

St James's Jotter

October 2015



Shoebox Appeal

It's that time of the year again when we turn our minds to making shoeboxes for those who are less fortunate than ourselves. May, from the Samaritan's Purse spoke with the children at Assembly on 18 September and showed them photographs of children receiving shoe boxes. She reminded the children of items that can be packed in the shoe boxes. Please visit <https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/> and click on the links to see suggestions for shoe boxes. We are asking for all shoeboxes to be brought back to school by Thursday 5 November. We look forward to seeing all the shoeboxes piled high as always showing the generosity and kindness of our school community.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

The safety of all our children is of paramount importance and I would like to remind parents/guardians that children are only supervised in the mornings once they enter the school building at 8.50am unless they go to Breakfast Club. Children are not supervised in the school grounds in the mornings so, if they are in the school grounds before 8.50am and are not attending Breakfast Club, parents/guardians are reminded that this is at their own risk. A much safer option, if you need to leave your child to school early, is to send them to Breakfast Club which is open from 8.00am. Children can receive a breakfast for £1.50 or if they do not want breakfast, the cost is £1 per day.

In the interests of Health and Safety, we are asking parents/guardians of Year 2-7 children to leave their children at the front door or in the children's entrance foyer in the morning and let the children make their own way to their classroom. We feel this will help to reduce congestion in the mornings in the downstairs classroom area particularly at the Year 2 and 3 classrooms. I would also remind you that teachers supervise the children from 8.50am and it can be very difficult for them to talk to parents at this time. If you need to inform the teacher of something, please send a note with your child or contact the office and a message can be given to the teacher. If you need to speak with the teacher, please phone the office to arrange an appointment.

Breakfast Club

I would like to thank St Vincent de Paul for their continued support of our Breakfast Club. The support of St Vincent de Paul is invaluable and enables us to maintain our prices at the very reasonable £1.50 for breakfast.

Mr Bobby Briggs

Sadly, Mr Bobby Briggs, one of our teachers, passed away on 26 September 2015. He will be remembered with great fondness and affection. Ten children and members of teaching staff, non teaching staff and the Board of Governors represented our school at Mr Briggs's funeral. The children were exemplary and did our school proud. We extend our sincere sympathy to Mr Briggs's wife, Mary, and his family circle. May he rest in peace.

Earrings

I would like to remind you that children are not permitted to wear earrings in school.

Living and Learning Together

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

We are currently undergoing a review of all policies and a number of policies have now been ratified by the Board of Governors. You will receive a copy of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy via email (or a hard copy if you do not yet receive emails). The following policies are available in the school: Parental Complaints, World Around Us, Special Educational Needs and Disability, Newcomer and Code of Conduct (Safeguarding). In the next few months we will be sending draft policies home and asking you to comment on the draft policy. Your comments will then be considered in the final draft of the policy which will then go to the Board of Governors to be ratified. I look forward to your cooperation in this very important process.

Hallowe'en Parade

The annual Hallowe'en Fancy Dress Parade will take place on Friday 23 October. As has happened in the last few years, parents are welcome to come to the dining hall and the children will parade around the hall at certain times. The PTA kindly provide a number of prizes which will be awarded at the parade. Please see below the parade times for the classes:

Nursery	9.15am
Year 1 and 2	9.30am
Year 3 and 4	9.45am
Year 5, 6 and 7	10.00am



Label your uniform!

I would appeal to you to please label all your child's uniform and belongings. We have an increasing amount of lost property which would be easily returned if the child's name was on the items.

CONGRATULATIONS

We congratulate Mrs Ciara Higgins and her husband on the birth of their daughter Ailbhe.



Hallowe'en Disco

The PTA Hallowe'en Disco will take place on Thursday 22 October from 6.30pm—8.00pm. Children can come to the disco in fancy dress. The disco is only for children who attend our school—Nursery Unit and Primary School. We ask that children are accompanied by an adult. There will be tea and coffee in the dining hall for parents/guardians.



Firework Safety

At this time of the year, it is important to remind ourselves of the dangers of fireworks. I would encourage you to discuss the dangers with your child. Please visit <http://www.nifrs.org/fire-storm/assets/documents/Fireworks/FireworkSafety.pdf> for advice.



WELCOME

We welcome back Miss Emma McCarthy who will be replacing Mrs Magill in Year 1. We wish Mrs Magill well as she begins her maternity leave.



PARKING

I would appeal to all drivers to please be considerate when parking in King's Walk and Bleach Green. I have had complaints from a number of residents about people blocking their driveways. Residents have been advised to report any incidents to the PSNI.

YEAR 3

The children in Year 3 will stay in school until 3.00pm on Monday to Thursday from Monday 2 Nov (once we return to school after the Hallowe'en break). They will finish school on a Friday at 2.00pm. Please note, the Year 2 children in Mrs Cunning's class will finish school as normal at 2.00pm.

Parent Teacher Meetings

Parent Teacher meetings will take place the week beginning Monday 19 October. Parents/guardians will receive an appointment time. Teachers will be coordinating interview times to suit families. Please note that interviews are timetabled to last 10 minutes each. If you require additional time with the teacher, I would ask you to make a further appointment.

In order to facilitate these meetings, all children will finish at 2.00pm every day this week from Mon 19 Oct to Fri 23 Oct. In order to ease congestion in the children's entrance foyer, for this week only, the Year 3 children will leave school from the main door at the bottom of the green corridor (beside the office). Children in Years 4-7 will leave from the Assembly Hall. Children in Years 1 and 2 will leave as normal.

Pupil of the Month

The following children were awarded Pupil of the Month for September:

Year One Mrs Magill	Mattheo Santos
	Maddie Hamilton
Year One Miss Morrow	Daisy Arkins-Flood
	Tom McAllister
Year 2 Mrs Cross	Patryk Kosiaski
	Lucy Godefroy
Year 2/3 Mrs Cunning	Leon Curry
	Juno Campbell
Year 3 Miss Black	Declan Douglas
	Caoimhe Quinn
Year 4 Mr Jones	Shera Jaise
	Cain Armstrong
Year 5 Mr Tunney	Hannah Quinn
	Oliwier Wiczling
Year 6 Mrs Kelly	Ciara O'Conallain
	Amiel Njarakulathu
Year 6 Mr Nolan	Manuel Jacob
	Melissa Pauley
Year 7 Mrs Donaghy	Sahar Syeda
	Bradley Maguire
Congratulations to all the boys and girls.	

HEARTSTART TRAINING

On Monday 28 September, teachers and classroom assistants participated in Heartstart training—emergency life saving training for what to do in a life threatening emergency situation.



VOLUNTEERS

Many thanks to:

- those parents/guardians who accompanied the children, teachers and assistants walking to the beginning of the year Mass on 25 September in St James's Church. Your help is vital in ensuring the safety of our children.
- those who have volunteered to help with our Accelerated Reader programme—both in the ICT suite and in the library.
- those who have volunteered to help paint the benches in the playground.
- those who have volunteered to help in our school garden.
- Mrs McMahon who tirelessly dedicates her time and energy to maintaining and developing our school garden.



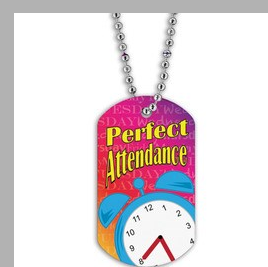
We greatly value all the support we receive throughout the year—the continued work and dedication of all our volunteers helps to make our school a better place and have a positive impact on learning for all our children. If you could help our school in any way at all, please speak with a member of staff. You don't have to be highly skilled—just willing!

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

Our After School Clubs will begin on Monday 12 October. Details of the clubs and forms will be sent out this week. Most clubs will run for 6 weeks and cost £2 per session or £10 for the full 6 weeks. Some clubs are run by external professionals and vary in price. Many thanks to all those who are organising and facilitating the clubs for our children.

ATTENDANCE

In order to promote attendance, we will be awarding those children who have 100% attendance every half term at Assembly.



Living and Learning Together

Newtownabbey Food Bank

St James's Primary School and Nursery Unit is a registered referral agent for Newtownabbey Food Bank.

Vouchers are available in school. Mrs Dallat is the contact person for these vouchers. The voucher entitles an individual or family in crisis to receive food sufficient for three days.

There is no gathering of personal information by school.

The vouchers can be handed in at the local food bank at Abbots Cross Presbyterian Church or in Carnmoney.

At the food bank there are refreshments available and toys for young children to play with whilst waiting for the food pack.

Volunteers will also be present to direct individuals to social services/citizens advice if needed.

Easy Fundraising

I am appealing for all parents/guardians and friends of St James's to please register for Easy Fundraising. We only got an additional two supporters in September. Easy Fundraising is a very simple way for our school to make money particularly at this time of the year when people are shopping online for Christmas. When you are buying anything online if you access the site you are buying from through Easy Fundraising, the school will get a percentage of what you spend at no cost to you. It really is simple to do.

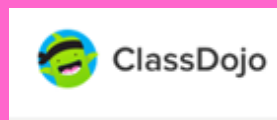
We have raised £195.66 since our Easy Fundraising account was opened approximately two years ago and we have 41 supporters. I would like to thank those who have signed up and have been able to raise these much needed funds for our school. The money raised is used to buy resources for the children.

Please log on to www.easyfundraising.org.uk, create an account and support the good cause St James's Primary School and Nursery Unit, Newtownabbey.



CLASS DOJO

Our school is using an online behaviour management tool called Class Dojo. Children earn points for displaying agreed behaviours, for example, wearing the correct uniform or being on task during their work. Each child has an avatar, a little character that holds their points which they can customise by logging in with a code provided by their teacher. Children are really engaging with Class Dojo as it is clear for them how they can earn points. It is a fun way for them to manage and become aware of their own behaviour.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Fri 16 October 2015	Nursery sponsored cycle	
19 October—23 October 2015	Parent—Teacher Meetings	Parents/Guardians will receive an appointment time to meet with the teacher. Please note school will finish at 2.00pm for all children this week.
Thurs 22 Oct 2015	PTA Hallowe'en Disco	6.30pm—8.00pm
Fri 23 October 2015	Hallowe'en Fancy Dress	see information about the Parade
Wed 9 December 2015	6.30-7.30pm	Open Night
Fri 11 December 2015	9.30am	Nursery Christmas Concert
Tues 15 December 2015	9.30am	Year One Christmas Concert
Tues 15 December 2015	11.00am	Year Three (Miss Black) and Year Four (Mr Jones) Christmas Concert
Wed 16 December 2015	9.30am	Year Two (Mrs Cross) and Year Two/Three (Mrs Cunning) Christmas Concert
Wed 23 December 2015	Half Day	12 noon finish

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PARENTMAIL

We are currently undergoing transition to a new version of ParentMail. Unfortunately this means that our Year One and Nursery parents/guardians will not be able to avail of ParentMail for another couple of weeks. We hope to have the transition to the upgraded system completed as soon as possible and thank you for your continued patience.

PUPILS' COUNCIL

The Pupils' Council provides pupils with the opportunity to become involved in the running of the school, working with the school leadership, staff and parents, for the benefit of both the school and its pupils. Over the next few weeks teachers will be holding elections in each class from Year 4 to Year 7. Children who wish to stand for the Council are required to make a presentation to their class outlining why they should be elected and some ideas they may have. One boy and one girl will be elected, by secret ballot, from each class. Children can only serve on the Council for one year. Class teachers will let the children know when the elections will be held to give them time to prepare.

Previous Councils have represented the school at a variety of functions, including open nights. They have requested money from the PTA and school to purchase wet play boxes and organised a Pyjama Day for Children in Need.



MATHS WEEK

Maths Week (Ireland) takes place from 10 to 18 October. Children throughout the school will be taking part in various activities to promote awareness, appreciation and understanding of Mathematics and, most importantly, activities making Maths fun!



SPONSORED BOUNCE

Years 1, 2 and 3 would like to say a massive 'Thank You' to all those who sponsored us during our Sponsored Bounce day. So far, we have raised £650. We are very grateful to you all. This money will help us to buy lots of new play resources for our classes. We had great fun bouncing the day away!



CANTEEN THEME DAY

World Food Day is on 16 October and to mark this occasion the canteen will be having a European theme day. Foods from around Europe will be served for dinner on this day. The usual cost of £2.50 applies.

PTA Meeting

Many thanks to those who attended the PTA AGM on Monday 5 October. The next PTA meeting is on Monday 2 November at 5.45pm and I would encourage as many people to come along as possible even if you have not attended a meeting before. The support that the PTA gives the school is vital particularly in buying much needed resources for our school. I would like to thank the PTA for their contribution to the iPads that were purchased at the end of last year.

POETRY IN MOTION

Our year 7 children are currently taking part in a project called 'Poetry in Motion' in association with the Community Arts Partnership NI. Each week, local published poet Annemarie Mullan comes in to the classroom to help the children produce their own poems and hopefully some will be chosen to be included in a special anthology with partner schools.

At the end of the project, the children will attend a very special launch event and they will receive a copy of the anthology as well as a CD recording of their poems they have written.

This has been a wonderful learning experience for our children and we look forward to hopefully seeing some of their work published.

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