

WELWYN ST MARY'S MARCH NEWSLETTER



Dear families,

When I think back to the start of January, it feels like a lifetime ago now! It's hard to believe that it has only been an 11-week term with all that we have managed to squeeze into it!

We started early in the Spring term with a 'frog invasion' in Year 5, which meant that the children had to register in the Hall, and then look for clues in their classroom to work out what had happened. This inspired some very creative writing and really inspired the children to write imaginatively, based on first-hand experiences.

Our governors came to join us for our Governors' Day Visit and had the pleasure of joining our classes in their learning, seeing phonics sessions and mathematics lessons in action throughout the school. They had the chance to see children at work, talk to our pupils about their learning and met with School Council. The Governing Body were extremely impressed by all they saw and were very complimentary about the behaviour of the children and their standards of achievement.

Our Years 3 and 4 treated us to some stunning performances of their production 'Hoodwinked', which showcased the talent we have here at Welwyn St Mary's. The children acted, sang and danced to an incredibly high standard and showed us how much can be gained, when offering opportunities to this level.

Many year groups have participated in and benefited from 'do and learn' experiences this term. Our Year 5 enjoyed an immersive and interactive Viking workshop; Year 3, an engaging Greek Day, where they dressed up and took part in a range of activities; and Year 2 experienced 'The Great Fire of London' sessions recently. All of these opportunities received glowing feedback from the children and they really did bring their learning to life.

The list goes on: 45 sporting events so far this year; our in-house Festival of Words and Speakers Cup; the 'Sons' acapella whole school assembly and workshops; World Book Day and author visits, our wooden spoon book characters competition and the whole school English and D&T topic on the book 'Traction Man', which has inspired some much creative writing and D&T work from our children; British Science Week and live-streamed science lessons; Year 5's countryside learning day and Year 6's Hendon Museum visit; School Council's work to raise our awareness of our chosen Tanzania charity and raising money for our sponsored student, Farijika; class assemblies from Reception and Year 2; the Year 5's participation in the dance festival at Campus West, a lovely Easter Service in St Mary's Church led by Reverend David and Mrs Jackson, our school chaplain; and then a whole-school egg decorating competition and the PTFA Easter Egg hunt!

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 Easter break. We look forward to welcoming you all back at school on Monday 15th April 2024 (for all that we manage to fit in in the Summer term!).

Best wishes,

Mr Whiteland
Headteacher





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Value

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

"Follow justice and justice alone, so that you may live and possess the land the Lord your God is giving you."
- Deuteronomy 16:20

New Staff

We welcome Miss Singer our new Midday Supervisor in the KS2 Playground.

World Book Day

Our school was filled with a variety of story book characters on World Book Day. All the children looked fantastic and enjoyed a number of reading themed activities throughout the day. A huge thank you to all parents for helping the children look so amazing.



Congratulations to the winners of our wooden spoon and extreme reading competitions. Thank you to everyone that took part, we had some fantastic entries.

Theo (BC2)	Oompa Loompa	Winner Rec/KS1
Elizabeth (DOS1)	Wonky Donkey	Winner Rec/KS1
Olivia (H2)	Blue Worry Monster	Runner up Rec/KS1
Scarlett (CNR)	Little Red Riding Hood	Runner up Rec/KS1
Elijah (CNR)	Spiderman	Runner up Rec/KS1
Charlie S (JT5)	Harry Potter Owl Egg	Winner KS2
Harriet (M3)	Robin Hood, Maid Marion	Winner KS2
Alex A (CD4)	101 Dalmatians	Runner up KS2
Alessio (JT5)	Where's Wally	Runner up KS2
Alice (P4)	The Big Friendly Giant	Runner up KS2



Upcoming events

Term Commences

We look forward to welcoming the children back to school on **Monday 15th April**.

Chicks

Year 2 will be the proud carers of chicken eggs from **Monday 15th April**. The children will (hopefully!) experience the chicks hatching and then be able to watch them grow and change.

Year 4 Faith Tour

Year 4 will visit a Sikh, Christian and Muslim place of worship on **Tuesday 16th April**. Children will need to bring a vegetarian packed lunch that should not contain meat, fish, eggs or nuts. Children will also need to bring a headscarf or beanie type hat (no baseball caps please) to cover their heads.

Year 3 Swimming

Year 3 will start their swimming lessons on **Thursday 18th April**. Children should come to school in their PE kit and bring their swimming costumes and towels in a named bag.

Year 6 GoConstruct KNex Challenge Monday 29th April

PGL Parent Meeting

A reminder to Year 6 parents that the PGL parent meeting will be held on **Thursday 2nd May**. More details will follow via Parentmail.



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Afterschool Care - Welcome Rising Stars

We have now signed an agreement with Rising Stars Wrap-Around Clubs Ltd, who will be providing our Breakfast and After School Club sessions from the start of the Summer Term.

Initially, during the Summer Term, we will be focusing on ensuring a smooth handover of our existing wrap-around provision to the new team. The good news is that our wonderful Breakfast and After-School Club staff will all be remaining in their positions with Rising Stars and will continue to work at our wrap-around clubs. To all intents and purposes, the clubs will operate as they do now, so children should not notice any major changes.

Once things are up and running smoothly, we very much hope that Rising Stars will be able to start expanding wrap-around provision at Welwyn St Mary's. For more information, please check your Parentmail.

Well wishes for Mrs Harrison

Just after half term Mrs Harrison underwent surgery and is now recovering well at home. She is in good spirits and has asked us to send her regards to everyone and to say that she misses all the children. Unfortunately, tests after her operation confirmed the early stages of cancer and, although removed successfully, chemotherapy is required to prevent any reoccurrence. Sadly, this means that Mrs Harrison is likely to be off for a bit longer than we originally hoped, but she hopes to return to HM6 and choir as soon as possible. Please keep Mrs Harrison and her family in your thoughts and prayers and wish her a speedy recovery.

Speakers Cup 2024



On Friday 16th February there was a Speakers Cup. The first person to do their speech was Jasper from BP6 (in other words Princess Tulu). He did a very humorous speech about crazy things and it was very funny. Next was Daniel from HM6. He did a very fascinating speech. It was all about Minecraft and some facts people did not know. From H5 Ivy did her speech on a singer called Harry Styles. It was interesting. Next was Jake from JT5. His speech was about sharks and it was very interesting. Felicity from P4 did a speech on endangered animals, particularly the Pangolin. It was very cool and she talked about lots of different animals. Then, from CD4 Alex did her speech on turtles versus tortoises. She was very entertaining and made it quite humorous. From MS3, Olive did a speech about homelessness and was trying to persuade people to help. Finally, we had Liliane from M3. She did a really cool speech on bats. In second place, tied, were Jake and Lilian. The winner was Alex. Well done Alex!

We would like to thank our judges; Evie M, Mr Quilter, Francesca B and Mrs Jackson. We would also like to thank Mrs Tucker for organising it.

- Nyla & Scarlett





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KS2 Chess Club - Summer Term

Mrs Phillips will continue to run our KS2 chess club throughout the summer term. The club will start on Thursday 25th April and will take place each Thursday lunchtime in BP6 from 12.20-13.00 until the 11th of July. Instead of signing up to the club for a full term, Mrs Phillips would like to trial running the club as open to all so children can drop in and attend as they choose. Children will need to know the basics of chess to join. It will provide a wonderful opportunity for our students to practise and develop their skills in a fun and supportive environment. If the sessions become overly popular, we will revert back to the sign-up form method via Parentmail.

Parking

Please be respectful of our neighbours when picking up and dropping off children. In no circumstances should you park across driveways or dropped kerbs or otherwise block access to residents' property.

Reception Class Assembly

Children in both Reception classes have been learning about people who help us. They held a fantastic class assembly, sharing wonderful paintings and songs and teaching everybody about the people who help us. The children were very confident with their lines and knew all of the actions and words for their songs. Well done LR and CNR! Thank you to parents, grandparents and carers who came to see the children's assembly.



K Club stationery shop



Thank you to all the families that supported the K Club stationery shop. They raised an amazing **£225.64** which will be donated to the Isabel Hospice which provides free palliative care and support for patients and their families in Hertfordshire.

Year 1 Hertfordshire Zoo Trip

On Wednesday 13th March, Year 1 went to Hertfordshire Zoo. In Science, they have been learning about animals... what a perfect place to find out some more! Both classes saw lots of animals, including lions, penguins, tigers, sun bears, snakes, a range of birds, monkeys and many more. There were some highlights of the day, which included our educational sessions learning about the enclosures and lions, the bird show, and of course meeting Tyler, Cam and Aaron from CBBC's 'One Zoo Three'. The opportunity to explore the zoo and find out more about the animals has really elevated Year 1's learning all about animals. We had a great day filled with lots of learning and fun memories.





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Decorated Egg winners



Prize	Winner	Name of Egg
Best LR egg	Milly	Happy Easter Basket
Best CNR egg	Oliver	Eggstraterestrials
Best B1 egg	Bobby N	Farm
Best DOS1 egg	Laiton	Minion Football
Best BC2 egg	Milly H	Space ship
Best H2 egg	Olivia	Monkey Land
Best M3 egg	Sasha	Forest
Best MS3 egg	Olive	Strawberry
Best CD4 egg	Jacob	Elvis Peggsly
Best P4 egg	Ben C	Wildlife House
Best H5 egg	Arabella	Neverland
Best JT5 egg	Camilla	The Easter egg-ariam
Best BP6 egg	George	Mr Meggs
Best HM6 egg	Yarden	Eggtastic Cinema
R/KS1 Overall Winner	Rosie D (H2)	Great fire of London
KS2 Overall Winner	Alex (CD4) Jasper (BP6)	Alex's Animal Funfair
Best RE-themed Winner	Poppy W (P4)	The Last Supper
Most imaginative	George (H5)	Eggsiting Ride
Best unaided/independent	Isabelle B (DOS1)	The Animals
R/KS1 Most ambitious (Most work!)	Harriette (H2)	Richard and Rasa
KS2 Most ambitious (Most work!)	Olivia & Maisie (BP6)	Egg-sembly
Grown-up winner	Katie M	Easter Animals



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Book recommendation

This month's book recommendations:

As the Christian festival of Easter is a time for celebrating new life, we would like to recommend the following books with a theme of 'new beginnings'. Some of these are available in the school class libraries or to reserve in the local library.



Early Years and Key Stage 1

- **The Comet** by Joe Todd-Stanton is a heartfelt picture book touching on the bewildering experience of moving house.
- **My Beautiful Voice** by Joseph Coelho is a moving, lyrical picture book about a shy child unlocking the power of their own voice through poetry.
- **Meesha makes friends** by Tom Percival is a book about finding your place when making friends is hard.

Key Stage 2

- **The Boy at the Back of the Class** is a modern classic by Onjali Q. Rauf of a boy who joins a new school.
- **Moving Up** by Christian Foley is a non-fiction book ideal for the upper Key stage 2 children as they make a transition to secondary school.

Speed Stacking - 18th January

Team names: Michelle, Grace, Alex, Felicity, Jacob, Lucas, Bastian, Teddy

Star Player: Felicity - she was outstanding and persevered so much

There were eleven teams and we came third in the relays. Alex came third out of all the girls in the 3,6,3. Michelle came first out of all the girls in the 3,3,3. Lucas came first out of all the boys in the 3,6,3. Lucas came first out of all the boys in the 3,3,3. It was fun because all of our team mates showed respect to each other. Everyone had passion and self-belief. We had fun because we could rely on our team mates to support us. We had team work and because of that we got better and better. We would like to thank our team mates for supporting us and we would like to thank Mrs Southall.

- Alex and Grace





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Herts Athletics Cross Country - 3rd February

Team names: Thomas, Douglas, Riley, Kitty, Loulou, Ella, Fred, Faris, Billy, Amelie, Orla, Mia
Dedication comes in many forms and participating in a weekend event for the school is definitely one of those things. The Herts Schools' cross country event run by Herts Athletics Association is a highly competitive event attended by children who regularly train for long distance running from all over the county. Our children did extremely well. The highlights are Amelie M coming in a very impressive 34th out of 110 runners. Kitty and Ella, coming 17th and 30th respectively in the year 6 girl's race. Thomas S placed 37th out of 117 runners. Well done to all and thank you for representing our school in a fantastic show of perseverance and determination.

- Mrs Southall

Saracens Tag Rugby - 7th February

Team names: Henry, Fletcher, Wilf, Ethan, Thomas, Sophie, Yarden, Dia

Star Player: Wilf

On Wednesday 7th February, some year 6 pupils went to Welwyn Rugby Club to play a tag rugby tournament. Our first game was against Applecroft and we won 1-0. Lottie scored the try and got player of the match for that game. Our second game we sadly lost 6-1 and Wilf scored the try. Wilf was also the player of this match. On our third game, we lost 4-2 and Wilf scored both tries and got player of the match. The next match we played we lost 3-2 but we tried our hardest and persevered. The player of the match was Fletcher. He scored a try and so did Wilf. Overall, we had a lot of fun and we would like to thank Mrs Porter and Mrs des Forges for taking us.

- Wilf and Lottie

Boy's Football Fixture - 13th February

Team names: Elliot, Oliver W, Oliver B, Teddy, Douglas, Ryan, Billy, Zac, Ethan

Star Player: Douglas

On Tuesday 13th February, Sherrardswood came to Welwyn St Marys to play a football match. The pitch was very muddy and slippery, plus it was raining. The game kicked off and a few minutes later Teddy injured his ankle and had to come off for the rest of the game. Then they had a counter attack and unfortunately scored to put them in front. Not long later, Elliot's corner rebounded off the keeper and scored to put us level. At the end of the first half it was 1-1 with 20 minutes left of play. In the second half, we had a counter attack and Douglas carried the ball up the pitch, took on a defender and scored to put us in the lead. With a few minutes left Sherrardswood scored to level it up. The final score was 2-2 and Douglas was the man of the match. We would like to thank the parents and Mr Gauden for cheering us on.

- Douglas and Elliot





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Rapid Fire Cricket - 16th February

Team names: Alice, Chelsea, Annabel, Omari, Kyle, Finley W, Jasper, Finley M

On the 16th of February some year 4 children went to Ridgeway to enter a rapid fire cricket tournament. We played other local schools. We got points for hitting the balls through the gates and for running up and down the wicket. We all had a turn fielding and batting and we all loved it. Overall we came 4th. We would like to thank Mr Gauden and Mrs Stanley for taking us.

- Finley W

Family Athletics - 1st March

Team names: Elliot, Douglas, Stanley, Teddy, Riley, Oliver, Max, Jasper, Alex, George, Billy, Kitty, Sophie, Ava, Dolly, Sophia, Ella, Dulcie, Dia, Lottie, Yarden

On the 1st March some Year 6 children went to Stanborough school to compete in an Athletics tournament. We started off with some relays and first was the 1 by 1. Then it was 2 by 2 and we won all of them. Then, we did under and over which has a mix of hurdles and tunnels. In both the girls and boys under and overs we came second. While some races were happening there were other small activities on the sides such as chest push, triple jump, long jump and vertical jump. Then we did javelin and speed bounce. After that, the girls did the relay and came 2nd and the boys did amazing and came 1st. Because of this, we came 1st overall and got into the semi-finals. We showed outstanding teamwork and would like to thank Mr Gauden and Madam Farrington for taking us and cheering us on.

- Sophie, Teddy & Lottie P

District Indoor Athletics - 7th March

Team names: Elliot, Douglas, Stanley, Teddy, Oliver, Max, Alex, George, Billy, Jasper, Kitty, Sophie, Dolly, Sophia, Ella, Dulcie, Dia, Lottie, Yarden

As we had won the local event on Friday 1st March, we were through to the district finals at Ridgeway. 8 top schools from the whole of Welwyn and Hatfield battling it out for the one chance at county finals. The competition was tough. Dedicated children and staff were all excited and determined to do their very best. The six track and six field events were carefully managed and scored, timed or measured by a team of sports leaders from Ridgeway. All our 19 children performed to their maximum, supported each other with care and encouraged those who had moments of doubt or nerves. One child in particular was noticed by a member of staff from another school for their kind, supportive comments to a child in another school - a wonderful example of our WSM values.

The children were disappointed by coming fourth. Mr Gauden and I are very proud of their hard work, fabulous attitude and perseverance. Well done to all the children and thank you for representing our school in every way possible. We would like to recognise Lottie P, Sophie, Alex and Douglas for their outstanding contribution to the afternoon.

- Mrs Southall





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March birthdays

Happy Birthday to all who celebrated in March:

Oria, Douglas, Ava, Nina, Penelope, Ethan, Orla, Bear, Louie, Chantelle, Ellie, Charlotte, Sam, Teddy, Isla, William, George, Connie, Isla, Milo, Nico, Scarlet, Jack, Omari, Charlie, Eliza, Teddy, Olivia, Cerys
Mr Stockton, Miss Howe, Mrs Mather, Miss Milnes, Mr Hawley, Miss Spence

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

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 29th April 2024	Year 6 GoConstruct KNex Challenge Day
Mon 13th May 2024 - Thurs 16th May 2024	KS2 SATs week
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
Mon 10th June 2024 - Fri 14th June 2024	Year 1 Phonics check week
Wed 12th June 2024	Year 1 Seaside Day
Fri 14th June 2024	Year 2 Knebworth House
Fri 21st June 2024	INSET day - school closed
Mon 24th June 2024	INSET day - school closed
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
Thurs 11th July 2024	Budge up day
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

