

St James's Jotter

April 2018



PTA BAG PACK

We are delighted to have been given a fantastic fundraising opportunity by Tesco Newtownabbey, through its Community Champion Katrina Dale. On **SATURDAY 9 JUNE 2018**, the PTA has been given permission to hold a charity bag-packing collection, from **10am - 6pm**. This is a really significant opportunity to raise substantial funds, which can be applied to needs of the school such as PE equipment, playground resources - even updating of the classroom furniture.

The success of the event will depend in large measure on one thing: the number of volunteers. We have 8 hours, during which we will pack bags and collect money at 10 tills. Keeping all of those tills manned by enthusiastic volunteers at all times is obviously crucial. So PLEASE help us by signing up to give whatever time you can - an hour would be great - to this effort. It is a job for the whole school community to become involved in. If you can smile and pack a bag at the same time, you're qualified! Any information you need will be provided in advance.

IF YOU (or a member of your family) CAN HELP, PLEASE SIGN UP with a member of the PTA or in the school office. This will allow a timetable to be finalised well in advance of 9 June. We cannot overstate the importance of this opportunity to our school. It is something to be genuinely excited about, and we look forward to making the most of it for the benefit of the pupils.

Thank you in advance for your support.

The PTA Committee

*Remember that at any time, you can you can donate to the PTA by text: just text **SJMS33**, followed by your donation, to **70070** (so, to give £3, text 'SJMS33 £3' to 70070). You'll receive a text message asking if you'd like to add 25% with Gift Aid: if you are eligible, please do. It makes a real difference.*

LET'S MAKE ST JAMES'S BETTER!

As you are aware, raising standards in all aspects of school life is a priority here in St James's. We are constantly trying to improve and we value your input. This year, we are asking you to complete the questionnaire earlier than we have in the past so as we can get the analysis back and hopefully inform you of the findings before the end of June or soon after.

I would be grateful if you could spare ten minutes to complete the questionnaire to tell us how well you think we are doing and how you think we can improve the things that are important to you. The questionnaire applies to the Primary School only and one questionnaire should be completed for each child in the Primary School. Therefore, if you have two children in the Primary School, I would be grateful if you could complete two questionnaires. We need as many parents/guardians to complete the questionnaires as possible to give us a true reflection of your thoughts and opinions.

The questionnaire can be completed by going to <http://survey.gi-assessment.co.uk/s/1M4V5/> and logging on using the password provided below. Your password is: STJ14789parent (the password is case sensitive).

By completing the questionnaire, you will be telling us how you think we should be spending our time and resources to make our school the best that it can be for your child.

Each completed questionnaire is vital in finding out what parents/guardians think. Your answers will be treated in strictest confidence and will make a difference to how we plan for the future.

I would be grateful if you could please complete this questionnaire by Tuesday 15th May 2018. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Living and Learning Together

YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

We have had a number of cases of chickenpox recently. The advice from the Public Health Agency is that children should stay off school for five days once the spots appear.

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.

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.

Women's Aid

We would like to thank Women's Aid and in particular Laura who has been working with Year 4, 5, 6 and 7 over the past few weeks on a variety of programmes. The children have thoroughly enjoyed taking part.

TROCAIRE

We would like to thank everyone for their generous contributions to our Lenten Trocaire appeal. Through the Big Bun Sale and various raffles we raised a fantastic £592! Well done everyone!

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. The Education Welfare Officer will ask for the reasons for your child's absences.

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.

We ask parents to try to make appointments for children outside school hours. However, if, in an emergency, you need to collect your child early, you must ask for your child at the office and you must fill in a form providing details of why your child is leaving school.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Mrs Hinds who graduated with her Professional Qualification in Headship on the 9th April.

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.

Newtownabbey Food Bank

St James's Primary School and Nursery Unit is a registered referral agent for Newtownabbey Food Bank.

Vouchers are available in school. Mrs Dallat is the contact person for these vouchers. The voucher entitles an individual or family in crisis to receive food sufficient for three days.

There is no gathering of personal information by school.

The vouchers can be handed in at the local food bank at Abbots Cross Presbyterian Church or in Carnmoney.

At the food bank there are refreshments available and toys for young children to play with whilst waiting for the food pack.

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.

YEAR 7 END OF YEAR SHOW

Our Year 7 children are rehearsing for their End of Year production of The Jungle Book. The performances will take place in the 13th and 14th June. Further information will follow.

FORTNITE: BATTLE ROYALE

Recently there has been much media attention given to the online game 'Fortnite'. Please find advice at the end of the Jotter from C2k (our school ICT provider) on this game.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

Our Year Four children will be making their First Holy Communion in St Mary's Star of the Sea, Whitehouse on Saturday 12th May at 11.00am. In preparation for the day, there will be a parents' meeting on Wednesday 2nd May at 2.30pm in Mr McNamee's classroom. In order to help with the celebrations afterwards, we would be grateful for any donations of cakes, buns, biscuits, etc. These should be left into the school office on Friday 11th May. I look forward to your generosity and support.

SPORTS DAY

Sports Day will take place on Friday 1st June (weather permitting). Sports for children in Years 1-4 will begin at 9.15am and end at 10.45am and for children in Years 5-7, sports will begin at 11.00am and end at 12.30pm. Children may go home with an adult afterwards as long as the class teacher is informed. However, school will continue as usual until 2pm for those children who do not go home. Further details will be sent home nearer the time.

Living and Learning Together

BIG PEDAL

As you are aware we have been taking part in the Big Pedal and children have been encouraged to cycle or scoot to school. We are currently in 312th place overall with 261 journeys being recorded. We would encourage parents to also take part as these journeys can also be included.

So far, the class with the most number of journeys completed is Year 2 (Mrs Cross and Mrs Dallat) with 54 journeys, followed by Mrs Magill's Year 1 class with 42 journeys and Miss Morrow's Year 1 class with 41 journeys.

This is the last week of the competition, so we would like to encourage as many as people (children and adults) as possible to take part and help us improve our overall number of journeys.

Pupil of the Month

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

Year One Miss Morrow	Ella McKinley Danny O'Neill
Year One Mrs Magill	Mikayla King Grace- Ellen Connolly McGrann
Year 2 Mrs Cross/ Mrs Dallat	Jessica Muckian Coby Finlan
Year 3 Mrs Hinds	Stuart Snoddy Harvey Snoddy
Year 3 Mr Jones	Jacob Nycek Alexander Ross
Year 4 Mr McNamee	Oliver Gordon Courtney-Lee Crawford
Year 5 Mr Nolan	Tyrelle Chodeva Amelia Grajek
Year 6 Mrs Kelly	Caitlin Grant Jeff Jazul
Year 7 Mrs Donaghy	Melanie Biju Anna O'Dowd

Congratulations to all the boys and girls.

ST JAMES'S IN THE COMMUNITY—BEE SAFE

On Friday 27th April, our Year 7 class took part in the Policing and Community Safety Event in the Movie House in Glengormley.

PARENT—TEACHER CONTACT

Our teachers are always willing to meet with parents to discuss any concerns they may have. However, I would ask you to please remember that, on most days, Year One and Two teachers have other classes to teach and need to get there promptly. Therefore, I would be grateful if you could please contact the office to arrange an appointment. Thank you for your cooperation.

2018-19 Holidays

The holidays for the 2018-19 school year are now available on our website under the About Us tab.
www.stjamesps.co.uk

SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

Well done to our Water Polo team who took part in a competition in the Grove Leisure Centre and came second.

We were also represented at another Cricket tournament when, once again, the children performed fantastically well.

Well done to everyone involved!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wed 2nd May	Year 1 Ditch the Stabilisers
Mon 7th and Tues 8th May	School closed
Wed 9th May	Year 3 Cycle Skills
Wed 23rd May	Year 6 Cycling Proficiency
Thurs 24th May	Year 4 Visit to Cloughfern Library
Fri 25th May	Year 7 Trip
Mon 28th and Tues 29th May	School closed
Fri 1st June	Sports Day
Tues 5th June	Year 5 (Mr Nolan) Trip
Tues 12th June	Year 4 Trip
Wed 13th and Thurs 14th June	Year 7 Show
Tues 19th June	Year 7 Leavers' Mass
Thurs 21st June	End of Year Disco—during the school day
Fri 22nd June	Year 7 Leavers' Assembly
Fri 29th June	Half Day

GDPR

As you may be aware, data protection law is changing on 25th May 2018 and this will include the introduction of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Mrs Cunningham has received some training and will receive further training from the Education Authority in the near future which will be disseminated to staff.

PTA Funding

In recent weeks, the PTA Committee has committed to provide the school with funding in respect of:

- a handwriting scheme to be used throughout the school, to provide a consistent approach and improve levels of presentation;
- a scheme to help promote listening and concentration skills, as recommended by the Education Training Inspectorate;
- *Numicon* numeracy resources, including for the Nursery Unit, to build on the success of these fabulous resources in other parts of the school;
- badly-needed toys for the Key Stage 1 play area; and
- further funding for the valuable *Accelerated Reader* literacy programme.

In total, this represents a PTA spending commitment at this time of approximately **£3900**. We would like to thank the PTA for all their hard work and fundraising efforts and thank all our parents/guardians for supporting the valuable work of the PTA.

STAY SAFE STAY OUT

Tragically, over the past few years a number of young people have been killed or seriously injured after entering disused or working quarries and got into difficulty in deep cold lagoons or on the steep rugged quarry faces. With warm weather and the summer holidays approaching, there is concern that children, teenagers and young adults could be tempted to enter their local quarry.

To help prevent this, QPANI, with the support of the Health and Safety Executive NI (HSENI), are promoting the Mineral Products Association (MPA) national "Stay Safe" campaign to raise awareness amongst younger children, teenagers, parents, teachers and youth workers about the dangers of entering quarries uninvited. All too often after the death or serious injury to a young person in a quarry, their friends or parents say that they were not aware of the risks they were exposing themselves, they thought they were engaged in a harmless bit of fun. If the friends who were with them had understood the risks, they might have stopped them. This is why we believe that helping to raise awareness of these hazards will help to save young people's lives.

We are appealing to you to help us pass on this important message to young people in your care - "STAY SAFE... STAY OUT" - so that they heed this warning that quarries (working or disused) are not fun places and that by trespassing they place both their own and their friends lives at risk. Fencing and warning signs are there to protect them, please do not ignore them.

The potential hazards that people expose themselves to are:

- Swimming in quarry lakes that can have very cold water even on a hot day in the middle of summer. Strong swimmers have drowned in quarries due to the unexpected impact that the extreme cold has had on their bodies.
- The water in quarry lakes can be very deep and shelving, exit from the water may only be possible in a few places, there may be pumps working or currents that can drag you under the water.
- There can be concealed underwater obstructions and other hazards that can seriously injure swimmers or individuals jumping into the water – tombstoning into quarry lakes is not safe.
- Tunnelling into piles of sand or playing on stockpiles exposes you to the risk of sudden collapses or movements that can easily bury you.
- Walking near the edge of quarry faces exposes you to the risk of serious falls as the edges can be unstable and collapse unexpectedly or sheer faces be obstructed by vegetation.
- Climbing or walking near rock faces can expose you to the risk of rock falls.
- Surfaces in quarries that may look solid, such as the surface of a silt pond, can suddenly break and act like quick sand sucking you down.
- Trail and quad biking in a quarry exposes riders to risks from unstable terrain, unexpected obstructions and being hit by moving plant.
- Young people on bikes or on foot may not be visible to operators of large machinery, they may not appreciate that the driver cannot see them.
- Quarries can often be located in remote sites where mobile reception is poor and there is no one on hand to help in the event of an accident.

I would be grateful if you could please reinforce the very important message of STAY SAFE...STAY OUT with your child/children.

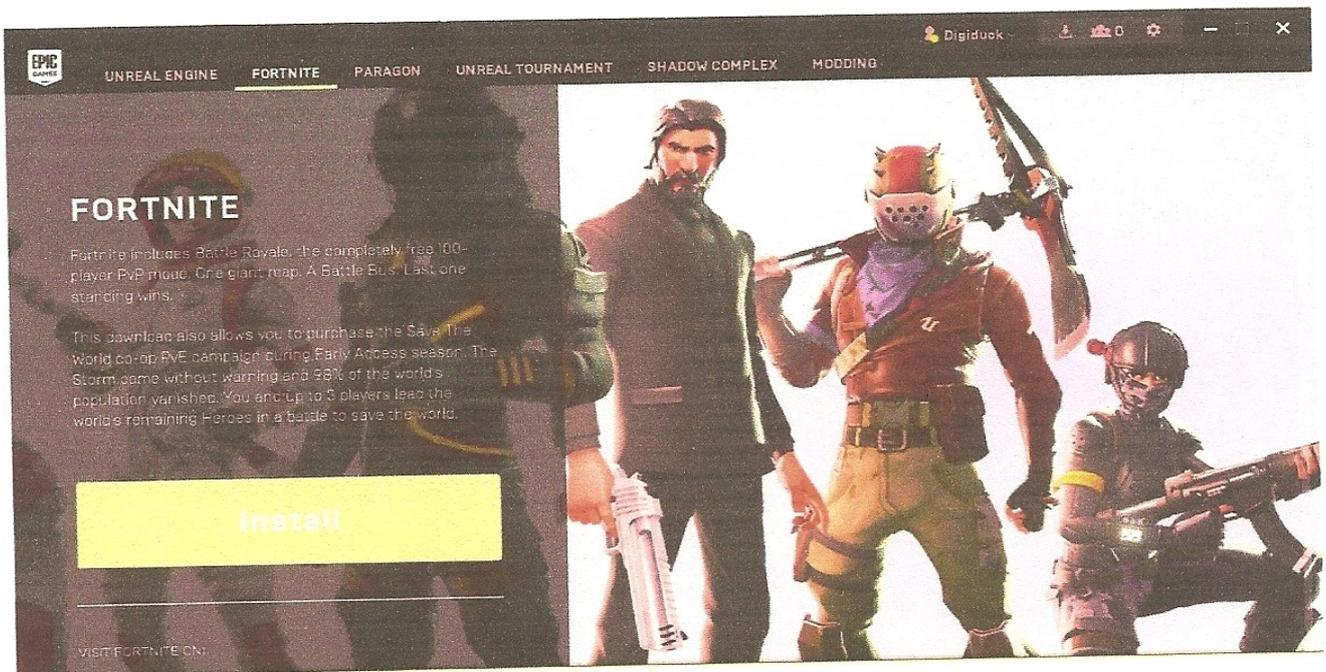
Advice re Fortnite: Battle Royale

There has been an increasing number of young people talking about the game 'Fortnite'. The following information is aimed at providing guidance to parents about Fortnite, looking at what the game is and some of the things to be aware of.

What is Fortnite?

Fortnite is an online game, which includes Battle Royale, where players do not have to pay to play. In Battle Royale, 100 players compete against each other to be the last person standing in player vs player (PVP) combat.

Users play against people of different ages from across the world, and can talk and interact with each other as they play through the in-game chat feature.



What age rating is Fortnite?

Fortnite has a PEGI rating of 12, PEGI have said this is due to the: 'frequent scenes of mild violence. It is not suitable for persons under 12 years of age'. This PEGI rating only takes into account the content in the game and not the contact element, where players may be exposed to swearing and offensive language from strangers, either through audio or on-screen text chat.

What do I need to know?

In order to play Fortnite you have to create an account. To create this account you need to provide an email address (which you will have to verify) and display/user name. However you are not asked your age in order to create an account.

You are playing against other players

As Fortnite is an online game you will play against players of different ages from across the world. You cannot turn the in game chats off or choose who you play against.

You can make in game purchases

Although Battle Royale is free to play, other aspects of the game are not. There are packs which give you different access to the full game and extensions, bonuses and weapons. These start at £34.99 and go up to £119.99. The game does ask players to make additional in-game purchases whilst playing, though these are not required to play the game.

There is animated violence

Fortnite does feature violence when players are in combat with each other, the animation of the game is very cartoonish, and the violence isn't bloody or gory. However, it is worth noting that the aim of Fortnite is to defeat other players by fighting against them.

Where you can play

Fortnite is currently available on PC, Mac, PlayStation and Xbox , and will soon be available on IOS (apple products). It is downloadable from the Fortnite website, this download gives access to both the free and paid for versions of the game.

Our advice

Have an open and honest conversation with your child

- It's important to involve yourself in your child's online life and a simple and effective way to this is by talking to them about their life online. Try to maintain an open dialogue with your child and find opportunities to talk to them about what they love to do online. Parents can help children access the amazing resources the internet has to offer whilst keeping them safe online at the same time.
- Asking your child about how they play Fortnite and what they like about it is a great way to start a conversation. Our conversation starters can help you to have this conversation.
- Play with them. It may seem daunting, but one of the best things that you can do is to engage with the gaming environment and begin to understand what makes Fortnite so attractive to young people, as well as giving yourself an idea of the reporting tools available within the game.
- Know how to make a report. On Fortnite you can report players who are behaving inappropriately by using the in-game feedback tool located in the game Main Menu, you can also make a report by emailing the creators of Fortnite.
- See what other people think of Fortnite. Common Sense Media (<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/>) allow parents and young people to give their reviews of games that they have played. They have created a very useful video guide to Fortnite with footage of the gameplay involved.