

St. George's School Newsletter

Friday 24th January 2025



From the Head

Over the last few days, I have spoken to many in our community who have been shocked by the trial of Axel Rudakubana, the young man who carried out the Southport attack in the summer. Details that have emerged are upsetting and rightly there is anger at all the missed opportunities to stop it.

This tragic case serves as a stark reminder of an important mantra often shared in safeguarding training: *"It could happen here."* While these words may feel unsettling, they are not intended to frighten us. Instead, they underline the importance of vigilance and taking proactive steps to help prevent such incidents from occurring.

This case reminds us of our shared responsibility - both as parents and educators - to remain alert to the warning signs that a young person may be struggling in the online world. Behaviours such as withdrawal, mood swings, low mood, disrupted sleep, or a seeming inability to disengage from devices could all signal an underlying issue.

If you ever have concerns, please remember that you are not alone. Our staff, through the House system and Student Services, are always here to provide support. Where needed, we also collaborate with specialist services to ensure the best outcomes for young people. Additionally, organisations such as [Educate Against Hate](#) or [The National College](#) offer excellent resources and guidance for families.

At our school, we are deeply committed to fostering **obvious kindness** and **obvious positivity** in all areas of life, both online and offline. These values are essential for building a safe, supportive, and respectful community. We ask for your partnership in reinforcing these principles at home. Here are some practical steps you can take:

- **Monitor your child's online activity.** Regularly review their phone and social media use to ensure it reflects our shared values and expectations
- **Discuss the risks of Social Media.** Help your child understand how content - such as videos or streams - can escalate quickly. Talk about the potential consequences of sharing or engaging with inappropriate material
- **Take an interest in their online friendships.** Ask about the people they interact with online and remind them that it is much easier for individuals to misrepresent themselves in the digital world compared to real life
- **Model healthy social media habits.** Show your young person the importance of balancing screen time with other activities and demonstrating thoughtful, respectful online communication

Together, we can remain vigilant and proactive, ensuring that every young person in our care grows up safe, supported, and free from harmful influences.

Invitation to meet with the Head

Thanks to those parents of pupils in years 9, 10 and 12 who have already signed up to join the Head for a round-table discussion. A final reminder of this opportunity to share insights and opinions on a variety of topics related to our school. During the sessions, he would like to discuss a range of issues, led by you. These might include:

- Our School Values and Culture
- The GCSE / A Levels Options Process
- Smartphones
- Our Co-Curricular Offering
- Parent Evenings & Student Reports
- School communications

If you would be interested in attending please complete this [google form](#). The closing date for responses is **Monday 27 January**. Once we have received all responses we will randomly select parents and send out invitations.

House Spirit

Being part of St George's means belonging to one of our four day school houses: Goddard, Grant, Monk, and Watts!

Every student in Years 7 to 11 is expected to wear a 'house identifier.' For most students, this is their tie, which features stripes in their house colour.

Students who choose to wear a revere-collared shirt (and therefore no tie) must wear a badge in their house colour. Examples for Monk House are shown in the photo.



Students in Years 7 and 8 received a Cecil Grant badge (top left in the photo) upon joining the school. Leadership role badges (right) are given to students when appointed. For all other students, the required badge is the capsule-shaped design (bottom left), which can be purchased from the school shop.

Debating Springs Back

Spring term is the busiest term for St George's debating, and this was encapsulated by an action packed day of debate last Thursday.

At lunchtime, we were visited by a guest speaker (Lady Val Corbett) who chaired a lively Q&A on prison reform and the role of women at the top levels of companies/politics.

In the evening, we hosted a lively set of debates versus STAGS where seven students represented the school for the first time. All debaters from STAGS and St George's were a credit to their schools. Well done to Áine W (Year 8), Bella B (Year 10) and Zoë B (Year 12) for picking up individual awards.

Next up: regional rounds of Oxford schools, second round of the rotary competition and house debating in the last week of half-term!

We expect around 80 students to represent their house and/or school this year, which is incredible for our whole school oracy!



16+ Evening

As our Year 11s decide on their next steps and future path: we have been providing them with a myriad of opportunities for information and engagement.

Last Monday, our 16+ Evening took place, where students were able to hear from the Head and Sixth form leaders, as well as being able to attend various subject talks. This was followed this week, by our subject fair, subject drop ins and a chance to talk to current Year 12s in tutor bases this week. Whatever our Year 11s choose to do next year, we want to make sure that they have all the information available to them to guide them in the next step of their journey and they feel comfortable and excited about their new chapter.

Please contact your child's Head of House if you need any additional support for your young person.



Flute and Saxophone recital-Monday 3 February

A reminder that this recital is happening in the Old Library on Monday 3rd February at 7.00 p.m.

The featured artists are flautist Clare Childs (née Robson) and saxophonist Dom Childs. They are both professional musicians and Clare attended St George's from 1994-2001, being the school captain in 2000/01. It is great to welcome Clare and her husband back to school for what promises to be a wonderful evening including music by Bach, Debussy, Bernstein and Madeleine Dring. They will be accompanied on the piano by Alison Farr.

Tickets cost £10 and are available now via ParentPay. Due to the size of the Old Library there are only 50 tickets available and these will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Refreshments before the recital and during the interval will be provided by the PE department as part of their fundraising efforts for their forthcoming Rugby and Lacrosse tour to America.

Being Ready to Learn

We are noticing that some students are not fully equipped to learn. Please can you help them to get organised by renewing their glue sticks, and check they have a reading book with them every day. Here are the basic items your young person should have with them at school every day. Thank you.

News from the Lettings Department

Looking for the perfect way to keep active and have fun? We're excited to introduce Bookteq, our new online booking system for the Sports Centre facilities! From the sports hall and MUGA to our pitches and old gym, our spaces are ideal for extra sports practice, a friendly football match, or even a fun family day out. You can even book unforgettable birthday parties for children aged 4-12, featuring inflatables with options such as Nerf battles, laser tag, and more! Start planning your next activity or celebration now by visiting [St George's School - Lettings](#)



Cosy Up With a Good Book!

The Library entrance is looking so bright and cheery with an inviting winter warming mittens display. Big thanks to all those students who have been busy filling our windows with some fantastic suggestions of books they would like to cosy up with on a cold and wet winter's day. We've had so many students and staff commenting on how colourful it looks this week. Fantasy, mystery, thrillers and historical fiction are proving to be very popular, with some classics and some newer titles suggested too. Your suggestions are always welcome, so please keep them coming!



Follow the Library on Instagram [@stgeorgeslibrary_](#) to stay up to date with news, events, book recommendations, book reviews and more.

Netball News

St George's senior netball girls took part in a fiercely contested fixture last week against Roundwood. Both teams were a credit to their schools and the game was played in excellent spirit. Next week, we take on Sandringham - which should be another high quality match up.

The U13As also played against Roundwood. The girls were very excited as they were playing against a lot of their teammates. It was a very competitive match, and the girls worked well as a team communicating throughout and driving into space. The match finished 23-19 to us! Congratulations to Lily for getting MVP and a special well done to Zara for stepping up and playing for Roundwood halfway through after one of their girls got injured.

Meanwhile, the U12Bs played away at KWS. The match started slowly, but as the girls' confidence built, they started to work as a team, moving the ball down the court, pulling away from KWS and finishing the match 13-3 to us! Our MVP was Katherine for some lovely shooting and attacking in the D.

Well done to all the girls who played.



Lacrosse and Rugby Tomorrow

All lacrosse matches vs Putney are cancelled tomorrow due to waterlogged pitches!
All rugby home matches are cancelled tomorrow due to waterlogged pitches!
U13 and U14 games have also been cancelled.

Lacrosse and Rugby Tour Fundraising

We have three exciting fundraising events coming up and we would love to see you all there! Please save the dates for the events below, more information will be released in the coming weeks!

Friday 28th March: 90's Fun House at The Electric Ballroom!

Come and party with DJ Pat Sharpe 8pm - 1am!

Tickets will cost £25 and information on how to buy tickets will be released in next week's parent bulletin!

Saturday 3rd May: Silent Disco at the St Albans Abbey! The UK's best DJ's will be playing your favourite tunes in the Nave of the Cathedral!

Saturday 17th May: Summer Mix - Canadian and American themed evening, with summer party games, great food and dancing to live music! Get you best red, white and blue outfits ready, more info coming soon!

St George's Odd Balls Hats

If you would like to purchase a St George's Odd Balls hat for £20 please contact Dean Harris at: dean0harris@hotmail.com Hats cost £20 and Dean will be able to organise that for you!



GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

St George's has been lucky enough to be one of 200 schools to receive some of the 2,000 KG of rope-grown mussels being donated by Offshore Shell, packed by River Teign Shellfish and delivered by DFDS.

Year 10 have been cooking Thai style mussels and conducting sensory analysis. Students showed off new skills in preparing and cooking the mussels in a Thai sauce. For many students it was their first experience of preparing and tasting mussels. This is not something we would not normally do and feedback from students has been incredibly positive and we hope, helped to diversify their palate!

Many thanks go to Offshore Shell, River Teign Shellfish, DFDS and the Food Teachers Centre for this superb opportunity.

To follow on from mussels, we've secured a 2 hour Fish Masterclass for our year 10 GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition students to enjoy on Friday 31st!





NOTICES

Harpenden Youth Group

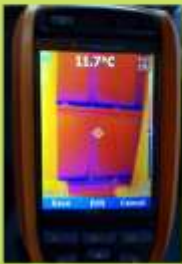
This is being held on Sunday 2nd Feb 5.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. in All Saints' Church Hall. All students in years 6 to 9 are welcome to join for the next youth group session. There will be lots of food, fun, and faith. They will be playing special games with the wonderful local youth charity STEP. Contact Revd James at associate.vicar@allsaints.parishofharpenden.org for more details.

Services for Young People

Services for Young People are running a youth work project at the Harpenden Young People's Centre. The Creative Spark Project is designed for young people with SEND aged 13 to 17, including those with social, emotional and mental health needs. The focus is on developing communication and interpersonal skills, confidence and self-esteem in a safe and supportive environment.

Young people will get support from qualified SfYP youth workers, meet other young people with SEND in their area and learn skills to help them live more independently. SfYP Youth Workers also offer individualised support with emotional wellbeing, healthy relationships, staying safe, nutrition and cooking, and managing money. The project will be running on a Tuesday evening from 6.00 to 8.00 p.m. during term time and the address is 27 High St. Harpenden, AL5 2RU (above the library).

Is your home leaking heat and money?



Use the Thermal Imaging Camera for **FREE** to:

- Identify draughts and cold spots.
- Review radiator efficiency.
- Check insulation.
- Save energy.

- Attend a free online info session to learn how to use the camera.
- Pay refundable deposit.
- Borrow the camera for 24 hours for **FREE**.

FIND OUT MORE:

SustainableStAlbans.org

[SSA Thermal Imaging Camera Project](#)




SUSTAINABLE St Albans
Registered charity no. 1173118



Train to Teach Events




February 2025

Tuesday 11th February 4.00pm-8.00pm
Train to teach recruitment event - cross phase
University of Hertfordshire, College Lane, Hatfield, AL10 9AB

Wednesday 26th February 7.00pm-8.00pm
Train to teach online event
meet.google.com/jbj-geux-bpw



Register in advance here
bit.ly/AlbanTSH-T2T





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Services for
Young People

Emotionally Based School Anxiety Coffee mornings

These EBSA coffee mornings are for parents/ carers with a child in years 5-6 at primary school or years 7-11 at secondary school, who are not attending school because of EBSA issues. This event is being run by DSPL7 with Services for Young People, and **young people are also welcome to attend.** This is a drop-in session with no need to book



Coffee mornings take place at the **The Pioneer Club, Heathlands Drive, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 5AY**, at the community cafe, Suet Yard. Sessions run from 9:30 - 11:30am on the following dates:

Dates	
Wednesday 22nd January 2025	Tuesday 11th March 2025
Wednesday 14th May 2025	Thursday 19th June 2025



admin@dspl7.org.uk



01727 519229



www.dspl7.org.uk



Vista
St Albans Primary Partnership



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SEND Coffee Mornings

DSPL7 & Vista St Albans+ host coffee mornings where School and SEND Family Workers are available to support parents / carers of children with SEND regardless of a diagnosis. This is an informal and safe place for parents / carers to share information and chat. The DSPL7 SEND Lead and other professionals may also be available for discussions. There is no need to book to attend this drop in session

Dates: 29th Jan, 19th March, 7th May & 25th June

Time: 9:15 - 11:00am

Venue: The Hub, Fleetville Junior School, 22B Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW. The Hub is to the right hand side of the school building at the bottom of the car park. **There is no parking available onsite, but 3 hours free parking is available nearby in Morrisons supermarket.**

Appointments

Running alongside our coffee mornings, there is also the opportunity to reserve a 20-30 minute appointment to speak to the following professionals between 9:30am - 12:00pm.

To book an appointment:
Please email
admin@dspl7.org.uk

Dates	Professionals attending
29th January	Lyndsey Hooper - Mental Health Support Team
19th March	Thelma Mugovera - Ask Sali
7th May	Clare Tomlinson-Smith - Challenging behaviour at home
25th June	Niamh Cooper - First Steps ED