

BOARD OF EDUCATION SCHOOLS TEAM

NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS

From Silsoe to Sierra Leone

The sun shone as pupils, staff, governors and guests gathered for the dedication of Silsoe VC Lower School's new state of the art building on 18th of May. The service was led by the Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith, Bishop of St Albans, who said two special prayers of thanksgiving and of dedication, and by the school's local vicar, Revd Dave Bell. The ceremony was a very special event which also celebrated the school's supporters and former pupils.

Rather than see the school's former site demolished after it was sold, a local charity was allowed to remove a great many useful items. 'Home Leone' are



a Luton-based charity working in Sierra Leone, whose vision is of a nation free of slum living. The equipment, which would not be available in the country, was sent to Freetown where it would be used in a modern school that is to be built in a new community, providing ground-breaking education for the area.

Den-Building for Charity

On 16th of June, Cockernhoe School took part in Den Day to raise funds for Save the Children. Staff and children came in with cardboard boxes,



pieces of wood, tarpaulin, cloth and string, all of which were placed in a central resource area. In mixed year groups, the children took it in turns to choose the materials they needed then built their dens, requiring both leadership skills from the older children and teamwork from everyone. The afternoon was a great success and the total raised was £96. Congratulations on a building job well done!

World Transplant Games Success!

The 21st World Transplant Games were held from 25th of June to 2nd of July this year in Málaga, Spain. Robert Collins, age 14, who



received a kidney transplant in 2009 and is now a pupil at All Saints Academy, Dunstable represented his country in badminton and table tennis, winning gold and bronze. Congratulations! Rob has returned to training for the British Transplant Games later this month and firmly intends to represent Great Britain in the next World Games in Newcastle in 2019. There are currently over 6500 people waiting for organs on the transplant register. For more information on this vital issue or to sign up to the NHS Organ Donor Register, go to <https://www.organdonation.nhs.uk/>

Snap Election with a Difference

The 6th of June started as a normal day for classes at Holywell School in Cranfield, studying the subject of the General Election. At 10am, everything

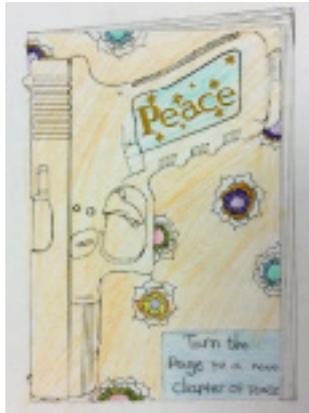


changed when headteacher Mr Haddon called a snap election in school. Each class represented a 'party', based on one of the school's key Values and secretly chosen by their tutor beforehand. Every class organised its campaign to persuade other pupils that their Value would change their life in the school for the better. Tasks were shared out, materials produced, speeches written and roles allocated so that every 'party' had its own candidate, campaign manager, journalists and other key actors. Candidates, with campaign managers at their side, passionately addressed Assembly and votes were cast. The winning parties were Tolerance and Empathy for Yrs 7 and 8, and Happiness and Self-Esteem for Yrs 5 and 6. A new generation of politicians may be born!

NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS

Wenlock welcomes Faith Leaders

This term, Year 4 children at Wenlock Junior School felt very fortunate to be able to welcome Luton Council of Faith. Leaders from all faiths and none were represented, and the discussion between the children and adults centred around working together to make Luton a better place to live. The conclusion was that we must learn to 'disagree well'. The visitors were inspiring and faced serious questions such as 'How can your religious role make the town more peaceful?', 'Can you use other religions to achieve your goal?' and 'Can your unity of faiths create disagreements within your own communities?'



In June, as a result of recent events in the news, the whole school also decided to join in the activities of the 'Great Get Together'. Activities throughout the day led the children to think deeply about British values, why weapons were so appealing to some and how guns could be turned to peace, and about the story of Bishop Dinis of Maputo, Mozambique, who was influenced by the Prophet Isaiah's vision of turning swords into ploughs.

Creation Creativity

In March, St Andrew's Lower in Biggleswade held a Creation Day to 'dip its toe' into Understanding Christianity before it is fully introduced in September.



The whole school spent the day thinking deeply about Creation and the world around us through a wide range of activities, from role play to poetry writing, art and dance. The children enjoyed every moment and there was a real buzz about the whole school. RE was made the focus of every activity and the children asked some very searching questions about God. One teacher commented: "Days like today are the reason that I went into teaching." Teachers found Understanding Christianity easy to plan from and thought the suggested activities were engaging yet relevant. The day was such a success that it has been incorporated into St Andrew's long-term RE plan.

A Refugee Encounter

During May in Bishop's Stortford, the pupils of All Saints Primary spent a week learning about the experiences of refugees and how the charity Christian Aid helps some of the world's most vulnerable people.



Thought-provoking books and stories were discussed, and Year 6 went on to write their own accounts of a refugee child's journey, while Year 2 simulated what a perilous crossing in a dinghy would feel like. The week was truly meaningful as the children seemed to understand and empathise with the frightening experiences many refugees encounter.

Raynsford's Reflection Garden

The entire school community at Raynsford Academy in Henlow is delighted with its brand new area of reflection. It was designed by two of the children who subsequently worked with garden designers to create it. The project was supported by various local companies as well as a successful bid for a Tesco grant. The resulting sensory garden and area of reflection looks stunning and its grand opening was celebrated on 14th of July.



Hooked on Worship

Each month at Toddington St George CE School, a group of pupils volunteer to research, write and deliver their own act of Collective Worship focussed on one of the school's key values. They may include stories from the Bible and other faiths, songs, music, poems, prayers, presentations, drama, art work and personal experiences, often in an interactive way. Parents and Carers are invited, and everyone enjoys preparing and taking part in these special moments. 'Hooked on Worship' is then shared with the school community through the monthly RE Newsletter, which also reports on work done in school around Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development.

NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS



The Bishop Of St Albans' Harvest Appeal 2017

As you are aware, the Bishop's Harvest Appeal this year is supporting a community development programme in the Philippines. The launch of this year's campaign took place at St Mary's High School in Cheshunt on 25th of May. The event included presentations, activities and a tough challenge... eating baked beans with a toothpick!



You will by now have received the information and resources pack in your schools. Please visit www.harvestappeal.org for downloadable photos, resources and more information on how to participate.

Need Reading Volunteers?

Jane Whitbread, one of the founders of the Schoolreaders charity, attended the Senior Leaders' Conference on 22nd of June at Putteridge Bury, together with Belinda Chambers, Hertfordshire's Ambassador for the scheme. The talk was very well received and three schools represented at the conference were already making good use of volunteers to support their weaker readers.

Do you need extra resources to listen to children read in school? The very successful Schoolreaders scheme that recruits volunteers from organisations such as the WI and matches them to appropriate schools, has volunteers available in the Diocese. They will also recruit more volunteers to meet your need.

Volunteers and schools can join the scheme or find out more at www.schoolreaders.org, by calling 01234 924111 or emailing admin@schoolreaders.org

Celebrating 60 Glorious Years

On 13th of May, St Giles' Primary School, South Mymms, celebrated 60 years on its current site. The weather was typically British, but didn't stop governors, headteachers, teachers, staff, pupils, parents and friends of the school, both past and present, attending a party that was fun through and through! Everyone enjoyed a huge variety of arena displays, stalls, archive pictures and newspaper cuttings, a Talent Show by the children, food, drink and musical performances. The support from across the community and local groups was tremendous, the atmosphere was amazing and the Friends of St Giles' raised essential funds for the school.

SCHOOLSTEAM NEWS

Focus On Governance

As the end of term approaches, a huge thank you to all our Chairs, Vice Chairs and Clerks for all you do to ensure good governance in our schools. We are so grateful for all the time and energy you invest in this vital task throughout the year.

If you are thinking ahead to new foundation governor appointments or reappointments after the summer break, do get in touch with us for any advice about recruitment or the appointments process. A quick word with us at an early stage can often help.

Finally, do save the date for our autumn governance conference for Chairs and Vice-Chairs: **Wednesday 18th October** at the Focolare Centre in Welwyn Garden City. With a focus on governor recruitment, the day includes keynote speaker Judith Hicks, Head of Inspiring Governance. For further details please contact Ruth Garman on rgarman@stalbans.anglican.org.

Belinda Copson - Governance Officer
bcopson@stalbans.anglican.org

Courses 2017-18

The new course schedule for 2017-18 has been finalised and every school should now have received a hard copy. As well as our regular, more familiar courses, there are some new additions to look out for this year, including:

- **Governor Conference** - this will focus on governor recruitment and will provide a networking opportunity for diocesan Chairs of Governors.
- **Networking Breakfasts** - these termly breakfast meetings will give headteachers a chance to network and discuss current issues with colleagues and members of the Schools Team.
- **Well-being** - The Children's Society will be running two courses, one focussing on school staff well-being, the other on pupil well-being.

For further details on 2017-18 events, please consult the booklet or go to www.stalbans.anglican.org/schools/courses. Please contact Ruth Garman on rgarman@stalbans.anglican.org with any questions or booking requests.

And finally...

REQM News:

Congratulations to all at **Alban Academy** and **Ickleford Primary School** on achieving Silver REQM awards, and to **St Paul's Primary, Langleybury**, on moving from Silver to Gold level since the last newsletter.

Headteacher Conference 2017



On 6th of June, 65 headteachers gathered at Putteridge Bury for the annual Diocesan Headteacher Conference held around the theme of 'Education for Wisdom'. Keynote speaker David Wells, author, educationalist and former headteacher, delivered two highly inspirational talks: 'Why bother?' and 'Rediscovering our vocation'. In the morning, David explored the impact of the relentless pursuit of improvement and performance-driven education; the afternoon was dedicated to considering strategies for attaining wisdom-focussed education and antidotes to a narrow view of education; these were two thought-provoking, challenging sessions which also managed to reassure and validate us in the work we do in our Christian environment.

Mo Baldwin and Jim Davis of The Children's Society joined us to present their work and introduce the collaboration between the Board of Education and the Children's Society to deliver well-being training courses for diocesan school staff and pupils next year.

The Revd Canon Richard Watson of St Albans Cathedral conducted the act of worship in the form of Morning Prayer and members of Edward Peake Middle School's choir led the singing during the service beautifully.

The whole Schools Team felt privileged to share the event with so many of our schools' leaders and the whole group took the opportunity to talk, network and just 'be'. In spite of the torrential rain which meant we couldn't enjoy the gardens this year, the day was judged to be an inspirational and fruitful 'time out'.

We wish you all a happy, restful and energising summer holiday.

Distinctively Christian • Community Focussed • Serving the Common Good

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DSAMAT welcomes New Academies

The Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust continues to grow, as three additional schools recently joined its numbers:

Thomas Whitehead Primary School on 1st April, **Manshead Secondary School** on 1st May and **Caldecote Lower School** on 1st July 2017.

The Bishop of Bedford visited each new academy, enjoying meeting staff and pupils, and led special acts of Collective Worship during which the school communities were able to give thanks for what they had been and celebrate what they would be in future.

Headteacher Changes

Our best wishes accompanied the headteachers to whom we said goodbye last term:

Zoe Kernohan-Neely at Victoria Infant School Berkhamsted, Lizzy Rackam at Dagnall School, Sarah Winter at Langleybury St Paul's Primary, Sue McNally at Christopher Reeves Lower Podington, Aaron Wanford at St Mary's Primary Rickmansworth, and Pippa Bremner at Sarratt Primary. We were delighted to welcome Val Britton, new headteacher at St Mary's Junior, Baldock in April.

Our best wishes for the future also accompany those leaving this summer:

Sue Lourensz at Alban Academy, Great Barford; Jenny Dingley at Ardeley St Lawrence Primary; Margaret Davies-McKeon at Barley First School; Jennifer Stevens at Benington Primary; Peter Haddon at Hollywell School, Cranfield; Rob Price at St John's Primary Digswell; Lisa Massey at Graveley Primary; Anne Peck at Offley Endowed Primary; Sue Ridge at St Giles' Primary, South Mymms; Linda Hardmann, Bishop Wood School, Tring, Andy Cosslett at St Mary's Junior, Ware, and Gilly Riach at St Lawrence Wymington. Gilly will be joining DSAMAT as Trust Headteacher with particular responsibility for Christian Ethos.

Thank you for all you have done for your communities, making your schools special places of learning that value every child in your care. We look forward to welcoming many new colleagues in September.