



## NEWSLETTER – 19<sup>th</sup> January 2024

**VALUE: Perseverance**

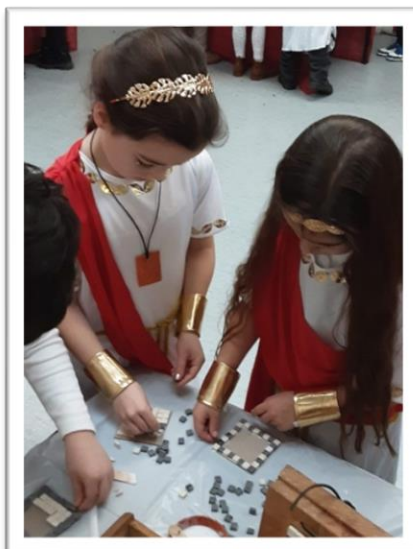
**Focus: Keeping going against all odds**

**'I can do all things through him who strengthens me' Philippians 4:13**

### FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Two particularly exciting but contrasting events have taken place this week. One took place in school, bringing in resources and expertise to give the children a rich experience in the comfort of our own building, therefore reducing the need to travel with the associated costs and environmental impact and the other was a very long day with lots of travelling and a late finish, but this event enabled the children to be part of something truly memorable and enjoyable.

#### The Roman Experience Day for Emerald Class



Emerald Class enjoyed a Roman Experience Day provided by Off the Page, a history workshop provider. Patrick (dressed as a Roman) brought a great deal of resources and an impressive amount of knowledge of Roman Britain into school and led the children through a day that involved making lots of Roman items, whilst stopping regularly to find out more about that period, practising shield formations, putting on Roman plays then enjoying a Roman feast.

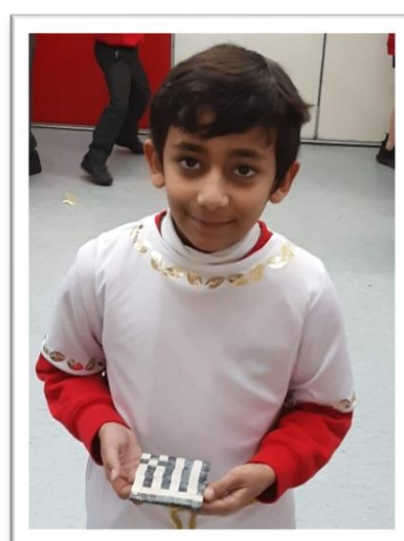
The Roman crafts were varied and involved lots of different skills and provided an insight into the lives of people at that time in Britain. The children were able to take all of the items home. Some of the children told me what the activities were, and what they had learned. The activities included making:

- a small mosaic out of tesserae (tiles). Mosaics could be lots of different designs and would decorate your villa. This would show that you were wealthy.
- a leather (ish) pouch, called a Bulla. They were worn by children until they became adults or got married and had special protective items inside.
- a wax tablet. If you were lucky enough to go to school you would write on them, and the wax could be heated and melted so you could start again.
- a signalacum. This is a piece of metal that was carried around to identify you as a soldier in the army and it would say something like Legio IX. Rich people had similar necklaces that could have any design – they were made of bronze or copper.

- perfume. Berries, herbs and spices were crushed then olive oil was added to make a perfume that could be used to put on to cleanse them and make them smell nice. This was a favourite item of many of the children and one told me that she had given some to her sister and some to her mum.
- a board game, called Rota. After they had made the game, the children played it. You had to get three stones in a row to win.

The children also enjoyed retelling how they had enjoyed finding answers to questions such as “what happened to the ninth legion?”, and “did Boudicca have spies in the Roman camps?”, and sharing their fascination with what they had learned about Roman hygiene and toileting, (including all the unpleasant details), how they had loved the shield practise, including making the Tortoise formation and how they had enjoyed performing plays, like the Romans would have done in their theatres, as well as having a feast to end the day.

As the children continue their topic on Romans, they will be able to build on the knowledge and experiences of this day, making their learning more meaningful and memorable. Thank you to the parent helpers and staff for their hard work and support.



## Young Voices 2024

This report is by our Diamond Class journalists, Alden and Josh.

### YV AT THE O2 ARENA

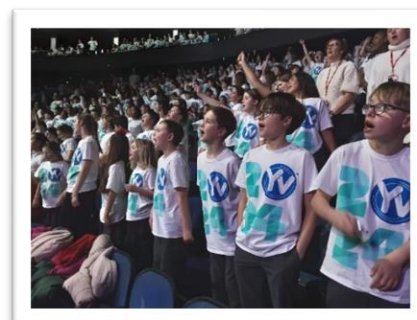
On Tuesday 16 January 2024, Diamond Class went to the one and only O2 Arena in London. David Townsend was our conductor. We had to perform nine songs and EVERY SEAT WAS FULL of parents. There was a school choir of 9,026 students from hundreds of different schools from all over the south east. The O2 was SOLD OUT.

We practised in the afternoon, then performed in the evening.

There were appearances from MC Grammar (rapper) Natalie Williams (singer) and Nandi Bushell (drummer). They also had the world's biggest dance battle between the parents and kids to a 90's Pop Medley and a massive Mexican wave spread around the entire arena.



Urban Strides Hip Hop dancers did some amazing performances and led the actions for us to follow. There were also breathtaking light shows that dazzled the audience and the choir. There was a live band: a bass, guitar, percussion instruments, keyboards and drums. In the rock medley, Nandi (who has played drums for the Foo Fighters) drummed all the way through. The big finale got all the guests to sing, River Deep, Mountain High with Nandi now playing the saxophone.





The teachers were #Legends. Everyone in Diamond class had a great time. We would love to do it again!

Parents also expressed their enjoyment of the event:

"Thank you so much to all of you the helped to make this happen. 🙌🙌 What an incredible evening!!"

"Absolutely amazing evening x"

"We absolutely loved it, you were all incredible! X"

"Such an amazing night. Thank you so much Mrs Smith for letting the children join in this experience. It was one to remember. All of you deserve a medal for the work you put in to this! "



**Indoor Athletics:** Year 6 took part in an indoor athletics event at Birchwood. They found the competition from many larger schools, with dedicated athletics teams quite a challenge but did really well on some of the team events and relays. We are proud that we are able to include all of the year group and follow an inclusive approach to events, giving all children in the year group the experience.



**Bag to School.** Thank you on behalf of the PTA for your generous donations.

**Online Safety** – here are some extracts from recent articles that may be of interest and links for further information.

The Children's Commissioner report on Children's Views on Video Gaming is a very interesting report with some key findings, for example:

- Around two thirds of children say that games are beneficial to mental health and wellbeing.
- There is pressure to have better gaming equipment
- Concerns over paid loot boxes.
- Frustrations at adults not recognising the positives of gaming.

You can access the report [HERE](#).

**Social Media Influencers.** The things social media influencers do and say online can be quite impactful. Around a third of children and young people think that, because the influencer is a 'celebrity', what they share is always good. But we know that isn't the case, sometimes it can be advice based on pseudo-science, selling something because they've been paid to and much more. Internet Matters have a great article where various specialists offer advice and guidance to parents/carers to support them to help their children think critically about social media influencers. You can find the article. [HERE](#)

### Governor Vacancies

A letter has gone out today enquiring whether anyone knows of anyone who maybe available to join our Governing Body. This is a great opportunity to make a difference to children through working with us. We have purposefully streamlined our processes and the number of meetings in recognition of how busy people are. If you have anyone in mind, please ask them to get in touch with me, via the office.

### Attendance Concern

Attendance has been very low over the last couple of weeks, and I am very concerned about the long-term impact on children's learning. I know it is cold and some children have colds and coughs and are a bit under the weather, but I urge all parents to bring children into school if they can. Coughs can linger and it is not necessary to miss school until they have completely gone. We can let you know if they are not well enough for the full day. Our building is warm, and we can provide somewhere inside for children at lunchtime if the weather is too cold for them. The impact of missed learning has been proven to have a negative impact on progress and wellbeing so I would really appreciate everyone's support with this.

Have a super weekend,

Jeremy Fisher

## MESSAGE FROM GREAT ST MARY'S CHURCH

### *Father Simon writes:*

Well, whilst the Christmas season may well have been packed away, along with all the baubles and tinsel, shortly after New Year, the Church's celebrations continue up until the beginning of February.

That's because, whilst at Christmas we celebrate the Jesus' birth and the visit of the shepherds, the Bible makes it clear that the visit of the wise men - often (wrongly) thought of as three kings - didn't occur for a good while - perhaps as much as three years after.

The Church therefore celebrates the arrival of the wise men separately, in early January. And this separate moment - which we call the Feast of Epiphany - turns into a Church season which is actually longer than Christmas... up, as I say, to the beginning of February.



Why? Well, to have a moment of 'epiphany' is to have a moment of revelation. Whilst it's always presumed that the local shepherds were Jewish (the same religion as Jesus), the magi, who, led by a star, travelled from the east, were gentiles - just like the majority of us in this country. Therefore, the moment Jesus is 'revealed' to the wise men is the moment Jesus is 'revealed' by God to the wider world - including us. It's the moment in the Bible that it's made clear that, whilst we may have to travel a great distance in mind and heart, Jesus isn't just a revelation for Jews but also for gentiles.

Therefore, whilst we officially celebrate Christmas in church for roughly the same length of time as our wider (secular) world, we celebrate Epiphany for longer - hearing in church various Bible stories which 'reveal' to us the reality of Jesus - because of its importance to our faith and belief in Jesus as the Son of God.

And so it's in that spirit that this Sunday, in our first *Mustard Seed* gathering of the new year (*Mustard Seed* gathers in church at 4pm on most third Sundays of the month), we're going to be doing crafts celebrating this Epiphany season, and reflecting how God continues to reveal Himself to us in our lives. And that's all followed by a party tea, so that there's no need for parents and carers to have to worry about feeding children before bedtime. I hope you'll consider joining us - it's always good fun.



Yours in Christ,

*Fr Simon*



## BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK



Ruby  
Evie  
Elle

Emerald  
Lilly

Diamond  
Sienna T



## STARS OF THE WEEK

### Ruby

- ✚ Sidney for being on task in all activities.
- ✚ Gracie for great focus and care.

### Sapphire

- ✚ Herbert for greater focus this week.
- ✚ Luna for extra effort in her writing.

### Emerald

- ✚ Scarlett for working so hard in whole class reading.
- ✚ Tristan for his great behaviour in learning.

### Diamond

- ✚ Alex for great progress in writing.
- ✚ Honey for amazing participation in the music and sports events this week.

## ATTENDANCE THIS WEEK

**Whole School  
Attendance – 88.67%**

**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.**

## NOTICES

- ✚ **Mustard Seed Service at Great St Mary's Church** on **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> January** - parents, carers and children are cordially invited to a short, informal service at **4 pm** with crafts and activities. This will be followed by a tea party for the children and hot refreshments for the adults.
- ✚ **School dinner debt** – could we kindly ask parents who have outstanding dinner debt to clear their accounts as soon as possible please. Please ensure that there are enough funds in your child's dinner account to cover their meals.
- ✚ **Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day Donations** – a huge thank you to everyone who donated to this worthy cause. We raised **£51.40!**

## MENU w/b 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

Day	Menu
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Chicken &amp; Sweetcorn Meatballs (Red)</li> <li>❖ Bean &amp; Vegetable Grill (Ve) (Green)</li> <li>❖ Jacket Potato (Yellow)</li> <li>❖ Cheese Roll (Blue)</li> </ul>
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Chicken Pie (Red)</li> <li>❖ Mild Vegetable Curry (Ve) (Green)</li> <li>❖ Jacket Potato (Yellow)</li> <li>❖ Cheese Roll (Blue)</li> </ul>
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Roast Beef (Red)</li> <li>❖ Potato Topped Vegetable Pie (V) (Green)</li> <li>❖ Jacket Potato (Yellow)</li> <li>❖ Cheese Roll (Blue)</li> </ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Quorn Hot Dog (V) (Red)</li> <li>❖ Beany Pasta Bake (Ve) (Green)</li> <li>❖ Jacket Potato (Yellow)</li> <li>❖ Cheese Roll (Blue)</li> </ul>
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Fish Fillet Fingers (Red)</li> <li>❖ Cheese &amp; Tomato Pizza (V) (Green)</li> <li>❖ Jacket Potato (Yellow)</li> <li>❖ Cheese Roll (Blue)</li> </ul>

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Date	Event
19/02/24 – 23/02/24	Half Term
26/02/24	First Day Back
20/03/24	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
23/05/24	Year 6 Crucial Crew
27/05/24 – 31/05/24	Half Term
03/06/24	Inset 5
03/07/24 – 05/07/24	Diamond Class Residential
11/07/24	Secondary Transition Day
23/07/24	Last Day of Summer Term
02/09/24	Inset 1
03/09/24	Inset 2
04/09/24	First Day Back
28/10/24 – 01/11/24	Half Term
29/11/24	Occasional Day
20/12/24	Last Day of Term
23/12/24 – 03/01/24	Christmas Break
06/01/25	Inset 3
07/01/25	Inset 4
08/01/25	First Day Back
17/02/25 – 21/02/25	Half Term
24/02/25	First Day Back
04/04/25	Last Day of Term
07/04/25 – 21/04/25	Easter Break
22/04/25	First Day Back
05/05/25	Early May Bank Holiday
26/05/25 – 30/05/25	Half Term
02/06/25	Inset 5
03/06/25	First Day Back
23/07/25	Last Day of Term

Contact: [admin@spellbrook.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@spellbrook.herts.sch.uk)

Website: [www.spellbrook.herts.sch.uk](http://www.spellbrook.herts.sch.uk)





# 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

Autumn term 2

# 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](http://gjwsports.co.uk)

SAWBO  
DESIGN CO.

**GJW  
SPORTS**

[www.gjwsports.co.uk](http://www.gjwsports.co.uk)



Club Fee  
£6.50 a week

# THE SECRET ART CLUB

With Artist Caroline Clark

## 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](http://www.carolineclarkartist.com)

## Address

Spellbrook C of E  
School



**Great St Mary's**  
Sawbridgeworth

*Passion for Christ - Compassion for all*

Mustard Seed -  
our monthly  
short, informal  
service  
with crafts and  
activities



Followed by a  
party tea for  
children  
and hot  
refreshments for  
grown-ups.



**Why not join us this Sunday at 4pm  
as we continue to celebrate  
the arrival of the wise men?**







## Parent/Carer Autism Online Workshops

Whether your child is awaiting a diagnosis or has already been diagnosed, these workshops are a great opportunity to learn more about Autism & ask questions within a supportive group of other parents & carers.

- **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February - An introduction to Autism**  
An opportunity to explore what Autism is, the many strengths and the differences that make each child so wonderfully unique.
- **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February - Communication**  
Identifying what communication is and the different communication methods that may be helpful for Autistic children.
- **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February - Sensory Processing**  
Explaining the 8 sensory systems, how the environment can impact on a child with sensory processing differences/challenges and strategies to meet an individual's sensory needs.
- **Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February - Pathological Demand Avoidance**  
A look into the interesting subject of PDA, how this may present and what is the best approach to take to avoid conflict.

Workshops will be held 7:30-8:30pm via Zoom.

£25 per workshop for each family.

To book your place...Email enquiries@theautismtrainingnetwork.com

Or scan the QR code



# TALKING FAMILIES

**Thursdays 9.45-11.15am** Course: ID 622  
8th, 15th, 29th February & 7th, 14th  
21st March 2024

**NOW ONLINE!**

**6, weekly sessions for parents and carers of children aged 0-12 sharing tips on how to:**

- Manage challenging behaviour with consistency
- Encourage positive behaviour
- Build your child's self esteem
- Set and maintain boundaries
- Respond to tantrums and difficult feelings in children
- Develop a strong parent/child relationship now and for the future

Groups are delivered by Zoom and are open to parents, carers, grandparents and guardians living, or with a child in school, in Hertfordshire.

'Every parent should do this course! It has taught me so much about how to deal with family life.'

**Booking essential**  
Please quote the course ID  
To check eligibility and book a place, contact Supporting Links on:

**07512 709556**

**bookings@supportinglinks.co.uk**

**www.supportinglinks.co.uk**



These courses are provided free to participants by Hertfordshire County Council's Targeted Parenting Fund



Information you share with us is used to process your booking. This will be held securely and only shared in accordance with our GDPR Policy.



## Hertfordshire Music Service

### Music Groups for all school ages

Join a music group or ensemble at

**Bishop's Stortford Music Centre**  
Based at Birchwood High School CM23 5BD



- excellent musical tuition • highly experienced music teachers • convenient venue • friendly and helpful group members • learning and playing modern and popular music • performance opportunities at termly concerts
- groups from young beginners to seasoned instrumentalists • teamwork • reinforce learning from individual lessons • develop musical connections
- two week try out • warm welcome

### SATURDAY MUSIC GROUPS AND ENSEMBLES

<b>Junior Music Group</b> 9.00-9.40am Ages 4-7 for beginners	<b>String Group</b> 9.45-10.45am Anyone able to play 5 notes or more	<b>Senior Wind Band</b> 9.50-10.50am Any wind and brass instrument grade 4 and above
<b>Orchestra</b> 11.00-12.00 midday Any instrument	<b>On-line Theory Group</b> (book through Hertford Music Centre) 9.00-9.40am Grade 3/4 and able to work independently	

### FRIDAY MUSIC GROUPS AND ENSEMBLES

<b>Junior Brass Ensemble</b> 4.30-5.10pm Anyone able to play 5 notes or more on a brass instrument	<b>Training Band</b> 5.30-6.30pm Anyone able to play 5 notes or more on any instrument
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Ensemble sign up



Each ensemble fee is £59.00 per term or, if you join more than one ensemble, consider the HMS Ensemble Membership for £109 per term to join and participate in more HMS ensembles for no extra cost; T&C's apply as per website

To register on line please visit <https://uk.hertfordshire.speedadmin.dk/registration/#/> or scan the Ensemble sign up QR code above  
For further information please e-mail [bstortfordmusicenquiries@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:bstortfordmusicenquiries@hertfordshire.gov.uk) or call 01992 556 752 (term time only)

## HOLIDAY CHILDCARE: LOWEST RATES & EXCLUSIVE DISCOUNTS!

**BOOK NOW!**  
For our LOWEST PRICES to 2024

**SCHOOL HOLIDAY CHILDCARE EXCLUSIVE SCHOOL DISCOUNT!**

USE CODE: **SCHOOL10**  
For an EXTRA £10 off a week!

**EARLY BOOKING OFFER**  
Save up to £89 with our Early Booking offer and your exclusive discount!  
Book by 31st January to guarantee our lowest rates!

Visit [barracudas.co.uk](http://barracudas.co.uk) or call 01480 467 567

**BARRACUDAS**  
SCHOOL HOLIDAY CHILDCARE

### EARLY BOOKING OFFER

We've launched at our lowest rates. You can save up to £89 a week if you book now with our Early Booking offer and your exclusive code!

### FLEXIBLE PAYMENT OPTIONS:

- Pay with Tax-Free childcare OR Childcare Vouchers
- Spread the cost with interest-free monthly payments
- Protect your booking with Flex

**EARLY BOOKING OFFER ENDS**  
**31ST JANUARY, 2024**

