



Friday 12th February 2021

Term	Start	Half Term	Reopens	Term Ends
Spring 2021		Fri 12 th Feb	Mon 22 nd Feb	Thurs 1 st April – 2pm
Summer 2021	Mon 19 th April Training day – School Closed. School opens Tues 20 th April	Fri 28 th May Training Day School Closed	Mon 7 th June	Wed 21 st July – 2pm

Covid-19 Update

The Prime Minister has announced that he hopes it will be safe to commence the reopening of schools and colleges from Monday 8th March. This is in response to the national public health data and pressure on NHS capacity. If the Government achieves its target of vaccinating everyone in the four most vulnerable groups with their first dose by 15th February, then those groups will have developed immunity from the virus around three weeks later, that is by 8th March. Education settings will be given at least two weeks' notice to prepare for a return to face-to face education. We will continue to update you when further information is known.

Free School Meals Vouchers

You should now have all received your voucher codes to cover entitlement for this week and next. Birmingham City Councils will be issuing vouchers to cover the half-term period. These will not be via Edenred. They will be Sodexo vouchers. They will cover a period of one week beginning 15/02/2021.

Covid-19 PCR Tests

If any family members of Critical Worker children are showing signs of coronavirus, they should ensure that they and their children self-isolate and are tested. Although school will not be open during February half term (Mon 15th-Fri 19th Feb), staff will be checking the enquiry email and parents MUST inform school for tracking and tracing purposes via enquiry@stjonmon.bham.sch.uk if their child tests positive.



Class/IT Emails

We are delighted that we now that we have our class emails and dedicated ICT email up and running. Please note that emails will be responded to between the hours of 8am - 4pm. Thank you.

Covid-19 Catch-up Funding

Each school is being issued with small amount of catch-up funding, equating to approximately £77 per child. We have already spent part of this funding on purchasing additional eBooks via Accelerated Reader and Oxford Owl. This is because the school recognises the importance for children to continue to read daily at home.

Sim Cards

We have been allocated a limited number of sim cards from Vodafone with 30GB of data for 90 days to help any families that require additional support in accessing the internet. We will issue these on a first come first serve basis. If you would like to request one please email enquiry@stjonmon.bham.sch.uk outlining your request with your **child's name** and **class** and we will be in touch to let you know how you can take up this offer.



'At SS John and Monica's, we learn through the example of Jesus to love, respect, understand and value each other'



Rewards Reading Eggs

Well done to Jonah Year 1 and Mariam Year 5 who are regularly accessing Reading Eggs/Express and working hard through the programme!

Mathletics

Well done to Izabelle Year 1 and Alima Year 6 for regularly accessing Mathletics and working hard through the programme!

Staff Area

Time to get to know more about the governors and staff of our school!

Bridie Rooney: Foundation Governor



Training/college/University background: I grew up in Balsall Heath and attended St John's Convent which was on Park Road until it closed and then I moved to St Monica's. The school was newly opened then and was just for juniors, the infant school was still based beside St John's church. The school seemed very modern in comparison to the convent and I loved that it was surrounded by trees. After 2 happy years I moved to St Paul's in Edgbaston for my secondary school education and we moved to Acocks Green.

My favourite subject and why: It was always maths; I think because it is logical and there is a definite right or wrong answer.

What I do now: I joined a bank planning to stay for a year while I decided what to study at university and stayed for 38 years! I suppose my love of numbers did influence my decision. I'm now retired.

What I like to do in my spare time: I love reading, still remember my Mom taking me to the library on Moseley Road every week on the way home from school. I also love crosswords, particularly cryptic ones. I practice yoga and try to walk regularly, used to jog and managed to progress to (very slow) park runs but stopped a few years ago due to injury, 2021 may be the year that I start again. I love to travel and have been lucky to visit many countries of the world, my favourites are India and Thailand. Cooking is something I enjoy, probably because I love to eat, one of my favourite things about travelling is trying out new foods. We normally visit Ireland regularly as both my and my husband's family are Irish, have really missed seeing them since the pandemic struck.

My favourite book of all time and why: Price and Prejudice by Jane Austin, it's one of the few books that I have read over and over since first studying it at school. It's strange that I love it so much as I don't now tend to read historic novels, I'm much more likely to pick up a detective novel. I think I enjoy the humour in it, particularly the mother character of Mrs Bennett who is desperate to arrange marriages for her daughters. When I was at junior school my favourite book was The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, we had a big old-fashioned wardrobe in our attic at home and I used to climb in and pretend that I was going to Narnia.

Mrs Gray - Year Six Teacher and English Lead



Why I wanted to become a teacher:

I really wanted to be a teacher because I enjoy working with children and young people. Their energy, enthusiasm and fresh, hopeful outlook on life, is sometimes exhausting but more often than not, inspiring! The journey I embarked on, before becoming a teacher, took me to many places of work, including a care home, a bakery, a supermarket, a sandwich shop, a cafe and an insurance company. I also travelled to Australia and Indonesia and many other European destinations which helped me to understand more about myself and what motivated me. I realised that I wanted to make a difference in the career I chose; I wanted to inspire and educate children and in doing so, open up opportunities for them, so they could have bright futures.

My favourite subject and why:

This will not surprise anyone – my favourite subject was always English. I have always enjoyed reading and some of my earliest memories are of my Mum reading to me. I love stories, characters and words; I love the escapism of a good novel and the way you can get lost in another world whilst sitting on your sofa! I always enjoyed writing too and again, I can remember at primary school always being the one who read out her stories to younger children and sometimes in assemblies too. Your imagination is never richer than when you are a child and we often see that in the written creations from our children at school!

University/Training background:

I grew up in Cornwall and part of my heart still lives there! I left to study English at the University of Birmingham, where I had a wonderful time and fell in love with this city too! After gaining my degree, I took a couple of years out and worked and travelled. I then undertook my PGCE at Worcester Teacher Training College. I became a secondary school English teacher and I worked in North Birmingham and Walsall for around 10 years. I really enjoyed my time at secondary school and I undertook mainly pastoral roles as a Head of Year, looking after the pastoral welfare and the academic progress of the children in my year group. After having my daughter, I took a couple of years out of work and I volunteered at her pre-school and primary school and this is when I decided to make the change from secondary to primary. I applied for a maternity leave cover here at SS John and Monica and with lots of support, care and training, the school leaders helped me to transfer my skills to become the primary school teacher I am now!

What I like to do in my spare time:

I've always enjoyed being busy so I've found lockdown a challenge. In my life before Lockdown, I enjoyed playing and coaching netball in my spare time. I love being part of a team and I enjoyed spreading the joy of netball to young girls in the Little League that I coached in. My family and I really enjoy being outdoors and we especially enjoy going skiing in France in the winter. We also like nothing better than long, rambling walks in the countryside with our dog. In a quiet moment, I love to read and to listen to podcasts. There's so much to do and not enough time as far as I'm concerned!

My favourite book of all time and why:

I found this tricky, as there are so many books that I have relished reading over the years. I will show my age by saying that as a child, I loved the Famous Five series and read them over and over again. The characters, their freedom and their crime solving abilities all appealed to my adventurous streak. Likewise, I loved Malory Towers and imagined that life in a boarding school with all of your friends and no parents must be brilliant! I also enjoy anything by Shirley Hughes as her books remind me of when my own daughter was little and we spent hours enjoying the pictures and stories about Alfie, Annie Rose and all of their friends. As an adult, I have especially enjoyed the novels of Barbara Kingsolver, my favourite being Flight Behaviour.

Letter to Pupils

Dear Children,

Mrs Elliott hopes this letter finds you all safe and well.

I wanted to write a special message in this, the last newsletter of spring term one, to say a big 'Well Done!' to you all for working so incredibly hard this term. I have been following your work on Seesaw and see that you have been trying very hard to complete all the activities that your teachers have set. This cannot have been easy and I know how difficult it has been for you all this term, not being able to come to school.

We are very much looking forward to the day when we will all be together again as our SS John and Monica family. We are hoping that this will not be too long now.

In mean time, take good care of yourselves, be helpful at home for your parents and we look forward to seeing you again very soon.

Lots of love

Mrs Elliott





Community Birmingham Library Resources

It is really easy for children/families to join Birmingham Library and start accessing e-books and audiobooks - here are some quick links: [Birmingham Library Membership](#). You may also find the [Libby App](#) helpful.

February Half Term

A reminder that school will be closed to all pupils next week (Week Beg Mon 15th – Fri 19th Feb) for half term. There will be no on-line during this week. Keep up with your Wellbeing activities though, which you can take part in and enjoy at any time.

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all staff for their continued tireless work, particularly with regards to on-line digital learning. Staff at SS John and Monica School are now self-administering lateral flow tests twice weekly to keep our school community safe and are looking forward to a week's break to be with their own children and families.

As I have said several times this term, to reiterate, thank you to all are parents and carers for your support this half term, it has really helped us all.

To all our SS John and Monica families, stay safe and keep well during half term!

Mrs M. Elliott - Head Teacher



*Happy Chinese
New Year!*

Mission Statement



***At SS John & Monica's, we learn through the example of
Respect, Understand and Value each other***