

BOARD OF EDUCATION SCHOOLS TEAM

FRIENDSHIP



Pupils at St Michael's VA Primary, St Albans, focussed on the value of Friendship during the Autumn term. Their homework was based on Friendship

and completed work was proudly displayed in the school library, along with amazing posters and attractive friendship bracelets. KS2 wrote poems and recipes for friendship. One was even an acrostic poem! It was apparent from their work that the children had truly embraced and thought deeply about the value of friendship and this was being demonstrated throughout the school, especially when the older children supported the younger ones during break times.

THE ROCK CHALLENGE

In February, St Paul's VA Primary School in Chipperfield participated in the heats of the Rock Challenge 2017. Rock Challenge is a yearly dance and drama competition which involves thousands of young people all over the world. It helps encourage students to lead safe and healthy lifestyles, building confidence and self-esteem. 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe' was the school's theme and focussed on battling for what they believe in. Characters included unicorns and griffins. The



school recorded their own soundtrack involving over 80 pupils. The production included a fantastically large lion which represented

Jesus, light, life, love and goodness. St Paul's won many awards of excellence and were delighted to have come second overall. Mrs Smith, Rock Challenge leader and Year 6 teacher said: 'I was very proud of the team who put on a tremendous show. As always, our pupils represented our school with respect, enthusiasm and determination'. For Year 6 pupils, it will be one of the most precious memories from their time at St Paul's. A report by Emily, Molly and Billy (Yr 6).

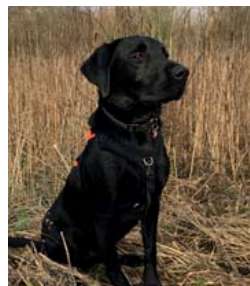
VISIT FROM THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

In January, St Peter's VA Primary, Rickmansworth, received a visit from Councillor Andrew Scarth, the new Chair of Three Rivers District Council. Peter and Lucy, head boy and head girl welcomed Cllr Scarth before introducing him to the current school councillors. After talking about his role in the community, Cllr Scarth asked the children how their school council worked. The children, when shown the Diocese of St Albans' coat of arms in his chain of office, eagerly noticed its cross was the same as their school badge. The visit gave the children a fascinating insight into the workings of the local council and was enjoyed by all. Cllr Scarth later included the visit in his blog, mentioning 'a lovely feeling of this school being a happy and positive teaching environment'.



CLEVER TEASEL

Meet Teasel the School Dog! St Nicholas VA Primary School and Nursery in Stevenage are very proud to be working with the charity *Dogs Helping Kids* (<http://www.dogshelpingkids.co.uk>) which trains and assesses dogs to work in schools, colleges and libraries as educational and therapeutic aids. Teasel has passed his basic and advanced training but still has to complete a two-year training programme to be fully certified. He is currently supporting children with communication and language difficulties, and listens to reluctant readers. In time, he will be taught to read 150 cue cards to support the development of young readers. Teasel also gets to go out and have fun with the children and he is rather partial to a stroke! He has his own blog and receives regular letters from the younger children. Teasel is owned and trained by the school's Headteacher and SENCO Sarah Stevens.



SCHOOLS TEAM NEWS

THE DIOCESAN RESOURCE CENTRE

The Resource Centre is based at Holywell Lodge and has a wide range of items available to borrow and use in your schools. You will find there collections of artefacts covering the six major world faiths, ideal for classroom displays, as well as resources for children to handle and explore. We have a large number of Godly Play boxes which can help in the telling of Bible stories and exploring seasonal celebrations such as Christmas and Easter. For more information on Godly Play, please see www.godlyplay.uk. The Centre also houses storybags, big books, puppets, posters, CDs, DVDs and a large selection of books providing material for collective worship and RE. We are beginning to catalogue the contents of the Centre and the following page on our website will be added to regularly: www.stalbans.anglican.org/schools/holywell-lodge/. To ask about availability or to enquire about resources that we may have for a specific topic, please email Ruth on rgarman@stalbands.anglican.org



RE NEWS

Church of England RE Conference 27 June, Hallam Hotel London: We have held a national RE summer conference in London for several years. Originally only for secondary colleagues, it was recently opened to primary teachers also. A flier will be sent to schools soon, but please hold the date if interested.

Understanding Christianity: Do send in articles for the newsletter if you have held events or have work to share. Most church schools and several clergy have now completed the initial free training via one of 11 full-day courses or 3 of 60 twilights. Several RE coordinators attended the second full-day training in January or have signed up for 24 June. Further training takes place in the autumn term. For more information, please email Jane on jchipperton@stalbands.anglican.org

Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus: Please sign up for the launch of the Herts Agreed Syllabus on 27 April. I will be exhibiting Understanding Christianity on the day.

Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton Agreed Syllabus: RE Today have been commissioned to review the Agreed Syllabuses with the Bedfordshire SACREs over the next year. A questionnaire will be sent to schools and teachers soon. Heads who sit on the SACREs will meet to discuss the revision before the summer holiday. *Jane Chipperton, RE Advisor*

FOCUS ON GOVERNANCE

- Recruiting governors can be challenging, but online resources can help. If local recruitment is proving difficult, have you tried to recruit online? Inspiring Governance (<http://inspiringgovernance.org/>) is the national free 'matchmaking' service connecting schools with skilled volunteers interested in serving as governors and trustees. Inspiring Governance is run by the charity Education and Employers and the National Governors' Association (www.nga.org.uk), working with other key partners. The service is supported and funded by the Department for Education.
- The NGA also offers excellent resources to support skills-based governor recruitment, including a new version of the Skills Audit tool, available freely at <http://www.nga.org.uk/Guidance/Workings-Of-The-Governing-Body/Governance-Tools/Skills-Audit.aspx>. Further online recruitment resources are available to NGA members. Remember to keep an eye on our governance webpage at <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/schools/governors/>. Our appointments guidance there includes advice on recruitment avenues for foundation governors.
- Finally, we are always happy to advise on governor recruitment: bcopson@stalbands.anglican.org

PUPIL PREMIUM

At recent training via the Regional Schools Commissioner, Marc Rowland, author of 'A Practical Guide to the Pupil Premium' gave some interesting thoughts about the way he has identified for the money to be most effectively used to support young people:

1. Understand the barriers for the PPG pupils in your school, this year. A key to this is talking to your students and asking them how they spend their time out of school. What do they do? Where do they go?
2. High-quality teaching day in, day out, is the most important factor in challenging disadvantage.
3. How welcoming is the reception of your school to those who find it hard to read or are nervous about entering places of authority?
4. Consider training midday supervisors to develop conversations with children you identify as needing to develop their oracy skills. Could there be conversation starters to encourage more fully developed sentences? There are many more ideas in the book, and if you would like to discuss these or any other ideas, please don't hesitate to contact me: ljeanes@stalbands.anglican.com
Lizzie Jeanes, Deputy Director of Education

OUR SCHOOLS' NEWS

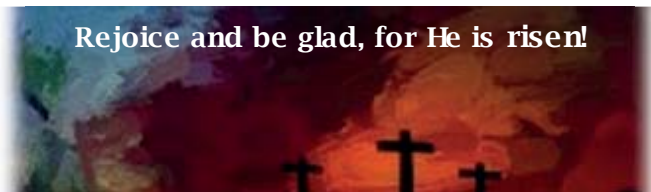
FIRST DAY OF DSAMAT

Wednesday 1st March was an important day for Churchfield Primary and Nursery in Cheshunt as it became the first school to join the Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust. Staff and pupils gathered in the hall to mark this important event in the life of the school. Headteacher Kate Hardwick and Bishop Michael led the collective worship and all the children joined in the songs and prayers and, as the candle was lit, there was a moment to give thanks for all that Churchfield had been and would be in the future.



THIS EASTERTIDE

Rejoice and be glad, for He is risen!



NEW PRAYER GARDEN

Two pupils at Henlow Academy have taken on a special project as part of their Year 8 Challenge. The opportunity to develop an open area at the centre of the school prompted Matthew and William to engage others to join in on their inspirational thinking to design a Prayer Garden/ Area of Reflection. Pupils confidently delivered presentations to senior staff, from which arose many ideas to provide Henlow with a fabulous area that the whole school community will be able to enjoy. The school's grounds maintenance team have generously given time and labour to clear the ground, allowing pupils to start planting and creating. Parents have offered help with landscaping, a local supplier has volunteered to provide materials and the father of one of the governors has very kindly made a financial contribution. We look forward to the project taking shape and will keep everyone updated. Thanks go to Roddi, Daniel, Oliver, Bailey, Saul, Jessica, Ben, Charlotte, Ellie, Daniel H, Dylan, Elise, Ellie and Alice for their creativity and contribution.



SLEEPOVER SLUMBER

Late last year, Class 5 at Long Marston VA Primary near Tring enjoyed a superb night in St John the Baptist church, Aldbury. After a night-time walk from Ashridge, the children delighted in having games, fish and chips, bell ringing and much more excitement in the church. The children had a wonderful time learning about the church and its history. Many thanks to Revd Jane and Fr Huw for allowing the school to spend time there and for the children to experience a different church in the parish.



PANCAKE RACES

Children from Barkway VA and Barley VC Schools near Royston weren't the only ones pancake racing on Shrove Tuesday. They were joined by parents, Revds Ruth Pyke and Sonia Falaschi-Ray, Richard Pyke and even... Rufus the retriever! The event was hosted by Barkway School and was supported by staff, governors, church members and the community group. A bring & buy sale, coffee, cakes and pancakes all raised funds for church and school, and brought different parts of the community together for a day of huge fun.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY - COURSES 2017

| DATE | COURSE | FOR WHOM |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| 2nd May 2017 | The Distinctive Christian Character of Church Schools | Teachers, Staff and Governors |
| 6th June 2017 | Headteachers' Conference | Headteachers |
| 13th June 2017 | SEF Writing | Headteachers and Senior Leaders |
| 22nd June 2017 (please note the change of date) | Senior Leadership Conference | Senior Leadership Teams |
| 26th June 2017 | Admissions | Governors dealing with admissions |

To book a course, contact Ruth Garman on 01727 818168 or email rgarman@stalbans.anglican.org

This year, the Bishop of St Albans' Harvest Appeal will be supporting a project in the Philippines, helping rural communities benefit from growing a wider variety of produce. Do consider giving your support to the 'Full of Beans' project in your schools. Further information will be available after Easter.

**We celebrated
World Book Day
around
the Diocese**



St Mary's,
Rickmansworth



St Mary's, North Mymms



St Michael's,
Woolmer Green

SENIOR LEADERS' RETREAT

A number of diocesan school senior leaders enjoyed 'time out' in March with the Revd Canon Richard Watson (St Albans) in the glorious setting of Canterbury Cathedral Lodge, beginning with the Ash Wednesday cathedral service. There was time to reflect on the national, diocesan and Church School vision as well as valuable networking moments during tasty meal breaks, exploring the area, joining a cathedral tour or enjoying one of the many local hostelryes...

A VISION FOR EDUCATION

Why do you do what you do? What inspires you, enables you to fulfil the role you undertake?

Whether you are a member of the support staff team, a teacher, governor, parent volunteer or senior leader, it is likely that you have a vision that motivates and inspires you to be involved in the work of your local Church School.

The vision of Weston Priory, an American religious community, reminds us that it remains possible to be counter-cultural in the formation and development of our own vision for education and our schools' vision for education: *'We choose to be a community that dances and sings, in spite of the tendencies of our times to despair and cynicism'*.

The Church of England, through its vision for education, has re-affirmed why the National Church does education; why it invests so much money, so much time, so much passion and energy in creating and maintaining Church Schools that are deeply Christian and serve the common good. It talks about dignity, hope, community and wisdom; antidotes to an individualistic society that often places self before the other and diminishes the power of community to change and transform lives. Church Schools in the Diocese of St Albans are

called to Live God's Love by being distinctively Christian, Community Focussed and through Serving the Common Good.

As a Schools Team, we are thrilled by the examples we see day by day of living Christian communities that include all, serve all and provide space for children and young people to flourish into the people God created them to be; Communities that are wholeheartedly placing dignity, hope and wisdom at the heart of the curriculum.

As we approach Easter, we hope and pray that you will find time to reflect on your own vision and the vision of your school and as you do, you may be refilled and refuelled by Hope and by the love of God.

David Morton, Director of Education

