



## Christmas newsletter – 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Dear parents,

I am going to be honest with you now. I looked at the news, re-read last year's Christmas end of term newsletter and then seriously contemplated just changing the date and sending it out as this year's. On first appearances, things seem fairly similar to how they were 12 months ago, but look a little deeper and much has changed.

For starters, toilet roll is now in abundance and available on demand in every supermarket. Long may this continue; in weeks from now we may look back at mid-December 2021 as a true golden age of toilet roll availability.

In addition, we have had nativities in school and services at the church; I cannot tell you how special it was for the children to actually perform to an audience in the Christmas plays and I cannot imagine how special it was for parents to see their children on stage. Please do look on the school website (from tomorrow) to see the lower phase children singing Away in a Manager and Come join the Celebration, as their end to the recent Christmas performance. We have had as normal an end to the term as we could have hoped for, and for that we should be thankful.

Also, most of us have been vaccinated at least twice, with a third dose imminent. So, a lot has changed. I hope we can enjoy a more positive Christmas break than we had last year.

I would obviously like to thank everyone here at St James' for always putting the children first, and doing it with such warmth, kindness and enthusiasm. I would like to thank the children who are officially the finest, funniest and most wonderful group of students on this planet; throughout this year they have never failed to astonish us with their resilience and delight us with their joy for learning. I would also like to thank all of the parents and carers for their understanding, patience and unfailing support throughout these last two challenging years.

So let us look forward now to Christmas morning – a magical time no matter how old you may be. Maybe there will be a light dusting of snow on the ground; a visit from Father Christmas is a certainty; and of course, we are all looking forward, with joy and anticipation, to the festive family lateral flow testing session (with seasonal gagging/sneezing) around the Christmas tree, before our grannies and grandpas turn up.

### Snow

We could have snow in January, you never know. If we do get a deluge and need to make emergency announcements we will let you know via ParentMail. We have never closed in the past and I have no intention of closing in the future, but with the crazy weather the world is seeing right now, who knows?

However, we will let you know if circumstances mean we need to ask you to make additional arrangements, for example if the kitchen cannot provide food and we need you to send in your child with a packed lunch.



## New term

Term starts on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> January. If there are any last-minute government announcements over the holidays (in the press) regarding the start of term for schools, please wait until you have heard from us via ParentMail and continue to assume that the 4<sup>th</sup> is the beginning of the new term unless we tell you otherwise.

I know that there is already speculation about a lockdown after the Christmas break. A lot will depend on how well the hospitals are coping and it makes no sense for me to make a prediction now, one way or the other. We may return to stricter guidelines and have to reintroduce bubbles, but we will let you know as soon as we can.

## Sports Update

### Athletics

Our Year 5/6 athletics team competed in a Sportshall Athletic competition last week at the Angel Centre in Tonbridge. There were a series of track and field events in what was a very hectic morning! The children competed exceptionally well all morning. The boys finished 1st in 3 of the relays, the chest push and standing long jump and the girls finished 2nd in two relays and the chest push. Overall, we finished 2nd - our highest ever finish in over 7 years of competing! The children were a real credit to the school.

### Football

Our A team played St Mark's on a very wet and windy Tuesday afternoon last week. The game finished 5-0 with goals from Mohammad (2), Seb (2) and Stanley. A super result in horrendous conditions! A special mention for William who stepped in to play in goal at the last minute.

### Netball

Our B team finished the year off with games against Claremont and St Peter's. There were several changes to the team with a few usual players off ill, so a big well done to those children who played at the last minute. The results didn't quite go our way this week with a 3-2 defeat to Claremont and a 1-1 draw with St Peter's.

It has been brilliant to be out and about again this year and seeing our fantastic children competing and showcasing their vast skills and talents. We look forward to more games and events in the new year!

Mr Hodges

## Year 3 and 4 Art Exhibition

Year 3 and 4 have held an Art Exhibition of all their learning from our Rivers and Rainforests topic. We all enjoyed going around the classrooms and looking at the work which has been completed. There was a real buzz amongst the adults and children to see such wonderful hard work, and fantastic results.

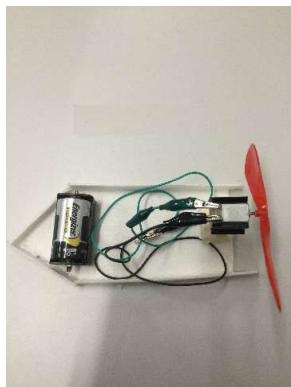


Mrs Jones



## Year 4 Science

Year 4 have enjoyed finishing their Science electricity topic by designing and making some fan boats. They had to make the circuit with a motor which spun a fan without any input, and then tested their boats on some water- with mixed results! We also discussed the possible uses of fan boats run on electricity to help reduce pollution.



Mrs Jones

## Forest School

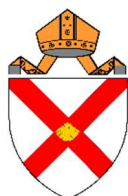
The children have enjoyed the run up to Christmas, loving making decorations using the resources on site and have survived the downpours and storms. Our parachute took a hit in Storm Arwen from an inconveniently positioned willow, so will be patched up shortly. The guilty willow will be pruned severely, with help from our tree surgeons, Living Forest, who have gone over and above in their support of us managing the invasive laurel, having been so impressed with St James' commitment to Forest School and the wonderful team and site.



Mrs Hadley

## Infant Panto

The children enjoyed a very exciting performance of Snow White and Seven Dwarves this morning. There were some very familiar faces amongst the cast members and fun was had by all!



### Well done Reception!

Well done to all of the reception children, making it to the end of their first full term at school. They have all had a very busy time, especially during this Christmas season, learning the Christmas story during RE day, participating in their first Christmas production and have completed lots of craft activities. They have ended the Autumn term, by enjoying a Christmas lunch and some of them were even brave enough to participate in the talent show! The children certainly deserve a very well-earned Christmas break.



Miss Coward

### Key Stage 2 Accelerated Reader Winners - A message from Ms Simpson

Well done to all classes for their fantastic enthusiasm about reading this term. All class teachers anticipate this continuing into next term and beyond!

Here are our Accelerated Reader winners for this term:

Highest Individual Word Count	Highest Number of Quizzes Passed	Highest Class Word Count
Divit in Dormouse Class	Divit in Dormouse Class	Swift Class
1,895,275 words	68 quizzes	6,051,439 words

I would like to say a huge "Thank You" to you for all your support with your children's reading practice at home. It does make a difference, so please keep encouraging your children to continue reading during the holiday. We look forward to celebrating more successes next term.

Merry Christmas to you all and a very Happy New Year.

John Tutt  
Headteacher

