



## Tonwell St Mary's CE (VC) Primary School

Ware Road, Tonwell, Herts, SG12 0HN

Tel: 01920 462894

E-mail: [admin@tonwell.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@tonwell.herts.sch.uk)

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Bridgman



'CURIOSITY, COURAGE, COMPASSION'

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Dear parents,

Wow! What an incredibly busy start back to school we have had.

I would like to start by thanking parents once again for your overwhelmingly positive comments and support during our Ofsted inspection last week and to congratulate our children on being so hardworking and engaged in their lessons. I expect to be able to share the report with you by half term.

As part of our safeguarding curriculum, we use the NSPCC's 'Speak out, Stay safe' assemblies in school. Our Y5/6 children have also had an NSPCC workshop in school this week. The children are taught about telling a trusted adult if they are worried and they are taught the childline phone number 0800 1111.



Y4/5/6 visited Verulamium Museum in St Albans as part of their history topic on The Romans. They explored the museum, had a workshop looking at real Roman artefacts and visited the ruins in the park.



We were delighted to welcome the Bishop of Bedford to the school yesterday. He visited both schools in our new federation to talk about his role in the church and to tell children about the Bishop's Harvest Appeal for Mozambique. We will be making a contribution towards the charity as a school. The children sang one of our harvest songs – he was very impressed!

There have been moments of sadness and reflection in school as we talked about Queen Elizabeth. Children wrote prayers and made pictures, which Mrs Coleman took to display in Green Park.



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Our Governing Board are looking to recruit two new parent members. They will be sending out more information soon. Please get in touch if you are interested.

### Attendance

I would like to share some reminders about the importance of children's attendance at school.

- Regular attendance is vital and it is a parent's legal duty to send their child to school.
- We aim for 98%+ attendance for all of our pupils.
- 90% attendance and below is a serious cause for concern.
- High attendance is strongly linked to high attainment.
- Term time holidays are not authorised.
- Punctuality is important and persistent lateness results in missed learning.

We understand that situations may arise when a child requires a day of absence from school e.g. illness. These one-off absences are a normal part of everyday life and do not pose a concern. A one-off day of absence can be managed so that a child can quickly get back on track upon their return to school. It is when these one-off absences recur or become extended periods that attendance starts to become a concern. It should come as no surprise that there is a strong link between high levels of attendance and high attainment. The government regularly review attendance and attainment for pupils at the End of KS2 (Year 6) and the End of KS4 (Year 11) and the findings are staggering. Pupils who did not achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths in 2019 had an overall absence rate of 4.7% over the key stage, compared with 3.5% among pupils who achieved the expected standard and 2.7% among those who achieved the higher standard.

Among pupils with no missed sessions over KS2, 83.9% achieved the expected standard compared to 40.2% of pupils who were persistently absent.

The charts below illustrate the impact of attendance on your child's learning.

| Descriptor                                    | Percentage attendance | Actual attendance (days) | Whole days absent (approx.) | Learning hours lost (approx.) |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Excellent</b>                              | <b>100%</b>           | <b>190</b>               | <b>0</b>                    | <b>0</b>                      |
|   | 99%                   | 188                      | 2                           | 10                            |
| <b>Good</b>                                   | <b>98%</b>            | <b>186</b>               | <b>4</b>                    | <b>20</b>                     |
|   | 97%                   | 184                      | 6                           | 30                            |
|   | 96%                   | 182.5                    | 7.5                         | 37.5                          |
| <b>Becoming Unsatisfactory</b>                | <b>95%</b>            | <b>180.5</b>             | <b>9.5</b>                  | <b>47.5</b>                   |
|   | 94%                   | 177                      | 13                          | 65                            |
|   | 92%                   | 175                      | 15                          | 75                            |
| <b>Cause for Concern (Persistent Absence)</b> | <b>90%</b>            | <b>171</b>               | <b>19</b>                   | <b>95</b>                     |
|   | Below 90%             | 169                      | 21                          | 105                           |
|   | 89% and below         | 167 and below            | 23                          | 115+                          |

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|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>90% attendance</b> is approximately equivalent to <b>20 schools days missed</b> . This is <b>4 weeks of school missed</b> and roughly equates to: |  |
| <b>20 maths lessons missed</b>   | This means vast gaps in understanding and potentially whole topics of maths completely bypassed.   |
| <b>20 English lessons missed</b>   | This includes numerous reading and writing skills lost and creates gaps in knowledge and understanding.  |
| <b>20 phonics lessons missed</b>   | In EYFS/KS1, phonics is taught every day and a new sound is learnt most days. This means that 20 sounds will be missed, creating huge gaps in children's building blocks for reading and writing.      |
| <b>40 foundation subject lessons missed</b>  | This includes history, geography, art, DT, PE, music, RE, French, computing and wellbeing. This means countless opportunities to broaden knowledge and understanding about a range of topics are gone. |

### How can I help?

- Bring your child to school for every possible day of attendance.
- Do not take term time holidays. Current education regulations determine that we are not permitted to authorise any term time holiday or extended leave unless there are exceptional circumstances. This means that all term time holiday will be unauthorised and parents will be issued with a fixed penalty notice by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC).
- Arrange medical appointments outside of school hours wherever possible.
- Illness that warrants absence from school will usually be authorised. However, if your child feels tired or not 100% but you don't feel they need to be absent, we would encourage you to send them to school. Most of the time, once the child is in and settled into their normal routine, they feel fine but we will contact you if they need to be sent home.
- All parents are now able to keep an eye on their child's attendance via Arbor. We would encourage you to view this regularly so that you are aware if it starts to fall and can act accordingly.

### **Y5&6 Netball and Football Club**

We are able to offer places at a Y5&6 netball and football club on Wednesdays 3.15-4.15pm at Thundridge this term. The club will be run by our sports coach (Kirsty) and Thundridge teachers. The teams will also be taking part in league games against other local schools. Parents do need to provide transport to and from Thundridge and children can be collected slightly early at 3.10pm if needed and will need to wear PE kits. Please email [head@tonwell.herts.sch.uk](mailto:head@tonwell.herts.sch.uk) if you would like more information.



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### Our Vision and Values

# Curiosity, Courage, Compassion

Thundridge and Tonwell St Mary's Church Schools' Federation

*'A community learning together in God's love'*

We aim to enable everyone in our school community to:

Be interested to develop a love and independence for learning and be ready to try new things.

Be brave enough to make mistakes, have a go at challenges and try again.

Be kind showing respect and care to all.

### Key Dates

Please note that it is possible there may be some changes.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> September          | Specialist music teacher sessions  |
| Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> September         | 8.45am Parent Forum  |
| Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> October            | Specialist music teacher sessions  |
| Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> October           | Harvest Celebration at St Albans Cathedral   |
| Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> October             | Growth Mindset Athlete Visit (Louise Hunt – Paralympian)<br>2.50pm Harvest Celebration in hall (parents invited) |
| Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> October            | Parent Consultations   |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> -28 <sup>th</sup> October | HALF TERM  |
| WB 14 <sup>th</sup> November               | Anti-Bullying Week   |
| Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> November           | Children in Need   |
| Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> December            | INSET DAY  |
| Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> December        | Last day of term (school closes at 1.15pm)   |
| Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> December          | 1.30pm Christmas Service at Holy Trinity   |
| Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> December           | Whole School Panto Trip – Hoddesdon  |
| Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> December         | 1.15pm End of Term   |
| Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> January           | INSET DAY  |
| Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> January             | Children return to school  |

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