



Newsletter – Friday 17th November

Dear parents and carers,

It is mid-November and the sounds of Away in a Manger are already floating down the school corridors. If your reaction to the rapid approach of Christmas is akin to Brenda from Bristol (You're joking – not another one!), then we have the cure for that right here at St James'. We have a number of events coming up over the following weeks that will whip your Christmas spirit into a frenzy.

Thank you for your vocal support on the hot topic of: "why is it always Mr Tutt on the gate when it rains?" I am deeply indebted to the lovely parent who bought me an umbrella this week, so hopefully I can now return to my office after standing on the gates without that damp, gently steaming feeling. Across the school Miss Hayward is known as the "rain whisperer" for her uncanny ability to predict rain between 8:35 and 9:00am and 3:05 until 3:30pm. In contrast to my frequent issues with dampness, Miss Hayward is highly regarded for her ability to maintain total dryness on even the wettest of days. To be fair, my dampness might be more of an age-related thing.

Staff news

We have two members of staff who will be leaving us temporarily next year to have a baby - Sophie Stock who teaches Owl class on Mondays and Tuesdays and Stoat class on a Wednesday; and Laura Willis who is one of our Teaching Assistants in Oak class – Laura begins her maternity leave at the end of this term. Sophie will be with us for the start of the Spring term and we will let you know the new arrangements for both classes after Christmas.

We are also very sad to be saying "goodbye" to a very long-standing member of staff at the end of this term. Shane Jacob, who works in Maple class, is leaving us to take up an exciting new opportunity. Shane has been at St James' since 2009 and is a highly experienced and valued member of our team – he will be very sadly missed and very fondly remembered.

Pupil Premium

Just a reminder that if your child is eligible for Pupil Premium, the school is happy to fund a place at one weekly extra-curricular club in school – including MSport clubs, Gabriella Dance clubs and a large range of musical instrument lessons. If you would like to take us up on this offer, you can get a full list of clubs and details of the club providers from the office. If you are not sure whether your child is eligible for Pupil Premium please just ask and we can check for you.

Parking

Oh for goodness sake...really? Again?

I realise that the people who park rudely probably won't read this but, just in case, please park safely, legally and responsibly. There is no excuse or mitigation for stopping on (or overlapping) the zig zags by anybody at any time.



We are approaching Carmageddon in Tunbridge Wells, where just a handful more cars on the roads at the wrong (right?) time will mean that all roads around the town will permanently seize up. Please try to cycle, scooter or walk to school to avoid this easily avoidable catastrophe from taking place.

Forest school news

What a stormy term! Thankfully, our Forest Schools have survived intact and the children have shown great resilience out in the torrential rain. They've done a brilliant job of making full use of the mud and water, creating incredible production lines channelling muddy "milk chocolate" and slick mud slides.

This week, a perfect team of Mr Fleming, the Forest School staff and some very strong Year 3s, trimmed down the trees outside the Year 3 classrooms to a safe height and then added the branches to the dead hedge on the field.

Thank you to all the parents ensuring their children have properly waterproof coats, trousers and wellies. Please also remember that, in addition to the school expectation for long hair to be tied back, this is essential in Forest School for the children's safety when climbing, using tools and fire, keeping it out of their eyes.

Happy splashing!

Mrs Hadley



Harvest donations

Thank you so much to all those who contributed to our harvest celebration with donations for the food bank. As a school we collected 239kgs of food and I have attached their flyer of thanks. Remember there is a donation station in the school foyer if you have a tin or box of food that you can spare.

Anti-Bullying Week

We began this week with 'Odd Socks Day', where pupils were invited to wear odd socks to celebrate difference and raise awareness about Anti-Bullying Week, and with a special Anti-Bullying Collective Worship on the theme



of 'make some noise', led by Miss Hayward. Key Stage 2 created a graffiti wall to show their thoughts about bullying, at the start and end of the week.



Miss Hayward

Parent Rep meeting

Parent reps are volunteers who represent the parents in their class, and they are a great way of helping communication between home and school. I have set the 29th November after drop off for a first meeting, which will include a short tour of the school at the end. I hope you can join us!

Santa Run

Don't miss out on the St James' Santa Run at 2pm on 9th December in Grosvenor & Hilbert Park and sign up today. We've been given 50 places in this 3km fun run, so that parents and carers can take part for free. Every adult registered to take part will receive their very own Santa suit to wear during the challenge. Children are very welcome, it's free for them to enter, and they are encouraged to wear their favourite Christmas outfit. Everyone who completes the festive challenge will get a special Santa in the City medal. To find out how to sign up and claim your free place visit www.stjamespta.co.uk

And finally, before the reading results...

You may or may have not noticed my effort to look even more like my dad (circa 1983) by growing a moustache for Movember, a charity that works to support men's physical and mental health. Please do consider donating via the Movember website for whichever moustache tickles your fancy, but only if you can spare it. Remember however that not all moustaches are being grown on a time-limited pay-per-view basis, so please avoid offending someone completely unaware of Movember (ie someone sincerely growing one for its own sake) by stopping them, laughing and asking how to donate.



Key Stage 2 Accelerated Reader Challenges

A huge “Well Done” to all the children for their incredible enthusiasm for, and engagement in, reading activities and quizzes so far.

Here are the overall winners of our Accelerated Reader Challenges for **last term**:

Highest Individual Word Count	Highest Class Word Count	Highest Individual Number of Quizzes Passed	Highest Class Quizzes Passed
George in Kestrel Class 2,163,935 words	Kestrel Class 9,368,425 words	Dylan in Badger Class 49 quizzes	Dormouse Class 414 quizzes

These children were our **Millionaire readers** last term:

Class	Pupil	Word Count
Chaffinch	Reuben	1,469,883
Kestrel	George	2,163,935
	Newton	1,296,810
Osprey	Ella M	1,718,026
	Bethany	1,020,084
Owl	Divit	1,814,846
	Samuel S-J	1,108,015
Swift	Isabelle W	2,153,892

Here are **this week's** winners:

Highest Individual Word Count	Highest Class Word Count	Highest Individual Number of Quizzes Passed	Highest Class Quizzes Passed
Mayenna in Kestrel Class 331,646 words	Osprey Class 1,252,319 words	Jasper in Kestrel Class 9 quizzes	Badger Class 52 quizzes

Many, many congratulations to all our winners. Thank you for encouraging your child to read as every word and quiz truly counts!

Happy Reading!
Mrs Simpson

Dates for the diary

These are on the school website so please take a look (under “parents” and “calendar”).

24th November

Flu immunisation for all year groups
Own clothes day for secret present room donations



29 th November	Parent Rep meeting
1 st December	Secret presents room
4 th December	Year 4 Christmas play (afternoon)
5 th December	Year 4 Christmas play (morning)
6 th , 7 th and 8 th December	Infant nativities - all infant parents welcome & details have been sent separately
12 th December	Year 3 led Christmas church service (2pm start) - Y3 parents welcome
15 th December	Last day of term
24 th December	Father Christmas visiting tonight
2 nd January	INSET day
3 rd January	First day of term

Kindest regards,

John Tutt

PTA dates for the diary

Dates for your diaries (please sign up to help if you can):

24 November- home clothes day and secret present room donations

27 November onwards- please donate your lovely but too small Christmas jumpers for our pre-loved jumper shop

1 December- Secret Present Room

8 December- Christmas Jumper shop

On sale now - tickets for Beauty & The Beast at the Assembly Halls. Save 10% and secure a donation to the PTA if you buy through our website. This is a family event so feel free to invite friends and extended family.

