



St Augustine's Academy Newsletter

8th May 2026



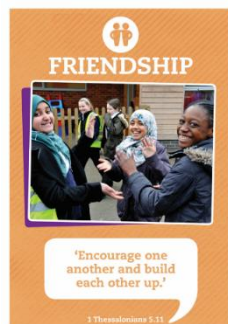
Headteacher's Message

Dear Parents, Carers and Children,



Gwynneth, from Dunstable Foodbank visited our school to talk about the work of this incredibly important charity. She talked about the meaning of the word 'crisis' and how a crisis can happen to anyone. She reminded us that the Foodbank is there to support families in their times of need. We are really grateful to everyone in our school community who helps to support the Dunstable Foodbank. At Harvest time we always have a special collection of food for the Foodbank but food is needed at other times of the year too. If ever you have canned or packet food that you would like to donate, you are more than welcome to bring it to school where we will see that it gets to the Foodbank for you. Thank you.

Best Wishes,
Amanda Howes - Headteacher



Lyfta and Our School Our World

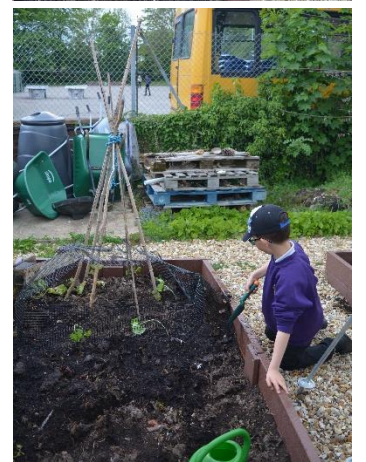


It is our unity that helps us to be successful.

This week we met Gebeyehu from the village of Awra-Amba in Ethiopia. Following his university education, Gebeyehu chose to return to the community of Awra Amba, where he grew up, to serve and help the people there, even though he could have secured a higher paid job elsewhere.

'Service' is one of our values at St Augustine's and we try our best to serve the needs of others in our school community. Some of the tasks that our children do include: helping to deliver bagels to the classes, giving out classroom resources, collecting recycling bags, tending the school garden and planning Collective Worship. By helping each other we can really make a difference.

Is there something you can do to help a family member this week?



'Let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.' *Matthew 5:16*



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Celebration

CONGRATULATIONS to the following children.

Our Stars of the Week are...

Year 1 – Agnes
Year 2 – Rodrigo
Year 3 – Curtis
Year 4 – Keaon
Year 5 – Abigail
Year 6 – Lena

Our 'Lyfta' Pupils of the Week are...

Year 1 – Mersana
Year 2 – Lois
Year 3 – Alfie
Year 4 – Roman
Year 5 – Eldon
Year 6 – Lillie



Our Vocabulary Velociraptors are...

Year 1 – Greyson
Year 2 – Lightecia
Year 3 – Thomas
Year 4 – Paige-Anthony
Year 5 – Hannah
Year 6 – Courtney



Our Attendance Bear Winner is...



The House Point totals this week are...















210

225

221

227

Vocabulary Velociraptors

1  drone pilot	2  food stylist	3  electric vehicle technician	4  heat pump installer
5  games developer	6  sustainable textile designer	7  typography designer	8  Puppet maker and animatronics engineer
9  mental health practitioner	10  cosmetic scientist	11  foley artist	12  vertical garden maintenance climber

This week we learnt the names of 12 different occupations as part of our Vocabulary Velociraptors learning. We repeated their names every day to ensure they stuck in our long-term memory. Can you learn them too?

Diary Dates

YEAR 6 SATS WEEK



Mon. 11th May
– Thu. 14th
May (Year 6
SATs
Breakfast
8:15am in the
school hall.)

Vocabulary Velociraptors – Bees Week

Lyfta – William in Peru - Harvests Honey in the Rainforest

Thu 21st May 2:15pm – EYFS Stay and Play

Fri. 22nd May 2:30pm – Year 1 and Year 2 Church Service at St Augustine's Church – Parents and Carers are invited to attend

Last Day of the Half Term

Mon. 1st Jun. Children Back To School
Vocabulary Velociraptors – Geography Week

Lyfta – Paula in Spain – Marine Biologist

Sometimes we have to change diary dates due to circumstances beyond our control. Please keep checking the school diary regularly for updates.

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 www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

An estimated one-third of children have a social media account, so it's important that trusted adults know what content young people are consuming, what they're posting and the interactions they're having. On social media, it can be easy to go down 'rabbit holes' that aren't beneficial to our wellbeing. As platforms grapple with managing such 'legal but harmful' content, lives are being impacted – sometimes to tragic effect. We might be daunted by the scale of the tech giants and their content which so enthral young people, but we can still help children to be aware of their mental wellness: recognising when something isn't OK... and knowing what to do about content that upsets them.

1. UNDERSTAND THE ALGORITHM

Algorithms rank content by user interest: someone who regularly interacts with sports news, say, will see the latest results at the top of their feed. Likewise, if a user browses content that can cause harm, that's what will be recommended to them in future. Someone who's had a bad day and looks for posts which reflect their mood will find similar content being suggested to them more and more.

2. AVOID THE MAIN FEEDS

Avoiding the default feeds on social media platforms limits the amount of recommended content that's shown. Users can opt to only scroll through the accounts they follow, use restricted modes, or highlight posts that they don't want to see more of. Explore the platform safety settings to see how you can take control of what your child's phone shows them when they open the app.

3. DISCUSS WHAT THEY'VE SEEN

Chatting about what your child's seen online keeps you aware of the content they're interacting with. Don't assume that platforms are screening out inappropriate material, or even that your child would recognise content as being harmful. Discuss who they follow, what posts they like and what comes up in their feeds: if alarm bells ring, it could be time for a more in-depth talk or to seek support.

4. LEARN HOW TO HIDE CONTENT

If your child stumbles across unsuitable content on social media, there's the option to hide that post as well as indicating you'd prefer any similar material not to be suggested in future. On some platforms, you might also be able to block posts that contain specific words, which is an excellent way to start taking control of what your child sees online.

5. SET DAILY LIMITS

Phones and most apps can tell you how much they're being used. Spending too long online can mean a child misses out on other activities that are important to all-round wellbeing. You could set some family rules – for everyone to follow – around device use, such as screen time limits and tech-free spaces: involving your child in creating this agreement makes them more likely to stick to it.

6. MONITOR THEIR ACTIVITY

Keeping a discreet eye on how your child is using social media can help ensure they're not entering potentially dangerous situations. As they grow up, of course, children need space to exercise their independence – but you can still occasionally ask to see what they're looking at. Be transparent about your own social media use and try not to sound judgemental about your child's.

7. TURN OFF PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Even for adults, it's tempting to check an email or message as soon as the alert sound pings. Push notifications encourage people to open their apps and spend time on their device, so turning them off will help your child to practise mindful use of tech. Most of us have other things that we need to focus on as a priority – and those notifications will still be there later, when we have more time.

8. USE DEVICES TOGETHER

Giving children internet-enabled devices and complete freedom to explore platforms on their own can result in exposure to hugely damaging content. You could consider making a particular area at home a designated space to use phones, tablets and so on – making it much easier to monitor what content your child is viewing and (if necessary) steer them away from any potentially harmful paths.

9. ENCOURAGE OTHER ACTIVITIES

Mental health professionals often highlight the importance of exercise, quality time with loved ones, a balanced diet and restful sleep for our mental wellbeing. Spending hours on social media can cause us to sacrifice other activities that our brains need to feel well – so encouraging your child to put down their phone and enjoy something that doesn't involve a screen can be immensely beneficial.

10. TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE

Most platforms default children's accounts to private, so only people they've accepted as friends can see their posts. This reduces the risk of bullying or unkind comments, but – just like offline life – the digital world can still make children feel as if they need to act or look a certain way to fit in. Talk to your child about peer pressure, and listen to any concerns so you can provide the support they need.

Meet Our Expert

Shazia Sarwar-Azmi is executive headteacher at a specialist primary school and, as an emotional therapy coach, works with school leaders to focus on the SEND, mental health and wellbeing agenda. A passionate advocate for vulnerable learners, Shazia is a Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching and the author of *The Rainbow Within*, a book which supports children with SEMH needs.



Sources: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-65204685>
<https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-usage-2021/>



PRIDE IN DUNSTABLE

A Celebration of Diversity
Everyone Welcome

Saturday 9th May 2026

13.00-17.00

Grove Park, Dunstable

Live Music, Family Fun, Food, Community,
Pride Party Anthems, Drag, Pride Procession, Picnic,
LGBTQ+ Celebration



**HOUGHTON
ATHLETIC
U10'S REDS**
(U11'S NEXT SEASON)

7-A-SIDE
FOR THE 2026/27 SEASON



FOOTBALL TRIALS



PLAYING IN THE
CHILTERN SEVENS
A LEAGUE
(TOP DIVISION)

★ HIGH STANDARD FOOTBALL ★

TRIAL DATES (MONDAYS)



11TH
MAY



18TH
MAY



1ST
JUNE

🕒 5:00PM – 6:30PM

(NO TRIAL ON 26TH MAY – SPRING BANK HOLIDAY)

LIMITED SPACES AVAILABLE

WHAT WE OFFER



STRUCTURED COACHING
with a clear development plan



INDIVIDUAL FOCUS
for every player



EXCELLENT 3G FACILITIES
in Houghton Regis

PLAYED AGAINST:



WEST BROM



PORTSMOUTH



QPR



MILLWALL



READY FOR A STEP UP?



MESSAGE TO REGISTER INTEREST



HIGH STANDARD



STRUCTURED COACHING



POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT



Next week, we are participating in Walk to School week (this could also include scooting, bike riding, park and walking). Each day that your child travels to school actively, they will receive a ticket. Tickets will go into a draw and there will be a winner for each class. The more times they travel actively, the more chances there are of winning!

As well as having the chance to win a prize, there are many benefits to walking to school:

1. Is good for our **heart** pumping blood around our bodies
2. It is good for our **brain** – it makes us more alert when we arrive at school.
3. It can save time because you don't get stuck in traffic jams around school.
4. It can save us **money** because we don't have to buy as much fuel for our cars.
5. It will **improve our air quality** particularly around your school
6. It is good for the **planet**.