



Aston St. Mary's Newsletter

Our value this half term is Forgiveness

www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

11th March 2022

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

Diary Dates

Wednesday 16th March: Danes and Puddlebridge visit to the Natural History Museum

Friday 18th March: Non-uniform for Comic Relief. Any donations via our Just Giving page please:
<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/rednoseday22-aston-st-marys-ch>

Monday 21st March and Thursday 24th March: Parents' Evening

Friday 25th March: Mothering Day service

Monday 28th March: Reward Day

Tuesday 29th March: Easter Breakfast

Wednesday 30th March: Haffydown Viking Day.

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

Friday 1st April: School finishes at 1pm

Wednesday 20th April: Children return to school.

The past few weeks have seen us begin to return to some sort of normality in school. We are now able to join together as a school for assemblies in the hall again; many after school and lunch time clubs have resumed and our youngest children in Shackadell Class are enjoying reading with their Year Six buddies once more. The arrival of spring means children are enjoying their breaks and lunchtimes on the field – it really is wonderful to see them making the most of our beautiful school grounds.

Next week, Danes and Puddlebridge classes are looking forward to their visit to the Natural History Museum. This will support their learning in both geography and science. We are delighted that the visit has been able to be rescheduled following our Covid outbreak earlier in the term.

Sadly, whilst our lives seem to be returning to normal, our thoughts and prayers are with those whose lives are being impacted by events in Ukraine. As a school, we are always mindful of how we present wider world issues to our children; including conflicts, natural disasters or any sensitive or upsetting events that might dominate our national or global news. We recognise that many of our children will see images and hear news stories about the current conflict and feel it is important that, within school, we support them to understand what is happening at an age-appropriate level. We have been very impressed by the children's empathy and understanding as well as their desire for the world to come together to support refugees.

We wish everyone a happy and relaxing 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:

Who will be our next shining star?



Merits were awarded to:

Lucas, Orlagh, Ethan, Bertie, Amelie, Flynn, James, Stanley P, Demi, Oscar, Anouska, Ellie, Isabelle H, Benji, Evie, Primrose, Ella, Teddy, Willow, Harry B, Ethan R, Maryam, Jadon, Vaaris, Isadora, Finley, Poppy-Belle and Isla



A Thought from Reverend Jenny

Lent recalls Jesus' 40 days of temptation, hunger and danger in the desert wilderness, preparing him, body, mind and soul, for all that lies ahead.

This Lent our world is full of danger...
many situations seem hopeless,
the future seems unbearably dark...
our prayers for peace seem unanswered...
there is so much wrong with the Church and society...
so much needless inhumanity and suffering...
we may feel tempted to give up on God...

Jesus knew tough times too.
Against suffering and inhumanity Jesus
CHOOSES to live HOPEFULLY and
PRAYERFULLY not getting bogged down in
life's darkness but FAITHFULLY TRUSTING
his Heavenly Father to support and guide
him, confident of God's GOODNESS and the
power of LOVE. This is our choice too.

Despair or HOPE
Darkness or FAITH
Inaction or PRAYER and LOVE...
the Love in action we see in the outpouring
of donations for Ukrainian Refugees.

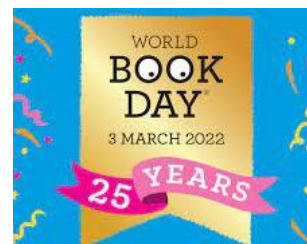


Notices



WORLD BOOK DAY 2022

THURSDAY 3RD MARCH 2022



IT WAS WONDERFUL TO SEE SO MANY ORIGINAL AND CREATIVE COSTUMES ON WORLD BOOK DAY!

WE HAD A FANTASTIC DAY IN SCHOOL WHICH BEGAN WITH A WHOLE SCHOOL ASSEMBLY INCLUDING A COSTUME PARADE. THIS FELT PARTICULARLY SPECIAL AS WE HAVE ONLY JUST BEGUN TO ENJOY BEING ABLE TO MEET IN THE HALL FOR ASSEMBLIES AGAIN. THIS YEAR, TO CELEBRATE WORLD BOOK DAY, WE DECIDED TO FOCUS ON A SINGLE BOOK ACROSS ALL CLASSES. WE CHOSE 'COMING TO ENGLAND' BY FLOELLA BENJAMIN. YOU CAN FIND OUT MORE ON THE CLASS PAGES. FINALLY, WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR DONATIONS; THE MONEY HAS BEEN SPENT ON NEW BOOKS FOR THEIR CLASS BOOK CORNERS. HAVING RECENTLY INVESTED IN LOTS OF NEW BOOKS TO SUPPORT OUR YOUNGER CHILDREN LEARN TO READ, WE HAVE THIS WEEK INVESTED IN A RANGE OF NEW FICTION AND NON-FICTION BOOKS FOR KEY STAGE TWO. IT HAS BEEN WONDERFUL TO SEE THE CHILDREN SO EXCITED BY THE NEW BOOKS; WE REALLY ARE PROUD TO HAVE CHILDREN WHO ARE SUCH DEDICATED AND ENTHUSIASTIC READERS.



RED NOSE DAY - FRIDAY 18 MARCH 2022



Children are invited to come to school in non-uniform on Friday 18th March. Instead of cash donations, we have set up a Just Giving page to raise money for this important fund-raising event. Please donate whatever you feel able to give at:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/rednoseday22-aston-st-marys-ch>

Whatever you do, no matter how small, you can help people live free from poverty, violence and discrimination. This includes funding organisations that are supporting people right now in Ukraine, and those attempting to cross the border.

Class News

Shackadell Class

We had a brilliant time celebrating World Book Day on Shackadell! Just like the rest of the school, we have some time reading and exploring 'Coming to England' by Floella Benjamin. We have been learning about different places in the world recently, such as Antarctica, so it was really good to learn about another country. Floella writes about her time growing up in Trinidad and we enjoyed comparing Trinidad with our country.

We looked at the weather and thought about the types of clothes we would wear in Trinidad and the UK during the month of March. We also explored native fruits and vegetables in the UK and Trinidad. We even got to try some pineapple, mango and avocado. Floella's book details her memories and we spent time thinking about some of our own memories.



We also really enjoyed dressing as our favourite book characters and dancing to the World Book Day rap!



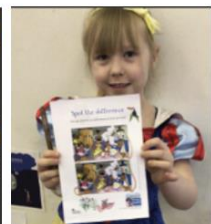
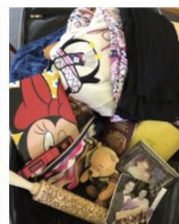
Class News

Peartree Class

World Book Day was such fun. It was so lovely to see all the incredible costumes that the children wore. It was even more lovely to have a whole school assembly where we could all celebrate and show other classes our costumes.



During the day we based our activities on the school focus book 'Coming to England' by Floella Benjamin. We started by talking about early memories and shared some photos that parents had sent in about things that they remember that are totally different in our modern times such as toys, computers and phones. We then wrote down our earliest memories. We looked at some of the fruits that they eat in Trinidad and then even tasted them, Yum! We drew pictures of fruit bowls. We did wordsearches too. We compared fruit, houses and beaches and had to work out which were from Trinidad and which from the UK. We all agreed the beaches are much nicer there.



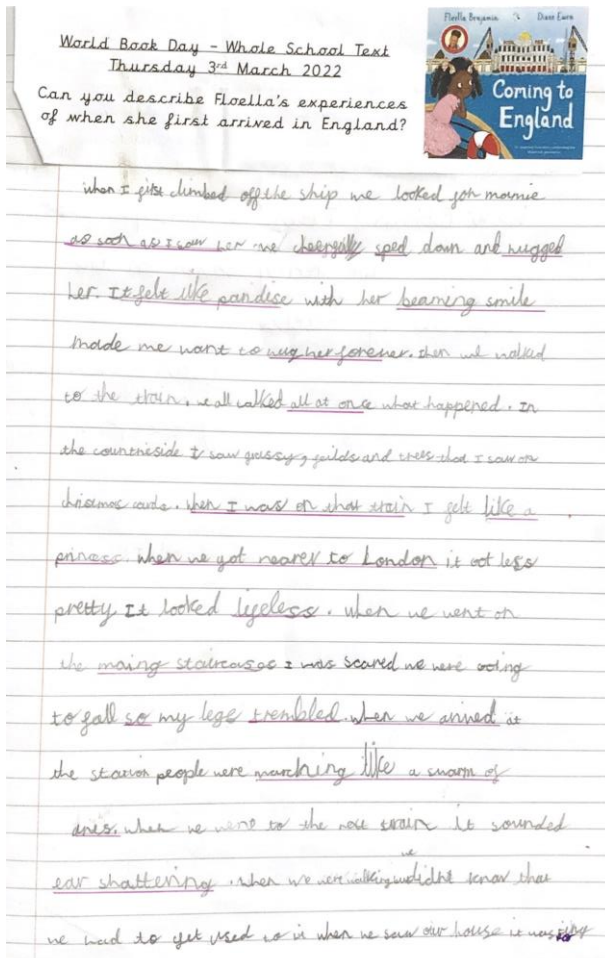
What a busy, fun packed day we had!

Class News

Orchard Class

We loved celebrating World Book Day in our class and it was so wonderful to see the children excited to share their favourite stories and to show off their costumes! Thank you so much for your donations. I have already purchased sixteen new books for our reading area and cannot wait to share these with the children once they arrive.

During the day, we explored the story "Coming to England" by Floella Benjamin. We compared life in Trinidad to life in England and discussed the emotions Floella must have experienced when arriving here. Using descriptions from the book and clips from the BBC drama to inspire us, we wrote our own first-person recounts imagining to be Floella. We described her first impressions of England and focused on using similes and adjectives to bring our writing to life. Here is an example of the amazing writing the children produced. I think you will agree that they have done a wonderful job at depicting Floella's varying emotions.



Class News

Haffydown Class

Haffydown had a wonderful World Book Day. We admired each other's outfits and compared our favourite books. We loved reading our class book, the true story *Coming to England*, and thinking about what we felt and thought about the story.

Haffydown loved learning about Trinidad. We looked at and smelled different foods from the Caribbean such as callaloo and ackee. Some of us even tried mango for the first time. We wrote a postcard in the character of the author, Floella Benjamin, explaining to a friend back in Trinidad how England was not what she expected it to be. The children discussed the different reasons why Floella found it difficult to settle in England, which ranged from the UK's much colder weather, her family's living conditions and, most shocking for our class, racism. To further develop an understanding of the story, we watched the film based on the book.

We have written a letter to the Floella, who we discovered is now a member of the House of Lords. We had to be extra careful when addressing our letters, as its very important to address a Baroness properly! We are looking forward to getting a response and will certainly share it with you.



Class News

Puddlebridge Class

Puddlebridge Class thoroughly enjoyed World Book Day! We had such fun dressing up as our favourite characters and sharing our favourite stories with each other. Our work in English has been based around 'Coming to England' by Floella Benjamin. We were so interested by her story and the history surrounding the Windrush Generation. We have compiled all our knowledge into a non-chronological report to inform other people about this period of history and its lasting legacy.



The Windrush Generation

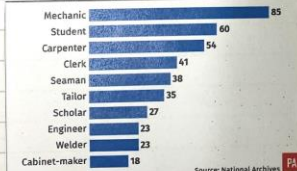


HMT Empire Windrush

The HMT Empire Windrush was a big ship that took millions of people to Britain. The people who sailed on the Empire Windrush started

their journey in the Caribbean and arrived at their destination after 15 long days.

Windrush passengers: most common professions



Most Common Professions

Some of the three most common jobs ~~are~~ were Mechanics, Carpenters and Clerks like in the picture on the left.

Other people who were still very young chose to go to better quality schools. One of the least most popular jobs was a Cabinet Maker and only 18 percent of people chose that job.



Discrimination and Racism

When the Caribbean people took their first step on the docks of England they thought

it was the place for them but then people started calling them names and saying that their colour is wrong.



The Windrush Scandal

After 60 years of living in Britain the Caribbean people were told to show their proof of citizenship but they didn't have any so they were told to go back to where they came from.

Danes Class



FORGIVENESS

HOME SCHOOL VALUES

This term we will be focussing in school on the value FORGIVENESS. We hope your family will find these ideas helpful as you explore the value and have fun together.

TALK TOGETHER about Forgiveness

Everyone makes mistakes, it's part of being human. Sometimes our mistakes hurt others and then we need to say sorry. Sometimes mistakes made by other people hurt us. When this happens we need to be able to **forgive**. **Forgiveness** can be difficult and costly but without it a new start is impossible. Talk together about:

- A time when you needed to say sorry
- A time you didn't say sorry but wish you had
- A time when you had to **forgive** someone who had hurt or upset you
- How it feels when you are given a new start because someone has **forgiven** you

THINK TOGETHER Words of Wisdom

"Without **forgiveness** there is no future.... If you can **forgive**, then you can move on and even help the person you are forgiving to become a better person"

Desmond Tutu



HOME-SCHOOL CHALLENGE

Maze

Design your own version of the maze tree in the story of Zacchaeus.

You can either draw it on paper or use other materials to create it. It's up to you! Take it to school to display in the Challenge Gallery.



READ TOGETHER...

Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

Zacchaeus was a little man. He was a tax collector and had become rich by making others pay lots of money in taxes to the Romans and to him. He didn't have many friends.

When Zacchaeus heard Jesus was in town, he wanted to see him. But Zacchaeus was short and Jesus was always surrounded by a crowd. So Zacchaeus decided to run ahead of the crowd and climb a sycamore tree. From there he could watch for Jesus. As Jesus drew closer, he held his breath excitedly until Jesus stopped right beneath his tree. Jesus looked straight up at him! "Zacchaeus," said Jesus with a smile, "come on down. I want to stay at your house today!"

Zacchaeus hopped down. "You are welcome at my house, Jesus," he said with a huge grin.

But others grumbled, muttering to each other. "Why does Jesus want to go home with the rich, cheating tax collector? He isn't good enough for Jesus to come and stay at his house."

Zacchaeus heard what the people were saying about him and he wanted to put things right. He turned to Jesus and said, "Master, here and now, I promise to give half of my money to the poor. If I have cheated anyone in taxes, I will pay them back four times that amount."

Zacchaeus wanted to turn over a new leaf because Jesus believed that everyone deserved a new start and now Zacchaeus believed it too!

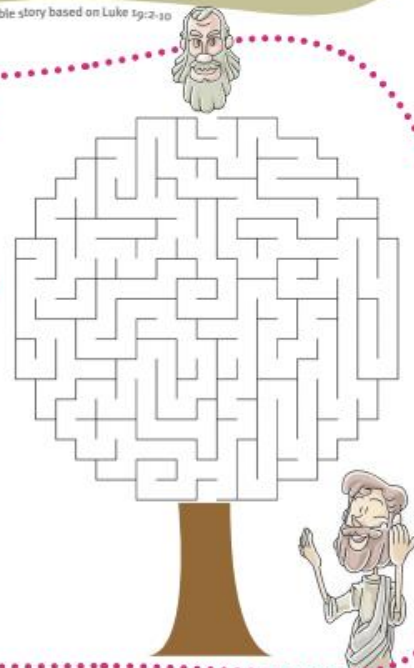
Bible story based on Luke 19:2-10



QUIZ

Tree Maze

Help Zacchaeus find his way down from the top of the tree, to meet Jesus.



☆ HALL OF FAME

Desmond Tutu

Desmond Tutu was Archbishop of Capetown from 1986 to 1996. Throughout his life Desmond Tutu worked tirelessly against apartheid in South Africa. Apartheid was a system that treated people differently because of the colour of their skin. People who were non-white were not given the same rights in the country as white citizens. For example they had to live where the government told them to, they were not allowed to vote, had to use separate transport, go to different beaches and use separate sports facilities.

There was much violence and oppression in South Africa during the years of apartheid, and when it finally ended in 1992 some people were left feeling bitter and angry and wanting revenge. In order to give everyone a chance to talk about the things that had happened to them Desmond Tutu set up the 'Truth and Reconciliation Commission'. Many people who had behaved badly could hear from those they had hurt. There was the chance to say sorry and sometimes receive **forgiveness**. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission helped to provide an opportunity for a new beginning for South Africa, a chance to build what Desmond Tutu called a 'Rainbow Nation' in which everyone had the same chance in life no matter what the colour of their skin.



FASCINATING FACTS

Crosses across the world

The cross is a very special symbol for Christians it reminds them of Jesus' death on the cross which brought **forgiveness** for the world.

Different shapes and designs of crosses reflect different traditions and communities across the world.

Maria Gomez was a Christian Primary School teacher in El Salvador. She angered the authorities in her country because she campaigned for the rights of poor people. Eventually she was murdered. Later a local artist was commissioned to paint a wooden cross with scenes showing her life and her work among the poor women in the rural villages of El Salvador.



The Celtic cross originates from Ireland. St Patrick described the circle on the cross as symbolising the endless love shown by Jesus. The cross is decorated with natural shapes and animals to remind us of God's creation.

The Black and White cross comes from South Africa and was designed during the time of apartheid. The Bible teaches that people are equal in God's eyes, no matter what their background or the colour of their skin.



The Jewish New Year Tradition

New Year for Jews normally falls during September. On the first afternoon of the new year, the festival of Rosh Hashanah is celebrated. Families visit a nearby stream, river or even the sea for the ritual of Tashlich (in Hebrew, the language in which the Jews' holy book the Torah was written, Tashlich means throw away).

After a celebration meal Jewish families gather left over breadcrumbs. These crumbs represent the words or deeds that each family member feels sorry about. When the crumbs have been thrown into the water, fish eat them or they are washed away. This symbolises the way that God **forgives** the bad things that people have done and washes them away so that there can be a fresh start for the New Year. During the ceremony the following words from the Torah are read aloud, "You (God) will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our transgressions into the depths of the sea." Micah 7: 19