



Newsletter – 11th February 2022

Dear parents,

We have come to end of what has seemed a very busy (half) term. We have been fortunate since Christmas as we have had very few COVID cases across the school. We peaked at 36 cases among the children a few weeks ago, but now we are down to 9, with no cases at all among the staff for the last few weeks. If you compare that with another local school who had more than 280 cases recently, you can see how well we have done. That success must be down to good luck, but also down to our parents who have been diligent and selfless in testing, spotting the symptoms and isolating their children when necessary. We have therefore been able to run the school almost completely normally (that is pre-Covid normal – it is never really all that normal at St James') since Christmas. Please accept our sincere thanks, as always.

You may have seen that enforced isolation may be ending for those testing positive. We will review the situation as and when this decision is made to determine how we will respond and communicate this to you.

The heating in the main building has stopped working again today. A different part has gone wrong and has been replaced. Most of this boiler has been replaced at one point or another over the last 30 years (so it has about as much of the original in it as Trigger's broom). A new boiler will cost around £20K, so we are going to persevere with it as long as we can.

In other news we found a half-chewed monkey nut on the field last week (yes, this job really is that glamorous). Please can I remind you that we are a nut free school and no nuts or nut containing products are allowed on the school site at any time, even for after school clubs. We have children in school with severe allergies and we need to keep them safe. In case you did not realise, most types of Pesto contain nuts...as does Nutella...and monkey nuts.

Some of the children have been telling us about their exciting plans for half term. I hope you have a lovely break whatever you do. Just to make you extra jealous, I plan on spending my half term in Crowborough.

INSET day

Please note that the Monday immediately following the half term break is an INSET day, so the children do not return to school until Tuesday 22nd February.

Rev. Jim Stewart

As you may know, Jim is retiring as vicar of St James' after 25 years in which he has played a key role in our school as a governor and of course as a regular visitor for assemblies. We got together on Tuesday to say goodbye to him, thank him for all he has done for our school and wish him an amazing retirement.

Vacancy for a midday supervisor

We have a vacancy for a Midday Supervisor to start as soon as possible for 7.5 hours a week, Monday - Friday. The job will be advertised on www.kent-teach.com with all the details. If you would like further information please speak to Mrs Pierce in the school office.



COMIC RELIEF RED NOSE DAY

Mrs Pierce is once again going to be selling an assortment of red noses in aid of Red Nose day after half term. This year they cost £1.50 to buy and there are 9 different noses to pick and all are 100% plastic free. If you would like your child to buy one, please put the money in a named, sealed envelope. The noses will be brought around for them to choose which one to buy.

Parking

Just for the sake of variety (which, as you know, is the spice of life) I have been asked to write to parents about parking.

Please do not park in the church car park unless you have children in pre-school. The car park is filling with St James' school parents to the extent that there is no room for parents dropping off their little ones. Apparently, some of them are regular offenders.

Sports Update

Athletics: Our Year 4s competed in their Sportshall Athletics event last week at the Angel Centre against 14 other schools. The children represented the school superbly all afternoon and had a fantastic time. They competed in a series of track and field events and finished an incredible 3rd overall! The boys came out top in two of the relays and 2nd place in the long jump and speed bounce. The girls finished 1st in 3 relays and 2nd in another relay and the long jump. Brilliant achievements all round!

Football: Our B Team played an extremely tight game with SKPS last week, coming out with a 2-1 victory thanks to two goals from Ali and a defensive masterclass from Alfie at the back. The girls' team also played SKPS and unfortunately suffered a 2-0 defeat in a very competitive game. They also suffered defeat to an extremely strong St John's team on Thursday - but huge credit to all the girls involved who always give 100% and do themselves proud.

Basketball: On Wednesday, two teams of Year 5/6s went to Skinners for the annual Basketball Tournament. Both teams finished 2nd in their initial groups with some strong performances. Both unfortunately lost their play-off matches, meaning they were placed together for the second group stage alongside St Peter's. Both teams beat St Peter's comfortably, before playing each other for the 4th and 5th place decider. The A team came out on top to secure 4th. It was a highly contested competition and our resident coach Cliff Allen was extremely proud of all the children.

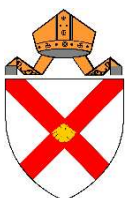
Mr Hodges

Safer Internet Day

The children have had fun this week learning about keeping safe online. With the theme of 'respecting online relationships', all year groups have participated in different activities. Here is what each year group got up to.

Reception and KS1 have been reading the new Digi Duck story, The Magic Castle, and creating their own avatars.

Year 2 discussed the importance of telling a trusted adult if something happens online that they don't like or aren't sure about. They talked about how to make passwords strong and hard to guess, and learnt that in-app purchasing can sometimes be turned off. They also thought about personal information they need to keep private and offline, and the sort of information that is safe to share online. They know how to have fun online whilst staying safe.



Here is a photo of Squirrel class with their Digiduck masks on!



In Year 3 the children enjoyed taking part in the Safer Internet Day quiz. They looked at different scenarios and the children had to choose how to respond. They had some brilliant discussions about how to be respectful to the people they interact with online, in apps and on games. Some of the children even shared experiences of how adults have helped them when something has worried them online.

In Year 4 they started by watching a video clip to get the conversation going. Then the children shared experiences of problems on games such as Roblox. The biggest issue the children have faced is being scammed by another user and losing out on Robux or trading an item and losing out. We discussed respect around these instances and who we should speak to when something online happens.

Year 5

Safer Internet Day 2022 this year, is themed on respecting others online and understanding what to do when you feel like you have been disrespected in a game or messaging app. Showing respect online is represented in many different ways. Some of these include:

- Accepting others' decisions
- Listening to what other people have to say
- Understanding other people's feelings
- And, most importantly, being kind to others you are messaging with

Remember, if you are ever in doubt of sending a text message to a friend, family member, or social group, think about whether you would like that message to be sent to you and if it is respectful or not.

Is it kind? Is it helpful? Is it needed?

Hannah (Nightingale Class)

Year 6 have learnt lots of fascinating bits about Internet Safety this week. They enjoyed Mr Stevens' assembly on Wednesday and we dug deeper into more age-specific scenarios later in the day. Mrs Pain visited the classes in the afternoon and we had lots of discussions around this year's theme "All fun and games? Exploring respect and relationships online" We completed a quiz aimed at younger secondary school children, which we found very helpful.

As teachers, we were very impressed with the children's knowledge about showing respect to others online. However, a few misconceptions meant that this would make a great topic of conversation at the dinner table! All children were reminded that if they ever found themselves unsure or saddened by interactions online, they should speak to a trusted adult



Reception topic

Reception have continued thinking about Q Pootle 5 and, in their classes, the children collaborated to make a rocket to help him return home.

To say thank you Q Pootle 5, left something behind for the children to look after. The children have spent time, thinking about what it is, where it has come from and how to look after it. We are all now waiting patiently to see what happens!

The children have worked really hard this term and deserve a lovely half term break.



Key Stage 2 Accelerated Reader Challenges – 10.02.22

Our Accelerated Reader challenges encourage the children to read widely and independently, as well as to read for pleasure and enjoyment. We would like to say a huge well done to all children for their engagement in reading activities this term, both at school and at home.

This week's winners are:

Highest Individual Word Count	Highest Number of Quizzes Achieved	Highest Class Word Count
Tessa in Nightingale Class 1,841,653 words	Divit in Dormouse Class 59 quizzes	Owl Class 5,864,257 words

Ms Simpson



Key dates for this term

21 st February	INSET day – school closed to children
22 nd February	First day back for the children – term 4 starts
3 rd March	World Book Day (see attached letter)
18 th March	Red Nose Day
1 st April	Last day of term 4
19 th April	First day of term 5

Thank you all, as always.

John Tutt
Headteacher

