



# Aston St. Mary's Newsletter

*Our value this half term is Thankfulness*

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

25<sup>th</sup> November 2022

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

## Diary Dates

**Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November:** Occasional Day – SCHOOL CLOSED

**Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> November:** 2<sup>nd</sup> visit for flu vaccine (for those who missed previous date)

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December:** Christmas Decoration Day

**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December:** Cake donations PTFA

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December:** PTFA Christmas Fayre 12-3pm  
Choir to perform at 2:50pm

**Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December:** Christmas Jumper Day

**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December:** Christmas Music Concert 6:30pm

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December:** Christmas Dinner

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December:** Christmas Parties

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December:** Reward Day

**Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December:** Last multi sports session after school (in lieu of 28.11.22)

**Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December:** Christmas Services at 9:45am and 1:45pm (Shackadell nativity with Year Six narrators)

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December:** Term finishes at 1:00pm.

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2023:** Children return to school

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2023:** Deadline for primary school applications.

**Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023:** School nurse visit (Shackadell)

As we reach the end of another week, we hope that everyone is looking forward to an extended weekend as we have our occasional day on Monday when school will be closed. This should allow all of us (adults and children alike) to recharge our batteries before an incredibly busy, and very exciting, final three and a half weeks of term. Please take careful note of the diary dates as there is so much going on!

Christmas is a very important part of our school calendar, and, in true Aston tradition, it all begins on December 1<sup>st</sup> when children will enjoy a full day of decoration making! They are invited to come to school in Christmas jumpers or festive clothes ready for a day of arts and crafts. Next weekend sees the return of our Christmas Fayre on Sunday afternoon. This is always a very popular event organised by our wonderful PTFA and raising valuable funds for the school. The choir will be performing towards the end of the Christmas Fayre at 2:50pm – nothing beats the sound of children's voices at Christmastime. On Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December, the children are once again invited to come to school in their Christmas jumpers for Christmas Jumper Day – if you wish to make a donation to Save the Children, please do so directly. Our Christmas music concert will take place on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December at 6:30pm – this is always a very special evening which last year had to take place outside! We should feel warmer this year! Christmas dinner and Christmas parties follow over the couple of days that follow. Please look out for further information about donations of food for the parties.

Our very special Christmas services take place at church on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December. This is when our youngest children perform their nativity - ably supported by Year Six who take on the role of narrators. As this is such a popular event, it takes place twice (morning and afternoon); we hope that you will be able to join us.

In the meantime, we wish everyone a wonderful long weekend and look forward to seeing the children back in school on Tuesday.

## ACADEMIC YEAR 2022/2023

### AUTUMN TERM

**Monday 5th September 2022 to Wednesday 21st December 2022**

**HALF TERM Break** - Monday 24th October 2022 to Friday 28th October 2022

**Occasional Day** (School Closed) - Monday 28th November 2022

### SPRING TERM

**Thursday 5th January 2023 to Friday 31st March 2023**

**HALF TERM Break** - Monday 13th February 2023 to Friday 17th February 2023

### SUMMER TERM

**Tuesday 18th April 2023 to Wednesday 19 July 2023**

**HALF TERM Break** - Monday 29th May 2023 to Friday 2nd June 2023

### **INSET DAYS – SCHOOL CLOSED**

Thursday 1st September 2022 and Friday 2nd September 2022

Monday 17th April 2023

Thursday 20th July 2023 and Friday 21st July 2023

## School Meals

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

**DINNER MONEY FEES £2.90  
per meal**



**Merit Certificates** were awarded to:

Max, Ray, Blake, Betsy,  
Jessica, Joel, Phoebe, Isla,  
Poppy-Belle, Rosie, Tate, Ted,  
Francesca, Lucus, Austin,  
Isabel, Cotis, Pixie, Toby, Ben,  
Vaaris, Ellis, Ollie, Brody,  
Gabriella, Ethan R, Lily,  
Sophie, Josh, Maisie



**Shining Stars** were awarded to:

Azariah, Leo F., Leo D.,  
Theo, Lily-Anne,  
Sophie, Teddy, Kyra

### Thank you Mr Preston

We would like to say a BIG thank you to Mr Preston for a fantastic quiz night last Friday. The evening raised **£600** for school funds and it was wonderful to see a full hall. A fun evening was had by all!

## A Thought from Reverend Jenny:

On this Feast of Christ the King we remember Jesus' words to his disciples: 'whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant. Just as the Son of Man (Jesus), came to serve not to be served and to give his life as a ransom for many' (Matthew 20:26-28) and we pray:

'May the mind of Christ, my Saviour,  
Live in me from day to day,  
By his love and power controlling  
All I do and say.

May the word of God dwell richly  
In my heart from hour to hour...

May the peace of God, my Father,  
Rule my life in ev'rything,  
That I may be calm to comfort  
Sick and sorrowing'.  
(Kate Wilkinson)



# Notices

## A Visit from Falconry UK

Last week, we had an amazing visit from Falconry UK who came all the way from Wales! Jason brought a White-Faced Owl, a Blue Winged Kookaburra, a Pygmy Falcon and a Verreux Eagle Owl to visit us. We learnt lots of interesting facts about the birds for example, an owl can spot a mouse from a mile away! What fantastic eyesight they must have! He explained that the birds are all born in captivity, so they are very good to take on visits. Some of the children (and adults) were even able to hold the birds too! Thank you to all the parents who kindly contributed towards this visit, the children had the most wonderful experience.



## Personalised Christmas Sweatshirts

Mrs Crowley is still fundraising taking orders for sweatshirts (£10 children and £15 adults). She has raised an impressive £350 so far!

Please email her quickly if you would like to order one for Christmas jumper day.

[Mrs Crowley@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk](mailto:Mrs Crowley@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk)



## Services of Remembrance

It was lovely that so many friends and family members were able to join us for our service of remembrance on 11<sup>th</sup> November. We were very proud of all the children and, in particular, Ray and Jack from Year Six for their performance of 'In Flanders Fields'. Their performance can be seen on the school website at:

<https://www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk/enrichment/christian-character/>

Thank you also to Louie and Molly for representing the school on Remembrance Sunday by laying the school wreath for us.



# Notices

## Year 6 Football Team

Our Year 6 footballers took part in a Stevenage FC tournament last Friday. They played brilliantly and displayed good sportmanship throughout the tournament. We had brilliant displays in all areas of the pitch, with Archie scoring five goals in one game and Max scoring a couple of hatricks. Joel was excellent in goal, Alfie showed his wide range of passing skills, Blake played well up front and scored a couple of goals. Seb and LJ were brilliant in defence. The team finished mid-table after winning two games and narrowly losing in two games.

Thank you to Mr Nash for organising the team and to all the parents for such enthusiastic support. Above all, well done to all of the Y6s that took part – they did themselves, their parents and the school proud!



## World Cup Fever!

We have certainly been hit by World cup fever since enjoying England's win over Iran on Monday afternoon. Many of the children watched the match live in the hall. The whole village could probably hear our children each time England scored! The goodie bags were much appreciated at half time.



## Congratulations!

Congratulations to Isadora who has passed her Grade 1 piano exam with merit and also to Jayden O who has passed his entry level piano exam with distinction.

We are so proud of both of you.





# Class News

## Shackadell Class

We had the best time on our first trip out on a minibus to visit St Christopher School in Letchworth where we met their resident animals. We met the three alpacas - Diablo, Chester and Joshi and the goats – Santa, Trembler and Caesar. We also met the rabbits – Lola and Heidi, and the very tiny sugar gliders – Hugo and Suki. We were allowed to stroke and hand feed all the animals. We loved learning about the sugar gliders and were so surprised to watch them arrive in a tiny bag. We thought it was so funny when they climbed all over us and we saw their tiny feet! When we got back to school, we made a card to say thank you to St Chris and we drew pictures of the amazing animals we had met.





# Class News

## Peartree Class

We have been busy in Peartree class. Friday was our 'Forest School' session and as it was also 'Children in Need' so we made our very own Pudsey using natural objects such as leaves and sticks. It was great fun.



We also loved seeing the birds of prey last week and some of us even got to hold them.

We really enjoyed our class trip to Tring Natural History Museum and learned a lot of new things. There used to be birds bigger than ostriches called 'elephant birds' and 'giant moas'! However, they are now extinct. We enjoyed our workshop on animals from the Antarctica and the Arctic and got to handle specimens like a whale's rib bone, a penguin wing and a reindeer's antlers.



In our English lessons, we are learning about performance poetry and have listened to some of Michael Rosen's poems. We all thought 'Chocolate Cake' was very funny. We also learned A.A. Milne's 'Now we are six' and performed it to each other.

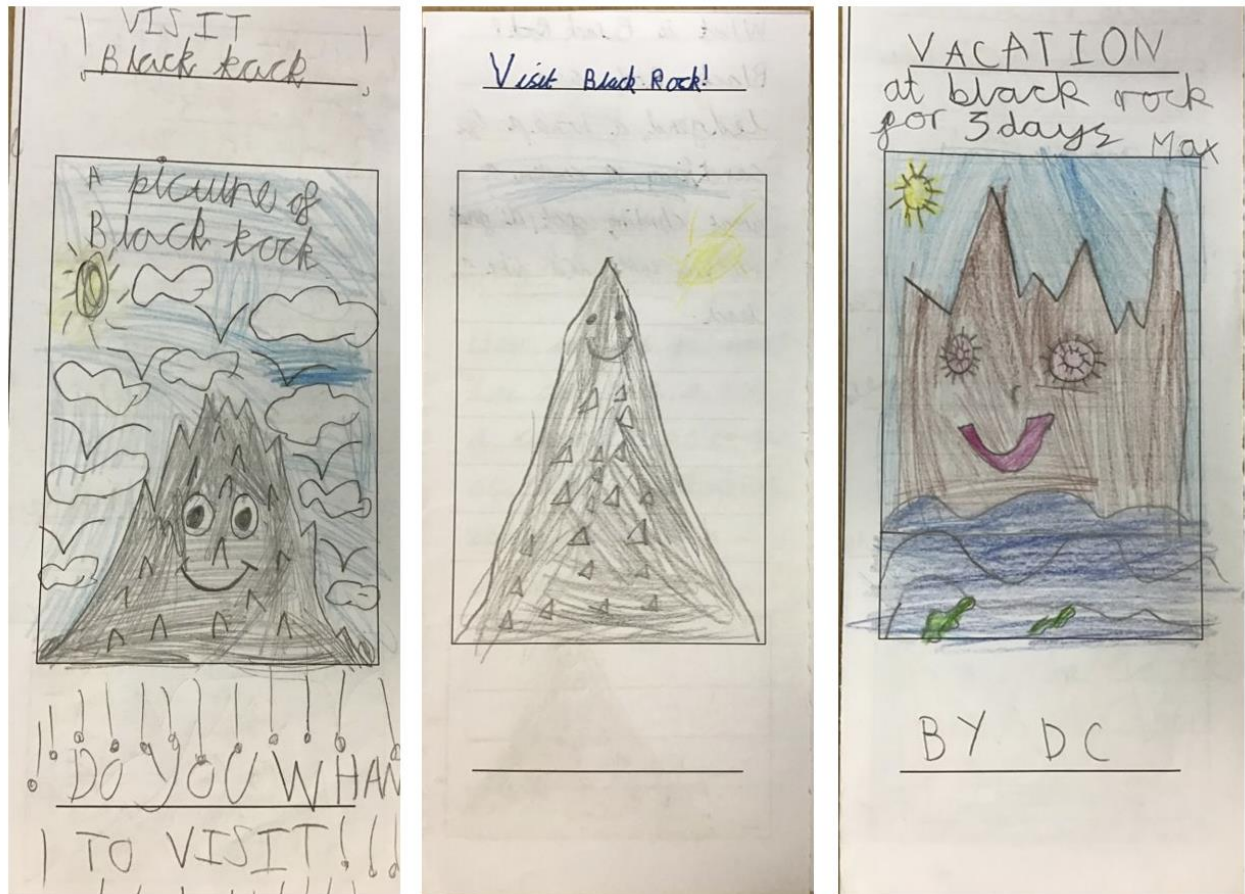
Finally, Mrs Baker has a really important question. She has asked us **'Has anyone seen my dragon?'**

**Watch this space ....**

# Class News

## Haffydown Class

Haffydown have had a busy few weeks. We have finished our English book "The Secret of Black Rock" and the children's final pieces were leaflets for the Black Rock. It was wonderful to see such beautiful writing from all the children. We have now started the book, '15 Things Not To Do With a Puppy' and we are creating lists of things we should or shouldn't do for grandma.



We have come to the end of the Anglo-Saxon history topic and will be starting the geography topic 'All about Antarctica' where we will be learning all about this fascinating frozen landscape.



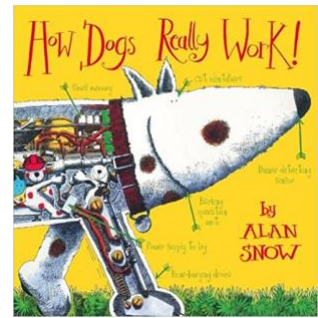
We really enjoyed the falconry session last week. We learnt so much about the birds and asked lots of questions. Some of us even got to hold them!



# Class News

## Puddlebridge Class

In English, we have been looking at instruction writing, using the book 'How Dogs Really Work' for inspiration. We have enjoyed using humour in the same way as the author, Alan Snow. We have finished the unit by writing our own instructions on how to build an animal of our choice.

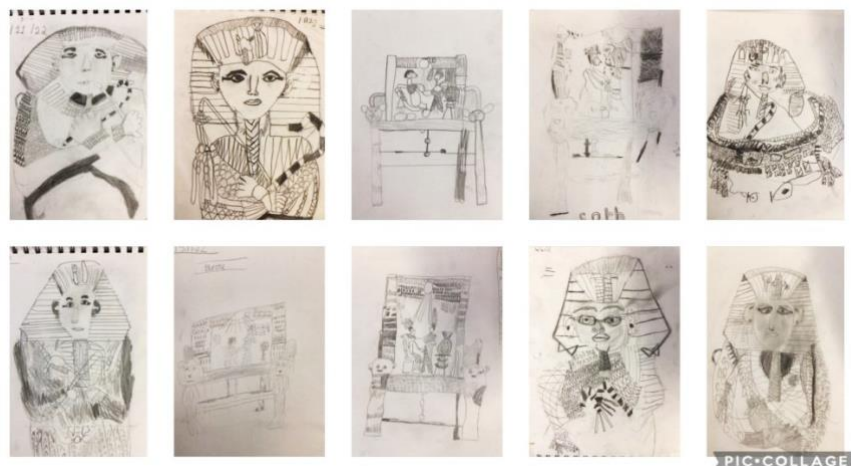


In Maths, we have been deepening our understanding of multiplication by exploring multiples and factors. We really enjoyed drawing factor bugs to find all the factors of a number and then use these to identify prime numbers.



This term, we have been developing our pencil sketching skills in Art. We have looked at different grades of pencils and the effects that can be created through shading and adding texture.

As our final piece, we produced observational drawings of ancient Egyptian artefacts. Have a look at our brilliant Tutankhamun masks and thrones!

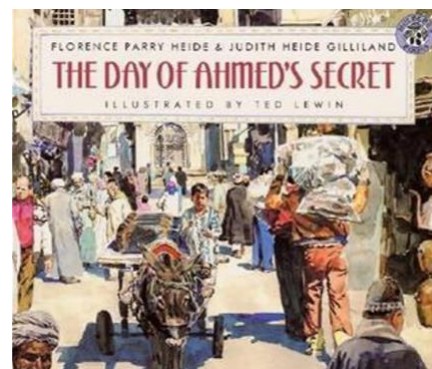




# Class News

## Danes Class

In history, our focus this term is the Ancient Egyptian Civilization. Our learning has been enhanced and supported by our learning across the curriculum. For example, last week in English we read 'The Day of Ahmed's Secret' – a touching story about a young boy working in the bustling streets of Old Cairo today. We wrote our own endings for the story before discovering what Ahmed's secret actually was.



In art, we have been developing our drawing skills. First, we experimented with different grades of pencil before focussing on how texture, shade and tone. After that, we looked at the human face and, in particular, how it is proportioned. We then moved on to focus drawing eyes and ears. Our final piece required us to apply all of these skills in order to draw an Egyptian death mask. We were very proud of the results!

Having learnt about forces in science last half term, we were able to apply our understanding of levers in design and technology as we worked in groups to design and make an Egyptian shaduf. These were used to collect water from the River Nile to irrigate the land. We used sticks to construct a triangular framework before constructing a lever mechanism. A counterweight was needed in order to balance the bucket of water. It was great fun testing our shadufs!





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01462 790152  
info@risingstars-wraparound.co.uk



# Christmas Holiday Wraparound Clubs at Martins Wood Primary Stevenage

21–23 December  
and

Mary Exton Primary  
Hitchin

22–23 December

Activities including  
Indoor and  
outdoor games!

Crafts!

Inflatables!

A variety of sports!  
Chill and Care!

✓ Ofsted Registered

✓ Childcare Vouchers accepted

8.00 – 5.00 – £25.00  
includes breakfast and light tea

8.00 – 1.00 – £20.00

10.00 – 3.00 – £20.00

12.00 – 5.00 – £20.00

**PLEASE PROVIDE A PACKED LUNCH!**

*On registering your child for a place on our course Rising Stars will collect certain information about you/your child which will include your names, email address, telephone number, child's date of birth, gender and school. We will not share this information with any third party for marketing purposes.*

To make a booking please go to:  
[risingstars.magicbooking.co.uk](http://risingstars.magicbooking.co.uk)



# TALKING ADDITIONAL NEEDS ONLINE



**Thursdays 9.45-11.15am**  
23rd Feb - 30th Mar 2023 ID: 551

(Also running face to face in Three Rivers, Feb-Mar 2023. Call for details)

**Free 6 week courses for parents and carers of children aged 2-19 years with a recognised additional need. Diagnosis is not essential.**

- Understand your child's behaviour.
- Find strategies that really work.
- Understand conflict: why it happens and how to handle it.
- Manage anger effectively.
- Motivate, encourage and support your child.
- Manage the different needs within your family.

'I have been on a few courses to help me with my son, this was by far the most helpful.'



**PARENTING COURSES  
DELIVERED TO YOUR  
HOME VIA ZOOM**

Full details on how to access and use Zoom will be offered.

**OPEN TO PARENTS AND  
CARERS ACROSS  
HERTFORDSHIRE**

**Pre-booking essential**

**Please quote the course ID**  
To check eligibility and book a place,  
contact Supporting Links on:

**07512 709556**

**bookings@supportinglinks.co.uk**  
**www.supportinglinks.co.uk**



These courses are provided free to parents by Hertfordshire County Council's Targeted Parenting Fund.

Information you share with us is used to process your booking. This will be held securely and only shared in accordance with our GDPR Policy.

# TALKING DADS ONLINE



Dads, Step-Dads, Stay at home Dads, Working Dads... all play an important role in your child's life.



**Wednesdays 7.45-9.15pm** 4th Jan - 8th Feb ID: 557

**Tuesdays 7.45-9.15pm** 21st Feb - 28th Mar ID: 558

**Over 6 FREE weekly sessions, fathers and male carers of children aged 0-19 will be supported to:**

- Increase confidence in your parenting.
- Develop your dad/child relationship, now and for the future.
- Improve listening and communication skills.
- Develop strategies for dealing with anger and conflict.
- Learn how to enforce boundaries.

'My child is easier to handle now, and has learnt from the techniques I use.'



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# TALKING FAMILIES ONLINE



Because parents don't get training for the toughest job on earth!



**Thursdays 8.00-9.30pm** 5th Jan - 9th Feb ID: 553



(Also running face to face in St Albans, Feb-Mar 2023. Call for details)

**Our FREE 6 week online course for parents and carers of children aged 0-12 will help you to:**

- Manage challenging behaviour with consistency
- Encourage positive behaviour
- Build your child's self esteem
- Set and maintain boundaries
- Respond to tantrums and difficult feelings in children

'It was a brilliant course and has made a huge difference'

'It has taught me new skills to deal with family life'



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