



St John's Highbury Vale C of E Primary School

Conewood Street, London N5 1DL

Tel: 020 7226 4906

E-mail: admin@stjhv.islington.sch.uk

Executive Head: Mrs Tonnies Read

Head of School: Ms Hasina Khan

Friday, 6th February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this week has been kind to you and that you have been able to enjoy some positive moments along the way.

Storytelling week

We read not just to learn, but to feel, to imagine, and to connect.

This week we have celebrated storytelling week. You are possibly fed up with me writing to you a lot about the importance of reading and, particularly, reading for pleasure. I came to England when I was 11 years old, and I did not speak English. One of the things which helped me to feel part of British culture was when I learnt to read. It enabled me to develop my vocabulary, connect with people, understand cultural references (weather, tea, standing politely in a queue), as well as academic success. Please promote reading in your households.

It is important that children read books from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds. Reading stories from other cultures helps children to develop curiosity, respect, and understanding of the world beyond their own experiences. At the same time, it is equally important that children can see themselves reflected in the books they read. When children recognise their own lives, families, languages, or experiences in stories, they feel valued and included, and are more likely to develop a positive relationship with reading. Books can help children both to understand others and to understand themselves, which is why diverse and representative texts are a vital part of reading for pleasure. Research shows that when children engage emotionally with stories, they are more likely to choose to read independently and develop lifelong reading habits.

Thank you to all the parents who have come into school this week to read to the children. It was quite wonderful to see.

Religious Education

As a Church of England school, Religious Education is a valued and protected part of our curriculum and is taught every week in line with the Statement of Entitlement from the London Diocesan Board for Schools. We ensure pupils receive their full RE entitlement, with more curriculum time devoted to RE than the national minimum. Our RE curriculum enables children to learn about Christianity as a living, global faith, while also exploring the major world religions, including Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism.

This week, we have been talking to children about how the RE classroom is a place where all voices are listened to, heard with empathy and respect, and given equal worth. Personal stories are treasured; difference and disagreement are embraced; inclusion is the norm; and all are deeply valued for being who they are.

I wanted to share this with you because it is important that you know how we support children in their RE lessons. Please ask your children what they are learning in RE and what they gain from the subject.





St John's Highbury Vale C of E Primary School

Conewood Street, London N5 1DL

Tel: 020 7226 4906

E-mail: admin@stjhv.islington.sch.uk

Executive Head: Mrs Tonnies Read

Head of School: Ms Hasina Khan

Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy

Next half term, we will begin championing sustainability across our school. In line with the Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, schools are expected to have a Sustainability Lead and take action to reduce their environmental impact. Working in collaboration with our deanery schools in Islington, our first focus will be the decarbonisation of our school buildings by reducing energy use, such as switching off lights, computers and interactive boards when not in use. Children will play an active role in monitoring energy use and encouraging our school community to reduce its carbon footprint.

We would welcome any parents or carers with experience in energy or sustainability who would be willing to share their expertise with the children. Please do get in touch.

FOSJ AGM

Thank you to all the parents who came to the AGM. The contribution you make to FOSJ allows our school to go above and beyond the national curriculum entitlement. Thank you. Please continue to support FOSJ however you can—all our children benefit from it. Thank you to Alice and Petuch, Athena, and all the class representatives.

Key dates for next week

Wednesday 11th February - Online Safety workshop for all parents – 9.00am

Friday 13th February – Y6 Class Assembly – 2.50pm

Friday 13th February - Bake sale (FOSJ) after school

I hope you have a wonderful weekend. I believe more rain is to come.

With thanks,

Ms Khan

Head of School

