



newsletter – 4th December 2020

Dear parents,

Welcome to the penultimate newsletter of 2020.

The feeling of anger at Tunbridge Wells being in Tier 3 is palpable. I am not sure whether it is the low infection rate and therefore unjustified ranking which is making Tunbridge Wells folk more cross, or whether it is being lumped in with the likes of Swale. People seem quite angry that the rule-breaking Swale, Thanet, Medway crowd are ruining things for the whole county.

Before we get too cross with our “rule-breaking” brothers and sisters a few miles to the north, I would like to point out that we seem to have some St James’ children attending birthday parties (!!) and mixing in other households; we know this because they tell us. Almost daily a sizeable crowd of parents and children gather after school in the churchyard for a chat while their children play. None of this is allowed or has been allowed for some time.

Happily, I am enjoying living in Tier 2 Crowborough – slightly tempered by the fact that the Wealden infection rate is higher than here. However, I can understand people’s frustrations; the sense of freedom that being in Tier 2 gives is, frankly, exhilarating.

As you know the government are relaxing restrictions over five days at Christmas. I do urge you all to be extremely careful as a widespread relaxation and increased mixing will inevitably lead to increased infection rates and increased incidences of children’s bubbles closing and having to access their learning from home. It was a wonderful feeling on Tuesday to welcome Year 1 back to school and I do hope that we can continue to keep the children in school up to and beyond the New Year.

Thank you for continuing to wear face masks on the school grounds. We would be very grateful if parents could also keep these on at other crowded pinch points (narrow pavements, crossings, church yards etc) on the way to and from school.

Reporting your child’s absence

When reporting an absence on the school absence line. Please tell the office the following:-

Childs name

Class

Reason for absence

Does your child have a high temp of over 37.7°?

If your child has a high temp have you booked a test?

Is your child self-isolating due to a contact outside the school?

What is the estimated date of return?

Santa Run



Don't forget to join in with the festive fun this December and join the St James' Santa Team for My Santa Run 2020. Get the whole family involved to complete 5k dressed in something festive on the 12th or 13th December. Register to take part [here](#) and help bring some Christmas cheer to the St James' community.

If that link does not work, please cut and paste this into your browser: [MSR-SCHOOLS — My Santa Run \(santainthecity.co.uk\)](#)

If taking part please wear appropriate footwear to avoid accidents; there is always something very poignant about seeing someone in a Father Christmas outfit in casualty.

Christmas Jumper Day - Friday 11th December

Let's have a bit of festive fun! Children (and adults) are invited to come into school wearing a Christmas jumper on Friday 11th December. If your child does not have a Christmas jumper, they can still join in by wearing something else festive e.g. a Christmas hat or tinsel accessory alongside their normal school uniform. There is absolutely no obligation to give anything to take part however, if you feel you are able, you can donate to Save the Children by visiting <https://www.savethechildren.org.uk> . Please do not send cash donations in to school with your child as we are unable to collect these this year.

Doorstep Christmas Carols

If, like me, you are going to miss the annual tradition of surly teenagers knocking on your door, singing four lines of "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" in a deep, menacing tone and then demanding cash - fear not, an alternative has been organised.

Doorstep Carols are organising an event to raise money for charity. Please take a look at the link below for all of the information that you will need including song sheets. BBC radio Kent and East Sussex have both agreed to broadcast so you'll just need to tune your radio, go to your doorstep and sing with your neighbours.

<https://www.doorstepcarols.co.uk/>

School meals in December

This is just a reminder that our kind donor has asked that, if parents with children in KS2 genuinely feel that they do not need any help with paying for lunches, they should donate the money they would have spent on school lunches or packed lunch ingredients to the Nourish food bank. Our donor wants to ensure that only those donate who can comfortably afford to.

COVID symptom study App.

So far, very few parents have signed up to this. As I said, this is completely voluntary, but I would appreciate it if you would sign up if you can. If it stops even one vulnerable person from becoming unwell, or stops just one class from having to isolate, then it will be well worth it.

Have a good weekend and thank you all, as always.

John Tutt
December 2020

