

MONDAY 19TH  
DECEMBER 2022

## A Word from Mrs Milner

Dear Parents and Carers,

What an amazing World Cup final it turned out to be. Those of you who followed ups and downs of football during the last four weeks, enjoyed the final game -France vs Argentina, This game had it all – drama and beauty as well as the clash of the world’s two best players. In the end the penalty shootout went Argentina way so a well done that the team.

I cannot believe that this is my last 2022 newsletter and that 2023 is just around the corner. It seems that the beginning of this term belongs to another era, as so much has happened during this this autumn term. I hope you agree with me that the school provided a rich curriculum for the children – core learning supported by all the enrichment activities available. I am very proud of what we have achieved this term – happy and confident children. who gained in skills and knowledge as the term progressed. This has been achieved thanks to our dedicated staff, who have ensured that children stay safe and that they learn in an engaging and constructive way. This involves not only our teaching and support staff, but also our dedicated office staff as well as our school business and site managers. Mrs Nickless and Mr Appleby are the true ‘backbone’ of Woodside and without their input and relentless hard work, the school would simply grind to a proverbial halt. Thank you once more. Our support staff ensures that the class teachers’ work is supported well, and they often provide that very ‘extra pair of eyes and ears’ in the classroom. Our midday supervisors ensure that playtimes are safe and happy, by trying their very best to resolve any misunderstandings that occasionally happen amongst the children. Finally – our teaching staff. I hope you agree with me that teachers are one of the most important members of our working society, as they set up our pupils for successful citizens of the future. No education system can be better than quality of its teachers, as teachers do so much more than passing their knowledge to children. They engage with them, provoke curiosity, develop creativity, resilience, and compassion. Teaching is a tough job, but it is one where a person can make so much impact in another person’s life and as saying goes –you never forget that one teacher who listened, cared, and inspired. So, thank you to all our Woodside staff for their dedication during this term and I hope that you all will have a very restful and lovely Christmas break. Finally, I cannot believe that in January it will be one year since Mrs Harrison joined the school - as our Deputy Headteacher. Her impact on the standard of education for our children has been immense -so thank you Julie.

Parents/carers are the most important influence in a child’s life. Any educational initiative can only be effective if there is a productive partnership between parents and school. Schools can be a very useful resource for the community it serves. Our aim is to keep all our parents and carers up to date with news and events and provide regular communication between home and class teachers via Class Dojo. We send weekly newsletters and provide additional information on safeguarding and well-being, as well as keep parents up to date with the school activities via the school’s Twitter account (thank you Mrs Tandara). However, all the above would be meaningless without your engagement and support. I, therefore, would like to say a huge thank you for entrusting your children into our daily care and I sincerely hope that our partnership will continue to flourish in months to come. May I also take this opportunity to say thank you to our PTA, whose hardworking members ensure that we continue fundraising for the benefit of our pupils and the school. (cont on next page)

### Dates for your diary

Date	Event
Tues 20.12.22 End of Term 1.30pm	Break up at 1.30pm on Tuesday 20th December 2022. No Hideout Zone after-school club on last day of term. Breakfast club is still available. Return to school Thursday 5th January 2023.
5.1.23	School returns for Spring Term
w/c 9th Jan	All afterschool clubs start back
16.1.23	Young Voices at the O2
21.1.23	Cross Country Event – Lowndes Park, Chesham
1.2.23	Year 4 Cross Country at The Misbourne School
7.2.23	GB Athlete Visit
9.2.23	Year 3 Mega-Fest Rugby at Dr Challoner’s
4.3.22	Cross Country Event – Little Missenden
20.3.23- 24.3.23	Yr6 Residential
08.05.23	Additional BANK HOLIDAY- His Majesty’s coronation
17.6.23	PTA Summer Fair – SAVE THE DATE

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## A Word from Mrs Milner (cont)

Thank you so much from all of us, as without your work and support we would not be able to purchase many 'extras' that are so needed. Thanks to our PTA's very generous donation towards our running track – our dream of this fantastic facility became a reality. Additionally, PTA provided fabulous Christmas present for our pupils -an individual Christmas tree decorations, engraved with a child's name. They were produced by a small company in Kyiv (Ukraine) so this is good to know that in a small way our school supported a business during this very challenging times for this particular country.

Our governors and trustees help to set the school's vision, ethos, and strategic direction. It is a voluntary role, which utilises a wide range of skills and expertise to benefit our staff and most importantly our pupils. I would like, therefore, to thank our governors for their positive impact and their commitment as well as dedication to our school and its pupils. This leaves me to say thanks to our ODBST Trust, whose vision of Empowerment, Inclusivity, Community and Service has such a positive influence on the work that we do. If you have five minutes, please have a look at their website, so you can familiarise yourself with the organisation and what it represents ([www.odbst.org.uk](http://www.odbst.org.uk))

This leaves me just enough 'paper space' to share some important news. As you know, we are saying goodbye to both Mrs Drake and Mr Ahmed, who both will be joining the Stoney Dean School. I am sure that you will join me in thanks for their hard work and service to the school and its pupils. Mrs Drake started her career at Woodside 10 years ago, as a newly qualified teacher and over the years has dedicated her time and energy, in a quiet and unassuming way, to ensure that children learn, are happy and well looked after. Mrs Drake has been an excellent teacher and we are very sad to see her leave. I am sure you also agree that Mr Ahmed added a very special dimension to the school. His good humour and dedication ensured that children in his care thrive. We wish both Mrs Drake and Mr Ahmed the very best in their new career path.

I must let you know a change of plan for January. Mrs Hawkes-Daves is now able to start in January, consequently she will take over from Mrs Drake during the forthcoming spring term. This means that Mrs Lang will teach in Year 4, until Mr Brown takes over after Easter. I would like to say thank you once more to our existing staff for their willingness to help to ensure the best for our children.

We were going to walk to the St. Michael's Church this Thursday, but due to paths being very icy, I decided that it would be the best if we were to 'stay put.' Reverend Debbie Oades kindly agreed to come to us. Children read reading from the Bible referencing the birth of Jesus and the whole school sang carols. The church is always looking out for new members (adults and children) to join their choir. If you are interested, please email [office@stmichaelsamersham.org.uk](mailto:office@stmichaelsamersham.org.uk)

Friday was a very busy day -Christmas jumpers, Santa Dash and Christmas Cheer – all happened at once! Those of you who joined us for the Santa Dash event (a grand opening of our running track) were treated to witnessing children and staff running around the track during this icy and cold weather. It was so lovely to see children's rosy cheeks. Thank you to the Deputy Mayor of Amersham, Jane Barnes, for her time as she opened our running track by cutting a ceremonial ribbon. It was a lovely ceremony and thank you once more to all who contributed towards the track. (cont)



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## A Word from Mrs Milner (cont)

Those of you who watched Year 4 Christmas production, were for a real treat. It was an amazing feast of performing, singing and some dancing. I am always amazed as to how children can learn all their lines and remember to deliver them with such an aplomb. Well done to all Year 4 – you are all super stars.

We have some very enthusiastic children, who love participating in a variety of competitions. I am, therefore, happy to let you know that recently all of the children took part in the BEBRAS competitions (computational thinking) and all the children received a certificate. Special mention to all children who had a highest score in their age group: Aad (Year 3), Jan (Year 4/5) and Will (Year 6) -well done. Four children in Year 6 were awarded a Gold Certificate for being in the top 10% nationally and as a result will be taking part in the next round in January. These children competed against Year 6 and Year 7 pupils, therefore their achievement is remarkable. They are: Will, Avaneesh, Akhil and Amelia A. Well done to all. Fantastic achievement.

All is left for me to say - I hope that you all have a lovely, lovely Christmas. Enjoy the festivities in whatever way you choose!

I also wish all our families a very Happy New Year,

We will welcome all the children back on Thursday 5th January 2023

With my warmest wishes

Dorota Milner, Headteacher

P.S. Thank you to everyone who has already completed our **uniform survey** (sent out on Friday). If you have not already done so, please do take the time to complete this so we can ensure that any decisions we make are based on the views of all our parents/carers. The survey will close on Tuesday lunchtime.



Children recognised in our  
celebration assembly on Friday

16th December 2022

**Benjamin**

**Tudor**



House Point Totals				
This Week	72	91	82	<b>99</b>
Since Start of Term	2606	<b>2873</b>	2495	2856
	<b>Maple</b>	<b>Willow</b>	<b>Elm</b>	<b>Cedar</b>

*Note: Please ensure all school meals are booked in Parent Pay by Tuesday 20th December for the start of term*



## Mrs Harrison's Curriculum Update



What a fabulously busy week we had last week! On Monday, we were treated to 21 performances at our annual Christmas Concert from children who have music lessons in school. From Christmas songs to Blur, it was a wonderful atmosphere and I felt very fortunate to be there. The children played drums, piano, keyboard, violin, guitar, trombone, saxophone and trumpet. To perform on an instrument in front of an audience takes real courage and I was very proud of all the children who took part. Please do get in touch if your child is interested in group or individual lessons next term.

Our Rock Steady children also treated us to a Christmas performance. Every Tuesday I pop my head in and am always so pleased to see their smiling, enthusiastic faces during their rehearsals.

Finally, our Year 4 children had a fabulous day experiencing life in Ancient Greece with 'History in School.' They took part in a quiz, played Ancient Greek Games and learned about fierce warriors, Greek myths and democracy. They even took part in Olympic sports to finish the day!

We also enjoyed playing in the snow at break this week. The school looked absolutely beautiful. This time of year is always so busy for us as parents and staff. I feel I should say a huge well done to you all for keeping up with the pace of events! With warmest Christmas wishes from me, Mrs Harrison.



### My book recommendations of the week

I really enjoyed spending time last week speaking to the staff from the Chorleywood Book Shop who ran our book fayre. They have arranged two author visits to school this year which have both been really inspirational for the children. So my first recommendation comes from them- 'The Explorer' by Katherine Rundell. I'm hoping to read this myself over the Christmas break. My second recommendation is 'The London Eye Mystery' by Siobhan Dowd.



## Well-being



*I hope that you will not mind this 'tongue in cheek' article.*

*With the festive season rapidly approaching, I thought I take a swipe at the bathroom scales in case they try and tell us things we don't want to hear post-Christmas.*

*We all know that Christmas time is when we usually indulge in good eating and drinking. The shops are packed with an array of tasty festive treats that quite frankly, are hard to resist. It is that time when we love to stock up with all those naughty things that we may not normally buy during the other 11 months of the year. My firm favourite are mince pies with a healthy dollop of brandy cream, followed by a glass of Baileys. In all shops there are chocolates, cheeses, creams, cakes -all the yummy items that potentially can help to pile on the pounds. There are all the to enjoy! However, if you feel that you need to 'hold back' (myself included) then below are some tips that may help.*

- *Eat something healthy before going out*
- *Do not buy Christmas food too early.*
- *Try not to drink too much - one standard glass of wine contains roughly the same amount of calories as a chocolate mini roll, and a pint of lager has the same as an entire packet of crisps (sorry).*
- *Dance as much as you can - the average person will burn 300-800 calories per hour dancing.*
- *Try to go for walks in between sumptuous meals – one hour of walking burns approximately 200 calories.*
- *15 minutes of laughter can help you burn 40 calories.*
- *Or do nothing but eat, drink and be merry and worry about it on the 2nd of January!*

*Merry Christmas from all of us at Woodside!*

**Now on a more serious note.** *There will be people within our community who are might be alone during this Christmas. This may be due to bereavement, living far from relatives or because of social isolation. According to the Mind charity, there are three ways to cope with being alone at Christmas. First, you can address your mental state and how it is contributing to your loneliness. Christmas, according to the charity, is the perfect time to appreciate what you have in life, be it good health, a place to live, or food on the table. Second, you can find things to do at Christmas that make you feel less alone. One way to cope with being alone on Christmas is to go out and do something productive. For example, if you feel full of energy, and the weather is decent, go for a walk. And third, you can plan so that you are not alone this time next year if you don't want to be. One way to gain a better appreciation for the good things in your life is to get involved in volunteering. During the holidays, volunteering is a way to connect with others, boost your self-esteem, and bring joy to people who are less fortunate. Consider offering to help serve dinner at a soup kitchen, bring gifts to a children's hospital, or visit lonely residents at a nursing home.*

*If you are feeling down about being alone on Christmas and can't pull yourself out of it, reach out for help. Call a friend, family member, or a helpline.*

**NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000**

**Samaritans:** *Whatever you're going through, a Samaritan will face it with you.*

*We're here 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Call **116 123** for free.*



## Safeguarding

If you are concerned about a child during school closure, please contact:

- 999 if a child is in an immediate danger
- Social services: 01296 383 962
- The NSPCC are here to help 24/7 and children can call their Childline number on 0800 1111
- Help for adults concerned about a child can call 0808 800 5000
- Shout is the UK's first 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help. Text 85258 fd
- You can e-mail the school: [dsl@wsb.odbst.org](mailto:dsl@wsb.odbst.org)

