



Aston St. Mary's Newsletter

Our value this half term is Trust

www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

19th January 2024

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

Diary Dates

Monday 19th February – Friday 23rd

February - Half Term break

Monday 4th March – Danes and Puddlebridge trip to Tower bridge

Thursday 7th March – World Book Day (further details TBC)

Clothing collection

Friday 8th March – Mothering Service in church

Monday 18th March – Parent Teacher consultations

Thursday 21st March – Parent Teacher consultations

Friday 22nd March – Reward Day

Tuesday 26th March – Easter breakfast

Thursday 28th March – Easter Service, Ceramic egg rolling and decoration. Last day of Spring Term

Tuesday 16th April – Summer Term begins

Monday 13th May – Thursday 16th May – Year Six SATs Assessments

Whilst the new year celebrations seem not much more than a distant memory now, we would like to wish our whole school community and **happy and successful new year**. We are now two and a half weeks into the new school term and there is certainly a buzz of learning around the school. This week in our whole school worship on Tuesday, children from **St. Paul's House** shared some of their recent learning with the school. Next week, it will be the turn of **Coventry House**. It is always a pleasure to hear the children talk with such enthusiasm and confidence about their learning across the curriculum.

We hope that you enjoy the **class pages** of this newsletter which give a taste of the learning that has been happening in each of the classes. Please be reminded that the **class pages on the school website** are regularly updated with lots more photos and information about our curriculum offer. The **Notices** section of this newsletter also contains some important information and reminders.

Our value this half term is **Trust**; in our daily worship we are exploring what it means to trust and be trusted. We see so many examples through the school day of how the children live by our school values. They understand that, in order to be trusted, they need to be responsible and reliable. In our collective worship, children have explained how to be a good friend they need to be able to trust each other and how trusting in God can help them to make the right choices. There are some ideas towards the end of this newsletter which you might like to enjoy with your child at home to explore the value of Trust.

Have a lovely weekend and thank you for your continued support.



ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/2024

SPRING TERM

Thursday 4th January 2024 to Thursday 28th March 2024

HALF TERM BREAK - Monday 19th February 2024– Friday 23rd February 2024

SUMMER TERM

Tuesday 16th April 2024 to Friday 19th July 2024

Bank Holiday – Monday 6th May 2024 – SCHOOL CLOSED

HALF TERM Break – Monday 27th May 2024 – Friday 31st May 2024

Dates for the next academic year are published on the school website.

School Meals

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

DINNER MONEY FEES £3.25
per meal



Please note that from April 1st, the price will increase to £3.40 per meal.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

Proverbs 3:5-6

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Ethan H who has passed his Grade 1 piano with merit.

We are so proud of you.



A Thought from Reverend Jenny:

Jesus says: "Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends" (Revelation 3:20).

Holman Hunt's painting "The Light of the World" pictures Jesus knocking on the door of our heart; this reflection imagines our response:

'The Father knocks on my door, seeking a home for his Son.... 'Rent's cheap,' I say.

'I don't want to rent, I want to buy,' says God.

'I might let you have a room or two,' I say.

'I like it,' says God. 'You might decide to give me more some day. I can wait,' says God.

'I'd like to give you the whole house,' I say, 'but I'm not sure.'

'Think on it,' says God. 'I would not put you out. Your house would be mine and my Son would live in it. You'd have more space than you've ever had before.'

'I don't understand,' I say.

'I know,' says God, 'but I can't tell you about that, you have to discover it for yourself.'

'A bit risky,' I say.

'Yes,' says God, 'but try me. I can wait,' says God. 'I like what I see,' says God.

House Points

Canterbury



169

St. Paul's



199

St. Albans



185

Coventry



177

Notices

World Book Day – Thursday 7th March 2024

In celebration of World Book Day, we will be promoting a love of reading. Like last year, we will be exploring the same text throughout the year groups with a range of activities planned to get the very most out of a book with a very important message. The theme of the book we will be enjoying as a school is poverty and how those who are struggling can feel overlooked by society. In order to promote the message of the story, we have decided children and staff will not be dressing up for World Book Day this year. Whilst we understand that some children love to dress up, this is not the case for all children, and it can also place a significant burden upon families either financially or in terms of time spent creating an outfit – or both. Many of these costumes are worn only once and some are even discarded during the school day as they can be uncomfortable, too warm or not warm enough.

In recent years, World Book Day has become a very commercial event (lots of supermarkets even offer costumes now, many of these costing £15 or more - approximately the cost of two books). We want to promote the love of reading element, rather than this commercial side. As already mentioned, dressing up can pose a huge financial burden on families (even when optional) and with the cost of living being so high, we do not want to put any families in a position where they feel obliged to provide costumes for one or more children.

Instead, we want the wonderful children at Aston to feel empowered to make a difference in our world and worthy because of their individuality, not because of a costume. We also want them to develop a genuine love of reading and to find value in this precious pastime - reading really does provide the key to their future success as well as unlocking a world of imagination, knowledge and so many adventures.

We thank you in advance for supporting us with this decision and we are very much looking forward to the day. Further details of our plans for the day will be shared nearer the time.



Outdoor Footwear

Please make sure that your child has in school **suitable outdoor footwear** to avoid bringing mud into the school building. All children should either have **wellies or old trainers** (not their PE trainers) to wear at break time and lunchtime – particularly when they are on the field. The decision about whether they are to play on the field, or the playground is taken daily depending on the conditions.



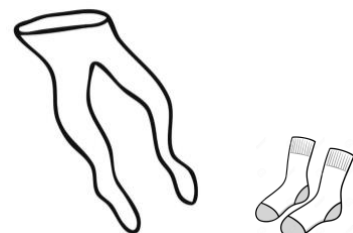
Smart Watches

It has come to our attention recently that some children are coming to school wearing **smart watches**. Please be aware that any device which enables the user to take photos, play games, take or receive calls or enables any other form of communication is **not permitted in school**. Any of the older children who bring a **phone** into school should hand these in at the office and collect them at the end of the day.



PE Kit

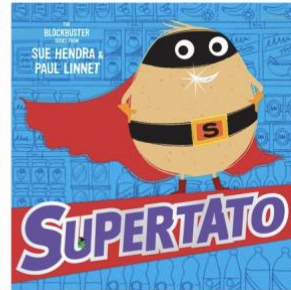
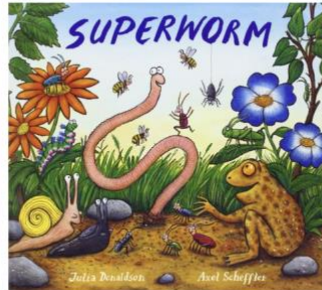
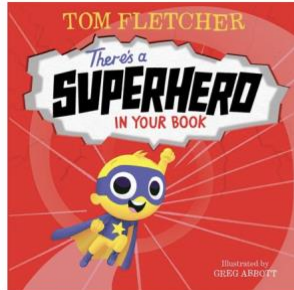
Now that the weather is cold, many children are wearing **tights** to school. It is important that they have a pair of socks in their PE kit as tights are not suitable for PE. Ideally, all children should be changing their **socks for PE**.



Class News

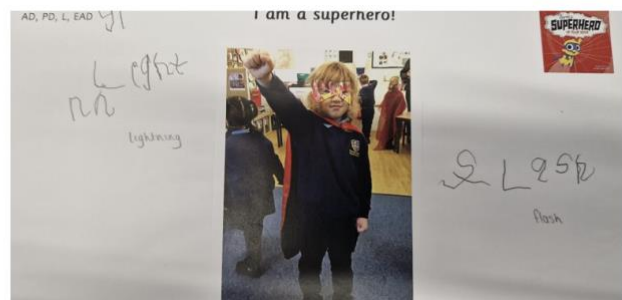
Shackadell Class

We are starting the new year with a zip, zap, zoom in Shackadell Class. We are really enjoying learning about **Superheroes**. We have started with the books 'There's a Superhero in your Book' by Tom Fletcher, 'Superworm' by Julia Donaldson and 'Supertato' by Sue Hendra and Paul Linnet.



We were excited to create our own superhero characters. We created our superhero names using alliteration. We then created costumes by making masks and then using pieces of fabric to design our capes. We had a think about the kinds of superpowers we would like to have.

We are looking forward to learning more about superhero cartoons and then real-life superheroes.

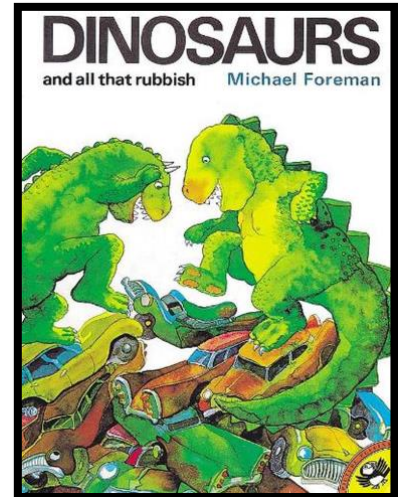
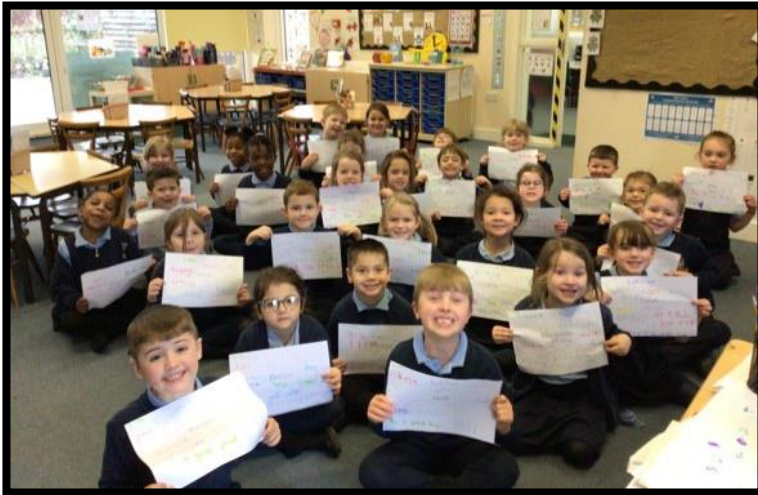


Class News

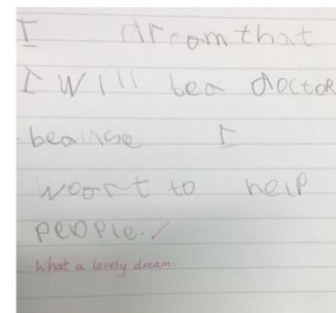
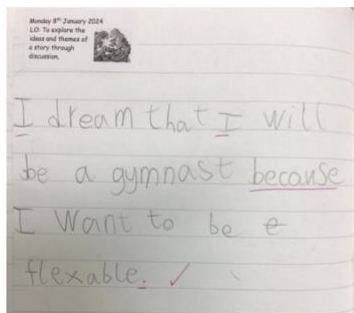
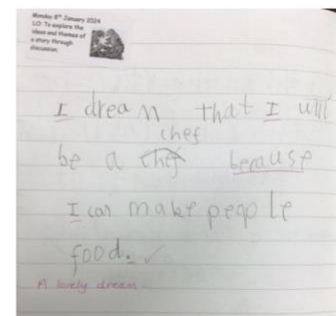
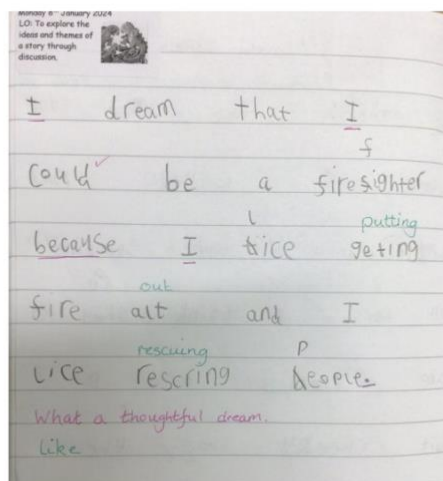
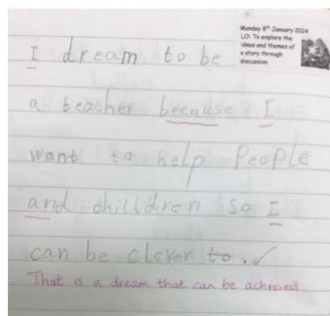
Peartree Class

Happy New Year. Welcome back to school after a well-earned break. I am pleased to say that everyone has come back to school with enthusiasm and determination to do their best.

In PSHE this term, we are looking at '**Aiming High**' and having achievable goals to work towards. We have been talking about our '**star qualities**' and what we are good at. We spent a fun lesson celebrating each other's 'star qualities' by writing compliments onto each other's posters. It made us feel happy to give and receive compliments.



Our new book in English is '**Dinosaurs and all that Rubbish**' by Michael Foreman. We had to make a prediction as to what the title was by looking at the front cover. There were some good ideas, such as 'Dinosaur Stomp' and 'Warsaurus'. In the story, the man dreams of visiting a faraway star. We then wrote about some of our own dreams and aspirations. Here are a few of them.

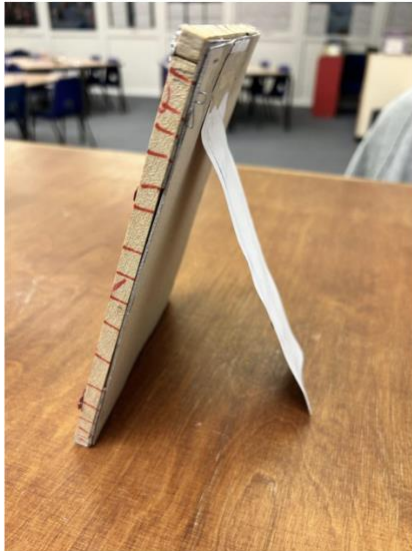


The class newsletter will be posted on Seesaw along with the homework grids. I look forward to another action-packed half term.

Class News

Haffydown Class

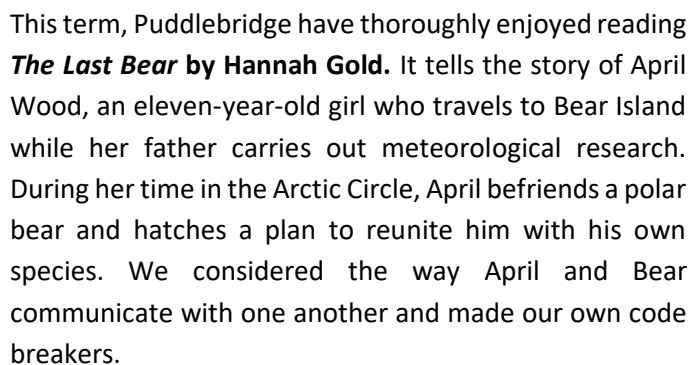
Our first few days back after Christmas were full of creativity in Haffydown. We made **photo frames** by measuring and sawing wood, before joining the parts and making them more stable with photo corners. We experimented with making a backing board stand up and then we added our **William Morris** style art into the frames. Haffydown worked really hard to fit the photo frames to their briefs and ensure their end product would fit the user.



To help support a **growth mindset**, we have been exploring a new book - **The Magical Yet**. We talked about things we can do and things we can't do yet. We discussed how having a magical 'Yet' with you does not have to be a bad thing, it's just part of learning and growing - after all, we do not have to keep the 'Yet' with us forever!

Haffydown have collectively read a massive 602 books since September and are well on their way to meeting the **1000 book goal**!

Puddlebridge Class



A circular diagram divided into 12 segments, each containing a facial expression and a corresponding emotion. The segments are:

- eyes lit up (happy)
- eyes squeezed shut (sad)
- mouth open in a gasp (surprised)
- mouth open in a scream (fearful)
- mouth open in a smile (happy)
- mouth open in a frown (sad)
- mouth open in a gasp (surprised)
- mouth open in a scream (fearful)
- mouth open in a smile (happy)
- mouth open in a frown (sad)
- mouth open in a gasp (surprised)
- mouth open in a scream (fearful)

In **Science, Year Four** have been learning about **the digestive system**. We began by learning about the first stage of digestion: our teeth. We identified our incisors, canines, premolars and molars and considered their functions. Using plasticene, we made models of our own teeth.



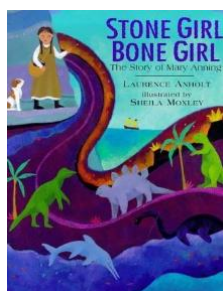
Class News

Danes Class

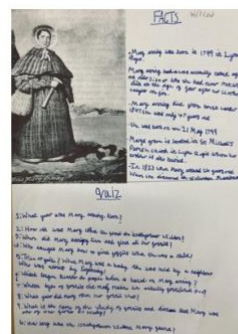
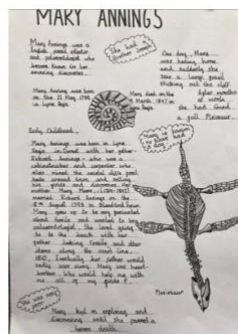
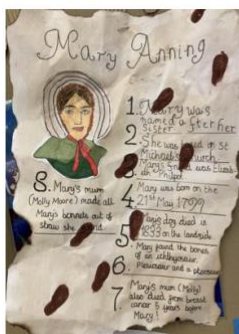
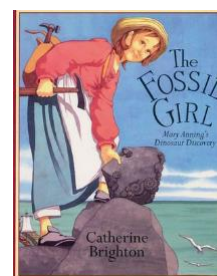


Danes Class have made a fantastic start to the new term; we began with a whole day of **Design and Technology**. We learnt about how cams work and researched moving toys which use **cam mechanisms**. We also explored the different movement created by different shaped cams e.g. snail cams, elliptical cams and egg-shaped cams. Next, the children designed and built their own moving toys. Here are some of their finished products – lots more can be seen on our class page on the school website.

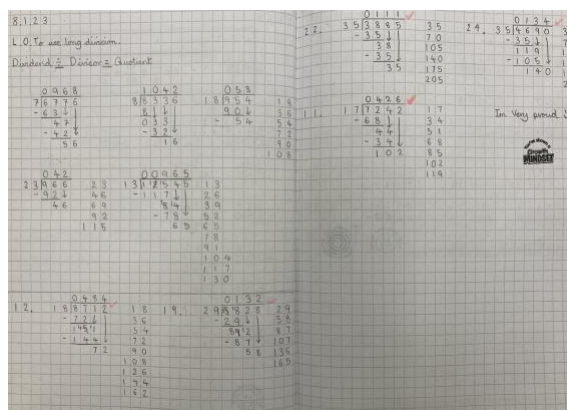
SCAN ME



In English, we have read two books about **palaeontologist Mary Anning**. This will support our learning in science as we will soon begin learning about **Evolution and Inheritance**. Our learning has included exploring several grammatical objectives including: complex sentences, how to use semi colons, active and passive and the use of dialogue. We have been very impressed by the quality of the children's weekly English Home Learning – linked to our work in school.



Our challenge in maths has been to become experts in **division**, including **long division**. The children have learnt how to express remainders as decimals (including recurring decimals) and fractions. Year Six have also been practising for their SATs assessments in May. Their enthusiasm and determination in order to achieve their very best is certainly impressive. Lots of hard work will continue to be needed throughout this term – we are very lucky to have a group of such motivated and keen learners.



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

TALK TOGETHER about Trust

Trust is a really important value. It must be earned. If we do not **trust** someone it is very hard to build a good friendship with them.

Talk together about:

- people who you know that are **trustworthy**
- practical ways that we can show others that we are **trustworthy**
- why it is important to be able to **trust** others when working together as a team

THINK TOGETHER Words of Wisdom

"**Trusting** someone is like knowing you can jump and they will be there to catch you"

Anon



FASCINATING FACTS

The Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI)

When the crew and passengers of boats get into difficulty at sea, they can **trust** the lifeboat crews from RNLI to try their very best to rescue them. Many of the crew and coastguards are volunteers.

- There are over 230 lifeboat stations all around the coast of Britain & Ireland
- Crews are on call 24 hours a day, every day of the year. They must be ready to drop what they are doing at a moments notice to go out on their lifeboat



READ TOGETHER... The Storm on the Lake

The disciples were just exhausted. All day crowds and crowds of people had been following Jesus, listening as he taught them about God's love and watching as he healed people who were ill. Now the sun was beginning to set over the Sea of Galilee. Seeing how tired his friends were, Jesus said, "Let's get in a boat and go over to the other side of the lake."

They rowed away from the shore while Jesus went to the front of the boat and lay down. The waves lapped gently against the side of the boat, lulling Jesus into a peaceful sleep.

Suddenly the wind began to blow dark clouds across the sky. The waves weren't so gentle anymore. The little boat began to pitch and rock. The men looked anxiously across the lake. But Jesus still lay sleeping in the front of the boat.

The wind blew stronger. Great gusts rocked the boat. Spray from the waves soaked everyone inside. But still Jesus lay sleeping in the front of the boat.

By the time they reached the centre of the lake, the wind had turned into an angry gale that whipped the waves so high that they washed right over the boat. Jesus' friends were terrified. They thought they might drown. But still Jesus slept on.

Finally, one of Jesus' friends went and shook him awake. "Master," he cried, "don't you care if we drown?" Jesus looked around. He listened to the howling wind. He felt the cold, stinging spray of the waves. He saw the fear in the faces of his disciples.

Jesus stood, stretched out his arms to the wind and the waves, and commanded: "Peace! Be still!" At once the wind died down and the waves became completely calm. Turning to them, Jesus asked the disciples: "Why are you so afraid? Do you not **trust** me?"

Bible story based on Mark 4:35-41



QUIZ Crack the code

Answer the clues to find the letter corresponding to each number and then fill in the message.

Thrown in a board game

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

Jam is stored in this

5	6	7
---	---	---

Opposite of dark

8	2	9	10	11
---	---	---	----	----

Used to carry money

12	13	7	14	4
----	----	---	----	---

Break the code to discover the message in the story:

11	10	4
----	----	---

1	2	14	3	2	12	6	4	14
---	---	----	---	---	----	---	---	----

11	7	13	14	11	4	1
----	---	----	----	----	---	---

5	4	14	13	14
---	---	----	----	----



FAMILY FOCUS

Get Knotting

Knot tying is an important skill for every crew member on board a sailing ship. For the various parts of the sails and rigging different knots are used and the crew have to **trust** that the knots are tied properly and will hold.

We all use knots occasionally to hold something securely in place. See if you can master these knots:

A Clove Hitch knot, to secure a rope to a post.



A Reef knot to join 2 ropes together.



HOME-SCHOOL CHALLENGE

Build a Boat

This term's Home School Value has a watery theme. The challenge is to use scrap materials to construct a boat that floats and has a working sail.

Create a draught (eg by blowing or using a lilo pump) to check that the sail really does catch the wind and move the boat across the water.



HALL OF FAME

Ernest Shackleton

From the time that he was a small boy Ernest Shackleton longed to go to sea. At sixteen he got his chance and joined the crew of a ship sailing to and from the Far East and America. This was the start of an amazing life of daring and discovery.

In December, 1914, Shackleton set out on perhaps his most famous voyage. It was his third expedition to Antarctica. His ship was called the "Endurance" and his mission to travel 1500 miles across Antarctica. Just 5 weeks later, "Endurance" became frozen in pack ice, unable to move. After being stuck for months the boat began to buckle, crushed by the ice. The crew was forced to abandon ship. They set up camp on an ice floe, but this was too dangerous so Shackleton and his men set out in three lifeboats. After six days, the men reached an isolated, uninhabited spot called Elephant Island.

Shackleton knew that for his men to survive, he must fetch help from a whaling station. It was 800 miles away but it was their only hope! Putting their complete **trust** in him and knowing their leader would return if it was humanly possible, the men watched as Shackleton and four others rowed away. Six long months followed before Shackleton was finally able to rescue his men 126 days later, after a journey of nearly 1600 miles.

Shackleton's courage and the **trust** he inspired in his men live on in legend.





SADA Drop-in Service

Every other Monday from 12.30pm to 2.30pm

To provide support and advice to victims and survivors, and children living with domestic abuse

For more information, please call 01438 242666
and ask for our Community Safety Team
or email SADA@stevenage.gov.uk



**WELWYN
HATFIELD**
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Stevenage
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