



### Be COVID Aware

Do not come onto school site if you have any Coronavirus symptoms, & get tested. Maintain social distancing at all times. The symptoms are:

- High temperature
- New, continuous cough
- Loss of or change to sense of smell or taste

## Newsletter

### 28th January, 2022

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Thank you to everyone who continues to wear a face covering on site, despite the cessation of national restrictions. Bedford continues to have very high numbers of positive cases (3rd highest) so it's really very important that we keep working together to keep people safe, especially the children as it seems that young children are really succumbing at the moment. Mr Gooch continues to test positive, although is feeling well; hopefully he will be back with us on Monday. It's been a tricky couple of weeks with us all, and I'm really grateful for all your support and that of the staff team, who have stepped in to cover staff absences wherever they can.

What's been great is that, although I've had to cancel events for staff (such as training, meetings, leadership monitoring activities), we've not had to cancel anything for the children—swimming, specialist music lessons, rugby coaching, gymnastics, science and mandarin lessons have all been able to continue. The children really enjoy these 'out of classroom' learning opportunities, which are all planned to complement our planned curriculum, and I know you will share in my gratitude to all the staff who work so hard to make sure these things happen (and those parents who support us by giving their time to help with supervision!).

On Monday, I spent the day with colleagues from the DSAMAT (the Trust we are proposing to join), being trained on how to use our experience and expertise to visit schools and provide improvement support for those at the earlier stages of school improvement and development. It was a good day on so many levels—the chance to work closely with potential new colleagues (I liked them!) and build new relationships; there was the opportunity for me to be able to use my 18(!) years of experience in headship to shape and develop school improvement for those at the start of their journeys; and also, I pick up lots of 'top tips' to bring back to St James' which will help us on our continuing journey. It was also the first face-to-face CPD I've had in the best part of 2 years—how wonderful to see 3-D people and not be sat in front of a Zoom screen! I am struck by how forward thinking the Trust is and so much of what they are aiming for aligns with my own philosophy—schools must always be looking forward and to do must work collaboratively with the best people, wherever they are. It was a good day!

I'm beginning to see the early signs of Spring—lighter mornings and longer days, the birds are starting to gather, I've even seen the first snowdrop appear in the garden—all signs that we're emerging out of a difficult, dark winter. Yesterday's sunshine was glorious! Thank you to those of you who emailed me this week to highlight the Borough 'Free Trees' offer, we're looking into it, and we're also talking through ideas to further develop the school grounds with some spring planting. Brighter days are not that far way!

However you spend your weekend, I hope you are able to rest and take some time to reflect on all the good things in life and all the good things we can look forward to!

With all good wishes,

Maria & all the team at St James'



### Term Dates

w/b 7th February	Children's mental Health Week, which includes....
Monday 7th February	.....Wear your clothes inside out!
Tuesday 8th February	Safer Internet Day—in school activities to ensure safe internet use to support good well-being
Wednesday 9th Feb	Oral health check (random sample of 5 year olds)
14th-18th February	Half Term
Monday, 28th February	Height & weight screening for YR—letters and information to follow
Tuesday, 8th March	Y4 Multi-sports event at Westfield School
Wednesday, 23rd March	KS1 multi-sports event at Biddenham School
	Parents/Teacher meetings 4.00-8.30pm
Thursday, 31st March	Easter Service 2.00pm
Friday, 1st April	End of Term—own clothes, early finish 1.30pm



### Gymnastics Club

There are limited spaces available in our Falcon Gymnastics Club. The club runs every Thursday morning, before school starting at 8. am. If you are interested in your child joining the club, please call Dawn in the school office. Places are offered on a first come, first serve basis.

### Oral Health Survey of 5 year old Children – 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Oral Health survey of 5 year old children. 14 children will be randomly selected to take part in the Survey. From the children selected, parents will receive parental consent forms closer to the date.

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

All children are invited to take part in class/group photographs on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2022, please see separate letter sent on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022. 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, consent slips must be returned to school by **Friday, 11th February - latest**. 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.

**Please return the consent slip back to school and clearly mark on the slip whether you do/do not give consent for your child/children to be photographed. If you do not return the slip, then we will automatically assume that you do not want your child to be part of the photographs and they will be excluded from the photograph.**

## COVID

Please continue to:

- Wear a face covering on site
- Use the one way system for drop off/pick up
- Limit the number of people who drop off/pick up—where possible, please don't bring lots of other adults/siblings
- Email teachers via the school office email account
- Refer to national guidance regarding testing & isolation
- Refer to the LA flowchart if your child tests positive for COVID
- Be sensible and cautious—keep your child away from school when they are unwell, even if you think it isn't COVID; there are lots of other viruses circulating and we need to keep those out of school as much as possible
- Ensure you have a negative LFT site ahead of any visits into school, such as appointments or if helping with events
- Use your child's Teams accounts to upload your child's work (rather than sending via the school office)

### Proposal for St James' to join the Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust

Parent Consultation—Wednesday, 2nd February 2022 7.00pm

Via Teams

<https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3a70afb5a0a51e4c69a2c8501ef50402a0%40thread.tacv2/1643283371752?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%225473bb8f-c64c-4108-8d27-e140a19e5599%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22e8cce415-806f-4f01-9b88-feb66d2cac6a%22%7d>

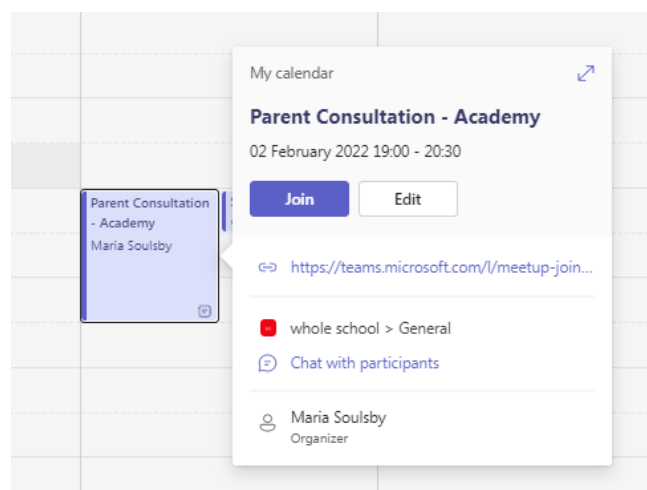
## Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer or mobile app

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

[Learn More](#) | [Meeting options](#)

Link also available through the calendar on your child's Teams count





### Bake Sale - 10th February 2022

The Pupil Governors are organising a bake sale, to raise money for the 'Make A Wish' Charity (our chosen charity). This is going to take place on the playground at the end of the school day, on Thursday 10th February.

#### **We need your help!**

Donations of cakes are needed - but please remember we are a NUT FREE school, so any home made bakes must be nut free.

Please send your cakes in to school on the morning of Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> February.

Thank you for your support - if you would like to find out any more information about the 'Make A Wish' charity, please use the following link:

<https://www.make-a-wish.org.uk/>

The Pupil Governors and Mrs De Luca.



### **Children's Mental Health Week**

Children's Mental Health Week is taking place on **7th to 13th February**, and the theme this year is **Growing Together**.

Growing together is about growing *emotionally* and finding ways to help each other grow. Challenges and setbacks can help us to grow and adapt and trying new things can help us to move beyond our comfort zone.

We have lots of exciting activities planned at St James to help develop our understanding of this idea, starting with an '**INSIDE OUT**' day on Monday 7th February! Encourage your child to wear their school uniform *inside out*, to demonstrate the importance of kindness as we never know how someone is feeling on the inside. The children could wear their jumper, t-shirt or socks inside out.

The following link has top tips for parents and carers on how to support your child's mental health and wellbeing, with further links to other websites which you may find useful.

<https://www.place2be.org.uk/our-services/parents-and-carers/supporting-your-child-s-mental-health/>



## What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# YOUTUBE

YouTube is a video-sharing social media platform that allows billions of people around the world to watch, share and upload their own videos with a vast range of content – including sport, entertainment, education and lots more. It's a superb space for people to consume content that they're interested in. As a result, this astronomically popular platform has had a huge social impact: influencing online culture on a global scale and creating new celebrities.

### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

YouTube is free and can be accessed via numerous devices, even without creating a YouTube account. Some content is flagged as 'age-restricted' (requiring the user to be logged into an account with a verified age of 18), but children can still view some mildly inappropriate material. This can include profanity and violence, which some young users may find upsetting.

### CONNECT WITH STRANGERS

YouTube is a social media platform which allows people to interact with other (usually unknown) users. Account holders can leave comments on any video they have access to, as well as messaging other users directly. Connecting with strangers online, of course, can potentially lead to children being exposed to adult language, to cyberbullying and even to encountering online predators.

### SUGGESTED CONTENT

YouTube recommends videos related to what the user has previously watched on their account, aiming to provide content that will interest them. This is intended to be helpful but can also lead to binge-watching and the risk of screen addiction, especially if 'auto-play' is activated. Users without an account are shown popular videos from the last 24 hours, which might not always be suitable for children.

### HIGH VISIBILITY

Content creators can also be put at risk – especially young ones who try to make their online presence as visible as possible. Creating and uploading content exposes children to potential harassment and toxicity from the comments section, along with the possibility of direct messaging from strangers. Videos posted publicly can be watched by anyone in the world.

### TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

YouTube is teeming with trends, challenges and memes that are fun to watch and join in with. Children often find these immensely entertaining and might want to try them out. Most challenges tend to be safe, but many others may harm children through either watching or copying. The painful 'salt and ice challenge', which can cause injuries very quickly, is just one of many such examples.

### SNEAKY SCAMMERS

Popular YouTube channels regularly have scammers posing as a well-known influencer in the comments section, attempting to lure users into clicking on their phishing links. Scammers impersonate YouTubers by adopting their names and profile images, and sometimes offer cash gifts or 'get rich quick' schemes. Children may not realise that these users are not who they claim to be.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### APPLY RESTRICTED MODE

Restricted Mode is an optional setting that prevents YouTube from showing inappropriate content (such as drug and alcohol abuse, graphic violence and sexual situations) to underage viewers. To prevent your child from changing across age-inappropriate content on the platform, we would recommend enabling Restricted Mode on each device that your child uses to access YouTube.

### TRY GOOGLE FAMILY

Creating a Google Family account allows you to monitor what your child is watching, uploading and sharing with other users. It will also display their recently watched videos, searches and recommended videos. In general, a Google Family account gives you an oversight of how your child is using sites like YouTube and helps you ensure they are only accessing appropriate content.

### CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

YouTube gives users the option of uploading videos as 'private' or 'unlisted' – so they could be shared exclusively with family and friends, for example. Comments on videos can also be disabled and channels that your child is subscribed to can be hidden. If your child is only uploading videos that are protected as 'private', they are far less likely to receive direct messages from strangers.

### CHECK OTHER PLATFORMS

Influential content creators usually have other social media accounts which they encourage their fans to follow. Having an open discussion about this with your child makes it easier to find out how else they might be following a particular creator online. It also opens up avenues for you to check out that creator's other channels to see what type of content your child is being exposed to.

### MONITOR ENGAGEMENT

YouTube is the online viewing platform of choice for billions of people, many of them children. Younger children will watch different content to older ones, of course, and react to content differently. You may want to keep an eye on how your child interacts with content on YouTube – and, if applicable, with content creators – to understand the types of videos they are interested in.

### LIMIT SPENDING

Although YouTube is free, it does offer some in-app purchases: users can rent and buy TV shows and movies to watch, for example. If you're not comfortable with your child purchasing content online, limit their access to your bank cards and online payment methods. Many parents have discovered to their cost that a child happily devouring a paid-for series quickly leads to an unexpected bill!

### Meet Our Expert

Clare Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.



**National Online Safety**

#WakeUpWednesday



[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com)



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