

St James's Jotter

December 2015



Thank You for Your Generosity



St James's has, once again, displayed our generosity by collecting a magnificent 119 shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child by the Samaritan's Purse. We also raised £240 to help with the shipping costs of the shoe boxes.

On 13 November children came to school with weird and wonderful hairstyles for Crazy Hair Day and raised a fantastic £240 for Children in Need. Many thanks to all our children, parents and guardians for supporting these worthy causes.



I would also like to thank all the volunteers who came to school on Saturday 7 November in terrible weather conditions to help with different activities around the school. Your help and support has made a huge difference to our school. Many thanks.

Happy Christmas

On behalf of the Governors and staff, I would like to wish all our parents/guardians, friends and children a very happy Christmas and best wishes for 2016.

Paula Cunningham



Application Forms

Application forms for the Nursery and Year One are now available from the office. Closing date for applications is noon on 13 January 2016.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

Our 'Parents as Partners' programme has been a great success with parents and guardians attending iPad workshops, facilitated by iTeach, Phonics workshops and an information session on Accelerated Reader. The children were also able to enjoy the Enchanted Evenings during the Phonic Workshops which proved to be very popular!

Our next Parents as Partners session will be on Wednesday 13 January and the focus will be Numeracy for Year 2 parents and guardians. Further dates are included in the *Dates for your Diary* on page 5.

'Virtually There' is coming to St James's

We are delighted to announce we have been selected to participate in the fantastic art programme 'Virtually There'. The project, run by **Kids' Own Publishing Partnership**, is the only long term professional art programme running in Northern Irish Schools.

In January, Year Two pupils from Mrs Cross's class will get the chance to work with an artist for a 10-12 week period. The unique aspect of this collaboration is that the artist comes into the classroom each week via the modern technology of our Interactive Whiteboard! Pupils will get the chance to explore their own creative expression through this professional partnership.

This is a very exciting programme to become involved with and we are delighted to have been chosen to participate. Watch this space!



Living and Learning Together

OPEN EVENING

Our annual Open Evening for the Primary School and Nursery Unit takes place on Wednesday 9 December at 6.30pm. Everyone is very welcome to come along to experience our warm, caring learning environment.

CAR PARKING

Please remember that, following advice from the Education Authority, the back car park is for staff parking only. As always, I would appeal to all drivers to please be considerate when parking in King's Walk and Bleach Green. I have received complaints about parents from our school blocking residents' driveways, being rude to residents and driving erratically and too quickly on King's Walk. Please consider our neighbours at all times. I would also suggest that you could drop your children off on Fernagh Road at the entrance to King's Walk and they could walk the short distance to school. Please note that residents have been advised to contact the PSNI to report any incidents. I appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

In order to continue to raise standards in our school, we are trying to improve punctuality and attendance. If your child is absent for any reason, a written note must be given to the class teacher to explain the absence. You may phone the office to inform us that your child will not be present but we would also ask for a written note to be sent in once your child returns to school. Teachers will be recording reasons for absences and, along with the Senior Leadership Team, will be monitoring children's attendance. Please note that children's poor attendance will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

It is also very important that all children are in class at 9.00am and this will also be monitored by the class teacher. Any child who is late three times in one month will receive a letter indicating that they have been late and reminding the parents/guardians of the importance of the child being in class at 9.00am. When a child is late for class, not only does it disrupt the class but the child can feel flustered and upset. Please try to ensure that your child is in class ready to begin their day at 9.00am.

WEBSITE

Please remember to check our website regularly to learn more about what the children are doing and to see lots for photographs of different activities.

www.stjamesps.co.uk

Remembrance Day

Mrs Cunningham and the Pupils' Council attended a Remembrance Day Service in Ypres Park on 11 November. The children were wonderful ambassadors for our school.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Thank you for your cooperation in implementing our new procedures for leaving children to school. The downstairs classroom areas are now much calmer for the children where the children feel safer. It also helps us to promote the children's independence. For those of you who are not sure of the new arrangements, 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.

I would also remind you that all 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. Please remember that parents should not go up the stairs in the morning.

LATE ARRIVALS

If your child is late arriving at school, please report to the office. Children will then make their own way to the classroom or, if necessary, a Classroom Assistant will meet them at the office and take them to their classroom.

PRIMARY MASTERCLASS

Year 6 were invited to Mossley Mill to participate in a Masterclass about how businesses work. They found out about the supply chain and how important it is to work well together. They also had the chance to begin planning their own cartons for a fruit juice drink. The Lord Mayor seemed to be impressed and tweeted a picture of himself with some of our children! See our Twitter feed where we retweeted the picture @StJamesPSandNU.

Tommy Jackson Soccer School

The Tommy Jackson Soccer School recently came to an end and the children who participated were presented with a medal at Assembly. Some children were chosen by Tommy for special recognition and they were awarded special prizes. Jeff Jazul won a trophy for the most improved player, Aisling Lennon won a trophy for the most helpful player and Jamie Wang won the penalty kick competition and was awarded a football. Well done to all the children who participated. We look forward to welcoming Tommy back to St James's in the future.



CAROL SERVICE

The Year 5-7 Carol Service will take place on Monday 21 December at 11.00am in St James's Church and everyone is welcome to attend. The children in Years 5-7 should come to school as normal on this day and we will walk to the Church. Children will be able to go home with their parents/guardians after the Carol Service but the class teacher must be informed. This is always a special occasion for the children and provides us with the opportunity to consider the meaning of Christmas.



TAKE CARE!

It is great to see some of our children coming to school on their bicycles. However, I would like to remind you that, in the interests of your child's safety, when riding a bicycle, they should always wear a helmet. Children should also get off their bicycle at the school gate and walk their bicycle round to the bicycle stands.



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Nursery Unit with all your online
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Living and Learning Together

Breakfast Club

Our Breakfast Club is proving to be increasingly popular and provides a valuable service for our parents/guardians. If your child goes to Breakfast Club and has money that they need to give to the teacher, I would be grateful if you could ensure the money is put in a labelled envelope in the child's bag which they can then give to their teacher. Mrs Brown and Mrs Thompson can no longer accept money other than that for Breakfast Club. Thank you for your cooperation.

Drainage

Apologies for the drainage problems we have been experiencing on the path at the Bleach Green entrance. This problem was reported to the Education Authority immediately and Mr Devenney tried to keep it as clear as possible. The drains have now been cleared so hopefully the problem is now resolved.

CONTACT DETAILS

It is vitally important that we have current contact details for all parents/guardians so as you can be contacted in the case of an emergency. Please ensure that if your contact details change, you inform the office immediately.

St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Hamper Appeal

Once again we are asking for your support to make up Christmas Hampers to support families in need this Christmas. We are asking for each family to try and bring in at least one or two items to help make up one hamper per class.

There are twenty basic items we try to provide in each hamper. Each child in the class will select one type of basic item from a list. If you wish to donate more than one type of item we have also made a list of luxury items that will be added to the hamper. You will find the list on the note that will go home.

We appreciate that this is a very expensive time for families, but if you can manage to support this appeal it would be greatly appreciated. All the items for the hampers would need to be in school by Wednesday 16th December.

CAROL SERVICE

On 10 December
children from St
James's and
Whitehouse Primary
Schools will be singing
Carols at Jordanstown



Nursing Home. Our children will also be singing at Inishcoole Day Centre on 16 December. It's great to see our children bringing the Christmas spirit to the local community.

Y1 and 2 Phonics Workshop and Enchanted Evening

We would like to thank all of the parents who attended the Year 1 and 2 Phonics Evenings. Your support and enthusiasm is greatly appreciated as we continue to work together for the benefit and development of the pupils. The Enchanted Evening which was held for the children, during the parent workshop, was a great success and very enjoyable for all involved...young and old! It was great to see the children arrive in their pyjamas and onesies to enjoy the bed time stories, chocolate milk and cookies!

Pupil of the Month

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

Year One Miss Patterson	Tayana McGuiness Abiel Njaickulathur
Year One Miss Morrow	Ryan Moran Monica Biju
Year 2 Mrs Cross	Leah McClung Jack Morton
Year 2/3 Mrs Cuning	Caoimhe Murphy Kaelan Greene
Year 3 Miss Black	Mateusz Glanowski Aoibheann Mulholland
Year 4 Mr Jones	Aisling Lennon Oliver Simpson
Year 5 Mr Tunney	Tristan Curry Ciara Green
Year 6 Mrs Kelly	Sasha McComb Max McKee
Year 6 Mr Nolan	Olivia McDermott Jessica McKinley
Year 7 Mrs Donaghy	Owen Todd Sinead Magee
Mrs Dallat	Paul Muckian Ann Sweetnam
Congratulations to all the boys and girls.	

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.

CONCERT TICKETS

In order to raise much needed funds for our school, we are selling tickets for this year's Christmas concerts. Please send in your order to the class teacher with the correct money and your tickets will be sent home. Many thanks for your support.

Countdown to Christmas

This year all our children will be participating in an exciting new Numeracy Investigation called 'Countdown to Christmas'. On Monday 14th December, Santa's Little Helpers will deliver a present to each classroom. Each parcel will contain a specific challenge that Santa himself has set for the class! The children will have until Friday 18th December when each class will present their results and have their work displayed. During this week, all children will complete homework linked to their class challenge; this will replace the usual class homework. There will be prizes awarded at the end of the activity and parents will have the opportunity to come and see what the children have achieved! Good luck everyone; Santa is counting on you!

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.

PTA

Many thanks to all those who came along to the Movie Night. It was a great night and enjoyed by all. The tickets for the Christmas Prize Draw are now available and have been sent home. If you would like additional tickets, please contact the school office. Tickets should be returned to school by Friday 11 December and the draw will take place on Wednesday 16 December. The last date for ordering a DVD of a Christmas show is also Friday 11 December. We appreciate your continued generosity.

The next PTA meeting is Wednesday 13 January at 5.45pm. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Fire Alarm

Last week we held a fire drill for the school. This is the second one we have had this term. I would ask that if any parents, grandparents, childminders etc are in the school grounds or building when the fire alarm sounds to please make your way to the assembly point at the top of the playground. This way we can help to ensure the safety of all if such an evacuation is ever needed. Thank you for your cooperation.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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
Thurs 17 December 2015	Lunch time	Children's Christmas Dinner
Mon 21 December 2015	11.00am	Carol Service in St James's Church
Wed 23 December 2015	Half Day	12 noon finish
Wed 13 January 2016	6.30pm	Year Two Numeracy Workshop
Tues 19 January	6.30pm	Year One Numeracy Workshop
Thurs 21 January 2016	7.00pm	Year Five Shared Education Science Workshop in Whitehouse PS
Tues 26 January	6.30pm	Year Three Numeracy Workshop
Wed 27 January	6.30pm	Year Four and Five Numeracy Workshop
Sat 6 February 2016	11.00am	Confirmation in Star of the Sea, Whitehouse
Mon 8 February 2016	9.10am	PATHS Information Session for Parents/Guardians
Sat 14 May 2016	11.00am	First Holy Communion in Star of the Sea, Whitehouse

Living and Learning Together