



Aston St. Mary's Newsletter

Our value this half term is **Forgiveness**

www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

28th March 2024

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

Diary Dates

Tuesday 16th April – Summer Term begins

Friday 26th April – Quiz Night (further information after the class pages)

Monday 13th May – Thursday 16th

May – Year Six SATs Assessments

Thursday 23rd May – Open Morning

Friday 24th May – Sports Day (weather dependent)

Monday 3rd June – Friday 7th June – Year Six Bikeability Training

Thursday 13th June – Puddlebridge and Danes Theatre Trip

Tuesday 2nd July – Intervillage Sports

Tuesday 9th July – Haffydown to Celtic Harmony

Wednesday 3rd July – Year Six to Hazard Alley

Thursday 11th July – Class changeover day and Year Six at secondary schools

Friday 12th July – Reward Day

Monday 15th July – Dress Rehearsal Year Six Leavers' Trip

Tuesday 16th July – Whole school production 1:30pm and 6pm

Wednesday 17th July - Whole school production 6pm

Friday 19th July – Last day of term (1pm finish)

Leavers' Service at church 9:30am



As we reach the end of term, we would like to wish all our families a happy and relaxing Easter break.

Earlier this week, the children enjoyed a special **Easter breakfast** in school. This is always a lovely occasion during which **hot cross buns** are shared whilst the children are reminded of the importance of Easter in the Christian calendar. It was wonderful that so many of you were able to join us for our **Easter service** in church this morning – thank you. Another important Aston tradition which takes place today is the **egg decorating competition** followed by **egg rolling** on the school playground. These are always exciting and closely fought competitions! This year, ceramic eggs have been used for the decorating competition and rubber eggs for the egg rolling – this was as a direct result of pupil voice last year where concern was raised about the wastage of real eggs for these competitions. We hope that the decorated ceramic eggs can be enjoyed as part of your Easter celebrations at home this weekend.

Thank you for attending the **consultation evenings** last week; we hope that you found them useful and informative. By working together, we are able to ensure that your child makes the best possible progress. Thank you also for the overwhelmingly positive feedback via the **parental survey forms**; we really are so lucky to work with such supportive families. **'Moments Matter, Attendance Counts'** is the new DfE strapline to highlight the importance of good school attendance – please see page 3 of this newsletter for further information.

As you will see from the dates list, we already have lots planned for the term ahead. In the meantime, we hope that you all enjoy some special family time over the break, and we look forward to welcoming the children back to school on Tuesday 16th April.

ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/2024

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

ACADEMIC YEAR 2024/2025

AUTUMN TERM

Tuesday 3rd September 2024 to Friday 20th December 2024

Half Term – Monday 28th October 2024-Friday 1st November 2024

Occasional Day Monday 25th November 2024 – School closed

SPRING TERM

Tuesday 7th January 2025 to Friday 4th April 2025

Half Term – Monday 17th February 2025– Friday 21st February 2025

SUMMER TERM

Tuesday 22nd April 2025 to Friday 18th July 2025

Bank Holiday – Monday 5th May 2025 – School closed

Half term – Monday 26th May 2025 – Friday 30th May 2025

Inset Days –School closed

Inset day – Monday 2nd September 2024

Occasional day – Monday 25th November 2024

Inset day – Monday 6th January 2025

Inset day – Monday 21st, Tuesday 22nd, Wednesday 23rd July 2025

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



Shining Stars were awarded to:

Maisie , Alice,
Joshua and
Cameron

House Point Winners

Well done to Canterbury House for earning the most house points this half term!



House Points

Canterbury



519

St. Paul's



477

St. Albans



439

Coventry



496

A Thought from Reverend Jenny:

As parents and grandparents, we'd be sad if our children only came to us when they wanted something.

We like being part of their lives... sharing their hopes and fears, joys and troubles...being there for them to listen, encourage, comfort and guide them...letting them know how much we love them.

Like God and us.

God, our Heavenly Father, loves us so much he wants to be part of our lives... to share our hopes, fears, joys and troubles...to be there for us to listen, encourage, comfort and guide us...and let us know how much he loves us. It's sad if we only come to God with a 'shopping list' of things we want in our prayers, (however needful our requests may be) and forget to thank him for all the good in our lives...or ask his forgiveness for any wrong thinking or wrongdoing, any good we've left undone...or be guided by him.

Jesus teaches us God's goodness, generosity and love exceeds that of the best earthly parents. He wants us to share his own intimate relationship with God and teaches us to pray as he does, in the 'Our Father' prayer...

a prayer we can resolve to make time to pray every day...

Notices

Peartree Class - We are Proud of You

Last week, Peartree Class visited Stevenage Museum – they travelled there by bus. We were delighted to receive this email from a member of public before they had even returned to school.

Good morning,

Today I had the pleasure of travelling to work by bus with a class from your school on their way to the museum. The children waited beautifully for the bus. Listen to any instruction given by the teaching staff.

Once seated on the bus they went on to sing lots of songs. I cannot tell you how much this brightened my day as well as the bus drivers, all children were polite and well behaved and they are an absolute credit to Aston St Mary's Primary School.

Kind regards,



Attendance



Attendance continues to be a key priority across the school – this term, attendance has been slightly lower than last at 95.5%. We are hoping that this will improve now that we are through the winter season of coughs and colds. **Peartree Class** deserve a special mention for having the best attendance this term.

Peartree: 97.0%
Haffydown: 96.6%
Danes: 96.1%
Puddlebridge: 95.3%
Shackadell: 90.1%

Attendance Really Matters

Being in school is important to your child's achievement, wellbeing, and wider development. Evidence shows that the students with the highest attendance throughout their time in school gain the best GCSE and A Level results. Research found that pupils who performed better both at the end of primary and secondary school missed fewer days than those who didn't perform as well.

National data shows that children in Key Stage 2 who didn't achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths missed on average four more days per school year than those whose performance exceeded the expected standard. Data from 2019 shows that 84% of Key Stage 2 pupils who had 100% attendance achieved the expected standard, compared to 40% of pupils who were persistently absent across the key stage. (source: <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/05/18/school-attendance-important-risks-missing-day/>)

Attendance during school year	Equates to days absent	Which is approximately	Which means the number of lessons missed
94%	10 Days	2 Weeks	50 Lessons
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	100 Lessons
85%	29 Days	6 Weeks	150 Lessons
80%	38 Days	8 Weeks	200 Lessons
75%	48 Days	10 Weeks	250 Lessons

It is law that if your child is well, they should be in school. The NHS have created a link to help parents and carers decide if their child is well enough to attend school or not. Please scan the QR code – this link can also be found on our school website homepage.



Sporting Opportunities

Netball v. St Christopher's



We are delighted to have had two teams participate in our first competitive netball matches. Mrs Maddock kindly organises training for the children during lunchtimes at school – thank you Mrs Maddock. Thank you also to Miss Myers who arranged for us to compete away against St. Christopher's School. We were lucky that the matches went ahead as the weather wasn't kind. Thankfully, both the Year Three/Four and Year Five/Six teams were able to compete in shortened indoor games. Since these matches, even more children have joined the netball training sessions which is great to see.



Year Five Handball

We were delighted to be invited to take a group of Year Five pupils to a handball competition at Barnwell School. The children thoroughly enjoyed learning how to play handball and playing some matches against other local schools. They did really well.

We are especially proud of them for being awarded the competition's value award. The award was for presented for giving 100%, putting their heart and soul into the games and never giving up. It was also awarded for caring about what we do and the people around us and for approaching each opportunity with enthusiasm and positively. It was great to see our Christian values shining through whilst competing in a sports competition.

Well done to all who took part.



Year Four Cricket

On the 6th of March, some children from Year Four went to rapid fire cricket at Barnwell School. They had so much fun and did really well in achieving 6th place having only played once before!



Year Four Badminton

This term, eight members of Year Four had the opportunity to attend a badminton festival at Barnwell School. For most of the children, it was the first time they had played badminton; they had lots of fun learning new skills.



Read, Read, Read



At Aston St. Mary's, we continue to work hard to instill a passion for reading in all our pupils. Reading increases life chances - this is why reading is always prioritised in our school. It is a skill that most of us take for granted and is essential for being able to get on in life. As a child grows up, being able to read well not only enables them to discover new facts and to learn at school, but also opens them up to a world of new ideas, stories and opportunities.

Our **World Book Day** earlier this month was based around Tom Percival's book 'The Invisible' to shine a light on the four million children in the UK living in poverty today. Across the school, we enjoyed a range of activities to get us thinking about some of the key themes in the book: poverty, gratitude, empathy, hope and community. We reflected on this story and thought about people in our communities who may feel invisible and overlooked. We created a wonderful display of learning from across the classes in the school hall. Our outcomes reflect the thought and effort that we put into this learning, approaching the story with sensitivity and respect.



Since World Book Day, Danes Class have loved it every time they have had the opportunity to relax with a book. They have enjoyed being able to find a quiet space - inside the school or outside - to read without interruption. It is particularly lovely to see our school library being used in this way.

On the Haffydown Class page you can find out about their 'Drop Everything and Read' day. This really was a very special morning which really demonstrated the passion for reading in our school.

Children in Years One-Three are also enjoying opportunities to 'Free Write'; they are delighted with their new books in which they are encouraged to write about anything and everything that they wish to. Some of them have even been seen writing on the playground during breaktime! Years Four-Six have also been authors recently - please see their class pages for some fantastic examples of their work.



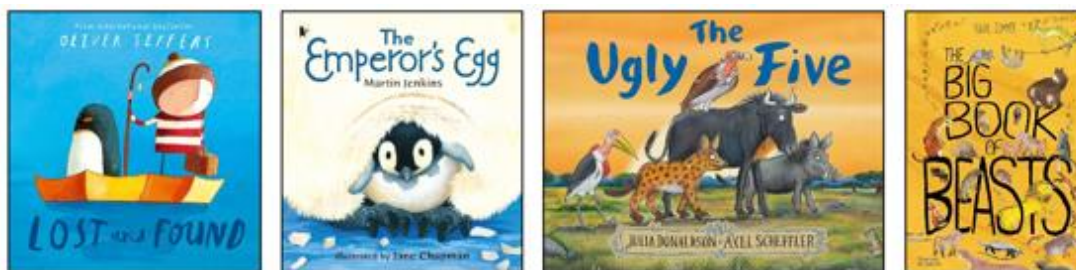
Class News

Shackadell Class

In Shackadell, we have been learning about some of the animals in **hot and cold places**. We learned the names of the continents by singing a song. We found out that Antarctica is very cold. We created our own South Pole role play area and one of the children in our class even made a snowmobile for it!



Next, we learned about Emperor penguins from a book called **'The Emperor's Egg'** by Martin Jenkins. We created our own water colour paintings of animals from Antarctica and wrote a fact about our animal. We then read the story **'Lost and Found'** by Oliver Jeffers. We helped create a boat for the boy and the penguin to row back to the South Pole.



After this, we learned about some animals that live in Africa. We really enjoyed learning from a book called **'The Ugly Five'** by Julia Donaldson. It is about five animals that all live in Africa – the wildebeest, the warthog, the lappet-faced vulture, the spotted hyena and the marabou stork.

We learned how to create digital images using a drawing app and stylus pens. We were very proud of our pieces of art.



Class News

Peartree Class

Here we are again, at the end of another busy but short half term. Peartree Class had their trip to **Stevenage Museum** last week. They were so excited about catching the bus into the town centre. During our bus ride, the children kept members of the public entertained with Easter songs and, of course, The Wheels on the Bus.



The children were extremely well behaved throughout the duration of the trip and were a credit to our school. We had a workshop about the **history of Stevenage and the building of The New Town**. We then ate our lunch before exploring the galleries. Finally, we caught the bus back to school and some of us were so tired we fell asleep on the bus.



Class News

Haffydown Class

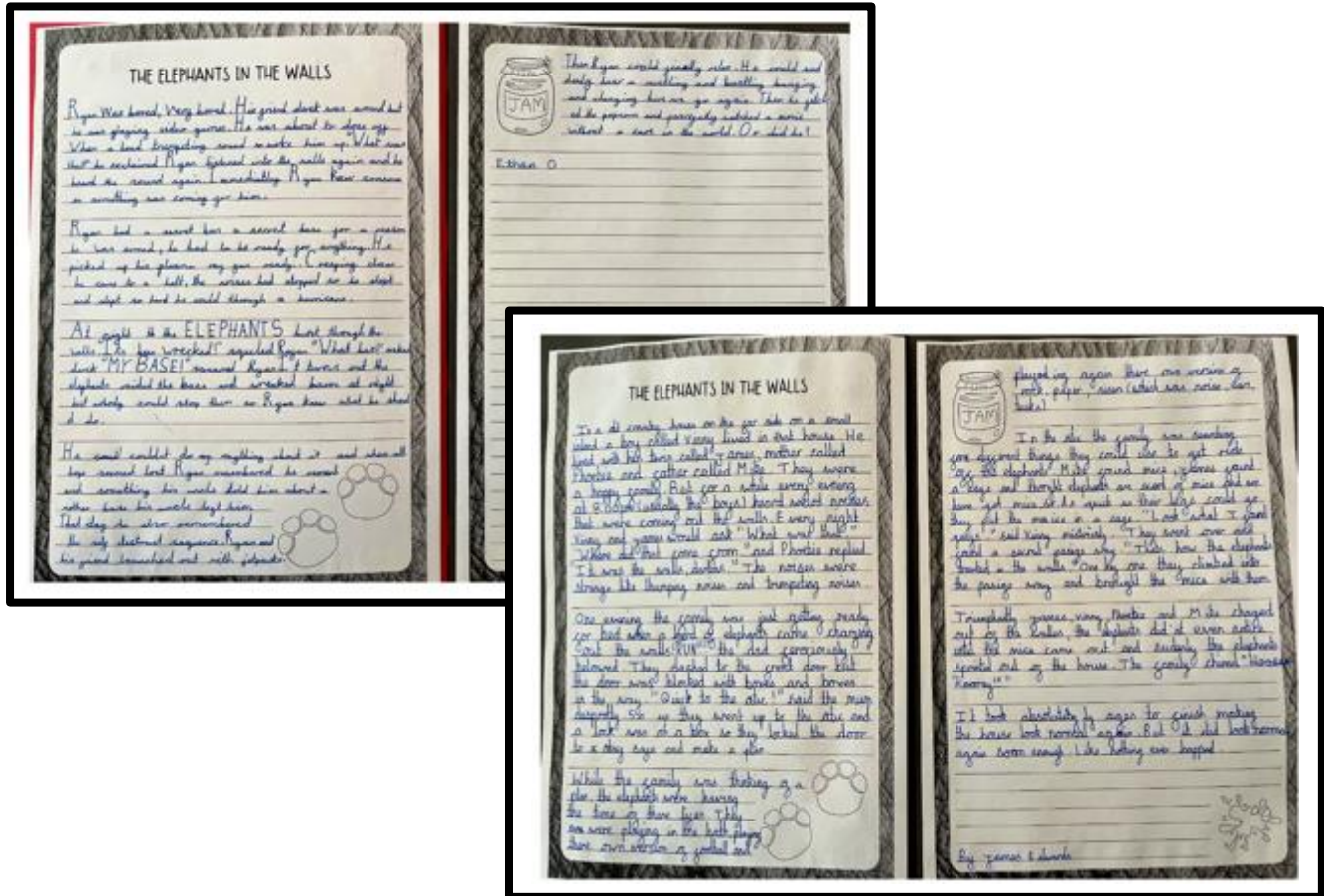
To celebrate reaching our goal of reading **1000 books** collectively, Haffydown were treated to a special 'Drop Everything and Read' day. The children came in wearing their pyjamas and comfortable outfits, carrying their pillows, blankets and cuddly toys, and settled in for a morning of sharing their favourite texts. We enjoyed a wide array of different texts, from bedtime stories and Christmas tales, to local poetry by an author from the village. Everyone read aloud to the class one at a time, and when Mrs Branagan visited us, she was amazed at the confidence and prosody shown by the class. We were even lucky enough to have a brand-new book read to us by Mrs Branagan. The calm, engaged atmosphere in Haffydown was very special and our highlight was sharing our love for reading with Shackadell, who came to visit us and see our books.



Class News

Puddlebridge Class

In English, we have thoroughly enjoyed reading 'The Wolves in the Walls' by Neil Gaiman. Inspired by this story, we have written our own short stories titled 'The Elephants in the Walls'.



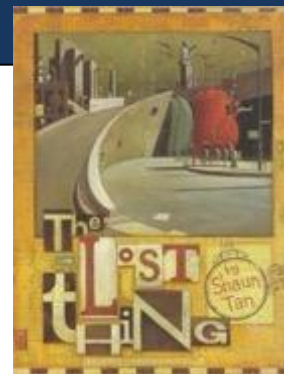
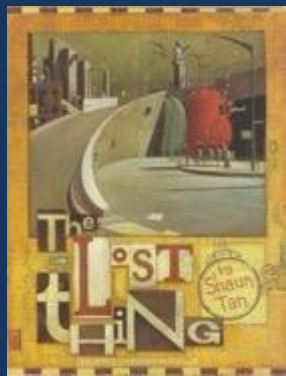
In Art, we have spent this term learning about the pop artist **Andy Warhol**. We created our own **Pop Art portraits** and have begun drawing everyday objects. We are planning on using these drawings to make a class collage.



Class News

Danes Class

In English, we have become authors and written our own books. We began by reading and watching an animated version of the book 'The Lost Thing' by Shaun Tan. We looked at the clever opening where the narrator speaks to the reader. We also looked closely at how characters are developed in the text and how dialogue can be used to develop a character. We also explored how varying the length of sentences can help us to write more than simply words – instead our writing can read like music on a page!



After a long time searching for the lost thing, I had to take the motor into my own hands. I went to my best friend's house to ask her for advice.

When I arrived, I asked her, "What do you know about this thing?" Her response was not in words but actions. She crawled into a corner of the room for months used as a side open, you could fit a toothpick in it. I soon realised that she wouldn't be any help so I went back to my parents.

After a few months of searching, I started to realise that all she was looking for was to go and get my parents but they said they are too busy.

I stood there for a while and took it all in. It had a strange look to it, almost like it was scared, and lost. I noticed that whenever it saw something interesting like a bird, it would wag what to me looked like a tail but when the thing got scared it slowly lowered the tail.

The thing looked like some sort of bottle. It was mostly grey with a bit of red and orange. It had two sticks like things for arms, and two pincers on the end. It had four legs which seemed quite handy as the thing was doing a rather lot of jumping. Everything was so interesting.

It took several lessons to draft our stories then our next task was to edit them. We read them through carefully whilst checking for any technical inaccuracies. We also made authorial decisions about word choices, word order and sentence construction. Finally, we chose one paragraph to redraft using an editing flap. This enabled us to completely restructure the paragraph, add more detail or even change events in the story.



Finally, we wrote up best copies of our stories to make into real books. We enjoyed designing front and back covers for these.

We loved sharing our books with some of the children from Shackadell and Peartree Classes.



Do you want to hear a story?

Well, I used to know a whole lot of interesting ones. But this one is probably going to be the most interesting one. Because this one is so interesting that you probably won't believe it.

Sit back, hold tight, let me tell you how I found the lost thing.

This happened a few weeks ago, on rather ordinary day but the sun. Not much was going on. But something caught my eye.

I made legs stand at a for a while. I mean, it had a really strange look about it - a whopper, a great sort of look. It floated in the air with all long legs. I couldn't help looking at it. All I could think about was how it was getting and how it got there.


As I looked, all I could see was some tiny details. It had a round eye with one slow coming out of the body. I was hiding for a second. I could tell it was there as I needed to sleep that day. I went to the village and asked anyone if they knew where it was from but they all said no.

Am I being weird?

Well, whilst you see, you might never be accompanied by a story. Maybe I'll tell you one my hilarious stories - so funny your head will knock off still screaming in laughter through out the galaxy, or I'll tell you a story so funny you'll fall asleep. Well, even people are so quiet like these days, and too frightened to talk to strangers. I'll tell you about my very best story about my cat sleeping in the dishwasher.

Actually it will be too good for you. I'll tell you about my story of giving my cats power in the air, walk... that'll be too funny for you. Hmm. You said things so perfectly specific. I'll tell you the story of lost items. The story of the lost thing.

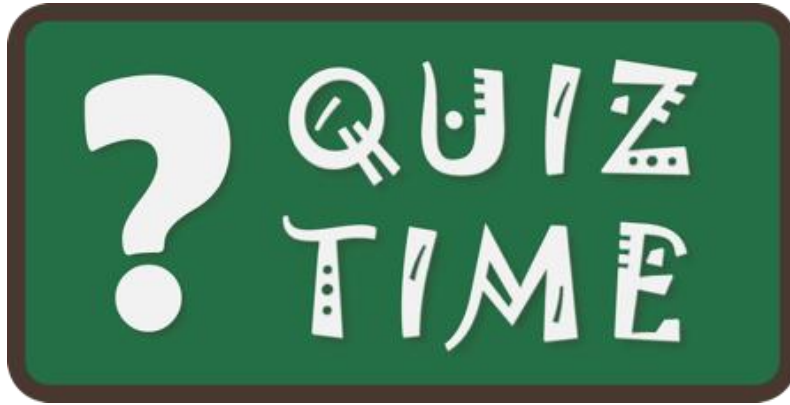
... A-a-a-a ZIP IT! Hey Chung let me inform you one my terrific tale.

I was absolutely and really... 

Please scan the QR codes to listen to some of our stories.

We adopted a similar narrator's voice to the author Shaun Tan. We began our stories by speaking directly to the reader.

Quiz Night – 7pm Friday 26th April



We are very excited for our next quiz night.

This is a fun evening where teams compete in tables of up to eight – ten people (adults only). Bring your own food and drink.

£6 per person and raffle on the night.

Tables are limited due to space in the school hall. If you would like to join us, please email:

closed@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

Coffee Morning

**to raise funds for a new
defibrillator for the village.**

Friday 5th April

10-12

**Aston Village
Hall**

Old fashioned 'Bring and Buy' stall -

**(Bring a new unwanted item and find
one you would like to buy)**

Delicious cakes and good company



Hertfordshire
Family Centre
Service



Hertfordshire Community
NHS Trust

Want to ask the School Nurses a Question?

Come to our live
Instagram Q&A on the
10/04/2024 at 15:00



@hct_schoolnursing



Hertfordshire
Family Centre
Service

NHS
Hertfordshire Community
MHS Trust

School Nursing

Spring 2024

Public Health Nursing 5-19 Team Newsletter

Welcome!

The school nursing team continues to support children in Hertfordshire mainstream schools.

Ways to contact us

School Nursing Duty line:
0300 123 7572
(Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)

Our referral website, which also has information about our service:



[School nurses in Hertfordshire \(hertsfamilycentres.org\)](https://hertsfamilycentres.org)

Social Media



@hct_schoolnursing
@teenhealth.hct



@HCT_SchoolNurse



©Hct SchoolNursing

Measles

Measles infection is caused by a virus, and spreads between people very easily. Around 1 in 15 people with measles can become seriously unwell.

What are the symptoms of measles?

A high temperature, runny or blocked nose, sneezing, a cough, red sore eyes.

Having the MMR vaccine is the best way to prevent measles.

To find out more, check out the National Measles Guidelines:



(UK Health Security Agency, 2024)

Emotional Health

Children can use many techniques to help reduce their stress and relax. There are many techniques on www.healthforkids.co.uk that you can teach your child to help them relax during times of stress. It's important that these are practised when you child is in a calm state.



Why not try the lanterns game to help your child express how they are feeling?



It's all about finding out what works for you and your child.

Special Educational Needs

The Hertfordshire Local Offer has lots of information about services for you if you have special educational needs and disabilities.

[The Hertfordshire SEND Local Offer](#)

SPACE supports young people who are neurodivergent. Whether you think you may be, are going through the diagnostic process, or have already received a diagnosis, **SPACE** are here to support you.

[SPACE Hertfordshire](#)



Chicken Pox

Chicken pox can appear at any age. It usually gets better after 1-2 weeks, without the need to see a GP. An itchy, spotty rash is the main symptom, which can appear anywhere on the body.

Chicken pox appears in 3 stages:

1. Small spots appear
2. Spots become blisters
3. Blisters become scabs

Other symptoms may include high temperature, generally feeling unwell and loss of appetite.

Children will need to stay off school until all spots have scabbed, usually 5 days after the spots appear.

For more information, check out www.nhs.uk/conditions/chickenpox

Headlice

Headlice can make your head feel itchy or like something is moving in your hair. Treat headlice as soon as you spot them. You can treat headlice without seeing a GP.

To remove headlice, comb the hair with a special fine-toothed comb. You can buy these online or at pharmacies. There's no need to keep your child off school.

Lice can be removed by wet combing:

1. Wash hair with ordinary shampoo, apply lots of conditioner.
2. Comb the whole head of hair, from the roots to the ends.

Do wet combing on days 1, 5, 9 and 13 to catch any newly hatched head lice. Check again that hair is free of lice after 17 days. See www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-lice-and-nits/ for more information.





Hertfordshire
**Family Centre
Service**



Want to know more about the Public Health School Nursing team in Hertfordshire?

Check out our platforms:



<https://www.hertsfamilycentres.org/info-and-advice/parents-and-mums-to-be/school-nurses.aspx#>

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



ChatHealth

07480 635 050

Confidential text message service ran by the school nursing team for 11-19 year olds. Text in any health and wellbeing concerns



@hct_schoolnursing

@teenhealth.hct



@HCT_SchoolNurse



🔍 Hct SchoolNursing



www.healthforkids.co.uk/hertfordshire



www.healthforteens.co.uk/hertfordshire



School nursing duty number

0300 123 7572

9am – 5pm Monday to Friday
(excluding bank holidays)

ORAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN

WHAT IS TOOTH DECAY?

The hard outer surface of a tooth is broken down or damaged by bacteria and acid making holes in the teeth, called cavities. It can cause pain and infections, and cause problems with eating, speaking, playing, learning, smiling and socialising. Tooth decay occurs when foods and drinks with sugars and starches are left on the teeth.

- Tooth decay is the most common reason for hospital admission in children aged 6-10
- Children with poor oral health have an increased risk of damage to adult teeth



There were 26,000 hospital admissions for children needing dental extraction in 2014 - 2015
(study carried out every 10 years)

REDUCE THE RISK OF TOOTH DECAY

- Take your child to the dentist when their first milk teeth appear
- Brush teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste - no rinsing
- Support children under 7 with brushing
- Children should see a dentist yearly at least
- Children should have fluoride varnish at each visit (which is free)

WHERE TO ACCESS A DENTIST

Scan the QR code or search "Find a dentist" for the NHS website.



Dental care is free for children and young people aged 0-19 years old.

TOP TIPS ✨

- Brush teeth in the morning and at bedtime for 2 minutes with fluoride toothpaste
- Use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste
- Spit out after brushing and don't rinse, otherwise the fluoride won't work as well
- Fizzy drinks, fruit juices and sugary snacks should be limited to mealtimes

HOW TO MAKE IT FUN

- Everyone can brush their teeth together - why not try a staring contest?
- Brushing to the beat - why not brush to your favourite song?
- Go electric?
- Use a timer - see who gets to two minutes without stopping





UK Health
Security
Agency

Measles is circulating

- measles is extremely infectious and can be serious
- Make sure your children get two MMR vaccines on time; the first at 1 year of age and the second at 3 years, 4 months
- If you or your children missed these vaccines, it's not too late. Ask for the free vaccine from your family doctor (GP) if you or your children aren't up-to-date
- if you have symptoms of measles, stay at home and phone your GP or NHS 111 for advice. **STAY AWAY** from GP surgeries and A&E departments – you could spread the illness to others
- symptoms include: high fever; sore red, watery eyes; coughing; aching and feeling generally unwell; a blotchy red brown rash, which usually appears after the first symptoms
- go to **nhs.uk** for more measles information

Symptoms

Rash



Temperature



Runny Nose



Red Eyes



Cough



This leaflet is available in English, Dari, Farsi, Pashto, Polish, Romanian and Ukrainian.
www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-outbreak