



Holywell News



Issue No: 161
March 2022

Mr Simpson's Headlines

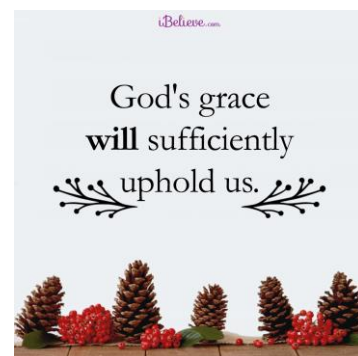
On this last day of the Spring Term, it is time to stop and reflect back on the last few months. It has been both joyful and challenging. Since January, we have recorded 246 cases of Covid-19 amongst students and staff; we have tested, we have been resilient; and we have continued learning. Most people in our Holywell community have remained positive and happy – some have struggled with their wellbeing, some have struggled with friendships and some have struggled to settle back into school life. We have supported, coached and encouraged everyone who has been in need of help and the response from so many people has been amazing; thanks in particular to students, staff, families, PTFA, our parish churches, Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough, the education team at the Diocese of St Albans and all the local services and friends. We have focussed on two particular values to guide us through these challenging times: respect and kindness – always aiming 'to live life in all its fullness'. We have explored other values too – in particular, Tolerance and Self-esteem (self-regulation and self-worth).

Our Value of the Month for April is a new value for us: Grace. This has been chosen particularly for its link with Easter. Grace is the idea that we are prepared to give to others what they really do not deserve. In other words, there is such a thing as a free lunch! And a lot more besides! This concept begins with the totally undeserved gift that God gave to the world in Jesus. In his life and death Christians see God at work. Jesus told stories about grace that have a powerful message. We have been looking at these stories in our assemblies this term and have reflected on some of the key parables: there was the father who welcomed the wayward son home again, the different



types of soil in which seeds grow (or not), the lost sheep and the employer who made sure that even the late-coming workers got a full day's pay. This week, we created a new parable to explore 'grace in action' - The parable of the empty tank:

Someone was very sad. They were lonely, they felt like they didn't matter and they were empty inside. Many people walked by. One person noticed them and did not walk on by. They asked the lonely person to think about family and friends and about how those people saw the lonely person – adjectives such as kind, helpful, and important started to fill up the empty spaces in the lonely person's heart. A bit of perspective followed with the lonely person counting their blessings – they had a home, they had food, they had many good things. The lonely person thought about their heroes and heroines – their dad came first to mind, then film heroes like Black Panther, Captain Marvel and Spiderman – all alone at some point in their lives, but determined and courageous. ... and the lonely person started to stand a little taller, started to look around, started to see that they were good enough. The tank was starting to fill up with love and optimism.



I'm sure there have been times this term when everyone of us has had an 'empty tank'. If we try some of the things from the parable, then perhaps we, too can stand a little taller. So, next time you're a bit down, here are a few things to try:

- Reframe and count your blessings
- Put things in perspective and see things from a different angle
- Think about what your heroes and heroines would do
- Stop – Think – Act ... choose a peaceful path
- Practise mindfulness

... but most of all, be the person of grace: be the person who does not walk by, be the person who makes a difference, be the person who is kind.

One thing which has sustained us all through the last term has been our wonderful students. They have created some superb pieces of work and have enjoyed our themed days and charity events: from practically perfect products created in Technology, to yummy, scrummy treats in Food Tech; from hopeful origami hearts made during Mental Health Day



to crazy costumes of World Book Day:



to crazy costumes of World Book Day:



Our fund-raising has been brilliant this term with £541.32 being raised for Comic Relief.

Our Sponsored Walk as part of our Mental Health Day raised a HUGE total: £3,812.21. We had some superb solo student sponsorships with Kai, James, Alex P and Dakota being our top sponsorship fund-raisers.

Term starts again on Wednesday, 20th April and we look forward to a 'more normal' Summer Term. Our Year 8s will begin their transition work preparing them for Upper School, Year 7 will start thinking about responsibilities and options for next year, Year 6 have the joy of SATs and Year 5 will be helping the new Year 4s with their transition.

So now as the term comes to a close, may I take this opportunity to wish everyone a peaceful, healthy, Covid-free Easter. Please enjoy the break and be safe whether travelling abroad for the first time in 2-years, whether staying at home with family or whether journeying across the country.

Best wishes

Mr Simpson

Staff News

After over 10 years at Holywell, Mrs Sheppard is retiring. In her time at Holywell, Mrs Sheppard has taught a wide range of subjects but her main passions have been Maths and Science. Mrs Sheppard has been a fantastic member of staff (and parent) and we wish her every happiness for the future.

Our Language Assistant - Miss Landgraf – has completed her 'Auslandserfahrung' (Overseas experience) and is also leaving – she returns back to Bamberg in Germany to finish her teaching studies. After Easter, we will be joined by our new Language Assistant – Miss Pistner. Miss Pistner will be working with Miss Muskett to provide valuable support for our students with English as an Additional Language.

Covid-19 Update

From today (1st April), a whole range of new guidelines has been announced by the DfE and the Government.

The new advice for children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature is that they should stay at home and avoid contact with other people. They can go back to school, college or childcare when they no longer have a high temperature, and they are well enough to attend.

From 1st April, anyone with a positive COVID-19 test result will be advised to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 5 days, which is when they are most infectious. For children and young people aged 18 and under, the advice will be 3 days.

From 1st April, updated guidance will advise people with symptoms of a respiratory infection, including COVID-19, and a high temperature, or who feel unwell, to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people where they can, until they feel well enough to resume normal activities and they no longer have a high temperature.

From 1st April, updated guidance will advise people with symptoms of a respiratory infection, including COVID-19, and a high temperature, or who feel unwell, to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people where they can, until they feel well enough to resume normal activities and they no longer have a high temperature. We will continue to manage confirmed or suspected COVID-19 outbreaks in line with our current Outbreak Management Plans.

From 1st April, schools are no longer required to provide remote education for students absent from school with Covid-19.

We will maintain our arrangements for providing remote education to students if (when?) we have circumstances where in-person attendance is either not possible or contrary to government guidance. This might include:

- occasions when we decide that it is not possible for school to open safely, or when that opening would contradict guidance from local or central government
- occasions when individual students, for a limited duration, are unable to physically attend their school but are able to continue learning, for example students with an infectious illness. In these circumstances, students should have access to remote education as soon as reasonably practicable, though in proportion to the length of absence and disruption to their learning.



Summer Uniform

At the start of the summer term (after Easter) students will have the following two options re: uniform:



a) **Either continue to wear blazers, white shirts and ties.**

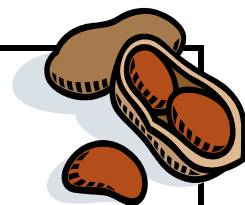
OR

b) **Wear a white polo shirt (without a tie) and a blazer.**

PRACTICAL REMINDERS

- **Hydration Guidance:** All students should have a water bottle (labelled) and they are encouraged to take regular sips during the day.
 - Bottles must be anti-spill bottles - NOT GLASS - with sports tops
 - Water bottles should be carried separately from school books and library books
 - Water bottles are not allowed near electrical equipment
 - Water bottles and drinks must be for personal use only
 - Teachers have the final word in lessons as to when and if they can be used
 - Bottles must contain still WATER! Flavoured still water or sugar-free squash is also an acceptable alternative, however, water is best! (Fizzy drinks – including sparkling water drinks or power drinks – are not allowed in school.)
- **Uniform** – If you are refreshing uniform, please make sure that the correct uniform is purchased. Make sure that shoes are shoes (no trainers)! Trousers and skirts should be grey and not black; skirts should be the correct length.
- **Chewing Gum** – Chewing gum is **not** allowed and should not be brought into school.
- **Mobile Phone Policy** – Reminder that we are a non-smart-phone school. Smart phones are not to be brought on-site. Non-smart phones for communicating with parents out of school hours are allowed with a permission slip and are the responsibility of the child. If smart-phones are found on-site, they will be confiscated and will need to be collected by a parent. Full policy on the website.
- **Behaviour – To / From school and on the buses** – we expect the same high standards of student behaviour on the bus and walking to and from school. Students should also make sure they are behaving safely at all times – eg. seat belts on, walking a safe distance away from the pavement, not crossing in front of vehicles, etc.
- **Haircuts** – Keep it professional! No fashion cuts, no lines or patterns, no colours, nothing shorter than Grade #2.

ABSOLUTELY NO NUTS OR NUT PRODUCTS IN SCHOOL



Could everyone please be aware that we have several children and members of staff with **severe nut allergies**. If your child comes to school with a packed lunch, or just brings in snacks for break time, **please ensure that nuts are not included** in any shape or form (**including Nutella or Peanut Butter**). Your co-operation in keeping everyone safe at Holywell is greatly appreciated.

For those students having school dinners provided by AiP, please ensure you have completed their '**Special Dietary Allergy/Medical Meal Request Form**', available from the Kitchen.



Emergency Contact Details



Please remember to inform the school office of any changes to your contact details. This includes **change of your home address, telephone numbers** (even temporary changes) **and doctors' details**.

This is very important, as it enables us to reach you in case of emergency. Thank you.



If your child is away from School

A telephone call, email or WEDUC notification
is required on the
first day of absence, before 10.00 am

Charity News

Sponsored Walk: Huge thanks to students and their sponsors. The amazing sum of **£3,812.21** was raised from the sponsored walk on Mental Health Day. The money raised will be going towards two local charities – **Chums** and **Groundworks** and also to our school **PTFA**, who are fundraising to buy the school extra playground seating and outdoor facilities.

Comic Relief: The grand total of **£541.32** was raised towards Comic Relief from our Red Nose Day Mufti Day on 18th March 2022.



Attendance and Holidays in Term Time



Attendance in school is a huge national concern at the moment in these Covid-19 times and the government is insisting that we follow up absences – especially when the percentage attendance falls below 90%. Whilst we remain sympathetic in these challenging times, we do have to follow procedures.

Parents / Carers should be aware that under current government guidelines **we can NOT give permission for any holiday in term time** – even when they have been deferred as a result of Covid-19. Holidays will be classed as **unauthorised absence** for your child. There may, however, be events that a student takes part in out of school which require him / her to miss a school day – we will continue to consider that sort of request. However, it is clear that the government and external authorities will want a very persuasive argument for us to be allowed to record any absence as a permitted time out of school. **No leave will be authorised during the first two weeks of the school year or during exam periods.**

Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence are required to fill in a **Leave of Absence Application Form** in advance and before making any travel arrangements (available from the school office and to download from the school website). We always take a reasonable, supportive approach to requests (especially with regard to fines) however, there are an increasing number of families taking ‘the odd day’ here and there ... this is having a HUGE impact on learning.

Did you know.....?

- There are 175 non-school days a year, 175 days to spend on family time, holidays and visits.
- Being 5 minutes late every day means 3 lost days a year of your child's education.
- Arriving after the register closes, without a valid reason, is recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Getting your child to school really matters.

If your child's attendance during the school year is	Your child would have lost approximately.....	Your child would have missed approximately....
95%	9 days	50 lessons
90%	19 days	100 lessons
85%	29 days	150 lessons
80%	38 days	200 lessons
75%	48 days	250 lessons
70%	57 days	300 lessons
65%	67 days	350 lessons

Absence = Lost Learning

Payment for Uniform, Trips and Sundries

Please pay online whenever possible, with the link on our website.

Tucasi (Scopay.com) For payment of the following:

- Ordering School ties / blazer badges
- Trips
- Early risers/breakfast club (booking form must also be completed on Weduc)
- Lost or damaged library books



If you have not previously logged in to Tucasi you will need an access code from the school. Please email finance@holywellschool.co.uk for this code.

If you are unable to pay online we have the facility to pay by credit/debit card in person at the school office or via telephone.

If you are unable to pay online or by card please contact the school office.

Parent Pay (Payment for tuck/school dinners)

Please remember to check your child's Parent Pay account balance regularly.

You can set up to receive a reminder email when the account credit goes below a certain level. To do this log in to your parent pay account>communication>alert settings>balance alerts> under threshold set an amount and tick email alert. Once the credit goes below this level you will receive an email reminder to top up the balance.

For queries with regards to Parent Pay please email:
school@holywellschool.co.uk

For web pages for the above please go to
<https://holywellschool.co.uk/> Parents>online payments.



PE Department News

Y7 Girls County Basketball Finals

The Year 7 basketball team qualified for the County Finals which were recently played at the Bunyan Centre. The girls played matches against the top teams in the county and played really well. Although we didn't finish in the top three on the day, the girls were a credit to the school and played with great team spirit. We are very proud of the girls for qualifying to play in the county finals, which was a fantastic achievement; they should all be very proud of themselves.

Miss Martin & Ms Stephens.



Y6 Rugby Tournament

Year 5/6 boys did outstandingly in their rugby tournament coming 3rd out of 8 schools!

*The tournament was very exciting and I think the boys became more of a team as it went on, I was so happy with the team as we won over half of our games! All of the players wanted to play and even when a few got hurt they still said they wanted to carry on. When I hurt myself, the teachers were so helpful and encouraged you and helped you out, what surprised the boys and motivated them was that we ended up beating a team that had players from my rugby team on, so overall, I was very happy with our performance! - **Ollie 6CS***



*I thought the rugby tournament was really good. The team improved a lot over the whole tournament in each game, we won 4/7 games. We ended up coming third out of 8 teams, it was a really fun day and some of the boys in the team want to now get involved in rugby outside of school. - **William 6EV***

Y7 and 8 Rugby

Considering the lack of club players and exposure to contact having been non-existence for 2 years, the 2 teams have had a superb season. For the Year 7s, after narrow losses to Alameda and RBA, they gained their first victory against a strong Henlow side. With games against Pixbrook and Parkfield still to come, we are hoping to end the season on a high. The Year 8 team gained more confidence as they progressed throughout the season, but were still looking for that elusive first win at the time of going to press.

Y5/6 and Y7/8 Girls football

Both teams still have several fixtures to complete so a comprehensive season report will be in the next newsletter.

Clubs:

If attending a PE club, students should wear their normal school uniform to school and then change into PE kit before the club.

Promote your team...

If you would like your club/team to be promoted at school to encourage others to join, then please send details to mkotur@holywellschool.co.uk. We have a lot of eager students who want to start playing more sports outside of school.

As always, the department would like to thank students, parents and carers for their continued support throughout the half-term.

The PE Dept.

PE Clubs Timetable – Summer 1st Half Term 2022

	13:05-13:35	13:35 – 14:05	15:45-16:45
Mon	Y5/6 Athletics (ME/MK) – Field Y7 Couch 2 5 K (SM) - Field		Y7/8 Tennis (MK) - MUGA
Tues	Y7/8 Athletics (ME/SM/MK) - Field Y5 Netball (EM) - SH	Y6 Netball (ES) - SH	<i>Athletics Fixtures</i>
Weds	Y6 Basketball (JU) - SH Y5 Golf (SH/MK) – Field	Y7/8 Rounders (CSI/MK)	<i>Rounders Fixtures Y7&8</i>
Thurs	Y5 Rounders (EM/MK) - Field Y7 Cricket (ME/SW) – SH	Y6 Rounders (ES/MK) - Field	<i>Cricket Fixtures</i> <i>Rounders Fixtures Y5&6</i>
Fri	Y6 Cricket (MK/SW) - Field Y8 Flag Football (ME) - Field	Y5 Cricket (MK) – Field	Y5/6 Tennis (MK) - MUGA

***If attending a club, you should wear your normal school uniform to school and then change into PE kit before the club.**

Permission letters for After School clubs are on the PE noticeboard (24 places only).

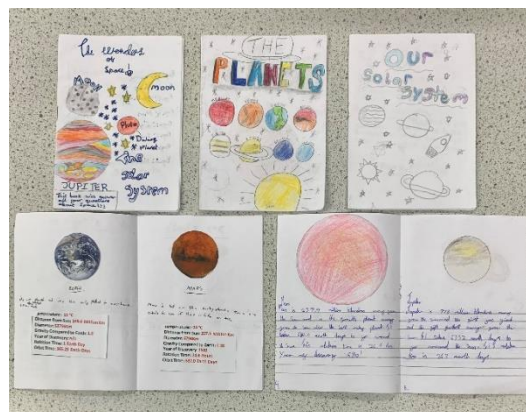
Reply slips have to be handed in to the register.



Happy Easter!

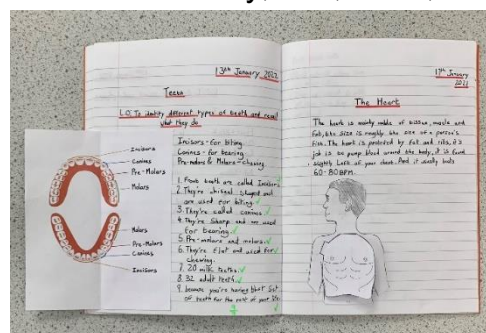
Science News

As we come to the end of the spring term, we celebrate together and reflect on the experiences that have helped us to learn and grow. Year Five began the term learning about many aspects of space. From the awe and wonder of the planets in our solar system to the phases of the Moon and much more! Our 'Forces' topic gave Year Five the opportunity to investigate magnetism, upthrust, friction and gravity. Students built their own gyrocopter and investigated the effect of air resistance.



Year Six started the term learning about 'animals including humans.' They took a close look at the human body, diet, teeth,

the circulatory system, components of blood and pulse rate. A topic not for the faint hearted as we dissected a lamb's heart! Our 'Electricity and Circuits' topic quickly followed. Students learned about the dangers of electricity and how to work safely. They investigated circuits and enjoyed using various components to build a steady hand game.



Year Seven started the term investigating the properties of light. It was an interesting topic that gave insight into the processes of reflection and refraction. Many students were fascinated to learn about how the eye works and



were fortunate to dissect a real eye! Their learning journey continued with a topic on reproduction. Here the students considered the

miracle of life. A sense of awe and wonder developed as we learned just how special life is.



Year Eight began the term learning about energy resources. From the formation of fossil fuels and their importance in the industrial revolution to our modern-day thirst for energy. Students explored the development of renewable, alternative energy resources as a way of becoming more sustainable. A really important area of study – I'm sure you'll agree! Many were excited to move onto our chemistry topic 'Reactions'. Practical investigation is at the heart of our science curriculum and the students were delighted to experiment; looking for evidence that chemical reactions had occurred.

We look forward to the summer term and continuing our learning journey together.
Happy Easter!

Mr Colbourne & The Science Department

Art Department News

Year 5 – Matisse Cut Outs



Year 5 have created these wonderful 'cut outs' inspired by the great artist Henri Matisse!



To some they may look fairly simple but pupils had a great deal to consider; shape, space, size, colour, layering and their overall composition!



They explored their composition with great thought until eventually gluing together their masterpieces. Well done Yr5!

Year 5 - Matisse Cut Outs



EXHIBITION COMING SOON!

Year 6 – Mind Monsters



Here is a sneak preview of our incredible up and coming Mind Monsters Exhibition!

Pupils have been exploring their feelings and emotions within their imaginative illustrations!



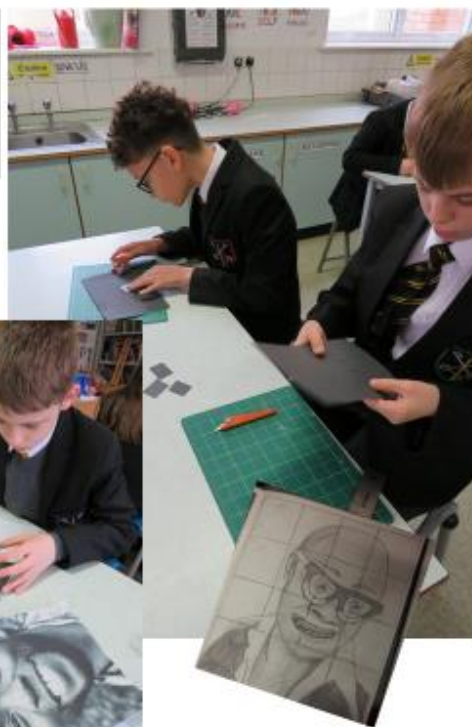
Year 7 - Portraits

Pupils have been making incredible progress with their observation drawing skills, as seen here with these sketches.



Year 7 – Portraits

These sketches are practice ahead of their next assessment, a very challenging celebrity portrait! These pupils are making viewfinders to further support their drawing!



Year 8 – Gaudi inspired sculpture

Pupils have been exploring the architect Gaudi's use of shape, texture and his influence of nature to develop their own clay sculptures.



The straight line belongs to men, the curved one to God.
Antoni Gaudi

Year 8 – Gaudi inspired sculpture



History Department News

It has been a busy term with lots of learning and some very impressive work from our students!

In **Year 5** we have just completed our unit on Ancient Greece and the students enjoyed comparing the lives of the Ancient Spartans with the Ancient Athenians. Students were genuinely surprised and impressed at how big a legacy the Greeks left for the benefit of the modern world. Their recent assessments were impressive and showed just how many great skills they have developed since they started at Holywell – well done, Year 5!



The **Year 6** students have finished learning about the Vikings and were very lucky to have Ash, a Viking re-enactor, visit them earlier this term. They were shown how to make a shield wall and defend themselves in

battle and enjoyed touching the weapons and armour as they made their way around the group. They learned the difficulties involved with trading and making lengthy sea voyages as well as what a typical Viking burial might look like. Everyone really enjoyed the experience and we can't wait for Ash to come back again next year!



In **Year 7** students have finished their unit on medieval history and are now immersing themselves in the life and times of the Tudors, before we move on to look at the Stuarts next term. They have learnt in detail about the break with Rome and the scandalous activities of monks and nuns that led to the dissolution of the monasteries!

In **Year 8** we have embarked on our unit that examines the horrors of the Transatlantic slave trade. Many students have understandably strong opinions about this topic and lessons have often involved lively debates and thought-provoking comments. We will conclude this unit soon and move on to our final topic – electoral reform and votes for women – before we say farewell and wish them all the best at Upper school in July.

RE Department News

Year 5 students have been learning about the life of Jesus in more depth. In particular, they have been trained to spot symbolism within religious texts that suggests that Jesus was the son of God. We have learnt lots of famous stories, such as the parable of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal son and looked at many of the miracles Jesus performed. We ended our unit by learning about the events of Easter week and hope that, as they enjoy their chocolate in a few weeks' time, they remember the real reason for this festival!

In **Year 6** students have spent the term learning about the religion of Sikhism, from the role of the 10 gurus, the creation of the khalsa and the importance of their holy book. They have shown a genuine interest in this religion and the values it stands for and have shown respect at all times. Some students even managed to interview a Sikh to gain a more personalized insight into the importance of this religion on its believers. Well done, Year 6.

In **Year 7** we have been looking at 'Salvation' and how Jesus is believed to have 'saved' mankind. We have also learned how Christians believe one gets to heaven and how these beliefs have changed over time. There has been plenty of opportunity for discussion and debate and many students have shown a keen interest in these ideas and showed good debating skills! We move on to look at our first ethics-based topic next term – racism and discrimination.

Hinduism has been our **Year 8** topic this term with students learning about beliefs and practice last half term and focusing on rites of passage this half term. Many have been fascinated by the cultural differences and diversity and have enjoyed comparing and contrasting Hindu and Christian ways of welcoming babies into the faith, commitment ceremonies and marriage. Next term we are moving on to another ethics-based unit – Justice and Poverty. This focuses heavily on homelessness with supports and extends their knowledge gained in English from studying *Stone Cold*. Again, there will be plenty of opportunities for discussion and we are expecting some lively and heated debates!

Willen Hospice Teddy Bear Hunt

The Events team at Willen Hospice are running their second Teddy Bear Hunt. Last year's event was so popular with friends, parents and grandparents alike, they have decided to bring it back for a second year and have asked us to put information in our newsletter.

Join the Willen Hospice Teddy Bear Hunt this Easter half term

Willen Hospice is hosting its popular Teddy Bear Hunt again this year, and this time it's 'On Safari!'.

Between 4th – 18th April, teddies will be hidden around Willen Lake and the nearby areas. You'll be given a clues sheet to help you find all 20, as well as fun trivia questions to complete on your way round.

It's a fun event for all the kids and only costs £10 per family, which will go towards supporting Willen Hospice, Milton Keynes.

Find out more at www.willen-hospice.org.uk/TeddyBearHunt



**TEDDY BEAR HUNT
ON SAFARI**

4 - 18 April

**Willen Lake and the surrounding areas
(within walking distance)**

Play our Teddy Bear Hunt over Easter half term and follow the clues to find Teddy's friends hiding around Willen Lake.

£10 for the whole family, includes entry into our free prize draw!

Scan the QR code or visit
www.willen-hospice.org.uk/teddybearhunt

Scan here



 For your chance to enter the free prize draw without entering the event, call 07908 303052

 Willen Hospice
always there to care

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



SPRING TERM 2022

End of Term – Friday 1st April

SUMMER TERM 2022

Closure Day – Tuesday 19th April

Term Begins – Wednesday 20th April

May Day – Monday 2nd May

Half Term – Monday 30th May to Friday 3rd June

End of Term – Friday 22nd July

Please note that dates may differ from other schools

SUMMER TERM TEST DATES 2022



Year 6 Tests

Key Stage 2 SATs

9 May - 12 May 2022

GL Tests

Week commencing 13 June 2022

Year 5 Tests

GL Tests

Week commencing 13 June 2022

Year 7 Tests

9 June – English GL

10 June – Maths GL

Year 8 Tests

9 June – English GL

10 June – Maths GL

PLEASE DO NOT BOOK HOLIDAYS AT THIS TIME

