



Newsletter – Tuesday 21st April 2020

Dear parents,

Welcome back to a new school term. I hope you are all well and keeping safe. Our thoughts are with everyone who is currently struggling. Even though we are not together, we are all still part of the St James' community and can be there to support each other so please do get in touch if there is anything the school can do for you.

Thanks again to all the people who have wished me well – I am well and truly on the mend now and looking forward to taking my daily exercise allowance on a bike very soon.

The Tutt family managed to get hold of flour and yeast and Mrs Tutt and the boys made some very tasty loaves. One downside is that it seems almost impossible not to eat a whole home-made loaf in a single sitting, and I am not sure the daily exercise allowance can make up for that. On the other hand, home-made bread seems to go stale in about three hours, so I suppose immediate eating is for the best.

Tower building challenge

Thank you to everyone who sent in a photo of their tower. I was amazed at the height some of you managed to achieve, often only limited by the ceiling. I realised when my own children tried the challenge that I had opened a health and safety minefield, so apologies if your child had to be rescued from underneath a pile of cereal boxes.

I had more than one very tall tower picture sent to me made purely out of dozens of toilet rolls. I think the question "who has been hoarding?" has now been answered.

All the towers were amazing but to pick out just a few of particular note:

Reception – Oliver, Matilda, Jessica & Laurel

Year 1 – Seb, Theo & Jamie

Year 2 – Toby & Isla

Year 3 – Ava, Armin & Aria

Year 4 – Luke, Keelan & Stanley

Year 5 – Corey & Zain

Year 6 – Callum, Grace & Seb

Home learning

Teachers will continue to send home learning and learning grids will be uploaded to the school website each Friday. Learning letters are then sent out each morning. Once again, you are welcome to be flexible if you need to be and please get in touch with your class teacher if you have any questions.

I know that some parents would like teachers to deliver live lessons via zoom or similar. The guidance from unions and KCC is that we should not and all primary schools in Tunbridge Wells are following this guidance. Apart from this, a lesson is a complex interaction between an adult (or adults) and 30 children at many different levels of ability which is impossible to achieve via a video link.



We are however looking at developing the way teachers communicate with pupils and parents to take full advantage of what technology can offer to support us and to help us connect more effectively.

Secondary transitions

Parents in Year 5 will already be thinking about their children's transition to secondary school at the end of Year 6. Usually, we have an after-school information evening followed by consultations where we share CAT test results where parents can discuss their thoughts with their children's teachers.

The children sit the CAT tests to help give parents an indication as to how their child may do in the 11+ Kent tests. These tests have to be sat at school in exam conditions. Unless we are able to return to school at the beginning of June, it will not be possible for the children to sit these tests. However, apart from giving you a guide to help you make the decision about whether or not to enter your child for the Kent tests, these tests have no other function.

Kent have told us that they will share a plan with us as soon as they have more idea what the situation will be in September; at present there is no guarantee that we will even be back at school (no spoiler alert here – I have as much idea of when we will return as you do).

Transition preparations for children in Year 6 will clearly adapt to meet the circumstances we find ourselves in later this term, and we will work with the secondary schools to keep you informed.

New entrants

If you have a child starting at St James' in September, please can you let us know which pre-school they attend via the office email address? This will help us to contact the pre-schools to begin transition arrangements.

Accelerated Reader (Key Stage 2)

Accelerated Reader is software the children use to build their reading skills and love for reading in our classrooms all year long. Now, they can enjoy even more of those reading experiences at home. In addition to reading books of their choice that help them grow as readers, they also can complete AR quizzes that help monitor their progress when they are out of school. Each child has an individual login for the website but if they have forgotten it, please contact your class teacher. The children are very familiar with AR; however, a help guide will be sent out via ParentMail, which details the key points on how to use and support your children when using the software.

Please follow the link below to access Accelerated Reader for your child. Our link is unique to our school and it cannot be accessed through search engines. <https://ukhosted71.renlearn.co.uk/2240930/>
If you have any questions or problems when accessing the site, please contact myself or your class teacher.

Happy reading!

Miss Stock

owlclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk

Keeping in touch

We would like all parents to contact their teachers via the class email addresses as least once every week. We appreciate that circumstances are not the same for everyone and that home learning looks different to different people so this could just be a quick email to say 'hello' and share that all is well in the family. We know that teachers are missing their classes and I'm sure children are missing their teachers and classmates. We think it is important to maintain links more than ever at this time and are exploring different ways that we can communicate with each other. If you do not contact the school, we will do our best to contact you. A reminder of the class email addresses is at the end of this newsletter.



If you need to phone the school please use the usual number, 01892 523006, but select option 1, as we have closed the junior building for the time being. You can email the school via the usual office address office@st-james.kent.sch.uk.

During this school closure, there is still a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) on site every school day who can be contacted, using the school number, if you have any safeguarding concerns. Alternatively, you can contact Lucy Hayward, during office hours, by email: lhayward@st-james.kent.sch.uk

Out of office hours and during school holidays, if you have any immediate safeguarding concerns, please contact Kent Front Door (emergency out of hours) on 03000 41 91 91. If you think someone is in immediate danger, the best thing to do is call 999 for the emergency services.

Superhero in the home

One of our parents emailed me with this and I thought it would be a good thing to pass on.

National Campaign Supports Frontline Superheroes

Superhero in the Home, launched by fundraising consultants TFA, will be held on National Superhero Day, 28 April 2020 to show our support and celebrate our frontline superheroes.

After the cancellation of fundraising events across the country, TFA want to provide a vital fundraising boost to the charities who are delivering key services in the fight against coronavirus, free of charge.

The idea is simple – dress up as a superhero, donate to the charity of your choice, and share a photo on social media.

Arun Sharma, Director of TFA said: “Many of us stuck at home don’t feel there’s much we can do, but this is a simple, fun initiative that everyone can take part in.

“It’s a great way for companies to add new twist for their home-based teams. It gives parents a new angle for home schooling and it’s just a fun way for anyone to safely support their favourite charities right now.”

Through the website, superherointhehome.co.uk, individuals, families, companies and charities can download a range of free resources to help them get involved.

There’s everything from superhero masks and superhero poems, to posters and fundraising ideas. There is even an opportunity to write a poem about your own superhero.

Companies like Salesforce, Gillingham Football Club and Paragon will be getting their staff and fans to dress up and donate. And great charities like NHS Charities Together, Feed the Frontline and Carers First are sharing the campaign with their staff and supporters.

The campaign gives the nation a fun and safe way to support our frontline superheroes who are working around the clock to provide vital services during the coronavirus crisis.

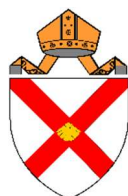
For more information visit superherointhehome.co.uk

John Tutt

April 2020

Class email addresses:

Mapleclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk



Cherryclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
Oakclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
Ashclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
Chestnutclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
Beechclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
Hedgehogclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
Rabbitclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
Squirrelclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
Foxclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
Deerclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
Badgerclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
Voleclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
Dormouseclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
Stoatclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
Swiftclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
Chaffinchclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk
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