



Newsletter

31st January 2020

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It's difficult to believe that we're already at the end of January and this week certainly seems to have flown by. We started the week talking to the children about our value of forgiveness, and linking this with Holocaust Memorial Day. I believe it's really important that we talk to children about important events such as this (at an age appropriate level) and reinforce the importance of values such as love, compassion, fairness and respect, ensuring we challenge acts of hatred at every opportunity. The children have responded to these discussions beautifully, and we're all so very proud of the kindness and compassion they show.

Yesterday, our youngest children took part in a special tennis taster session—they had a wonderful time, and learnt so many new skills. Also yesterday, Year 4 have begun a course in Latin, led by a student from Bedford School, as part of our growing partnership. I'm sure they will enjoy the challenges set.

Mrs Hawkins continues to be struggling with her health, and still does not have the strength to work full days in the classroom. I have therefore arranged for Miss Robson to cover Year 3 for the afternoons next week. When teachers are unwell, I always try to cover their absence with staff that the children know well, and people who I trust to do a good job in terms of maintaining a good level of teaching. My other option is to use agency teachers; the challenge with this is that it is very difficult to secure a teacher who knows the children well and can come into school every day; it is most usual that we would have more than one agency teacher in class across the week. My view is that it is always in the best interests of the children to maintain as much stability for the children as possible, by ensuring that the person teaching knows them and the school well. There are some occasions where we have to split a class, simply because we are unable to provide cover for that period, this is very rare indeed and is always a last resort. We are extremely lucky at St James' - our staff absence rates are very low, and significantly lower than other schools, and where we have any absence, we are able to provide extremely high quality cover, so that children's learning is not compromised. We also benefit from having a very strong, committed team of people who go beyond in order to give children the very best for the children.

Personally I am extremely grateful to Mrs Hawkins for the great efforts she has made to be as well as she can be (and provide all the planning for her class in her absence), to all the staff for their work in supporting Year 3 (especially Miss Robson and Mrs Sims) and to all of the parents who have shown understanding, patience and concern for Mrs Hawkins during this time.

Next week is science week; all staff have planned a range of scientific activities linked to the theme of 'refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle', building on children's interest in and concern for the wider world in which they are growing. Robins will also enjoy a special talk all about wildlife and Peacocks will be visited by an astronomer.

Wishing you all a very happy and peaceful weekend,

Maria & all the team at St James'

Class/Group Photographs – 25th February 2020—ACTION REQUIRED FROM ALL PARENTS

All children are invited to take part in class/group photographs on 25th February, 2020. The photographs will be taken by Tempest Photography, all photographers have enhanced DBS checks, and the school has confirmed that appropriate Data Protection measures are in place, in line with the GDPR. You must give us consent if you would like your child to be photographed as part of a group, so the consent slips must be returned to school by **Monday, 10th February**. After this date, we will be preparing lists of children's names for the photographs, so do not miss this deadline, otherwise your child's name will not go on our lists. **If we do not hear from you, then we will assume that you do not want your child to be part of the photographs and will be excluded from the photograph.**



Pupil Governor News



Do you like animals?

The animals in Australia are suffering and we want to help them! We want to raise money to help the animals who have been hurt and lost their homes in the Australian Bushfires. We have decided to have a **cake sale on Wednesday 12th February** (please support us by donating cakes nearer the time) and hold a **MUFTI Day on Friday 28th February** (wear your own or animal themed clothes). We will be donating the money we have raised to the 'World Wildlife Fund'.

Help us and save the animals!

School Uniform Reminders

Staff are noticing an increasing number of children in breach of our school uniform policy. Parents are reminded:

- Extreme hair styles are not permitted; this includes dyed hair
- Hair accessories (hairbands etc) should be modest in style and colour (not huge bows please)
- Makeup, including nail varnish, is not permitted
- Only one pair of stud earrings are allowed. All earrings must be removed for PE (health & safety) and this must be done by the child
- Only children in Years 5 and 6 are permitted to have backpacks in school. All other children should have a bookbag and PE bag. There are specific reasons for this: a backpack for older children allows them to prepare for secondary school life by managing all their equipment in one place; storage in cloakrooms for younger classes does not allow for 30 backpacks. If you have already purchased a school backpack for your child, we will not ask you to replace this, but parents of younger children must refrain from purchasing these until the children reach Year 5.

We have very high expectations of uniform, as we believe high standards in presentation of self will lead to high standards of presentation in all areas of learning and school life. Thank you for your support.

Communication with School

Please remember:

- To discuss concerns about your child, speak with the class teacher in the first instance. Any continuing concerns should then be discussed with the Assistant or Deputy Head Teacher. The Head Teacher is not normally your first point of call, save in exceptionally serious situations. For SEND queries, you should discuss with class teachers and then Mrs Morton.
- Please do not send last minute requests for collection arrangements to the office email, as this account is not monitored consistently throughout the day, and we may miss your message.
- When you phone school, if we don't answer, please leave a message; we will get back to you if we need to
- Please remember that the office closes at 3.45pm. Dawn is often held up by parents with queries beyond this time, which makes her late for her own children. Please also remember that Dawn is able to take messages for staff such as class teachers or peripatetic music teachers, but it is not her responsibility to take action or address specific concerns.
- Class Teachers can be emailed via the office email address; please allow up to 5 school days for any written response.

Event	Date & Time	Class	Staff Lead	Notes
Science Week	w/b 3rd Feb	All	TKL	
KS1 & 2 Gymnastics competition	Tues 11th Feb	Y1-6	GH	
Valentine's Breakfast	Fri 14th Feb	All	GH	Mrs Hawkins will send details home in due course
Half Term	17th-21st Feb	All		
Class Photos	Tues 25th Feb	All	DS	
Parents Information Session—phonics	Tues 25th Feb 5.00	All	CD, FL	Open to all parents, but of most interest to parents in Reception and Year 1
MUFTI for Australian animals	Friday, 28th Feb	All	CD	
Book Week	w/b 2nd March	All	IL	
Multi sports event	Tues 10th March	Y3, 4	GH, LR	
Book Blink	Fri 13th March 3.00-3.30	All		Finishes at 3.30
KS1 SATs meeting for parents	Tues 24th March 5.00	Y2	SP	
Multi Sports event	Thurs 26th March	Y1, 2	SP, FL	
Easter Service	Thurs 2nd April 9.30	All		
MUFTI—last day of term	Fri 3rd April	All		

Class Assemblies	Spring	Summer
Robins	6th March	25th June
Whinchats	28th February	3rd July
Canaries	7th February	12th June
Green Jays	14th February	22nd May
Kingfishers	31st January	15th May
Peacocks	24th January	1st May
Sabrewings	17th January	26th June

May Day Bank Holiday

Please be aware that the date has changed this year, and the Bank Holiday will be on **FRIDAY 8TH MAY 2020** (rather than Monday 4th)

Being Bold.

We are hoping to make upcycled craft items to sell at the Christmas fair this year. All the profit from our stall will go towards a charity called Plan International. We would like to be able to sponsor a girl with Plan International Be Bold for Brave Girls Campaign to have basic things we have like clean water, healthcare, education and rights.

We are looking for donations of the following items and materials:

- Colourful T-shirts and sweatshirts
- Christmassy fabrics
- Men's cotton shirts
- Any other fabric scraps! (Bright, metallic and colourful please!)
- Felt
- Cottons & embroidery threads
- Ribbons, buttons & beads
- Zips less than 30cm

We are very grateful for any donations.

Please put all your donations into the box in the office. Ask Mrs. Steed if you are unsure!

Thank you for all your support,

Isla Purvis and Mary Fox

FEBRUARY HALF-TERM RUGBY CAMP

at Bedford Athletic Rugby Club,
Wentworth Drive



BEDFORD
BLUES
COMMUNITY

PLAY THE BLUES WAY

Tue 18 Feb

Wed 19 Feb

Thu 20 Feb

9am-3pm

£30 a day

£70 for 3 days

- Open to boys & girls
- All abilities welcome
- Ages 5-14
- Free Bedford Blues kid's match ticket





BOOK ONLINE

HTTPS://BEDFORDBLUES.TICKETCO.EVENTS/UK/EN

OR EMAIL COMMUNITY@BEDFORDRUGBY.CO.UK



'Church' with a difference!

3.30pm - 5.30pm
St James's Church Barn, Biddenham

Tuesday 21 January

Tuesday 25 February

Tuesday 17 March

Tuesday 21 April

Tuesday 19 May

Tuesday 16 June

Tuesday 7 July

Tuesday 15 September

Tuesday 20 October

Tuesday 17 November

Tuesday 15 December








Free - No need to book - Just come along after school!

Everybody Welcome!

Includes tea for the children

St James's Church, Biddenham

Electrification of the Midland Main Line between Bedford and Corby.

I am writing to inform you that from 00:01 on Saturday 11th April 2020 the overhead power lines suspended above the railway tracks near your property/place of business/infrastructure will be energised at 25,000 volts AC.

To help meet the challenge of rising demand, the Midland Main Line is undergoing the largest upgrade since it was completed in 1870. This will enable more trains, with more seats and less crowding, to operate on the network from December 2020 - supporting the growth of the regional economies and connecting people to more job, education and leisure opportunities.

Upgrade work includes electrifying the route between Bedford via Wellingborough and Kettering to Corby. This will enable trains powered by electricity to make rail travel greener as well as quieter for passengers and lineside neighbours.

This will have no effect on the safety of rail users, nearby properties/infrastructure or those going about their legitimate business. There is no danger to anyone as long as they remain outside of the railway boundary – which is clearly marked by rail-side fencing.

However, we want to make you aware of this significant change. **The overhead lines will be energised at 25,000 volts AC, at 50Hz frequency. It therefore extremely dangerous for any person to come close to the overhead line equipment or any associated part of it, including the supporting masts, switch feeds and cables.**

Prior to constructing and energising the overhead line equipment, technical assessments were undertaken and best practice was followed in its design to ensure that electromagnetic compatibility was achieved and electromagnetic fields would not pose issues to lineside neighbours. For more information on electromagnetic compatibility and electromagnetic fields visit www.networkrail.co.uk/communities/safety-in-the-community/railway-safety-campaigns/always-on/

Should you have further enquiries regarding our programme to electrify the Midland Main Line, please visit: networkrail.co.uk/mml or contact the Network Rail 24-hour National Helpline on 08457 11 41 41.

Dear Parents and Carers,

Notice of Vacancy for Parent Governor at St James' CEVA Primary School

The governing body is responsible for both the conduct of the school and for promoting high standards. The governing body carries out its role by setting the vision for the school and then ensuring that the school works efficiently and effectively towards achieving its vision. It does this by building a thorough knowledge of the school and its community, by both supporting and constructively challenging the leaders, and by ensuring accountability and compliance. The governing body of our school is made up of parent governors, staff governors, and those appointed by church foundations.

A vacancy has arisen for a parent governor on our governing body. The governing body is asking you to nominate someone with parental responsibility for a child at the school. If it receives more than one nomination, then a ballot will be held. Before you decide to nominate someone, or indeed stand yourself, you may want to know a bit more about what is involved. Governors need not be experts in the field of education. What they do need is an interest in the school and in the welfare of all our children and the time and willingness to get involved. The skills you have can be very useful to the governing body. At the moment the governing body is lacking governors who have expertise in human relations, health and safety and compliance, although it is not a prerequisite that only people with those skills can be elected. If you are someone with the required experience, would you consider applying?

Governors also need what is known as 'soft skills' – the ability to be able to build relationships with a range of people, to be able to work as part of a team, to be able to question, and to make connections between different types of information. All governors are expected to be able to read straightforward budget reports and data on school standards.

Our governing body expects governors to

- attend **two** termly meetings of the full governing body
- sit on a committee and attend the meetings which are usually held **twice** a term
- visit the School formally for monitoring purposes at least **three** times year
- visit the School informally at least **three** times a year
- commit to attend training courses, perform additional research as required and take part in monitoring a specific area within the school.

In return, our governing body commits to

- provide you with a structured induction
- provide access to quality training via Bedford Borough Council
- provide you with an experienced governor as mentor
- provide informal feedback on your contribution to the governing body on a bi-annual basis

If you would like to find out more about how you can contribute to governance at our school, please email the school office with your contact details and we will pass on your details to the Chair of Governors who will then arrange a time for a conversation.

If you would like to stand for election, please complete the nomination form (available from the school office or by emailing office@stjamesvaschool.co.uk) and return it to the school not later than **14th February 2020**. Nominations must be from parents with children at the school on the day that nominations close. Parents putting their names forward are invited to provide some brief biographical details limited to not more than 150 words suitable for inclusion in the ballot paper. Parents who have paid employment in the school for 500 hours per academic year or more or who are elected members of the Local Authority are not eligible to stand in this election. Anyone standing for election must certify that he/she is not disqualified for any reason (this information can be provided upon request). The successful candidate will be required to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service form regarding their suitability to have access to children and young people and will not be able to take up their appointment until clearance has been received. If there are more nominations than vacancies the election will be by secret ballot. If that is necessary, voting papers will be sent to all parents together with details of the ballot procedure.

Maria Soulsby
On Behalf of the Governing Body