Welwyn St Mary's Primary School

NEWSLETTER

October 2026

Our value for this half term:

Generosity

"Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share."
- 1 Timothy 6:18

Welcome to our monthly newsletter.

We're excited to share some exciting updates from across our school community this month. From workshops to school trips and sporting achievements, our students have been busy learning, growing, and making memories. This edition brings you highlights of recent events, important updates, and a glimpse of what's ahead, celebrating the hard work, curiosity, and kindness that make our school such a special place.

Upcoming November Events

Friday 6th November	*Year 6 Legal Eagles*
Wednesday 4th November	*Reception Open Morning 9:15am*
Friday 6th November	*Year 3 Assembly 9:15am & 2:30pm*
Monday 7th November	*PTFA Fireworks Night*
Wednesday 11th November	*Year 6 Maya Workshop*
Friday 13th November	*Year 5 Cake Sale*
Friday 13th November	*Children In Need*
Monday 16th November	*Odd Socks Day*
Wednesday 19th November	*Year 6 Rugby Festival*
Thursday 20th November	*Occasional Day*

Telephone: 01438 714169 **E-mail:** admin@welwynst-marys.herts.sch.uk

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Prospective Reception Parents Open Mornings

We will be offering open mornings for prospective Reception families with children starting school in September 2027. These will be held on Wednesday 4th November, Wednesday 25th November and Wednesday 6th January 2027.

Open mornings will start at 9.15am with a talk from Mr Whiteland, the Headteacher. There will be a chance to tour the school with Year 6 guides and ask any questions. Each open morning will be limited to 30 families. Spaces must be reserved. Please book on via our website.

It is not possible to tour the school outside of these times. We respectfully ask that you make other arrangements for younger siblings, although children starting school in September are welcome to attend.

Harvest Festival

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks for your wonderful support of our Harvest Appeal this year. Through your generosity, we are thrilled to share that we raised £684.50 to aid the important work of Herts Young Homeless. 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.

PTFA Fireworks Display - Tickets now available

The PTFA are delighted to welcome back Fireworks Night and are pleased to confirm that ticket purchasing is now live for anyone who would like to attend the display on Saturday 7th November.

Click here to purchase a ticket.

Doors will open at 5.30pm with the display starting at 6.30pm. The event will take place on the KS2 playground.

There will be a BBQ, hot drinks, mulled wine, beer, refreshments, snacks and more. Our entry fee is £6.50 per person. Children under 3 are free.

There are only a limited number of tickets available so they will be sold on a first come, first served basis.

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Operation Christmas Gift Boxes

Our Kiwanis' club at school are going to start sorting items for the Operation Christmas gift boxes that are sent abroad for children less fortunate than our own. The appeal is run by Samaritan's Purse. There is a small box (shoe box size) in each classroom which we hope to fill with gifts. Please could you support your child to bring in one item. The list of items which we would like to put into the boxes is as follows:

- A quality gift item e.g. a small toy in good condition or new.
- Bar of soap or a flannel
- Hairbrush, comb or hair bands
- New pencils, coloured pencils, erasers and a small colouring book.
- Socks and gloves
- Small games, toy car etc

No liquids or food items are allowed (including toothpaste). Please bear in mind that we need to fit many items into the shoe boxes so nothing too big.

Please send items for our Christmas boxes into school with your child to hand to their teacher. Items need to be in school **by the 9th of November**.

PTFA Christmas Fair

The Christmas Fair is coming! Please save the date – Saturday 5th December from 1-4pm. We will need help setting up on the Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, manning the stalls for the duration of the event and then clearing up at the end. Many hands make light work so please look out for sign-ups via your year group/class WhatsApp groups; this event does require many volunteers. We'll also be looking for various donations: bottles, toys and books in 'nearly new condition'; craft stall donations; and tombola prizes.

We would love for you all to join us as we already have some fantastic gift stalls lined up to help you get your Christmas shopping well and truly under way. We do have a few spaces left for booking gift stalls in the Hall (£25 per stall, discounted to £15 if you also donate a raffle prize), please email laurastichbury@hotmail.com if you would like further details.

Finally, we are also gathering raffle prizes for the fair. If you or your business can donate anything, please send an email to the email address above or let the school office know. We would be very grateful!

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PTFA Year 6 Cake Sale

The Year 6 cake sale took place on Friday the 16th of October. We want to extend a big thank you to everyone who donated treats and came to support the event. Together, we managed to raise £227!

PTFA 2026-2027 Calendar Of Events

The PTFA have lots planned over the next school year, here is everything we have to look forward to:

Monday 7th November	*PTFA Fireworks Night*
Friday 13th November	*Year 5 Cake Sale*
Monday 16th November	*Provisional PTFA Meeting (Zoom)*
Friday 4th December	*Dress Down Day*
Saturday 5th December	*PTFA Christmas Fair*
Tuesday 12th January	*Year 3 & 4 Disco*
Friday 15th January	*Year 4 Cake Sale*
Tuesday 19th January	*Year 1 & 2 Disco and Year 5 & 6 Disco*
Saturday 30th January	*Parent's Quiz Night*
Friday 12th February	*Year 3 Cake Sale*
Monday 1st – Tuesday 2nd March	*Mother's Day Gift Shop*
Friday 12th March	*Year 2 Cake Sale*
Wednesday 24th March	*Easter Egg Hunt*
Tuesday 20th April	*KS1 Movie Night*
Tuesday 27th April	*KS2 Movie Night*
Friday 14th May	*Year 1 Cake Sale*
Friday 11th June	*Reception Cake Sale*
Monday 14th – Tuesday 15th June	*Father's Day Gift Shop*
Saturday 10th July	*Summer BBQ*

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Year 2 Scootability

Our Year 2 children have been taking part in scooter safety sessions. These sessions help provide valuable skills that they can use whilst out in pubic on their scooters top keep themselves safe.

Year 4 Pedestrian Skills

Our Year 4 pupils 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 5 Plastazote Workshop





On the 6th of October, our Year 5 pupils took part in a Plastazote workshop. During this workshop, children designed and made a Plastazote mask. They learned about Plastazote as a SMART material with properties that can be significantly changed by temperature. Take a look at a few of their fabulous creations!

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Year 4 Faith Tour









On Wednesday 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.

Following the trip, the children wrote thank you letters, here are a few of their thoughts on the trip:

"Thank you for showing us around your religious buildings. I really enjoyed when you showed us and taught us about your buildings and what you do there." - *Scarlet*

"I loved all the colour in the gurdwara and I loved the shape of the carpets in the mosque and the tiles of the story of Jesus with all the colour [in the church]." - *Charlotte*

"I enjoyed my visit very much and I liked how you respected each other's religions and beliefs." - *Miriam*

"Thank you for letting us explore your wonderful religious buildings. The buildings were beautiful inside and out." - *Poppy*

"Thank you for letting us visit your special religious buildings. We enjoyed having a tour and learning about how you respect your religion." - *Isabelle*

"The experience was amazing and it was great to see what you actually do inside of the buildings. It was fun to learn about what you do in each religious building and temple." – *Nysha*

Thank you to all the teachers and helpers who attended this trip.

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Year 6 Multisport Event – 1st October

Team: *Finley, Max, Reid, Enzo, Danny, Caleb, Robyn, Penny, Elsie, Georgaina, Millie and Florence.*

On Thursday the 1st of October, some of year 6 went to a multisport event. When we arrived, were greeted by Miss Soppet Moss and Miss O'Connor. Once we got to the playing fields we separated to different schools. Our first event was long jump, Max got the furthest jump.

Then we went to Javelin, the furthest throw went roughly 20m by Finley.

Our 3rd event was tug of war. Most people enjoyed this.

Our 4th event was sprinting and our fastest players were Millie, Finley and Max.

Our 5th event was archery and Millie got the highest score out of all the schools which was 16 and followed close by Finley who got 14.

Our final event was the relay race, everybody did well but there was a clear winner: Finley's team.

At the end there was an award, a medal and a pineapple. The winner of the pineapple was Caleb. Big thanks to the teachers and carers/parents who came for us.

Star player: *Caleb*

- Finley and Max

Year 3 Archery Competition – 2nd October



On Friday the 2nd of October, some of our Year 3 pupils competed in an archery competition. We are very proud of all the children who took part, winning first place for the school!

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Year 5 and 6 Cross Country Finals – 8th October

Team names: *Johnny, Arlo, George, Harriet, Kiara, Amelia, Vinnie, Rosie, Jacob, Sophie and Karianna.*

First was the year 6 boys' race and they did really well. Johnny came second, George came seventh and Arlo came eight, all qualifying for county.

Next was the year 6 girls race and they all did really well. Olive came second, Amelia came fourth, Harriet came seventh, Kiara came eleventh.

Next was the year 5 boys race, they did really well. Jacob came second and Vinnie came 21st.

Then the last race was the year 5 girls race. Karianna came 5th, Alice came 7th, Sophie came 11th, Harriet came 17th and Rosie came 29th.

Star players: Johnny, Olive, Jacob and Karianna

- Finley and Max

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Year 6 Netball Tournament – 13th October

Team names: *Juno, Olivia, Harriet, Emily, Olive, Amelie, Emily, Everly and Amelia.*



On Tuesday the 13th of September, 9 girls from Year 6 went to a netball tournament at Monks Walk School. The first game we showed determination and teamwork and won 8-0 against Commonswood school. The second game we played Templewood and with self-belief and passion we won 6-3. We found out that the girls that were playing have made it to district. Thank you to Mrs Sanyal and our coach Sara for supporting us and our parents for taking us. The star player was everyone!

- Olivia and Juno

October Birthdays

Happy Birthday to all who celebrated in October:

Hunter, Samuel, David, Eli, Muhammed, Violet, Amelie, Alexander, Eira, Lucas, Evie, Oscar, Cassius, Noah, Joshua, Willow, Lucy, Sienna, Elsie, Carys, Vaezhaadhirai, Thomas, Maxwell, Emily, Kiara, Elliot, Emily, Georgaina, Autumn, Oscar, Mrs Birch, Mrs Dines, Mrs Oliver.

Considerate Parking

Please do remember to drive and park carefully and considerately when dropping and collecting children. Please only park in marked bays in Ottway Walk carpark and leave the disabled bays for those with blue badges. Cars should not be parked on yellow lines or zebra crossings as this obstructs the view and puts pedestrians at risk.

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BBC 500 Words Competition



The annual 500 Words competition from the BBC is now open for entries. This competition is a wonderful opportunity for children aged 5 – 11 to showcase their imagination.

There is only one rule – the story must not be more than 500 words!

The judges are not looking at spelling, punctuation or grammar. They want children to write a story other children would like to read, without them feeling the pressure to make it perfect.

Entries close on 6th November. For more information, please visit the BBC website at 500 Words.

If your child does enter the competition, please ask them to give a copy of their entry to Mrs des Forges or Miss Clements so that we can celebrate their work in school.

Music Lessons

If your child would like to sign up to music lessons in school, please register here: https://ukhertfordshire.speedadmin.dk/registration#/

All of our music lessons are run via the Mid Herts Music Service and we currently offer: guitar, violin, flute, clarinet, saxophone, brass instruments and piano. Once registered, the Music Service will be able to advise you on availability. We are always looking to introduce new instruments into our offerings and will share these via ParentMail when they become available.

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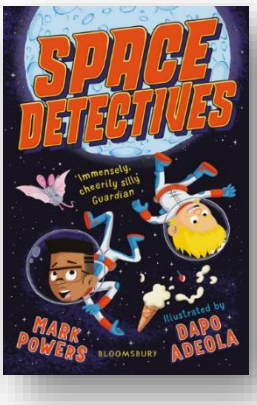
This Month's Book Recommendations

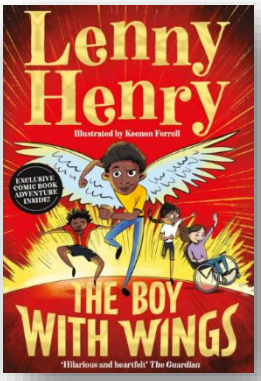
We are the diversity ambassadors and are looking forward to sharing new books each month. (Penny, Chatelle, Hayazahra, Kang, Isabelle, Aaran, Isobel, Bella)

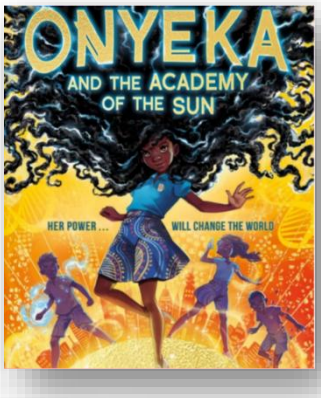
The books we have chosen represent stories from different cultures this month to celebrate Black History Month. We know that black people may be different, but they make up a huge impact on our community. We have a mixture of fiction and non-fiction books.

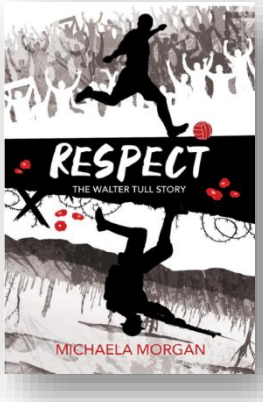
We recommend the following fiction books which are available in school:

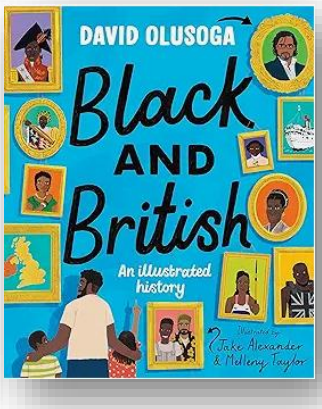


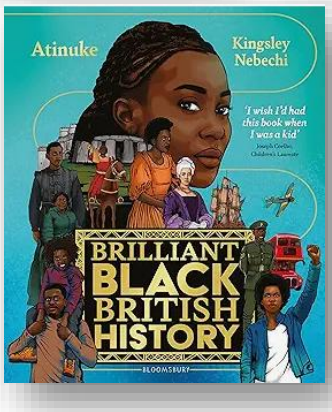














We recommend these books for learning about history and contributions from significant British black people in history.

Onyeka and the Academy of the Sun *by Tola Okogwu*

Amazing Women *by Caryn Jenner*

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*

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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).

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

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.

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:

http://www.welwynst-marys.herts.sch.uk/news-dates/diary-dates

Autumn Term 2026	
Wednesday 4th November	*Reception Open Morning*
Friday 6th November	*Year 3 Assembly*
Monday 7th November	*PTFA Fireworks Night*
Wednesday 11th November	*Year 6 Maya Workshop*
Friday 13th November	*Year 5 Cake Sale*
Friday 13th November	*Children In Need*
Monday 16th November	*Odd Socks Day*
Wednesday 19th November	*Year 6 Rugby Festival*
Thursday 20th November	*Occasional Day*
Saturday 5th December	*PTFA Christmas Fair*
Friday 11th December	*Whole School Panto*
Friday 18th December	*Term Ends – Rec & KS1 1:15, KS2 1:20*

Spring Term 2027	
Monday 4th January	*INSET Day – School Closed*
Tuesday 5th January	*Term Commences*
Tuesday 9th February	*Year 3 Ancient Greek Day*
Monday 15th – Friday 19th February	*Year 6 Maya Workshop*
Monday 1st March	*Year 5 Saxon Day*
Wednesday 10th March	*Year 2 Great Fire of London Day*
Thursday 25th March	*Term ends – Rec & KS1 1:15, KS2 1.20*

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Summer Term 2027	
Monday 12th April	*Term Commences*
Monday 3rd May	*Early May Bank Holiday – School Closed*
Friday 28th May	*INSET Day – School Closed*
Monday 31st May – Friday 4th June	*Half Term*
Monday 7th – Wednesday 9th June	*Year 6 PGL Trip*
Wednesday 9th June	*Year 1 Seaside Day*
Friday 25th June	*Year 3 Celtic Harmony Trip*
Wednesday 21st July	*Last Day Of School - Rec & KS1 1:15, KS2 1:20*
Thursday 22nd July	*Occasional Day*