



## Newsletter 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024

To our families and friends,

We hope that your children enjoyed their half term holiday and got to enjoy some of their favourite past times with friends and family. For those of you who were able to also be at home, we hope that you enjoyed the week with your family.

This half term is incredibly short (slightly less than 5 weeks in total) and therefore we have minimised the number of themed days and events so that class teachers can ensure that during these 5 weeks, their priority is to cover the whole curriculum for their year group. We will however, be welcoming the Saltmine Theatre Company on 4<sup>th</sup> March, celebrating World Book Day on 7<sup>th</sup> March (including an author visit on 6<sup>th</sup>), having the annual Mothers and Other's Day event on 8<sup>th</sup> March and the sponsored bounce on 26<sup>th</sup> March. We look forward to organising more themed days and events in the summer term (which is longer than the spring term).

This week, we welcomed the children back to school on Monday with a special Leap Year assembly. The children learnt about what leap years are and why we have to have them. We showed them our own Leap Year Vault which is currently displayed in the school hall. We would love for as many children as possible to take part in this FOW event where the children will have the opportunity to write something, which can go into the vault. The vault is now open and it will remain open for 4 weeks (it will close on 23<sup>rd</sup> March). When the vault has been closed, it will be removed from the school hall and stored in a secret location and kept there for 4 years. On 29<sup>th</sup> February 2028, the dust will be blown off the vault and it will be reopened and everyone who put something in the vault will be able to see what they wrote back in 2024! If your child would have left the school by that date, then we will still like them to add something to the vault and the FOW will ensure that you are informed of the vault opening date. The children listened very well during this assembly and are very excited about the opportunity to put something in the vault for prosperity. Please look at the FOW section of this newsletter to see entry details.

Coming soon.....the return of the Skip To Be Fit challenge!!!! For the next couple of weeks, all children will have an opportunity to practice and improve their skipping skills and agility. Children will have opportunities during the school day to get practicing. In a few weeks' time, all of the classes will take part in the skipping challenge 'How many skips can they do in 1 minute?' If you have a skipping rope at home, then why not encourage them to keep practicing at home.

### Year 2 Class Assembly

This Thursday, we were delighted to welcome friends and family of the children in Year 2 into school to watch their class assembly. Last half term, Year 2 learnt about the Great Fire Of London in their History lessons and the assembly was an opportunity for them to share their learning.

All the children had part of the historical event to talk about. They also read poems that they had written and sang a song all about the Great Fire of London. The children spoke with confidence and really enjoyed sharing their knowledge and understanding. Well done Year 2.

### Rapid Fire Cricket Event

Yesterday, some year 4 children attended a Rapid Fire competition at Wodson Park. This is a form of indoor cricket without any bowling. There were 14 medium and small schools, split into 2 pools. In our pool we came 3<sup>rd</sup> and went into a 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> playoff with the other pool. We won which meant we came 5<sup>th</sup> overall. The schools that beat us were medium, which meant we were the top of the small schools. All the children were great and really excelled.



## World Book Day

Next Thursday (7<sup>th</sup> March) is World Book Day and we are really excited about this day in the school calendar. We have amazing activities and events planned for 2 days. These include Christian Darkin (a published author of children's books who originally came from Waterford) coming into school to lead an assembly and workshops with classes on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup>. On the 7<sup>th</sup>, all classes will have an opportunity to visit the Book Bistro in the library, where they can create their own 'menu' of favourite books whilst enjoying something to eat! At some point during World Book Day, the whole school will take part in 'Drop Everything and Read' and this will be a perfect opportunity for all children to read/look at their favourite stories. Children are welcome to come to school on the 7<sup>th</sup> dressed as one of their favourite book characters. However, if they would prefer, they could come to school that day dressed in their pyjamas and ready for a story. Please do not feel pressured to go out and buy expensive costumes or spend hours making a costume for your child.

## P.E Tops

The new P.E tops will be available to purchase from Kidz Connections in Hertford during the Easter holiday. If you have not had a chance to look at these P.E tops for yourself yet, then please do pop into the admin reception area where we have one displayed for you to see. These tops are optional for the children to wear in the summer term but will become a compulsory element of the P.E kit from September 2024. These are made from a dry fit material instead of cotton and will therefore dry extremely quickly once washed. You may find that one of these P.E tops will be sufficient, even if you do a mid-week wash. The admin office do have a supply of our current t shirts which can be purchased for £3 and worn until the end of the year.

## Importance Of Daily Reading

# 20 is plenty!

Children who read for 20 minutes a day...

Will have a world of imagination & creativity opened to them

Will be exposed to 1.8 million words a year

Will have better general knowledge

Will improve critical thinking skills

Will improve their communication skills

F

Will have a broad vocabulary

Will learn how to develop empathy

Will improve their test results

Will have reduced stress levels



### Why is reading so important?

Reading opens the door to learning. A child who reads a lot will become a good reader. A good reader will be able to read more challenging material. A child who reads challenging material is a child who will learn. The more a child learns, the more he or she will want to find out.

Reading for pleasure will help develop your child's vocabulary, communication, empathy, imagination and concentration.

**Reading for just 20 minutes a day = 1.8 million words a year!**

| <u>Great to Be Gold</u> |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <u>Pre Sch</u>          | <p><b>Camille</b> - Camille has grown in confidence within the setting, showing an interest in the Preschool environment, and has become a lot more confident chatting to the Preschool adults and peers. Well done Camille we are very proud of you!</p> <p><b>Darcie</b> - Darcie has been fully immersed in her learning this week. Showing particular interest with an animal hunt in the garden and telling me what animals she has found and how many! We are very proud of you Darcie!</p> |
| <u>Nur</u>              | <p><b>Frankie</b> - for trying hard this week, he has been following directions and the Nursery routines. Well done Frankie.</p>  |
| <u>Rec</u>              | <p><b>Frankie</b> - for always working to the best of his ability.</p>  |
| <u>Year 1</u>           | <p><b>Sienna</b> - for working to the best of her ability in all subjects and producing some lovely work that she should feel proud of.</p>   |
| <u>Year 2</u>           | <p><b>Mila</b> - for showing a love of learning in her phonics and during our class assembly.</p>   |
| <u>Year 3</u>           | <p><b>Ffion</b> - making the right choices and always following the school rules.</p> <p><b>Frankie</b> - following instructions and paying attention to the adults.</p>  |
| <u>Year 4</u>           | <p><b>Poppy</b> - for being an outstanding role model. Poppy listens to all adults and has a love of learning.</p>  |
| <u>Year 5</u>           | <p><b>Charlie</b> - outstanding role model - fabulous support, team work and kindness to his new partner.</p>   |
| <u>Year 6</u>           | <p><b>Cornelius</b> - for working to the best of his ability in all subjects and improving his presentation.</p>  |
|                         |   |

## Headteacher's Awards



Each week, staff are constantly looking for children in the school who are showing awareness of one or more than one of our school learning values. These values will help children to become better learners as well as developing their relationships with others around them. Children are recognised for their achievements with being awarded Headteacher's Awards.

### **Reception:**

Teddy for showing a love for writing this week and taking pride in his achievements.

Tiora and Jack for always being respectful and helping to tidy up areas in our classroom after child-initiated learning.

### **Year 1:**

Eliza for taking pride in her handwriting and thinking carefully about her letter formation.

Henry and Lillian- for always being so respectful to all of the adults.

### **Year 2:**

Jacob S- for taking pride in his handwriting.

Elliott S- for showing resilience.

### **Year 3:**

Erin - having pride in her presentation and handwriting.

Millie - working well with others during group tasks.

Louis - being reflective during English by making comparisons to prior learning.

### **Year 4:**

Verity - for her amazing performance at Kwik Cricket at Wodson Park. She worked well with others in her team.

Sam B - for improving his handwriting and having pride in his achievements.

### **Year 5:**

Rose - for having pride in her handwriting and presentation.

Mila - for working with others and showing great resilience.

### **Year 6:**

Robson - for his thoughtful and sensible contributions in his guided reading group. He had a great sense of pride about his achievements.

Alfie C - for having pride in his handwriting which is accurate and neat in all his subjects.

## This Weeks attendance %

|                     |       |
|---------------------|-------|
| Dixon (R)           | 96%   |
| Bay Class(1)        | 97.6% |
| Pendleton Class (2) | 94.5% |
| Ezra Class (3)      | 90.5% |
| Shepherd Class (4)  | 93.7% |
| Grint Class (5)     | 97.7% |
| Straker Class (6)   | 95.7% |

Whole School Attendance this week 95.14%

Whole School Attendance this term 96.28%



## House Points

### This week

First place - Yellow House - 349

Second place - Blue House - 321

Third place - Red House - 315

Fourth place - Green House - 310

### This Half Term

First place - Yellow House - 784

Second place - Green House - 782

Third place - Blue House - 759

Fourth place - Red House - 751

## Birthdays this week

We wish these children a very happy birthday



Samuel B - 26<sup>th</sup> February

Ned H-N - 2<sup>nd</sup> March

Lola H - 3<sup>rd</sup> March

Monty K - 3rd March

Our staff are here to help you  
and your family

Please treat them with  
kindness and respect

At school we expect everyone to:

Be kind

Be respectful

Be polite

These are the foundations  
of our school communities



## Tesco Fundraiser

We have recently applied for Tesco's Stronger Start Grant Award in order to further develop the outdoor areas in the early years. We were thrilled to find out this week that we have been successful in our application and during April, May and June, Tesco customers will be able to vote in store. We are hoping that our parents, families and community will be able to help us gain lots of votes during this time. The project with the highest number of votes across the region will receive £1,500, the second placed project will receive £1,000 and the third placed project will be awarded £500. The following stores will all be taking part in the voting for this project: Stevenage Extra, Old Stevenage High Street, Stevenage Chells, Broadwater Stevenage, Woolmer Green and Hitchin. Please help us by spreading the word to your friends, families and work colleagues. Thank you.

## Friends of Watton Update

### ***Happy Spring Day ! (Links are underlined)***

Have you heard about our **Leap Year Vault?** **Violet and Ned's grandpa** have built an amazing vault for the school. **FOW** are inviting you to add a piece of information to the vault. You could write a letter to your future self, telling us what you would like to be when you **grow up**, or you could speculate on what will be happening in the world in 2028. Maybe you would like to **draw a picture** or include a newspaper clipping of something interesting. The world is your oyster. We are hoping that Mrs Etienne and the teachers will add a piece too, maybe get your grandparents to add a piece.

**The Vault** will open on Thursday, February 29th, and will be locked on Friday, March 23rd.

In 2028, the Vault will be reopened, allowing you to see how **accurate** your predictions were or to **reminisce** on what you were doing in 2024. We will announce a date to open the Vault on social media so that alumni students can be notified. To enter, please go to Classlist [\*\*HERE\*\*](#). There is a £1 fee per entry.

On **Friday 8th March**, the **FOW** is organizing our annual "**Mothers and Others Day Stall**" in the school hall. We believe that there are many wonderful mums and special people who make a difference in our lives, so this event is a great opportunity for children and school staff to **express their love** and gratitude for them.

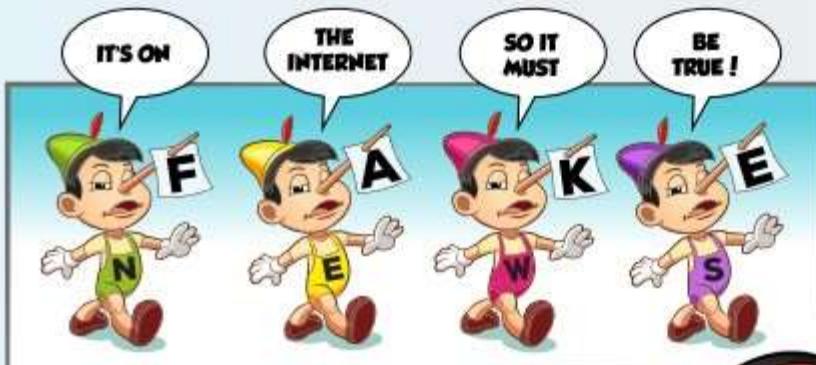
We have a range of **gifts** available from **50p to £7**, so everyone can find something that suits their budget. Children and school staff can purchase **multiple gifts** if they wish, and we accept card payments.

We are looking for **volunteers** to assist us with this fundraiser, witnessing the children shopping independently for their loved ones is **heartwarming**. Help from 9am to 11:45am (or even a half hour slot). If you are interested in volunteering, please sign up using the provided link [\*\*VOLUNTEER HERE\*\*](#). We truly appreciate your support.

Have a lovely weekend

**FOW** ([Click to email](#))

## A Parent's Guide to Fake News



scan the QR code with your phone's camera for Parent Guides on how to help keep your children safe online



**Don't believe everything you see online!**

Young people can very easily be dragged into things without parental guidance and support.

**Online safety is when young people know who they can tell if they feel upset by something that has happened online.**



## Watton at Stone Parish Council

### Parish Clerk

Watton at Stone, Hertfordshire

Due to the retirement of our current Parish Clerk in March 2024, Watton at Stone Parish Council are seeking an enthusiastic and highly motivated individual for the role of Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

The successful candidate must be flexible and able to adapt to the ever-changing demands of the Council. Working from home, the successful applicant will work largely under their own initiative and will have good financial, IT, communication, administrative and literacy skills, as they will be interacting with the public, councillors, suppliers, and other organisations, in both verbal and written formats.

The role will include:

- Act as Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer for Watton at Stone Parish Council.
- Fulfil the role of Council and Committee Secretary.
- Implement and execute decisions by the Council and instructions from Council members.
- Purchase goods and services on behalf of the Council.
- Support the councillors in actively managing the Council's land and property assets to optimize revenue and value to the community.
- Communicate with residents, councillors, and external organisations.
- Manage the Council's IT systems and website.
- Meeting administration including collation and publication of agendas, report writing, taking minutes, and offering procedural advice where required.
- Preparation of the Council's accounts to include both the monthly management of and recording of receipts and payments; preparing monthly bank reconciliations; budget preparation and variance analysis; preparation statutory returns; liaising with the Council's own internal and external auditors.

The successful applicant should have a good level of education, with good communication and interpersonal skills. Experience in a local government environment would be an advantage, as well as knowledge of meeting administration and working to deadlines. The successful applicant must be available to attend the meetings of the Council currently held on the second Tuesday of the month and extra meetings as required (such as meetings of the various Council sub-committees).

The salary scale starts at SCP19 rising to higher points on the scale depending on the qualifications and experience of the successful applicant.

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Job Type:       | Part-time, Permanent   |
| Salary:         | Paid monthly in arrears based on the National Joint Council for Local Government Pay Scale |
| Expected hours: | 15 – 20 per week.  |
| Benefits:       | Home office allowance  |

Please submit your application and Curriculum Vitae to Watton at Stone Parish Council at [clerk@watton-pc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@watton-pc.org.uk). Applications to be received no later than 08 March 2024.

Dates for your diary

Diary dates in red - new dates added this week

**March**

- 4<sup>th</sup> - Saltmine Theatre Company performance
- 6<sup>th</sup> - Christian Darkin (children's author) in all day to lead an assembly and workshops
- 7th - World Book Day
- 8<sup>th</sup> - FOW Mother's and Others stall
- 8<sup>th</sup> - Year 5 trip to the Planetarium, Morgan School
- 13<sup>th</sup> - Rock and Pop assembly led by iRock
- 14<sup>th</sup> - FGB (Full Governing Board Meeting)
- 14<sup>th</sup> - FOW meeting 8pm The Bull Pub - everyone welcome
- 15<sup>th</sup> - Red Nose Day - children to wear an item of red clothing
- 11<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> - Assessment week
- 21<sup>st</sup> - Year 4 class assembly 9am - parents and families invited to attend
- 22<sup>nd</sup> - Pupil Parliament meeting
- 26th - Sponsored Bounce
- 27<sup>th</sup> - Parent Forum Meeting 6pm
- 28<sup>th</sup> - End of Term 2.15pm

**April**

- 15th- INSET Day
- 16<sup>th</sup> - Children return
- 16th - 19th - Pupil Progress Meetings

**May**

- 7<sup>th</sup> - Reception class screening checks
- 13th - 16th - Key Stage 2 SATS
- 20th - 24th - Mental Health Week
- 27th - 31st - Half Term

**June**

- 3rd - Inset Day
- 4<sup>th</sup> - Children return

3<sup>rd</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> - Year 4 Multiplication Table Check  
10th - 14th - Fitness Week  
11th - Sports Day 1  
12<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> - Year 4 Hudnall Park  
17<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> June - Year 6 PGL residential (Caythorpe)  
25th - Reserved Sports Day  
10th - 14th - Phonic Screening  
28th - Watton's Got Talent Show

### July

1<sup>st</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> July - Assessment week  
16th July - Year 5/6 Production 6pm  
17th July - Reports out to Parents  
18th July - Year 5/6 Production 2pm  
23<sup>rd</sup> - Year 6 leavers assembly  
23rd July - End of Term 2.15pm