

Aston St. Mary's Newsletter

Our value this half term is Compassion

www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

21st January 2022

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

Diary Dates

Monday 24th January: Happy Bags collection

Wednesday 26th January: Year 6 Height and Weight screening

Wednesday 2nd February: Danes and Puddlebridge trip to Natural History Museum

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 (faceto-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

Wednesday 20th April: Children return to school.

It was wonderful to welcome the children back to school after the Christmas break. As you are already aware, we have since then found ourselves with Covid outbreaks in several classes. Thank you for being vigilant in carrying out regular LFT tests and keeping your children off school should they feel unwell. Teachers have been working hard to ensure that those who are well enough to continue their learning at home are accessing the same learning as they would be in school. We can be contacted seven days a week via email (closed@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk) and teachers are monitoring Seesaw and Tapestry regularly in order to answer any queries, provide feedback and keep in touch with those not able to be in school.

Our value this half term is 'Compassion'; we have been very impressed already by the children's understanding of what this means and how we should show compassion in our daily lives. Please see some suggested activities that you might like to complete at home – these can be found after the class pages as well as on the Christian Values Education page of our website:

https://www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk/christian-values-education/

We are delighted that swimming lessons have now been able to resume for children in Years Four, Five and Six; their attitude and behaviour has been excellent during their first two lessons. We will look forward to seeing the progress that they make over the year.

We wish everyone a relaxing and enjoyable weekend.

ACADEMIC YEAR 2021/2022

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:

Austin



Merits were awarded to:

Archie, Blake, Benji, Anouska, Jack C, Orlagh, Bertie, Pixie, Francesca and Vaaris

A Thought from Reverend Jenny

Archbishop Justin Welby's words for Prince George at his christening are for everyone who is baptised:

'For you Jesus Christ came into the world.

For you he lived and showed God's love.

For you he suffered the darkness of Calvary...

For you he triumphed over death and rose to new life.

For you he reigns at God's right hand.

All this he did for you,

though you do not know it yet.'

'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life'. (John 3:16)

'Stand up for fairness, truth and kindness.

God's love is for you and for everyone.

Share with other people the good news of his love.'

(Baptism service 2015)

Notices

Welcome to Aston St. Mary's

We would like to welcome Miss Jayamohan and Miss Warrington to our staff team.



Hello, my name is Gatha Jayamohan and I am joining Aston as a teaching assistant this year. I graduated from the University of Essex in the summer with a degree in Languages and Linguistics, where I became interested in Speech and Language Therapy. During my year abroad in Spain, I worked as an English Language Assistant which was when I realised how much I love teaching and working with children. I am so excited to get to know everyone over the year!

Hello, my name is Miss Warrington. I have been lucky enough to join Peartree class at Aston St Mary's School for eight weeks whilst I complete my teacher training. I am really enjoying my time so far; the children have been very welcoming! I studied English Literature and Film at the University of Hertfordshire and I particularly enjoy reading in school – it is lovely to see the children's faces light up as they become immersed in a new world! I know my time at Aston St Mary's will go very quickly, so I am keen to enjoy every moment and want to say thank you for having me.



Happy Bags Collection



Just a reminder that the next Happy Bag collection on Monday 24th January.

Please leave your bags of clothing under the bike shelter by 9am the morning of Monday 24th January. Please make sure the clothing is secure in plastic bags as Happy bags will not take any wet clothes.

Notices

Covid Outbreak

Unfortunately, we continue to be in an 'outbreak situation' in school.

Please support the school to stay open by not sending in your child if they have any symptoms or test positive on a lateral flow test. If your child tests positive, you are NOT allowed to take them out of the house, even to bring their siblings to school. We will provide remote learning for any siblings of a positive case who are unable to get to school due to the parent or sibling testing positive.

If anyone in your household tests positive, you need to all carry out lateral flow tests daily. Adults who receive negative tests are allowed out if they are fully vaccinated.

If your child is unwell with Covid, there is no expectation that they will complete home learning. Their teacher will put a message on Seesaw or Tapestry. Once they have responded to say they are well enough to do their home learning, work will be uploaded for them to complete. Please note that teachers are busy teaching in school all day so it may be the following day before work is set. Children should continue to read and practise their spellings each day, practise on Times Tables Rock Stars (Years 2-6) and can also access learning on websites such as BBC Bitesize. There is no expectation for children to be working at home if they are unwell.

The latest guidance indicates you do not need to go for a PCR test, unless you have symptoms, but are getting a negative lateral flow test.

With this new variant, we have been advised by PHE that if you test positive after the 10-day period, regular lateral flow tests should begin again. This includes people identified as close contacts and staff working with children etc. The ninety days of not testing no longer applies.

Please see details received from the DfE regarding the changes to the isolation period from Monday 17th January 2022.

Changes to the self-isolation period for those who test positive for COVID-19

From Monday 17 January, people who are self-isolating with COVID-19 will have the option to reduce their isolation period after 5 full days if they test negative with a lateral flow device (LFD) test on both day 5 and day 6 and they do not have a temperature. For example, if they test negative on the morning of day 5 and the morning of day 6, they can return to their education or childcare setting immediately on day 6. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 5 of the self-isolation period, and the second must be taken the following day. All test results should be reported to NHS Test and Trace.

If the result of either of their tests is positive, they should continue to self-isolate until they get negative results from two LFD tests on consecutive days or until they have completed 10 full days of self-isolation, whichever is earliest. Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests or anyone who continues to have a temperature will need to complete the full 10-day period of self-isolation.

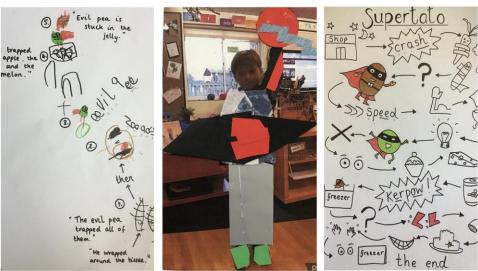
Thank you for your continued support.

Shackadell Class

In Shackadell class, we have had a 'super' start to the year as we begin learning all about superheroes. We have already enjoyed 'There's a Superhero in your Book' by Tom Fletcher and 'Supertato' by Sue Hendra. We created our own superhero characters which we named using alliteration. We had Jelly Jayne, Lightning Leo and Three-Dimensional Theo just to name a few! We spent time creating our own masks and some costumes for some mini versions of ourselves. We also thought about what kind of superpowers we would like to have which included invisibility, flying and super kindness.



When learning about 'Supertato' we created a story map. We are able to use this to retell the story. Some of us even had a go at making our own story maps. We hope you enjoy our super pictures!



Peartree Class

Hello everyone,

I can't believe we are already at the end of week three.

We have been really enjoying our learning and here are some of the things that we have been up to.

In our science topic of 'Everyday Materials' we have started sorting them based on what they are made from or the properties they have.





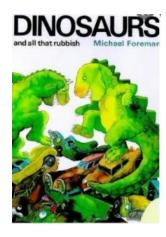




In maths, we have been using everyday objects to 'find the difference' between two amounts and using Cuisenaire Rods to help us with halving and doubling.

We had a very calm, relaxing yoga session one day where we all nearly fell asleep!





In English, we have been looking at the book 'Dinosaurs and all that Rubbish' by Michael Foreman.

We have made predictions, role-played characters, used noun phrases to describe a setting, used imperative verbs for instructions, looked at similes, apostrophes for possession, sequencing and present and past tense. PHEW!

Hopefully, we will continue to enjoy outdoor learning - particularly as the weather begins to change.

Mrs Baker, Mrs Evans, Mrs Crowley and Miss Warrington.

Orchard Class

Happy New Year and welcome back for the start of spring term.

The children have got stuck in straight away to all our new units and are particularly enjoying our new Geography topic "An Island Home". Last week, we discovered how islands are made and were particularly fascinated to learn how many islands were once part of a bigger mass of land called a continent. We demonstrated our understanding of this process using playdough to show the islands breaking off.

In English, we have been reading stories by the same author, Mariri Hedderwick, who wrote the Katie Morag series set on the fictional Isle of Struay. We have loved exploring the map to find out more about the island and wrote our own visitors guides which we also presented to the class. This week we are connecting with characters feelings in the story of Tiresome Ted.





Our learning sequence for maths has focused around reading different scales and units of measure. We practiced our estimating skills when thinking about capacity by estimating how many cups of water different containers could hold. The fun part was testing out our estimates to see how accurate we had been. Later in the sequence, we thought about more standard units of measure. We had to apply our understanding of counting in 2s, 5s and 10s to estimate volume, mass and temperature.



Please check your child's book bags for the class termly newsletter I sent out last week. This also contains this half term's home learning grids for our science and geography units.

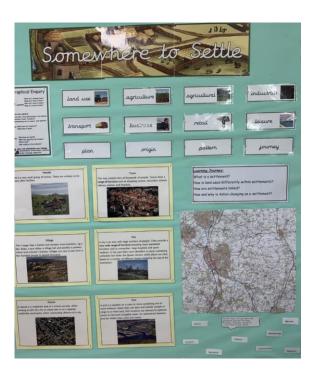
Haffydown Class

Haffydown have made a wonderful start to the New Year!

In English, we have been learning about persuasive writing. We read 'The day I swapped my dad for two goldfish' and used persuasive techniques to come up with what we would swap for something we really wanted. It was funny to see how many children suggested swapping their siblings! Year Three were also given the chance to persuade me to give them five minutes of extra playtime if they could use the techniques we had learnt... they achieved it!

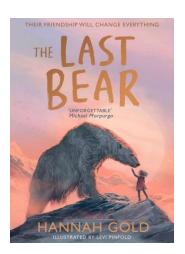
We started this year looking at worded problems. I was very impressed with all the addition and mental strategies Year Three remembered from last term! Haffydown had the chance to make up their own questions using our key vocabulary. We had some super worded problems!

In Geography, our topic is 'Where to Settle'. We discovered what would be essential, desired and not needed in a settlement. We then learnt about different types of settlements: hamlets, villages, towns and cities. Year Three showed me their amazing map skills by finding settlements near us and deciding which type they were based on the features found.





Puddlebridge Class



In English, we have thoroughly enjoyed reading The Last Bear by Hannah Gold. It tells the story of a girl named April who develops an unlikely bond with a polar bear. We have used the text to explore a range of grammar including modal verbs and passive voice. We have been able to make links between Hannah Gold's story and our work in PSHE where we have considered what it means to be a responsible global citizen and small changes we can make to reduce the effects of global warming. We are looking forward to writing news reports based on April's adventures next week.

We have started a new Geography topic this term called 'Extreme Earth' which focuses on natural disasters. We have kicked off the topic by finding out about the earth beneath our feet and how it is structured. We used plasticine to create our own models to show the inner core, outer core, mantle, and crust.











In Science, Year 4 have been learning about the human digestive system. This week, we used bananas, biscuits, water, and orange juice to model what happens to our food. First, we broke down the food using orange juice to represent stomach acid. Then, we poured the mixture into a pair of tights which acted like the small intestine and extracted the nutrients from the food. We absorbed any extra water using a tea towel (just like the large intestine). Finally, we cut a hole in the tights and observed the waste being excreted.

Danes Class

Danes have made a fantastic start to the new term. We have a busy term ahead with lots of exciting learning opportunities.



In English, we have become experts in the life of palaeontologist Mary Anning by reading 'Stone Girl Bone Girl' and 'The Fossil Girl'. We have focussed on many aspects of grammar including the construction multi-clause sentences, the use of semi-colons and passive verbs. Earlier this week, we applied our skills in our writing when we wrote Mary Anning's biography.



In geography this term, we are learning about geological forces from deep within the Earth. We will find out about volcanoes, earthquakes and other natural disasters. As part of our learning, we have explored the structure of the Earth and how the movement of plates can cause natural disasters. We used plasticine to make models of the Earth showing the inner core, outer core, mantle and crust.

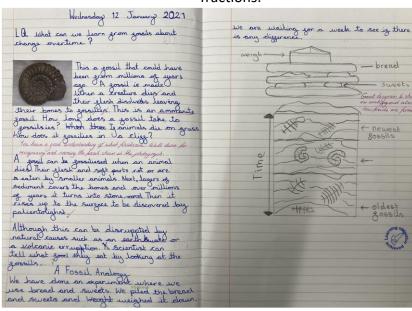


Years Five and Six are learning about Evolution and Inheritance in science this term. We began our learning by exploring fossils. We have found out about: how they are formed; the evidence that they provide and the reasons why there may be gaps in the fossil record. We also set up a fossil analogy using layers of bread to represent the layers of sediment and jelly dinosaur sweets to represent the animals. We left them for a week before separating the layers – a mould of the sweet had been created in the bread.



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We began the term by focussing on division in maths; we developed our skills with both short and long division as well as looking at how remainders can be expressed as decimals or fractions.





This term we will be focussing in school on the value COMPASSION.

We hope your family will find these ideas helpful as you explore the value and have fun together.

TALK TOGETHER about Compassion

Compassion is about 'standing in someone else's shoes' when they are having a hard time. In other words, trying to understand how they might be feeling and doing our best to try to help.

Talk together about:

- how we can show compassion and kindness to one another at home
- recognising when friends at school need us to listen and act with compassion
- stories in the news demonstrating how strangers show compassion in times of natural disasters
- how nations show compassion to other nations at times of disaster or need by sending money or volunteers to help



THINK TOGETHER Words of Wisdom

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."

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READ TOGETHER... The good Samaritan

When someone asked Jesus the question, "Who is my neighbour?" he told a story that surprised everyone who heard it. The hero was from Samaria but those listening were mainly Jews. (Jews and Samaritans usually kept well away from each other.)

"A man set out on foot from Jerusalem to a town called Jericho", said Jesus. The crowd murmured and exchanged knowing glances. They knew this was a lonely, dangerous road, a favourite place for robbers to attack travellers. "As the man reached a rocky and desolate place, a gang of robbers leapt out and beat him. They took all that he had and left him bleeding and bruised. To the man's relief, he saw in the distance a priest from the temple. A priest is bound to help me, thought the man. He waited until the priest came a little closer and then called out, 'Thank goodness it is you. Please Sir, take me to safety.' But to his amazement the priest hurried past pretending not to see or hear him.

As the poor, injured man grew weaker and weaker in the burning midday sun, he once again heard footsteps. Looking up he saw a Levite, another of his own people. 'Please Sir, please help me', he called out. Surely this Levite would take pity on him, but to his horror the Levite just kept on walking.

The man had almost given up hope when he felt a gentle touch on his shoulder. A stranger, a Samaritan, had bent down beside him and was bandaging his wounds and giving him sips of water to drink. The Samaritan helped the man on to his own donkey and slowly, carefully took him all the way to an inn. There he paid the innkeeper to look after the man until he was well. The man never forgot the **compassion** and kindness of the Samaritan stranger."

"Who do you think was a good neighbour?" asked Jesus.

Bible story based on Luke 10:29:37

?

QUIZ The Stranger on the road was kind....

Change one letter in the word to answer the next clue.

The traveller was attacked as he walked along the			
Watching from the rocks was a small creature like a frog	ROAD		
The Samaritan the innkeeper to look after the man			
The Samaritan acted with courage. He was			
We sometimes talk about the of friendship (rhymes with pond)			
Wrap tightly with a bandage (rhymes with find)			
The Samaritan in the story was			



Random Acts of Kindness

Kindness is often appreciated most when it is offered at unexpected times.

Choose one week this term for your family to have "a random acts of kindness" week, and do something kind for someone each day. Try to do it without telling people it was you!



www.randomactsofkindness.org



As well as being kind and showing compassion in what we say, it is often what we do that other people remember.

Draw and cut out the shape of each person's hand in your family. Decorate it with all the random acts of kindness that they have shown. Mount the hands of each member of your family on some paper so they look fantastic and ready to be displayed.



FASCINATING FACTS

What a difference **compassion** and kindness can make! Numerous charities help people who have been hurt, are ill or suffer through lack of resources. Below are just 3:

World Vision encourages individuals and groups to 'Sponsor a Child'
in an area of the world where food, health and education cannot be
taken for granted. For just 75 pence a day the life of a child, in for
example Uganda or Bolivia, can be transformed by providing help to
grow food, source clean water, improve health services and pay for
education.

www.worldvision.org.uk

 Help for Heroes was set up after many British soldiers returned from war zones in Iraq and Afghanistan. By giving to this charity the public show their compassion for the soldiers and their families and recognise the service they gave on behalf of us all.

www.helpforheroes.org.uk

Help the Hospices. Sometimes when people become very ill they
go to a hospice which will provide them with care and compassion.
 Often hospices are maintained by donations from people who admire
and value their service or who have had a relative who has been
helped by the hospice.

www.hospiceuk.org







A famous bear with a spotty scarf



Pudsey Bear became a national mascot in 1985. He was designed by Joanna Ball and she named him after the small town in Yorkshire where she lived and went to school for many years, Pudsey.

When we see Pudsey Bear we immediately think of Children in Need. This charity has grown enormously since it began and raises millions of pounds every year. Thanks to people all over the country, children in the UK and across the world have come to know real kindness and **compassion**, made possible by generous donations to the charity, www.bbc.co.uk/childreninneed

Supporting Your Child With Sleep Difficulties



Who is this workshop for?

Parents/carers of children and young people struggling to fall asleep or stay asleep.

Although some of the topics in the workshop are targeted at primary school aged children, the content can also be applied to older children in secondary school

What will be covered?

- Why sleep is important
- Reasons children may have sleep difficulties
- Signs of poor sleep & sleep hygiene tips
- Other Factors that may impact on sleep
- Creating a step-by-step plan to address worries
 - Using praise & rewards





What are the outcomes?

 You will gain knowledge, advice & practical strategies to manage your child's sleep difficulties

- You will also be given a list of useful resources and websites

Dates

All workshops are via MS Teams



Tuesday 11th January 2022 10am – 11.15am

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/supporting-your-child-withsleep-difficulties-tickets-227648602097



Tuesday 8th February 2022

10am - 11.15am

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/supporting-your-child-withsleep-difficulties-tickets-227651310197



Tuesday 8th March 2022

6pm - 7.15pm

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/supporting-your-child-withsleep-difficulties-tickets-227653556917



Tuesday 12th April 2022 10am – 11.15am

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/supporting-your-child-withsleep-difficulties-tickets-227659043327

Supporting Your Child's Self-esteem Workshop



Who is this workshop for?

Parents of children aged 5-11 wanting to learn information and strategies on how to support their child's selfesteem

What will be covered?

- What is self-esteem?
- What causes self-esteem?
 - How does it affect us?
 - Tips to build self-esteem -Additional resources





What will I learn?

- What self-esteem is and how it affects us
- Practical strategies to increase self-esteem
 - How to challenge thoughts
- Step-by-step plans to increase confidence

Dates

All workshops are via MS Teams



Tuesday 25th January 2022

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/supporting-your-childs-self-esteemtickets-228467471357



Thursday 17th February 2022

10am – 11.30an

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/supporting-your-childs-self-esteemtickets-228470690987



Wednesday 2nd March 2022

6pm - 8pm

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/supporting-your-childs-self-esteemtickets-228472546537





Supporting Your Child's Self-esteem Workshop



Who is this workshop for?

Parents of children aged 5-11 wanting to learn information and strategies on how to support their child's selfesteem

What will be covered?

- What is self-esteem?
- What causes self-esteem?
 - How does it affect us?
- Tips to build self-esteem
 - -Additional resources





What will I learn?

- What self-esteem is and how it affects us
- Practical strategies to increase self-esteem
 - How to challenge thoughts
- Step-by-step plans to increase confidence

Dates

All workshops are via MS Teams



Wednesday 27th April 2022 10am – 11.30am

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/supporting-your-childs-self-esteem-tickets-228474452237





Supporting Your Child's Emotional Wellbeing



Who is this workshop for?

Parents of children aged 5-11 wanting to learn information and strategies on how to support their child's emotional wellbeing and support their child to emotionally regulate.

What will be covered?

- What are emotions and why do we have them?
- The Fight, Flight and Freeze Response
- Recognising, Labelling and Normalising Emotions
- General Emotional Regulation Strategies
 Specific Emotional Regulation Tips for Anger, Anxiety and Feelings of Sadness
 Additional resources





What will I learn?

- How our brains are linked with emotion and how thoughts, feelings and behaviours interact
 - Strategies to support your child to recognise, label and regulate emotions and maintain general wellbeing
- How to support your child to effectively problem solve and manage their thoughts

Dates

All workshops are via MS Teams



Thursday 13th January 2022

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/supporting-your-childs-emotionalwellbeing-and-ability-to-self-regulate-tickets-228816756077



Tuesday 22nd February 2022

6pm - 8pm

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/supporting-your-childs-emotionalwellbeing-and-ability-to-self-regulate-tickets-228821610597



Tuesday 15th March 2022

10am - 12pm

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/supporting-your-childs-emotionalwellbeing-and-ability-to-self-regulate-tickets-228822764047



Tuesday 5th April 2022

10am - 12pm

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/supporting-your-childs-emotionalwellbeing-and-ability-to-self-regulate-tickets-228823335757







We can help you to get set up!

Is there a shortage of baby & toddler groups near to where you live? Do you know a local venue that would welcome a baby & toddler group within your community?

The Family Centre Service are looking to work in partnership with groups and individuals to help them to set up their own baby & toddler groups. We can also offer support to re-establish existing groups following the impact of Covid-19.

Funding is available from Hertfordshire County Council to help get groups up and running. To find out more, or to express an interest, you can email us at community.fcs@oneymca.org or call us on:

0300 123 7572









CREATING HEALTHIER, HAPPIER FAMILIES IN STEVENAGE



Our free after-school groups are coming to Stevenage this February!

Our team of family wellbeing experts and nutritionists make learning about healthy eating fun, and have plenty of tricks to help you and your kids turn what you learn into healthy habits for life!

Kids will cook healthy meals, take part in fun games and sports, and make loads of friends!



Parents are supported by our team to handle conflict resolution, and benefit from the support network of likeminded families.

NHEWS

TUESDAYS 17:00 - 19:00

Starting February 22nd for 12 weeks

BARNWELL MIDDLE SCHOOL

Shephall Grn, Shephall, Stevenage, SG2 9XT



CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP FOR YOUR FAMILY'S FREE PLACE



ONLINE **TALKING SENSORY** SIGNS, SIGNALS & SOLUTIONS

Date: Thursday 27th Jan, 3rd Feb 2022

Time: 12.30pm - 2.30pm Cost: FREE - For Parent/carers

This workshop looks at the signs and signals you may see when someone is experiencing sensory processing disorder or difficulties, it then moves on to look at strategies and solutions that may help with these.



THE TOPICS COVERED ARE:

- · Senses How many and what are they?
- · What is Sensory Processing Disorder?
- · What does this mean for your child?
- S.E.N.S.E.
- Individual Senses
 - Signs and Signals - Solutions
- Sensory Ciruits
- · Sensory Equipment
- Resources

Please use the eventbrite link below to reserve your place: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/talking-sensory-signs-signals-and-solutions-2-week-course-tickets-226555783447 Limited Places Available

training@spaceherts.org.uk



www.spaceherts.org.uk



MONDAY 31ST JANUARY 2022 6pm - 8pm





SOPHIA CHRISTOPHI Tourettes and ASD

Do you know the difference between an autistic stim and a Tourette's tic? Sophia talks about the events that led to her discovering she is autistic, developing Tourette's in her teens and the impact this had on her.

Come to this online talk to find out what makes her tid

Please book your place via our Eventbrite link below:

Limited Places Available









There is a School Nurse on duty every weekday that can support you with any concerns you may have about your child's/ children's health and wellbeing.

They can be contacted on:

0300 123 7572

9am - 5pm Monday to Friday



www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services/school-nursing