

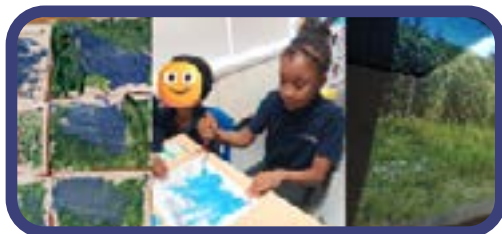
23rd June 2026

St John's News



**St John's
School**
Achieving Together

P2



Geography

This term in Geography, pupils explored the topic of rivers. They used the floor projector to simulate safe ways of walking along a riverbank, helping them understand river safety. To conclude the unit, pupils expressed their learning creatively by painting their own river scenes. Pupils enjoyed painting their river picture.



PSHE

In PSHE, pupils focused on exploring their school environment. They selected and discussed pictures of their favourite places to visit within the school, as well as their favourite classroom activities, encouraging reflection and communication.



Maths

In maths this term we are learning measurements. From measuring capacity using bottles of water to using a CM ruler, pupils explored different way of measuring items as well as completing measurement activity sheets.



S8



For literacy in S8 we have been exploring the seaside. Our aim was to design a persuasive poster inviting the reader to visit the seaside. H has used persuasive techniques in his wonderful poster.

'Light house keepers' lunch' in Literacy. M made a realistic illustration of what a light house looks like.

We have also been reading the



In careers, we had the opportunity to attend a workshop with the Magpus Air Ambulance services and the Bedford Road safety services to explore the different jobs that people do. We learned how CPR and a defibrillator works. We also got to experience what road safety looks like using some amazing VR sets. **C** said, "The VR was the best at teaching me how to stay safe on the road!"

We have also been looking at our rights and responsibilities of being a law-abiding citizen. We have explored the 'Rule of Law' and how the school student council is representing the views and rights of the pupils at St John's. **O** and **C** are our class representatives and this is what they said.

O said, "My job is to hear what everyone wants and tell the school how they should help us achieve this."



P1

In P1 we have been enjoying sensory stories in Literacy recently, exploring interacting with the different elements. **HA, LB, AK** and **JA** enjoyed hearing the boat sounds when they pressed the big mack button, while **LRH** and **MZ** enjoyed the feel of the seaweed. We then had a go at making sensory bottles, adding in different sea-themed items, as well as our coloured water. Everyone has loved shaking them!

In Maths we have been refreshing our number knowledge, working on our addition using our special dabber pens to make the amounts. **FK** worked very hard with staff to track as he was counting, while **ZAA** opted to add in his head. We have also continued working on our number formation, practising one number per week. We are working on our pencil grip so that we can hold mark-making tools with increased independence.

Pupils have also been loving the start of the summer weather, having lots of fun outside! We have been engaging in more water play, seeing what different tools we can use to make the water splash. **AH & RH** loved being able to make big splashes in the water tray. We have also observed that many of the leaves have changed colour, as well as looking at the different insects we can see in the summer.

It was also had Sports Day this week. All pupils worked hard on kicking the ball into the goal, balancing on the benches, throwing the ball into the basket and knocking down the bowling pins. Many thanks to the parents and carers that came along; we really appreciated it!



S9

We were delighted to receive news from Nicola, our fabulous Music Instructor, who has been working with our pupils on a project from the English National Opera.

Dear S9
Wow! A huge congratulations on submitting your fantastic composition!

We loved hearing your ideas for how the world could be in your composition To Neptune And Beyond! that completes Elif's opera 'Plant This Seed'.

At the ENO, a group of us got together to listen to all of the compositions submitted to us in April.

Your composition was listened to by: Sabrina Bauer, Membership & Appeals Officer
And here is their feedback:

So I'm a lover of all things planets and space so you had me at the title. This makes me feel like I'm an astronaut flying through space and talking to aliens. I loved how it goes from quiet, everyone being excited for the start, to all the noise coming from space (I guess that's what space sounds like). Well done!

We are also **especially excited** to let you know that your composition was one of 10 to be selected to be awarded an illustration that responds to your composition - made by the illustrator of Plant This Seed, Lena Yokoyama! Huge congratulations! Here is a link to your the digital version of your illustration - a print out will be in post to you next week to display in your classroom:

We also sent those compositions selected for illustration to our composer Elif Karlidag so that she could listen and provide you with her own feedback:

Wow, this is very interesting. I loved the drones; they are incredibly effective. Your piece made me want to travel to space immediately! I really enjoyed the different sounds and textures you explored, and the music created a vivid atmosphere full of colour and imagination. Really fascinating work.

We hope you're all feeling really proud of yourselves - congratulations again to each and every one of you!

Enjoy celebrating your amazing work on the project, and we very much hope you are inspired to keep on composing!

Warmest wishes,
English National Opera



FE



We had a fantastic day at the Bedford Athletics Stadium for St John's Sports Day. All of the pupils put in a great deal of effort in preparation for the event, demonstrating excellent commitment and enthusiasm throughout.

Looking ahead, on 7th July many of our FE1 pupils will return to the track to take part in the Bedfordshire Games. This is a highly inclusive and exciting event designed for adults with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). It is particularly special this year, as several of our learners have been training consistently throughout the year in preparation.



The Bedfordshire Games provide a wonderful opportunity for our pupils to represent St John's and compete against participants from a range of other settings, helping to build confidence, teamwork, and a sense of achievement.

Overall, the Sports Day was a great success—everyone had an enjoyable time, and it was clear to see how much the pupils benefited from the experience.

La said, 'It was so much fun.'

Lu said, 'I liked the javelin.'

S said, 'I did a pretty good throw.'

K said, 'I only liked the ice-cream.'

J said, 'I liked all of it.'

R said, 'I liked the javelin best.'

W said, 'I liked running in the sand.'

LU said, 'I liked all the activities, best 100m.'



P8



This half term, P8 have continued to explore the exciting topic 'At the Seaside'. We have enjoyed a range of sensory experiences linked to this theme, including exploring sand, water and ice. These hands-on activities have supported engagement, curiosity and communication as pupils investigated different textures, temperatures and materials associated with seaside environments.

We have been enjoying the sensory story "The Snail and the Whale" in Literacy. Pupils have responded well to the story through listening to songs, watching short video clips and exploring the characters in a multi-sensory way.



In ICT, pupils have shown great enthusiasm when using technology. They particularly enjoyed interactive activities such as Chrome Music Lab and the snake game.

We have been creative and imaginative in Art, taking part in sand painting activities and making crabs using pipe cleaners. These have supported the development of fine motor skills, creativity and sensory exploration, while also linking closely to our seaside theme.

Overall, it has been a busy and enjoyable half term in P8, with pupils engaging well across all areas of learning and making positive progress through a rich variety of sensory and practical experiences.

C: I love the snake game and Pacman!

K: I enjoyed the sand painting and wanted to play more

R: I like watching the cartoon of 'The Snail and the Whale'.

L: I like the sand play.



S4

S4 had a wonderful time at our secondary sports day at the Bedford Athletic Stadium.

Pupils took part in sprints, hurdles, rocket throw and football. Pupils commented 'running' and 'kick' during activities. Pupils loved cheering on their classmates in the sprint races, with some pupils saying 'look look'

when they crossed the line!

We also all enjoyed an ice cream from the ice cream van during the day. We enjoyed making Sharon and Connor a thankyou card for organising such a fantastic day and our pupils delivered them signing 'thankyou'.



S5 We have been enjoying seaside sensory stories and making our own sand.

We have been playing catch the beachball and have so much fun with sensory play. We have been counting seaside features and writing sentences about going to the beach.



S5

P4

P4 went on a trip to Woburn Safari Park!

We started off with the drive round safari. **SD**, **EV** and **JS** ticked off what animals they saw on their checklist. **JKM** was able to tell us the names of different animals and where they are from. A monkey even climbed on our bus!

We then went to Woburn's new SEN classroom. **SU** loved colouring, **SF** loved sitting in the reading corner.

While in here small groups were taken out for the walk round safari.

AM liked seeing the penguins and kept saying 'penguins swimming'.

JS loved seeing the otters and wanted one as a class pet!



Sports Day

S3 pupils really loved attending sports day.

C said 'I loved sports day. My favourite things at sports day were the egg and spoon race and the ice cream van.'

A loved the egg and spoon race and the ice cream van too!

H loved running around the tracks and exploring the

S3

field!

D loved the running race!

Next steps

Two of our S3 classmates will be leaving St Johns at the end of this term, we will miss them both hugely and wish them the best of luck in their new setting. They have both been exploring their new college and have enjoyed transition visits to become familiar with their new environment.



P7



We have had an incredibly busy, creative, and fun-filled few weeks! Our pupils have been working hard, learning new skills, and making us proud every single day. Here is a look at what we have been up to.

We brought a bit of the seaside into our classroom with some beautiful beach umbrella art! The pupils did a fantastic job exploring textures and colours. We were especially proud of one of our pupils who usually prefers to avoid messy artwork but rolled up their sleeves and happily joined in with the whole group. The final pieces look amazing, and the pupils were so pleased with their creations.



In maths, we have been using balloons to practice our counting and matching skills. The pupils worked on counting out groups of balloons and matching them to the correct written numerals. Some of our pupils did a brilliant job mastering numbers up to 3, others challenged themselves and managed all the way up to 10!

Our time in the kitchen was a massive success as we turned into top chefs to make delicious cheesecakes. This activity was packed with great sensory and motor skills development. The pupils loved crushing the biscuits to make a crunchy base, helping to whip the cream and mixing everything together to ensure the filling was perfectly nice and light before pouring it into the tin.

We are so incredibly proud of the progress, determination, and teamwork our pupils have shown over the last few weeks. Thank you for your continued support at home!

P6



In P6 we have been doing lots of hard work around the theme at the seaside, everyone liked our number song and pressing the switch to start the next part of the song.

The sensory story about Sheldon the Snail going to the beach had lots of sensory stimuli to explore with **I** loving the water spray for the sea part with lots of laughs and giggles, **G** showing enjoyment of the seagull sounds. **M** has engaged with art feeling and exploring the different textures that have been put into paint to create sea creatures, seaweed and sandcastles. We have also been doing TacPac, Music, and working hard on our personal learning.



Earlier in the year P6 and S9 had an artist come into school to deliver a workshop with some pupils from both classes entered an art competition with the work they created. We are so excited to announce that the pupils who entered are going to have their work put on display in The Higgins Bedford from 20th June till 4th October.



Music News



On Thursday 21st May, the members of the school orchestra went to Bedford Corn Exchange to watch a live orchestra perform in a concert called Orchestra Unwrapped.

The concert featured an exciting programme of music played by the Philharmonia, one of the world's great orchestras, and was a celebration of their 80th Birthday! The pieces performed took the audience on a journey through time linking to the exciting history of the Philharmonia, from 1945 to today.

From the very first note, the pupils were glued to the orchestra and couldn't take their eyes (and ears!) off the incredible array of musical instruments on stage! They joined in enthusiastically with an interactive audience participation piece with the Philharmonia, which we had learned to sing and sign prior to the concert.

L said her favourite part of the concert was "joining in with the singing."

When asked which their favourite musical instrument in the orchestra was, **C** said, "the drums" and **O** said, "all of them!!".



Harper Trust

Theme: *Aspire: Nurture your potential*

We were also successful in achieving in the Harper Trust Art competition! Pupils work will be displayed at the Higgins in Bedford! Go have a look!



Congratulations go to **B** whose artwork has been shortlisted for a prize.

L
St John's Special School
'Fist bump'
Felt-tip, paint, printing and stencil on paper.
L was enabled to achieve his personal learning goals through the creative process of making his piece of Art.

He attended and demonstrated interest in the activities taking place and the persons in the environment. He was able to engage in the activity especially showing interest in the remote-control car making paint tracks. He manipulated tools to stamp paint on to his chosen stencil of a 'thumbs up' which he interpreted as fist bump, one of his newly learnt skills – so it was so lovely and meaningful to him, he enjoyed fist bumps through the activity whilst willingly engaging. He wore his hearing processors throughout the session! He tasted a little of the paint too! Excellent achievement!



B
St John's Special School
'High five'
Felt-tip, paint, printing and stencil on paper.
B was enabled to achieve personal learning goals through the creative process of making her piece of Art.

B enjoyed using a pen on a cane to make large marks on her paper. She communicated to our visiting artist asking her name using her iPad, this is not something we have seen before with visitors. The creative activity engaged her, and she was able to mark-make with greater independence and interest than seen before. She chose a hole punch and a hand stencil, which she immediately 'Hi fived' with smiles. She manipulated the tools well. The activity connected with her!

B loves High Fives! She was very proud of her work.

The Harper Trust Art Competition An exhibition of Children's Work

20 June - 4 October 2026

Sir William Harper Gallery - Free Entry

The Children's Art Competition will feature more than 100 pieces of artwork created by pupils from schools across Bedford Borough. The children aged 4 to 16 have created their artwork at workshops with professional artists visiting their schools. The theme for the 2026 exhibition is *Aspire: Nurturing Potential*, based on their aspirations, goals, dreams, hopes and what they want to be or do in life. This may be looking ahead to the year, before they go to secondary school, when they leave school, or even later in life. The competition and exhibition are delivered by The Harper Trust and The Higgins Bedford.

Further information please see Art Competition - Harper Trust.

Football News

Our footballers recently returned from a highly competitive tournament, showcasing just how much they have grown as a team over the last twelve months. It was a day filled with grit, skill, and plenty of school pride.

The most pleasing aspect of the tournament was seeing how much more competitive the squad has become. Compared to last year's results, the improvement was clear for all to see. The team secured two very creditable draws against tough opposition and remained resilient throughout the day; even in defeat, they were never beaten by more than a two-goal margin.

This newfound consistency is no accident. We can trace this progress directly back to our "Football Friday" programme, which has now been running for over a year. The dedication shown by the pupils every Friday afternoon is clearly translating into confidence on the pitch.

While the whole team played brilliantly, we were delighted to see one of our players receive a special individual award for Determination. This was awarded by the tournament organisers to recognise the incredible work rate and "never-give-up" attitude shown across all the matches. It was a proud moment for the player and the entire coaching staff.

In a further boost for our footballing community, we are thrilled to announce that one of our pupils has been offered the chance to join a local professional club! They have been invited to join the club's official Inclusion Team, marking a huge step forward in their sporting journey.

This is a wonderful testament to their hard work and talent, and we look forward to hearing all about their progress at the next level.

A huge thank you to all our footballers and the staff who take the time to coach them each week.



UKPN Visit

Electricity Safety Workshop with UKPN

On Tuesday afternoon, a small group of secondary pupils from across S7, S8, S6 and S3 were invited to take part in a fantastic electricity safety workshop delivered by our neighbours at UK Power Networks.

The session focused on the dangers of electricity and how to stay safe around electrical equipment and power networks. Pupils had the opportunity to explore a range of specialist PPE, try some of it on, and get hands-on with interactive resources, including circuit tubes that lit up and made sounds when completed correctly.

The pupils were highly engaged throughout the workshop, listened carefully, and asked some excellent questions during the Q&A session!

As an added bonus, everyone who attended received a goody bag to take home!

A huge thank you to UK Power Networks for delivering such an informative, interactive and enjoyable workshop. We are very grateful for the opportunity and look forward to working with them again in the future.



Goalball

We are incredibly proud to share the news of our recent sporting success at the Goalball Tournament. Our students delivered a masterclass in teamwork, strategy, and determination, returning to school as the overall winners of the competition!

The team was in exceptional form, winning seven out of their eight games. It wasn't always an easy path to victory; in two of those matches, our players found themselves behind on the scoreboard. However, showing incredible mental toughness, they kept their composure and staged two brilliant "comeback" wins to secure their place at the top.

What makes this achievement even more special is that we were competing against a variety of schools, including some more mainstream settings. Our pupils rose to the challenge magnificently, proving that their skills and communication are second to none.

The sportsmanship displayed by our team was exemplary. They represented the school with pride, supported one another through every save and every goal, and thoroughly deserved their first place.

Well done to all our players on their wonderful achievement.



Diary Dates

Friday 17th July 2026 - Last day of Summer Term (1pm finish)

Monday 7th September 2026 - Pupils Return to School