

St James's Jotter

March 2018



SACRAMENTS

Congratulations to our Year 3 children who made their First Confession on 6th March and to our Year 7 children who were confirmed on 14th March. The children, as always, were impeccably behaved and participated fully in the ceremonies. Many thanks to all those who were involved in preparing the children for these Sacraments. Thanks also to all those who donated cakes, buns, biscuits etc for the celebration after Confirmation. Your generosity helped to make this a very special occasion for our children and their families.

BIG BUN BONANZA FOR TROCAIRE

As part of our fundraising efforts for Trocaire, we are having a Big Bun Bonanza on Wednesday 21st March. We are asking each family to donate some cakes, buns or tray bakes and leave them into the school on Tuesday 20th March or on Wednesday 21st March first thing in the morning. The children will be able to go to the bun sale and buy themselves a bun for their break - no healthy break on this day! They can even buy some buns to take home to their families. Each bun will cost 25p and all proceeds will go to Trocaire. If your child has any allergies, please ensure that you speak with their class teacher prior to the bun sale.



Morning Arrangements

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.

CAR PARKING

I would like to remind parents/guardians that they should not enter the staff car park at the back of the school either for parking or dropping off. I am appealing for cooperation in this request as staff are still having difficulty getting in and out of the staff car park. If your child is going to Breakfast Club, I would be grateful if you could drop them off in the main car park and they can walk the short distance to the canteen door. I would also be grateful if parents/guardians would be mindful of the speed at which they enter the school grounds remembering there are lots of children around.

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YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

In this season of colds and flu, I would be grateful if you could remind your children to take extra care to wash their hands thoroughly, to cover their mouth when coughing and to use a tissue. I would also 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>

FEET FIRST FAMILIES

We are excited to announce that as part of the Sustrans Active School Travel Programme, we are holding a **series of FEET FIRST FAMILIES** events. **FEET FIRST FAMILIES** is a brand new initiative in which we are supporting our pupils to walk, scoot or cycle to school on a regular basis and to encourage other members of the family to get involved too.

On Friday 2nd March, pupils will be given a sheet of stamp strips which they can mark off each day that they make an active journey to school.

There are 6 spaces on each strip, 5 for school days and 1 for the weekend. We would love you as a parent or guardian to complete the weekend option with your child by going for a walk, cycle or scoot with them – maybe the whole family could participate? Once the strip of 6 is complete, simply place it in the **FEET FIRST FAMILIES BOX** in the children's entrance foyer to be in with a chance of receiving a prize.

As part of the **FEET FIRST FAMILIES** official launch day on the 9th March, we are encouraging as many pupils and their families as possible to walk, cycle or scoot to school on that day. We will also be choosing our first prize winner on this day.

If you are unable to walk, scoot or cycle the whole journey from home, please consider a 'Park n Stride' option where you are encouraged to drive part of the journey to school. Find a safe and suitable place to park up, meet friends and walk the final part of the journey (at least 7-10 mins away) – you may find this more relaxing than sitting in traffic.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

In order to continue to raise standards in our school, we are continually trying to improve punctuality and attendance. Class teachers are now responsible for recording your child's attendance on the school computer system, SIMS.

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.

Women's Aid

A representative from Women's Aid will be presenting at Assembly on 23rd March and will then be working with some classes in the third term. They will be promoting self esteem, healthy friendships and internet safety.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

Our Safeguarding team is:

Mrs Dallat	Designated Teacher for Child Protection
Mrs Hinds	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 Hinds.

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

All concerns will be dealt with sensitively.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Mon	Judo 2-3pm and 3-4pm
Tues	Basketball 3-4pm; Drums 3-4pm; Year 6 Literacy and Numeracy
Thurs	Multisports 2-pm and 3-4pm
Fri	Art 2-3pm

TAKE CARE!

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



Children should also get off their bicycle/scooter at the school gate and walk it round to the bicycle stands.

CRICKET

Well done to our Cricket Team who came second in their first tournament in the Valley Leisure Centre. There is definitely a bright future ahead for cricket in St James's!



St Patrick's Day

We celebrated St Patrick's Day on 16th March with lots of singing and dancing and the children all wore green. It was a great day of fun and laughter!



The McConkey Cup

Congratulations to all the boys and girls who learned a poem for our poetry recital competition. Three children from each class were selected to perform in front of the whole school to compete for the prestigious McConkey Cup. Well done to our winner, Hannah Quinn (Year 7), who recited *The Tree and the Pool* by Brian Patton.

ERASMUS

Mrs Dallat, Mrs Cross and Mrs Brown visited our partner school in Jerez de la Frontera in Spain last week as part of our Erasmus Project. They were there along with our partner schools from Milan, Kildare, Finland and Whitehouse PS.

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wed 21st March 2018	Big Bun Sale for Trocaire (further details to follow)
Thursday 29th March 2018	Half Day
Friday 30th March—Friday 6th April	Easter Holidays
Mon 7th — Tues 8th May	Holiday—school closed (please note additional day)
Sat 12th May 2018 2018 11.00am	First Holy Communion in St Mary's, Star of the Sea, Whitehouse
Fri 25th May	Sports Day—further details to follow
Mon 28th May—Tues 29th May	School closed

Pupil of the Month

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

Year One Miss Morrow	Beck McManus Lucy Sommerville
Year One Mrs Magill	Conall McWilliams Frances Bacalso
Year 2 Mrs Cross/ Mrs Dallat	Leoni McCracken Tom McGrillan
Year 3 Mrs Hinds	Tomisin Bamidele Tayana McGuinness
Year 3 Mr Jones	Darcy McCann Rosa McKinley
Year 4 Mr McNamee	Kevin Hoyne Hollie McMillan
Year 5 Mr Nolan	Arianna McCracken Mark Neill
Year 6 Mrs Kelly	Ciaran Laverty Cemre Caylak
Year 7 Mrs Donaghy	Scarlett reid Jonathan McCourt

Congratulations to all the boys and girls.

ST JAMES'S STEM CHALLENGE

Last week, as a celebration of 'British Science Week', we gave our children a challenge! They were all given a pack of 50 lollipop sticks and asked to put their Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths skills to the test and build a structure. We look forward to seeing the children's wonderful creations and there will be prizes for the most creative and inventive. We hope to display the models throughout the school and there will of course be photographs on our website.



YEAR SIX TRIP TO STORMONT

Last week some Year Six children had the opportunity to attend a Science Festival in Stormont. The Festival focused on the diverse geology and landscape of Northern Ireland and the children got to take part in a series of interactive workshops.