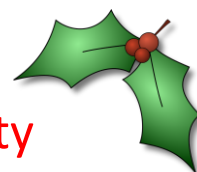




Aston St. Mary's Newsletter



Our value this half term is Generosity

www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

17th December 2021

Every child is a treasure - small in size, growing in God's love.

Diary Dates

Thursday 6th January 2022: Children return to school

Tuesday 11th January: Swimming starts (Years 4, 5 and 6)

Tuesday 11th January: Christingle in school. Pupils to make their own Christingle during the morning.

Saturday 15th January: Applications close for primary school places starting September '22

Wednesday 26th January: Year 6 Height and Weight screening

Monday 7th-Friday 11th February: Children's Mental Health Week

Thursday 3rd March: World Book Day

Monday 21st March and Thursday 24th March: Parents' Evening (face-to-face or online TBC)

Friday 25th March: Mothering Day service (church or online TBC)

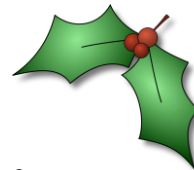
Monday 28th March: Reward Day

Tuesday 29th March: Easter Breakfast

Friday 1st April: Easter Service (TBC) followed by egg rolling and egg decoration.

Friday 1st April: School finishes at 1pm

Wednesday 20th April: Children return to school.



As we reach the end of a very long and often challenging term, it is wonderful to look back and celebrate all the fantastic learning that has taken place across the school since September. Today, staff have met for our regular pupil progress meetings; these are a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the achievements of each and every child. They also allow us to plan provision for the term ahead. We never cease to be amazed by the children's thirst for learning.

Covid has continued to impact upon the day-to-day running of the school throughout the term; arrangements for events have had to be adjusted and staff have had to be endlessly flexible as we have moved people around and often had to cover multiple roles whilst others isolate. Despite this, classes have been able to enjoy a range of offsite visits, enrichment days/weeks and, of course, Christmas celebrations. It would be fair to say that everyone is now in need of a well-deserved break! We can only hope that 2022 brings a reduction of cases and a return to a life that is closer to normality – both within school and in the wider community.

We would like to wish our whole school community a very happy and safe Christmas. We hope that everyone will be able to enjoy some important family time over the break.



ACADEMIC YEAR 2021/2022

AUTUMN TERM

Thursday 2nd September 2021 to Tuesday 21st December 2021

HALF TERM Break - Monday 25th October 2021 to Friday 29th October 2021

Occasional Day (School Closed) - Monday 29th November 2021

SPRING TERM

Thursday 6th January 2022 to Friday 1st April 2022

HALF TERM Break - Monday 14th February 2022 to Friday 18th February 2022

SUMMER TERM

Wednesday 20th April 2022 to Wednesday 20th July 2022

Bank Holiday (School Closed) - Monday 2nd May 2022

HALF TERM Break - Monday 30th May 2022 to Friday 3rd June 2022

Jubilee Day (School Closed) – Monday 20th June 2022)

School Meals

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

DINNER MONEY FEES £2.80 per meal



Shining Stars were awarded to:

Ethan O, Jack C,
Favian, Harrison,
and Oliver W



Merits were awarded to:

Max, Aiden O, Lily-Anne, Sophie, Isla, Jess, Aidan S, Mia, Nyah, Aariv, Praise, Ollie, Lilly, Tilly, Bertie, Ethan, Lucas, Isabel, George, Darcie, Toby, Theo, Niamh, Vaaris, Astrid, Danny, Benji, Hanna, Harrison, Ella, Stanley, LJ, Finlay, Ellie, Favian, Gabriella, Jacob, Finn, Liam, Ella and Primrose

A Thought from Reverend Jenny

*We light the third candle for John the Baptist
and remember God calls US to bring life and JOY
to others.*

*'And Three's for John the Baptist
He calls on us to sing:
Oh, PREPARE the way for Jesus Christ
He is coming Christ the King.'* (trad)

*'John the Baptist, by his preaching
and by water poured,
brought to those who heard his teaching
news of hope restored:
'Keep your vision strong and steady,
and be READY for the Lord.'*
(Mark Earey)

*Jesus is the light of the world.
A light no darkness can ever put out.*



Notices

🎵🎵🎵 Christmas Music Concert – 14th December 🎵🎵🎵

It was wonderful to share in an evening of Christmas music earlier this week. Eighteen musicians from Years Two to Six performed pieces on the piano, clarinet and saxophone. We were blessed with a mild evening which ended with a Christmas sing-song.

Thank you and well done to all our performers!



Many of you will know Charlotte Brazier (Mum of Jack in Orchard class and Reggie). On Sunday 3rd April 2022, she is taking on the challenge of the London Landmarks Half Marathon to raise funds for the National Autistic Society. Her youngest son, Reggie who is four, is non-verbal and sees life through an autistic mind. Autism is a lifelong disability which affects how people communicate and interact with the world.

You can read more about Reggie on Charlotte's Just Giving page.

Any support and donations would be greatly appreciated.

https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/charlotteb-reggie17?utm_source=Sharethis&utm_medium=fundraising&utm_content=charlotteb-reggie17&utm_campaign=pfp-email&utm_term=53d355565d5a4b04b13518662f7a43c3.%3CBR%3E%3C BR%3EDonating

Are you a registered childminder?

Some of our families are seeking after school care.

Please contact the office if you would like us to pass on your details.



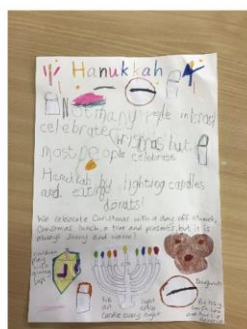
Christmas Around the World Day

On Tuesday 7th December, the whole school enjoyed a fun-filled geography and RE enrichment day to discover how Christmas is celebrated around the world in different countries and cultures. Every class was assigned with a different continent to focus on. At the end of the day, we created a display in the staffroom for each class to visit. We enjoyed seeing all the different activities everyone else had been up to and some of the home learning that had taken place too.



Shackadell – Australasia

In Shackadell, many children received videos, letters and cards from family and friends right across the world! They loved finding out about traditions from a wide range of countries including Israel, Estonia, Italy and Australia. During the day, they made “fairy bread” which is a popular Australian sweet treat often eaten at celebrations. They made Christmas scenes featuring sandmen, Santa wearing shorts, barbecues on the beach and kangaroos pulling the sleigh!



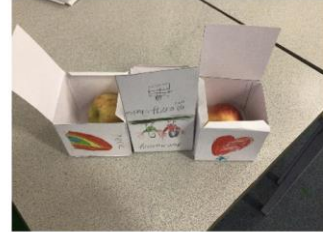
Peartree – Africa

In the morning, Peartree enjoyed making delicious South African cookies with chocolate button toppings! In the afternoon, they learnt about how Christmas is celebrated on the African island of Madagascar. As the poinsettia is the national flower, they practiced using oil pastels to do some still life drawings. Many children were eager to try the lychee fruits which are popular snacks handed out in the streets on Christmas day.



Orchard- Asia

Firstly, Orchard visited Indonesia where the hot climate means pine trees do not grow. Instead, Christmas trees are made of chicken's feathers on the island of Bali and they had a go at making some themselves. Next, they stopped off in China where even though less than 1% of the population are Christian, they still enjoy celebrating Christmas and gift each other apples as a sign of love and joy. They decorated their own gift boxes and put an apple inside for those who they love. Lastly, they visited the Philippines which is the only predominantly Christian country in Asia. Here the "parol" star is a popular Christmas decoration made from bamboo sticks. They made their own from paper plates and tissue. Don't they look beautiful?



Haffydown- Europe

Haffydown jetted off to Europe where they tasted lots of sweet Christmas treats from countries such as Germany. Firm favourites included gingerbread and stollen. They learnt how to say lots of different Christmas related words in German and made these beautiful nutcracker soldier puppets from the famous Christmas ballet.



Puddlebridge- North American

Puddlebridge enhanced their locational understanding with some map work to set the context for the day. Next, they visited a Jamaican Christmas market where they had to apply their maths skills to solve mathematical problems and learn about Jamaican Christmas traditions along the way. In the afternoon, they learnt about the Euphorbia Punicea flower and drew some detailed pictures of this traditional flower with pastels.



Danes- South America

Danes were fascinated to find out about the famous *Rodrigo de Freitas Christmas tree which floats on a lagoon* in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The metal tree is an enormous 85m tall and is lit up with some impressive lights. They made their own miniature scale versions of the tree and had a go themselves to try and make them float. In the afternoon, they learnt about Christmas traditions in Bolivia. They made cardboard shoes as this is how children in Bolivia receive their small gifts on Christmas day.



Dear God,

*Though we might celebrate in different ways,
Christmas brings for many, meaningful days,
Jesus is born, what a wonderful reason,
For coming together to celebrate the season.
Thank you for all that we have this Christmas time,
For giving us the gift of your son – Jesus,
Who was born in a stable but worshipped by angels.*

*Be with all who are lonely and all those who feel distance from celebrations this
Christmas.*

Be for us, a living hope that lightens their hearts.

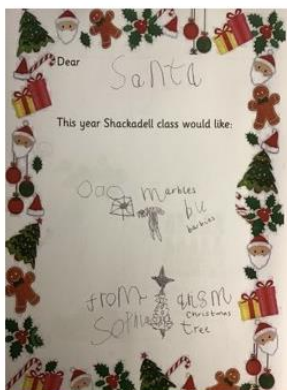
Amen

Class News

Shackadell Class



Christmas has arrived in Shackadell class and we have really been enjoying the festive season. We have been practising our Nativity play, which will be available for all to watch very soon. Performing on a stage and using our performance voices has been really good and has developed our expressive arts skills. We have loved having Nativity costumes in our classroom and you can always find a 'Mary' or 'Joseph' if you pop into Shackadell. We have also been enjoying using our phonics knowledge to write letters to Santa and our cutting skills to make Christmas gift lists by cutting out our favourite things from catalogues. Our book advent calendar has been very exciting too. We love opening a new book each day, seeing who it belongs to and enjoying the story.



We can't wait to hear about everyone's Christmas holiday when we return in January. Merry Christmas from Shackadell!

Class News

Peartree Class

Wow! this half term has flown by so quickly and what a busy time we have had.

We had our class trip to Rye Meads Nature Reserve where we had such a fantastic time. We learned all about different birds and their similarities and difficulties. We had to work out what foods they ate by looking at their beak size and shape. We went into a bird hide and spotted different birds. We even had to pretend to be different birds and find our partner by just using the bird calls.

We then learned a song (to the tune of Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes) which told us about the bodies of some of the creatures in the freshwater pond.

Head, thorax abdomen, abdomen.

Head, thorax abdomen, abdomen.

Six wiggly legs, two antennae.

Head, thorax abdomen, abdomen.

After we went pond dipping and had to scoop out creatures and put them into a 'zoo pot' where we could look at them more closely. We used a spotter's guide to identify them.

We then had to make some of them using ourselves.

(A back swimmer and a ramshorn snail)



Have a lovely Christmas and a happy new year. I look forward to seeing you all in January.

Class News

Orchard Class

What a fantastic first full term it has been in Orchard Class! The children truly are all “treasures” who have learnt so much in such a small amount of time. I am very proud of them all! A special shout out must go to Azariah who has displayed our Christian Value of generosity. After noticing the great influx of Christmas around the world home learning projects piling in and hearing me mention that I needed to buy more prizes, Azariah very kindly donated a chocolate selection pack and insisted that it should be used to help supply the prizes to her peers. Thank you Azariah for your kindness, generosity and for thinking of others.

A few weeks ago, we enjoyed our trip to Rye Mead's Nature Reserve with Peartree. We had great fun pond dipping and hunting for mini beasts. We learnt about backswimmers, ram horned pond snails and many other fascinating creatures. A highlight was using the “figure of eight” technique with the nets to catch our creatures. Kneeling at the edge of the pond meant we could do this safely. After lunch, we learnt all about the different bird noises and how they communicate. After a long walk over to the bird hide, we enjoyed taking in the view.

During English, we have been using the book “A World Full of Plastic” to inspire our writing. After discussing ways in which we could help, the children decided to write to the government to request that our school fruit and veg snack should be packaged in a reusable or more biodegradable alternative. They wrote some powerfully persuasive letters which we will be posting. Hopefully we will get a reply soon.

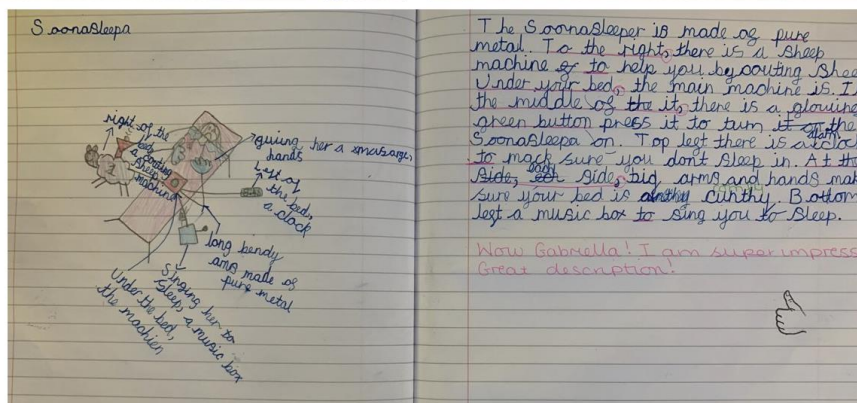
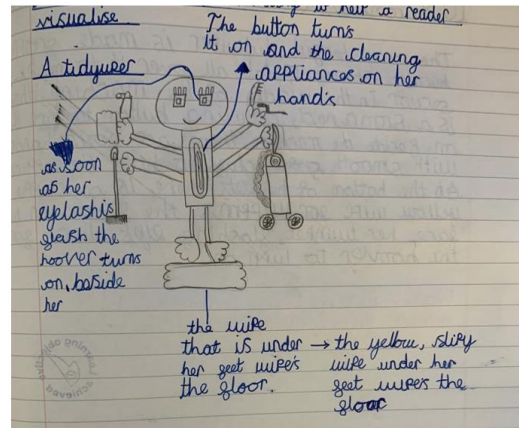
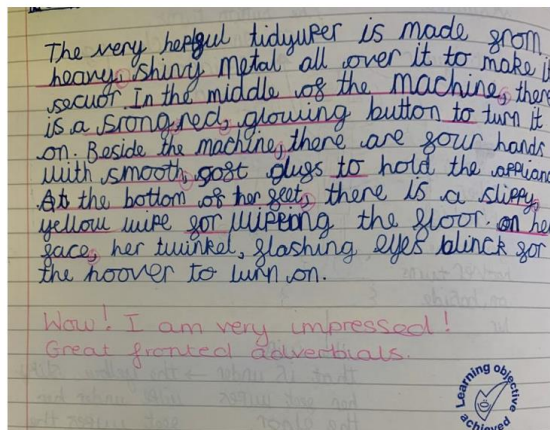
I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy, healthy new year.



Class News

Haffydown Class

Over the last two weeks, we have been reading *The First Charlie Small Journal*. Using this book, we have come up with our very own helpful inventions. Year 3 have great imaginations! We have had hoverboards, machines to help you sleep, backpacks with extra arms, cleaning robots and many more exciting inventions. We have been using sophisticated vocabulary to describe our invention and played a funny conjunction bingo game to work on our subordinating conjunctions and subordinating clauses. As our topic is explanation texts, we are planning to explain how our inventions work.



We have been learning about Alfred the Great. We used images as hints to build a picture as to why Alfred was seen as 'Great'. We also discovered some reasons he was not so great. We are going to rewrite the BBC Bitesize Website introduction to Alfred the Great to be more critical and give a balanced view.

Our theme has been 'Think Positive' this term in PSHE. We have been working on how to deal with negative thoughts and we have shared many ways we cope with different negative feelings. Last lesson, we discussed how we could take control of our emotions. It was nice to see how many children colour, draw, speak to a trusted person and take a walk when they feel stressed or any other negative feeling. We played a fun game of Feelings Charades. This allowed us to work on these skills of understanding how someone else might be feeling and why they may be feeling that way. We certainly have some future Oscar winners in Year 3.



Class News

Puddlebridge Class

We have had a fun filled few weeks in Puddlebridge Class! We kicked off the Christmas preparations by designing and making decorations for our classroom; this included making stockings for our fireplace and baubles for our tree.



Last week, we finally got to design and make our model WWII planes which we have been looking forward to all term. We got to develop our woodworking skills and apply our knowledge of electrical circuits. It was wonderful to see everyone's plane successfully fly around the room.



We have worked so hard this term and all deserve a wonderful Christmas break. I am looking forward to another exciting term with you all in the new year.

Class News

Danes Class



Last week, we enjoyed a whole day of design and technology. Our task was to design and make a model Anderson Shelter which needed to look authentic and be durable. We worked in groups to complete the challenge and scored points throughout the day for: teamwork; economic use of materials; time management and keeping a tidy and organised workspace. Everyone did a brilliant job – the shelters looked fantastic, there was almost no wastage of resources and the classroom stayed tidy! The key to success was everyone being involved, sharing ideas and using time effectively. We made the structure for our shelters using a Jinx framework – this provided strength for our designs.

Once the shelters were complete, they were tested to ensure that they were durable (after all, they needed to provide protection during bombing!). A tennis ball was dropped onto each shelter from increasing heights (up to around two metres); all the shelters survived the testing process. Despite many of us being quite nervous about possible damage, we were very proud that our shelters survived!



Wishing everyone a very Happy Christmas and a well-deserved rest. We look forward to welcoming the children back to school in January for another exciting term.

Due to Government Funding in the Adult Education Budget. The Aim Group have several **Free** online Level 2 CACHE/TQUK/NCFE Accredited Courses available to help better understand some key issues around young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Below are some of the most popular courses we offer:

- **Understanding Autism** (learn how individuals process sensory information, understand characteristics, understand conditions, learn how speech, language and communication differ in people with Autism)
- **Understanding Children and Young Peoples Mental Health** (Understand factors which may affect Young Peoples mental health, the impact that they have and how to support them with these issues)
- **Understanding Behaviour That Challenges** (supporting positive behaviour, effective communication & how to manage challenging behaviour)
- **Understanding Specific Learning Difficulties** (understand characteristics of ADHD, ADD, Dyslexia & Dyscalculia, importance of early diagnosis, assessment methods available to diagnose learning difficulties)

The qualifications are completed within an 8-week period, duration is completely dependent on each learner's ability as to how fast they complete and how many hours it takes. There are no exams, essays or end-point assessments however I would however advise that these are NOT 'short courses' that will take just a few hours to complete. As these are equivalent to a GCSE Grade C, you are required to write comprehensive answers for some questions. You may do as many as you like, just one at a time.

The only criteria the learner must meet to be eligible, is the following..

- Aged 19 or over on or before 31st August 2021
- Have lived in the UK/EU for 3+ years
- Not already on a Government funded course (Apprenticeship for example)

The course is completely free, but the learning provider reserves the right to charge a drop out fee to the learner in the event that someone enrolls, but then makes **no attempt to complete the course without a valid reason**. That said, the college will grant extensions if the learner needs more time to complete the course. This is of zero cost.

If you are interested in undertaking one of these Free Online courses, then please complete the following link this week. This will then allow you to complete a quick Registration on our website. I will then contact you to explain how Enrolment works and answer any questions you may have.

<https://theaimgroup.co.uk/booking-form/0014J00000dJIEw>



[The AIM Group -
Apprenticeships, Free
Qualifications and Pre-
Employability Courses](#)

theaimgroup.co.uk

Donna Hansen
DSPL Support Worker,
C/o Peartree Spring Primary School,
Hydean Way, Stevenage, SG2 9GG.

01438 233900

SEND families



SEND DROP IN

3rd Monday in every month – 10.00 – 11.30am

Bedwell Family Centre, Unit 2-3 Bedwell Park, Stevenage, SG1 1NB

FREE bookable session

SESSION DETAILS

Are you a Parent of a Child with Special Needs?

If so you will be very welcome to attend our SEND Drop In. You will have an opportunity to discuss any concerns you may have, find out information about local support groups, meet other families. Your child does not need to have had a formal diagnosis

We can provide a friendly ear and a safe space to talk.

Children are welcome to attend with you or you can attend on your own. Children are welcome, no diagnosis needed.



HOW TO BOOK

Log onto our Eventbrite page
to book your place
<https://barnardos-stevenage.eventbrite.co.uk>

MORE INFORMATION

hertsfamilycentres.org Call us
on: 0300 123 7572



December/January 2021/2022 half term @ Brighter days Kids Club

As well as offering our usual paid sessions at Roebuck Academy, we are also offering 4 hour funded sessions at 2 locations throughout the holidays.

Roebuck funded sessions are 9-1 OR 2-6 and Ashtree funded sessions are 9-1

Children aged 5 -12 in receipt of free school meals can access the funded spaces, your school will send you a code to use when registering.



		20 th Dec	21 st Dec	22 nd Dec	23 rd Dec	27 th Dec
Ashtree 9-1 funded	AM	Snowman craft	Dance workshop	Reindeer food	Hot chocolate cones	Winter scavenger hunt
Roebuck 7:45-18:15 (4 hour funded and paid sessions available)	AM	Pinecone trees	3D Christmas tree	Reindeer food	Christmas biscuits	Peppermint creams
	PM	Winter hats	Winter scavenger hunt	Dance workshop	Snowstorm bottles	Bath bombs
Lunch		Chicken curry	Macaroni cheese	Fajitas	Chilli con carne	Tomato pasta
Dinner Roebuck only		Pasta bake	Sausage and mash	Jacket potato	Chicken curry	Beans on toast
		28 th Dec	29 th Dec	30 th Dec	3 rd Jan	4 th Jan
Ashtree 9-1 funded	AM	Football skills	Mini gingerbread houses	Bouncy castle	Melted snowman cakes	Bath bombs
Roebuck 7:45-18:15 (4 hour funded and paid sessions available)	AM	Hot chocolate cones	Snowman craft	Bouncy castle	Melted snowman cakes	S'mores
	PM	Pin the nose on the snowman	Forest school	Mini gingerbread houses	Walk to the woods	Football skills
Lunch		Tomato pasta	Jacket potato	Wraps	Noodles	Spaghetti bolognese
Dinner Roebuck only		Pizza	Hot dogs	Pasta bake	Marconi cheese	Toasties



If you have any questions, please contact us at:

enquiries@brighterdayskidsclub.co.uk

07727092382





Do you feel isolated?

In need of support?

*Do you want to meet other families who have
children with additional needs?*

Powers is an inclusive group for children of all ages and their families with ADHD and ASD and other additional needs.

We are supported by Little Conkers Nursery who will provide SEN Practitioners each session to engage with the children and families and a SENCO who can offer guidance and help with paperwork.

We will provide tea, coffee, juice and activities for the children.

St Nicholas Community Centre in Stevenage.

On the second Saturday of every month from 10.15-11.45.



Sponsored by Friends of Great Ashby, The Adept Living Foundation
CIC, invis-Ability CIC and Little Conkers Nursery.

For any further enquiries contact **Rae**: 07535624228

