



St Hilda's School
HARPENDEN
Caring, Curious & Confident

NEWSLETTER

Wednesday 18th December 2024 No. 135

*O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels their great glad tidings tell,
O come to us, abide with us - our Lord, Emmanuel.*

Phillip Brookes

Dear Parents,

As we conclude a busy and successful Autumn Term, it gives me great pleasure to introduce our termly newsletter, giving a cross-sectional insight to life at St Hilda's School from September through to December. Many of our pupils have achieved and exceeded personal milestones, of which they are and should be justly proud.

As always, all classes have been engaged in a wide variety of holistic experiences which have enabled them to access all that St Hilda's has to offer across a broad and balanced curriculum. Trips and excursions, workshops in school, musical and sporting opportunities, as well as the fun and excitement of daily school life have ensured our children have had another fulfilling and rewarding term.

My grateful thanks to all our staff who have worked tirelessly to ensure that the wellbeing of our pupils remains paramount, helping them to access their learning opportunities. I also express my sincere thanks to you all, for your support of St Hilda's over the past three and half months. Our school community is blessed to have so many parents who give willingly of their time to ensure the school machine runs that bit more smoothly. I chiefly would like to thank our FoSH Officers Dom Hutt, Tammie Modi and Sophie Forsyth, Monique Chapman overseeing 2HU, as well as those who volunteer in different ways, including our Board members who give such valuable advice and insight. Thank you all so much.

Charitable giving has continued to be a notable feature of our school community. I am delighted to report that we raised £1246 for Azalea at the Harvest Festival, £287.30 for the Poppy Appeal in November and £629.50 at the Nativity Service for The Samaritans.

I am pleased to announce that Mrs Toulitsi is expecting a baby in the Spring, and will be going on maternity leave, all being well, before Easter.

As you know, my faith is a big part of my life and so this season of the year is particularly special, in remembering the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. I wish you each His peace as we celebrate this season, especially those of you experiencing personal challenges.

With warm regards

Dan Sayers
Headmaster

PUFFINS (PRE – NURSERY)

The Puffins have had a wonderful start in Pre-Nursery making new friends and learning to share and play together.

Over the last few months, they have enjoyed learning yoga in the school hall and have learnt to work as a team and improve their gross motor skills using the parachute together.

In all weathers they have been outside during Child Led Learning (ChIL) sessions and have really enjoyed Forest School sessions exploring the natural environment.



KITTIWAKES (NURSERY)

During the first half of the Autumn Term the Nursery children settled into the new routines of the Kittiwakes class. Many of our children had already attended our Puffins class but we were joined by other children from various settings. The class have enjoyed getting to know one another through our topic work on 'Settling In', and 'Our Families' and have developed lovely relationships with one another and our teachers.



We have worked on our fine motor skills in our Busy Fingers sessions, preparing us all for future writing. We also love our weekly outdoor learning sessions during our Welly Walks and really enjoy our parachute play sessions, playing lots of fun games, extending our gross motor skills, and working as a team. We had great fun recently playing on the school field during a sprinkling of snow.



Every Monday morning, we take some time to think about our wellbeing during our 'Mindful Monday' sessions. We have enjoyed a variety of mindful experiences but one of our favourites is yoga. We also enjoy spending time in our 'Calm Corner' exploring different textured resources, sharing books and taking some quiet time out of our busy day.



In the final weeks of the Autumn Term, we supported the Children in Need charity by holding a 'Fun Day' where we enjoyed lots of different activities and thought about those less fortunate than ourselves. We hope that we raised lots of money to help. We are now thinking about Christmas and have learnt all about the Nativity.

It's been a busy first term in the Kittiwakes class and we look forward to more fun and learning in the Spring Term.

RECEPTION



Reception have had a fun packed term settling into the life of full-time school. We have learnt so much since arriving in September. We are growing in independence every day. We can look after our belongings, do our own zips and are such a helpful class.

In Literacy we have learnt to recognise and say all our sounds, we are learning how to form them correctly in handwriting and are all beginning to blend these sounds to read words and stories.

In Maths we have great fun exploring numbers and the value of a number. We have found that there are so many ways to make a number. We have been exploring shapes and enjoyed a fun shape hunt around the school. Triangles were the hardest shape to find!

We have also been busy being creative both in and out of the classroom. At Forest School we made Hedgehog houses using sticks and leaves. We love playing with a variety of construction sets to make imaginative places and objects together.



We finished the term by dressing up and forming the Nativity scene in the end of term Nativity service with the older girls.



FORM 1

Form One have enjoyed a super first term together.

We have been working hard as a team to get to know each other, strengthen our friendships and develop our perseverance and resilience!

In English, we enjoyed sharing lots of traditional Fairy Tales and alternative Fairy Tales and celebrated our topic by dressing up as a Fairy Tale character, even writing and acting in our own traditional tale!

In Maths, we have been focusing on numbers 0 - 20, comparing, adding, subtracting and manipulating amounts.

As a class, we have been focusing on the topic of 'Ourselves' and finding out even more about our friends in fascinating Show and Tell presentations.

In History, we focused on our families and homes, building family trees and looking at homes through the ages. We then moved onto finding out more about why we celebrate Guy Fawkes Night and why Christians celebrate Christmas.



In Science, we learnt about our bodies, naming parts and functions. We then moved onto Animals and categorizing animals by names, diet and habitats. We even made class animal poo depending on whether they are carnivores, herbivores or omnivores! We loved visiting Hertfordshire Zoo, taking part in a super Animal Classification workshop.



In Art, we focused on colour mixing using primary colours, culminating in detailed face portraits. We used colour brilliantly when designing our Firework pictures with a wax resist technique. When the clocks changed, we felt very autumnal and chose to focus on The Starry Night artwork by Van Gogh, using his painting techniques to produce beautiful paintings.



Phew! What a busy term. We can't wait for more learning and fun in Form One in the New Year.



FORM III



We have had a super term in Form III and have learnt so much whilst having lots of fun!

We have enjoyed creating our own poems, stories and games in English. We had great fun performing some poems based on different festivals and also enjoyed learning about Rama and Sita and creating our own version of one of the chapters.

In History, we delved into Stone Age times! We welcomed Stone Age Stevie from Historic Workshops, back in November. She ran a whole day of Stone Age based activities for us and it was such an immersive, fun experience for all. We did some cave painting, archery, bone investigations and even got to try our hand at making our own weapons, stone age style!

In Science we completed lots of practical investigations, learning about light and dark, reflective surfaces, sun safety and shadows. Our second science topic on Forces gave us lots of opportunities to explore how objects change speed. We also took part in a scrapyard challenge and had fun with magnets!

We enjoyed Forest School too, which saw us toasting marshmallows, whittling and drilling slices of log to make medallions!



FORM IV



Form IV have been working incredibly hard this term.

In Humanities, the children have been studying the Ancient Egyptians, and we had a wonderful day of special workshops with crafting, drama, dance and dressing up! The children learnt about what life was like during the reign of Akhenaten and the changes he made to Egypt.



At Forest School, Form IV went on a Scavenger hunt and then got creative by working together to make dens and homes.

I have been impressed with all the children's hard work in science this term. They have been learning about teeth and eating and had great fun investigating the digestive system.



The children's English skills are going from strength to strength, and I have been wowed by the improvements in their writing. We've had lots of fun doing drama, writing letters, creating newspaper reports and writing character descriptions.



FORM V



The girls have had a great start to life in Form V and have had a packed Autumn Term with a great range of learning across the curriculum.

In September, they had the privilege of attending Harpenden Methodist Church for the annual UNICEF Peace Service, where the girls sang their song "Dona Nobis Pacem" beautifully.



Another highlight was the FIV and FV trip to Hazard Alley, an interactive safety centre in Milton Keynes. The trip provided lots of hands-on experiences across various safety scenarios designed to help children learn how to react in real-life emergencies. The girls thoroughly enjoyed their day.



As always, they loved Forest School where they further developed their whittling skills as well as taking opportunities to paint and be creative with the elements around them in the woods.



More recently the FV girls finally met their long-awaited Nursery buddies for the first time and were excited to share Christmas stories with them.



It was a fun and lively morning, and they can't wait to meet up again!

Next term, they will get an opportunity to spend a break-time with their Nursery once a week.

All the girls should be commended on an extremely successful first term in Form V.



FORM VI



Form VI have fully embraced becoming top of the school along with the opportunities it presents. Some excellent leadership skills are emerging, and the children have been carrying out their Positions of Responsibility with pride. Many have sat for entrance exams this term, and all have shown good application to their studies. We wish them all every success with the upcoming secondary allocations and hope that they can begin to look forward to and prepare for whichever school they are moving on to when their time at St. Hilda's comes to an end.



In Science, Form VI produced their own tv programme about what they had learnt about light. They let their creativity collide with their super science knowledge and created some excellent mini productions.



Form VI's Portrait study this term has been exceptional; Mrs Fairbairn is very impressed. They worked with acrylic paints and explored colour mixing for skin tones with great skill.



Jeans for Genes 2024

In September, a small group of Form VI girls attended a Modern Foreign Languages Day at Haileybury. They enjoyed a range of activities including winning the languages quiz; exploring different jobs in French; learning some Italian greetings; learning how to order food in German; and playing games such as Pétanque and Kahoot.



ART

What a fabulous term of creativity this has been. Our entries to the ISA London North Art competition enjoyed many successes. Most notably, the self-portrait by Isla McCann (below left) was awarded first place in the 2D Individual Upper Key Stage 2 section. Also successful was Charlotte Finnemore's 'Snail', (middle) a 3D piece which came first in the Art 3D Individual category, and our current Form III were winners in the Textiles Group category, coming first with their silk painting 'Under the Sea'. Well done everyone!

The entries to this years' photography competition have been particularly inspirational, and it was lovely to see so many entries (including those from the staff). A selection of entries is below.



There have been a wonderful number of students attending art club and entering competitions this year, so thank you to everyone for participating. Wishing you all a very creative 2025.

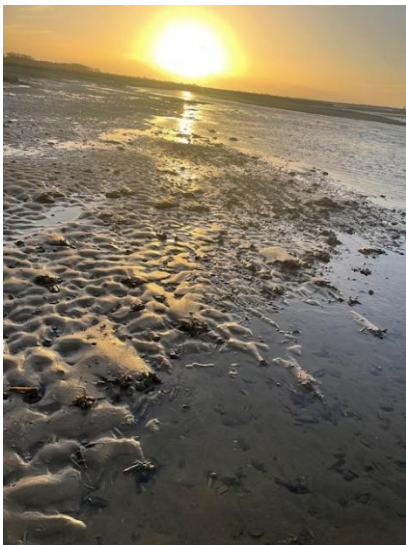


Figure 2 Ella Johnston: Sunset across the sea



Figure 3 Sophie Wan: light through a glass



Figure 1 Olive Biggin-Lamming: Sun shining through the clouds over Loch Ness

SPORTS

The Christmas term has been full of fixtures, competitions and events. The girls have taken every opportunity to take part, and it is credit to them for showing so much commitment and dedication to sport.

There have been several highlights and some personal triumphs for individuals. A special mention to Freya, who was selected for the ESSKIA squad (her team also came 3rd in the National Indoor ISA ski championships), Lottie for qualifying for the National ISA Cross-country championships, Imogen for coming 3rd at the London North Swim championships, Georgina for qualifying for the National ISA Swim Finals and Violet for coming 3rd in the District Cross-country.



All our netball teams have enjoyed a successful season so far: U9s are unbeaten, U10s unbeaten and U11s lost 1 out of 4 matches to date. Improvement across the board in terms of skill, passing and movement on court. Each girl has contributed to the success of the team.



Thank you to parents for driving and supporting at fixtures. We couldn't manage without your help.



MUSIC



In Music this term Reception girls worked on their singing in tune and playing in time with a beat, through a topic called All about me. They learned songs for harvest and Christmas and for assemblies.

Form one worked on topics about Animals and Ourselves, including listening to some Chinese music. They learned songs for Christmas and Harvest and played instruments including chime bars and handbells. They enjoyed singing for assembly and singing fun songs in Junior Choir.

Form III worked on classifying sounds as they are made by different instruments and on improving their singing and recorder playing. Many of them took part in Rocking Recorders and Showtime Singers too and are enjoying their new badges!

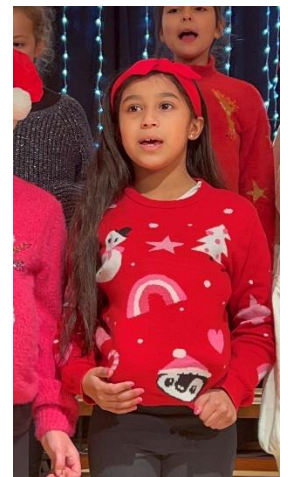
Form IV worked hard on their Amazing Egyptians topic and recreated a performance of The Funeral of Amenhotep III by Philip Glass, using their own instruments and class percussion. They learned two chords on the ukulele and are playing in the carol service.

Form V worked on a topic about stages of life, including lullabies – singing in three parts and playing Brahms Lullaby on glockenspiels and tinkly instruments – and school subjects – where they created jingles for different lessons.

Form VI worked together on body percussion patterns to create a sequence and worked very hard to improve their glockenspiel skills. They also took part in the Harpenden Schools' Peace Service in September, singing Dona Nobis Pacem in Latin and English.

Our ensembles have all made a successful start to the year with a strong orchestra and large recorder ensembles – many girls beginning to play the larger recorders. We enjoyed seeing them perform, and String Group, Wind Band and our Choirs, at our Winter Concert last week.

All classes learned and performed two songs as well as their poems and the combined festive finale was wonderful!



FOSH



As the Michaelmas Term draws to a close, we'd like to thank parents and staff for your support across the many events we have organised. Our two recent parent events, the Wreath Making Workshop and Dads Night to see Gladiator II, were both well attended and a lot of fun. We also saw the return of the Secret Gift Room last Friday which the girls thoroughly enjoyed.



Looking ahead, we have the following dates to note in your diaries.

Tuesday 21st January - Braids, Bubbles and Brews

Thursday 6th February - Winter Disco

Friday 21st March - Quiz Night

Monday 31st March - Easter Activity Day

Looking further ahead, we have a date change to advise of for the Summer Party which will now be held on Friday 6th June.

Further details of all upcoming events will be provided nearer the time.

Wishing you all a relaxing Christmas break.



Coming Up...

Term Dates 2024 - 2025

Spring 2025	
Term Begins	Tuesday 7 th January 2025 – Thursday 13 th February 2025
Inset Day	Friday 14 th February 2025 – No pupils in school
Half Term	Monday 17 th February – Friday 21 st February 2025
Term Ends	Wednesday 2 nd April 2025

Summer 2025	
Inset Days	Wednesday 23 rd April 2025
Term Begins	Thursday 24 th April 2025
Half Term	Monday 26 th May – Friday 30 th May 2025
Term Ends	Friday 11 th July 2025

JESSOPS
image is everything

Theme: Wonderful Water

Rotary **YOUNG PHOTOGRAPHER** COMPETITION



Deadline 15th February

CLICK!

Calling all young photographers

Express yourself by putting your photography skills to the test at the annual Rotary Young Photographer competition. (Up to the age of 17)

Email: youngphotographer@rotaryinharpenden.org.uk

<http://rotaryinharpenden.org.uk/rih-photo-comp>

Rotary in Harpenden CIO is a charitable incorporated organisation, Reg'd Charity No 1163420



Poster valid until: 15/2/2025 v.hden 2025-1.0

Hurst Children's Theatre Group
presents
Dick Whittington
A traditional Panto for ALL the family!

In the Eric Morecambe Centre, Harpenden
Thurs 23rd Jan @ 5pm
Fri 24th Jan @ 7pm
Sat 25th Jan @ 1pm + 7pm
Sun 26th Jan @ 12pm + 6pm

In the Abbey Theatre, St Albans:
Sat 11th Jan @ 2:30pm
Sat 11th Jan @ 7:15pm
Sun 12th Jan @ 12:30pm
Sun 12th Jan @ 6pm

BOOK NOW
Tickets from £10
Via the EMC Box office or
The Abbey Theatre Box office

HCTG
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT:
hurstchildrenstheatre.com