St John's VA C of E Primary School
NEWSLETTER

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

09/10/26

Autumn Term 1
Value: Love

Welcome message from the Headteacher

The children are incredible in our school

I have one of the best jobs in the world. I think about this statement, and I say to myself every morning how lucky I am to have such an incredible school, such incredible staff and such incredible children. It is not just about the day to day that makes me feel I have the best job in the world but the living, breathing family community that we grow each and every day. I witness children's wow moments where they realise they can complete a difficult sum for the first time. I see children of all ages supporting one another at lunch times and around the school. I am so very proud of our school and how far we have come together on this journey. When I started a few years ago, I knew we would get to this point, but to actually sit here in my office writing the newsletter knowing we have achieved some incredible events has really made me proud. Thank you everyone for helping to reach these goals.

The children have been working really hard on their oracy skills and writing foundations. I have really enjoyed seeing the children develop their handwriting and speech skills over the past two weeks. Not only do they continue to aspire to do more but they are also proud of what they have achieved. I have seen children as young as nursery age speaking fluently and enjoying learning in our school.

I was reflecting on our surveys that have been completed and realised that we are shaping a school for children to develop further in all areas. We don't just focus on the core subjects or outcomes for Year 6, but we also consider the arts, technology and development in their physical ability.

Year 6 have had an eventful two weeks finding out their job roles and beginning to for fill these. We are very proud of Year 6 and how they have come to this point in their journey at our school. Growing independence is a key area that I would like all of our children to learn before they leave.

Harvest festival was a great success yesterday and Mrs de la Croix and Mrs Miller shared with me the huge success of the service. Thank you to everyone who has donated and supported our local community. We have been discussing how love in the bible has been shown in many parables and verses. Knowing that we are showing love each and every day as a school is incredible. I am very proud of each and every pupil at our school always aiming to be kind.

We have a few more weeks until half term, The Friends and I have been working hard on the annual planner for events to help raise money for the school's newest project. We are just finalising information about this and then we will share this out to everyone.

Have a great weekend - Mr Worton-Geer

Pupil quote of the week- Kara (Year 6): In the past two weeks, I have enjoyed the new equipment and being responsible for OPAL as an OPAL lead with my friends. We are having great lunch times.

Quote from the bible- 1 John 4:19: "We love because he first loved us."

Improvements to the school:

We have had several improvements so far:

- **We have planned for October half term to have more emergency lights put in and some additional fire safety equipment around the school for further safety**
- **We are looking at getting a new sign for our office**
- **I am working on building a timeline for the school to go around my new office so that we can see how the school has developed on a journey.**
- **We have had a huge order of Forest school equipment from our Tesco Grant. Thank you to the parent who helped secure this funding!**
- **We have begun to spend our Thames Water Grant. We have been working incredibly hard on hopefully getting a small jetty!**
- **Our bibles have arrived ready for next half term. We will be giving bibles out to all children from Years 3-6 rather than the end of the school journey. We will be keeping these in school and teaching them how to find scriptures.**

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Highlights

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

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.

Social Media:

We have begun to explore the world of social media in order to help support promote the school and share with our community including our podcast. Please can you update your photo and video consent for social media – found on Arbor.

Youtube: https://youtube.com/shorts/6OBtkSibRWM?feature=share

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/digswellstjohns?igsh=MXB6Nm1qaHc3dHE2eQ%3D%3D&utm_source=qr

REMINDER

Please can we remind parents that the outside play equipment should not be used before and after school hours. This is due to health and safety.

Attendance:
Week commencing 28th October 2026

Year	Percent	Place
Nursery	97.4%	6th
Year 1	95.2%	8th
Year 2	98.3%	5th
Year 3	98.7%	3rd
Year 4	100%	1st
Year 5	99.3%	2nd
Year 6	96.8%	7th
Year R	98.5%	4th

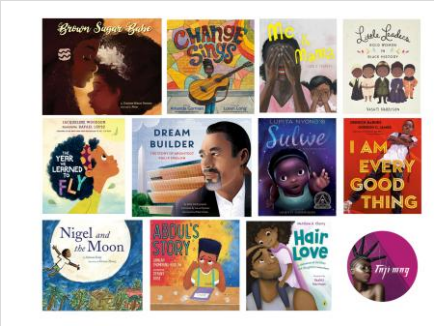
Black History Month: Celebrating Black Authors

October is **Black History Month**, a time to celebrate the achievements, contributions and stories of Black people throughout history and today. This year at school, we are putting a special focus on **Black authors and illustrators**, encouraging our children to discover some of the wonderful books and stories created by talented Black writers.

As part of our reading challenge, **every book by a Black author that a child can recognise and tell Mr Worton-Geer about will earn them a House Point**. Whether it is a picture book, chapter book, poetry collection or non-fiction text, every new author discovered is another opportunity to broaden horizons and develop a lifelong love of reading.

Why is this important? Research shows that while representation is improving, Black and other racially minoritised creators remain under-represented in children's publishing. In 2021, only **11.7% of children's book creators in the UK were people of colour**, and they produced just **9.1% of children's book titles**. [booktrust.org.uk] We are excited to introduce children to inspiring authors such as **Joseph Coelho, Malorie Blackman, Benjamin Zephaniah, Dapo Adeola, Patrice Lawrence and Onyinye Iwu**, alongside many others whose stories help children see the richness and diversity of our world.

We encourage families to visit their local library, explore our recommended reading lists and join us in celebrating the power of stories this Black History Month. Happy reading, and don't forget to share your discoveries with **Mr Worton-Geer** for your House Point!



Explore Amazing Black Authors:- Children can learn more about these fantastic authors and discover their books by visiting the websites below:

Malorie Blackman

Former Children's Laureate and author of the popular *Noughts & Crosses* series. https://www.malorieblackman.co.uk

Joseph Coelho

Award-winning poet, author and former Children's Laureate. https://www.thepoetryofjosephcoelho.com

Benjamin Zephaniah

Poet, writer and campaigner whose work continues to inspire readers of all ages. https://benjaminzephaniah.com

BookTrust Represents

Discover a wide range of books and authors from diverse backgrounds. https://www.booktrust.org.uk/what-we-do/programmes-and-campaigns/booktrust-represents

Child Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for always providing us the light when we are struggling. Thank you for guiding us each and every day. We are grateful for the harvest festival and the food that we are able to give to others. Amen (Year 6 - Davi)

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Calendar

Monday 12th October	Year 4 Swimming sessions week
Wednesday 14th October	Reception reading meeting 2:30pm
Friday 16th October	Year 6 Forest School
Friday 16th October	Year 6 Cake Sale
Modnay 19th October	Reception/ Nursery parent tour – 2:00pm
Tuesday 20th October	Book look afternoon 2:30pm
Wednesday 21st October	Parents Evening
Thursday 22nd October	Parents Evening
Friday 23rd October	Year 5 Forest School Day
Friday 23rd October	Last day of half term
Friday 23rd October	Glow Disco
Monday 26th – Friday 30th October	Half term week
Monday 2nd November	First day back at School
Tuesday 3rd November	Collective worship – bible Sunday – in school
Wednesday 4th November	Flu Vaccinations
Friday 6th November	Year 5 Cake Sale
Saturday 7th November	Fireworks Night
Sunday 8th November	Remembrance Sunday at the memorial – 12:30pm
Wednesday 11th November	Collective worship – Remembrance Day (school) 10:50am
Friday 13th November	Non-School uniform day – Children In Need
Monday 16th – Friday 20th November	Anti Bullying Week
Monday 16th – Friday 20th November	Road Safety Week



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Academic Highlights

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

EYFS



In Reception, we read 'Hair Love' and looked at our similarities and differences. We used mirrors to look at our features and painted our own self-portraits. We also created a timeline of pictures from being a newborn to our current age. The children loved talking about what they could do in the past and what they can do now. We practised painting our names too, trying really hard to form our letters correctly.



KS1



Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 had a fantastic time celebrating our **Monster Phonics Dress-Up Day!** The children (and staff!) looked amazing in their colourful costumes and enjoyed a day packed with fun, hands-on phonics activities, including **Play-Doh words, LEGO tricky words, grapheme watches** and much more. One of the highlights was our brilliant **afternoon fashion parade**, where everyone had the chance to show off their fabulous outfits! It was a wonderful opportunity to bring our younger children together, have lots of fun and most importantly, reinforce the **colour coding, characters and learning from our Monster Phonics scheme**. Thank you to all our families for helping to make it such a memorable day!



Year 1 have had another busy and exciting couple of weeks! A real highlight was our **Monster Phonics Dress-Up Day**, when the children looked fantastic in their colourful costumes and enjoyed celebrating phonics together. Our LEGO-crazy children have also been choosing to practise their phonics during independent learning, building **tricky words with LEGO**! We've continued making phonics as active and engaging as possible, designing grapheme watches, combining fine-motor skills and Play-Doh to make tricky words, and using our spinner to choose words to press into dough.

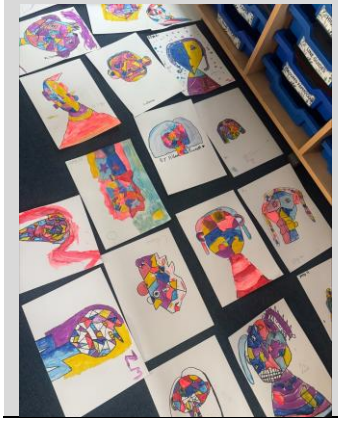
Lower KS2

It has been a busy couple of weeks in Year 3. We became geographers for a trip around Digswell, where the children identified features of the village and carried out a traffic survey as part of our Geography unit on settlements.

In English, the children have been writing exciting fantasy stories, using their imagination to create magical settings and adventurous plots. We have also been preparing for Harvest Festival by writing harvest poems that we presented at the service at St Johns.

To top it all off, we had a fantastic Spanish WOW Day, where the children practiced their handwriting in Spanish, designed their own Talavera tiles and became flamenco dancers!





Upper KS2

In Year 6, we had such fun on Spanish day! We learnt about the artist Picasso and even used his work as inspiration for our own painting!

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Parish News

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

Donations:

If you wish to contribute to a donation, please see the new link:

https://givealittle.co/c/ba0580ac-0010-48cd-be88-35d9d2fdcd98



Here is the collective worship list for school visits on Tuesday's:

Oct
13 Fr Rob (Stewardship)
20 Selina (Value - Love)

Nov
3 Bibles Fr Rob
11 Remembrance Selina
19 Fr Rob (Value -Hope)
24 Lee - governor (Feast of Christ the King)

Dec
1 Advent Eucharist Fr Rob
10 Selina Advent

Save the Date
Sunday Nov 1
10.30am Memorial Service for the departed.
We will be remembering our loved ones once again during All Souls and All Saints. Do join us and note the time.

Don't forget there is always a warm welcome at either of the Parish Cafes.
Coffee Pot
Fridays
9:00-12 noon
St John's Church, Monks Rise

The Hub Cafe
Saturdays
10:00-12:30pm
CtKHub, Haldens

TEA, TOAST and TODDLERS
Time: 9:00-10:30 am
Toys, craft activity, messy play and plenty of toast!
When:First and Third Thursday of the Month
Where: The Hub at Christ the King, Haldens
We are looking for volunteers to help once a month with refreshments, setting up the toys, helping with the craft activity and welcoming all who come along.
Please email us at info@digswellparish.org.uk for more information.



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The Friends News

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



Total so far:£0

Friday 9th July 2027
Summer Fair

Friday 2nd July 2027
Sports Day

Wednesday 30th June 2027
Hop-a-thon

Friday 18th June 2027
Special Men's Day

Friday 21st May 2027
Disco

Friday 23rd April 2027
Duck Race

Thursday 25th March 2027
Easter Chocolate Tombola

Friday 5th March 2027
Special Ladies Day

Thursday 4th March
World Book Day

Friday 26th February 2026
Quiz night

Friday 29th January 2026
Bingo Night

Friday 4th December 2026
Christmas Fair

Thursday 19th November
Be cool be seen

Week of the 16th November
Friendship chains

Saturday 7th November 2026
Fireworks

Friday 23rd October 2026
Glow disco

The Friends:

The Friends, Mrs Scott, the Governors and I are working collectively together this year to raise money for the school. We are eager to ensure that we work in collaboration for the benefit of all our children at our school. We have come up with an annual calendar of what needs to be completed to help run events well. We will need everyone to help. From Reps to sharing out communications to parents volunteering, we are going to be working collectively to help raise money for our school.

We have increased our communication methods; we have updated our calendars including the school website calendar for you to see all of the great events that will be appearing at the school. Together we can raise money for our school project to develop our school to be the best in the nearby area. We want your voice, your views and your help at these events. Please ensure to invite everyone to come so that we can raise money together to develop the school further.

Preloved uniform:

I just wanted to let you know that we raised £50 at the preloved uniform sale on Friday.
We sold jumpers, fleeces, trousers, shorts, skirts, dresses as well as wellies, coats & shoes.

How good is this for the environment?
Saving 50 T-shirts from being newly manufactured prevents approximately 215 to 912 kilograms (kg) of CO_2e (carbon dioxide equivalent) from entering the atmosphere. Real-World Equivalent: Saving around 500 kg of carbon is roughly equivalent to driving a standard petrol car for about 1,200 to 1,300 miles. By my rough estimation, this has saved the equivalent of 900 baths of water.
There is a small team who've been brilliant and we are very grateful for their help. We are also really grateful to all the parents who've bought and donated clothes.

Reps for each class		
Vacancy	Nursery	Vacancy
Roshni Bharij	Reception	Vacancy
Natalie Burnett	Year 1	Nicola Pattison
Fiona Hetheringto n	Year 2	Sara Box-Hashem
Claire Dixon	Year 3	Chantelle Newman
Kelly Butler	Year 4	Lauren Bowman
Jo Jamieson	Year 5	Lisa Robson
Lee Pocha	Year 6	Natalie Burnett



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CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION

The Chairman of Welwyn Parish Council is seeking a beautifully festive Christmas card design to serve as the official Parish Council card for 2026.

The competition is open to all Reception/KS1 and KS2 children in the Parish (Digswell, Oaklands, Mardley Heath and Welwyn).

The design should be created on A4 paper, with any Christmas-related theme, and must lay flat (no glitter or 3D stickers).

Entries will be divided in to two categories: Reception/KS1 (age 4-7) and KS2 (age 8-11)

Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd in each category and the overall winner will have their design printed as real Christmas cards with some to take home too!

We will also invite the winner to help switch on Welwyn village Christmas lights on Friday 27th November 2026.

Please submit your entries to the Parish Offices, Lockleys Drive, Welwyn by 3pm on **16th November 2026**. Be sure to include your name, age, and a parent or carer's phone number so we can reach out to the winners.





Hertfordshire County Council wants to hear your views on where 20mph speed limits may be appropriate in Welwyn Garden City.

Lower traffic speeds can make streets feel more comfortable for a wider range of users. They can help people cross roads more easily, support independent journeys to schools and local facilities, and encourage more people to consider walking, cycling or using public transport for shorter journeys. It can make it easier to pull out of driveways and side roads in their cars.

We are not considering 20mph limits on key distributor routes such as Stanborough Road, Bessemer Road, Broadwater Road, Black Fan Road and Chequers.

Our Right Place, Right Pace approach recognises that different roads serve different purposes. Some roads are places where people live, walk, wheel, cycle, shop, access schools and spend time, while others play an important role in helping people travel between communities.

We are asking residents, businesses, schools and local communities to help shape how a future 20mph scheme could look in their area by telling us if, and where they believe lower speed limits are most appropriate. We also recognise that views differ on where 20mph limits should be used and that not every road will be suitable.

By completing the survey, your feedback will help us understand local priorities and inform the potential development of a 20mph areas for Welwyn Garden City **click here** **Take survey**

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Parents and Carers talk about self-harm and recovery

Please join us at an information session to learn more about self-harm and get practical ideas and strategies to help your child towards recovery

Where: **Online over Zoom.**

When: **Tuesday 6th October, 7pm to 9pm**

For more information or to book your place:
Call: 01992 58 69 69
Email: contact@carersinherts.org.uk
Go online: www.carersinherts.org.uk/events

Carers in Hertfordshire
charity registration number 1085491


The Friends of
St John's School, Digswell
ANTI-BULLYING WEEK
16TH – 20TH NOVEMBER
KINDNESS CHAINS
£1 PER CHAIN
BUY A LINK, SPREAD KINDNESS AND BE IN WITH A CHANCE TO WIN A PRIZE!
Be kind
Include everyone
You matter
Choose kindness
Our Kindness Chains will be on sale all week.
Add your link to our whole school chain to help us create a colourful display of kindness.
On FRIDAY 20TH NOVEMBER we will cut one lucky link from our Kindness Chain and the winner will receive a PRIZE!
Let's make a chain of kindness that reaches across our school!

ROAD SAFETY WEEK
16TH – 20TH NOVEMBER
BE COOL BE SEEN
NON-UNIFORM DAY
THURSDAY 19TH NOVEMBER
£1
WEAR SOMETHING BRIGHT, NEON OR REFLECTIVE!
Help us raise awareness about keeping safe on our roads while supporting our school.
All donations go to the Friends of St John's School.


The Friends of
St John's School, Digswell
DISCO
SAVE THE DATES!
FRIDAY 23RD OCTOBER
FRIDAY 21ST MAY
MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW SOON!
TICKETS £5
TUCK SHOP
POP CORN
SWEETS
NURSERY & RECEPTION
YEARS 1 - 3
YEARS 4 - 6


The Friends of
St John's School, Digswell
CHRISTMAS FAIR
FRIDAY 4TH DECEMBER
1PM – 3PM
ST JOHN'S SCHOOL, DIGSWELL
COME AND SEE FATHER CHRISTMAS
(EXTRA CHARGE WILL APPLY)
STALLS
RAFFLE
TOMBOLA
BAR
AND MORE!
FESTIVE FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY!


The Friends of
St John's School, Digswell
CAKE SALES
ALL CAKES 50p
IN THE PLAYGROUND AFTER SCHOOL
Homemade or shop bought cakes welcome!
YEAR 6 FRIDAY 16TH OCTOBER
YEAR 5 FRIDAY 6TH NOVEMBER
YEAR 4 FRIDAY 15TH JANUARY
YEAR 3 FRIDAY 12TH FEBRUARY
YEAR 2 FRIDAY 19TH MARCH
YEAR 1 FRIDAY 16TH APRIL
RECEPTION FRIDAY 7TH MAY
NURSERY FRIDAY 28TH MAY
Raise funds for our school with some yummy treats!
Come along, grab a cake and support our school!
Everyone welcome!

The Church of England
Parish of Digswell
Welwyn Garden City

Compline/weekly worship available on Soundcloud Channel

Morning Prayer is via Zoom

Please ask us for details 240926

October 2026

Thu 1	**9:00am**	**Tea Toast & Toddlers at Christ the King Hub**
	8:30pm	**Compline** – *a link is sent*
Fri 2	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**
	9:00am	**Coffee Pot at St John's Café**
Sat 3	**7:45am**	**Fr Rob presents *Thought for the Day* LIVE on BBC Radio 4**
	8:30am	**Morning Prayer**
	9:15am	**A Moment of Healing at St John's Church**
	10:00am	**Hub Café at Christ the King Hub**
Sunday 4	**HARVEST FESTIVAL**	
	Audio Service for This Week *a link is sent*	
	9:30am	**Parish Eucharist at St John's Church**
	1:00pm	**Holy Baptism at St John's Church**
Mon 5	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**
Tues 6	**10:00am**	**Eucharist at Christ the King Hub**
	1pm	**Safeguarding Leadership Training** [Fr Rob]
	8:30pm	**Compline** – *a link is sent*
Weds 7	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**
	10:00am	**Fr Rob teaching online ERMC course on preaching**
	2pm	**WGC Anglican Incumbents meeting**
Thu 8	**8:50am**	**St John's School Harvest Festival Service- St John's Church**
	10:45am	**Homerswood Harvest Festival Service – St John's Church**
	2pm	**Harwood Hill Harvest Festival Service – St John's Church**
	8:30pm	**Compline** *a link is sent*
Fri 9	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**
	10:00am	**Coffee Pot at St John's Café**
Sat 10	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**
	9:30am	**PCC Away Day at Elstow Abbey**
	10:00am	**Hub Café at Christ the King Hub**
Sunday 11	**Trinity 19/Stewardship Sunday**	
	Audio Service for This Week *a link is sent*	
	9:30am	**Parish Eucharist at St John's Church**
	11:00am	**All Age Anglican Service at Digswell Village Church**
Mon 12	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**
	2:00pm	**DVC Bible Study Group**
Tues 13	**8:50am**	**Collective Worship at St John's School**
	10:00am	**Eucharist at Christ the King Hub**
	12 Noon	**Clergy Chapter at North Mymms**
	1pm	**Safeguarding Leadership Training [Fr Rob]**
	8:30pm	**Compline** – *a link is sent*
Weds 14	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**
	7:30pm	**Deanery Synod Meeting**
Thur 15	**9:00am**	**Tea Toast & Toddlers at Christ the King Hub**
	2pm	**Parish Book Club meets at the Rectory**
	8:30pm	**Compline** *a link is sent*
Fri 16	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**
	9:00am	**Coffee Pot at St John's Café**
Sat 17	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**
	9am	**Diocesan Synod meets** [Fr Rob]
	10:00am	**Hub Café at Christ the King Hub**
Sunday 18	**ST LUKE THE EVANGELIST**	
	Audio Service for This Week *a link is sent*	
	9:30am	**All Age Worship at St John's Church followed by refreshments**
	12:00pm	**Holy Baptism at St John's Church**
	Fr Rob is celebrating and preaching today as a guest in the parish of St Peter & St Paul Little Gaddesden	
Mon 19	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**
	9:00am	**Waterside Assembly**
	2:00pm	**An Afternoon in Corinth (2) at the Rectory**
Tue 20	**8:50am**	**Collective Worship at St John's School**
	10:00am	**Eucharist at Christ the King Hub**
	8:30pm	**Compline** – *a link is sent*
Weds 21	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**
	10:00am	**Fr Rob teaching online ERMC course on preaching**
Thu 22	**8:30pm**	**Compline** *a link is sent*
Fri 23	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**
	9:00am	**Coffee Pot at St John's Café**
Sat 24	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**
	10:00am	**Hub Café at Christ the King Hub**
Sunday 25	**Trinity 21**	
	Audio Service for This Week *a link is sent*	
	9:30am	**Parish Eucharist at St John's Church**
	11:00am	**Anglican-led service at Digswell Village Church**
Mon 26	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**

Tues 27	**ST SIMON & ST JUDE**	
	10:00am	**Eucharist at Christ the King Hub**
	8:30pm	**Compline** – *a link is sent*
Weds 28	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**
Thu 29	**8:30pm**	**Compline** *a link is sent*
Fri 30	**8:30am**	**Morning Prayer**
	9:00am	**Coffee Pot at St John's Café**
Sat 31	**7:45am**	**Fr Rob presents *Thought for the Day* LIVE on BBC Radio 4**
	8:30am	**Morning Prayer**
	10:00am	**Hub Café at Christ the King Hub**

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