



Welwyn St Mary's Primary School



Newsletter – September 2025

Value

Our value for this half term is: **Thankfulness**
“Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.”
1 Chronicles 16:34

Welcome back!

I am delighted to welcome everyone back to school for the start of what promises to be an exciting and productive Autumn term! Whether you're returning for another year or joining us for the first time, we're thrilled to have you as part of our school community. We look forward to another fantastic term filled with learning, growth, and achievement.

Staffing Update

We are pleased to welcome Miss Dunstan to our TA team, who has been initially working in Year 4 and is now supporting Year 6. We said goodbye in September to Miss Hawkins, one of our 1:1 TAs, and wish her well in her future endeavours.

Prospective Reception Parents Open Mornings

We will be offering three open mornings for prospective Reception families with children starting school in September. These will be held on Wednesday 5th November, Wednesday 26th November and Wednesday 7th January. Open mornings will start at 9.15am with a talk from Mr Whiteland, 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 in advance via our website: [Welwyn St Mary's C of E Primary School » Home page](https://www.welwynst-marys.herts.sch.uk)

Termly leaflets

Our Autumn term class leaflets are now available on our website. Leaflets contain useful information about topics classes will be studying this term, class routines and upcoming events so please do take a look. www.welwynst-marys.herts.sch.uk/curriculum/curriculum-overview

Year 6 Bikeability

Our Year 6 classes recently took part in Bikeability sessions, delivered by the Hertfordshire Transport, Active and Safety Team. The course introduced the children to the important skills of riding safely on the road. They learned how to navigate left and right-hand turns, overtake parked vehicles, and develop confidence in real-world cycling situations.

The children had a wonderful time and thoroughly enjoyed the hands-on experience. A huge congratulations to all who earned their nationally recognised Bikeability Award – what an achievement! Well done to everyone involved, and thank you to the Hertfordshire team for providing such a valuable learning opportunity!

Upcoming events in October

KS1 & 2 Harvest festival

All children in Reception, KS1 and KS2 will be attending St Mary's Church on **Thursday 9th October** for Harvest Festival. Please could all children come to school in full school uniform. Unfortunately, there will be no space to invite parents as our school fills the church.

Parent consultations

We will be holding parent consultations on the evenings of **22nd and 23rd October**. Full details and booking links we will sent out via Parentmail.





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Year 2 Scooterbility

A big thank you to Hertfordshire County Council's Active and Safer Travel Team for delivering a fantastic Scooterbility course to our Year 2 children. The course was a great success and the children had a wonderful time learning how to control their scooters safely, practise basic pedestrian skills, and understand the importance of sharing space with others. The children thoroughly enjoyed the experience and gained valuable skills to help them stay safe while scooting.

Online Safety Workshops



We were pleased to welcome "The 2 Johns" in school this month to deliver some eSafety sessions. They were interactive and engaging workshops, and we hope that the information shared will be remembered and that it will help to keep our children safe when online.

We implore all parents to supervise their children's online use carefully – delaying giving smartphones until secondary school and being considerate of their use of any devices and smart TVs to help keep them safe from inappropriate content.

SnapChat Parent Information

SnapChat, like most other social media platforms such as TikTok, WhatsApp and Instagram, has a minimum age requirement of 13+. No child at primary school should have access to these forms of social media and there is overwhelming evidence of this often leading to upset and disagreements with their peer group, exposure to inappropriate comments or material and the risk of grooming, scamming and phishing. Please see the attached poster which contains useful information and advice for parents around the risks associated with SnapChat. Please support our school in providing children with a smartphone-free primary school experience.

House Captains

Congratulations to our house captains and vice captains who were voted in by KS2 children.

	<u>NORMANS</u>	<u>ROMANS</u>	<u>SAXONS</u>	<u>VIKINGS</u>
<u>CAPTAINS</u>	Freddie and Annabel	Ted and Kiara	Monty and Alba	Teddy and Lillie
<u>VICE CAPTAINS</u>	Jacob and Orla	Finn and Omari	Lucas and Harriet	Kyle and Poppy





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Running Festival

On Thursday 18th September the whole of Year 5 and some Year 6s went to a running event at Monk's Walk School. When we got there we waited for the other schools to arrive and then they explained the rules to us. We either got to pick if we wanted to do the fun run or competitive race. If you chose the fun run you would not qualify for the next round. If you did the competitive race and came in the top 12 you would qualify for the next round at Stanborough Lake. The people who qualified for the Year 5 boys were: Johnny, George, Arlo, Ethan and Jack, and for the Year 5 girls it was Harriet, Amelia and Olive. The Year 6 boys qualifiers were Monty, Freddie, Finley and Lucas, and for the Year 6 girls it was Zara, Poppy, Nancy, Alba and Evie. We showed respect, passion, determination and cheering for others. Thank you Mrs Southall, Mrs Jameson, Mr Hawley, Miss Veasey and all the staff that brought us.
Johnny and Ethan

Reading Friends

On Friday 26th September we relaunched our 'Reading Friends' initiative where our Year 5s and Year 2s meet up and share their work and read books together. It is a lovely way of creating special bonds with children of different ages and encouraging the older children to promote reading, speaking and listening within school. They will meet regularly throughout the year.

This month's book recommendations:

Black History Month is celebrated each year in October to remember moments in history, achievements and contributions that black people have made in the United Kingdom. With this in mind, here are our book recommendations for this month.

Reception and KS1:



KS2:



We have some of these titles in school and all are available at our local library.





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Nature Day



Nature day was a dress down day where we wore items of clothing connected to nature. We managed to raise an amazing amount of £338. Half of the money we raised will be donated to the World Wildlife Fund. The other half will go towards projects in our nature reserve. On nature day the whole school took part in planting bulbs. Other activities that took place were pieces of artwork including: patterns in nature; painting watercolour leaves; painting stones. We also wrote nature themed poetry. At the end of the day everyone went outside to listen to a story. We had amazing weather and the sun shone brightly. We would like to thank Waste Not Want Not in Knebworth for their help in supplying the bulbs, Mr Daly for helping us plant the bulbs, and Mrs Mather for organising Nature Day.

Iris and Amara (6 Rowans)

September birthdays

Happy Birthday to all who celebrated in September: Ethan, Matilda, Eleanor, Lottie, Aubrianna, Ben, Sophie, Leo, Connie, Harry, Ayana, Teddy, Burt, Rosa, Rosie, Finley, Luke, Sofia, William, Charlie, Amelia, Adam, Bobby, Finnley, Freddie, Lilah, Kang, Millie, Edith, Miriam, Frank, Ash, Felix, Monty, Leo, Mrs Hanley, Mrs Phillips, Mrs Maouchi, Miss Parkin, Mrs Hewitt, Miss Dunstan, and Mrs Brunson.

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 the symptoms of any illness rather than just "feeling unwell" so that we can accurately record and monitor this.

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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School Uniform Reminder

We would like to thank all parents for ensuring that the children have returned to school looking so smart in their uniforms. It's wonderful to see our students taking pride in their appearance.

As a reminder, please ensure that pupils follow our uniform policy, which includes:

- Long hair must be fully tied back, and hairstyles should be smart and moderate in style.
- No make-up or nail varnish.
- The only permitted jewellery is one pair of plain stud earrings (no other piercings). Earrings must be removed or taped for PE.
- Smart black school shoes (no trainers or boots please) when wearing school uniform. Plain black trainer-style school shoes without branding are acceptable.

Following a very high volume of lost property uniform, **please ensure that all items of clothing are labelled with your child's name**, and ensure any pre-loved uniform has the previous owner's name removed. This includes coats, jumpers and hats which are often taken off in the playground during break times and are very difficult to reunite with their owners if not labelled.

Welwyn St Mary's PTFA have paired up with "My Name Tags" to help parents label their clothing while further fundraising for the school. Our school ID is 29167. MyNameTags will give 24% of the order value back to the school PTFA.

For full details on the school uniform policy, please visit our website. Thank you for your continued support.





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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.

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	
Tues 7th October 2025	Year 4 Faith Tour
Wed 8th October 2025	Year 4 Pedestrian Skills
Thu 9th October 2025	Harvest Service [St Mary's Church]
Fri 10th October 2025	Nasal flu immunisations
Tues 14th October 2025	Year 5 Plastazote workshop
Wed 15th and Fri 17th October 2025	Year 4 Pedestrian Skills
Wed 22nd and Thu 23rd October 2025	Parent Consultations
Mon 27th - Fri 31st October 2025	Half term
Wed 5th November 2025	Prospective Reception Parents Open Morning 9.30am
Fri 21st November 2025	Occasional day – school closed
Wed 26th November 2025	Prospective Reception Parents Open Morning 9.30am
Fri 28th November 2025	Dress Down Day for PTFA
Sat 29th November 2025	PTFA Christmas Fair
Tues 16th December 2025	Reception Christmas Play
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] Attendance is compulsory for Year 5 and 6 pupils
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
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
Thu 22nd July 2026	Last day of school – Rec & KS1 1.15pm, KS2 1.20pm
Fri 23rd July 2026	INSET day – school closed

