

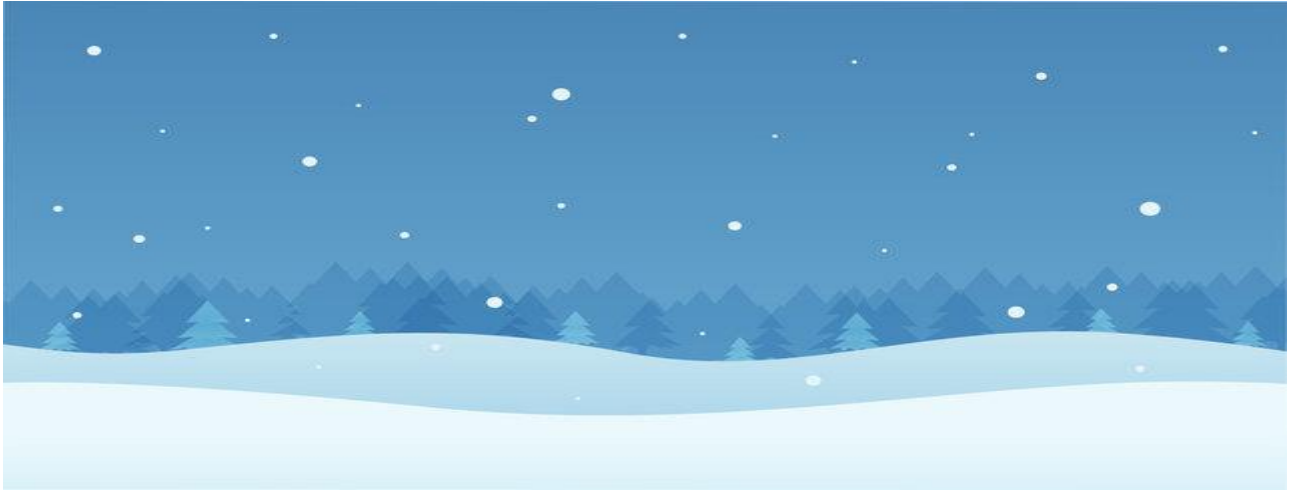


ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL

Weekly Newsletter

12th January 2024

Information



There is an increasing likelihood of the possibility of snow and perhaps disruption over the coming weeks. In the newsletter of the 17th November we advised you of why we may need to close school, and what will happen if we do. Some of that information is available below.

On a snow day the school may have one of two responses:

- a) "a staggered start" is when we move the opening of school to a later point in the day. This usually means a start time of 9.40am allowing us time to have a registration period and then start formal teaching at period 2. The staggered start enables us to clear the site to make it safe; allows for staff and students to travel in daylight, and after some snow clearance may have taken place; and provides a more stable and reliable position of staffing. The "staggered start" option may be in the first instance, with a decision on full closure coming at a later time.
- b) We close. If this is the first day of closure we normally allow for some recreational time in the morning (who doesn't like building something out of snow!) with some online learning being provided from 11.15 onwards (i.e. from period 3). On the first day this may be more creative; if closure is looking like it will be for a longer period of time; more in depth learning will be provided.

Early closure

In some instances, snow has started to fall during the day, which may be deep enough to determine that by staying open we are at risk of pupils not being able to get home safely. In these VERY unusual circumstances we may close school early.

So with these ideas in mind can we encourage you to:

- Consider who/where your child could go if we were forced for any reason to close early?
- Can we ask you to make sure that your contact details are up to date. Any information coming out to you is likely to be via Edulink, email and text services. You can update these directly through Edulink. We will also put a banner on the website.



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Attendance Matters

Welcome back! The government has launched a national campaign to ensure that everyone is clear, dubbed: **"moments matter, attendance counts"**. They have provided guidance to ascertain if a child is too ill for school with the expectation that:

It is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with mild respiratory illnesses. This would include general cold symptoms: a minor cough, runny nose or sore throat.

Follow the link below for more information:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-oo-ill-for-school/>

House teams regularly check attendance looking for patterns of absence or broken weeks. Where students are missing the odd day over a number of separate weeks the rhythm of school and learning are lost. Combined with the loss of social interaction the impact of "broken weeks" can be huge. Over the coming weeks, through assemblies and targeted groups students will be spoken to about the importance of regular attendance.

If you are concerned about your child's pattern of attendance, are reporting absences or requesting leave please use the house email address. These are:

Goddard@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk

Grant@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk

Monk@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk

Watts@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk

If you are reporting an absence, write 'absence report' in the subject line. If requesting an absence in advance write 'absence request'.

Absences connected to social, emotional or mental health issues

Please let us know when your young person is absent for any type of SEMH issue. This is so that we can support you and can put support in place for them. Our Mental Health Lead, Mrs McCarney-Redford, is always happy to give you a ring to offer support and advice.

You can contact her via email: lmccarney-redford@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk

News from the Music Department

The Music Department is kicking off 2024 with preparations for our Spring Concert "Magic Most Musical", featuring all of our choirs, bands and ensembles performing music with a magical theme. This is a fantastic opportunity for students of any age and experience to get involved, from Junior Concert Orchestra to the enormous Senior Choir.

If you would like your child to get involved, there is a full list and timings of the different groups in the Music Department, and they can also speak to Ms Humphrey and Mr Burrett.



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Do you have a dusty old french horn that you haven't played since forever? If you would like to donate an old instrument to the school Music Department to find a new eager young person to learn to play it, then please do contact Ms Humphrey.

Gang Show

A fantastic well done to all of our lovely people, young and old, who have been involved in the Gang Show this week. I know that these events take an awful lot of organisation; investment in rehearsal time; and a great deal of energy on the night - so thank you for putting on a fab show. Miss B

Leaving Items at Reception

Goddard Reception has on the first week back seen a vast increase in forgotten items being dropped off for students throughout the school day. Please can we remind you students should not be requesting at school drop off or contacting home during the day and requesting items be brought in unless it is something important such as medication or an authorised request from a teacher. On these occasions the item needs to be clearly marked with the students name, year group, house and placed in a suitable bag/container. Items that are not collected from Goddard Reception within 24 hours can then be picked up from the School Shop by the student.

Maintaining our high standards

Next week's focus will be on email etiquette, which will support students in the appropriate ways to address staff if corresponding by email. Now that this is such an integral form of communication, we feel it is helpful for students to learn and develop this skill early on in their school careers.

Focus on... EMAIL ETIQUETTE

- Email is a formal mode of communication
- Address emails to staff by using their full name i.e. Dear Mr.....
- Write in full sentences, using please and thank you
- Sign off in an appropriate way i.e. Kind regards
- Try not to send emails at the last minute as there is a strong chance your teacher will not see it
- If you do not follow these simple and polite guidelines, expect your teacher not to reply!



KINDNESS

Send emails at an appropriate time of day to ensure your teacher has time to reply

POSITIVITY

Ask how a teacher is in your email - a little kindness can go a long way



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During the Autumn Term students in all four houses, students have the opportunity to get involved in the annual St. George's Inter-House Art Competition.

The first round, in is a well presented tonal drawing, Art Captains then select students to represent the houses in each year group. This year the theme for the inter house Art Competition was 'Changes'. The final day of the Competition was on Tuesday 19th December. Two students from each year group worked very hard to create wonderful artworks using a variety of media.



Mrs Jarvis, Head of Art from Clement Danes School, came to judge the final last week, she wrote "The standard of the competition was exceptionally high, I had difficulty in judging this year, especially in year 9 and 12. The written explanations were informative and heartfelt and the students explored a variety of visual options. Well done to all those involved". **Congratulations to Watts who are the winners!**

All the students involved worked so hard and with huge creativity; some of the artworks are shown here.

Mrs Turner, Head of Art.





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PSA Meeting January 2024

The first PSA meeting of the year is on Tuesday 16th January in the Goddard block at 8pm, please do come along.

We know it can be a bit intimidating to set foot over the threshold, in fear that you might suddenly find you are running the school fete. This term is quite a low key term for big events, but there are smaller scale things already fully led and organised that you could maybe come and help with - like the second hand uniform sale, or the quiz night. Do think about coming, whether just yourself or with some friends. Meetings tend to last about an hour.

On the grapevine.....and via a very big notice on Sun Lane

A large sign on Sun Lane at the bridge is indicating that the road will be closed for major road works between the 22nd January and the 12th February. On the grapevine we are hearing that this will mean the complete closure of the bridge for vehicular traffic during this time. As you can imagine this may have a major impact on traffic around the school entrance. We have been in contact with the agency undertaking the work and they have reassured us that the bridge WILL be open for pedestrians.

Can I ask that you plan in advance to avoid the Sun Lane entrance and have regard for the fact that this may place added pressure on Carlton Road.

Please consider whether you can drop off your child and pick them up from either the Station Car park and the Bowers Way car park. Please do not wait or park in Pigeonwick Road, as this is likely to form greater congestion in the local area.

If we find out any further information, we will forward it to you via this bulletin. Many thanks

Miss B

Is your child equipped with the right clothes?

Every morning, we see many of our students arriving at school shivering and looking slightly blue. They are not wearing coats, hats, gloves or even an old-school snood. Many are in flimsy slipper-like shoes. This means that they are starting the school day cold and miserable. Please can you encourage, cajole, bribe your young person to dress appropriately for the weather.

Top tips

1. Magic gloves - they are small and can easily fit into a blazer pocket and they are cheap.
2. White/natural coloured base layers/skins/thermals - can be worn easily under a school shirt.
3. Tights under trousers.
4. Black socks under or over black tights.
5. School hat or scarf.



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Thinking of a career in teaching?

Our very own Mr Clark will be at the event below if you would like to find out more



TRAIN TO TEACH Information Event

Sir John Lawes School, Harpenden
Monday 15th January 2024 9:15am

Register here to attend our ITT
recruitment event: bit.ly/47yEwkj

- Meet representatives from local schools.
- Learn more about our flexible routes into Initial Teacher Training.



Scholars'
Education Trust



Sir John Lawes School
Education for a changing world

Actions



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Thoughts

“
**New year —
a new chapter,
new verse, or just the
same old story?
Ultimately we
write it. The choice
is ours.**

ALEX MORRITT

Welcome to 2024!

I've never been one to set a new year's resolution, mainly because by this time of the year it is already in tatters on the floor and it makes me feel like I am a complete failure. So this year in our start of term chapel we focussed on what we would be writing in our life story over the next 12 months. If we are not careful we are at risk of being stuck in a rut with life....and school life can be very much a catalyst for that ... it's the spring term so we must be doing XXXXXX etc. So this year are you just going to repeat the "same old story" or will this be a chapter with a different twist and perhaps a different ending?

We talked about challenging ourselves to do something different; try something new or perhaps change the way we respond and act. That challenge can be big or small but ultimately needs to be personal to us.....one person's challenge is not another's.

Having read Bear Grylls book "Mud, Sweat and Tears" over the Christmas holiday (what a driven man he is!) I have decided that my life has become boring and slightly predictable.....so my personal challenge is to go cold water swimming (there I've said it out loud and written it down for all to see!) I've got a little over 10 weeks to get my body wetsuit ready (Ha!) and my brain in gear. Am I looking forward to it? Probably not. At the moment I have "some of the gear, but not much idea", but that's part of the challenge.....putting myself out of my comfort zone; trying something new; challenging myself both physically, and probably mentally as well.

So what new adventure will you be on this year? How will you ensure that your life is not just on repeat? Because it is true, whether we like it or not, ultimately we are the ones in control of what our story contains.

Happy thinking and planning.
Miss B



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Signposting (click on each to find out more)

PLAYING OUR PART TO SUPPORT OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

Parent & Carer Support Spring Term 2024



FREE to parents and carers living in Hertfordshire

TALKING TEENS

6, weekly sessions for parents and carers of children aged 12-19, covering:

- The Teen Brain: physical and emotional changes taking place and why behaviour changes.
- The link between behaviour and communicating difficult feelings.
- How to maintain your relationship with good communication.
- Understand risk taking behaviour around drugs, alcohol and gang culture.
- How to negotiate and reduce conflict.



Thursdays 7.45-9.15pm

4th Jan to 8th Feb

Online Course: ID 624

Wednesdays 7.45-9.15pm

7th Feb to 20th Mar

(no session in half term)

Online Course: ID 625

TALKING ANGER in TEENS

6, weekly sessions for parents and carers of children aged 12-19, supporting you to:

- Understand why young people and adults get angry.
- Develop strategies to handle anger in yourself and others within your family.
- Recognise the early signs of anger.
- Reduce conflict and arguments.
- Encourage positive behaviour.



Tuesdays 7.45-9.30pm

23rd Jan to 5th Mar

(no session in half term)

Online Course: ID 626

TALKING DADS

6, weekly sessions for dads & male carers of all ages, sharing information on:

- Improved listening and communication skills.
- A healthy dad-child relationship now and for the future.
- Effective strategies for dealing with anger and conflict.
- How to enforce boundaries.
- Being the dad, you want to be.



Wednesdays 7.45-9.15pm

3rd Jan to 7th Feb

Online Course: ID 627

Tuesdays 7.45-9.15pm

6th Feb to 19th Mar

(no session in half term)

Online Course: ID 628

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TALKING FAMILIES

6, weekly sessions for parents and carers of children aged 0-12 sharing tips on:

- Managing challenging behaviour with consistency.
- Encouraging positive behaviour.
- Building your child's self-esteem.
- Setting and maintaining boundaries.
- Responding to tantrums and difficult feelings in children.
- Developing a strong parent/child relationship now and for the future.



Thursdays 8.00-9.30pm

1st Feb to 14th Mar

(no session in half term)

Online Course ID 623

Thursdays 9.30-11.30am

8th Feb to 21st Mar

Course ID 622

Waterside Family Centre, Rowans,
WGC AL7 1NZ

TALKING ANXIETY in FAMILIES

6, weekly sessions for parents and carers of under 12's, supporting you to:

- Understand why young people and adults get anxious.
- Develop strategies to handle anxiety in yourself and others within your family.
- Recognise the early signs of anxiety.
- Reduce stress and tension.
- Encourage resilient behaviour.



Mondays 8.00-9.30pm

29th Jan to 11th Mar

(no session in half term)

Online Course ID 621

TALKING ADDITIONAL NEEDS

A 6-week group for parents and carers of children with any additional need from 2-25.
Your child does not need a diagnosis to join.

- Understand your child's behaviour.
- Develop strategies that really work.
- Reduce conflict.
- Improve emotional regulation.
- Explore sensory needs.
- Increase your child's resilience.
- Manage different needs in your family.



Wednesdays 9.30-11.30am

31st Jan to 13th Mar

(no session in half term)

Course ID 620

Otley Way Family Centre,
Otley Way, Watford, WD19 7TB

Booking essential. Please Quote the Course ID

To check eligibility and book a place, please contact Supporting Links on:

07512 709556 or bookings@supportinglinks.co.uk

These courses are provided free to parents by Hertfordshire County Council's Targeted Parenting Fund

Information taken on booking will be used to process your booking, check your eligibility, identify any access needs and will be stored in accordance with our GDPR policy which is available on request

