






# St John's Green Primary School

Learn to Live, Live to Learn

## Newsletter

We  We are all  
Maths writers ... 



We are growing  
our learning 

School Number: 01206 762884 e-mail: [admin@st-johnsgreen.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-johnsgreen.essex.sch.uk)

Website: [st-johns-green.eschools.co.uk](http://st-johns-green.eschools.co.uk)

Follow us on Twitter: @SJG\_News School Uniform: [www.smartypantsschoolwear.com](http://www.smartypantsschoolwear.com)

### Welcome Back

A very warm welcome back to everyone and a new term and year ahead. I trust and hope that everyone had a good Summer.

An especially warm welcome to our new EYFS children who have had their first taste of school this week and who will be in school full time from next week.

Just a quick reminder to all parents about timings at the two school sites.

AF—Doors Open @ 8.30a.m. and are closed at 8.40a.m. for all children. Please try and make sure you are on time—8.30a.m. is the best time.

T—Doors Open @ 8.40a.m. and are closed at 8.50a.m. for all children. Again, please try and be on time and 8.40a.m. is the best time.

**Class Teachers start teaching at 8.40a.m. (AF) and at 8.50a.m. at T. If your child is coming in late they are starting their school day rushed which is not fair on them.**

EYFS and Year 1 children finish at 3.00p.m. at AF.

Year 5 and Year 6 children finish at 3.05p.m. @ AF

Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4 children finish at 3.15p.m. at T.

Staff on the doors in the morning will rotate but at the end of the day Class Teachers will bring the children down should you wish to quickly catch up with them.

### Report to Parents from Governing Body Meeting 3/9/2025

The governing body noted a warm welcome back to all our school community and a special welcome to our new starters, both children and parents, of reception.

A new academic year always means a refresh of the school's development priorities, agreeing new policies and having an oversight of the school financial plan for the year ahead. This year we are very excited to have the development of the Outside Play and Learning scheme as one of our key priorities.

Over the next 2 years you will see the provision for outside learning to increase and develop in both of our sites. This is going to be an exciting opportunity for children to develop new skills and confidence in a range of areas. One of the best things about OPAL is that it will be developed with resources that are recycled or that can be easily sourced through donations. Please keep a look out for the exciting developments in this area.

We learnt about our latest staffing updates and were pleased to learn that Mr. Kelly is now in place as our Site Manager and that Mrs Cook has had her baby and they are both doing well! In addition to this news there are 2 learning support assistant positions available within the school which may be of interest to parents and will be advertised on the Essex School Jobs website.

We were reminded that as usual September means Kingswood time, we know that the children always have an excellent time and come back full of stories of adventures and fun memories. We do ask however that you bring Mr Billings back in one piece and that he doesn't get too enthusiastic on the Leap of Faith.

And on a final note, I got told off by my daughter this week for taking my phone out of my pocket on the school playground when wanting to take a 1st day photo of my grandson. We are of course now a smart phone free school so don't be upset if you too get reminded of this if you forget.

*Elisa Vasquez-Walters*

### Coats

Our great British weather has been up to its normal tricks this week and many of us have been caught off guard.

As much as possible we will take the children outside for their break and lunchtimes regardless of a bit of rain or manage their time outside.

This is really a polite/long way of saying—please make sure that your child has a coat in school and that this is named—they will definitely need it.

Volume 61, Issue 1

Newsletter date:

Friday 5th September 2025

Welcome Back—Page 1

Opal—Page 1 & 2

FGB—Page 1

Coats—Page 1

New IT system—Page 1

Assembly Theme for WB 8/9/25—What is Good Learning

### Term Dates

Monday 2nd September—Friday 19th December (Autumn Term).

Monday 27th October—Friday 31st October—Half Term.

Monday 3rd November—Non Pupil Day—The School is Closed.

Monday 5th January—First Day of Spring Term.

### Diary Dates

Thursday 11th September 5.00p.m. @ AF. Final Information meeting for parents of children going to Kingswood.

Saturday 13th September—Heritage Open Day @ T Site.

Sunday 21st September—Friday 26th September—Year 6 Residential to Kingswood.

Tuesday 14th October—Individual Photographs @ T

Friday 17th October—Individual Photographs @ AF.

### Rights Respecting Schools

**Article 12:** You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously. (from children's perspective – fair and just).

### OPAL

Hopefully your children have come home this week and told you at least a little bit about OPAL.

Just in case they haven't.

OPAL stands for Outdoor Play and Learning and the school has signed up for this initiative which has started this term.

On page 2 of this newsletter, there is a letter that explains about OPAL in a bit more detail—but here are some highlights for you.

As part of OPAL we will and have been changing our provision for the children at lunchtime only. A big part of this is providing the children with additional resources to use at lunchtime and it is through utilising these resources that the children continue to grow their learning.

To begin with we are introducing a new resource each week for the children to utilise when they play outside. How the children play and use them (within reason) is up to them. This first week, we introduced skipping ropes across both sites, next week, there will be an additional resource and so on going forward.

We will be asking parents for support and unwanted items that we feel the children could use. But not just yet. Please just bear with us and keep an eye on the newsletter.



### New Computer System

Our apologies if communication hasn't been quite as on point as we'd have liked so far this term. We upgraded to the new Microsoft platform over the Summer and we've had a few teething problems. We are almost there now though.



# St John's Green Primary School

Learn to Live, Live to Learn

Headteacher Mr Simon Billings  
Assistant Headteacher Mrs Clare Skinner  
Assistant Headteacher/SENCo Mrs Fiona Bullivant  
Assistant Headteacher Mrs Hannah Minshall

We ♥  
Maths



We are all  
writers ...

We are growing  
our learning

Telephone: 01206 762884 Email: [admin@st-johnsgreen-essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-johnsgreen-essex.sch.uk) Website: <http://st-johns-green.eschools.co.uk>

Dear Parents,

As a school we are embarking on an exciting new adventure with the aim to improve physical activity, socialisation, cooperation, coordination, resilience, creativity, imagination and enjoyment through improved play. OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) is based on the idea that, as well as learning through good teaching, your children also learn when they play. As 20% of their time in school is playtime, we want to make sure that this amount of time (equivalent to 1.4 years of primary school) is as good as possible.

One reason our school is carrying out this programme is that childhood has changed, and many children no longer get their play needs met out of school.

- Average screen time per day is six hours.
- Average outdoor play time per week is five hours.
- Percentage of UK children who only play outdoors with other children at school is 56%.

As the school improves play opportunities for your children, you may find they get a bit messier, be exposed to more challenges and have greater freedoms to play where, with whom and how they like. The experiences the school is fostering are essential for children's physical and mental wellbeing and are in line with all current good practice advice on health and safety, wellbeing and development.

If you would like to learn more about the OPAL Primary Programme, please have a look at the OPAL website ([www.outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk](http://www.outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk)), where you will find lots of useful information and several videos about the programme.

For this to work effectively, particularly as the weather begins to change, it is essential that your child brings a **raincoat** into school each day as we will be going outside. Going forward, we will be looking at children bringing in additional footwear to change into. Please keep a look out for OPAL on the newsletter as there will be further information there.

We are really excited about this project and hope that you will support us in our efforts to improve play time for all children.

Many thanks,  
Mrs Minshall and Miss Wiggins

St John's Green Abbey Fields Site  
(Years EYFS, 1, 5, 6)  
5 Circular Road East  
Colchester  
CO2 7SZ



St John's Green Town Site  
(Years 2, 3, 4)  
St John's Green  
Colchester  
CO2 7HE