

### St Mary's Reflects on Climate Justice



St Mary's East Barnet have been doing their bit to help combat climate change by reducing waste, recycling, litter picking and planting to help support biodiversity. The school have planted 1500 crocus bulbs in their local park to help bring a smile to the local community in the spring and, in October, they supported the work of

JustOneTree and raised £278 — for every pound raised, a tree will be planted in Madagascar.

In November, St Mary's proudly exhibited posters made by the children to share their thoughts about climate justice. In recent weeks, they have been reflecting on how they can have a heart for the earth, and have explored the issues of climate change and how, sadly, some communities have been affected more than others. This thinking is part of a Christian Aid project, and photographs of the children's creations have been shared with the charity to forward to the Houses of Parliament, where global leaders will be invited to view the posters and hear the voice of this generation of children.

The school were joined by Farah Ali from Barnet Council's Sustainability Team who were very impressed with the children's passion and commitment to tackling climate change, in addition to their knowledge about the injustice of some people's lives being so negatively impacted by the decisions of others.

### Churchfield Focus on Dyslexia Awareness

In October, Churchfield Academy took part in Dyslexia Awareness week, following the theme 'Uniquely You'. Children discussed and shared what makes them unique, what they want to be when they grow up and used art to express this to others. The school celebrated everyone's differences whilst raising awareness and understanding of dyslexia and how this can impact reading and language processing.



### Vacancies Webpage

The Vacancies page on the diocesan website gives you an additional platform to advertise job openings in your school free of charge. Do send any vacancy advertisements to [hpuddfoot@stalbans.anglican.org](mailto:hpuddfoot@stalbans.anglican.org)

### Bishop Richard Visits St Augustine's

St Augustine's Academy were thrilled to be visited by Bishop Richard during the autumn term. Bishop Richard is a trustee of the Jane Cart's Trust, which funded their new Art/DT/Science room and outdoor clothing for their Forest School. The school are very thankful to the Trust for helping them to provide such wonderful new resources for the children.

As part of his visit, Bishop Richard toured the school and enjoyed taking part in collective worship with Reception class. He 'cut the ribbon' of the new Art/DT/Science room with the Year 6 School Councillors and presented the Pupil Worship Leaders with their badges. He also answered some of the children's questions such as, 'When you were young, what did you aspire to be?' (Bishop Richard wanted to serve God from a young age but at one point he thought about becoming a judge) and 'What is your favourite Bible story?' (The parable of the lost sheep).



### Edwinstree's Eco Actions



Edwinstree Middle have continued to explore 'the outside' as a theme to support their wellbeing. The Edwinstree School Association (ESA) helped to fundraise for an outdoor classroom powered by solar panels, which was constructed in school this term. The ESA have also aided the development of the school's new pond, and provided them with sheds and materials to increase the biodiversity both in the pond and on the meadow within the school field. A team of eco-warriors feed the school's food waste to tiger worms to reduce methane, and support its recycling system.

## High Wych's Reflection Area



High Wych Primary were extremely pleased to open their beautiful new reflection area, which the school's RE Council had worked hard to design and create for everyone to

enjoy. The children researched ideas to include and then designed the layout of the garden. They also

helped to create intricate mosaic stepping stones that display the school values. Key Stage 2 children enjoyed making beautiful stained glass wheels and panels to add colour to the space.

Parents helped to create flower beds and planted blooms as well as an array of herbs with the Nursery class. It was a true team effort.



## Remembrance at St John's Lemsford



This half term, the values that St John's Primary, Lemsford has been focusing on are Peace and Understanding. For Remembrance, the pupils wrote personal reflections

based on Peace and Understanding. The children's thoughts and prayers were displayed on symbolic doves. As part of collective worship, the doves were attached to one of the trees between the school and St John's church. Families were encouraged to visit the tree and spend some time looking at the children's reflections.

## Ubuntu at Nash Mills

As a school, Nash Mills have been looking into the South African principle of Ubuntu; the idea of what it means to be an individual within a community. 'I am me because you are you'. Through this, the school's Reflections Councillors, supported by their local vicar, have worked on different values that tie into the concept, beginning with Friendship and Faithfulness. Each half term, the Reflections Councillors have designed activities and challenges for children across the school to complete. The value is also highlighted within the weekly celebration worship.

It has been fantastic to see the children having such an awareness of these values and being able to use them in school and at home. The children truly are able to live the school's vision with independence and compassion.

## St Michael's Eco-School Green Flag Award

Children at St Michael's Primary in St Albans have earned an international accreditation, recognising their amazing work in making their school more environmentally friendly and raising eco-awareness in fellow pupils.

The school formed an Eco-Committee and conducted an environmental review, assessing how eco-friendly their school is. Building on their findings, they planned a year of action designed to advance St Michael's 'green credentials', improve their local environment and protect our planet.

The Eco-Committee connected their work to 3 Eco-Schools topics: Waste Aware, Cut Your Carbon and School Grounds Improvement.

They then planned a variety of projects including whole-school focus weeks to raise awareness of how to reduce waste and how to reduce carbon emissions. They also improved the school grounds by developing the school garden, including insect friendly habitats, making bird feeders in Forest School, and growing bee-friendly plants and herbs.

On completion of the projects, the school was awarded a distinction!



## Remembrance at St Mary's, Welham Green



On Friday 10 November, St Mary's Primary in Welham Green held a Remembrance commemoration for those who lost their lives in the two World Wars and other

conflicts. They had a gathering of the whole school in the hall, where they held the two minutes of silence at 11am to remember the fallen. During the commemoration, some of the children read Remembrance poems, and prayers were said. Following the ceremony, everyone then went outside into the car park and, one by one, placed a poppy that they had made themselves in the Remembrance garden.

## Harvest at St Michael's



On Wednesday 11 October, St Michael's, Woolmer Green had their Harvest service at St Michael's and All Angels Church, led by Beech Class (Year 5). Following the service Years 3

to 6 made a pilgrimage to All Saints church, Datchworth, accompanied by Revd Christie and a number of parents and carers. Each year group carried its class cross during the scenic walk across the fields.

When they arrived at the church Revd Susannah met them with some much-needed refreshments. The pupils then followed her into church to learn about Christian pilgrimage and complete their Harvest service.

The school received many positive comments from local residents saying how wonderful it was to see all the children out walking.

## Great Gaddesden's Forest School



The children of Great Gaddesden Primary are continuing to enjoy their regular Forest School sessions, which take place throughout the year.

The beautiful, rural setting provides opportunities for pupils to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in the natural environment.

The children take part in a range of inspirational activities from shelter building and woodland crafts to cooking on open fires. Such experiences and supported risk-taking allow them to become resilient, independent and creative learners.

This autumn, the children have been inspired by Creation as they have been foraging for blackberries and elderberries and used them to create fantastic tie-dye designs.

## Potato Picking at Hormead!

This term, there have been many wonderful History lessons about what life might have looked like for children in Hormead's historic school in the past. Year 1 had a trip to the Hitchin Schools Museum dressed up in their Victorian attire. They took part in a Victorian lesson and visited the Headmaster's house. The children had many questions and the whole experience was very enriching for them.

The Year 3's and 4's have been learning about how children's lives have changed since the Tudor and Victorian periods. They have heard about the jobs that children had and how some would work in very poor conditions and weren't allowed to go to school.

The school's headteacher, Mrs Cowler, told the pupils about the times in Hormead when previous headteachers would be asked to send some children to help the farmer pick his crop of potatoes. Seeing how much the children loved this idea, Mrs Cowler arranged with a local farmer, who owns fields next to the school, for all the pupils to re-live this experience. One sunny afternoon, the headteacher received the call, just as it was written in the old school diaries, saying the farmer needed help. The children were

marched up to the field and started to collect the crop. They were extremely excited and loved the experience. What Farmer James and his brother saw as hard work, the children saw as one big game. They scurried around the field picking potatoes, shaking off the soil, checking for quality and worked hard to fill up sacks in record time. They even got to take some home for their families!



## Harvest at St Swithun's



St Swithun's school community had a wonderful visit to their local church this Harvest Festival and collected large amounts of food that was then donated to The Need Project.

# NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS

## Hertingfordbury Cowper's Gift Collection

Hertingfordbury Cowper Primary held a community collective



worship time to focus on their 'Christmas Gift Appeal' in support of the Salvation Army. The children and their families were asked to donate a new toy, book or gift to support local families at this time of the year. The school were overwhelmed by the love and care shown by their community, as they collected over 200 gifts.

## St Mary's, Ware's Worship Leaders



The newly appointed Worship Leaders at St Mary's, Ware have been settling into their new role which has involved, among other things, arranging the cakes for the Macmillan Tea Afternoon which raised £495, organising the Harvest Festival display to donate to the Hertford and Ware Food Bank and creating the Advent Ring for the school's collective worship throughout December.

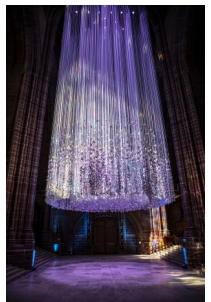
# NEWS FROM THE SCHOOLS TEAM

## St Albans Cathedral Doves of Peace

Thousands of paper doves have been flocking to St Albans Cathedral for the spectacular 'Peace Doves' art installation. Created by sculptor Peter Walker, this unique spectacle of 10,000 hanging paper doves with messages of peace written by the local community will be at St Albans Cathedral from 3 January to 13 February 2024.

To complement this installation, the Cathedral Education Team will be offering wellbeing & peace sessions, or you may simply book your school in for a self-guided visit to go with your class to see this spectacular installation.

To find out more, contact [education@stalbanscathedral.org](mailto:education@stalbanscathedral.org) or call Marina on 01727 890212.



(Photograph: Installation at Liverpool Cathedral)

## Focus on Admissions (VA Schools and Academies)

Many of you have already been in touch this term about your admission arrangements for 2025-26 but, if admissions are still on your to-do list, please remember that the governing body (or board of trustees) must determine these admission arrangements by 28th February 2024 and upload them to the school website by 15th March 2024. You are all very welcome to get in touch with me any time with any questions about admissions at [mjarman@stalbans.anglican.org](mailto:mjarman@stalbans.anglican.org)

Maggie Jarman  
Admissions Officer

## Focus on Governance

**Recruiting a clerk/governance professional:** I receive many enquiries from schools about how to recruit a clerk/governance professional. There is a persistent myth that the diocese has a bank of candidates we can call on for clerking roles! I'm afraid we cannot provide or recommend candidates; recruiting a clerk is a local responsibility for the governing board. However, there is much that governors can do to maximise attracting candidates.

Before advertising a vacancy, make sure you have reviewed the clerk's role description and rate of pay. Review your publicity too – is the advert clear and transparent about number of meetings including any committees, overall pay, whether the work is in person or online, and any additional work between meetings? Are you making the most of advertising options, both locally and online? Remember, adds can also be posted onto our vacancy page free of charge.

The following resources may be helpful:

**Article from Ask a Clerk:** this new article has some great tips and ideas to ensure an effective clerk recruitment process, and includes useful links: <https://askaclerk.co.uk/recruiting-a-clerk-to-governors/>

**Pay rates for clerks and governance professionals:** there are no statutory rates of pay for these roles but two reports on the topic were published in 2020. They include some indicators of appropriate rates of pay:

- National Governance Association: [Putting a Price on Effective Clerking](#)
- National Association of School and College Clerks: [NASCC Clerks Pay and Conditions Interim Report](#)

Belinda Copson  
Governance Adviser

## And finally...

### Headteacher and CEO Changes

**A warm welcome this term to our new substantive headteachers and those who have joined new school communities:**

Alison Barden, St James', Biddenham; Luke Varney, St Paul's, Chipperfield; Emma Fleet, Dagnall; Siobhan King, All Saints', Datchworth; Rebecca Sutherland-Cooper, Hertford St Andrew's; Laura Murphy, St Andrew's Hitchin; Sarah Wright, Ickleford; Natasha Maxwell, St Mary's, Rickmansworth; Anna Spyropoulos, Roxton; Andrea Sharkey, Tewin Cowper; Andrew Darlington, Toddington St George; Anthony Flack, Townsend; Stuart Whiteland, Welwyn St Mary's

**Our thanks and best wishes accompany those who are leaving or have left their current school this term:**

Nicholas Simms, St Mary's High, Cheshunt; Dot Marlow, Ponsbourne St Mary's

**Our appreciation also goes to all those who have, or are about to, step in as interim or acting headteachers or Trust CEOs.**

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### A Message for the End of Term

Dear Colleagues,

As Christmas approaches, our mind can often find itself resting on the angelic proclamation to the shepherds,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.” (Luke 2:4)

Despite the words of the angels, heralding the birth of Jesus, peace and goodwill today, as in centuries past, can seem as elusive as ever.

Regrettably, conflict on a national, regional and local level is all too present, often stoked by a narrative that seeks to exclude those who believe something different. Even at a school level we are all too often being exposed to conflict, to an absence of peace, as others seek to impose their own views and beliefs to the exclusion of others.

In the Old Testament the psalmist writes:

1 How good and pleasant it is  
when God's people live together in unity!

2 It is like precious oil poured on the head,  
running down on the beard,  
running down on Aaron's beard,  
down on the collar of his robe. (Psalm 133)

Unity is a precious thing, but it shouldn't mean that everybody has to believe the same thing, or holds the same opinion. Unity can celebrate difference.

Peace, genuine peace, is possible where people are prepared to work positively to include those who are different from themselves.

As educators, those who model what living in community looks like, with its emphasis on peace and unity, may we have the courage to recognise and celebrate difference in all its forms and to create schools where, despite differences, all can live and co-exist under a shared vision motivated by the love of Christ.

May you and your families experience the peace of Christ this Christmas!

With my best wishes,

*David Morton*

*Director of Education*

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## We wish you all a peaceful Christmas break!

***Living God's Love in Education: Enabling Life in all its Fullness***

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