



Newsletter – Friday 3rd November

Dear parents and carers,

Welcome back to a brand-new term! Highlights of Term 2 include bonfire night, parent consultations and Christmas – an exciting mix! This is just a very brief newsletter to start the term.

School closures

I used to say (with pride) how St James' never closed – how hollow those words seem now. However, in the case of bad weather please assume that we are open. We have never closed due to snow (or wind) and are unlikely to do so in the future. But, as the last few months have taught us, hubris is a very dangerous thing. If the school has to close, partially close or is affected in other ways by the weather (for example the kitchen is unable to prepare hot meals) we will ParentMail as early as we can in the morning.

Class WhatsApp Groups

As you may know, I have three children and therefore understand these groups from a parent's point of view. While I never joined my own children's groups, my wife's mobile buzzed regularly with messages such as "XXX has just told me that the kids are supposed to come to school in pirate costumes tomorrow - [furious emoji]! Is that true?". Another common concern seemed to be the whereabouts of various misplaced items of clothing (more on this later). Sometimes comments clearly hit a nerve and the phone buzzed continually.

I completely understand the utility of such a forum and was always pleased to see the helpful responses which followed most messages; mainly emojis conveying the emotions of either blind rage or hysterical laughter without much in between. Thankfully the Tutt offspring are now at secondary school (and beyond), and secondary schools do not seem to have these groups (or, more likely, we have intentionally not been invited to join one).

Remember that these groups are about your child's class and that children are inherently vulnerable. Please be wary of discussing incidents which may (or may not) have happened in class, especially considering that the witnesses are young children; children should never be named in these groups and neither should parents who may or may not be a member of the group, particularly when messages are negative or accusatory. If parents have any concerns these should be addressed with the class teacher who will not only be able to give you the facts rather than hearsay but is in the best position to give real help if needed.

I know how important every channel of communication is and Class WhatsApp Groups (and others) are extremely useful for keeping in touch, helping to navigate through the challenging role of being a parent and staying up to date. If you have any concerns though, it is best to ask us directly.

Naming things

It is important that you put your child's name in everything they bring or wear to school, as items are left by children in random places around the school on a daily basis. The enigma of the pair of trousers left under a table in the classroom after a PE lesson (when all of the children went home fully clothed at the end of the day) is a mystery worthy of Danny Robbin's next Uncanny podcast. School uniforms are, by their nature, quite uniform in



appearance so please give us a chance to reunite the right items of clothing with the right children and save you some money. Anything worn by the children or brought to school needs to be named.

Coats

Children are still arriving at school without coats, so please ensure your child comes to school wearing one ; please remember to put a name in the coat.

Attendance

At St James' we are very pleased that we have very good attendance, and we would like to share and celebrate this more with you as we know that it is your hard work that helps to makes this happen. Therefore, each newsletter we will now include a brief attendance update like this:

School target	96.5%
Current whole school attendance	96.4%

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!

Dates for the diary

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

7 th & 9 th November	Parent consultations (3:30pm until 6.30pm)
7 th November	PTA AGM
10 th November	PTA pre-loved uniform sale 8:45am
14 th & 15 th November	Sharing Learning (afternoon 14 th and morning 15 th)
24 th November	Flu immunisation for all year groups
29 th November	Parent Rep meeting
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 to follow
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):

7 November- AGM at 7.30pm at school - come along and help make our community stronger

10 November- Uniform Sale at drop off outside the PTA shed. Please drop any uniform donations to the box in reception.



11 November- Table Top Sale 2-4pm

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.

