



Aston St. Mary's Newsletter

Our value this half term is Generosity

www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

19th December 2025

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

Diary Dates

Tuesday 6th January 2026 –

Children return to school

Wednesday 21st January –

Danes and Puddlebridge Classes

to visit Bayfordbury

Observatory 5pm

Friday 23rd January – Non-

uniform for governor fund

Monday 16th February - Friday

20th February – Half Term break

Friday 27th February – Non-

uniform for governor fund

Thursday 5th March – World

Book Day

Friday 6th March – Aston's Got

Talent (PTFA)

Monday 9th March - Parents

evening 3:30pm - 5:20pm

Thursday 12th March - Parents

evening 3:30pm - 7:20pm

Friday 13th March –

Mothering Day Service

Thursday 26th March – Rock

Steady Concert

Friday 27th March – Easter Service

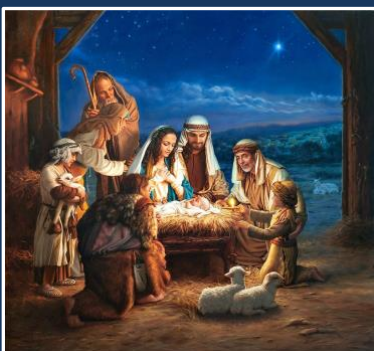
Spring term finishes at 1pm.



As we head towards the end of term, we would like to wish all of our families and very Happy Christmas. In the midst of all the preparations for Christmas, both in school and at home, it is important that we reflect upon the true meaning of Christmas. People all over the world will be celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ and sharing in the joy that this brings. Our value this half term is '**generosity**'; at this time of year, it is particularly important that we give generously in whatever way we can. We need to be grateful for the lives that we lead and remember all those around the world who are not as fortunate as ourselves.

The past couple of weeks have been a very busy time in school. Thank you to our wonderful PTFA for organising such a successful **Christmas Fayre** – this raised **over £2000** for our school; it really was great that this event was so well attended by so many families and friends of Aston St. Mary's. Last week, both our upper and lower school **singing groups** visited **Woodlands View Care Home** to spread some Christmas joy by performing some beautiful Christmas songs. They also performed to family and friends at our **Christmas Concert** last Monday evening. Thank you to everyone who attended; the hall was full to capacity! We would like to thank **Mrs Avis** for all her hard work leading the singing groups this term – it is wonderful that so many children (51 altogether from across Years One – Six) choose to participate. The children of **Shackadell Class** had their chance to perform on Thursday; their performance of **Busy, Busy Bethlehem** was simply delightful. Last Friday, the children enjoyed **Reward Day**, a whole day of fun activities, to recognise the excellent behaviour of children throughout the term. This week began with our **Christmas Carol Services**. We think you will agree that there was a very special atmosphere in the church. It was wonderful to hear the **Year Six bell ringers** perform at the end of the service – **thank you to Mr Falder** for giving the children this opportunity. Since then, we have enjoyed **Christmas lunch** (thank you to **Joyce and Heather** in the kitchen for such a wonderful meal), a fantastic **concert from our Rock Steady bands**, **Christmas parties** and, today, a **Christmas sing-song** to end the term.

We would like to thank our whole school community for your continued support and to wish you and your loved ones a restful Christmas and a New Year of health and happiness.



ACADEMIC YEAR 2025/2026

AUTUMN TERM

Tuesday 2nd September 2025 to Friday 19th December 2025

Half Term – Monday 27th October 2025– Friday 31st October 2025

Occasional day – Monday 24th November 2026 – School closed

SPRING TERM

Tuesday 6th January 2026 to Friday 27th March 2026

Half Term – Monday 16th February 2026– Friday 20th February 2026

SUMMER TERM

Tuesday 14th April 2026 to Friday 17th July 2026

Bank Holiday – Monday 4th May 2026 – School closed

Half term – Monday 25th May 2026 – Friday 29th May 2026

INSET DAYS (School closed)

Inset day – Monday 1st September 2026

Occasional day – Monday 24th November 2026

Inset day – Monday 5th January 2026

Inset day – Monday 13th April 2026

Inset day – Monday 20th and Tuesday 21st July 2026

School Meals

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

DINNER MONEY FEES £3.55

per meal



Shining Stars
were awarded to:
Azariah, Lucas and Rosie

House Point Winners

Well done to St. Paul's House for earning the most house points this half term!



House Points

Canterbury



631

St. Paul's



661

St. Albans



541

Coventry



562

A Christmas Thought about Generosity: The Gift of Giving

At Christmas, we often think about the gifts we hope to receive. The twinkling lights, the songs, and the wrapped boxes under the tree all remind us of the joy of presents!

But the very best gift we can give or get doesn't come in a box. It's the gift of **generosity**. Generosity isn't just about buying things; it's about giving our time, our kindness, and our help. It's helping a friend who drops their books, sharing our favourite game, or making a card for a lonely neighbour. Think about how good it feels when someone is kind to you. That's the feeling we spread when we are generous.

This Christmas, let's try to be like the wise people in the Christmas story, who shared their treasures. Our treasure is the kindness in our hearts. Let's share that with everyone we meet!

Dear God,

*Thank you for the wonderful gifts of Christmas.
Help us to remember that the best gifts are the ones we give.*

*Please fill our hearts with generosity, kindness, and love.
Guide our hands to help others, our voices to say kind words, and our minds to think about those who might need a friend.*

*Thank you for the joy of giving and sharing.
Amen.*



Christmas at Aston St. Mary's

Carol Service

It was wonderful that both our carol services were so well-attended with the church full to capacity each time. Year Six did a fabulous job of reminding us of the Christmas story and the carols were simply beautiful; we think you will agree that all the children sang beautifully. Well done to the fantastic Year Six bell ringers too.



Christmas Lunch

Our Christmas lunch was certainly a very special occasion. The whole school enjoyed a delicious lunch together whilst listening to Christmas music. After lunch, the children were treated to a festive film together in the hall.



Christmas at Aston St. Mary's

Carol Singing at Woodlands View



On Monday 8th December, the children from Lower School Singing Group (Years One-Three) delighted their audience when they sang some Christmas songs to the residents of Woodlands View Care Home. They really did have a lovely morning, including a crisp, cold walk to and from school. On Wednesday 10th December, it was the turn of the Upper School Singing Group (Years Four – Six) to spread some Christmas joy as they too visited the care home. Both groups of children were beautifully behaved and a real credit to Aston St. Mary's.



Christmas Concert



It was wonderful to see so many children from Years One – Six enjoying performing a delightful collection of Christmas songs on Monday evening last week.

To hear some of their beautiful singing, please scan the QR code.

Class News

Shackadell Class

Shackadell Class have really been getting into the Christmas spirit! We had a brilliant time when some of our adults came in for a 'stay and make' session, where we created some lovely Christmas crafts! We have also been learning about letters. We read '**Paddington's Christmas Post**' and '**The Jolly Christmas Postman**'. We were also lucky enough to have a visit from the postman that serves our local community, who told us all about his job at this time of year. We have had lots of post delivered to Shackadell Class from some of our friends and family from different parts of the UK and the World! After this, we wrote our own letters to Santa. With all of the cards coming into school, we have also had to set up our own sorting office.



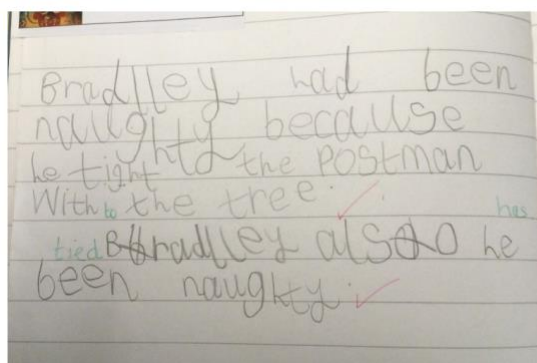
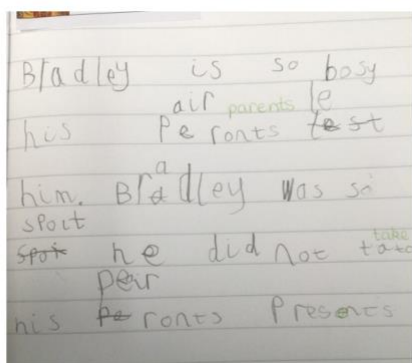
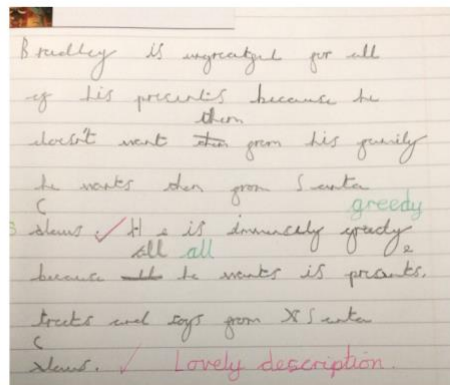
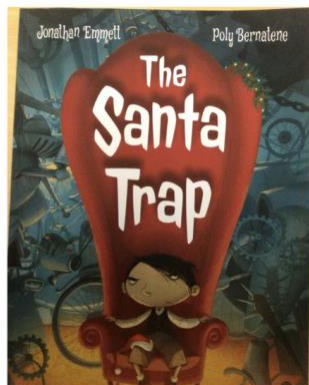
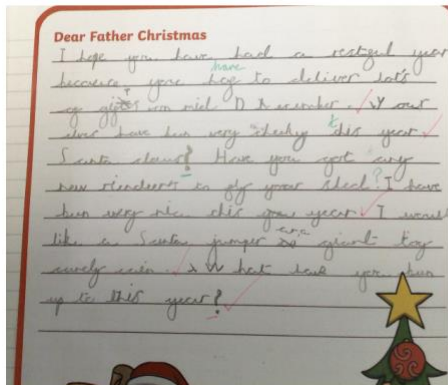
Shackadell have also been incredibly busy learning and performing our Nativity play '**Busy, Busy, Bethlehem**'. It was wonderful to see our school hall so full of family who were there to support us and enjoy the performance. We know you will all agree that the children were brilliant and showed some fantastic acting, singing and dancing skills!



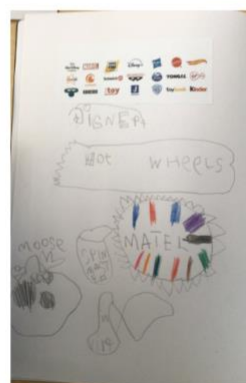
Class News

Peartree Class

I cannot believe how quickly this half term has gone. We are all excited for Christmas and have been reading **The Santa Trap** by Jonathan Emmett. We wrote a character description about the main character Bradley and we wrote our own letters to Santa.



We have begun our art topic which we will carry on in the Spring term, and we are all very excited. The learning question is **'What do our toys do when we are not there?'** We will learn about the toy photographer **Mitchell Wu**.



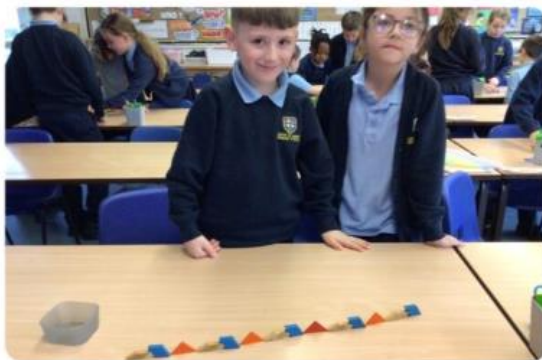
I hope you all have a lovely Christmas and a happy New Year.

Class News

Haffydown Class



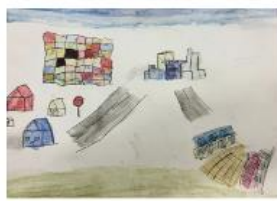
Haffydown Class have been busy exploring shapes in maths. We started by identifying and naming a range of 2D and 3D shapes and discussing the relationship between them. The children investigated shape properties such as sides, faces, edges and vertices, and used Venn diagrams and Carroll diagrams to sort shapes according to these features. They loved challenging each other in a fun shape-identifying game to see who could spot the most shapes correctly! We also explored real-life examples, including pentagon-shaped buildings and skyscrapers as cuboids, helping to link our learning to the world around us. We then moved on to linear patterns, where we created and described repeating patterns using shapes – a skill the children are now very confident explaining. A fantastic effort from everyone, showing great teamwork, reasoning and mathematical thinking!



Class News

Puddlebridge Class

In our art lessons this term, Puddlebridge have been exploring the question: ***How do you draw a journey?*** We studied the work of artists **Stephen Wiltshire, Olivia Brotheridge** and **Gareth Fuller**, using their techniques and ideas to inspire our own final responses to this key question.



Class News

Danes Class

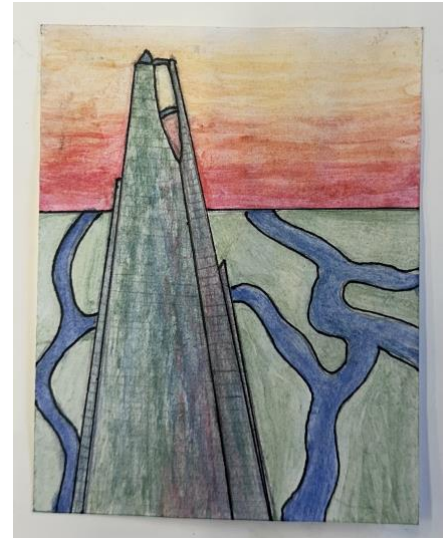
Oh what fun we've had this half-term with our music learning! We created our own 'Spooky Story' compositions featuring a **drum beat**, **melody** and **bassline**. Using chrome books and headphones, we accessed our own workspaces where we explored **story writing**, **music composition** and had so much fun **producing our own tracks**.



Scan the QR code to listen!



Last week, we created our final pieces for our art learning this term. All of our learning journey has centred around the question: **How Do Artists See the World?** Contrasting in their styles, we explored how **Jane Adams** (one-point and two-point perspective) and **David Hockney** (flattening space) express themselves to understand how composition can vary. **Our final pieces show how we (as artists) see the world.** We're so proud of how they turned out!



Ghastly Waxwork
A Gothic Narrative

The light trickled in through the drawn, lifeless curtains. The isolated room, deserted and ominous gull of white antiques. A lit candle flickered drowning the ghostly table. As the curtains opened even more, they unveiled aghast figure of Miss Havisham. Her sunken eyes looked on my gaunt body. Her neck spoiled with jewels. She was dressed in rich, white materials as if she was getting ready for a wedding. She had one shoe on and another lay by her sparking wrist.

Miss Havisham's hopeless eyes spoke to me as if they were alive. Her skin shrank to skin and bone; she had lipstick which spread across her face. I heard Miss Havisham squeal.

"Who's there?"

I didn't know what to say.

"Pip na'ar." I conveyed in fear.

I gazed at the dusty clock - it stopped at twenty minutes to nine. I curiously peered at Miss Havisham's wrist. She had a watch, it also suddenly stopped at twenty minutes ... to nine.

If you ever decide to go to work, home, mountain regions, there is some vital information you need to know. What if you get caught in an avalanche? What if there's a snow storm? How do you avoid the terrifying Death Zone? No worries this guide will tell you everything you need to know, and more...

Weather Warning
In the frozen desert, weather can turn on you very quickly. By the weather changes, you will be in serious danger. The temperatures can drop to as low as -10°C, so you need to stay warm. Strong winds can be very treacherous and can cause severe harm. You may think that the Sun would be a good thing but direct sun can cause an 'avalanche' (see section titled 'Avalanche' for more information).

Die Prepared - Equipment
If you want any chance of survival in these areas there is some serious gear you will need:

- Ice axe - to job into the ice or snow.
- Oxygen tank - high altitudes can affect oxygen.

A Light tent

- Snow boots
- Warmers
- Warm food
- Satellite phone - a mobile phone won't work
- Layers
- Sleeping bag

Avalanche
When unstable snow heavily piles down a mountain, it's called an avalanche. Powerful winds dislodge the snow on a slope, then the heat of the sun causes powder snow to subside down the mountain.

Mountain Formation
For millions of years, mountains have been forming. There are three major mountain forms because the tectonic plates just apart, pull apart, and slide along each other. A geological formation is called a mountain. These form when magma flows out of the surface and dries up. Sometimes the tectonic plates push together making the land crumple into a mountain - a fold mountain. Like volcanoes, some mountains are formed because of magma; although this time, the magma not stays underground - making a storm. When tectonic plates slide past each other it causes a mass of the earth to be forced from the ground into a block mountain. Even though these formations take millions of years, they are being climbed by millions of adventurous people.

In English, we wrote our own mountaineering guides after enjoying 'How To Be A World Explorer'. Through both our English and Guided Reading sessions, we became mountaineering experts creating visual and engaging leaflets titled 'A Mountaineers' Guide'.

Most recently, our English learning has taken a gothic turn! **Charles Dickens' 'Great Expectations'** has been the stimulus for our writing. Focussing on an extract in which Pip met Miss Havisham for the first time, we were posed the question 'How does Dickens create a sense of horror and decay around the character of Miss Havisham?' When writing our own pieces, we used a **gothic style** as well as some of the techniques used by Dickens.



Scan the QR code to read some more!

Take a look at our Pyramid themed dance!

