



Newsletter – 24th September 2021

Dear parents,

There is a lot of bad news around at the moment: gas prices, food shortages (but only of the things that people actually want to eat), fuel shortages, COVID, that poor alpaca called Pinocchio (or something)...you name it. However, if you ever feel the need to question the way the world is heading, one look at our children enjoying their learning in the classrooms, playing on the fields or engaging in Forest School is all you need to reaffirm that the only way is up. Everything else might be getting expensive or running out, but we have smiles to spare at St James'. Added to this the sun has been shining, with gentle breezes and blue skies.

I just want to thank all of the team here at St James', and all of the children for such a positive start and for making our school such a special and magical place to spend every day.

I am trying to be efficient this week, so with that in mind I have pushed the brevity button on this newsletter and cut the waffle (apart from that first part – please feel free to go back and un-read). We have a fairly brief newsletter today, but plenty of important information to share.

Tours for our new Reception parents

If you remember as far back as July, when we invited you in to school to meet your child's new teacher, I promised you that I would offer to show you around the school properly once it was possible.

If this is something you would like me to organise then please email Angie Pierce (apierce@st-james.kent.sch.uk) to let us know. Once I know how many people (if any) would like to look around we can put some dates in the diary for later this term.

COVID measures

We have been very fortunate to have had relatively few cases in school in comparison to other local schools. If there is a confirmed case within a class I will send a letter to parents in that class (obviously without naming anyone) as a "warn and inform". All children should continue to come to school unless they develop symptoms.

Please remember that children should stay at home even if they have just one symptom; they do not need to have two or three. The symptoms are (how many times have I typed these words?) a persistent cough, a high temperature (37.9 degrees or higher) or a loss or change of the sense of taste or smell. If your child has one of these symptoms they need a full PCR test; a home lateral flow test is just for routine testing and is not as accurate.

Thank you as always for your cooperation and understanding.

Remote learning

If your child is isolating due to a positive test, but is otherwise well, then please contact your class teacher so that we can set work for them so they do not fall behind. If your child is unwell, then getting better is the only thing they need to worry about; school work can wait.



The teachers' email addresses are the class name followed by the word "class", followed by the usual school email address. For example, Dormouse's email address is dormouseclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk and Chestnut's is chestnutclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk.

Parking

We have had an increasing number of complaints about (and incidents of) illegal and/or anti-social parking. It seems that more people than ever are eager to get in their cars, use up some fuel, and join the ill-tempered queues on our roads.

As a reminder, double yellow lines (anywhere) or the yellow zig zags outside the school mean parking is not allowed at any time. In addition, blocking the drive of a neighbour, even if you will "just be a few minutes" (and to me this seems quite an obvious thing to say) is just plain rude. We have reached an agreement with the council where they will follow up on any photos of illegally parked cars that we send them. I will also put flyers under windscreens as a gentle reminder. They have also agreed to significantly step up enforcement patrols and issue fines.

Almost all parents at the school live within easy walking distance (to me that is any walk of around 30 minutes or less) so please leave that tonne of metal at home where at all possible and enjoy a more healthy, relaxed and predictable journey to school. If it is essential for you to drive, please respect the safety of our children (and other pedestrians) and our neighbours and park only in designated spaces or places where parking is permitted.

Drop off reminder

This is another reminder of the timings. Please note that children need to be in school by **8:55am in years 1 to 6**, and by **9am in Reception**. If children arrive later than that they must go in through the main school office and be signed in by an adult. Starting the day on time is important and unfortunately pupils who arrive late miss part of the daily routine, including settling activities. Please support us by getting your child to school on time each day.

Dates for the diary

19 th October	Flu vaccinations
21 st October	Last day of term 11+ results sent to parents
22 nd October	INSET day
1 st November	1st day of new term Deadline for secondary school applications
5 th November	Applications open for entry into YrR 2022
15 th November	Braiswick Photography in to take individual photographs – whole school

Thank you all, as always.

John Tutt
September 2021

