

# St James's Jotter

September 2017



As we begin a new school year, I would like to welcome all our returning children and their families and extend a very big welcome to all our new children in our Nursery Unit, Year One and throughout the school. I am sure you will all be very happy in our school.

We are delighted with the feedback we have received about our new surroundings and we look forward to the rest of the work being completed hopefully at Hallowe'en.

The staff of St James's are looking forward to a busy, exciting year ahead filled with lots of wonderful learning opportunities for our children. As always, we look forward to working in partnership with you to develop your child and to continue to raise standards and develop our school. Paula Cunningham

## Shared Education Signature Project

We are delighted to be starting Year 3 of our Shared Education initiative with Whitehouse Primary School and Nursery Unit. This year, the project will involve Year Five and Six children in STEM modules, Year Seven in STEM days, the Nursery and Year 1 in the Forest School programme, Year 2 in outdoor learning and the whole school in working towards the Rights Respecting School Award. The staff from both schools will also be collaborating on a number of occasions. We have an exciting and busy year ahead!

## Values of the Month

We will be continuing with our Values of the Month initiative this year. Both in Assembly and in class, the children will consider the current Value and how they can demonstrate it. Certificates will be awarded each month for children who have demonstrated the value throughout the month. This month our Value is kindness.

## Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club runs in the canteen from 8.00am until 8.50am Monday to Friday. The cost for a breakfast is £1.50 per child. The latest time a child can be left at Breakfast Club in order to receive a breakfast is 8.40am. Children can also be left at breakfast for supervision only (no breakfast). The cost for this is £1 per child. For families with three or more children, supervision costs £2 per day for the family. Please note this is only applicable if the children do not receive a breakfast. Unfortunately the supervisors are unable to pass on messages/money to teachers.

## Beginning of Year School Mass

Our Beginning of Year School Mass took place on Tuesday 19 September. We were delighted that Fr Alexander was able to say this special Mass in the Assembly Hall. This year's Mass was particularly special as it was Fr Alexander's last Mass in our school before he moved to Carnlough and Glenarm. We would like to thank him for all he has done for our school and wish him every happiness in his new parish.

## School Uniform

As we continue to raise standards in our school, it is important that all children wear their full school uniform. Our uniform consists of a school jumper, white polo shirt, grey trousers for boys, grey skirt or pinafore for girls, grey or black socks for boys and white or grey socks for girls. All children should wear black shoes to school. When the children have PE they must wear their uniform to school and get changed for PE. They can change into shorts or track suit bottoms, t-shirt and trainers or plimsolls. Please note that if children wear their polo shirt for PE they must change into a fresh polo shirt afterwards. PE gear including track suit bottoms and trainers should not be worn to school.

Please ensure that your child's name is on all items of clothing.

For health and safety reasons, children are not permitted to wear jewellery including earrings. Children may wear a small watch but this will have to be removed for PE.

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### Leaving children to school

Children and parents should come into school in the morning through the children's entrance (the main front entrance is for disabled access and can be used by those parents with buggies/prams). In order to promote children's independence and for health and safety reasons, we ask that children in Years 2 to 7 are left at the door and make their own way to the classroom. 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.



### Collecting children

Children in Years 1, 2 and 3 must be collected by someone (16 years and older) who is named on the permission sheet. We will not release a child to someone if they are not on the list. If the list of named 'collectors' changes, you must notify the class teacher in writing. On a rare occasion, if you need someone different to collect your child, please notify the school office as soon as possible. Year 1 children can be collected from the children's entrance foyer. The doors will not be opened to parents until 2.00pm. From Tuesday 26th September, Year 2 children can be collected from the main door outside the office (facing the Nursery). Please note that teachers in Years 1 and 2 may not always be available to talk with you at 2.00pm as they may have to be with another class at 2.10pm. Again, from Tuesday 26th September, Year 3 children can be collected from the main door at the bottom of the green corridor until Hallowe'en. After Hallowe'en, when Year 3 children stay until 3pm, they can be collected from the children's entrance foyer. Children in Years 4, 5, 6 and 7 are permitted to walk home if their teacher has the permission sheet. Children in these classes who do not have permission to walk home must be collected by a person named on the permission sheet. Class teachers will accompany their class to the doors at the children's entrance foyer from where the children can be collected or children can walk home. At 3.00pm there will be a teacher at the Bleach Green Gate and the front gate of the school to supervise children leaving. If, for any reason, a child is not collected by a 'named' person, the child will be brought to the office and the parents contacted. Children who are not collected promptly will be taken to the office.

### Punctuality

Class begins for all children at 9.00am. This means children should be in the classroom ready to begin the day at 9.00am. If your child is late, it is very disruptive to the class and the teacher and it can cause the child distress. All incidents of lateness will be recorded by the class teacher and monitored by the Senior Leadership Team.



### Attendance

Daily attendance at school is vitally important for your child's development. Please see Every School Day Counts (on the next page) which illustrates various levels of attendance. If your child is absent, you must send a note to the class teacher providing a reason for the absence which is then recorded on your child's attendance record. If you do not provide a reason for the absence it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Attendance is monitored regularly and if your child's attendance falls to 90% or lower, you will receive a letter from the school and your child's attendance will be discussed with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). If your child's attendance falls to 85% or lower a formal referral will be made to the EWO.

### Car Parking

Please drive slowly and carefully in the school grounds. We would encourage you to park on the Fernagh Road and walk the short distance to school. Please ensure that you do not park on the zig zag lines at the school gates as these must be kept clear at all times. Please do not block the driveways of our neighbours. If this happens, residents have been advised to contact the PSNI. If you are parking in the school grounds, please note that you do so at your own risk and the school will not accept responsibility for any damage or loss of belongings. Please ensure that you do not park on the pedestrian footpath or block other cars.

## Every School Day Counts

Every single day a child is absent from school equates to a day of lost learning. Attendance percentages can be misleading:

100% attendance	0 days missed	Excellent
95% attendance	9 days of absence 1 week 4 days of	Satisfactory
90% attendance	19 days of absence 3 weeks and 4 days of learning missed	Poor
85% attendance	28 days of absence 5 weeks and 3 days of learning missed	Very Poor
80% Attendance	38 days of absence 7 weeks and 3 days of learning missed	Unacceptable
75% Attendance	46 days of absence 9 weeks and 1 day of	Unacceptable

For some parents 90% may seem like an acceptable level of attendance, but the reality is that 90% attendance means that your child will miss half a school day each week or 19 days of school during year - that's nearly 4 school weeks.

**Key Point - Give your child the best start in life - every school day counts.**

## Safeguarding and Child Protection

This year our Safeguarding Team is as follows:

Mrs Cunningham      Principal

Mrs Dallat              Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Mrs Hinds                Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Mrs Heaney              Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Nursery)

If you have any concerns about a child in the Primary School, please speak with Mrs Dallat or, in her absence, Mrs Hinds.

If you have any concerns about a child in the Nursery Unit, please speak with Mrs Higgins.

All concerns will be dealt with sensitively.

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## 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.**

### We Need You!

We always need volunteers throughout the school year. We are currently looking for volunteers to help us with the Accelerated Reader Programme and the school garden.

Helping with Accelerated Reader would involve supervising children in the ICT suite and/or the Library. If you would like to help us implement this extremely beneficial programme, please leave your name in the office.

The small garden area next to the playground is used daily by the pupils. To keep it looking well we rely on the pupils and volunteers to do weeding, digging and planting. We are very grateful to Mrs McMahan who works tirelessly in our garden and we would love to get her some help!

If you have a spare hour, once a week, during the next few weeks we would be extremely grateful for your support.

You do not need to be a garden expert, just a willing volunteer!

If you think you can help in the garden please contact Mrs Dallat or leave your name in the office.

### No dogs allowed

In the interests of health and safety, dogs are not permitted in the school grounds.



### Trip to Tesco

Our Year 2 class will be visiting Tesco in Newtownabbey this week to participate in the Farm to Fork initiative. Many thanks go to Tesco and, in particular, their Community Champion, for all that they do to support our school.



### EasyFundraising

I am appealing for all parents/guardians and friends of St James's to please register for Easy Fundraising. This is a very simple way for our school to make money. When you are buying anything online, if you access the site you are buying from through EasyFundraising, the school will get a percentage of what you spend at **no cost to you**. It really is simple to do.

We have raised £376.97 since our Easy Fundraising account was opened and we have 72 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](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk), create an account and support the good cause St James's Primary School and Nursery Unit, Newtownabbey. It would be great if we could get 100 supporters by the end of September!

### Free School Meals

If you think you may be entitled to Free School Meals, please ask for a form in the office and make an application. We can help you with the application form. Not only does Free School Meals help you as a parent/guardian, but it also provides our school with additional funding in our budget. So please, take a few minutes to make an application.

### Bikes and Scooters

In the interests of health and safety, any child who comes to school on a bike or scooter must get off it at the school gate and walk through the school grounds. All children on a bike or scooter should wear a helmet.

### CONTACT DETAILS

Please ensure that the office has the correct contact details for you. Already, on a number of occasions, we have been unable to contact parents/guardians due to having an out of date phone number. It is vitally important that you inform us if you change your phone number and/or address as soon as possible.

### Congratulations

Congratulations to Mr Jones and his wife on the birth of their son, Keelan.



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## ACCELERATED READER

This year the school will continue to use the Accelerated Reader system in Years 4-7. Accelerated Reader has proved very popular with both staff and children and has helped to promote an increase in the quantity and quality of the children's independent reading. An appropriate book level will be assigned to each child based on the results of their STAR Reading test (to be completed early in the new school year). At home the children are required to read for approximately 20 minutes every night (this is the minimum requirement). It is vitally important that your child is actively engaged in the reading process at this time. Time spent looking for books or reading with one eye on the TV will not help your child's reading development.

In order to help facilitate close monitoring of the children's progress, it is important that Reading Records are completed and signed every night. A score of 85% or greater correct is recommended for optimal growth in reading achievement.

If you have any questions regarding Accelerated Reader please contact Mrs Kelly or your child's teacher.

## Healthy Eating

In St James's we always try to promote healthy eating. We would encourage children to bring a healthy break to school and teachers will be awarding Class Dojo points for healthy breaks. We would also encourage parents/guardians to consider what they pack in their children's lunchboxes and to choose a healthier option for the best start to the school year. Choosing a healthier option at break and lunch can help with children's concentration and behaviour as well as helping children to establish good eating and drinking habits for future health. Please remember that we are a nut free school.

The Public Health Agency have provided the following helpful tips:

### Drinks

**What to pack—Water:** tap water or unflavoured, still, bottled water. **Milk:** all whole, semi-skimmed or skimmed unflavoured milk.

**What not to pack—Fruit juices** (including pure fruit juice), smoothies, sparkling water, squash or fizzy drinks, even those labelled 'no added sugar', 'diet' or 'zero'.

### Fruit and veg

**What to pack—Any fresh fruit and vegetables** or fruit packed in pots or tins in fruit juice but not in syrup. A portion could be one medium sized piece of fruit, eg apple, orange, banana, pear, a cup of grapes, cherries or berries; a cereal bowl of salad, eg lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber and celery.

**What not to pack—Fruit tinned in syrup, dried fruit** (eg raisins, sultanas) and processed fruit bars (eg fruit winders, fruit flakes etc). These are high in sugar and can cause tooth decay.

### Bread

**What to pack—White or wholemeal bread, rolls or baguettes, toast, plain bagels, wheaten, soda, potato or pitta bread, spread thinly with a little margarine, low-fat spread or butter; plain bread sticks or crackers, a small sandwich with a sugar-free filling such as tomato, tuna, chicken, cheese etc.**

**What not to pack—Sugary spreads including jam, honey, marmalade or chocolate spread** as these are harmful to teeth. Stay clear of cereal bars or sweetened breads and pastries eg pancakes, scones (plain and fruit), fruit bread, croissants and Danish pastries as these can contain a lot of sugar and/or fat and salt.

For more information refer to the leaflets *Healthy breaks for schools* and *Are you packing a healthy lunch?* at [www.publichealthagency.org/publications](http://www.publichealthagency.org/publications). For information about healthy packed lunches, visit [www.enjoyhealthyeating.info](http://www.enjoyhealthyeating.info) and [www.bit.ly/enjoylunch](http://www.bit.ly/enjoylunch).



### Presentation of Work

Children and teachers are working very hard to improve the presentation of work that the children do. This involves setting high standards and encouraging the children to meet these high standards. The children have to write the date and the learning intention (WALT) and set out their work neatly. Any illustrations need to be coloured in carefully and neatly. We want the children to take pride in their work and have beautiful books that they can be proud of. We appreciate your support in encouraging high standards of presentation when the children are completing homework. Many thanks.

### Maiden Voyage Dance Company

Our Year 2 children are going to see a performance of "Pause and Effect" in Theatre at the Mill on Thursday 19th October. They will also have the opportunity to participate in a dance workshop.

### Website

Please remember to regularly check our website to see what is happening in our busy school!

[www.stjamesps.co.uk](http://www.stjamesps.co.uk)

### No Pens Day Wednesday

We will be participating in No Pens Day on Wednesday 5 October. No Pens Day Wednesday encourages schools to put down their pens and pencils and have a day of speaking and listening activities. We look forward to an interesting and enjoyable day! We are asking each child for £1 to participate which will go towards school funds.

**No Pens Day  
Wednesday**

**4 October  
2017**

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### PTA

The PTA AGM will take place on 21st September at 6.15pm in the staffroom. With all schools facing financial hardship in light of budget constraints, the work of our PTA is even more important and without their energy, dedication and commitment, our school and our children would not be able to avail of much needed resources. I would urge you all to please support the PTA and try to make it to the AGM. Committee members will be elected at the AGM but you do not have to be on the Committee in order to attend the meetings and give your support. Everyone is welcome to attend.

### CLASS DOJO

We continue to use the 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. Following successful trials, we will be giving parents the opportunity to join Class Dojo to see what their children are getting points for. Please note that Class Dojo is not a tool for communicating with teachers and this should continue to happen in the usual way.



### Christmas Card Fundraiser

Every child in our school will be invited to design a Christmas Card. Once completed, their drawings will be sent off and made into a pack of Christmas cards for parents to purchase. This is a great fundraiser for our school and proved very popular last year with lots of beautiful and unique Christmas cards being bought!



## Dates for your diary

Monday 18th September	Year Five Curriculum Meeting (9.10am)	
Tuesday 19th September	Year Two Tesco Trip Beginning of Year Mass	
Wednesday 20th September	Year 6 Curriculum Meeting (9.10am)	
Thursday 21st September	Year 3 Curriculum Meeting (9.10am)	
Friday 22nd September	School closed for Staff Development	
Monday 25th September	School closed for Staff Development	
Tuesday 26th September	European Day of Languages	
Wednesday 27th September	Year 2 Curriculum Meeting (9.10am) Family STEM night (Year 5) Whitehouse PS 7.00pm	
Thursday 28th September	Year 1 Curriculum Meeting (9.10am)	
Friday 29th September	Year 4 Curriculum Meeting (9.10am)	
Monday 2nd October	Year 7 Curriculum Meeting (9.10am)	
Friday 13th October	Year 6 Athletics Taster Session 11.30am	
Thursday 19th October	School photographer	
Friday 20th October	School photographer	
16 October—20 October	Parent—Teacher Meetings. School finishes at 2pm  Parents/Guardians will receive an appointment time to meet with the teacher. Further information will follow.	
Wednesday 18th October	Shared Education Pre Residential Meeting St James's PS	
Friday 20th October	Nursery Sponsored Cycle	
Thurs 26th October	PTA Hallowe'en Disco (Fancy Dress)	
Fri 27th October	Hallowe'en Fancy Dress Parade times will follow  Half Day	
Mon 6th November	School reopens	
13th —17th November	Anti Bullying Week	
15th—19th November	Shared Education Residential	
Mon 27th November	School closed for Staff Development	
Wed 6th December	6.30-7.30pm	Open Night
Fri 8th December	9.30am	Nursery Christmas Concert (Full time and Part Time am classes)
	12.30pm	Nursery Christmas Concert (Part Time pm class)
Tues 12th December	9.30am	Year One Christmas Concert
Wed 13th December	9.30am	Year Two Christmas Concert
Thurs 14th December	9.30am	Year Three and Year Four Christmas Concert
	1.30pm	Year Three and Year Four Christmas Concert
Fri 22nd December	Half Day	12 noon finish
Mon 8th January 2018	Children return to school	

Dear Parent/Guardian

## **CONCUSSION AWARENESS – WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?**

The Department of Education has requested that all schools should write to parents/guardians to highlight the need for you to keep all organisations informed if your child receives a concussion injury.

Concussion is a brain injury which is usually caused by hitting the head or a fall. It can happen at any time, anywhere: for example during sports, in the school playground, or at home.

Concussion must always be taken seriously and it is vitally important that any child/young person suspected of having concussion should **immediately** be stopped from continuing whatever activity they are doing and be assessed by a medical professional for diagnosis and guidance.

A second injury when a child has concussion can be extremely serious and may even be fatal. It is vitally important therefore that medical clearance is sought before your child returns to school/play. Children should not resume physical activities such as Physical Education (PE), sports or games until permitted to do so by a medical professional.

Concussion may also affect your child's ability to learn at school. This must be considered and medical clearance should be sought before the child returns to school. As symptoms vary from child to child, a graduated return to school programme may be needed.

If your child suffers a concussion in school or outside school, it is vitally important that you keep all people/organisations with responsibility for caring for your child informed so that they are aware of the potential dangers and any restrictions that may apply to the activities your child is permitted to do.

The '**Recognise and Remove**' leaflet produced by the Department of Education and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure is available on the Department of Education's website <http://www.deni.gov.uk> and provides guidance on the signs to look out for.

Keeping everyone informed about concussion is in your child's best interests and parents/guardians have a key role in making sure that information is passed on to their child's teacher, sports coach, youth leader or other care provider.

Yours faithfully

Paula Cunningham

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# ACTIVE ROBINS

DEVELOPMENTAL COORDINATION  
DISORDER | DYSPRAXIA | MOTOR  
LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

RED  
ROBIN  
therapy

JUST ACTIVE GYM

# DCD/DYSPRAXIA

Fine motor skills - Gross motor skills - Balance  
Organisational Skills - Concentration Auditory  
Independence skills - Writing | Drawing - Planning  
Perception - Hand-Eye Co-ordination - Memory  
Processing - Confidence and Self-Esteem

## NEW KIDS' CLASSES

STARTING 18TH SEPT

MONDAYS P1-P3 3.30-4.30PM

FRIDAYS P4-P7 3.30-4.30PM

**FITNESS & GAMES AT JUST ACTIVE GYM FOR  
YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DCD**

For more information contact  
ANDREW Just Active Gym - 028 2826 8000  
CLARE Red Robin Therapy - 077 9036 1220

 120-122 Main Street, Larne

 Find us on  
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