



School Newsletter
Spring Term - 6
12/02/2021

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A MESSAGE FROM MRS WALLIS

As we reach the end of the first half of the spring term, I look back to this time last year when the thought of closing the whole school for a significant period of time, was unthinkable. Although Coronavirus was in the news back then, we had no inkling of how it would affect our country and each one of us personally. I can remember having discussions with staff about the possibility of school closure – and most of us dismissed the idea as unlikely!

The year has brought huge change – teachers have had to learn to deliver lessons from home, how to effectively explore and utilise new technology and how to monitor and provide meaningful feedback to children that they have not been able to see in person. Families have had to try to establish home classrooms, support home learning, set up routines alongside managing the restrictions of lockdown and continue with a semblance of family life. It has been a challenge and a very steep learning curve for us all.

Throughout this time, staff and families have demonstrated considerable resilience, determination and commitment as we have sought to navigate uncharted territory and emerge with a deeper understanding of how to provide and access remote learning effectively. At St Catherine's, overall over 80% of children are regularly logging on to work online, which is significantly higher than the national average at this time. In addition, we know that there are other families who are working through paper work packs or participating in learning in other ways. This is testament to everyone's hard work and dedication and is a credit to the school and its community.

Looking ahead, we are hoping to welcome children back into school from 8th March, but what form that will take, we are currently unsure. The restrictions that were in place in the autumn term (staggered drop off, collection, break and lunch times etc) will continue; we will let you know further details as soon as we have them.

When we return, during the second week, it will be our annual 'Songs and Sunflowers' day and this year, we plan to provide a range of 'remote' activities – as well as an opportunity to take part in a whole school rendition of a well-known song. For those who have been with us for a while, you will know that Songs and Sunflowers began as a way to remember Mrs Staiano, one of our previous co-headteachers – and also provides an opportunity for us all to remember those who are no longer with us, or who are currently absent from our lives. Further details in this newsletter and to follow...

During the half term break, I hope that you will be able to switch off from remote learning and enjoy spending time doing whatever it is you enjoy doing; hopefully the weather will be warm enough for us to get outside and appreciate outdoor spaces.

WHOLE SCHOOL BIBLE STORY CHALLENGE

We have had a fantastic response to the Bible Story challenge that was launched a few weeks ago in assembly and seen a range of media being used to represent this account of Jesus calling his first disciples. Please keep any work that has been done and send in with your child on their return to school so that we can make a display of the variety of entries to the challenge.

MESSAGE FROM HCC

Thank you for playing your part and helping to keep our school safe by following current Government guidelines during the national lockdown.

It's so important that we don't become complacent during half-term so we can all enjoy the break and hopefully come back to either remote, or face to face learning (for children considered vulnerable or children of critical workers) safely.

Hertfordshire County Council have asked us to share the attached leaflet with you as a reminder of what we all can and cannot do during the lockdown restrictions. Please do take the time to read it and remind your children that for now, we all have to play our part to protect ourselves, our families and our friends.

<http://www.intra.thegrid.org.uk/info/coronavirus/documents/resources/do's-and-don'ts-leaflet-for-parents-feb21.pdf>

CLEANER VACANCIES

There is a cleaning job opportunity at St Catherine's, which is likely to start during the spring term. If you are interested in a job that requires an early morning start, cleaning classrooms and communal areas for approximately two hours a day, please contact the school office for more information.

WWF COMPETITION

St Catherine's would like to invite all pupils to take part in an Art competition for the World Wide Fund for Nature. The competition consists of designing what you would like the Earth to look like in 5 years time. You can imagine your own personal paradise or choose an area of the world that is in danger of being destroyed, such as the rainforest. Create your perfect image of what you think the world should look like, along with around 30 words explaining your art. Then scan it in and send it off to

TogetherForOurPlanet@cabinetoffice.gov.uk with a filled in permission form from parents. Teachers will be sending out details on Google Classroom including an overview explaining the competition, the entry form, permission form and two examples. Remember to let your teacher know you're taking part. Good luck!

TECHNOLOGY CORNER

Tuesday 9th February was Internet Safety Day 2021. Across the school children have learned to question what they see online and consider carefully before choosing to share things.

Internet Matters have created a great Online Critical Thinking Guide <https://www.internetmatters.org/safer-internet-day/> for families with more information about internet safety, including Fake News, along with questions for families to talk together.

As we enter half term, Technology Corner is switching off...but will be back on the 22nd February.

Have a lovely, restful and maybe 'device free' half term!

SCHOOL LUNCHES

If your child is currently having a school lunch whilst attending school in person, please can we remind you to book your lunches at home on School Grid <https://app.schoolgrid.co.uk/login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2F> so that you ensure your child gets the meal of their choice. .

SONGS AND SUNFLOWERS

Every year, during Songs & Sunflowers we provide an opportunity for children to quietly think about Mrs Staiano or any loved ones throughout the day. This year particularly, we want to provide an opportunity for children and families to think about lost loved ones or family and friends we miss, if they would like to.

Every child will receive a wooden disk that they can decorate as they would like; sunflowers, words, names, or a yellow heart which has become a symbol of remembrance and grief during the pandemic. Families are invited to hang them on the wire fencing (near the weaving) at the school entrance.

We invite everyone in our community who would like to share this opportunity to participate; if you would prefer to paint a pebble or hang a heart of your own – please feel welcome to add to our space of remembrance and know that we join you in thinking of loved ones..

TTRS

Unfortunately, Christchurch Primary School beat us, by quite a lot, in the school vs school TTRS battle. Well done if you played and tried to help our school to be victorious. A special well done goes to Riley, in Year 6, who was our top player and scored 15, 318 points! He ranked 3rd place in the Top 50!

We will have a rematch after half term which we will hopefully win; we just need more players.

Please spend some time practising so that you're ready for the next battle.

ST CATHERINE'S VS CHRISTCHURCH		Completed ^		
St Catherine's VS Christchurch				
Info	School Results	Class Results	Pupil Results	Certificates
School average / user	School score			
Position				School score
1	Christ Church CEVA Primary School And Nursery, Ware			228,159
2	St Catherine's Hoddesdon CofE Primary School, Hoddesdon			62,831

PANCAKE DAY

Please join Rev Rachel and Rev Kate at 5.00pm on Tuesday 16th February via Zoom for a Pancake Day party...

DEAR PARENTS AND FAMILIES:
We (St Catherine and St Paul's Church)
invite you, with your children,
to an online
PANCAKE DAY PARTY!

When?
Tuesday 16th February 5pm

Where?
Zoom, streamed to our page on
YouTube and then also available
on Facebook to catch up later.

Tell me more...
Contact Kate for more info:
curste@hoddesdonparishchurch.co.uk

