



Welwyn St Mary's Primary School

Newsletter – October 2025



Our value for this half term is:

Thankfulness

"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good."

1 Chronicles 16:34

Staffing Update

This half term, we have welcomed Mrs Jackson to our office team and Miss O'Neill to our TA team. We are sadly saying goodbye at half term to Mrs Porter, one of our TAs, and Mrs Ragless, our finance officer, and wish them well in their new roles.

Kitchen Hygiene Rating

We are delighted that our kitchen team received the highest hygiene rating of 5 following their recent visit from Environmental Health. Congratulations to Caroline and her team and thank you for focussing on such high standards.

Another huge well done to Caroline, who has been recognised by the Chief Executive of HCL for her outstanding efforts to keep all allergy children safe, by constantly monitoring ingredients. Thank you and well done, Caroline.

Harvest Festival

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks for your wonderful support of the Bishop of St Alban's Harvest Appeal this year. Through your generosity, we are thrilled to share that we raised £359 to aid the important work carried out in partnership with Mission Direct.

In addition, we are extremely grateful for your contributions to our local food bank. Your donations will directly assist families in our community, providing essential food and supplies during these challenging times.

Cold Weather

As the weather turns colder, please ensure your children come to school dressed appropriately to keep warm. Warm coats, hats, gloves, and scarves are needed. To help prevent any mix-ups, please make sure all items are clearly labelled with your child's name.

Upcoming events in November

Prospective Reception Parents

Open Mornings: Wednesday 5th and Wednesday 26th November at 9:15am

PTFA Fireworks Night:

Saturday 8th November - 6pm-8pm

Occasional Day:

Friday 21st November (School Closed)

PTFA Dress Down Day:

Friday 28th November

PTFA Christmas Fair:

Saturday 29th November - 1pm-4pm





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Year 4 Pedestrian Skills

Our Year 4 students recently took part in Pedestrian Skills sessions. During the activities, they learned about the road environment, including the importance of being seen, staying aware and practising safe road-crossing techniques. The children enjoyed the experience and gained valuable skills for staying safe on the roads. We would like to thank the Hertfordshire Council Active and Safer Travel team for delivering these informative sessions.

Year 4 Faith Tour

On Tuesday 7th October, Year 4 children went on their faith school trip visiting 3 places of worship, Guru Nanak Gurdwara, All Saints Church, and the Jamia Masjid Gulshane Baghdad Mosque.

"It was really fun and we learnt a lot. Everyone asked lots of questions and was very inquisitive. The people that spoke were very friendly. The Mosque was very beautiful too."

- *Bella and Jacob*



Year 5 Plastazote Workshop

On Wednesday 15th October, Year 5 went into the hall to make masks out of Plastazote. We all came into the hall to have an explanation on what to do. 5 Pines left and 5 Poplars stayed to do it for the whole morning. 5 Pines came in the afternoon. Some special people came in to help us. Their names were Peter and Clare. Plastazote is a material that feels like foam. It is made from oils and gases. Peter and Clare both had an oven. After you put Plastazote in the oven it goes flimsy so you can mould it in any way, and it will stay like that. It cools down quickly. Our masks were based on Egyptian Gods. We used glue to stick it all together.

- *Evie, Seren and Lily.*





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Sensory Room Fundraising

We're thrilled to share that an amazing £362 has been raised so far towards our KS1 Sensory Room – thank you for your generous support!

To help us reach our goal, we're holding a fundraising event at The Civic Centre, Welwyn, on Friday 21st November. It promises to be a fun-filled occasion for the whole family.

We'd love to see you there – come along and join the fun while supporting a great cause!

To find out more about this project or to donate, please follow the link: <https://gofund.me/199123ace>



Staff Trek for Charity



On 20th September, a group of us walked 20-miles, raising money for the Lister MacMillan Cancer Unit. The group included members of Welwyn St Mary's staff: Mrs David, Mrs May, Mrs Sanyal, Mrs Mather and Mrs Harrison. Mrs Noakes provided much-needed snacks and drinks halfway around!

We were overwhelmed by the support we received, and with Gift Aid, we raised a staggering £5,568!

A huge thank you to everyone!

Mrs Harrison

Welwyn St Mary's Community Choir

Parents, Grandparents, come and sing!

Wednesdays 7.45 - 8.45pm
WSM school hall.
Fees £20 per term

We are a friendly group where the emphasis is on having fun, singing together and raising funds for charity. If you're interested in joining us, please either just turn up, or let the office know if you'd like more details.





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PTFA Fireworks Night – Saturday 8th November

Join us for the PTFA Fireworks Night- tickets are still available! Enjoy a brilliant evening and help us raised funds for exciting projects, including new KS2 playground equipment.

Tickets available online at:

<https://welwyn-st-marys-ptfa-100692.square.site/>



Forgotten items

We are receiving a very high number of forgotten items via the school office each morning, and requests from children to call parents for forgotten sports kits for clubs. Please could you remind children to bring all items they need for the day with them. We suggest packing bags the night before school to avoid the morning rush.

Club Availability

There is still availability for your child to sign up to clubs after half term. Please see below links to the following clubs with availability:

<u>Cheerleading</u> <u>Year 1 & 2 – Wednesday – 12.30-1.00</u> <u>Year 3, 4, 5 & 6 – Wednesday – 12.00-12.30</u>	<u>Dance</u> <u>Year R – Monday 12.30-1.00</u> <u>Year 1 – Tuesday 12.30-1.00</u>
<u>Multisport</u> <u>Year 4, 5 & 6 – Tuesday 12.15-1.00</u> <u>Year 1, 2, 3 – Friday 12.15-1.00</u>	<u>Mad Science</u> <u>Year 3, 4, 5 & 6 – Thursday 3.20-4.20</u>





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This month's book recommendations

We are the diversity ambassadors and we're looking forward to sharing new books with you each month. (James, Lillie, Harry, Tommy, Orla, Rowan, Libby, Freya and Gael)

This month, we have chosen books that celebrate stories from different cultures for Black History Month. These books highlight the amazing contributions of black people to our community and beyond. We have a mix of fiction and non-fiction titles for you to enjoy!

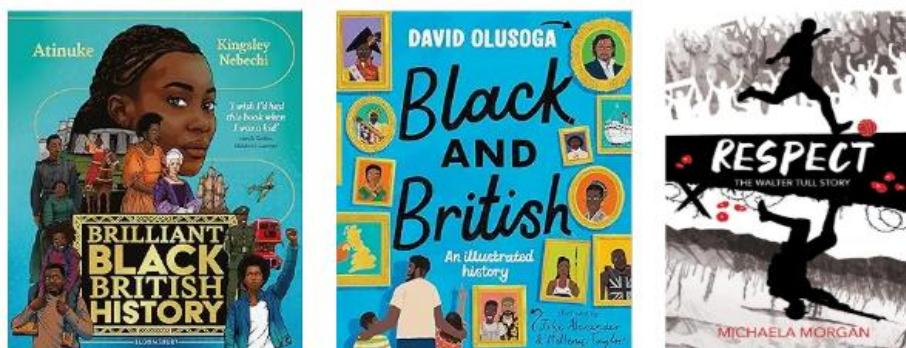
We recommend the following fiction books which are available in school:

- Onyeka and the Academy of the Sun by Tola Okogwu
- Space Detectives Cosmic Pet Puzzle by Mark Powers and Dapo Adeola
- The Lion above the door by Onjali Q. Rauf
- The Boy with Wings By Lenny Henry



We also recommend these books for learning about history and contributions from significant British black people in history.

- Brilliant Black British History by Atinuke and Kingsley Nebechi
- Black and British by David Olusoga
- Respect: The Water Tull Story



If you are unable to find the book in school, try the local library.





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Year 5 and 6 District Cross Country

On Thursday 9th October, a number of our Year 5 and Year 6 pupils competed at the Stanborough Lakes Cross Country District Final, and they delivered some outstanding performances!

Our runners showed determination, resilience and great team spirit throughout the races. Special congratulations to our top finishers.

Year 5 Boys: Johnny (3rd), Arlo (14th), George (19th), Ethan (29th), Jack (30th)

Year 5 Girls: Harriet (3rd), Amelia (8th), Olive (10th)

Year 6 Boys: Monty (1st), Freddie (2nd), Jacob (6th), Finley W (13th), Lucas (19th)

Year 6 Girls: Zara (1st), Poppy (2nd), Nancy (6th), Alba (8th), Evie (12th)

A huge well done to all our runners — you represented the school brilliantly and should all be very proud of your achievements! ☀

Year 6 Tag Rugby

On Wednesday 8th October a few Year 6 girls went to a tag rugby tournament. They were Evie, Alba, Elin, Alex, Chloe, Chelsea, Violet, Kiara and Grace G. We played six matches, first we lost 6-1 to St. Johns, and 3-6 to Applecroft. Then we won 4-3 against Holwell, drew 7-7 against Sherrardswoods, won 3-2 against Brookmans Park and finally won 5-3 against Holy Family. The star players were Elin and Alba, and the most supportive team player was Violet. Altogether, we had a great time and would like to thank Miss Veasey for taking us. Thank you.
-Alba and Evie.

Year 3 and 4 Tag Rugby

On Wednesday 22nd October, a group of Year 3 and 4 children went to a tag rugby tournament at Welwyn Rugby Club. The people who went were Alfie, Ralphie, Isaac, Evan, Rowan, Elizabeth, Ebony, Sophie, Harriet and Bethany. In the first match on pitch 3, it started with the other team scoring a try, then Alfie scored a try, then the other team scored a try and finally Elizabeth scored in the last minute and we drew 2-2. When the next game started the other team scored 2 tries, then Ralphie managed to score a try, then sadly the other team got another 2 tries and we lost 4-1. Then the next match started and straight away Alfie scored a try. A bit after that the other team scored, sadly, then Alfie scored and then finally the other team scored and we drew 2-2. The next match we won. Ralphie scored 2 tries and Isaac scored a try at the end and we won 3-0. The next match, Alfie scored 3 tries and Ralphie scored a try and we won 4-1. Finally, the next match Alfie scored 2 and Ralphie scored 1 but we lost.
-Alfie and Ralphie.

Star players – Alfie and Ralphie.





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Raising money for school

If you shop online you could be raising funds for our lovely school – at no extra cost to you!

- **Lovereading4kids.co.uk** sell a range of children's books at competitive prices, and the good news for us is that, if you nominate Welwyn St Mary's, 25% of the cover price will be given to us to spend with them on new books for our school library.
- **Easyfundraising.org.uk** – by going through this website to then purchase at other retailers, you can nominate Welwyn St Mary's to receive a percentage of the cost of your items (e.g. 4% at Argos, 2% at John Lewis, 9% at M&S).

October birthdays

Happy Birthday to all who celebrated in October: Alba, Hunter, Eli, David, Muhammad, Violet, Harry, Alexander, Eira, Oscar, Cassius, Noah, Kyle, Joshua, Lucy, Elsie, Carys, Elijah, Thomas, Maxwell, Kiara, Elliott, Emily, Georgaina, Autumn, Oscar, Miss Birch and Miss Dines.

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.

Absence Reporting

Please call or email by 9am on each day of your child's absence. Please can we ask that you advise us of the symptoms of any illness rather than just "feeling unwell" so that we can accurately record and monitor this.

Term Time Absence and Penalty Notices

A new National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence, including unauthorised holiday absence, has now been introduced following changes to the law.

Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent, for each child that was absent. For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines. Parent refers to anyone with parental responsibility and may include carers, step-parents, grandparents or any other adult with parental responsibility.

National Threshold

There is a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence. The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

[Click here](#) for further information.





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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.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave of absence or unauthorised absence the amount will be:

- £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days
- Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

- £160 per parent, per child within 28 days

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court.

- Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines up to £2,500
- Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education.'





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Diary Dates

Diary dates are regularly updated on the school website:
www.welwynst-marys.herts.sch.uk/news-dates/diary-dates

2025 Autumn Term	
Wed 5th November 2025	Prospective Reception Parents Open Morning 9.15am
Fri 7th November 2025	Year 3 Class Assembly
Sat 8th November 2025	PTFA Fireworks Night
Mon 10th November 2025	Odd Socks Day
Fri 14th November 2025	PTFA Year 5 Cake Sale
Fri 14th November 2025	Year 4 Affinity Water Lego Workshop
Fri 21st November 2025	Occasional day – school closed
Wed 26th November 2025	Prospective Reception Parents Open Morning 9.15am
Fri 28th November 2025	Dress Down Day for PTFA
Sat 29th November 2025	PTFA Christmas Fair
Wed 10th December 2025	Year 2 Christmas Play – 1.30pm & 6.00pm
Tues 16th December 2025	Reception Christmas Play – 2.30pm
Wed 17th December 2025	Christmas lunch/Christmas jumper day
Thu 18th December 2025	Whole School Christmas Service [St Mary's Church]
Thu 18th December 2025	Year 5 and 6 Carol Service [6pm, St Mary's Church] We ask all to attend this special service.
Fri 19th December 2025	Terms ends – Rec & KS1 1.15pm, KS2 1.20pm
2026 Spring Term	
Mon 5th January 2026	INSET day – school closed
Tue 6th January 2026	Term starts
Wed 7th January 2026	Prospective Reception Parents Open Morning 9.30am
Tue 20th January 2026	Year 3 Greek Day
Wed 28th January 2026	Year 4 Play/Pantomime – 1.30pm & 6.00pm
Mon 16th to Fri 20th February 2026	Half term
Fri 27th March 2026	Last day of school – Rec & KS1 1.15pm, KS2 1.20pm
2026 Summer Term	
Mon 13th April 2026	INSET day – school closed
Tue 14th April 2026	Term starts
Mon 4th May 2026	Bank holiday – school closed
Fri 22nd May 2026	INSET day – school closed
Mon 25th to Fri 29th May 2026	Half term
Saturday 4th July 2026	PTFA Summer BBQ
Friday 10th July 2026	PTFA Break the rules day
Wed 22nd July 2026	Last day of school – Rec & KS1 1.15pm, KS2 1.20pm

