

St John's VA C of E Primary School

NEWSLETTER

Finding the light in ourselves and each other (John 8:12)



12/12/25

Autumn Term 2

Value: Hope

Welcome message from the Headteacher

13 days till Christmas!

Dear all,

The festive month has been full of shows, nativities, choirs and visits. We have thoroughly enjoyed the past few weeks preparing for our Christmas break. We started with our traditional house group activities including creating Christingles. The biggest event of the year so far was the Panto. Not only was it a great success but the community spirit was incredibly high. From parents to staff, the Digsowell Residents Association to the National Rail staff, I want to say a huge thank you to everyone for supporting this trip. Whilst we did miss our return train by a minute, we will ensure to consider tweaking our plan for next year. It has been a great success, and the children had a great time.

The school continue to achieve in many events. We have had some incredible results in Numbots and TTrockstars, in particular some incredibly hard-working reception children on Numbots! We have also come in the top three schools for the indoor athletics and came first in Archery last week. We continue to develop our provision for sports aiming for every KS1 and KS2 child to attend a festival representing the school.

Last Thursday and Friday we had our OPAL visits and planning day, our Play Leader – Mrs Davies-Golder, and our governors were present to see what things we will need to develop our school further. Our new mud kitchen is being built for the inclusion playground as we speak as well as a vision for a whole school sand pit! We will need your help in the new year to bring the vision of OPAL alive. This has huge improvements of fun at break and lunch times.

Tidy Friday today was a success with parents, children and even the local MP making an appearance. Together we can achieve any goal that we set and particularly around this time of the year I have really seen our family coming together to support the school and local community.

Finally, we have two policies that have been updated that I would really like you to take a look at, the healthy eating and drinking policy with an update on snacks as well as our communication policy.

Worton-Geer



Improvements to the school:

We have had several improvements so far:

- We have received funding for a new gate system and to move our front gate into the courtyard near the bike shed. This will be commencing in the new year. We looking forward to moving the front office around in the near future.
- Thank you to the parents who have supported putting in the netball posts and paying for them – this is a huge asset to the school. We are currently deciding where to put the basketball hoop.
- A range of new balls have been sent out to classes for lunch time and break time.

Pupil quote of the week: Zvika (Year 5): It has been great and adventurous going to the panto on the train – thank you staff and parents for letting this dream happen.

Quote from the bible: (Romans 8:24-25). For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.



Highlights

Here is some useful information that is happening in the school.

Attendance:

Week commencing 1st December 2025

Year	Percent	Place
Nursery	95.1%	5 th
Year 1	94.8%	6 th
Year 2	97.7%	1 st
Year 3	95.3%	4 th
Year 4	90.6%	8 th
Year 5	93.8%	7 th
Year 6	96.7%	3 rd
Year R	97.5%	2 nd

Amazon Wish list

We have created our amazon wish list if parents would like to buy items for the school – this would be greatly appreciated. The link is found [here](#). Throughout the year we will update the wish list.



Church choir on Saturday 29th November at St John's Church. Well done everyone for taking part in these events. They also sang at our Christmas Bazaar in school too. Please can we say a huge thank you to Mrs Miller. On Sunday 7th December a group of talented pupils took part in the 1st ever Digsowell Nativity at St John's Church. The event welcomed representatives from the schools in the parish who all contributed to this special event. We thank all those who volunteered their time and enthusiasm to supporting this community celebration. A huge thank you to all who supported the pupils at the Digsowell Nativity on Sunday 7th December at St John's Church. Everyone loved it. The pupils were extraordinary. The singing was just great. The Mayor of Welwyn Hatfield said she had had the most wonderful morning. A special thank you to Mrs de La Croix for all the work she put into the event and for rehearsing the children so beautifully – Fr Rob

Healthy eating policy and drinking policy:

We have updated this policy after the feedback in the most recent survey. It expresses some ideas of snacks that we are able to have at school. We are aware of medical conditions which are explored in health care plans. Thank you to everyone for meeting this policy. For reference the link to the policy is [here](#).

Communication policy:

Another policy that we have created is the communication policy, requested in the survey and from staff. This has been a team effort to see it from all perspectives. It is paramount that we build on our communication as a family to ensure that we can meet the needs of the children and support our school's ethos. This will be sent out in January.

SANTA CANTA

🎅🌟 Santa Canta Reminder! 🌟🎅 Next Wednesday (17th December) is our first ever Sponsored Santa Canta on Christmas Jumper Day! The whole school will be heading out for a joyful festive run, so please send children in with named Santa hats or Christmas accessories if you have them. Sponsorship is completely voluntary, and donations can be made via Arbor for anyone who'd like to support Save the Children. Thank you, as always, for your generosity, good humour & Christmas sparkle at this busy time of year!

Movie Afternoon- Wednesday 17th December 2025

On Wednesday 17th December we are having our Christmas dinner day and jumper day as well as our Santa Canta. We will be having a movie afternoon after the Christmas dinner in both key stages. Films will be decided in class.

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

On the last day of school, please can we remind you that the whole school will be at the church service at St John's church and children will need to be dropped off there for 8:40am. Nursery parents (where possible) please can you help walk back your children at the end of the service. A reminder that the school finishes **at 1:30pm on the last day of term** as shared several weeks back in the newsletter.

Attendance:

Attendance is a vital gear in a school and the local authority and OFSTED are determined to improve attendance. If your attendance drops below 90%, a letter is generated and sent out to families to raise their awareness and there is a requirement to improve attendance. This letter is created by the local authority of which schools must send out if children's attendance is lower than 90%.

Child Prayer:

Dear God, Thank you for the world. Thank you for the food and drinks that you provide us every day. We thank you for our staff and parents who look after us each and every day. Please continue to look over us and protect us over Christmas. We are excited to see the Christmas spirit.
Amen (Year 5- Logan)



Calendar

Tuesday 16 th December	Christingle – Year 3
Wednesday 17 th December	Christmas jumper and Dinner day
Friday 19 th December	Last day of school – finish at 1:30pm
Friday 19 th December	Carol service – whole school at church for 8:50am
Friday 19 th December	Forest school Year 1
Monday 5 th January 2026	INSET day
Tuesday 6 th January	First day back at school
Tuesday 6 th January	Eucharist Epiphany at School
Friday 16 th January	SATs workshop 8:50am and 1:45pm (change of date – Year 6 only)
Wednesday 21 st January	Phonics Assessment Workshop – 8:50am
Wednesday 28 th January	Year 4 MTC workshop 8:50am and 2:50pm
Monday 2 nd February -Thursday 5 th February	MOCK SAT's Week – Year 6
Monday 9 th – 15 th February	Children's Mental health Week
Tuesday 10 th February	Safer Internet Day
Monday 16 th -Friday 20 th February	Half Term
Thursday 5 th March	World Book Day
Monday 9 th -Friday 13 th March	Science Week
Wednesday 11 th March	Year 1-6 Science Workshop
Thursday 12 th March	Book Look Day- 2:45pm
Monday 16 th -Friday 20 th March	Year 6 Residential trip to Essex Outdoors
Monday 23 rd -Thursday 26 th March	Mock SAT's Week (Year 6)
Wednesday 25 th and Thursday 26 th March	Parent Consultations

Panto: A whole school and local community working as one to give our children a great experience. Thank you to everyone for your support. Please see [here](#) a link to the national rail supporting us.



Academic Highlights

Here is some useful information that is happening in the school.

Nursery:



Nursery took advantage of the colder weather, which had left blocks of ice on our playground. We felt how cold and slippery the ice was and felt it melting in our hands. We used hammers to smash the toys out of the ice and enjoyed getting bigger bits to throw onto the ground.

Reception:



Reception have been busy practicing The Nativity. We performed our dress rehearsal in the school hall to the Year 5 and 6 buddies and the class siblings. Everyone really enjoyed it. We finished with a fun Christmas sing-along.

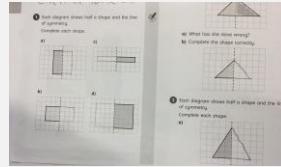
Year 1:



Year 1 have certainly not eased into “end-of-term mode”! This week we became super scientists, running a fun & practical investigation into our sense of smell (the giggles when guessing mystery scents were priceless). We also joined the whole school on a very exciting train trip to see *Cinderella* at the panto, before stepping into the spotlight

ourselves with our nativity *Everyone Loves a Baby* – performed both to school and later in church. And if that wasn't enough, we even led a whole-school Spanish assembly, proudly singing our sea-creatures song. Who said things quieten down in December?!

Year 2:



Year 2 have been learning about shape in Maths. We have been learning about 2D shapes and their properties, including naming the number of sides and vertices. We have been learning to identify lines of symmetry within shapes and have been practising drawing the other half of a shape using symmetry. We have been trying very hard to use a ruler to draw straight and diagonal lines to help draw shapes more accurately!

Year 3:



In Year 3 we have started a new book called 'The Snowman'. As part of our snow theme, we read a poem together called 'Snow' by Walter de la Mare. We then worked in small groups and bought the poem to life reading it out and adding a soundscape.

Year 4:



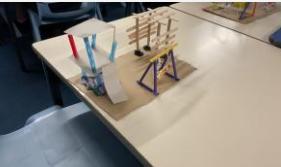
Christmas is fast approaching in Year 4, it's the most wonderful time of the year but also the busiest! Everyone is still very merry from our wonderful trip to the panto and we've also begun some themed work in English, where we're looking at 'The Snowman' by Raymond Briggs. We've made time to decorate the classroom too!

Year 5:



The Year 5 Elf has been up to his naughty tricks again!!! I think he was feeling fed up after being left behind when the children went to the Panto...so he is getting his revenge!!!! Let's just hope the children manage to stay awake! Not sure how much thought went into 'elf and safety!!!

Year 6:



Year 6 have had a fantastic few weeks - a great start to December! In science we have been creating lots of circuits and solving problems with electricity. In DT, we have just completed our playground models. They look so fun - look at Teddy's incredible



Mini Mozart

Reception had an extra special treat when Mini Mozart company came in to tell us the story of The Snowman. We sang songs, played instruments, and had some amazing games.

Thank you Mrs Dingwall for our amazing workshop.



School Podcast

Please see the link below for our latest podcast!

<https://youtu.be/rX2ZSKYkfWM?si=UOlp5AZmHJdJOFPuU>

Amazon Wish List

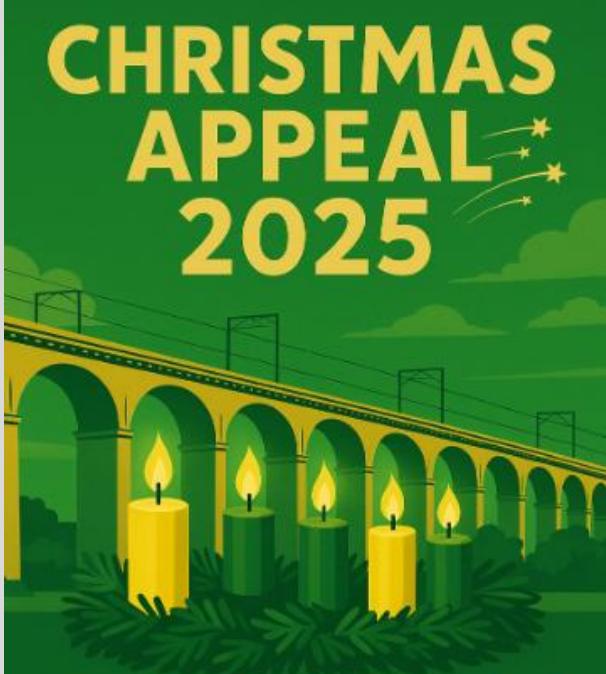
Following feedback from parents, we have created a wish list of items the school would like. If you are able to support us with this in any way it would be greatly appreciated.

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/help/customer/display.html?nodeId=GHCGC7B7SQ222YMD>



Parish News

Here is some useful information that is happening in the Parish.



A green poster for the Christmas Appeal 2025. The text "CHRISTMAS APPEAL 2025" is at the top in large yellow letters. Below it is a stylized illustration of a viaduct with green arches and a train. In the foreground, there are five lit candles (three green, two yellow) on a bed of green pine branches. The text "Supporting the work of the parish and through our local schools also the Beatitude Sisters and Isabel Hospice" is in yellow, followed by the website "www.digswellparish.org.uk" and email "info@digswellparish.org.uk" in white. The text "on how to contribute" is in white at the bottom.

Christmas Market

Thank you to everyone for your support on Saturday.

The Christmas Market was a super success bringing people together across the community.

So far around £3,600 was raised for which we offer grateful thanks.

Special thank you to Christmas Market Coordinator and Churchwarden Tracy Tann for amazing project management skills!

Parish Book Club

The Book Club has its last meeting of this year on Friday at 10.30am

The book is ***Meet Me at the Museum*** by Anne Youngson

The first book of 2026 will be ***A House in Sicily*** by Daphne Phelps on Friday 16 Jan.

St John's School Carol Service Fri 19th Dec 8.50am

This is the last day of school where we will be inviting all children (including Reception and Nursery) to the Christmas carol service. We invite family and friends to this event where we celebrate the end of term and Christmas.



On Tuesday 2nd December children and staff from Year 3 to Year 6 took part in an Advent Eucharist service that took place at school.

The Eucharist helpers from Year 6, supported Father Rob and Mrs de la Croix to help the collective worship run smoothly.

It was a great memorable way to mark the start of Advent at school.

The Friends News

Here is some useful information that is happening with the Friends.

This academic year we are going to host the AGM at school on Wednesday 4th February 2025 at 2:45pm. Mr Worton-Geer will be hosting with Teas and coffees to invite all parents to attend so that we can build a team to support the school. There are named roles here such as Chair, vice chair, treasurer and Secretary but also Reps for each class and non-named roles. Together we can support the school to develop a strong community that will help raise money for our children. Please come along.

Dates for the diary for half termly meetings are:

Wednesday 4th February 2025 at 2:45pm – AGM voting for roles

Wednesday 11th February 2025 – welcome new committee and discussion on World book day- a focus on Wonka.

Wednesday 25th March 2025

Wednesday 29th April 2025

Target: £10,000

Total so far:
£7466.50

World Book day

Sport's day

Father's day
projects

Mother's day
projects



Wednesday 24th June
2025



Christmas
bizarre
£1966.50

PLEASE COME AND SUPPORT OUR

AGM

Wednesday 4th February
at 2.45pm

Refreshments will be
provided

These are the cake sale dates

Yr 5 - 16/1/26
Yr 4 - 13/2/26
Yr 3 - 27/2/26
Yr 2 - 13/3/26
Yr 1 - 17/4/26
R - 8/5/26
N - 22/5/26



Our future events that we would like to run
and will need support are:

- Christmas Fair
- Christmas Cards
- Mother's Day project
- Father's Day project
- Sports Day
- Year 6 Show
- Odd shoe day

Fireworks
£2200

Anonymous
Donations
£1000

Tesco Grant
£1000

Quiz night
£1300



DIGSWELL PLAYERS PROUDLY PRESENTS



ALICE IN WONDERLAND

A PANTOMIME BY TOM WHALLEY – WWW.TOMWHALLEYPANTOMIMES.COM

DIRECTED BY CLAIRE KULA & ZARA STUART

MUSICAL DIRECTOR: JEREMY LOVELL

1ST TO 10TH JANUARY 2026

TICKETS: WWW.DIGSWELLPLAYERS.COM

ONLY £14 ADULT / £10 CHILD

TEL: 0845 20 90 100

DIGSWELL VILLAGE HALL, AL6 0AT

BOOK NOW

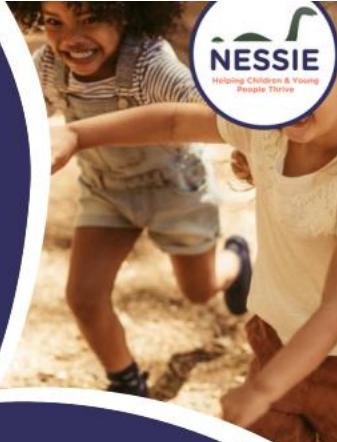
DIGSWELL PLAYERS



INCREDIBLE YEARS PARENTING PROGRAMME

A program for parents and carers of children aged 4 - 11 years in Welwyn and Hatfield, who are struggling with their child's behaviour at home.

Does your child display anxious, aggressive, argumentative, destructive behaviour and or refusal to follow instructions? Then this course is for you. This supportive program aims to develop parenting strategies tailored to you and your individual family's needs.



"This program is transformational in helping coach, support and gently challenge unhelpful thoughts or behaviours. Could not recommend more for parents of children of any age or background"

8th January - 26th March '26

Every Thursday

10am -12pm

(apart from half term)

Swallow Dell School,
Blackthorn Road, Welwyn
Garden City, AL7 3JP

Scan the QR code
to book now!



Who's in Charge?

A FREE* 8 WEEK COURSE FOR PARENTS/CARERS LIVING WITH A STRONG-WILLED CHILD

COURSE COVERS:

- ENTITLEMENT VERSUS RESPONSIBILITY
- CONSEQUENCES
- ANGER
- ASSERTIVENESS
- SELF-CARE
- COOPERATIVE FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

PROGRAMME CONSISTS OF 8 X 2 HOUR WEEKLY SESSIONS

DATES:
Monday evenings,
starts Feb 2026 - exact date to be confirmed

TIME: 6:30-8:30pm

LOCATION: Onslow St. Audrey's School

To book a place, please use the QR code or go to this link: <https://forms.office.com/e/q1ci0btEX5>

Made by the Partnership Welwyn Hatfield Schools Partnership Ltd. <https://www.welwynhatfieldschoolspartnership.org.uk/our-schools/>



Who's in Charge?

A FREE* 8 WEEK COURSE FOR PARENTS/CARERS LIVING WITH A STRONG-WILLED CHILD

COURSE COVERS:

- ENTITLEMENT VERSUS RESPONSIBILITY
- CONSEQUENCES
- ANGER
- ASSERTIVENESS
- SELF-CARE
- COOPERATIVE FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

PROGRAMME CONSISTS OF 8 X 2 HOUR WEEKLY SESSIONS

DATES:
Wednesdays from 28th Jan - 25th March (no session in half-term)

TIME: 9:30-11:30am

LOCATION: Peartree Primary School

To book a place, please use the QR code or go to this link: <https://forms.office.com/e/UzmG701hmR>

Made by the Partnership Welwyn Hatfield Schools Partnership Ltd. <https://www.welwynhatfieldschoolspartnership.org.uk/our-schools/>

