



Welwyn St Mary's Primary School



Newsletter - December 2023

Value

Our value for this half term is: **Trust**

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:5-6

Wishing all of our families and school community a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful 2024



How time flies! I cannot believe we are nearing the end of the autumn term - my first term at Welwyn St Mary's! It has been an enjoyable and extremely busy first term and thank you to all of the pupils, staff and parents/carers, who have made me feel so welcome and supported here.

There's still so much to do and learn, but it is reassuring to know that there is such a caring community, who are keen to help, lend a hand wherever they can and will offer kind, positive words, which are always appreciated.

It's been an amazing term with a large number of sporting events and achievements, Year 6 Bikeability, Year 2 Scooterbility, Year 4 pedestrian skills, an enormous amount of clubs on offer, NSPCC PSHE sessions, our PCSO's mini-police programme for Year 5, Year 3's very moving class assembly about WWI and remembrance, Year 5's Plastazote workshop, the PTFA's extremely successful fireworks night and Christmas Fair, wonderful Christmas performances from Reception and KS1, and some very special church services! I'm still not sure how we have managed to fit it all in!

As we now approach the end of term, I would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year. We look forward to welcoming you all back at school on Thursday 4th January 2024 for the start of the Spring term.

Best wishes,
Mr Whiteland, Headteacher

Y6 NSPCC workshop

For six weeks both Year 6 classes have been learning about online safety and cyber bullying with two ladies from the NSPCC. We learnt lots of things like not to speak to strangers and report people if they're bullying you. We went into different groups and made our own campaign and on the last week we performed it to the whole class. Most groups made colourful and clear posters to share the important messages that tell you not to change what you look like or what you like and enjoy doing.

- Sophia and Izzy



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Christmas performances/collection thanks

On the 6th and 7th of December, Year 1 and 2 performed their nativity Barmy Bethlehem to the rest of the school, friends and family and what a performance it was! The children worked really hard to learn their lines, and the words and dance moves to songs. For lots of them it was the first time on the big stage with the lights, and they performed brilliantly. Thank you to all those who helped their children learn their lines and sent in their amazing outfits. They really put on a West End production!

On Tuesday 12th December, Reception performed their Christmas show 'Is There a Baby in There?' They learnt 8 songs and performed enthusiastically with actions. We were really proud of the children's confidence in front of a large audience, saying their lines loudly and clearly.

Thank you to everyone who has supported our Christmas performances. Whether that be practising songs at home, helping your child to learn their lines or being a part of the audience.

We would also like to thank you for the kind donations collected at both performances. Together and combined with our Christmas jumper day we have raised an amazing £959.57 for Save the Children.

WSM Choir Performance

Our choirs have had a busy run up to Christmas, performing at 4 concerts this month. Christmas started early with a performance at the Christmas fair, where they really helped to get everyone into the Christmas mood. This was closely followed by singing alongside Oaklands School at the switching on ceremony for the Welwyn Christmas lights. Last week our Choir and Chamber Choir also performed pieces at the Year 5 and 6 Carol Service.



The highlight of our choral Christmas came on Monday evening when the two school choirs were joined by the Welwyn St Mary's Community Choir and an alumni choir made up of children who have now left school but have continued to sing. St Mary's Church kindly hosted the event and the Church was packed with family, friends and local residents who had come to watch the performance. It was a truly magical evening and the standards from everyone were so incredibly high. Many parents commented on the way out of Church that they had no idea that primary school children could sing to such a high standard and that the concert had really put them into a 'Christmassy' mood. The concerts raised money for four local charities: Herts Musical Memories, Codicote Food Bank, St Mary's Church and School.

Thank you so much to children for giving up their lunchtimes each week to rehearse and for their record attendance at concerts this term, our Alumni Choir for inspiring us with what can be achieved and our Community Choir for showing the fun in continuing to sing. Thank you to Mrs Dunstan for accompanying the choir and especially to Mrs Harrison for all her work running the choir and making our concerts happen. Welwyn St Mary's is lucky to have such a talented musical community.

If any parents or friends of the school have been inspired and would like to join our Community Choir next term, they meet in the school hall from 7.45pm to 8.45pm on Wednesday evenings. The first rehearsal will be on 17th January and they would warmly welcome new members.



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Y5 Mini police programme



In year five we have been doing a mini police programme and we have been learning how to be responsible, safe and respectful to others. We have been learning about anti-social behaviour, bullying, road safety and hate crime. We wore high vis vests and asked PCSO Anne lots of questions about her job. We went outside and she showed us her police car and talked about road safety.

- Camilla and Billy

Green Group Art Competition

We are very proud of all the amazing artwork that was entered into our recycled art competition. We are so impressed with the different recycled materials that people used. Well done to everyone who took part. We are enjoying looking at all the artwork displayed by the Green Group board.



Winner for Key Stage One - Isabella (BC2)

Runner up for Key Stage One - Sophie and Ben (BC2)

Winner for Key Stage Two - Freddie (CD4)

Runner up for Key Stage Two - Daniel (HM6)

Reception September 2024

The window for applications closes on 15th January 2024. Please be aware that we require our own Supplementary Information Form to be completed and returned to the school office (via email or the post box outside class MS3) as well as the online application to county.

Our last open day for prospective Reception families will be held on Friday 5th January at 9.30am. The open morning will start with a talk from Mr Whiteland, Headteacher, followed by a chance to tour the school with Year 6 guides and ask any questions. To reserve a space please email admin@welwynst-marys.herts.sch.uk.



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A message from the PTFA

The Christmas fair, held on Saturday 2nd December, was a resounding success! We raised an impressive £4,302 through various activities, including toy stall, external stall holders, children's and adult Tombola, brown bag stall, secret present room, games room, and refreshments featuring mulled wine and cakes. A highlight was our Santa's Grotto where a Christmas Elf read the children a Christmas story before meeting Santa! The choir added festive charm with a performance before our fantastic raffle was held, finishing off what was a superb afternoon. Heartfelt thanks to all the volunteers, and all the donations on dress down day, with a special acknowledgment to Laura Howard, this years dedicated Christmas Lead.

As we bring this term to close, we are happy to share with you an update on what has been raised so far this academic term.

We look forward to the New Year where we will be kickstarting it off with children's discos! For now, have a lovely Christmas break.

Merry Christmas from the PTFA Team!



Cake sale reminder

A friendly reminder that there will be a Year 4 cake sale in the Key Stage 1 playground after school on Friday 19th January. Please bring cash or card to purchase a delicious treat!

Year 3/4 Production

Year 3 and 4 will be performing their version of 'Hoodwinked' on Wednesday 31st January and Thursday 1st February. Ticket information will be sent out via Parentmail in the new year.





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Book recommendation

This month's book recommendations:

With a New Year approaching, it is the perfect time to think about our hopes and aspirations for the year ahead. When we return to school in January, the children will be exploring and sharing their dreams and goals as part of our next PSHE unit of work but why not read about the BIG DREAMS of other influential people.

The Little People, Big Dreams series are biographies that explore the remarkable lives of some of the greatest role models of modern history, from designers and artists to scientists and activists. Each and every one begins with the key figure as a small child with a dream of what the future may hold for them. These books will certainly help to empower and inspire children of all ages to know no limits.

We have some titles in school and many of the books in this series can be reserved and borrowed from your local Hertfordshire library.



Multisport Event - 15th November - School Games Event

Team names: Teddy F, Wyatt, Ronnie, Charlie, Sammy, Willow, Bethany, Izzy, Alana, Loulou

A group of year six children went to Hatfield Leisure Centre for a multisport event on Wednesday 15th November. We did lots of different sports; boccia, badminton, curling and handball. It wasn't a competition; it was just for fun and to try new things. There were several other schools there too. It was lots of fun. At the end there was an opportunity to win a prize. The prize was a pineapple. Teddy F won the pineapple. Badminton was my favourite.

- Sammy

Football Fixture - 22nd November

Team names: Teddy S, Stanley, Oliver, Zac, Douglas, Wilf, Max, Preston, Billy

Star Player:

On Wednesday 22nd November, we went to Harwood Hill to play a football match. The game started and we started well. First Douglas scored to make it 1-0. Next Stanley scored a penalty from a handball to make it 2-0. We were dominating the game and had many shots but were unlucky not to score. Then Preston crossed it in to Zac who made it 3-0. After that, Douglas scored again to make it 4-0. Then a brilliant corner from Zac to Stanley who headed it into the back of the net to make it 5-0. After that Billy scored to make it 6-0. They had a counter attack but couldn't score. Max scored a good goal to make it 7-0. A great cross from



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Oliver to Max made it 8-0. Then we won a corner and Teddy scored an amazing goal from it to make it 9-0. Max went on to score again to get a hattrick and make it 10-0. In the end we won 10-0 we had a strong team and we were proud of ourselves and we would like to thank Mr Gauden for cheering us on and being supportive to everyone.

- Douglas and Teddy

Girls County Table Tennis - 23rd November - School Games Event

Team names: Ava, Kitty, Amelie

On the 23rd of November Ava and Kitty went to the county table tennis competition. Amelie was sick on that day so sadly couldn't come. Ava had to play two games to cover Amelie. Both played really well and won a number of games. We came 7th out of nine schools. The standard was very high and we were unlucky not to win. We would like to thank Mrs Southall for taking care of us and supporting us the entire day.

- Kitty

Archery - 7th December

Team names: Izzy, Ophelia, Lottie, Sienna, Jasper, Alec, Matthew, Alex

Star Player: Sienna - top scorer, Matthew - most improved



On 7th December we went to an archery competition. After a few practice arrows, we had a personal challenge of beating our own scores. This helped build our confidence. We had a mini competition against the other children from our school. Sienna came first, Alex came second and Alec third. We then had a one arrow competition. Lottie R came first in the girl's competition out of 15 schools. Izzy showed great determination and Ophelia demonstrated great sportsmanship. We thank Mrs Southall for taking us.

- Ophelia and Izzy

Chess Competition - 11th December

Team names: Finley, William, Olga, Oliver

On the 11th December at 4 o'clock after school finished, four of us went to represent the school in a chess tournament. There were four games each which lasted for 15 minutes. There were about four other schools at the tournament. The atmosphere was good, and at the end everyone had won at least one game and one person from our group got onto the winning table. We would like to thank Mr O'Neill and Mrs Phillips for organising the event. We are looking forward to future chess tournaments.

- William and Oliver





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December birthdays

Happy Birthday to all who celebrated in December:

Jacob, Tamilore, Leo, Jake, Daisy, Ivy, Harper, James, Evan, Laiton, Darcey, Ava, Lottie, Sophia, Nicole, Isabella, Ashley, Johnny, Tiffany, Robyn, Thomas, William, Enzo, Ebony, Tireni, Leo, Sebastian, Izzy, Evan, Amber, Ivy, Evelyn, Benjamin, Rocco, Mrs Stanley, Mrs Hall, Mrs So, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Rogers, Mrs Kinsella, Mrs Farrington and Mrs Southall

Foodbanks help

We have links with local foodbanks so, if you are struggling financially at the moment, please contact the school office in confidence and we can refer you.

Term Time Absence and Penalty Notices

A reminder that Hertfordshire County Council issues Penalty Notices which meet the Hertfordshire Code of Conduct regardless of the overall level of the pupil's attendance. Please be advised that the Governing Body has agreed that Welwyn St Mary's will be following this guidance.

This means that unauthorised absence exceeding 15 sessions (each day is two sessions) over 2 consecutive terms risks a fine of up to £120 per parent for each individual child. The Local Education Authority may issue you with a Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, for failure to secure your child's regular attendance at school. One session is equal to a morning or an afternoon.

So that parents are aware of the risk of receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice, Welwyn St Mary's will issue warning letters to all parents who request term time holiday, regardless of the length of holiday.

Please note that:

- Even brief term time holidays can affect children in school adversely for some weeks, both before and after the actual vacation.
- Very few children can afford to miss aspects of the school curriculum.
- Staff are unable to provide activities for your child to complete during unauthorised absences from school.
- It is also highly unlikely that your child will be able to 'catch up' on the work undertaken by classmates whilst your child is on holiday.

We appreciate your understanding and thank you for supporting us in maintaining our high attendance record.





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Diary Dates

Spring Term 2023	
Thu 4th January 2024	Term commences
Fri 5th January 2024, 9:30am - 10:30am	Prospective Reception Parents Open Morning
Fri 19th January 2024	Year 4 Cake Sale
Mon 29th January 2024	Year 5 Viking workshop
Wed 31st January 2024	Year 3 and 4 Production
Thu 1st February 2024	Year 3 and 4 Production
Fri 9th February 2024	KS1 Festival of Words
Tue 13th February 2024	Year 3 Greek Day
Fri 16th February 2024	KS2 Speaker's Cup
Fri 16th February 2024	Year 3 Cake Sale
Mon 19th February 2024 - Fri 23rd February 2024	Half term
Thu 29th February 2024	Year 2 Great Fire of London workshop
Mon 4th March 2024 - Fri 8th March 2024	PTFA Mother's Day Gift Shop
Thu 7th March 2024	World Book Day
Fri 15th March 2024	Year 2 Cake Sale
Wed 20 th March 2024	Year 5 Countryside Learning Day - Woodhall Estate
Mon 25th March 2024 - Fri 29th March 2024	PTFA Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt
Thu 28th March 2024	Terms ends
Thu 28th March 2024	Whole school Easter service
Summer Term 2024	
Mon 15th April 2024	Term commences
Tue 16th April 2024	Year 4 Faith Tour
Wed 24th April 2024	PTFA Meeting - 7pm
Mon 29 th April 2024	Year 6 GoConstruct KNex Challenge Day
Fri 17th May 2024	Year 1 Cake Sale
Wed 22nd May 2024	Class Photos
Thu 23rd May 2024	Sports Day
Mon 27th May 2024 - Fri 31st May 2024	Half term
Mon 3rd June 2024 - Wed 5th June 2024	Year 6 PGL
Mon 10th June 2024 - Fri 14th June 2024	PTFA Father's Day Gift Shop
Fri 14th June 2024	Year 2 Knebworth House
Fri 21st June 2024	INSET day - school closed
Mon 24th June 2024	INSET day - school closed





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Thu 27th June 2024	New Reception Parents Meeting
Fri 28th June 2024	Reception Cake Sale
Fri 28th June 2024	Year 3 Celtic Harmony
Sat 29th June 2024	Welwyn Festival Parade
Thu 4th July 2024	Music Evening
Sat 6th July 2024	PTFA Summer BBQ
Wed 10th July 2024	WSM's Talent Show
Wed 10th July 2024,	Open Evening - 6pm-7pm
Wed 17th July 2024,	Year 6 Show - 6pm
Thu 18th July 2024	Leavers' service
Thu 18th July 2024,	Year 6 Show - 6pm
Fri 19th July 2024	Terms ends
Mon 22nd July 2024	INSET day - school closed
Tue 23rd July 2024	INSET day - school closed



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