St John's Highbury Vale C of E Primary School

Conewood Street, London N5 1DL
Tel: 020 7226 4906
E-mail: admin@stjhv.lslington.sch.uk
Acting Headteacher: Ms Khan

Friday 9th October, 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you have had a good week. October has got off to a positive start for us. On 2nd October, Mary Thorne, our School Effectiveness Partner from the LDBS, led a teaching and learning review at the school. On Monday, we welcomed our Christian Distinctiveness Partner, Tim Wright, who worked with our staff, children, Chair of Governors and clergy to see what our vision looks like in action day to day. I am pleased to say that both visits went very well. Our visitors left with lots of positive feedback, as well as some helpful ideas for how we can become even better. I always say to the staff that all feedback is a gift, and that we should always strive to do better.

Honouring Our Communities

On Monday, I introduced this year's Black History Month theme: honouring our communities. We learnt about Bishop Rose Hudson-Wilkin, the first Black woman to become a bishop in the Church of England. Bishop Rose has often spoken about how God calls people from every background, and how the Church is stronger when everyone's gifts are welcomed. This is what honouring our communities looks like: noticing people, caring for them and making sure they have a voice. I have asked the children to think of one person in our community and to say thank you to them.

We also listened to "Stand By Me" by The Kingdom Choir, and the children are really enjoying gospel music. If you would like to listen together at home, here are some suggestions:

Gospel music to enjoy at home

"Oh Happy Day" – Edwin Hawkins Singers
"I Smile" – Kirk Franklin
"Every Praise" – Hezekiah Walker
"Joyful, Joyful" – from Sister Act 2
"Stand By Me" – The Kingdom Choir
"This Little Light of Mine" – traditional (many choir versions available)
"He's Got the Whole World in His Hands" – traditional
"Amazing Grace" – traditional
"Total Praise" – Richard Smallwood
Anything by the London Community Gospel Choir

All of these can be found on Spotify, Apple Music or YouTube. Why not listen together, clap along to the rhythm and join in with the chorus?

St John's Highbury Vale C of E Primary School

Conewood Street, London N5 1DL
Tel: 020 7226 4906
E-mail: admin@stjhv.lslington.sch.uk
Acting Headteacher: Ms Khan

Allergy Safety

From September 2026, all schools in England are required to have a dedicated allergy safety policy. This new requirement is known as Benedict's Law, named after Benedict Blythe, a five-year-old boy who sadly died following an allergic reaction at school. At St John's Highbury Vale, we take every case seriously and strive to make sure that all our children are safe and well cared for. Please take a moment to read our Allergy Safety Policy, which is available on our school website alongside all our statutory policies. If you have any difficulty finding it, please ask our office team, who will be happy to help.

Attendance

Every week, we receive a breakdown of attendance across Islington schools. Last week, our attendance was 96.3%, which placed us third best in Islington. This is really good, and I would like to thank you for all your support in getting your children to school every day. However, I know we can do even better. Please can we aim for 100% attendance and work together to reach the top two in Islington. Every day in school counts, and I look forward to sharing our progress with you next week.

Protected Characteristics

This week, some of our classes began learning about the protected characteristics. These are part of the Equality Act 2010, the law that protects people from being treated unfairly because of who they are. It is important that our children understand them, so they can recognise when someone is being treated unfairly and know how to show respect and kindness to everyone. As a Church of England school, we believe that every person is made in the image of God and is of equal value. As a Rights Respecting School, we also want every child to feel safe, valued and able to achieve and belong.

A Calm Start to the School Day

We have a number of children who find the morning routine and arriving at school particularly challenging. For these children, we have arranged for them to enter school via the office so that they can have the calm, quiet space they need to settle into the day.

To help us support these children, we kindly ask that parents avoid coming into the office to drop off forgotten items or for things that can wait until after the morning rush. Seeing people coming and going, as well as children waiting around in the office, can be distressing for some of our children and can make it more difficult for them to settle.

Where possible, please try to make sure your child has everything they need before they come to school. If something does need to be brought in, please wait until after 9.30am where possible. Alternatively, please give us a call and we can help where we can.

St John's Highbury Vale C of E Primary School

Conewood Street, London N5 1DL
Tel: 020 7226 4906
E-mail: admin@stjhv.lslington.sch.uk
Acting Headteacher: Ms Khan

Thank you for your understanding and for helping us to make the start of the school day as calm and positive as possible for all of our children.

October Holiday Camp

Bookings for October Holiday Club will close on Monday 12th October to allow us to rota staff in advance. Please make any bookings you need over this weekend or email Emily by Monday if you want to pay with Childcare Vouchers. We may not be able to facilitate late bookings as this will depend on the staff to child ratio.

I hope you have a wonderful weekend, and we look forward to seeing you on Monday. Get your coats out—it's getting cold!

Best wishes,
Ms Khan

Key Dates for next week

Monday 12th October - Online safety workshop for parents - 9am-10am- Maberley Hall
Thursday 15th October - Author Visit - Neal Zetter
Friday 16th October - Reception Coffee Morning - 9am-10am
Friday 16th October - Y6 trip to IWM