



NEWSLETTER – 15th December 2023

VALUE: Trust

Focus: The Nativity

'My God is my strength in whom I trust.' Psalm 18.2



Christmas Jumpers

FROM THE HEADTEACHER

The Christmas season at Spellbrook is most definitely upon us and this week we have enjoyed our Christmas lunch, with Christmas jumpers, the Nativity and Santa.

Christmas lunch was the usual massive operation that we have come to enjoy. Through careful planning and borrowing of furniture from all around the school, we set up the hall for all of the children to eat together. The children wore the Christmas hats and crowns that they had made as well as their Christmas jumpers.

We join in with the 'Save the Children' Jumper day and raise funds for this worthy cause but combine it with our Christmas Lunch Day to add to the festivities. It was lovely to see so many children taking part and wearing such a variety of jumpers. We are very grateful to our generous parents who have supported a number of charity events over the Christmas period.

The teachers and other staff served the children and the mid-day assistants first. As usual, the cook, Mrs Blackham, and her team in the kitchen, provided a wonderful Christmas meal for everyone. After the children had eaten and the mammoth tidying up task was complete the staff and governors enjoyed their meal whilst the children played outside. What a super, festive and delicious occasion.



Ruby and Sapphire Classes treated us all to a 'Twinkly Nativity'. This was a simple retell of the Christmas Story with a group of stars as the narrators, hence the Twinkly title. Beautifully sung songs with actions by the choir that included all of the children, introduced the different characters who joined Mary, Joseph and the donkey on stage to tell the Nativity Story. The hall was full of parents for two performances, and many expressed how thoroughly they had enjoyed this lovely event.



The children had a visit from Santa today. They each received an individualised gift. Well done to Santa's helpers for such a lovely idea and for all the effort that they have put into it. We hope they will hang their decorations on a tree or find somewhere else to enjoy displaying it.



Thank you to the PTA for organising the Christmas Gift Shop. This has been a huge success with many children purchasing gifts for family members. They have also organised the Bauble Competition. The winners will be announced on Monday and the prizes will be given out next week.



Diamond Class: As well as the festivities, other activities have been taking place, with some particularly memorable ones for Diamond Class. They were invited to the local Suzuki garage to decorate some cars for Christmas. The children had a wonderful time drawing Christmas designs all over the cars. We were also joined by the mayor of Sawbridgeworth - Cllr Ruth Buckmaster. It was lovely to spend some time with a local business and get involved with others in the community. Keep a lookout for more photos in The Independent.

Today, Diamond Class went on a litter pick. Armed with gloves and litter pickers, they ventured out to the areas just outside the school. What a lot of rubbish they tidied up.



We are looking forward to finishing off this very busy week with the Carols around the Campfire after school today and next week we have the Carol Service at Great St Mary's Church on Monday afternoon at 2:15, to which you are all invited. Please don't forget the term finishes on Wednesday at 1:30 pm.

Have a super weekend,

Jeremy Fisher

MESSAGE FROM GREAT ST MARY'S CHURCH

Father Simon Vivian writes:

Tomorrow, I'm once again going to be standing on the touchline of a muddy football pitch, watching my son play for his Saturday team. Rarely, at this time of year, do people see that I'm wearing a clerical shirt and collar; I'm usually wrapped in several layers and two coats!



So it's been amusing recently when fellow parents have asked me what the family and I might be doing for Christmas, causing a chuckle when I tell them that I'm the Vicar of Sawbridgeworth and will be on duty on Christmas Day.

The next comment is usually something around the fact that it must be a busy time of the year for me. It is busy, with various daytime and evening church groups winding up for Christmas and asking me to visit them to send them on their way with a blessing, various groups and schools coming to the church for their own carol service, let alone my commitments to my own family's school Christmas activities, and it disappoints me that I can't get to everything. Indeed, I wasn't able to make it to the Spellbrook Christmas lunch or nativity this past week.

But it's not just me. For many of us, whether we're associated with a church or not, Christmas is a particularly busy time of the year with all the preparations and travelling. We put undue pressure on ourselves, chasing that illusive perfect Christmas which we're 'sold' through countless cookery and makeover tv programmes, through cheesy low budget tv movies about 'coming home for Christmas', and through all the beautifully decorated shop windows of our towns. Sadly, it's all more likely to mean that, by the end of it, many of us will be disappointed, having set our expectations too high.

Anybody who knows me won't be surprised to hear that I'm not against parties, gifts, food, and television Christmas specials. I'm not even pleading with you to put Jesus or religion back into Christmas - though a trip to church and a reading of the opening chapters of St Luke's gospel is always a good thing. It's simply that many of our ways of enjoying ourselves at this time of year are actually destructive, bringing about more long-term disappointment, disillusionment, and misery than short-term happiness.

Perhaps it's time to re-evaluate how we celebrate - how we enjoy ourselves - before our expectations are raised too high again. For me, that means spending some time in God's presence. But, for all of us, it surely means learning to accept a more balanced life without the need for those great peaks which result in those deep troughs.

Perhaps it's then - whether it's Christmas or not - that we'll be able to live lives which, in themselves, become more level, continual, happy celebrations of goodness, thankfulness, and joy.

As you head into your final few days of the term at Spellbrook, I look forward to seeing many of you at the school carol service in church on Monday afternoon. And I wish you all a very blessed Christmas and a happy new year.

Fr Simon

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK AND OVER THE CHRISTMAS BREAK



Sapphire

Jessie
Herbert

Emerald

Louis

Diamond

Alice
Dominic
Maizee-Leigh



STARS OF THE WEEK

Ruby

- ✚ Tillie for increased focus in following instructions.

Sapphire

- ✚ Eliza for working on a hard sentence in Read, Write, Inc.
- ✚ Arlo for excellent focus in his learning.

Emerald

- ✚ Arthur for his helpful, kind behaviour.
- ✚ Georgia for hard work and progress with her times tables.

Diamond

- ✚ Stanley T for being helpful and kind.
- ✚ Finley for doing well in his end of term assessments.

ATTENDANCE THIS WEEK

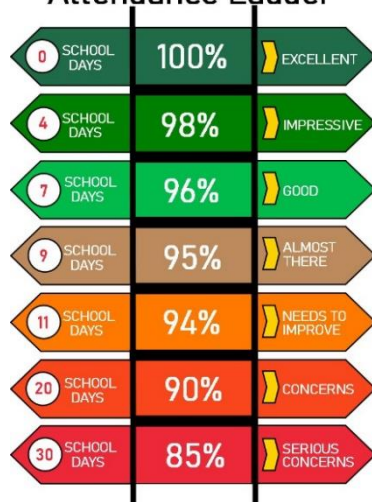
**Whole School
Attendance – 91.9%**

Whole School Target Set – 96%

Please contact school every day of any absence. This can be done by calling **01279 723 204**, **Option 1** and then leaving a message on the absence line.

If you are going to be late, please also advise the school office to ensure a meal is ordered in time.

Attendance Ladder



NOTICES

- ✦ **Christmas Service at Great St Mary's on Monday 18th December** from 2.15 – 3.00 pm – children will be travelling to the church by coach. Parents and carers are warmly invited to attend. **Children should be collected from the church promptly at 3.00 pm.**

- ✦ **Change to Menu on Wednesday 20th December** – as it is the last day of term, the menu will be Friday's options, a more popular choice. If you have already pre-ordered your child's meal in Arbor, this can be amended in class on the day.

- ✦ **Last Day of Term is Wednesday 20th December.** School closes early at **1.30 pm.**

- ✦ **School resumes on Monday 8th January** at the usual time.

- ✦ **Sapphire Class Swimming** starts on **Wednesday 10th January.** If you have not yet paid, please do so as soon as possible.

MENU w/b 18th December 2023

Day	Menu
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Chicken & Sweetcorn Meatballs (Red) ❖ Bean & Vegetable Grill (Ve) (Green) ❖ Jacket Potato (Yellow) ❖ Cheese Roll (Blue)
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Chicken Pie (Red) ❖ Mild Vegetable Curry (Ve) (Green) ❖ Jacket Potato (Yellow) ❖ Cheese Roll (Blue)
Wednesday	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Amended End of Term Menu</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Fish Fillet Fingers (Red) ❖ Cheese & Tomato Pizza (V) (Green) ❖ Jacket Potato (Yellow) ❖ Cheese Roll (Blue)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Date	Event
18/12/23	Christmas Service @ Great St Mary's Church – 2.15-3.00 pm
20/12/23	Last Day of Autumn Term 23
04/01/24	Inset 3
05/01/24	Inset 4
08/01/24	First Day Back
10/01/23	Sapphire Class First Swimming Lesson
16/01/24	Young Voices @ O2 Arena (Diamond)
17/01/24	Bag 2 School
19/02/24 – 23/02/24	Half Term
26/02/24	First Day Back
20/03/23	Sapphire Class Last Swimming Lesson
28/03/24	Last Day of Spring Term
15/04/24	First Day Back
06/05/24	Early May Bank Holiday
27/05/24 – 31/05/24	Half Term

03/06/24

Inset 5

23/07/24

Last Day of Summer Term

Contact: admin@spellbrook.herts.sch.uk

Website: www.spellbrook.herts.sch.uk



Collection bags will be given out in class for children to bring home.
Please place your donations well inside the bike shelter on the morning of collection.



Wednesday 17th January

Clothing	Curtains
Cuddly toys	Bags
Bedding	Towels
Shoes	Jewellery
	Blankets



BREAKFAST CLUB

8am - 8.40am everyday
cooked breakfast
served at 8am



£4.50 per session payable via arbor

NB late arrivals will not be catered for cooked breakfast

Please book 24 hours ahead to ensure availability

AFTER SCHOOL Sports Clubs

Spellbrook C of E Primary School

3:20 - 4:20pm

October 31st - Thursday 14th December

Football
- Tuesdays

£6
per session

Dodgeball
- Thursdays

Book online at:
gjwsports.co.uk

SAWBO
DESIGN CO.

GJW
SPORTS

www.gjwsports.co.uk

CHRISTMAS ARTY FUN

THE SECRET ART CLUB
Christmas Activities: *With Artist Caroline Clark*

Parents can drop off or stay and relax with a cuppa

Saturday 16th December - Sparkly Bauble Painting at 9.15am,
Saturday 16th December - 'Cheeky Snowmen & Cute Robins' Bubble Painting at 12 noon
Sunday 17th December - Christmas Bag Painting at 10am
Monday 18th December - Christmas Pencil Case Painting at 10 am
Monday 18th December - Wreath Making at 5pm
Tuesday 19th Dec - Christmas Bag Painting 10 am
Wednesday 20th December - Wintry Sketchbook Making at 9.30 am
Wednesday 20th December - 'Sparkly Baubles' Watercolor Painting at 3pm
Thursday 21st December - 'Cheeky Snowmen and Cute Robin' Bubble Painting 9.15 am
Friday 22nd December - Christmas Printing Workshop - Card Making too! - 1.30pm and 4pm
Saturday 23rd December - Christmas Bag Painting at 9.15 am
Saturday 23rd December - Christmas Pencil Case Painting at 12 noon
Tuesday 2nd Jan - tbc - please see website for further details
Wednesday 3rd Jan - Abstract Painting Workshop (child) at 9 am and (twins and teens) at 11.30 am
Thursday 4th Jan - Fun Printmaking Workshop - using lego, plants, stencils at 9am and 11.30 am
Friday 5th Jan - Snazzy Sketchbook Making Workshop - cute animals, pikachu or minecraft covers optional! - at 9.15 am and 2 pm
Saturday 6th January - Pet or Favourite Animal Portraits on Canvas 9 am and 12 noon

To Book
Go to www.carolineclarkartist.com
or 07847 269 734 - Caz Clark (Caroline)

Address
Secret Art House
Sheering
Bishops Stortford
CM22 7LX

Workshops for children aged 5-11 years (plus tweens/teens in Jan)

THE SECRET ART CLUB

With Artist Caroline Clark

Club Fee £6.50 a week

Activities:
• Painting
• Printing
• Drawing
• Pottery
• Collage
• And more!

Date:
Weekly on Fridays, starting 12th January 2024, 3.20 - 4.20 pm

Register interest
Caroline Clark (Caz)
07847269734
or book on at www.carolineclarkartist.com

Address
Spellbrook C of E School



Advent and Christmas at Great St Mary's

Sat 2nd Dec 12.30-2pm - Advent Lunch and Raffle

Enjoy a light lunch in Church House of homemade soup, cheeses, fruit, and treats, all in aid of The Children's Society

Sun 3rd Dec 5pm - Advent Carol Service

A candlelit service of Advent hymns and readings marking the beginning of our preparations for Christmas

Sat 9th Dec onwards - Decorate the Community Christmas Tree

Bring your own decoration or use ours, perhaps to remember a loved one

Sat 9th & Sun 10th Dec - Great St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival

Wander around the church and experience some of the magic of Christmas as we host an array of Christmas trees decorated by the town's many organisations

Sun 10th Dec 3pm - Christingle Service

A fun all-age service with oranges, candles, Christmas carols and sweets!

Sun 17th Dec 5pm - Christmas Carol Service

The traditional carol service followed by mulled wine and mince pies

Sun 24th Dec 3pm - Crib Service

A shorter, fun, all-age service, particularly suitable for young children

Sun 24th Dec 11.30pm - Midnight Mass

The first eucharist of Christmas with traditional carols

Mon 25th Dec 9.30am - Christmas Morning Eucharist

Dress as your favourite Bethlehem character for a scratch nativity and traditional carols



Neurodiversity Support Hub

For Parents, Carers and Professionals

We can offer support, signposting and guidance about a whole range of things including but not limited to:

- Understanding ADHD/Autism
- Distressed Behaviours
 - Anxiety
 - School

No Diagnosis Required

The phones are answered by our team of parents and carers of neurodivergent children and young people

Are you a Parent, Carer or Professional?



01727 833963

supporthub@add-vance.org

Open Monday-Friday
9 AM - 1PM



We Can't:

- Give updates/ fast track places on waiting lists
- Recommend specific private assessors

Here to support, reach out for a listening ear



How can I get my child to eat healthier if they won't try new things?



Our top 6 tips to tackle fussy eating at home

Peter Humbles, Family Nutritionist

- 1. The big "why"?** Why don't they try new things? Are there tastes or textures they love or hate?
- 2. Check your language.** Aim for encouraging language and avoid labelling. Swap "my child doesn't eat vegetables" for "my child loves sweetcorn."
- 3. Lower anxiety at mealtimes.** Phones away and focus on chatting. There's no need to pressure them to try new foods.

- 4. Exposure.** Get them to pick out fruits and veg when you're out shopping and ask them to help chop them up.
- 5. Routine.** Set mealtimes to build regular habits and aim for 2 healthy snacks per day between meals.
- 6. Make it fun!** Make funny face pizzas and add some new toppings.

[Award Winning Weight Loss Programmes | Behaviour change for good \(beezebodies.com\)](#)



X22-1993

Get FREE support to get your family healthier

Join programmes starting in January!



Scan the code

...or click here to find out more

Sign up today!

