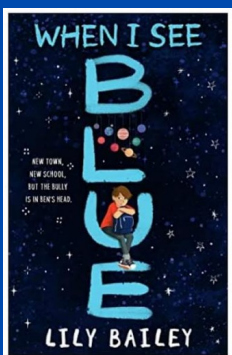




## Margaret Chapman, Executive Head Teacher

As we conclude this very rapid half term we have enjoyed a week of celebration, culminating in STAGS does VALUetines day! This has involved students sending postcards to each other and to staff to celebrate the STAGS values - there were over 600 cards delivered on Wednesday with some lovely words of appreciation! (More pictures on page 3).

Our Learning Ambassadors continue to review teaching and learning across all subjects, led by Ms Cardani, they met this week to review best practice and celebrate the very best learning experiences across the school.



Each year we choose a wonderful book for our 'Whole School Read', not only to celebrate our whole school reading culture but to also engage students to explore a wide range of diverse themes. This year, we are delighted to announce that our choice for 2024 for our STAGS Read is Lily Bailey's, 'When I see Blue.' It is an inspirational story that addresses the challenges of OCD, friendship, and bravery. 12-year-old Ben, faces difficulties adjusting to a new school and town, while also dealing with his parents' failing relationship. This heartfelt story about a boy with OCD celebrates how friendship can make you brave and find the strength to overcome anything. Students will have the opportunity to gain House Points for their engagement with the STAGS Read and win prizes as the year goes on, with the top prize being a form pizza party for the form with the most participation! Copies are available in the library and we hope students will enjoy reading and discussing this wonderful text. If families would like to get involved, the text is available on both Amazon and Audible.

**SUPPORT   TRUST   AMBITION   GENEROSITY   SUCCESS**

Sporting engagement and successes continue:

The Year 10 Level 1 Sports Leaders participated in some speed stacking officiating training with external leaders from the School Games Partnership in preparation to officiate a primary school speed stacking competition after half-term.

The Under 13's football team progressed into the district semi-finals with a hard fought 2-1 win against Katherine Warrington School.

The Under 15's B team won their netball fixture against Katherine Warrington School 33-8. All players played superbly!

Finally, Thea in Year 8, participated in the European Fencing Confederation Millfield Cup Under 14 earlier this week and proudly secured a Bronze Medal. Poland claimed the Gold and Great Britain took home both Silver and Bronze.



As we conclude this half term with our Trust Teaching and Learning Conference over the past two days, we also conclude our themed focus on Mental Health Week, I thought the [attached article](#) from the NSPCC in conjunction with their new campaign video: [Please don't let go of my hand poem](#) may be of interest to us all. As cited by the Head of Brand and Content at the NSPCC, *"This powerful new ad campaign will hopefully make parents feel less alone and more inclined to reach out to the NSPCC for help with the everyday anxieties and challenges that they face while bringing up their children"*.

We enjoyed a wonderful Lunar New Year celebration on Friday. My thanks go to Mrs Lavelle and all who supported this event. Additionally, Mrs Buckley organised family members of students to visit us as part of the celebrations which was such a wonderfully positive celebration of our community.

Thank you for your continued support this half term. Thank you also to those who continue to support the School Fund donations through the PTA. As a result we have been able to purchase a new trampoline as sadly 'Goliath' is beyond repair. Also, we have purchased a new laser cutter for Technology - this subject continues to grow and flourish and is greatly enjoyed by so many of our students. This cutting edge technology has made the team absolutely delighted and I look forward to sharing with you when it arrives!

Yesterday, we hosted a recruitment fair welcoming over 30 local schools to engage those interested in teaching and training to teach - a superb event, very well attended, with our Mayor also visiting to meet schools, leaders and prospective teachers. Our Rotary Club team, led by Mrs Rock, were on hand with refreshments and fundraising activities - thank you to all who ensured such a successful evening.

As of Thursday 29 February - the St Albans & District Foodbank's Wheathampstead Distribution Centre will be held every week at: The Memorial Hall, Marford Road, Wheathampstead, AL4 8AY from 11.30am to 13.30pm. Attached in the notices section is an updated locations poster with information of times and locations for all distribution centres that are held during the week.

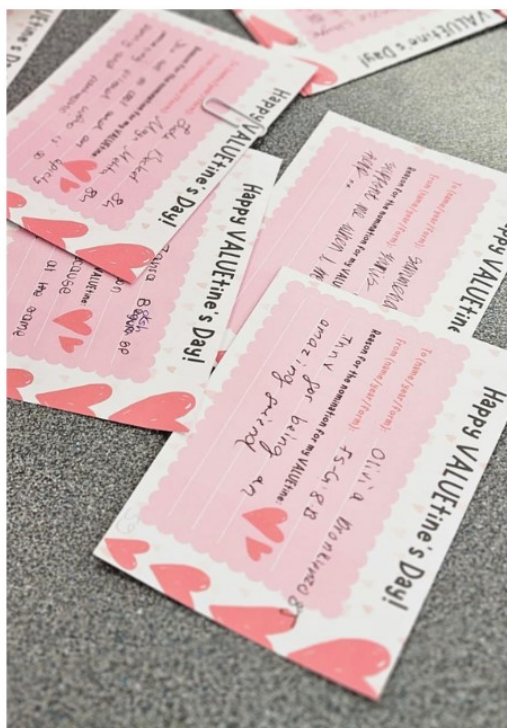
Although it is half term next week, our rewiring and electrical works continue across the school site. As such, on Wednesday 21 February there will be no electricity or internet across the whole site.

Finally warmest congratulations to Mrs Georges who has welcomed a new baby safely and happily into the family - all are doing well.

With all good wishes,

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'M. Carey', with a long, sweeping underline.









# Diary Dates

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## **Thursday 15 - Friday 16 February**

**School is closed to Students**

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## **Monday 19 - Friday 23 February**

**Half Term**

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## **Monday 26 February**

SEND Parent Group Meeting, 7-8.30pm,  
LRC

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## **Monday 26 Feb - Friday 8 March**

Year 11 Progression Meetings

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## **Tuesday 27 February**

Year 11 Parent Revision Evening,  
Main Hall, 11(A-F) 6-6.50pm,  
11(H-S) 7-7.50pm

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## **Wednesday 28 February**

Year 10 Malta Netball Tour Parent Information  
Evening, 6pm, Hall

Interhouse STAGS Bake Off

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## **Tuesday 5 and Wednesday 6 March**

Flair Dance Performance, 7-8.15pm, Hall

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## **Thursday 7 March**

PTA Meeting, 7-8pm, Learning Resource Centre

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## **Thursday 7 - 10 March**

Year 10 Languages Spanish Trip to Madrid

Year 10 & Year 12 ADT Trip to Madrid

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## **Friday 8 March**

Year 8 and Year 12 Inspiring Women  
Networking Event



# Notices



## THE GREAT INTERHOUSE STAGS BAKE OFF

28th February 2024

**TICKETS ON SALE MONDAY  
26TH FEBRUARY AT 9AM!**

## FLAIR 2024

**5 & 6  
MARCH**

**£6 ADULTS,  
£4 CONCESSIONS**

**7-8.15  
PM**

TICKETS ON SALE VIA SCHOOL  
GATEWAY FROM MONDAY 26  
FEBRUARY AT 9AM

STUDENT LED PERFORMANCE WITH DANCERS FROM ALL YEARS



## SPRING CONCERT

TUESDAY 19 MARCH, 7PM

FEATURING A RANGE OF PERFORMANCES  
FROM OUR MUSICAL ENSEMBLES, AS  
WELL AS SMALL GROUP ACTS FROM  
ACROSS THE YEAR GROUPS





# Notices



## Inspiring Women

Networking Morning

Year 8 are invited to meet with a variety of inspirational women and learn about their career journeys

Friday 8th March, 9-11am

St Albans Girls' School  
Main Hall/Restaurant

Look out for an email from [careers@stags.herts.sch.uk](mailto:careers@stags.herts.sch.uk) for more information



## Inspiring Women

Networking Breakfast

Year 12 are invited to a networking breakfast to meet with a variety of inspirational women and learn about their career journeys

Friday 8th March, 8-8.45am

St Albans Girls' School  
Main Hall/Restaurant

Look out for an email from [careers@stags.herts.sch.uk](mailto:careers@stags.herts.sch.uk) for more information



**Herts Parent Carer Involvement**  
[www.hertsparentcarers.org.uk](http://www.hertsparentcarers.org.uk)



Mind Hertfordshire Network



Carers in Hertfordshire



ADD-vance  
The ADHD and Autism Trust



POTENTIAL KIDS



Angels



Herts Disability Sports Foundation



SPACE



Herts Parent Carer Involvement

**Find out about the 'Autism in Schools' (AIS) project**

**Hear what our guest speakers can offer you!**



**CLICK HERE TO REGISTER**



NHS Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust



ISL



Hertfordshire SEND 0-25 years Hertfordshire's Local Offer

# HPCI AIS Parent Carer Webinar

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024 - 10.00am-12.30pm**





# Notices



[www.stalbansdistrict.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.stalbansdistrict.foodbank.org.uk)

## St Albans & District Foodbank

We are open for food collection at  
the following times and locations:

### St Albans

Vineyard Church, 7 Brick Knoll Park, AL1 5UG Monday 10:00-12:00

Christ Church, 3 High Oaks, AL3 6DJ - Tuesday 1:00-3:00

Cottonmill Community Centre, Old Oak, Cottonmill Lane, AL1 2EF - Wednesday 1:00-3:00

Caledon Community Centre, Caledon Road, London Colney, AL2 1PU - Friday 10:00-12:00

Jubilee Centre, 10-12 Catherine Street, St Albans, AL3 5BU - Saturday 10:00-12:00 from 13th January 2024

### Wheathampstead

Hilldyke Community Centre, 17 Hilldyke Road, AL4 8TU - Thursday 12:30-2:30

### Harpenden

Crabtree Church, 139 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, AL5 5RD - Friday 1:00-3:00

### Redbourn

Redbourn Parish Centre, The Park, Redbourn, AL3 7LR - Monday 2:00-3:30 from 8th January 2024

To donate food to us please visit our website:

[www.stalbansdistrict.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food](http://www.stalbansdistrict.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food)

Please call 01727 613019 - option 1 or email  
[info@stalbandsdistrict.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@stalbandsdistrict.foodbank.org.uk)  
for more information

Charity Number: 1158917



## ST ALBANS COMMUNITY PANTRY OPENING TIMES

**9.30AM -  
11AM**

EVERY MON  
TO THURS

### COMMUNITY FRIDGE + BREAD

UNIT 9, THE ENTERPRISE CENTRE, LONG SPRING  
ST ALBANS AL3 6EN

OPEN TO ALL • NO VOUCHERS REQUIRED  
SURPLUS FOOD RESCUED FROM LOCAL  
SUPERMARKETS, HELP US SAVE FOOD HEADING  
TO LANDFILL

**9.30PM -  
10.30PM**

EVERY SAT  
TO WEDNES

### COMMUNITY FRIDGE + BREAD

UNIT 9, THE ENTERPRISE CENTRE, LONG SPRING  
ST ALBANS AL3 6EN

OPEN TO ALL • NO VOUCHERS REQUIRED  
SURPLUS FOOD RESCUED FROM LOCAL  
SUPERMARKETS, HELP US SAVE FOOD HEADING  
TO LANDFILL

**12PM -  
2PM**

EVERY MON

### COMMUNITY PANTRY + LUNCH

COTTONMILL COMMUNITY & CYCLING CENTRE  
ST ALBANS AL1 2EF

OPEN TO ALL • NO BOOKING REQUIRED  
SURPLUS FOOD RESCUED FROM LOCAL  
SUPERMARKETS. AVAILABLE TO TAKE HOME.  
FREE HOT COOKED LUNCH. FREE HAIRCUTS.  
BENEFITS ADVICE. IT TUITION & MORE

CONTACT US

**08081753917**





# Notices

## Get the right help at the right time



### early help, brighter futures

#### Need advice and support for your family?

- |                            |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Relationship support       | Money advice              |
| Parenting Advice & Courses | Services for Young People |
| Emotional & Mental Health  | SEND Local Offer          |
| Staying healthy            | Search local services     |
| School attendance/anxiety  | and much more             |



Visit Hertfordshire's Families First website:-  
[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/familiesfirst](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/familiesfirst)



DSPL7 Delivering Special  
Provision Locally

## The Hub

### ASC/SEND Coffee Mornings

Vista St Albans are hosting coffee mornings with a School Family Worker to help support Parents/ Carers of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, diagnosed or not. This is an informal and safe place for Parents/ Carers to share information and chat.

**Time:** Coffee Morning starts at **9.15am** until **11.00am**  
(no need to book - just turn up)

**Venue:** The Hub, Fleetville Junior School, 228 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW  
(The Hub is situated to the right hand side of the School building)

For further information, please call Vista/St Albans Plus on 01727 519128  
Email: [vistastalbans@gmail.com](mailto:vistastalbans@gmail.com)



**Dates:**  
Wednesday 13th March 2024  
Wednesday 8th May 2024  
Wednesday 26th June 2024



[www.vistastalbans.org.uk](http://www.vistastalbans.org.uk)  
[www.facebook.com/Vistastalbans](https://www.facebook.com/Vistastalbans)



# Notices

The National Online Safety organisation provides a weekly newsletter with regular updates. This week's guide dives into online dating and relationships, detailing the associated risks and offering tools and strategies to keep your child safer online. To view the PDF click [here](#) or to follow the link to their website click [here](#).

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [nationalonlinesafety.com](https://nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guidance, hints and tips for adults.

## What Parents & Carers Need to Know about ONLINE DATING & RELATIONSHIPS

Most online dating apps claim to be for over-18s only but, in some cases, relaxed age verification also allows children to access them. What's more, some popular social media platforms use similar design features to many dating sites – blurring the line between why a young person initially downloads an app and what they actually end up using it for.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

#### ONLINE GROOMING

Online grooming is when someone forms a connection with a child in the digital world and carefully cultivates this relationship with the intention of manipulating the child into doing something sexual or illegal. The process involves gaining the young person's confidence – which can make them far less likely to tell a trusted adult about their new online 'friend', or to recognise what is even happening.

#### WEBCAM BLACKMAIL

Some young people have been coaxed into getting nude or semi-nude on a video chat with someone they met on a dating platform. They're then told that, unless they hand over a certain amount of money, a recording of the video will be posted online (or possibly sent to their contacts). This can be hugely traumatic for a young person and, in extreme cases, has resulted in self-harm and even suicide.

#### DAMAGE TO SELF ESTEEM

Many dating platforms encourage users to rate the images that people upload; this has clear potential to negatively impact a young person's self-esteem. On some apps, pictures of a user's face and body can be rated anonymously, with notifications informing them if someone has then declined to match with them. This form of rejection can feel extremely hurtful and degrading.

#### CATFISHING AND SCAMS

Creating a false identity to deliberately lure people into a relationship (whether romantic or platonic) online is known as catfishing. Commonly, someone pretends to share interests or beliefs with their victim and gradually gains their trust. A young person's feelings for this fake 'friend' may cloud their judgement and can lead to them surrendering money, personal images, passwords and so on.

#### STALKING AND HARASSMENT

Stalking is obsessive behaviour by a fixated individual which disrupts their victim's life. It can bring severe distress and even the fear of violence. There have been frequent reports of stalking cases that originated on dating apps, with perpetrators creating new accounts in response to being reported or blocked. It's a particular cause for concern if a young person has ever given out personal details (such as their street or school name) online.

### Advice for Parents & Carers

#### KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

Reassure your child that they can always talk to you about anything online that's worried them. Emphasise that if they're being sent unwanted images – or if they've shared images or video content themselves – they should tell you straight away. Discuss the potential risks of online dating and check in with them frequently to ensure that they're feeling comfortable about their online relationships.

#### TAKE A 'SAFETY FIRST' STANDPOINT

Encourage young people to be careful about who they send invitations to – and accept them from – on dating sites and apps. Familiarise yourself with how to adjust the privacy settings on your child's devices and apps to help them control who can access their profiles and information. Talk to your child about why it's unwise to share any sensitive, private or confidential information in their profile.

#### PROTECT CONTACT DETAILS

If a young person is interested in using online dating sites or apps, strongly encourage them to choose one that offers the facility to conceal both parties' email addresses when messaging prospective dates. If that's not possible, ensure that the young person sets up a separate email address which doesn't include their real name. This is easy to do via providers like Hotmail, Yahoo! Mail or gmail.

#### HIGHLIGHT COMMON DANGER SIGNS

Talk to your child about some of the obvious red flags in online dating: requests for money, for instance, should always ring alarm bells. Likewise, if a young person is in contact with someone who they feel is pressuring them into providing personal or financial information – or who they suspect is trying to trick them into it – they should end communication immediately and contact the dating service provider.

### Meet Our Expert

Webcam Jennings has more than 10 years experience in the field of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), as well as delivering workshops and training for young people, parents and schools. She is also a subject matter expert on RSHE for the Department of Education.

**The National College**

**NOS National Online Safety**  
#WakeUpWednesday

Twitter: @natonlinesafety  
Facebook: /NationalOnlineSafety  
Instagram: @nationalonlinesafety  
TikTok: @national\_online\_safety

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