if they can teach you the actions!

Upcoming Dates

Monday 20 th July:	St John's Leavers' Service 9am
Monday 20 th July:	St Nic's Leavers' Service 2pm
Tuesday 21 st July:	Last day of term – St John's finishes 1.30pm; St Nic's 1.45pm (ASC finishes at 4.15pm at both schools)
Tuesday 21 st July:	Year 6 Leavers' Party 2pm
Thursday 2 nd September:	Start of new school year
Thursday 2 nd September:	Year 3 and 6 meet the teacher 3.30pm

Friday 4th September:
Monday 7th September:

Year 4 and 5 meet the teacher 3.30pm
Year 1 and 2 meet the teacher 8.45am

A list of currently known dates for the school year will be sent out with the first parent update in September.

Have a lovely Summer break.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Harvey
Executive Headteacher