

CELEBRATING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

As a part of Catholic Schools Week, we celebrated our grandparents or, for those children who may not have any grandparents, a significant adult in their life other than a parent/guardian. On Friday 5 February, we invited grandparents/significant adult to visit their grandchild's class and take part in activities. We would like to thank all those who came along and made the day a very special occasion for the children. We were overwhelmed by the turn out, support and enthusiasm of all our visitors and we hope that they all enjoyed the experience as much as the staff and children.



I would also like to invite you to an Internet Safety Information Session for parents/guardians on Thursday 11 February at 6.30pm. In order to help with child care arrangements, we will supervise Nursery and Primary School children at this time. The information session will be held in the ICT Suite and we encourage as many of you as possible to attend.

I would like to remind parents/guardians that children in Years 2-7 should be left in the children's entrance foyer from where they can make their own way to their classroom. Only parents/guardians of Year One children should accompany their child to the classroom unless an arrangement has been made with Mrs Cunningham. In the interests of Safeguarding and Child Protection, parents should not enter the children's toilets. If a young child needs to use the toilet, please use the toilets at the office.

Living and Learning Together

YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

I would encourage you to regularly check your child's hair for headlice. If you find that your child has headlice or nits, please seek treatment from your pharmacy. I would also be grateful if you could let the class teacher know. Please note that having headlice or nits is not a reason for your child to be absent from school. Further information can be found at

<http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/head-lice>

PEACE PROMS

Our choir will be performing in the Peace Proms on Sunday 28 February in the SSE Arena in Belfast. This is a very exciting opportunity for the children. If anyone would like to attend the concert, tickets are available from the SSE Arena.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

In order to continue to raise standards in our school, we are trying to improve punctuality and attendance. If your child is absent for any reason, a written note must be given to the class teacher to explain the absence. You may phone the office to inform us that your child will not be present but we would also ask for a written note to be sent in once your child returns to school. Teachers will be recording reasons for absences and, along with the Senior Leadership Team, will be monitoring children's attendance. Please note that children's poor attendance will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

It is also very important that all children are in class at 9.00am and this will also be monitored by the class teacher. Any child who is late three times in one month will receive a letter indicating that they have been late and reminding the parents/guardians of the importance of the child being in class at 9.00am. When a child is late for class, not only does it disrupt the class but the child can feel flustered and upset. Please try to ensure that your child is in class ready to begin their day at 9.00am. Please note that when a child is late for class it is recorded on their attendance record.

LEARN 2 SIGN

On Wednesday 27th January the children in Year 6, at St James's PS, were delighted to welcome students from Jordanstown School, the Northern Ireland school and centre of excellence for children who are deaf or visually impaired. Both Year 6 classes participated in a Learn2sign session and were instructed in the use of British Sign Language (BSL). The children took part in a number of enjoyable and informative workshops, prepared and presented by the Jordanstown students. After a fun morning of learning to use sign language, the Year 6 children were ready to try out their newly acquired skills on their peers and teachers. All of the children declared that they had 'an amazing time' and that sign language was much easier to learn than they had thought.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

Our 'Parents as Partners' programme has been a great success with parents and guardians attending iPad workshops, facilitated by iTeach, Phonics workshops, an information session on Accelerated Reader and Numeracy workshops. The children were also able to enjoy Enchanted Evenings which proved to be very popular!

I would like to thank all the parents/guardians and grandparents who attended the workshops—the feedback has been very positive. I would also like to thank all the teachers and Classroom Assistants who delivered the workshops and helped to supervise the children.

The next parent information session is on Monday 8 February at 9.10am when a representative from Barnardo's will be explaining the PATHS programme that we are now implementing throughout the school.

There will be an Internet Safety workshop on Thursday 11 Feb at 6.30pm. This is a very important issue for all of us and we hope to see lots of you at this session. Supervision will be available for children.

HEALTHY EATING

As a health promoting school, I would remind you that children should bring a healthy break to school. Information regarding healthy breaks can be found in the September St James's Jotter which can be downloaded from our website. I would also remind you that we are a nut free school and children should not bring nut products to school. Due to being a health promoting school and in the interest of children with allergies, we are unable to give the children cakes or treats sent in by parents/guardians when it is their birthday. I appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

Our Safeguarding team is:

Mrs Dallat	Designated Teacher for Child Protection
Mrs Kelly	Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection
Mrs Heaney	Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Nursery)
Mrs Cunningham	Principal

If you have any concerns about a child in the Primary School, please speak with Mrs Dallat or, in her absence, Mrs Kelly.

If you have any concerns about a child in the Nursery Unit, please speak with Mrs Heaney.

All concerns will be dealt with sensitively.

CAR PARKING

Please remember that, following advice from the Education Authority, the back car park is for staff parking only. As always, I would appeal to all drivers to please be considerate when parking in King's Walk and Bleach Green. I would also suggest that you could drop your children off on Fernagh Road at the entrance to King's Walk and they could walk the short distance to school. In a recent meeting with DRD, this was also suggested as a way to help address our traffic issues. Please note that residents have been advised to contact the PSNI to report any incidents. I appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

TAKE CARE!

It is great to see some of our children coming to school on their bicycles. However, I would like to remind you that, in the interests of your child's safety, when riding a bicycle, they should always wear a helmet. Children should also get off their bicycle at the school gate and walk their bicycle round to the bicycle stands.



AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Monday	Street Dance Years 1-3
	Street Dance Years 4-7
	Music Theory
	Drums with Adam
Tuesday	Hockey
Wednesday	Drama
Thursday	Gardening and Eco
	Football
	Speech and Drama Years 1 and 2
	Speech and Drama Years 3-7
Friday	Jujitsu

ROAD SAFETY QUIZ

On Tuesday 26th January, four primary seven pupils took part in the annual Primary Schools Road Safety Quiz hosted by Newtownabbey Road Safety Committee. The event took place in Mossley Mill. In the weeks leading up to the quiz, Year 7 pupils brushed up on their road safety knowledge and four were then selected to represent St. James's. This was the first time our school had entered the event so we weren't too sure what to expect! There were 16 local schools in total all bidding for the title along with the newly sponsored Cornhill Insurance trophy. A PSNI officer was the quiz master who had put together a fantastic selection of quiz rounds. Our pupils showed off their skills by answering an array of general knowledge and road safety questions over the 7 rounds. Although we weren't the winners this time, our team were presented with medals and a road safety goodie bag. We will definitely be back again next year! A big congratulations to Sahar, Abbie, DJ and Ewan for representing our school. A great morning was had by the pupils and Mrs Cross was very proud of the school's performance.

CONTACT DETAILS

It is vitally important that we have current contact details for all parents/guardians so as you can be contacted in the case of an emergency. Please ensure that if your contact details change, you inform the office immediately.

MEDICS IN SCHOOLS

We are delighted to be once again working in partnership with Queen's University and Sentinus to support the Medics in Primary Schools programme. The programme provides an opportunity for both Primary school children and medical students to develop their communication skills. We will have a medical student working with our Year 7 children and we look forward to an exciting learning opportunity for our children.

BREAK THE RULES DAY

On Friday 12 February the children will be allowed to 'break the rules' in order to raise funds for the PTA. The children get to choose which rules they want to break and pay 50p per rule. This is always a very popular event and we look forward to your support.

Year 2 are Virtually There!

In our December edition of St James's Jotter, we informed you of the exciting opportunity for Mrs Cross's class to work with an artist. This week the artist Naomi Draper said hello to the Year 2 class for a short 'getting to know' us session from her studio in Boyle, Roscommon. We are all looking forward to the collaboration with Naomi.

TWITTER

If you have requested to follow us on Twitter but haven't yet been accepted, please let me know as it can be difficult to determine who is a parent from the twitter name.

CONFIRMATION

Our Year 7 children will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on Saturday 6 February at 11.00am in St Mary's, Star of the Sea, Whitehouse. After Mass, the children, sponsors and their families are invited to the Hall for refreshments. In order to help with this, I am asking for donations of tray bakes, buns, cakes, biscuits etc. Any donations should be left into the school office on Friday 5 February. I look forward to your support in making this a very special celebration for our children and would like to thank those who have already donated biscuits.

Pupil of the Month

The following children were awarded Pupil of the Month for December:

Year One Miss Patterson	Harvey Snoddy Zuzanna Dagiel
Year One Miss Morrow	Liam Magill Darcy McCann
Year 2 Mrs Cross	Jackson Mulholland Damian Siwecki
Year 2/3 Mrs Cuning	Courtney Lee Crawford Mark Neill
Year 3 Miss Black	Ieuan Russell Luna Banasik
Year 4 Mr Jones	Bradley McComb Aimee Green
Year 5 Mr Tunney	Anna Gordon Rory O'Connell
Year 6 Mrs Kelly	Nakita Douglas Jamie-Louise McLaverty
Year 6 Mr Nolan	Jamie Wang Jodie Coiley
Year 7 Mrs Donaghy	Zeigan Barrido Abbie Moore
Mrs Dallat	Darcie Robinson Macauley Coyle

Congratulations to all the boys and girls.

NURSERY STAY AND PLAY

The Nursery 'Stay and Play' programme takes place in February. Parents and Guardians have the opportunity to 'Stay and Play' with their child and see the wonderful learning that happens in our Nursery. Parents/Guardians should contact their child's Nursery teacher to arrange a time.

PTA

With the festive period now over, what better way to start the New Year than with a good spring clean. The PTA will soon be planning the May Fair. This will consist of an evening of fun for the children and their families.

We would be extremely grateful if you would donate any unopened/unwanted Christmas gifts for the tombola. Such gifts could include chocolates, alcohol, perfume, books, photo frames, CDs, DVDs, candles or toiletries. **UNUSED ITEMS ONLY PLEASE.** If you have any such items, please leave them with your child's teacher. Many thanks in advance.

Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday 9th February at 6pm in the school staffroom. If you are a parent or guardian please come along or give any suggestions or ideas you might have to a teacher or committee member.

St James's PTA

Living and Learning Together

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sat 6 February 2016	11.00am	Confirmation in St Mary's, Star of the Sea, Whitehouse
Mon 8 Feb 2016	9.10am	PATHS Information Session for Parents/Guardians (Assembly Hall)
Thurs 11 Feb 2016	6.30pm	Internet Safety Information Session
Mon 15 Feb—Fri 19 Feb		School closed for Mid term
Tues 15 March	11.00am	First Confession, St James's Church
Thurs 17 March		School closed for St Patrick's Day
Thurs 24 March	12 noon	School closes for Easter Holidays
Mon 4 April	9.00am	School reopens
Sat 14 May 2016	11.00am	First Holy Communion in St Mary's, Star of the Sea, Whitehouse

MORNING ARRANGEMENTS

I would like to remind you that, in the morning, we ask parents/guardians of Year 2-7 children to leave their children at the front door or in the children's entrance foyer in the morning and let the children make their own way to their classroom.

I would also remind you that all teachers supervise the children from 8.50am and it can be very difficult for them to talk to parents at this time. If you need to inform the teacher of something, please send a note with your child or contact the office and a message can be given to the teacher. If you need to speak with the teacher, please phone the office to arrange an appointment. Please remember that parents should not go up the stairs in the morning.

LATE ARRIVALS

If your child is late arriving at school, please report to the office. Children will then make their own way to the classroom or, if necessary, a Classroom Assistant will meet them at the office and take them to their classroom. Please note that when a child is late for class it is recorded on their attendance record.

WEBSITE

Please remember to check our website regularly.

www.stjamesps.co.uk

Breakfast Club

Our Breakfast Club is proving to be increasingly popular and provides a valuable service for our parents/guardians. If your child goes to Breakfast Club and has money that they need to give to the teacher, I would be grateful if you could ensure the money is put in a labelled envelope in the child's bag which they can then give to their teacher. Mrs Brown and Mrs Thompson can no longer accept money other than that for Breakfast Club. Thank you for your cooperation.

ACCELERATED READER HOME CONNECT

We are pleased that parents and carers now have the opportunity to use Renaissance Home Connect. This is a means of monitoring children's reading practice by allowing access to Accelerated Reader at home. Renaissance Home Connect provides a snapshot of each child's reading progress including average percentage correct on quizzes, number of points earned and results of the last quiz taken (reading quizzes can only be taken in school). Parents and carers can also see all of the books read by their own child. We are sure that Renaissance Home Connect will prove to be a valuable tool in helping parents to encourage their child to read and in helping to monitor progress towards reaching reading targets. The children in Years 4 to 7 have already been given the website address and their login details. If you have any questions about Home Connect please feel free to ask the class teacher or Mrs Kelly (Coordinator).

Living and Learning Together