



# Welwyn St Mary's Primary School



## Newsletter - January 2023

### Value

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

"A person cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore."

*Andre Gide*

"Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says I'll try again tomorrow."

*Mary Anne Radmacher*

### Welcoming new staff

A warm welcome to our newest teaching assistant and midday supervisor, Mrs des Forges. We hope you will be very happy at Welwyn St Mary's.

### Welcoming our new parent governor

We are delighted to welcome Corinna Semon as our new parent governor. We are so pleased you are joining our governing team. Thank you to all the parents who stood in the election and everyone for voting.

### Christmas Performances

Well done to all the children who took part in performances over the Christmas period, they were fantastic! A big thank you to all the parents/carers that came along to support the children and for your kind donations during difficult times. Together, we raised a total of £484 from school performances which will be donated to Addenbrookes Hospital for helping several of our children this year. Our school service at St Mary's raised a substantial £273.28 which is much appreciated by the church.

### Choir Concerts



Our school choirs had a very busy December, appearing at no less than five different concerts! We kicked off the Christmas festivities singing at the Christmas fair, shortly followed by a performance alongside other local primary and secondary schools at the Monk's Walk family concert at St John's Church Digswell. Our rendition of "Saltwater" by Julian Lennon was beautifully sung and gave a really import message about the need to take care of each other and our planet.

The choir also sang alongside children from Oaklands Primary School at the Welwyn Christmas lights switch on and at our Year 5 and 6 carol service. A very busy December finished with a gala performance alongside our Community Choir and Alumni Choir, featuring the ever popular "Sheep!" and a beautiful rendition of John Rutter's Angel Carol from Daniel R, Elsie M and two ex-pupils who have just started choral scholarships at Cambridge University.





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Our Community Choir (made up of parents, teachers and members of our local community) were also busy, singing carols at John Lewis to raise money for the Samaritans.

Thank you to all of our choir members for giving up their lunchtimes every week and for coping so well with a packed December concert schedule. Thank you also to parents for your support and lovely comments. We are looking forward to great things next term, including a performance at the Royal Albert Hall by our Chamber Choir.

- Mrs Harrison

### Book recommendation

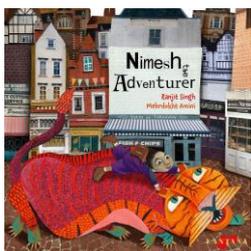
As part of our ongoing work on diversity and inclusion, each month we will be suggesting a selection of books to share and enjoy with your children. Some of these titles will be available at school or you could pop to the local library to borrow them.

### This month's book recommendations:



#### **Leo and the Octopus** by Isabelle Marjnov

A dreamy and perceptive story about a little boy with Asperger's Syndrome who struggles to make sense of the world until he meets Maya the octopus.



#### **Nimesh the Adventurer** by Ranjit Singh

Nimesh is walking home from school but ... there happens to be a shark in the corridor and a dragon in the library! And why would crossing the road lead to the North Pole? A fun-filled story about a little boy with a BIG imagination.





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### Safeguarding training session for volunteer helpers

A huge thank you to all our parent helpers for giving up your time to help out in school. We really appreciate everything you do to give our children the best possible opportunities.

As part of our statutory duty to keep children safe, we are asking all parent volunteers who regularly help in school or with swimming lessons to attend an annual safeguarding training session. Please complete the form via Parentmail to book onto one of our training sessions or to let us know that you cannot make either available date.

### Happy Chinese New Year

On Monday 23rd January, both reception classes were very lucky to have a visit from Mrs So, a member of staff who works in our Breakfast and After School Club. She spoke to the children about Chinese New Year. Mrs So explained how she prepares for Chinese New Year by cleaning and decorating her home. She showed us a range of decorations and explained that red, gold and yellow are lucky colours and this is because of a traditional Chinese story where red is used to keep evil away. Mrs So then showed us a calendar and explained that Chinese New Year lasts for 15 days and that each year has a different animal. We then learnt a Chinese New Year song. Reception would like to thank Mrs So for giving up her time and sharing her celebration with us.

- Miriam said, "I liked listening to the story Mrs So told us."
- Robert said, "I put some decorations up."
- Isabelle said, "I liked learning the song."
- George said, "I liked Mrs So telling us about the calendar."
- Charlie said, "I liked the dragon."



### Year 5 Distraction Training



Mobile phones are a big distraction that is why we had a lesson on how to use phones safely near roads. We learnt a lot about using a phone at the right time. Maisie and Ava were allowed to bring their phones into school to show us a demonstration of how to use a phone safely whilst crossing a road.

We also watched some videos of how to use phones safely. They helped us understand that distractions are dangerous when near roads. In the videos we saw scenarios about accidents on the road with your phone. We would like to thank Mr Lai for talking to us. We finished the lesson by making our own posters to warn others.

- By year 5





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### Cycle/scooter policy

Our updated cycle/scooter policy can be found on the policies section of our website:  
[www.welwynst-marys.herts.sch.uk/parents/policies-agreements/](http://www.welwynst-marys.herts.sch.uk/parents/policies-agreements/)

### Year 4 Faith Tour



On Tuesday 10th January 2023, P4 and CD4 went on a faith trip in Bedford. We went to a mosque. We went in and took our shoes off because this is respectful. A man showed us a PowerPoint and we learnt that Allah is the God! He also let us look in some Arabic holy books!

Next, we went to a church. In the church we got to look around. After that, some of us got to wear the vicar's clothes. We also learned about the stained-glass window.

Finally, we went to the Gurdwara. We had to put on our head covering and take our shoes off. We ate lunch there. After lunch we learnt about the Gurus. Then we went into a room where there was a man waving a chaur over the Guru Granth Sahib.

- Edward B

Welwyn St Mary's  
Primary School

Dear friends of the Mosque, Church and Gurdwara,  
 Thank you for the faith tour on Tuesday.  
 I enjoyed going to the Mosque because it felt  
 so calm and different. I also liked seeing the Guru  
 Granth Sahib. I recognised lots of things in the  
 Church like stain glass windows and candles. I learnt  
 that baptised Sikhs can't cut their hair. I was  
 surprised how the Mosque looked on the outside. I  
 will remember for a long time that I have seen the  
 Guru Granth Sahib. I wondered how long it took to  
 write the Guru Granth Sahib. I didn't expect for  
 the Mosque to be so small. I didn't expect the  
 Muslim to respect Jesus. I also didn't expect for  
 some of the books in the Mosque to be English.

From Toby

Welwyn St. Mary's  
Primary School

Dear friends of the Mosque, Church and Gurdwara,  
 Thank you for our brilliant faith tour  
 on Tuesday. I enjoyed being in all three  
 places of worship especially the Gurdwara and  
 the Mosque. I recognised the Guru Granth  
 Sahib and the Bible. I learnt that the stain  
 windows of the Church weren't there until  
 after the Great war. They help people  
 to remember the people who fought  
 in the war. I will remember the year for  
 trip to Bedford for ever and ever.  
 Thank you for a lovely day.

from Ethan



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### Year 5 Plasterzotes workshop

On Wednesday the 11<sup>th</sup> of January year 5 had a Plasterzote workshop. Plasterzote is a flat, plastic material that can be shaped when warmed in an oven. Two ladies came in to teach us how to make masks. Both year 5 classes did it. JT5 did it in the morning as they had their Stay and Read session in the afternoon. We designed the mask we wanted to make. We cut out shapes and then when we wanted something moulded, we took it to the two ladies at the oven. George decided to make donkey from the Shrek movie. Zachary tried to do baby Yoda from Star Wars but eventually it ended up looking like Kermit the Frog. When we needed something to glue onto our mask we went to the glue gun section. Our favourite mask was George's which was a donkey from Shrek.

- From George, Zachary and Teddy S

### Year 4 Curling Event

Team names: Charlotte, Bailey, Logan, Caitlin, Ava, Max, Layton, Tiffany

Star player: Logan

After a practice we started the real game. We got into pairs and we all tried our best. We were nervous but excited and courageous too. We had to play our best as St Michael's were very good. We had to kneel on a mat and had the curler in our hand. Then we had to aim to the middle of a target. We could also knock peoples curls out of the way. The aim of the game is to get as close to the blue spot in the middle of the track. St Michael's won by one point. Even though we lost, we all loved it. Our favourite thing was taking part. Thank you to Mr O'Neill for organising the event.

- Charlotte, Caitlin, Bailey and Logan

### Herts table tennis

Team names: Logan, George, Elliot, Max, Kitty

Star player: Max and Logan for perseverance

Children from all over Hertfordshire came to compete. George will never forget falling over but still getting the point and winning 3-1. Elliot will remember a very frustrating moment when an opponent got five points by cutting the net then falling on to his half. He won his game 3-2. Kitty will never forget when she won a game. Logan will remember he won one set because the standard was high but lost 3-1. Max will never forget that it was his first table tennis tournament and he won one game 3-0. George came second in his group.

- The team

### Year 3 Speed Stacking

Team names: Chloe, Harper, Oli, Jasper, Orla, Violet, Danny, Marcus

Star player: Marcus

On Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> we went speed stacking. Speed stacking is a type of sport where you have to stack cups up and down as quickly as you can. We had a fun time. Marcus came 1<sup>st</sup> out of all the boys. Chloe came 3<sup>rd</sup>. Our mixed team came third.

- Marcus and Violet





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### HCC Winter Health Update



### Winter health update - January 2023

For parents/carers and education and childcare settings

From Geraldine Bruce, Head of Health Protection, Hertfordshire Public Health

As children return to schools and childcare settings, we expect to see many more cases of flu, COVID-19 and other infections that affect children's breathing (known as 'respiratory infections'). There also continue to be high numbers of scarlet fever cases, which can spread quickly, but can be easily treated with antibiotics. To help us through this term, this leaflet has five simple steps we can take to protect children, minimise the spread of illness in schools and childcare settings and protect others.

<b>1</b>	<p><b><u>Stay home if unwell</u></b> Infections can spread quickly in schools and other childcare settings. If your child is unwell and has a fever they should stay home from school or nursery until they feel better and their fever has gone.</p> <p>Adults should try to stay home when unwell and consider wearing a face covering to protect others if you do have to go out. Don't visit people in hospitals or care homes if you have a fever, a cold or symptoms of a stomach upset.</p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b><u>Keep hands clean</u></b> It is important to help children understand that keeping hands clean can stop bugs from spreading. Help your child wash their hands regularly at home with soap and warm water. More information <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b><u>Catch coughs and sneezes</u></b> Catching coughs and sneezes in tissues then binning them is a simple way to help stop illness from spreading. Keeping rooms well ventilated will also help prevent the spread of winter illness.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b><u>Get vaccinated if you're eligible</u></b> Now is a good time to check your you and your family's vaccinations are all up to date. If you are unsure your child has had all their routine vaccinations, you can check their personal health record (Red Book) or ask your GP. You can also check the <a href="#">childhood immunisation schedule</a> online.</p> <p>And it's not too late to get the free NHS flu jab or nasal spray this year if anyone in your family is eligible. The NHS will be contacting parents of children who have not yet had their flu immunisation. Flu nasal spray clinics are still taking place in some schools this month, or for children aged 2-3, please contact your GP to arrange an appointment.</p>
<b>5</b>	<p><b><u>Be scarlet fever aware</u></b> Call your GP for advice if you think your child has scarlet fever. More information about scarlet fever can be found on the <a href="#">NHS website</a>. If you are concerned about a rash that your child has, advice is available here: <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/rashes-babies-and-children/">https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/rashes-babies-and-children/</a></p>





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### December birthdays

Happy birthday to all who celebrated in December:

Leo, Laiton, Sophia, Jacob, Ebony, Tireni, Evan, Amber, Evelyn, James, Johnny, Robyn, Enzo, Preston, Izzy, Harper, Betty-Leigh, Nicole, Benjamin, Rocco, Tamilore, Jake, Teddy, Ivy, Ashley, Tiffany, Sebastian, Darcey, Isabella, Elsie, Rafa, Tegan, Mrs Hall, Mrs So, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Rogers, Mrs Kinsella, Mrs Farrington and Mrs Southall.

### Severe weather procedures

Should we need to close due to severe weather, we will inform parents via Parentmail and we will keep our website up to date.

### 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		
1 <sup>st</sup> February	8.45 - 10.30am	School Family Worker Coffee Morning - Garden Room
6 <sup>th</sup> February		Year 3 Greek day
8 <sup>th</sup> February		Parent Consultation
9 <sup>th</sup> February		Parent Consultation
13 <sup>th</sup> - 17 <sup>th</sup> February		<b>Half term</b>
23 <sup>rd</sup> February		Year 5 Woodhall estate trip
24 <sup>th</sup> February		Festival of Words - Reception & KS1
24 <sup>th</sup> February	2.15pm	Year 6 SATs Chat
24 <sup>th</sup> February		Year 6 PTFA cake sale
28 <sup>th</sup> February		Year 2 Great fire of London day
3 <sup>rd</sup> March		Year 2 class assembly
10 <sup>th</sup> March		The Speaker's Cup - KS2
17 <sup>th</sup> March		Reception PTFA cake sale
21 <sup>st</sup> March		Year 5 Dance Festival (evening)
24 <sup>th</sup> March		Reception class assembly
29 <sup>th</sup> March	8.45 - 10.30am	School Family Worker Coffee Morning - Garden Room
30 <sup>th</sup> March		Whole School Easter service at St Mary's Church
31 <sup>st</sup> March	<b>1.20pm</b>	<b>Term ends</b>
Summer Term 2023		
17 <sup>th</sup> April		Term commences
18 <sup>th</sup> April		Year 5 Chiltern Open Air Museum Trip
15 <sup>th</sup> May	9.15-11.30	Understanding Anxiety in Children Workshop Part 1
19 <sup>th</sup> May		Year 1 PTFA cake sale
22 <sup>nd</sup> May	9.15-11.30	Understanding Anxiety in Children Workshop Part 2
22 <sup>nd</sup> May		Year 6 GoConstruct K'Nex Challenge
24 <sup>th</sup> May	8.45 - 10.30am	School Family Worker Coffee Morning - Garden Room
29 <sup>th</sup> May - 2 <sup>nd</sup> June		<b>Half term</b>
5 <sup>th</sup> - 7 <sup>th</sup> June		Year 6 PGL
6 <sup>th</sup> June		Year 2 Knebworth House trip
14 <sup>th</sup> June		Year 4 Verulamium Visit
16 <sup>th</sup> June		Year 2 PTFA cake sale
23 <sup>rd</sup> June		<b>INSET day - school closed</b>
26 <sup>th</sup> June		<b>INSET day - school closed</b>
28 <sup>th</sup> June	8.45 - 10.30am	School Family Worker Coffee Morning - Garden Room
20 <sup>th</sup> July		Year 6 Leavers' Eucharist at St Mary's Church
21 <sup>st</sup> July	<b>1.20pm</b>	<b>Term ends</b>

