St Mary's C of E Junior School Newsletter

Care. Believe. Succeed.

'All things are possible for one who believes.'

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND DIOCESE OF ST ALBANS

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Curriculum & Enrichment

Eco-schools

This year, we have signed up to *Eco-schools*. We have over 25 children from all year groups who make up our eco-committee. We started our sessions by completing an environmental review about the following topics areas:

- Biodiversity - Energy - Global citizenship - Healthy living
- Litter - Marine - School grounds - Transport
- Waste - Water

From this, we created our action plan. Year 5 and 6 members of the committee were involved in creating our action plan. We decided to focus on the following 3 areas:

- Healthy living
- Litter
- Water

Since the committee has begun, we have:

- arranged daily litter picks
- completed a break time snack survey (results below)
- created littering posters which are up throughout the school
- we are working with Mrs Castle to empty bins weekly
- we have started to create an assembly to share with the school about littering
- the eco-committee have been involved in informing classes about the RSPB birdwatch
- we have had a meeting with the kitchen to discuss healthier puddings and having a plant based meal during our Healthy Living Week
- started to plan our Healthy Living Week (week commencing 25th March)
- arranged a litter pick in the local area (12th, 13th, 14th February)

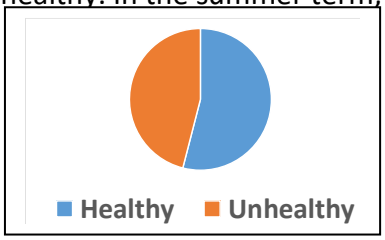
Results from the break time snack survey:

54% of snacks recorded were healthy

46% of snacks recorded were unhealthy – such as crisps, chocolate biscuits and sweets!

As a healthy school, **we are concerned about the high percentage of unhealthy snacks recorded**. Healthier snacks will keep us energised for the next lesson, they help us to concentrate and are better for our bodies. We

would appreciate it if you could review your child's break time snack to ensure it is healthy. In the summer term, we will be repeating the break time snack survey.



Thank you for your support,

The eco-committee.

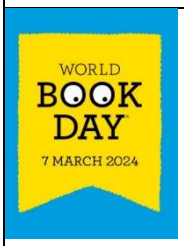
Written by: *Ranbir, Alice, Oliver T, Aaron, Freya, Paige and Ava T* (years 5 and 6)

Birdwatch

Year 3 have been completing Birdwatch for the RSPB. They've seen robins, gulls, pigeons and lots of magpies!

PHSE –Children's Mental Health Week 202

This week we will be taking part in Children's Mental Health Week 2024, thinking about the theme My Voice Matters. Each class will be completing activities throughout the week on this theme. Years 5 and 6 have workshops run by the NSPCC happening on Tuesday 6th. Look out on your class story page for more information about what we have been up to during the week and talk to your children at home about what they have been learning!



WORLD BOOK DAY 2024

It's that time of year again! World Book Day is happening on Thursday 7th March 2024 which is the second week back after half term. This year, we would like to have a non-fiction focus for our reading and writing on that day!

Our vision is to create a St Mary's encyclopaedia with the aim of encouraging reading non-fiction texts for pleasure.

We would like the children to come in dressed as an entry for this encyclopaedia…. that could be a famous person current or historical, a creature, an interesting object, a famous building, anything you could imagine! Don't forget that some children may have PE that day and will need to be able to complete a full school day in costume, so nothing too elaborate!

Your child can come in costume for the day and bring a written fact about the item/person they have come dressed as. We can then take a photograph of them and their fact to put together in our encyclopaedia.

Mrs Atkinson (English lead)

SPORTS UPDATE

Indoor athletics

Where to start with St Mary's sport this month? Records are there to be broken so we shall start there. Fantastic achievement by our boys and girls Indoor Athletics teams as they both beat 6 other schools to qualify for the District Final Event. 15 boys and 15 girls performed in 24 running, throwing and jumping events. Our boys did something that has never been done before. They came 1st in EVERY SINGLE EVENT! Bring on the final.

Dodgeball Champions

We took 4 teams to the Dodgeball tournament last week and came away as champions against 19 other teams!
All 4 teams had the best afternoon. After the standings were revealed, our 4 teams all played one more game against the same position team from the other group. St Mary's won all of these games, including the big final to become champions.
I'm ever so proud that 4 of our children were awarded medals for sportsmanship by other schools.

Netball

Our Netball team resumed their training to get ready for next months tournaments by playing some friendlies against Hartsfield. They shook the rust off and played some lovely netball.

Boys football

On Saturday 27th January, our Champions in Boys football travelled to Watford for the County Final. Playing against other champions, it wasn't meant to be for us this time. We won our final game against Knebworth to finish an admirable 6th best school football team in the entire County!

Cross Country

There was blood, sweat and tears on Saturday 3rd at the Hertfordshire County X Country race in Watford. Our best runners raced against our Counties elite and ran admirably on a lovely woodland track. Congratulations to Elliot who finished 6th, our highest position we've had in my time here.

Staffing Updates

A fond farewell

At the end of this half term, we will be saying farewell to our wonderful Miss Boyle. After 22 years at St Mary's, Miss Boyle will be moving on to an exciting new challenge at an Academy school! We wish her all the best and just know she will be a wonderful addition to their team as a full time teacher. Elm Class parents received a letter on Friday with regards to this.

In addition, we also say goodbye and good luck to Mrs Naxton, one of our support staff. We wish her all the best with her English Literature degree studies.

Mrs McQuade, our lovely Deputy head, will be leaving us for a short while at half term as she begins her journey into motherhood. We'll share the news as soon as baby McQuade comes into the world!

New staff

After half term, we welcome Mrs Huggill, who will be joining the St Mary's team as a Higher Level Teaching Assistant. She will be working across the school to support both whole classes and small groups.
Mrs Gray will be also be joining us to teach Oak Class alongside Mrs Hinchliff, as maternity cover teacher for Mrs McQuade.
Mrs Whelan and Mrs Bowden will be joining Elm team to teach alongside Mrs Di Noia.
All new staff bring a wealth of experience with them to St Mary's and I'm sure you'll all give them a warm welcome.

Parent Consulations

Spring term parent consulations will be on the following dates:
Thursday 21st March 5-7.30pm
Tuesday 26th March 3.40-6pm

Elm class parent consulations will be on Monday 12th February between 2.00-4.50pm unless you have received a letter from Mrs Reeve.

PUPIL PARLIAMENT

HOT DOG FRIDAYS

Hot dog Fridays are proving to be popular, so Mrs Castle and her team will be selling them every Friday on the Year 3&4 playground at a cost of £1 each. Please ensure that they have £1 coins only in order to purchase these. All profits will go towards their IT equipment fundraising.

Citizen Advice North Herts

Help Shape Our Future Services: Participate in Our Survey!
At Citizens Advice North Herts our mission is to ensure that individuals receive the support they need in a manner that suits them best. We value the opinions of our clients and the wider community. Your input can play a crucial role in shaping our future services.
Take a few moments to complete our online survey by visiting:
https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/CANHAccessSurvey2024/

NUMERACY WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS

Do you know someone who needs help improving their maths skills or wants to feel more confident with numbers?
Step2Skills Multiply workshops aim to help adults improve their number skills through practical activities. The workshops can help with tasks in daily life and also offer the opportunity to gain a qualification to support career progression.
Who is eligible?

Multiply is for people who:

- Live in Hertfordshire
- Are aged 19 or above
- Do not hold a GCSE (Grade C or above) or an equivalent qualification in maths

What is covered?

Examples of topics covered are:

- Money management
- Making sense of numbers in daily life
- Understanding Excel
- Developing numeracy skills for healthcare
- Using numbers while cooking
- Using numbers in music

Interested? Please use the link below to find out more!

https://servicesforyoungpeople.org/support-for-young-people/support-for-young-people-with-learning-difficulties-andor-disabilities/the-services-for-young-people-ldd-team/step2skills-multiply-project/

Attachments with this newsletter:

- **Online Safety New letter for Parents**
- **Measles information**
- **Year Group Curriculum Maps**

Diary dates

Spring Term 2024

Thursday 4th January 2024 to Thursday 28th March 2024
Spring Half Term: Monday 19th February 2024 to Friday 23rd February 2024
Easter Break: Friday 29th March 2024 to Friday 12th April 2024
GOOD FRIDAY: 29th March 2024

Summer Term 2024

Monday 15th April 2024 to Tuesday 23rd July 2024
Summer Half Term: Monday 27th May 2024 to Friday 31st May 2024
EASTER MONDAY: 1st April 2024
MAY BANK HOLIDAY: Monday 6th May 2024
INSET DAY: Monday 15th April 2024
INSET DAY: Monday 3rd June 2024
TRANSITION DAY: Thursday 11th July 2024
INSET DAY: Monday 22nd July 2024
INSET DAY: Tuesday 23rd July 2024

Autumn Term 2024

Monday 2 September 2024 to Friday 20th December 2024
Autumn Half Term: 28th October 2024 to 1st November 2024
Christmas Break: Monday 23rd December 2024 to Monday 6th January 2025
INSET DAY: Monday 2nd September 2024
INSET DAY: Friday 25th October 2024
OCCASIONAL DAY: Friday 29th November 2024