

Learning and Growing with God by our Side



St Alban & St Stephen Catholic Primary School & Nursery Weekly Newsletter



23rd September 2022

Welcome Mass for the Start of the School Year

On Wednesday, we celebrated the start of the new school year together as a school community by sharing in a beautiful Mass. Key Stage 2 pupils, parents and staff gathered together at Ss Alban and Stephen Church, while Key Stage 1 and Early Years joined in the Mass back at school via Livestream.

Year 4 led the Mass reverently with thoughtful readings, prayers, lovely solos and a hymn, 'You are My All in All', which the Year 4 Choir sang after Communion.

During the Mass, Father Andrew welcomed all of our new staff and pupils and also gave a special blessing to our Year 5 and 6 Pupil Chaplains and Prayer Leaders as they begin their new roles.

Thank you to Father Andrew, who celebrated the Mass. As it was also the Feast Day of St Matthew, Father Andrew spoke to us about how we can be like St Matthew and share the Good News this year, living out our faith every day.

One parent commented afterwards, "Thank you for such a beautiful Mass. It was so peaceful and moving."



Welcome to our New Staff!



Hello,

My name is Miss Cotterell and I am one of the Year 1 teachers at St Alban and St Stephen. Although this is my second year at SSAS, it is my first year in the role of teacher. I was lucky enough to experience year 1 last year as a teaching assistant, and now I am really looking forward to the year ahead with the incredible Key Stage 1 team and amazing Year 1 children. I like to think of myself as a very creative person. I enjoy Art and Design and the performing arts. These passions have followed me through my career; at university I was fortunate enough to be able to specialise in both Art and Music. I hope that this year the children will have a creative, exciting and educational year with me!



Hello,

My name is Mr Bancroft and it has been a wonderful experience to join the St Alban and St Stephen community as a year 6 teacher. I have varied interests including being a musician and documentarian. I also enjoy reading many genres of fiction and keeping up with the latest films at the cinema. It is important to me to lead an active lifestyle with skateboarding, swimming and forest walks being my favourite ways of keeping fit. I am looking forward to working with Year 6 throughout the year. I hope they will have an opportunity to finish their school career here by showcasing the amazing learning they have achieved in their time at St Alban and St Stephen!



Hello,

My name is Mrs Pham and I am the new Nursery teacher at St. Alban & St. Stephen. I have received such a warm welcome from the entire SSAS staffing team.

We have had a great start so far with many of the children settling into Catholic school life smoothly and I am very excited about the year ahead. I look forward to welcoming in all the new children to the school and providing enriching learning opportunities for them to explore through play.

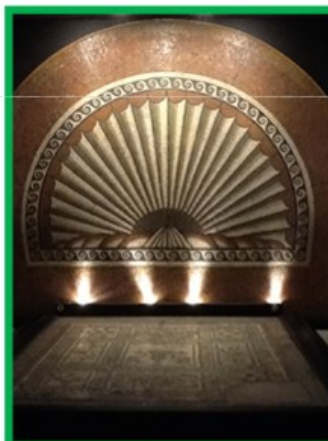
Year 4 go back to Roman Times in Verulamium!

Year 4 had a wonderful day out this week visiting the ancient site of Roman Verulamium. The trip really brought to life all of their classroom learning in History lessons about the Romans. The trip began with a visit to the fascinating site of the Roman theatre, which was excavated in the 19th and 20th centuries. We were very lucky to be able to see this theatre, as it is the only Roman theatre built with a stage in the whole of Britain. When we looked at the ruins, we could imagine visiting the theatre in Roman times to watch plays, wild beast shows and armed fights. There were also some ruins of shops, a villa and a secret underground shrine.

Next, we visited the Hypocaust and admired the beautiful mosaics and the clever underfloor heating system. After a picnic in the park, we went to Verulamium Museum. It was really interesting to look around the exhibits and to see the Shell Mosaic, which was found buried under a huge tree root!

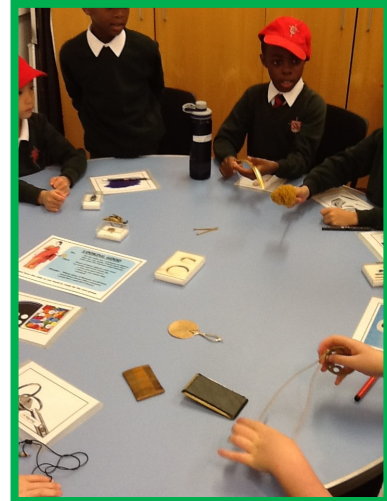
Finally, we took part in an interactive workshop. It was amazing to handle real 2000-year-old Roman artefacts and try to work out what they were used for.

Thank you to all the parents who came with us to help and to Matt and the Verulamium Museum staff who led the workshops.



Year 4

“I thought our trip was really fun because we got to do lots of activities. I also liked filling in the worksheet. Most of all, I liked finding out about how the Romans live and who they worshipped. Did you know that the Romans actually didn’t use toilet paper- we think they used a sponge on a stick (although archaeologists can not be sure about that!)” *Lazerian*



“I really enjoyed seeing the hypocaust which had a mosaic floor and underfloor heating. While we were there, we also saw some Roman pottery. In the museum, we learnt about what the Romans ate and drank. We looked at artefacts and found out that they ate meat, olives, vegetables, porridge and even pancakes! It was a fantastic day!” *Antonia*

“Our trip was so much fun. First, we went to see where the outlines of the Roman shops and houses were. We also saw lots of Roman artefacts that had been buried underground for 2,000 years! We saw beautiful, patterned mosaics. My favourite part was when we did the workshop at the Museum and we looked at and touched Roman artefacts and we guessed what they were.” *Callum*



Our School's Liturgical Year- Autumn Term



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The Catholic liturgical year is the celebration of a series of religious feasts and seasons throughout the year. Celebrating the liturgical year helps us to make the ordinary days, weeks and months of the calendar year holy. At St Alban & St Stephen, the liturgical year shapes our life as a Catholic school community. Following the liturgical year helps us to learn and grow together with God every day.

September	<p>New School Year Mass We return to school and celebrate Mass together. Year 4 lead us in praying for the year ahead.</p>
October	<p>Harvest Our Pupil Chaplains lead our Harvest assembly and present the food and money that we have collected to our local food bank.</p>
	<p>Praying the Rosary In October, we mark the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary on October 7th. Throughout the month, our Prayer Leaders help all classes to learn to pray the Rosary</p>
November	<p>All Souls (2 November) The Commemoration of the Faithful Departed Today and throughout the rest of November we pray for those who have died. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.</p>
	<p>Remembrance Day (11 November) Our Pupil Chaplains lead our Remembrance assembly. Our Book of Remembrance for Holy Souls contains the names of loved ones we will be praying for.</p>
	<p>Advent As the church's liturgical year begins, we light our advent wreath during our Advent sharing assembly and make Advent promises. Advent means 'coming'. We think of the coming of Jesus when he was born but we also think of his promise that he would come again at the end of time. It is a time of waiting and preparing. Pupils from each class and our Prayer Team lead prayers to remind us that we are coming out of darkness into light.</p>
December	<p>Christmas KS1 invite their grandparents to share in a special Christmas celebration with carols.</p>
	<p>KS2 remind us of the meaning of Christmas through Bible readings and carols.</p>
	<p>EYFS lead us in the Nativity.</p>

Religious Education at SSAS

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AUTUMN TERM 2022 COME AND SEE AT HOME

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

This term we will be studying the three themes of Domestic Church (Family), Baptism and Confirmation (Belonging) and Advent and Christmas (Loving). Each class will approach the themes through different topics. The children will also spend a week studying Judaism.

DOMESTIC CHURCH - FAMILY

(12th September- 7th October)

Early Years	MYSELF - God knows and loves each one
Year 1	FAMILIES - God's love and care for every family
Year 2	BEGINNINGS - God is present in every beginning
Year 3	HOMES - God's vision for every family
Year 4	PEOPLE - The family of God in Scripture
Year 5	OURSELVES - Created in the image and likeness of God
Year 6	LOVING - God who never stops loving

SUGGESTIONS FOR HOME ACTIVITIES

Make a collage using family photographs of all the significant family members—grandparents, parents, children, aunts, uncles etc. who show God's love. Write underneath it "We show God's love to one another." Include those who have died.

BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION - BELONGING

(10th October-11th November)

Early Years	WELCOME - Baptism: a welcome to God's family
Year 1	BELONGING - Baptism: an invitation to belong to God's family
Year 2	SIGNS AND SYMBOLS - Signs and symbols in Baptism
Year 3	PROMISES - Promises made at Baptism
Year 4	CALLED - Confirmation: a call to witness
Year 5	LIFE CHOICES - Marriage, commitment and service
Year 6	VOCATION AND COMMITMENT - The vocation of priesthood and religious life

SUGGESTIONS FOR HOME ACTIVITIES

Talk to someone who has been to a Baptism and/or Confirmation about their memories of this celebration.

JUDAISM (14th-18th November)

Pupils will study various aspects of Judaism for one week. Ask them what they have been learning about.

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS - LOVING

(21st November- 21st December)

Early Years	BIRTHDAY - Looking forward to Jesus' birthday
Year 1	WAITING - Advent: a time to look forward to Christmas
Year 2	PREPARATIONS - Advent: preparing to celebrate Christmas
Year 3	VISITORS - waiting for the coming of Jesus
Year 4	GIFT - God's gift of love and friendship in Jesus
Year 5	HOPE - Advent: waiting in the joyful hope for Jesus, the promised one
Year 6	EXPECTATIONS - Jesus born to show God to the world

SUGGESTIONS FOR HOME ACTIVITIES

Discuss with the children how your family welcomes visitors to your home. Find out about some Christian symbols for Advent e.g. Advent wreath, calendar, Jesse tree. Use the CAFOD or Mission websites to get a religious Advent calendar.

SADA Competition



The charity SADA (Survivors Against Domestic Abuse) have contacted all Hertfordshire schools to share news of an exciting competition.

“We are holding a Survivors Against Domestic Abuse (SADA) drawing/painting competition for **all** of the children in Hertfordshire **from 2 - 30 September 2022**. This is a fantastic chance for us to decorate our SADA House Refuge and Safe Space accommodation with some beautiful art from across the county and give local children the chance to contribute to making our safe accommodation a welcoming and happy place to live. We are looking for drawings and/or paintings to **‘make us feel happy’**. There are two categories: age range 5 to 10 years and age-range 11 to 16 years old.

The competition begins on Friday 2 September 2022 and all completed entries are to be submitted by Friday 30 September 2022. Entries can be submitted via email. Winners will be selected by our panel by 14 October 2022. All winners will be contacted and we will look to have the artwork framed and placed in our Safe Spaces and refuge in time for our 16 Days of Action Against Domestic Abuse (December 2022). Winners will receive a small complementary gift and certificate of thanks for your contribution to our services.

Please could you forward all of your entries with contact details to: **SADA@stevenage.gov.uk**. Please include your name, age and contact details alongside the picture.”

You may also wish to watch and share this child-friendly animation explaining the support available at SADA:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9-NmiSQS84>

SADA can be contacted for support by emailing SADA@stevenage.gov.uk or phoning 01438 242666.

Dates for your Diary

- Tuesday 27th September 9.05 Nursery Welcome Meeting—Lower Hall
- Wednesday 28th September 9.05 Year 1 Welcome Meeting—Lower Hall
- Thursday 6th October 2.30pm EYFS Parents' Phonics Workshop, Lower Hall
- Friday 7th October 9.15 Year 2 Family Assembly, Lower Hall
Year 2 Parents and Carers are welcome to attend
- Thursday 13th October 2.30pm KS1 Parents' Phonics Workshop, Lower Hall
- Friday 14th October 9.15 Year 3 Family Assembly, Upper Hall
Year 3 Parents and Carers are welcome to attend
- Saturday 15th October PTA Autumn Fair
- Thursday 20th October 1-7pm Parent Consultations
- Friday 21st October School closed for INSET day.

Harvest Foodbank Appeal

Thank you to everyone who has already brought in items to donate to the Year 6 Pupil Chaplains' Harvest Appeal. The collection of tins, packets and boxes is steadily growing! Please bring in all of your donations by Friday 30th September, when a representative from the Food Bank will be coming in to speak to us in our Harvest Festival assemblies and collecting all of the donations.



Courses this autumn for Hertfordshire adults and families

Step2Skills is offering a range of courses this autumn for Hertfordshire residents. The full range can be browsed on their website at www.step2skills.org.uk.

Two highlights include;

Early Years Experiences - Online - A 5-week course designed for parents and carers of young children to help understand how children are taught in the Early Years.

Family Coding - Online - A 4-week course where children and their parent or carer can spend quality time together, learning about computer coding.