



# Aston St. Mary's Newsletter

Our value this half term is **Courage**

[www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk](http://www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk)

23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020

## Diary Dates

13<sup>th</sup> November: **Children in Need**

11<sup>th</sup> November: **Remembrance Day Service**

19<sup>th</sup> November: **Happy Bag Collection**

24<sup>th</sup> November: **Nasal Flu Immunisation (catch-up) session.**

30<sup>th</sup> November: **Occasional day (school closed)**

1<sup>st</sup> December: **Christmas Decoration Day (children can wear Christmas jumpers)**

4<sup>th</sup> December: **Non-uniform Day. Bring in a bottle or chocolate.**

14<sup>th</sup> December: **Reward Day and last day to bring in 'Jolly Jars'**

15<sup>th</sup> December: **Christmas Service**

16<sup>th</sup> December: **Christmas Dinner**

17<sup>th</sup> December: **Christmas Parties**

18<sup>th</sup> December: **Christmas Raffle**

It is now almost eight weeks since school fully reopened and we were able to welcome the children back to school. After all the planning and preparations needed, we are delighted to have had such a successful half term.

Attendance has been excellent across all the classes and there has been a real buzz of learning throughout the school. We hope that you enjoy our fortnightly updates from each of the classes in these newsletters; they certainly serve as a reminder as to how many valuable and exciting learning experiences happen throughout the school every single day. The children, and staff, definitely now deserve a well-earned rest over the half term break.

Whilst we would have preferred to conduct parent teacher consultations in their usual face-to-face format, we were delighted to be able to speak to parents and carers over the phone last week. Children always make the best progress when home and school work closely together; we hope that you found these conversations useful. It was one of our Year six pupils who suggested that Seesaw could be used as a platform to share some of the work done in school with parents – a fantastic idea and we will continue to encourage the older children to post pieces they are proud of regularly in the future. Thank you to those of you who have already returned your questionnaires; if you have not yet done so, please return these to either the school office or via your child's teacher.

We would like to wish all our families a safe, happy and healthy half term break and we look forward to welcoming the children back to school on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

## ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/2021

### AUTUMN TERM

**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020 to Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

**HALF TERM Break** - Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020 to Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020

**Occasional Day (SCHOOL CLOSED)** - Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020

### SPRING TERM

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 to Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

**HALF TERM Break** - Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021 to 19<sup>th</sup> February 2021

### SUMMER TERM

**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021 to Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

**HALF TERM Break** - Monday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021 to Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2021

**Bank Holiday (School Closed)** - Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2021

## School Meals

To order school meals, please log onto your School Gateway account via the website or the app.

**DINNER MONEY FEES £2.70 per meal**



**Merits** were awarded to:

Ella, Ethan R, Connor, Harry C, Primrose, Nathaniel, Jacob, Liam, Joshua, Finn, Willow, Hettie, Jack B, Kacie, Tallulah, Stanley, Benji, Mia, Charlie, Nathan F, Ella, Hanna, Favian, Finley T, Blake, Sophie, Harrison, Mika, LJ and Max



**Shining Stars** were awarded to:

Harry C, Saffiya, Austin, Nathan, Demi, Finley T, Harrison and Blake

## A Thought to Share from Reverend Jenny:

From a hymn by Stuart Townsend

In Christ alone, my hope is found  
He is my light, my strength, my song  
This cornerstone, this solid ground.  
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm,  
What heights of love, what depths of peace,  
When fears are stilled, when striving cease  
My comforter, my All in All  
Here in the love of Christ I stand.



# Notices



## Harvest Festival

Thank you to everyone who has donated food to our harvest collection this year. We were really pleased to see such a huge amount of food being delivered to us last week. We are really happy to be supporting the Stevenage Vineyard Foodshed again this year. The Foodshed is a local food bank who have been working really hard, throughout lockdown especially, to continue to provide food for people and families across Stevenage who are in need. With many more people struggling for money and food due to Covid-19, this year the food donations being made to food banks are vital. Thank you!

It was lovely to celebrate harvest in our classes with worship via video led by Janet Bird. We look forward to being able to return to church as soon as we are able.

# Notices

## School Uniform

Parents received a letter earlier this week regarding the importance of maintaining high standards and expectations regarding school uniform. Thank you for your support with this.

A few reminders:

- No jewellery is allowed, except a suitable watch for telling the time and small, plain stud earrings.
- Socks must be navy (with shorts and trousers) or white (with skirts and dresses).
- Smart school trousers, dresses or skirts must be worn (no skorts).
- Smart black shoes should be worn. Children can change into trainers or boots to play on the field.
- All items should be clearly named.

Please see <https://www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk/school-uniform/> for more details.

**It is our expectation that all children will return to school after half term dressed appropriately.**

## PTFA Fundraising

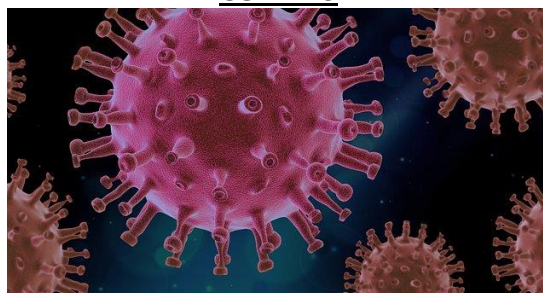
As we are sadly unable to hold our annual Christmas Fayre this year, the PTFA are organising a large raffle to raise money for the school. Please look out for further details and sell as many tickets as possible to friends and family to support our school. The non-uniform days this term are supporting the PTFA with prizes for the raffle.

Funds raised by the PTFA benefit our children in so many ways – we are lucky to have a hardworking team and such supportive families.

Thank you to everyone involved.



## COVID19



Just a reminder that the symptoms of coronavirus are as follows:

- High temperature
- Persistent dry cough
- Loss of taste and/or smell

Should a member of your household display any of these symptoms the whole household must self-isolate until tested and the results are back. If someone is positive, the household MUST self-isolate for fourteen days.

If any tests are taken, someone is taken ill or results arrive when school is closed, please email:

**[closed@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk](mailto:closed@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk)**  
to keep us informed and up to date.

This allows us to take the necessary steps needed to keep our school community as safe as possible.

Thank you.

## **We Value Your Feedback!**

Thank you to everyone who has already returned their questionnaires. If you have not yet done so, please return these to either the school office or via your child's teacher as soon as possible.

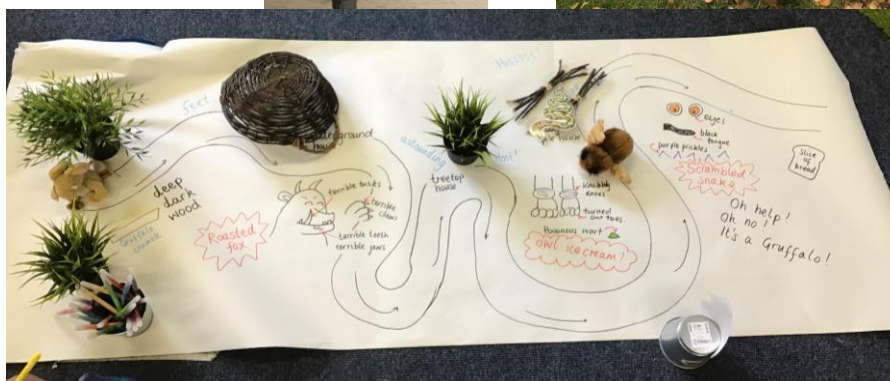
Thank you



# Class News

## Shackadell Class

This week in Shackadell, we have been learning all about one of our favourite stories, “The Gruffalo”. We have been doing lots of retelling using our story map and story sticks. We have also been doing descriptions and drawings of the characters and in forest school we built a home for each character in our outdoor classroom.



In phonics, we've enjoyed learning lots of new sounds. For "n" we loved making paper planes and flying them around making the nnnn sound and aiming them through sound hoops. For "p" we enjoyed a party with Pirate Pete which then led into a whole pirate theme day, making pirate hats, maps and dressing up.

In maths, we had a visit from “Mrs Muddles” who kept getting in a muddle counting things! Luckily, Shackadell are brilliant at counting and could teach her how to do this accurately.



# Class News

## Peartree Class

I cannot believe how quickly this half term has gone. It seems like just a few days ago, not seven weeks, we came back to school after a very strange time not really knowing what to expect. I am so proud of Peartree class children. They have settled in so quickly and are all eager to do their learning.

In science, we have been looking at our five senses and the body part used. We were then given a mystery to solve where we had to use our senses to solve the clues. It was great fun!



We also had a DT day where we looked at lots of different styles and types of houses and homes. We then designed and built a house for Samuel Pepys.





# Class News

## Orchard Class

We have been really enjoying our learning in Orchard class over the last two weeks.

In English, we have been having lots of fun with our learning about Traction Man. We worked in groups last week using thesauruses to generate vocabulary to describe Traction Man, and then we used our ideas to write descriptions of him later in the week. We have also used role play to inspire our writing of turning everyday objects into villains, just like in the story! All the children used great descriptive language in their role plays and Year 3 practiced using their performance voices too, which is something they have been practicing in their Guided Reading sessions.

Year 2 loved their Science lesson with Miss Branagan on Wednesday. We learnt about what makes a balanced diet and then did a taste test of some unusual fruits. We really liked the taste of persimmons, which were a fruit both the children, Mrs Merry and Miss Branagan hadn't tried before either!

In our PE sessions, we have been developing our hockey skills. We have worked really well with our partners this week to practice our push passes and dribbling of the ball. We have also been practicing passing the ball through goals. We have really enjoyed our hockey sessions.

We are looking forward to Friday, where we will be having an Art day in class to learn all about the artist Lowry. We can't wait to spend the day working on our Art projects.



# Class News

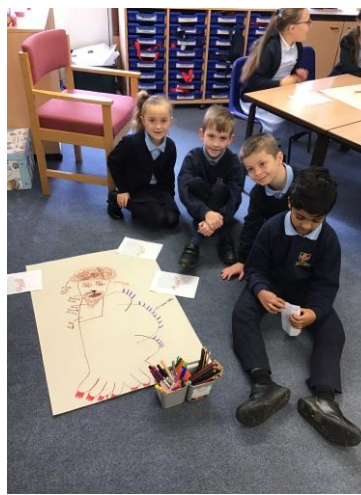
## Haffydown Class

It has been a very exciting first half term back at school for us in Haffydown. The children have settled back into routine so well and have already made lots of progress with their learning.

As the finale to our Stone Age - Iron Age topic, we became history detectives to solve the mystery of the 52 bodies found at Maiden Castle.

In maths, we have been exploring methods for mental addition and subtraction. We now know that the method we choose varies depending on the question.

In English so far, we have loved our poetry unit "The Hippocrump" by James Reeves. We have enjoyed performing the poem using the strong rhythm and rhyming pattern that echoes the galloping of hooves. We used the descriptive language in the poem to draw what we thought the mythical creature would look like. This week, we are creating our own mythical animals and are writing our own poems in the style of James Reeves.





# Class News

## Danes Class

Danes class have continued to work hard towards the end of this half term. In English, we have been developing our inference skills while studying 'The Egyptian Cinderella'. We have enjoyed looking at a familiar fairy-tale in a different context. In Maths, we have been considering appropriate mental strategies for multiplication and division. This week, we have applied all the strategies we have learned over the last few weeks to solve multi-step word problems.

In Science, we worked in groups to investigate how different surfaces affect the distance travelled by a toy car. We put our results into a line-bar graph and noticed that the cars travelled further on smooth surfaces (like a tabletop) than they did on the carpet. We were able to explain our results by talking about friction.

In PSHE, we discussed e-safety. After finding out that the minimum age for most social media apps was 13, we discussed how to stay safe online and what to do if we ever felt unsafe.

On Friday lunchtimes, we have been able to run a 'Coding Club' for pupils in Danes class. The club is organised and run by Nathan and Demi who are experts at Scratch! They started off by teaching us how to make an interactive game, playing as a shark eating fish. We are excited to see what else they have in store for us!

