



**St John Rigby Catholic Primary School**  
*'God's will be done through work and play, as we follow Jesus day by day'*



# NEWSLETTER



## December 2017

### Message from the Headteacher

The season of Advent is upon us and with it, the beginning of the Church's year. It follows on from the last Sunday of the previous year where we celebrated the feast of Christ the King. We hear Jesus described as a King at this time of year more than any other. It is a central theme of many of our Christmas carols.

In a recent assembly, some images of the top google searches for the word "King" were displayed. The characters who came up were hugely diverse. They included Henry VIII, Simba (from the Lion King), Tutankhamun, Elvis, Michael Jackson and King George VI. The children were asked what kind of words spring to mind when we see these images. They included great power and authority (and a reminder of "Divorce, beheaded, died etc."), riches and wealth, being worshipped by many and, of course, sacrifice. One of our older pupils had read about George VI, a reluctant king, who had been left to rule after his brother had abdicated in order to marry a divorcee (topical!). He said he knew about "The King's Speech" (thankfully he had not seen the film as the language is colourful!) and the problems George VI had faced with a stutter. What came to mind was that here was a king who knew the sacrifices that he would need to make in order to serve his country dutifully.

We recognise in the portrayal of the infant king, a child that was born and sent by God to be sacrificed so that we may be united with God. In scripture, Jesus reminds us that His kingdom is about serving those around us and making sacrifices. During this season, all of the children have been encouraged just to do that little extra something for someone else. The simpler the better. It is a pleasure to observe those frequent moments when our children do this in school. It is sometimes a kind remark, helping someone carry their bag or put their packed lunch in the right place, or, holding the hand of a new child who may be slightly lost.

As we move into Advent, a season of preparation, one can't help that this theme of "keep it simple" is more important than ever. The retail industry is in full swing. Black Friday has come and gone and every advert has a soundtrack of sleigh bells. I am sure many of you have received a list from your child addressed to Santa. I have, and I can safely say, that there are a number of items where I simply don't have a clue what they actually are (more internet searching needed perhaps!).

At some stage, however, we need to switch all of this "background noise" off. Matthew's gospel asks us to "stay awake". One could argue that all of this noise is keeping us awake when we don't want to be! Perhaps there is a danger that rather than a sleepy state, we can fall into a trance-like state driven by the commercial bombardment that we all face. This means we are not awake when it comes to the arrival of Jesus.

That is where we must keep things simple, this Christmas. The conversation around a table where there is no background noise, the outdoor walks where our children can play creatively and laugh with us. If we approach our break in this way, we will be awake in the presence of Jesus.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL**

Follow our Facebook page: "St John Rigby Catholic Primary School" and Twitter #SJR@StJohnRig

### Website and communications

Please do check out our new website at [www.stjohnrigby.org](http://www.stjohnrigby.org) "Latest news" articles are being added all of the time and these are linked to our social media feeds.

### Key term Dates for the New Year(these are on the website calendar)

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January: Pupils return for the first day of the Spring Term

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January: Christmas Season Masses and Liturgies for Pupils (Year 3 – 6 walk to Holy Cross)

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January: AM: PTA Panto at Castle Newnham (all year groups)

Wb Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January: Year 6 Mock SATs week.

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February: Year 6 assembly for parents (10.30am)

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February: Year 6 Parents Evening (Part One)

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February: Year 6 Parents Evening (Part Two)

### Some pictures from the recent Year 4 viking Day:



### Primary Mathematics challenge

In November, a group of year 5 and year 6 pupils participated in the Primary Mathematics challenge. The children did amazingly well on some very challenging questions, and I was extremely proud of what they achieved. Furthermore, seven of the pupils that took part are waiting to see if they have done enough to get into the bonus round, in the new year. We will keep you posted.

Miss Guard



### **Safety around the school grounds: bikes and scooters**

Members of staff have been reminding children that they should be dismounting from bikes and scooters whilst on the school grounds. We would be grateful if you could ensure that when dropping off and picking up your child they adhere to this. Many thanks.

### **PTA Volunteers**

If you would like to get involved with the PTA, there is a facebook page or email [pta@stjohnrigby.org](mailto:pta@stjohnrigby.org). No long-term commitment is required. There are so many great events that are organised by the PTA from fun running to discos and fairs. Not only do they raise funds but they provide us with many of our most memorable moments!

Thank you to all families and friends who supported our magical nativities and carol service.

At each event, the PTA presented £500 for each year group which is being used to purchase curriculum resources. The PTA have also donated £2000 towards new LED lighting in our main hall. They are also funding our whole school pantomime on January 9th. Many thanks to all who volunteer their time and energy to support the pTA. As a school we are incredibly fortunate to have so many enterprising parents!



### **The Reading Cloud: Years 3 - 6**

This week you will receive a letter introducing the Reading Cloud. This is a personalised web page which bases its content on your child's reading habits in school. It allows children to write blogs and reviews about what they are reading. It also allows children to learn more about their favourite authors (many authors talk about their own books on video) and recommends titles based on the books that the children have borrowed. Your child could come home with a 3-digit code that acts as a username and password for their webpage. We would be grateful if you could encourage your child to try this out over the Christmas break. The letter and the website also give details of the app version for mobile devices. More information can also be found on our website

at: <http://www.stjohnrigby.org/page/?title=READING+CLOUD&pid=171>

December 2017

Welcome to the first eSafety Newsletter. Our newsletter aims to explain what we are doing in school to help ensure that all members of our school community are kept safe whilst enjoying the wonderful tool that is the internet. This has been launched ready for Christmas just in case Santa places some technology into Christmas stockings! This newsletter also aims to communicate important safeguarding information to you so that we can work together to keep the children safe.

If you have any eSafety questions or concerns, please do come and see me.

Last year, part of our Healthy Self Day included a session on internet safety. We completed a number of activities, and were reminded of a previous visit from PC Denton.

We discussed the importance of staying safe online through never sharing personal details, particularly when using Social Media. There is a display in our ICT suite that reminds the children not to use their full name as a username, not to share passwords, and to always ask an adult if unsure of what they are being asked to share.

We also discussed the fact that Social Media has age restrictions, and I have included these on the newsletter for your reference.



### Age Restrictions:

Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat – 13  
WhatsApp – 16  
YouTube – 18, or 13 with parental consent

### This is what happens in an internet minute:

**Email – 204 million emails sent**

**Google – 2 million searches**

**Facebook – 1.8 million likes**

**Skype – 1.4 million connection minutes**

### Social Media Tips:

The internet is amazing. Children can play, learn, create and connect – opening up a new world of exciting possibilities. But with the digital world changing all the time, how can you make sure your child is staying safe?

Make sure geo-location is disabled to keep your child's whereabouts private.

Check that your child has set any Social Network accounts to private.

Ask your child to be open about who they are talking to online and supervise whenever necessary. Make sure they are aware that not everyone is who they say they are online.

Discuss potential long-term impact of what is shared online, especially if consent to do so hasn't been gained.

Encourage children to spend real-life time with friends and not to worry about approval through 'likes'.



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# PTA Information

### **EVENTS 2018**

**Easter Raffle Mufti –  
Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March  
2018**

**Easter Raffle –  
Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March  
2018**

**Quiz – Date to be  
confirmed**

**PTA MUFTI and  
Discos – (EY'S – Year  
5) Friday 6<sup>th</sup> July  
2018**

**Summer Fayre –  
Friday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

**Leavers Family Disco  
and Graduation –  
Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> July  
2018**

### Online shoppers

The PTA has registered with an online fundraising website:

[www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk)

On here you have links to Amazon, ebay, Tesco's, John Lewis, etc.

We would be grateful to all of you who shop online if you could register with this website, when you register it will ask you to enter the charity you wish to support – 'St John Rigby PTA – Bedford'.

Each time you shop through this website the PTA will receive a percentage of what you have spent. Last year we got approximately £122.

### External Stalls

Do you or someone you know have a business that would like to have a stall at our Christmas or Summer Fayre? We aim to offer a wide range stalls at our fayres to suit all age groups. Please contact the PTA for further information.

**If you have any questions or if you can help at any of our events, please contact the PTA via email: [pta@stjohnrigby.org](mailto:pta@stjohnrigby.org)**