



Welwyn St Mary's Primary School



End of term newsletter - December 2021



Value

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

"Trust is the most important thing you will ever earn." *Anon*



"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*

We wish all our families a very Happy Christmas and every blessing for 2022.



This wonderful hat filled with Christmas messages of love, giving and sharing was made by Finley in MN2.



Thank you to Vanstone Park for once again treating us to a beautiful Christmas tree. It has really brightened up our school and all children and staff have been able to enjoy it.

End of term arrangements

School will end at 1.20pm on Friday 17th December. After School Club will close at 4.20pm.

Welcome

We are pleased that Mrs Addabab and Mrs Pearce will be joining our teaching assistant and midday supervisor teams in January. We hope you will be very happy at Welwyn St Mary's.





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Christmas fun



The last week of term has been full of Christmas fun, with hat making for our Christmas lunch, watching the pantomime, Reception and Key Stage 1 productions and our Year 6 Carol Service in church.

Christmas Jumper Day Fundraising



Thank you for your generous donations for Christmas Jumper Day. We raised a total of £478 which has been shared equally between Save the Children and our PTFA.

Attendance Award

Congratulations to HJ5 who have won the December attendance award.

| | | |
|-----|-----|-------|
| 1st | HJ5 | 95.30 |
| 2nd | LR | 95.12 |
| 3rd | BC3 | 95.05 |
| 4th | A5 | 94.51 |
| 5th | S3 | 94.47 |

House Point Winners

Well done to Romans for the most house points this term. House points can be awarded by any adult in school for good work or good behaviour. Well done for all the hard work this term. A massive 9170 were awarded. Thank you to Bertie and Morgan for totalling it all up.

| | |
|---------|------|
| Romans | 2364 |
| Vikings | 2333 |
| Saxons | 2245 |
| Normans | 2228 |





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December Birthdays

Congratulations to all who celebrate in December:

Jacob, Tamilore, Jake, Elsie, Ivy, Harper, Zayn, Edward, James, Rafferty, Darcey, Harvey, Betty-Leigh, Nicole, Rafael, Noah, Isabella, John, Tiffany, Robyn, Eva, Teddy, Enzo, Ebony-Rose, Tegan, Tireni, Sebastian, Isabella, Evan, Amber, Evelyn, Elle-Louise, Benjamin, Rocco, William, Madame Farrington, Mrs Rogers, Mrs So, Mrs Southall, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Hall, and Mrs Kinsella.

Clubs and Music lessons

Clubs start in the week beginning 17th January 2022. Please contact club providers directly to book your child's place. Club packs will be sent by Parentmail before the end of term.

Guitar lessons start on 7th January. All other music lessons will start in the week beginning 10th January 2022. May we remind you that the Hertfordshire Music Service request half a term's notice to end lessons.

Medication in school

Please may we remind parents to ensure that the medication that is kept in school (inhalers, Epipens, Piriton and so on) is in-date, and that replacements are provided as soon as possible when these expire. Your child will bring home any out of date items at the end of term.

Winter Reading Challenge

The Reading Agency's Winter Mini Challenge runs until Sunday 16 January 2022. This encourages children to keep up their reading habits over the Christmas holiday, with a free-to-access website featuring rewards and incentives for reading and reviewing books. To take part, children simply read three books or more - these can be any books of their choice. Every time they finish a book, they add it to their Challenge website profile (www.readingagency.co.uk) and leave a short book review. Reaching their online reading goal will unlock a special virtual badge and a new Wild World Hero certificate to print off and keep. They can also find fun activities, videos, and reading recommendations. Children will be able to join the Wild World Heroes (characters from this year's Summer Reading Challenge) once again as they embark on an Arctic Adventure to find out about the creatures that live there and the environmental issues facing this remote place. There are also plenty of new and exciting books to choose from and borrow for free from our local libraries.

Reception Places 2022

The window for applications closes 15th January 2022. Please be aware that we require our own Supplementary Information Form to be completed and returned to the school office (via the post box outside class S3) as well as an online application to county.





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Charity Christmas Lights

Do come along to Paddock Cottage, Pottersheath Road, Welwyn, AL6 9SU and enjoy the Christmas lights (in support of the Essex and Hertfordshire Air Ambulance). You will find a North Pole Post Office, reindeer stables, Santa workshop and a nativity scene. In the Post Office the children are able to write their letter to Santa and post it in the post box (last post 8 pm 24th December). The lights are on from 4.40 to 8 pm each day, weather dependent.





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Covid-19 information for the holidays

Please do be extra vigilant and keep safe during the holidays, following all the latest guidance and any restrictions in place.

If your child develops Covid-19 symptoms please notify the school at the earliest opportunity - admin@welwynst-marys.herts.sch.uk - and also notify us of the results of tests.

If you are travelling overseas during the holiday, please ensure that you are up to date with the latest guidance in case you need to quarantine on your return.

Children are now only required to self-isolate if:

- they themselves have tested positive for Covid,
- they are required to quarantine following travel abroad to a red list country.
- they are showing one or more of the three main Covid symptoms - a high temperature (over 37.8 degrees), a new persistent cough or a change/loss of their sense of taste or smell. In this instance, please book a PCR test and keep your child at home until they have received their test results.

If your child has been identified as a close contact of a positive Covid case they should still attend school, even if the case involves a member of their household. If your child is identified as a close contact, the Government may ask that you book a PCR test for your child as soon as possible. They do not need to self-isolate whilst awaiting the results of this test unless they develop symptoms of Covid.

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.

Pupil Premium and Free School Meals

For every child registered for Pupil Premium, the school receive additional funding which is spent on raising the attainment of those pupils. If you are entitled to Pupil Premium funding, your child could access a range of additional benefits, including extra help in class, additional resources, items of uniform, free school trips and visits and one free club per term. If you think that you might be eligible for free school meals and are not currently registered, please complete the simple online application form which can be found at: www.hertsdirect.org/freeschoolmeals Once you have registered your child, please inform the school office.

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.





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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.

Diary Dates

| | Autumn Term 2021 |
|--|---|
| 17 th December | Term ends at 1.20 pm |
| 20 th - 21 st December | INSET days - school closed |
| | Spring Term 2022 |
| 5 th January | INSET day - school closed to pupils |
| 6 th January | Spring term commences |
| 9.30 am 10 th January | Open morning for prospective parents - Reception Sept 2022 intake |
| 13 th January | Year 4 swimming commences (Covid restrictions permitting) |
| 14 th - 18 th February | Half term holiday |
| 1 st April | Term ends at 1.20 pm |
| | Summer Term 2022 |
| 19 th April | Summer term commences |
| 30 th May - 3 rd June | Half term holiday |
| 24 th June | INSET day - school closed |
| 27 th June | Occasional day - school closed |
| 14 th July | Secondary transition day |
| 22 nd July | Term ends at 1.20 pm |



Welwyn St. Mary's Wellbeing Newsletter

The power of pausing

We all need to press the pause button sometimes; perhaps never more so than during the Christmas period when we can feel maybe as though we are on an express train that is travelling too fast. In amongst the already busy everyday tasks we have the added pressures of decorating our trees and houses, buying presents, planning and preparing. For families, even those who love the Christmassy time of year, it is often a time that is full to bursting.

Added to that is the already packed nature of our lives. Clubs for the children, work, school, homework, financial pressures and now to navigate the ever changing world of Covid 19 and all that living in the midst of a pandemic brings. How often do we say 'we don't have time to' and yet if we do not push the pause button we can end up feeling exhausted, stressed and less able to cope well before the big day arrives. Making time for some self-care should be something we put at the front of our to-do lists.

For children it is a very full time of year with song words to learn and what they want from Santa all mixed up with the routine of school, clubs, friendships and more. If as parents and school staff we can teach them at an early age to be able to press their own pause button modelled by us we will be tooling them up for their future, enable them to be much more successful in coping with life. Modelling as parents and families is always the best way to help our children to learn, they take so much from what they observe us doing some more so than what we say. If we can show that we can press our own pause button and take care of our own mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing not only can we cope with all the pressures of this season more effectively we will enable our children to do likewise.

Merry Christmas

Nicky Jackson Wellbeing Coordinator

Useful websites

<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/five-steps-to-mental-wellbeing/>

