

St. George's School Newsletter

Thursday 27th November



From the Head

As we approach the final few weeks of term, I hope all our students can use the long weekend to get some well-deserved rest. Please encourage them to recharge their batteries so they are ready for the final push before the Christmas holiday!

Coming to school every day is vital. Research published by the Department for Education (DfE) consistently shows a clear link between attendance and attainment; put simply, pupils who attend school regularly are far more likely to achieve their full potential in their exams and future pathways.

With that in mind, I am incredibly pleased to report that our current overall attendance stands at 97.1%. This is a remarkable achievement by our pupils. In fact, data showed we were the best attending secondary school in Hertfordshire throughout September and October, and we are currently holding strong as the 2nd best in the county for November.

It is brilliant to see that our pupils genuinely want to be here every day. However, we know that winter bugs are circulating. To support parents in decision-making, we are following the Chief Medical Officer's advice: it is right to send children to school with mild respiratory illnesses (runny nose, sore throat, slight cough). They should only stay home if they have a high temperature (fever), have vomited or had diarrhoea (in which case 48 hours off school) or do not feel well enough to carry out normal activities.

Please see an update from Mr Ede on absence requests below.

I hope you enjoy reading about the many student successes and updates in the rest of this newsletter. This includes a report on the "Friday Night Lights" Rugby game a few weeks ago, and an update on the PSA Christmas Fayre which was a wonderful event last weekend. I hope that you and your families have a wonderful, restful long weekend.

Attendance & Procedures Update: A Message from Mr Ede

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to **Mrs. Flemming**, who has joined our administrative team as our new Attendance Officer. She will be working closely with us to ensure our records are accurate and our students are supported.

Reporting Absences - We need your help to ensure accurate and timely reporting of attendance:

- **Reporting Illness via Edulink:** The preferred method for reporting student illness is now via the **Edulink app**. This ensures the information is communicated directly to the necessary staff. Please remember that a student needs to be unwell for the **whole day** to be marked absent.

- **Planned Absences:** If you are requesting a planned absence (such as a medical appointment that cannot be scheduled outside school hours), we require a minimum of **48 hours' notification** to process the request effectively.

Mock Exam Attendance (for Y11 and Y13) Mock exams are a vital part of your child's preparation for their formal qualifications. We encourage you to treat these days with the same seriousness as the final summer exams. With this in mind:

- **Urgent Contact:** If your child is expected to be absent on a day they are due to sit a mock exam, please **contact the school office immediately**.
- **Rescheduling:** Please be aware that rescheduling mock exams is extremely difficult due to complex timetabling and invigilation requirements; missing a paper can significantly disrupt a student's access to important feedback.

School Holidays and Term Time Leave We understand that booking holidays outside of school breaks can be appealing. However, we must remind all parents that holidays should **not** be booked during scheduled term time. This includes the last day of term.

The school is not permitted to authorise leave for holidays during term time. Taking children out of school for holidays causes significant disruption to their learning. Please plan your holidays strictly for the designated school holiday periods.



Christmas Lunch is on 17th December

This is a most wonderful occasion when the whole school gets together to enjoy a fine Christmas lunch with festivities and music. It is also the day where students can wear their Christmas jumpers (with school uniform).

The deadline for the purchase of a Christmas lunch is on **3rd December** and this will be the only dining option on this day so please sign-up on ParentPay today!

Joyful Voices and Carol- bration of Christmas

Join Us for Our Carol Services at St George's!

The magic of Christmas comes alive at St George's with three unforgettable Carol Services this December. We warmly welcome everyone—no tickets needed, just come along and soak up the festive spirit!



Dates to remember:

- Junior Carols – Sunday 7th December, 5:00 p.m.
- OG Service – Saturday 13th December, 3:00 p.m.
- Nine Lessons & Carols – Sunday 14th December, 5:00 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.

From joyful voices to timeless traditions, each service promises to lift hearts and fill the season with music, reflection, and celebration. Seats are first- come, first- served, so arrive early to secure your place at these cherished Christmas gatherings!

Rugby Friday Nights Light Up

On Friday 14th November 2025, St George's 1st XV came out with a mission – to break the 13-year cycle of not securing a victory over St Albans School (SAS) in what has become *the* local school rugby derby. It was a wild night under the floodlights, bringing together a combination of rain, momentous support for both sides (plus a band!) and some tense and electrifying rugby.

Albert NK described the match: “It was a ‘brutal’ first half. The match kicked off at full pace, with huge tackles from both sides and whilst St George's looked more dominant physically, punching holes in the SAS line and controlling territory early on, but ill-discipline cost them valuable points. Two penalties in dangerous areas suddenly handed them the lead by 14 points. Soaked and punished for errors, St George's heads could have dropped. They didn't. Instead, St George's spotted space, made a clean line break, chipped ahead, and won the foot race to touch down followed by a secure conversion for a halftime score of 14-7.

Whilst the second half saw St George's put on a tireless onslaught of attack, the points just wouldn't come. Then in the final minutes of the match, St George's gave their all, breaking through the SAS defence to score and convert and bring the score line to 17-14. The atmosphere was alive with cheers of support to drive the St George's boy's momentum. And it worked. A penalty came moments later securing a draw... but a draw against St Albans wasn't what St George's had trained for. With a penalty advantage, a high cross field kick was launched and plucked from the sky to be taken over the try line and see St George's 1st XV break the cycle and win the match 19-17”.

This was an evening to remember, particularly for parents who have been at the school for many years watching their boys play rugby in St George's colours and a moment to celebrate the sporting effort, resilience, and determination of the school. The support from fellow students (from both schools), ex-students, the teachers and parents and siblings, was an example of how St George's is not just a school, but a community.



St George's School Live on MIX 92.6!

We're turning up the volume on Friday, 5th December 2025, as St George's School takes centre stage on Hertfordshire's MIX 92.6 Breakfast Show!

As part of the station's fun feature, 'The Random School Selector', our pupils and staff will be getting a special shout- out at around 8:20 a.m. So set your alarms, tune in, and listen out for St George's making waves across the county!

MIX 92.6 reaches over half a million residents with its unique, community- driven content. The show celebrates local voices—schools, charities, businesses, and people who make Hertfordshire thrive. You can catch it anywhere: FM, DAB+, smart speaker, or online.

UK Parliament Week at St George's: A Week of Voices, Ideas, and Debate!

What a whirlwind week it has been at St George's as we joined schools across the country in celebrating UK Parliament Week!

Monday kicked off with a bang as we welcomed our local MP, Victoria Collins, for a dynamic Q&A session. Students seized the opportunity to challenge, question, and explore the realities of political life.

•By Wednesday, our Year 12s were in full stride at the county- wide 'Speak Your Mind' event. Their questions to the expert panel were sharp, thoughtful, and fearless—showing just how engaged our students are with the issues shaping society today.

A true highlight came when Enny J took centre stage, opening the debate with a powerful three- minute speech before joining the panel itself. Her confidence, eloquence, and maturity shone through as she addressed an audience of hundreds of peers.

And today, we round off the week with a thrilling BP debate at Berkhamsted School, putting our debating skills to the test against some of the best young minds in the region.

But the excitement doesn't stop here! Next week, the spotlight swings back to St George's as we host our very own 'St George's Question Time'. Guided by our newly appointed debate captains and leads, this promises to be another inspiring showcase of student voice, critical thinking, and spirited discussion.



Year 13 visit to the British Film Institute

Nana (y13) writes: On Wednesday 12th November, we visited the British Film Institute in London for an A-Level French film study day alongside students from other schools. The day began with an engaging introduction to *La Nouvelle Vague*, followed by an interactive workshop exploring a range of film-making techniques and genres. It was an insightful experience that encouraged us to share our ideas while learning from one another. We viewed excerpts from several films and took notes in a workbook provided for us, giving us useful material to take back to school.

After a refreshing lunch break in the city, we watched *La Haine*, the film we are currently studying. Seeing it on the big screen added a new level of intensity and helped us appreciate its themes in greater depth. It was a rewarding and inspiring trip that strengthened both our understanding of French cinema and our enthusiasm for the subject.



Year Seven's Quality of Life in School Survey (QUALIS)

Last week, year sevens visited the computer rooms to complete QUALIS - a survey which captures what it's like to be a year seven at St. George's. We have been completing this survey since 2002 so we have many years of comparative data! We will be sharing this data with the students but thought we would share some highlights with you:

In the last two weeks:

- 96% of students have had another student say something nice to them
- 97% of students have had another student smile at them
- 96% of students have not experienced any unkindness online
- 82% of students have been lent an item that they had forgotten by another student
- 84% of students had been told a joke by another student
- 90% of students have been invited to join in a game by another student.

Experiences are very similar across all houses. Monk has the highest average for receiving kind words and being comforted, while Watts and Grant report feeling left out the least. Differences between houses are small, indicating a consistent experience for students regardless of house.

They have had a great first term at StG's.

Celebrating National Non-Fiction November!

Recent research by the National Literacy Trust found that more children and young people who read non-fiction were motivated to read for educational purposes, to satisfy curiosities, to foster social connections and to support their mental wellbeing. Providing students with the opportunity to read and explore non-fiction plays a vital role in helping them to learn about their world, as well as fostering reading for pleasure.

In consultation with Directors of Learning and subject staff, the Library aims to provide students with access to a high quality, relevant and engaging non-fiction collection.



This month we have been showcasing an impressive selection of Art and History books, so we are taking the opportunity during National Non-Fiction November to share some of these new additions.

We always welcome new suggestions from staff and students, so if there is a book you would like to see in the Library, please let us know!

Sixth Form Mock Interview Volunteers Needed!

We are appealing to our talented parent community to help our Sixth Form students prepare for their future by assisting with University Mock Interviews. This is a crucial step in their application process, giving them invaluable experience and feedback.

We are especially seeking parents with professional experience in the following fields:

- Medicine
- Veterinary
- Law
- Physiotherapy
- Construction Management

We are open to any parents who would like to help! If you have experience with university-style interviews or are working in a professional field, your time and insight would be greatly appreciated.

How to Volunteer

Please contact Mrs. Beaman in the Sixth Form office by emailing 6thformadmin@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk to let us know your availability. Your support can make a significant difference to our students' success!

From our Amazing PSA Team

The PSA wanted to say a huge and heartfelt thank you to everyone who volunteered, donated or supported the Fayre by coming along last Saturday with friends and family. You helped make it a fantastic event full of festive fun, and together we raised **£6,300** for essential school projects.

Thank you also to the Fayre team, who put in so much hard work to make it such a success.

We are incredibly proud of our St George's PSA, and the Fayre was a true testament to the community spirit that brings us all together. Thank you to everyone who helped!

Didn't Attend the Christmas Fayre?

Even if you weren't able to join, donate or volunteer at the Christmas Fayre, you can still make a meaningful difference through a direct monetary donation. Every contribution, big or small, helps support our school. Simply click or scan the QR code to donate via Give as You Live Donate: <https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/donate?cid=269374#amount>



Can You Help? Volunteers Needed for Christmas Ball Set-Up – Friday 28th November

As excitement builds for the biggest fundraiser in the school calendar, we are looking for volunteers to support the Christmas Ball team with set-up **this Friday between 10.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m.**

Help is needed with table decorating, putting chair covers on, and assisting with runs to the lock-up. **If you can spare even an hour, please come to school to help.**

If no one is available at Goddard Reception to greet you, please make your way directly to the Dining Room (main venue) or the Old Gym (music and bar area), where the team will be coordinating the set-up.

Thank You to the Bar Team

A big thank you to the Bar Team for their fantastic support during the recent drama production. Their hard work helped raise funds for the school and made the event even more enjoyable. Your contribution is truly appreciated!

Lost Property and Missing Items

While incidents of deliberate theft are very rare at St George's, we find that items are sometimes mistakenly taken by another student, particularly when so many wear the same branded coats, use the same bags, etc.

We are asking for your support in two areas:

Returning Mistaken Items: Please remind your children that if they ever mistakenly take home an item that does not belong to them, they must return it to the school shop (Lost Property) as promptly as possible. We understand mistakes happen, but prompt return is essential.

Labelling: To prevent losses, we strongly urge all parents to ensure every single item of school uniform, PE kit, and outer garment is clearly and permanently labelled with your child's name.

St George's School

Follow us on Socials!





Website



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Meet father christmas church farm Ardeley



Selected dates in December

Festive Farm Entry includes

Christmas Activity Pack * Festive Woodland
Walk the farm & see the farm animals

Meet Father Christmas

Father Christmas in his outside grotto
(includes a quality toy)

Meet the Elves

Write a letter to Father Christmas

Write a wish for the Wish Tree

Bag up reindeer food & carrot to take home to Rudolph

Additional Activities

Santa Paws – bring your beloved pooches to meet

Father Christmas include treat & toy

Harvest your Own Christmas Tree

Festive Tractor & Trailer Ride

Feed the farm animals

Book online www.churchfarmardeley.co.uk

*This is an outdoor event so plenty of
fresh air. Wrap up warm & wear wellies!*

CHURCH FARM, ARDELEY
A Free Range Experience

