



Aston St. Mary's Newsletter

Our value this half term is Peace

www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

3rd May 2024

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

Diary Dates

Friday 10th May – Non-uniform day (cash donations please towards IT upgrade)
Monday 13th May – Thursday 16th May – Year Six SATs Assessments
Monday 20th May – Friday 24th May – Walk to School week
Tuesday 21st May – Shackadell trip to the library
Thursday 23rd May – Open Morning 9:30am - 10:30am
Friday 24th May – Sports Day - morning (weather dependent)
Monday 3rd June – Friday 7th June – Year Six Bikeability Training
Tuesday 4th June – Shackadell Trip to Hertfordshire Zoo
Thursday 13th June – Puddlebridge and Danes Theatre Trip
Friday 14th June – PTFA Fathers' Day Gifts and Reserve Sports Day
Thursday 27th June – Class Photos
Friday 28th June – Peartree Trip to Cuffley
Tuesday 2nd July – Intervillage Sports
Wednesday 3rd July – Year Six to Hazard Alley
Thursday 4th July – Music Concert at 6pm
Tuesday 9th July – Haffydown to Celtic Harmony
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 6:00pm
Wednesday 17th July - Whole school production 6:00pm
Friday 19th July – Last day of term (1pm finish) Leavers' Service at church 9:30am

Since returning from the Easter break (which now seems like a distant memory!), it has been wonderful to see all the classes absorbed and engaged in their learning – this is evident throughout the school day, every day. So much has been achieved already, a taster of which is shared on our class pages. After school is busy too, with so many children taking part in the various **clubs and activities** on offer. A highlight of this academic year has to be the many and varied **sporting fixtures** which children across the school have been able to take part in - and plenty more are planned for the summer term. Thank you to all the staff, and in particular the office staff, for the many hours it takes to enable our children to take part in these fixtures.

Our value this half term is '**Peace**'; we have begun to explore what this means in our daily worship. We have been impressed by the children's thoughts and contributions and their desire for peace at home, in school and also in the wider world. Please see the ideas sheets towards the end of this newsletter should you wish to explore our value at home with your child.

As you will see from the **dates list**, we have an exciting term ahead with lots going on. A number of new dates have been added – these are shown in red on the list. Please keep checking the diary dates because further dates may be added as plans are finalised and all are subject to change.

As always, this point in the year is particularly important for our **Year Six** pupils as they prepare to take their SATs assessments the week after next. They have worked incredibly hard throughout the year and are very well-prepared and even excited to show what they are capable of. We wish them every success and are immensely proud of them for being such wonderful and ambitious young people. At Aston St. Mary's, our pupils continue to enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum throughout the year, including in Year Six. This week, Danes Class have enjoyed a visit to **The River Beane** as part of their geographical learning – take a look at their class page on the website to find out more.

We wish everyone a happy and relaxing (and hopefully sunny) **bank holiday weekend** and we look forward to seeing the children in school again on Tuesday.

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



House Points

Canterbury



150

St. Paul's



145

St. Albans



148

Coventry



192

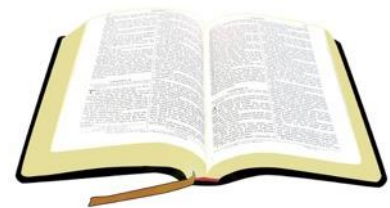
A Thought from Reverend Jenny:

'I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony' sang The New Seekers in the 1970's
'I'd like to see the world for once
All standing hand in hand
And hear them echo through the hills
For peace throughout the land
(That's the song I hear)...'



...the vision of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah (11:6-11) of a world where 'the wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them...They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea...' a vision at odds with the world as it is ...

a vision that demands we change...
that we let go of our anger, hate and unwillingness to forgive...
our pride, our need to be right, our need to be on top...
our selfishness and self-sufficiency,
loving our neighbour (everyone!) as ourselves...



To change the world we must be good to those who cannot repay us'. (Pope Francis)

Notices

GoConnect K'nex Challenge



On Wednesday 17th April, Danes and Puddlebridge Classes had lots of fun taking part in the 2024 GoConstruct K'nex challenge. This event, which involves around 180 schools from Hertfordshire and surrounding areas, is an exciting engineering competition. Under the guidance of our local STEM ambassador, the children embarked on the task of constructing a K'nex bulldozer equipped with a functional, pivoting scoop. Working in pairs, they had a tight deadline of an hour to complete their creations before showcasing their designs to the class. Their efforts were evaluated based on criteria such as teamwork, problem-solving, and design.

Aiden and Liam (Danes) and Darcie and Bertie (Puddlebridge) were overjoyed when their bulldozers were selected as their class winners. Photos of their bulldozers will be judged against the top designs from other participating schools.

Summer Music Concert Thursday 4th July at 6pm



**An opportunity for instrumentalists
and the choir to perform.**

**If your child has music lessons
outside school and would like to
perform, please contact Mrs Minnis
or Mrs Crowley.**



Quiz Night

Friday 26th April 2024

Thank you to everyone who attended our Quiz Night last Friday. It was a fun, sociable evening which raised an impressive £365.

Events such as these raise money for the governor's fund which will be used towards our essential IT upgrade.

Particular thanks should go to our two hosts – Rachel and Max – who did a fantastic job of writing and presenting the quiz.

Please look out for the date of our next quiz – it would be great if we could welcome at least one team of parents to represent each class in the school (up to eight people in a team).

Notices



We are delighted that our kitchen has, once again, received a Five Star rating following a visit from the Food Standards Agency earlier this week.

Well done to Joyce and Heather.



Walk to School Week - 20th – 24th May 2024

We are excited to be taking part in Walk to School Week this May.

We all know the health benefits of walking so please help us this week to reduce congestion by supporting children in being more active and help reduce lower carbon emissions during this Walk to School Week.

We would like to encourage all our pupils to try and walk, cycle or scoot to school during this week. If it's not possible to walk all the way, then it would be great if you could park 10 minutes away from school and walk or scoot the last part of your journey.

Each class will have a poster of featuring a map of Hertfordshire and aim take a 'virtual' walk by helping Buster The Dinosaur (the Active and Safer Travel Team mascot) walk around Hertfordshire. Every time a pupil travels sustainably, a dot can be coloured in.

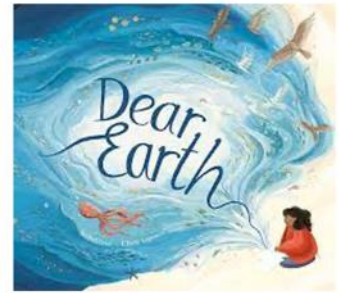
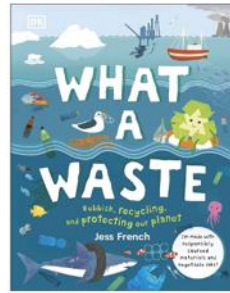
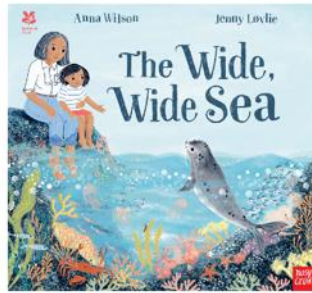
Following on from Walk to School Week, we will be supporting **Clean Air Day on Thursday 20th June 2024.**



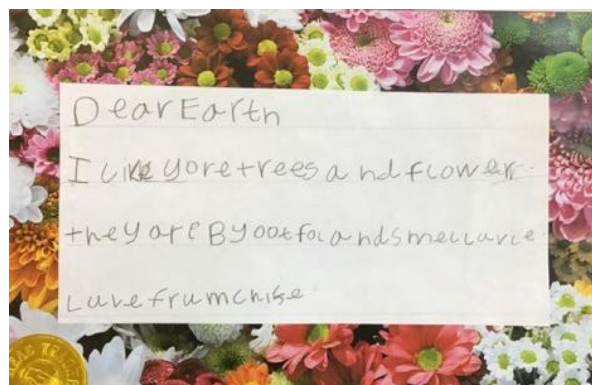
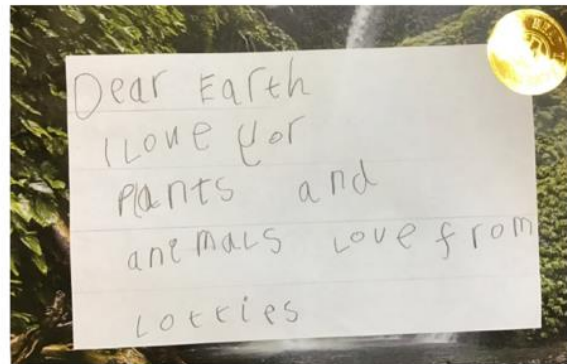
Class News

Shackadell Class

This half term, we have already been very busy learning about how to **protect our planet**. We celebrated **Earth Day** by learning all about litter and the damage it does to our environment - including the oceans. We read the story 'Somebody Swallowed Stanley' and 'The Wide, Wide Sea' and discussed how we could protect our oceans. Next, we enjoyed 'What a Waste' and did a litter pick around our school grounds. We couldn't believe how much litter we found! We also learned that pollinators are very important to the survival of many plants in our planet. It was fun using recycled paper to create our own marigold seeded paper which we will plant in our school garden and at home to attract more pollinators.



We really enjoyed reading 'Dear Earth' which inspired us to write letters to Earth which explain what we love about our planet!



Class News

Peartree Class

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce **Miss Gregson** to Peartree class. She will be with us up until half term. I know you will all make her feel welcome.

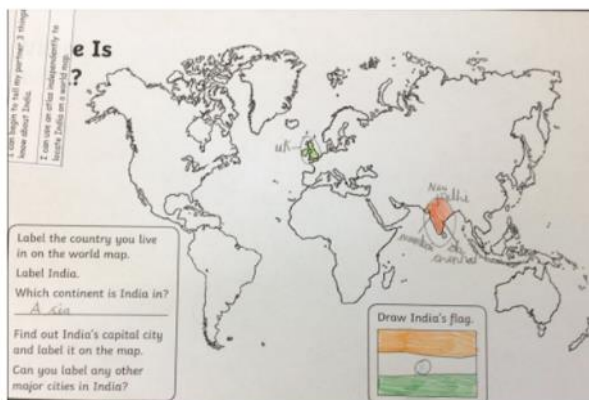
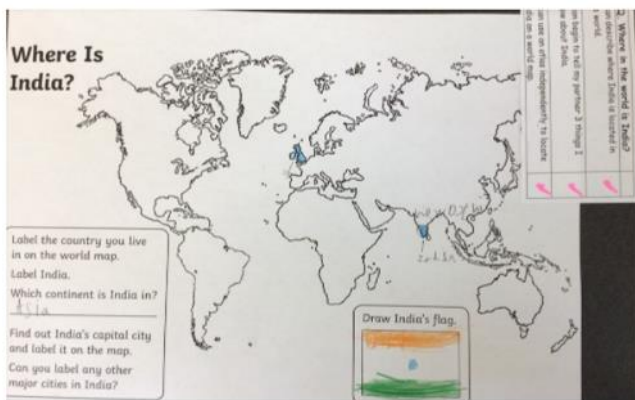


We have now finished our geography unit on the **United Kingdom** and the children have really enjoyed this. They can talk about human and physical features and landmarks. I have received so many pieces of home learning



The children are learning to use an atlas to find information. They love looking through them in their free time and have even been asking if they can take them home.

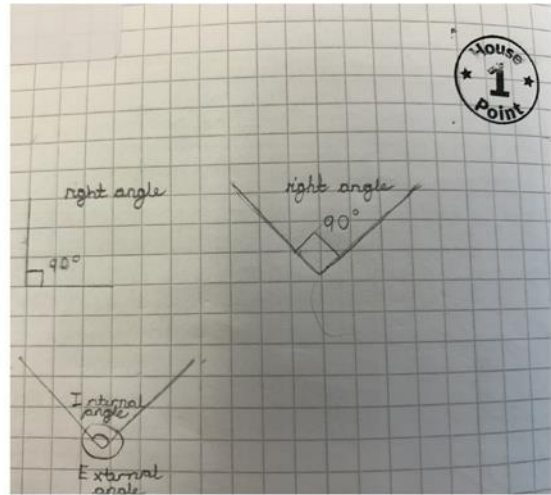
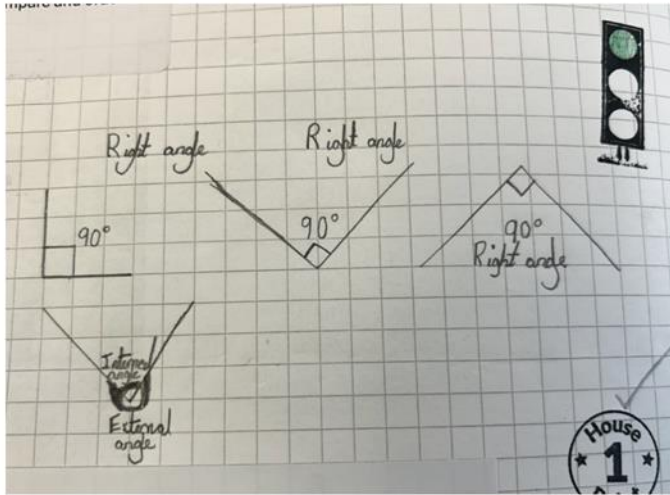
We are now starting our next unit where we are learning about **India**. We will also be looking at some different styles of Indian art. The children have enjoyed decorating their title pages. I am looking forward to seeing what the children will bring in for their home learning this half term.



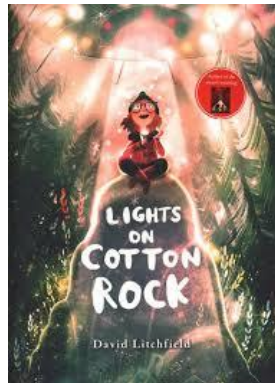
Class News

Haffydown Class

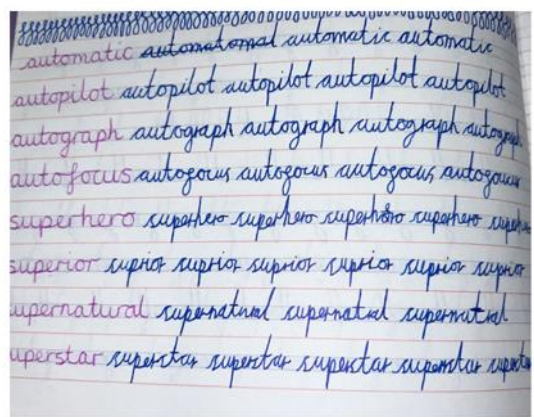
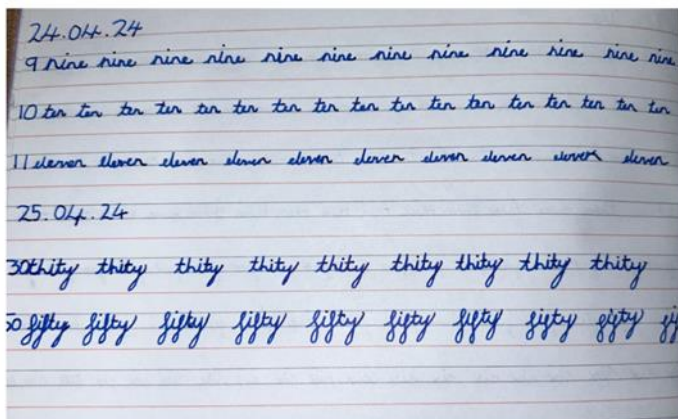
In Haffydown, we have been exploring **angles and lines** in maths. We have worked hard on our presentation and accuracy when drawing right angles and we had lots of fun using the geoboards to construct perpendicular and parallel lines.



In English, we are continuing with our book '**Lights on Cotton Rock**', and we can't wait to find out what happens in the end!



As we work up to writing our persuasive letters, we have been practising really hard on our handwriting!



Class News

Puddlebridge Class

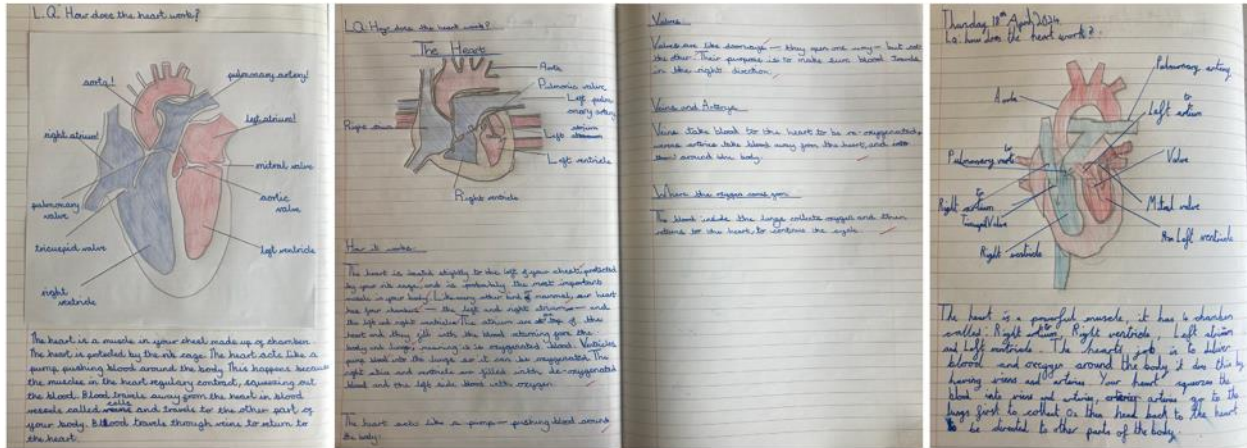
In our recent Design and Technology sessions, we've been learning about cam toys. This week brought the hands-on part of our learning: measuring, cutting, and building our toys. We are all so pleased with our final outcomes.



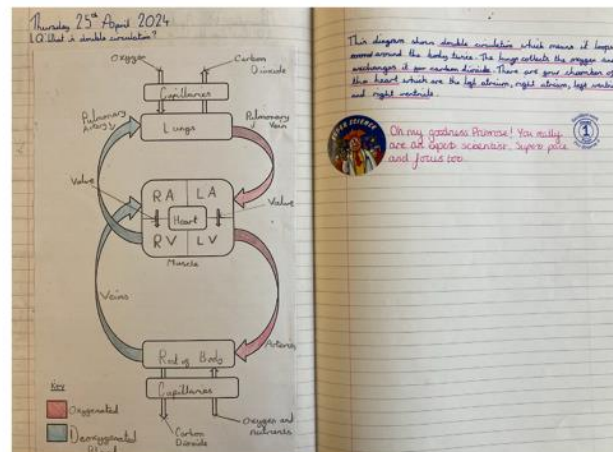
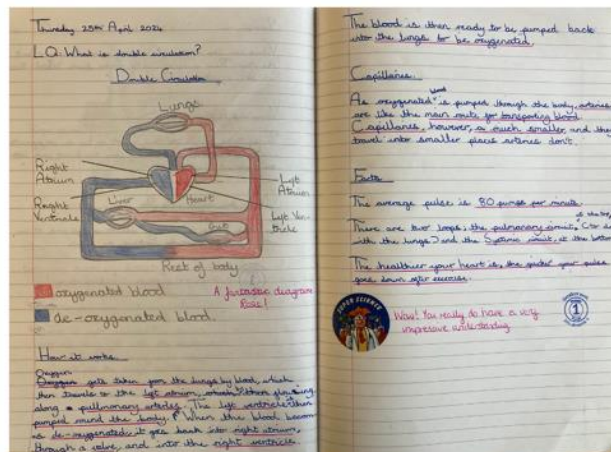
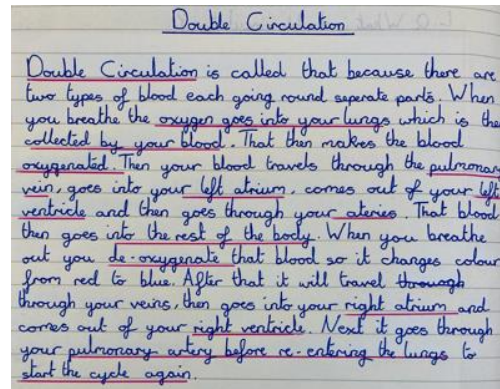
Class News

Danes Class

In science, Years Five and Six are learning about the **circulatory system**. We began by finding out about the **heart**. We learnt that it is a muscle which pumps blood around the body. We also found out that the heart has four chambers – two on the left and two on the right. When we labelled these on our diagrams, we had to be careful to get left and right correct – to convince ourselves of this, some of us needed to hold our diagrams against our bodies!



Our next lesson was all about **double circulation** – how the blood actually passes through the heart twice (once to collect oxygen from the lungs and once to the rest of the body) during each circulation. To understand this, we went outside onto the playground where we ‘acted out’ the circulation of blood. The role of the heart was particularly important - Finn, Nikita, Harry C and Willow were selected for this popular role and they did a fantastic job of circulating the oxygenated and deoxygenated blood around the body! Please **scan the QR code** to see what we did. Finally, we produced labelled diagrams to represent double circulation.



PEACE

HOME SCHOOL VALUES

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

TALK TOGETHER about Peace

In school, children will have been learning about different kinds of **peace** including **peace** that comes when it is quiet, the things that make for **peace** of mind and the qualities of a **peacemaker**. In this issue of Home School Values, we will be focussing on the last of these.

All families have disagreements and arguments from time to time.

- What are the things that cause members of your family to fall out?
- Are there particular times of the day that arguments happen?
- How do each of you feel inside at these times?

THINK TOGETHER Words of Wisdom

"You cannot shake hands with a clenched fist"

Golda Meir/Indira Gandhi



READ TOGETHER...

David Tries To Make Peace With King Saul

King Saul knew that he needed to keep an eye on young David. He had killed the giant, Goliath, and now people were saying that David should be king. David was a gifted musician and so Saul asked him to come and live in his palace and play soothing music to him when he was in a rage.

David became more and more popular and a good friend of Saul's own son Jonathan. Saul became more and more angry and jealous. Finally one day, as he watched David **peacefully** playing his harp Saul's fury erupted and he threw a spear at David narrowly missing him. David knew he must escape from Saul's palace and with Jonathan's help, he fled into the desert. Before long, hundreds of followers joined David. Saul was furious and, with 3000 of his finest soldiers, set out to hunt David down and kill him.

One day Saul and his men stopped by a huge cave. Saul went into the cave alone or so he thought! In fact, David and his friends had been resting in another part of the cave and when they saw Saul, David's men whispered, "This is your chance David. God has delivered Saul into your hands to deal with as you please. Let's kill him at once." David ordered his men to stay back while he crept forward and taking his knife from his belt, instead of killing Saul he simply cut off a corner of the king's cloak.

As Saul left the cave, David called after him, "My King, why do you think that I want to harm you and cause a rebellion? Look, here is a piece of your cloak! I could have killed you but I wish for only **peace** between us."

Saul was overcome with sadness for what he had done. "May the Lord reward you richly for the way you have treated me today. I know now that one day David you will indeed be king."

Bible story based on 1 samuel 24



QUIZ

Spot the difference

Can you spot the eight differences?





FASCINATING FACTS



The Nobel Peace Prize

Alfred Nobel was a 19th century Swedish inventor and engineer. He invented dynamite, which was used to destroy many things! Perhaps because of this, in his will, Nobel left money and instructions to award five special prizes each year. He said that one of these, the Nobel **Peace** Prize, should be given to a person, or group of people, who had done the most or best work to promote **peace** between nations.

- The Nobel **Peace** Prize is presented in Oslo on 10th December each year by the King of Norway
- The winner is given a diploma, a medal and over 1 million US dollars to carry on their work



FAMILY FOCUS Becoming Peacemakers

'Peer Mediation' is a scheme often used in schools to train teams of children who volunteer to help settle disputes in the playground. Some of the guidelines in the training include the following strategies:

- Listen carefully to both sides
- No interrupting
- No accusations
- List problems to be sorted out and then work through them

How do you resolve disagreements in your household? List one 'top tip' from every member of the family.



HOME-SCHOOL CHALLENGE

Create an Acrostic for the word **Peacemaker**

A good **peacemaker** is.....

Prepared to listen

Even-handed with everyone

Always fair

★ HALL OF FAME

Rigoberta Menchu

Very few people had heard of Rigoberta Menchu when it was announced that she had won the Nobel **Peace** Prize in 1992. However, Rigoberta was one of the bravest women ever to have been awarded this prestigious prize. She was born in 1959 into a Mayan Indian family who lived and worked in Guatemala. The Mayan people were treated cruelly by the government and the army in Guatemala. The Menchu family were Christians and they believed it was their duty to fight against such injustice. The family learnt Spanish from the local priests so they could stand up for the rights of their people. One by one the members of the family were killed in the most dreadful way by the government soldiers, first Rigoberta's 16 year old brother, then her father because he was a union leader and then finally her mother. Rigoberta knew she would be next, so she escaped to Mexico where she wrote her life story and made a film about the bad things happening in Guatemala. Rigoberta continued to stand up against injustice and for more than twenty years worked as a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador to promote a culture of peace and protect the rights of people to live in their own country.



Our Workshops - Summer Term 2024



Angels
AUTISM & ADHD SUPPORT

Supporting Sensory Needs Workshop

Autistic children and those with ADHD experience their senses differently to others; sometimes experiencing too much or too little. This can make the world around them seem overwhelming.

Join us to look at how to support your child's sensory needs.

23rd April, 10am - 12noon
on Zoom

www.angelsupportgroup.org.uk

Angels
AUTISM & ADHD SUPPORT

Autism and ANXIETY

Autistic people are more likely to experience anxiety. Anxiety for those on the autism spectrum can be more intense than for those who are not. Join us to look at anxiety in more detail and discuss ways to help support your child or young person.

7th May, 10am - 12noon
on Zoom

www.angelsupportgroup.org.uk

Angels
AUTISM & ADHD SUPPORT

Come and talk to us about...
EDUCATION ISSUES!

21st May, 10am - 12noon on Zoom

Join us for a Q&A session on all things related to: Education, EHCP's, Graduated Response, Panels, Appeals, Mediation and Tribunals etc.

Managing Meltdowns Workshop **Angels**
AUTISM & ADHD SUPPORT

Join our friendly, informative workshop to better understand meltdowns and rage.

We will look at why they happen and look at ways to help when they do.

11th June
10am-12pm
on Zoom

www.angelsupportgroup.org.uk

Angels
AUTISM & ADHD SUPPORT

Executive Function Dysfunction

Executive functioning skills help you get things done! These skills are controlled by an area of the brain called the frontal lobe. It's common for those with Autism and ADHD to struggle with this.

Executive Function helps you: Manage Time, Stay Organised, Switch Focus, Organise, Remember Details, Avoid Laying on Doing the Wrong Thing, Multitask

Executive Function Dysfunction can affect your ability to work or go to school, do things independently, & maintain relationships.

Often autistic people and those with ADHD often struggle with this. Come to our informative and helpful workshop to learn strategies to help.

25th June,
10am-12 noon via Zoom

www.angelsupportgroup.org.uk

Angels
AUTISM & ADHD SUPPORT

SURVIVING the Summer Holidays

9th July, 10am-12noon via zoom

Losing the predictability and structure that school brings coupled with everywhere you visit being extremely busy. The summer holidays can be really difficult for families of neurodivergent children.

Join us for a discussion about ways to cope during the summer break.

www.angelsupportgroup.org.uk

Angels AUTISM & ADHD SUPPORT for parents/carers of children with ADHD and/or on the Autistic Spectrum

Angels provide individualised, professional expertise and advice for the families of autistic children and children with ADHD (and those awaiting diagnosis). Come along to our meetings to chat with other parents, share ideas and experiences and gain information, advice and strategies.

We provide:

- Parent support group meetings and workshops in Stevenage, Letchworth and Online.
- Online evening support group meetings
- One-to-one service to support you in a personalised way with any issue around your child/young person's conditions, including support with meetings and forms.
- A private moderated Facebook group just for members.

Scan the QR code and complete our online membership form to access our FREE support.



Note for Professionals:

If you are a professional working with families and would like to learn more about Angels, then please contact The Angels Team on info@angelsupportgroup.org.uk

Follow Angels
Support Group on
Social Media



www.angelsupportgroup.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1117059

Charity no: 1117059



Charity no: 1117059



Tue - via Zoom 10am-12noon	Wed - Letchworth 10am-12noon at The Pod, Northfields Infant and Nursery School, Burley, Letchworth SG6 4PT	Thu - Stevenage 10am-12noon at The Phoenix Group, 2-6 The Hyde, Shephall, Stevenage SG2 9SE	Thu - via Zoom 7.30pm- 8.30pm	Tue - via Zoom 10am-12noon	Wed - Letchworth 10am-12noon at The Pod, Northfields Infant and Nursery School, Burley, Letchworth SG6 4PT	Thu - Stevenage 10am-12noon at The Phoenix Group, 2-6 The Hyde, Shephall, Stevenage SG2 9SE	Thu - via Zoom 7.30pm- 8.30pm
16th April Parent/Carer Support Group with Lorraine Jones		18th April Meet Up and Chat	18th April Evening Parent/Carer Support Group	4th June Parent/Carer Support Group with Lorraine Jones		6th June Meet Up and Chat	
23rd April Workshop: How to support your child's sensory needs	24th April Meet Up and Chat <i>In partnership with the Letchworth Family Support Team</i>	25th April Parent/Carer Support Group with Lorraine Jones		11th June Workshop: Managing Meltdowns		13th June Parent/Carer Support Group with Lorraine Jones	13th June Evening Parent/Carer Support Group
30th April Parent/Carer Support Group with Lorraine Jones		2nd May Meet Up and Chat		18th June Parent/Carer Support Group with Lorraine Jones	19th June Meet Up and Chat <i>In partnership with the Letchworth Family Support Team</i>	20th June Meet Up and Chat	
7th May Workshop: Autism and Anxiety		9th May Parent/Carer Support Group with Lorraine Jones		25th June Workshop: Executive Function Dysfunction		27th June Parent/Carer Support Group with Lorraine Jones	
14th May Parent/Carer Support Group with Lorraine Jones		16th May Meet Up and Chat	16th May Evening Parent/Carer Support Group				
21st May Workshop: Q&A Education Issues	22nd May Meet Up and Chat <i>In partnership with the Letchworth Family Support Team</i>	23rd May Parent/Carer Support Group with Lorraine Jones					

Half Term

Charity no: 1117059



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2nd July Parent/Carer Support Group with Lorraine Jones		4th July Meet Up and Chat	
9th July Workshop: Surviving the Summer Holidays	10th July Meet Up and Chat <i>In partnership with the Letchworth Family Support Team</i>	11th July Parent/Carer Support Group with Lorraine Jones	
16th July Parent/Carer Support Group with Lorraine Jones		18th July Meet Up and Chat	18th July Evening Parent/Carer Support Group

Summer Holidays

Follow us on social media for updates:



Our podcasts cover a wide range of topics, search "Neurodiversity Chats"