



Newsletter

18th October 2019

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Our last day of term has arrived, the time seems to have whizzed by!

On Monday, I had a meeting with David Fraser, our new Chair of Governors, looking ahead not just for the coming year but for the next few years—David is an experienced governor and Chair, so it's really good we will benefit from his experience and expertise, and I'm very much looking forward to working with him. Please see his letter to you later on in the newsletter.

On Wednesday, we were visited by two colleagues from Thornden School/Learn Alliance—a secondary school led Teaching School in Hampshire—they are in the process of setting up an Academy Trust with primary schools and wanted to see what great primary practice looks like. We were nominated for this visit by Isabel Davis who heads up the Peter Pan Federation in Bedford. It was great to be able to share all that is good about St James', and as we walked around the school, our visitors were incredibly impressed by the learning and attitudes towards learning displayed by all children in all classes; I was incredibly proud of everyone!

On Thursday I went to visit some of our ex-pupils now at Biddenham. I wanted to know how they had settled in and how our transition work in the summer had helped/hindered them. It was lovely to see our St James' pupils looking so confident and smiley, working hard, and so settled; they seem to have grown about a foot already! The staff at Biddenham tell me that our children stand out because of their independence and confidence, which is just lovely to hear. I am hoping I will be able to visit our Lincroft cohort in the coming weeks.

Today is a busy end to term—Year 3 are out on their visit, it's Neon MUFTI (my eyes hurt with all the bright colours!), we have visitors in with Year 5 this afternoon, and Year 6 are sharing their learning with parents. A lot to fit in before 3.30, but when we do get there, I wish you all a very happy, healthy and peaceful half term.

Very best wishes,

Maria & all the team at St James'

Term 2 starts Monday 28th October—don't be late!

Year 6 Parents

Applications for Secondary School places for next September must be completed by **31st October**—don't miss the deadline, or you run the risk of not getting a place at one of your preferred schools.

Apologies...

...for the late notice for parents' evening appointments. We have bought a package which allows parents to book appointments online, which we had hoped to introduce to you. However, as ever with technology, there have been a few hitches, and despite Dawn and Lauren's best efforts, we just haven't been able to solve the problems, so have had to revert back to the previous system. We will keep working on it, and will hopefully have it in place soon.

Competition Time!

Competition Title	Details	Prize	Closing Date
STEM—If you were an engineer what would you do?	Open to all years Find a problem, invent a solution, draw itwrite an explanation www.leadersaward.com	Invitation to Award ceremony, all entries displayed at a Public Exhibition	25.3.2020
Step into the NHS—Years 3-6	Say thank you to the NHS, focus on the different types of jobs in the NHS. Creative artwork or creative writing https://www.stepintothenhhs.nhs.uk/primary-schools/KS2-competition	Amazon vouchers Class trip to a local science venue	1.5.2020
Wallace & Gromit Cracking Ideas—ages 5-11	Look at the world around you. Imagine a cracking idea that can help get mundane jobs done quicker, better and most importantly from the comfort of a warm armchair! Drawing, craft, photographs https://crackingideas.com/competitions/Wallace+Gromit+Cracking+Ideas+Competition	Aardman model making workshop for the school	24.4.20

Break Time Snacks—Years 3, 4, 5, 6



Up until now, we have allowed healthy cereal bars as snacks, but we have now noticed an increase in litter around the site, and we also have children bringing in other types of snacks which are not so healthy.

After half term, the only snacks which can be brought in for breaktime will be fruit or vegetables (no grapes, please). Dried fruit can be brought, but would ask that any fruit in packets is kept to a minimum. There will be a grace period of

one week—where children are found with other snacks, we will remind them of the expectation and ask them to bring in fruit in the future. However, after a week, staff will then ask children to put the snack back in their bag and take it home with them at the end of the day.

Years R, 1, and 2 will continue to receive fruit as part of the national scheme, so do not need to bring in any snacks for breaktimes.

As an additional reminder, please ensure lunchboxes remain healthy and balanced.

Thank you for your support and co-operation.

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you will have hopefully read in last week's newsletter, I have been appointed to be Chair of Governors at St James' Primary School for the coming year. Governors are very grateful to Brian Johnson for his leadership during the previous year, which was always going to be very much on an interim basis.

My role is about serving the best interests of the children, staff and communities in our care. It is a privilege to be a governor at any school, thus being able to put back into education that which we might have benefited from ourselves. For my own part, I came from an aspirational, working-class family and was fortunate enough to attend a state grammar school. Having now spent 44 years working in the education sector in Bedfordshire, that not only makes me quite old, but also very experienced in all matters concerned with schooling and governance.

There are three core functions of a governing body:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
- Holding the executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff.
- Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

The board acts as a corporate body and does not involve itself in day-to-day, or operational, matters – that is the role of the Head and her senior leaders.

As a Church of England school, St James' Primary has a distinctive Christian Ethos but one where we welcome children and parents of all beliefs and views. For my own part, I am a communicant member of the Church of England, a PCC member in a north Bedfordshire parish and, for many years, sat on the Diocesan Board of Education as well as being Deanery Lay Chair for the Sharnbrook Deanery.

I am deeply passionate about improving the life chances for all children and young people, no matter what their background or circumstances, which is why it is an equal privilege for me also to be Chair of Governors at a secondary Church of England Academy that serves the most deprived wards in Bedfordshire.

The education of our children is a three-way partnership between teachers, pupils and parents. It is the responsibility of the governing body to ensure that those elements within its remit function effectively. We must also ensure that you, as parents and carers, are communicated with so that you receive the relevant and appropriate information about your child's progress. For their part, children should be prepared for school each day so that they arrive on time, are ready to learn and are not unduly stressed by the pressures of modern-day living.

Should you have any concerns about the schooling of your child, please do make these known using the appropriate channels which, in most cases, will be contact through the School Office. The school's website has detailed information regarding all policies and procedures should you wish to reference them.

Now that the school is firmly established as a primary school, we look forward to a period of both consolidation and growth where our children flourish and develop in a safe and caring environment.

Yours sincerely

David Fraser

Chair of Governors



Mrs Lawless & Year 1 are looking for donations of the following:



Offcuts of timber (non-treated) for woodwork
Recyclables- cereal boxes, kitchen rolls, egg boxes, yogurt pots.

Pots and pans, kitchen utensils.
Bucket, spades, dress up clothes/ role play items.

We are also looking for any donations of the following:

Old household electrical items, such as kettles, hairdryers, hair straighteners, lamps
Any old plastic kitchen equipment, such as plates, cups and toy food
A child's kitchen for outdoor play
Any old dolls, plastic doll's house
Storage boxes (suitable for outdoors, preferably with lids)
Any writing equipment—paper, pens, envelopes
Donations of (healthy & easy to care for) pot plants
Throws & larger pieces of fabric

Thank you!

Wanted:

Donations of any hardy plants or cuttings for the school garden. Please leave outside the Year 1 classroom. Many thanks.

Do You Work in Science or Technology?

At St James', one of our key curriculum drivers is ensuring that our pupils have high aspirations and high levels of achievement. Because of this, we are asking if any parents or family members know of anyone whose job is related to Science or technology and is willing to talk to children about their work.

If you are able to help us, please contact Miss Kassim-Lowe (Year 5 Class teacher) via the school office. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you!



We had an army of parents who came to help us build garden furniture from pallets last weekend. They worked incredibly hard and we now have the bare bones for our new Rainbow Garden to be planted up in the Spring. Huge thanks to Stephen, Rob, Dan, Sophie, Rachel, Cathy, Andy, Ed, Jon, Sarah, Michael, & Kristoff's grandma (sorry, we didn't catch your name!), and all the children who also helped— you are all superstars and we really do appreciate your support, hard work, and ingenuity!





We are collecting Aldi stickers, so please bring these into school, and ask your friends and neighbours if you can have their stickers too!

THANKYOU for all your donations this morning—very much appreciated!

If you go abroad this half term, please don't forget to let us have any left over loose change—thank you!

DONATE YOUR OLD OR FOREIGN COINS & BANKNOTES TO HELP

SUPPORT OUR ST JAMES' PRIMARY SCHOOL PSA



- ✓ All foreign coins & banknotes
- ✓ Current UK coins and banknotes
- ✓ Any old British & Irish money
- ✓ Even obsolete currency!

Currency services supplied by  cash4coins

Event	Date & Time	Class	Staff Lead	Notes
Parents Meetings	29.10.19 4.00-8.30pm	All		
Swimming Starts	31.10.19	KS2	GH	See separate letter sent home
Storytelling Day	1.11.19	Y5	TKL	See separate letter
UK Parliament Week	4th-11th November	All	IL, CD	
Year 6 Height & Weight Screening	5.11.19	Y6	DS	See separate letter sent home
KS2 SATs—Information meeting	5.11.19 5.00pm	Y6	IL	All parents of children in Year 6 should attend
Y1 & 2 Multi-skills	8.11.19	Y1, 2	SP, FL	See separate letter
PSA Neon Party	8.11.19 8-12pm		PSA	Adults Disco
Sutton Hoo trip	11.11.19	Y4	LR	See separate letter
Bag 2 School	20.11.19	All	PSA	
Vision Screening (Reception)	25.11.19	YR	DS	
Flu Vaccinations	28.11.19	All	DS	
Head Teacher for a Day	29.11.19		MS	Details will be sent home in due course
Christmas Decoration morning	2.12.19 9.00-10.30am	All	CD	Help us get into the festive spirit!
Y2 Winter Wonderland concert	3.12.19	Y2	SP	
Y3 & 5 Music Performances	3.12.19	Y3, 5	GH, TKL	
Pantomime	6.12.19	All	GH	Whole school trip, late return to school
Christmas Jumper Day	13.12.19	All	LR	
Book Blink	13.12.19 3.00	All		Doors will close at 3.30
PSA Christmas Fair	13.12.19	All	PSA	
Christmas Show	17.12.19 2.00, 4.00	YR, 1, 2	CD, FL, SP	
Christmas Service	18.12.19. 9.30am	All	LR, GH	Led by Y3,4; all invited to attend
Christmas Lunch	19.12.19	All	IL	
Carols Round the Tree	19.12.19 4.00	All	SM	
MUFTI	20.12.19	All		

Starting School September 2020

We have a number of dates available for tours of the school for prospective parents. If you know any-one who is getting ready for their child to start school next September, please do encourage them to contact us and book a tour of the school. We also offer tours for families in other year groups. Unlike many other schools, our tours do not take place on one-off Open Days, so offer an opportunity to see life in action at St James' on a 'normal' school day.