

St James's Jotter

September 2018



As we begin a new school year, I would like to welcome all our returning children and their families and extend a very big welcome to all our new children in our Nursery Unit, Year One and throughout the school. I am sure you will all be very happy in our school.

Mrs Keaney, our school secretary, retired over the summer. Mrs Keaney has worked in St James's for over 20 years and we would like to thank her for her dedicated service and commitment to our school community. She will be missed. On behalf of the Governors, staff, parents and children, I would like to wish Mrs Keaney every happiness in her retirement.

The staff of St James's are looking forward to a busy, exciting year ahead filled with lots of wonderful learning opportunities for our children. As always, we look forward to working in partnership with you to develop your child and to continue to raise standards and develop our school. Paula Cunningham

Our Golden Rules

In August, the staff of our school participated in Promoting Positive Behaviour staff training. As part of this training, we are adopting the 'Golden Rules' as our school rules. These rules encompass all the high standards and values that we expect in our school from all the adults and children alike. We have also redrafted our Positive Behaviour Policy and following consultation with staff and pupils, we will seek feedback from a random selection of parents/guardians before sending the policy to everyone. We look forward to your support in promoting the Golden Rules throughout our school.

Golden Rules

We are gentle



We are kind and helpful



We listen



We are honest



We work hard



We look after property



Congratulations!

Congratulations to some of our current Year 5 children who are now published authors! The children had riddles, written when they were in Mr McNamee's Year 4 class, published in the Young Writers Little Riddlers 2018 book. We are so proud of our fantastic writers!



Values of the Month

We will be continuing with our Values of the Month initiative this year and we will be linking them, if possible, to our Golden Rules. Both in Assembly and in class, the children will consider the current Value and how they can demonstrate it. Certificates will be awarded each month for children who have demonstrated the value throughout the month. This month our Value is gentleness.

Living and Learning Together

Leaving children to school

Children and parents should come into school in the morning through the children's entrance (the main front entrance is for disabled access and can be used by those parents with buggies/prams). In order to promote children's independence and for health and safety reasons, we ask that children in Years 2 to 7 are left at the door and make their own way to the classroom. 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.



Collecting children

Children in Years 1, 2 and 3 must be collected by someone (16 years and older) who is named on the permission sheet. We will not release a child to someone if they are not on the list. If the list of named 'collectors' changes, you must notify the class teacher in writing. On a rare occasion, if you need someone different to collect your child, please notify the school office as soon as possible. Year 1 children can be collected from the children's entrance foyer currently at 12 noon and then, from 24th September at 2.00pm. Miss Morrow's Year 2 class can also be collected from the yellow doors in the children's entrance foyer. Mrs Hinds's Year 2 class and Mr Jones's Year 3 class can be collected from the main door outside the office (facing the Nursery). Please note that teachers may not always be available to talk with you at 2.00pm as they may have to be with another class at 2.10pm. Children in Years 4, 5, 6 and 7 are permitted to walk home if their teacher has the permission sheet. Children in these classes who do not have permission to walk home must be collected by a person named on the permission sheet. Class teachers will accompany their class to the doors at the children's entrance foyer from where the children can be collected or children can walk home. At 3.00pm there will be a teacher at the Bleach Green Gate and the front gate of the school to supervise children leaving. If, for any reason, a child is not collected by a 'named' person, the child will be brought to the office and the parents contacted. Children who are not collected promptly will be taken to the office.

Punctuality

Class begins for all children at 9.00am. This means children should be in the classroom ready to begin the day at 9.00am. If your child is late, it is very disruptive to the class and the teacher and it can cause the child distress. All incidents of lateness will be recorded by the class teacher and monitored by the Senior Leadership Team.



Collecting Children Early

When children are collected early from school it can disrupt learning for the child and the class. We would urge parents/guardians to try to make any appointments after school. Missing part of a school day can impact on your child's overall attendance and may result in your child being discussed with the Education Welfare Officer. If, in exceptional circumstances, you need to collect your child early you must go to the office and complete a form stating the reason for taking them out of school. All incidents of early collection will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team.

Car Parking

Please drive slowly and carefully in the school grounds. We would encourage you to park on the Fernagh Road and walk the short distance to school. Please ensure that you do not park on the zig zag lines at the school gates as these must be kept clear at all times. Please do not block the driveways of our neighbours. If this happens, residents have been advised to contact the PSNI. If you are parking in the school grounds, please note that you do so at your own risk and the school will not accept responsibility for any damage or loss of belongings. Please ensure that you do not park on the pedestrian footpath or block other cars.

Shared Education Signature Project

We are delighted to be starting Year 4 of our Shared Education initiative with Whitehouse Primary School and Nursery Unit. This year, the project will involve Year Five and Six children in STEM modules, Year Seven in STEM days, the Nursery and Year 1 in the Forest School programme, Year 2 in outdoor learning and Years 3 and 4 in STEM based activities. The staff from both schools will also be collaborating on a number of occasions. We have an exciting and busy year ahead!

Attendance

Daily attendance at school is vitally important for your child's development. Please see Every School Day Counts (on the next page) which illustrates various levels of attendance. If your child is absent, you must send a note to the class teacher providing a reason for the absence which is then recorded on your child's attendance record. If you do not provide a reason for the absence it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Attendance is monitored regularly and if your child's attendance falls to 90% or lower, you will receive a letter from the school and your child's attendance will be discussed with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). If your child's attendance falls to 85% or lower a formal referral will be made to the EWO.

Premises Improvements

Over the summer we got our Assembly Hall and three classrooms painted. We are currently waiting on new curtains for our Assembly Hall. As you are aware, we are also getting new floors in a number of rooms. Currently, the Nursery, Year One, Year Seven and the ICT suite all have new floors. We hope that the programme of work runs as smoothly and with as little disruption as possible.

School Uniform

As we continue to raise standards in our school, it is important that all children wear their full school uniform. Our uniform consists of a school jumper, white polo shirt, grey trousers for boys, grey skirt or pinafore for girls, grey or black socks for boys and white or grey socks for girls. All children should wear black shoes to school. When the children have PE they must wear their uniform to school and get changed for PE. They can change into shorts or track suit bottoms, t-shirt and trainers or plimsolls. Please note that if children wear their polo shirt for PE they must change into a fresh polo shirt afterwards. PE gear including track suit bottoms and trainers should not be worn to school.

Please ensure that your child's name is on all items of clothing.

For health and safety reasons, children are not permitted to wear jewellery including earrings. Children may wear a small watch but this will have to be removed for PE.

Free School Meals

If you think you may be entitled to Free School Meals, please ask for a form in the office and make an application. We can help you with the application form. Not only does Free School Meals help you as a parent/guardian, but, even if your child does not want to take school dinners, it also provides our school with additional funding in our budget. So please, take a few minutes to make an application.

No dogs allowed

In the interests of health and safety, dogs are not permitted in the school grounds.



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.

Every School Day Counts

Every single day a child is absent from school equates to a day of lost learning. Attendance percentages can be misleading:

100% attendance	0 days missed	Excellent
95% attendance	9 days of absence 1 week 4 days of learning missed	Satisfactory
90% attendance	19 days of absence 3 weeks and 4 days of learning missed	Poor
85% attendance	28 days of absence 5 weeks and 3 days of learning missed	Very Poor
80% Attendance	38 days of absence 7 weeks and 3 days of learning missed	Unacceptable
75% Attendance	46 days of absence 9 weeks and 1 day of learning missed	Unacceptable

For some parents 90% may seem like an acceptable level of attendance, but the reality is that 90% attendance means that your child will miss half a school day each week or 19 days of school during year - that's nearly 4 school weeks.

Key Point - Give your child the best start in life - every school day counts.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

This year our Safeguarding Team is as follows:

Mrs Cunningham Principal

Mrs Dallat Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Mrs Hinds Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Mrs Heaney Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection (Nursery)

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.

Living and Learning Together

We Need You!

We always need volunteers throughout the school year. We are currently looking for volunteers to help us with the school garden.

The small garden area next to the playground is used daily by the pupils. To keep it looking well we rely on the pupils and volunteers to do weeding, digging and planting. We are very grateful to Mrs McMahon who works tirelessly in our garden and we would love to get her some help!

If you have a spare hour, once a week or whenever you can, during the next few weeks we would be extremely grateful for your support.

You do not need to be a gardening expert, just a willing volunteer!

If you think you can help in the garden please contact Mrs Dallat or leave your name in the office.

Many thanks.

CHIP SHOP DAY!

The canteen will be having a special 'Chip Shop' day on Wednesday 26th September. Children can have fish and chips or sausages and chips.



GDPR

Our staff received training in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in May 2018 followed by a further training session in August. Our Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy are available on the school website. Please be assured that we will continue to treat any information you give to us with great care and respect.

Data Capture and Consent forms

Please return all data capture and consent forms immediately as we need to update our records and our ParentMail account as soon as possible. If you have any queries about any of the information required, please do not hesitate to speak to Mrs Cunningham.

EasyFundraising

I am appealing for all parents/guardians and friends of St James's to please register for Easy Fundraising. This is a very simple way for our school to make money. When you are buying anything online, if you access the site you are buying from through EasyFundraising, the school will get a percentage of what you spend at **no cost to you**. It really is simple to do.

We have raised £408.34 since our Easy Fundraising account was opened and we have 77 supporters (only 5 more than this time last year). I would like to thank those who have signed up and have been able to raise these much needed funds for our school. The money raised is used to buy resources for the children.

Please log on to www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stjamesps/ and start shopping!

It would be great if we could get 100 supporters by the end of September!

Please remember—

EasyFundraising does not cost you any money!

Glenville Road Traffic Concerns

We are aware that a number of local residents including parents of children at our school, are concerned with the speed of traffic on the Glenville Road particularly when children are walking to and from school. The advice the residents have been given by the PSNI is, that if they have a concern about the speed of a vehicle, they should report the incident on the 101 number.



Bikes and Scooters

In the interests of health and safety, any child who comes to school on a bike or scooter must get off it at the school gate and walk through the school grounds. All children on a bike or scooter should wear a helmet.

Living and Learning Together

ACCELERATED READER

This year the school will continue to use the Accelerated Reader system in Years 4-7. Accelerated Reader has proved very popular with both staff and children and has helped to promote an increase in the quantity and quality of the children's independent reading. An appropriate book level will be assigned to each child based on the results of their STAR Reading test (to be completed early in the new school year). At home the children are required to read for approximately 20 minutes every night (this is the minimum requirement). It is vitally important that your child is actively engaged in the reading process at this time. Time spent looking for books or reading with one eye on the TV will not help your child's reading development.

In order to help facilitate close monitoring of the children's progress, it is important that Reading Records are completed and signed every night. A score of 85% or greater correct is recommended for optimal growth in reading achievement.

If you have any questions regarding Accelerated Reader please contact Mrs Kelly or your child's teacher.

Healthy Eating

In St James's we always try to promote healthy eating. We would encourage children to bring a healthy break to school and teachers will be awarding Class Dojo points for healthy breaks. We would also encourage parents/guardians to consider what they pack in their children's lunchboxes and to choose a healthier option for the best start to the school year. Choosing a healthier option at break and lunch can help with children's concentration and behaviour as well as helping children to establish good eating and drinking habits for future health. **Please remember that we are a nut free school.**

The Public Health Agency have provided the following helpful tips:

Drinks

What to pack—Water: tap water or unflavoured, still, bottled water. **Milk:** all whole, semi-skimmed or skimmed unflavoured milk.

What not to pack—Fruit juices (including pure fruit juice), smoothies, sparkling water, squash or fizzy drinks, even those labelled 'no added sugar', 'diet' or 'zero'.

Fruit and veg

What to pack—Any fresh fruit and vegetables or fruit packed in pots or tins in fruit juice but not in syrup. A portion could be one medium sized piece of fruit, eg apple, orange, banana, pear, a cup of grapes, cherries or berries; a cereal bowl of salad, eg lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber and celery.

What not to pack—Fruit tinned in syrup, dried fruit (eg raisins, sultanas) and processed fruit bars (eg fruit winders, fruit flakes etc). These are high in sugar and can cause tooth decay.

Bread

What to pack—White or wholemeal bread, rolls or baguettes, toast, plain bagels, wheaten, soda, potato or pitta bread, spread thinly with a little margarine, low-fat spread or butter; plain bread sticks or crackers, a small sandwich with a sugar-free filling such as tomato, tuna, chicken, cheese etc.

What not to pack—Sugary spreads including jam, honey, marmalade or chocolate spread as these are harmful to teeth. Stay clear of cereal bars or sweetened breads and pastries eg pancakes, scones (plain and fruit), fruit bread, croissants and Danish pastries as these can contain a lot of sugar and/or fat and salt.

For more information refer to the leaflets *Healthy breaks for schools* and *Are you packing a healthy lunch?* at www.publichealthagency.org/publications. For information about healthy packed lunches, visit www.enjoyhealthyeating.info and www.bit.ly/enjoylunch.



Presentation of Work

Children and teachers are working very hard to improve the presentation of work that the children do. This involves setting high standards and encouraging the children to meet these high standards. The children have to write the date and the learning intention (WALT) and set out their work neatly. Any illustrations need to be coloured in carefully and neatly. We want the children to take pride in their work and have beautiful books that they can be proud of. We will be introducing a monthly award for presentation of work. We appreciate your support in encouraging high standards of presentation when the children are completing homework. Many thanks.

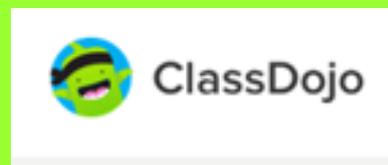


PTA

The PTA AGM will take place on Tuesday 9th October at 6.30pm in the staffroom. With all schools facing financial hardship in light of budget constraints, the work of our PTA is even more important and without their energy, dedication and commitment, our school and our children would not be able to avail of much needed resources. I would urge you all to please support the PTA and try to make it to the AGM. Committee members will be elected at the AGM but you do not have to be on the Committee in order to attend the meetings and give your support. Everyone is welcome to attend.

CLASS DOJO

We continue to use the online behaviour management tool called Class Dojo. Children earn points for displaying agreed behaviours, for example, wearing the correct uniform or being on task during their work. Each child has an avatar, a little character that holds their points which they can customise by logging in with a code provided by their teacher. Children engage well with Class Dojo as it is clear for them how they can earn points. It is a fun way for them to manage and become aware of their own behaviour. Parents are also able to link to Class Dojo. Please note that Class Dojo is not a tool for communicating with teachers and this should continue to happen in the usual way.



Website

Please remember to regularly check our website to see what is happening in our busy school!

www.stjamesps.co.uk

No Pens Day Wednesday

We will be participating in No Pens Day on Wednesday 3rd October. No Pens Day Wednesday encourages schools to put down their pens and pencils and have a day of speaking and listening activities. We look forward to an interesting and enjoyable day! We are asking each child for £1 to participate which will go towards school funds.

**No Pens Day
Wednesday**

**4 October
2017**

Christmas Card Fundraiser

Every child in our school will be invited to design a Christmas Card. Once completed, their drawings will be sent off and made into a pack of Christmas cards for parents to purchase. This is a great fundraiser for our school and proved very popular last year with lots of beautiful and unique Christmas cards being bought!



Living and Learning Together

Dates for your diary

Monday 17th September	Year 2 Curriculum Meeting (9.10am)
Tuesday 18th September	Year 3 Curriculum Meeting (9.10am)
Wednesday 19th September	Year 6 Curriculum Meeting (9.10am)
Friday 21st September	Year 7 Curriculum Meeting (9.10am)
Monday 24th September	Year 1 Curriculum Meeting (9.10am) Year 1 children stay until 2.00pm
Tuesday 25th September	Year 4 Curriculum Meeting (9.10am) School photographer—individuals and siblings
Wednesday 26th September	Year 5 Curriculum Meeting (9.10am) European Day of Languages
Thursday 27th September	School closed for staff development
Friday 28th September	School closed for staff development
Wednesday 3rd October	No Pens Day (£1 for school funds)
Monday 8th October	Shared Education Week
Tuesday 9th October	Photographer for school promotional material
Friday 12th October	Nursery Sponsored Cycle
15th October—19th October	Parent—Teacher Meetings. School finishes at 2pm Parents/Guardians will receive an appointment time to meet with the teacher. Further information will follow.
Fri 26th October	Half Day—school finishes at 12 noon for all pupils. There will be no afternoon session of the Nursery
Mon 5th November	School reopens
12th —16th November	Anti Bullying Week
Mon 27th November	School closed for Staff Development
Tues 11th December	9.30am Nursery Christmas Concert (Full time and Part Time am classes) 1.00 pm Nursery Christmas Concert (Part Time pm class)
Thurs 13th December	9.30am Year One Christmas Concert
Thurs 13th December	11.00am Year Two Christmas Concert
Fri 14th December	9.30am Year Three and Year Four Christmas Concert
Fri 21st December	Half Day 12 noon finish
Mon 7th January 2019	Children return to school

Dear Parent/Guardian

CONCUSSION AWARENESS – WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?

The Department of Education has requested that all schools should write to parents/guardians to highlight the need for you to keep all organisations informed if your child receives a concussion injury.

Concussion is a brain injury which is usually caused by hitting the head or a fall. It can happen at any time, anywhere: for example during sports, in the school playground, or at home.

Concussion must always be taken seriously and it is vitally important that any child/young person suspected of having concussion should **immediately** be stopped from continuing whatever activity they are doing and be assessed by a medical professional for diagnosis and guidance.

A second injury when a child has concussion can be extremely serious and may even be fatal. It is vitally important therefore that medical clearance is sought before your child returns to school/play. Children should not resume physical activities such as Physical Education (PE), sports or games until permitted to do so by a medical professional.

Concussion may also affect your child's ability to learn at school. This must be considered and medical clearance should be sought before the child returns to school. As symptoms vary from child to child, a graduated return to school programme may be needed.

If your child suffers a concussion in school or outside school, it is vitally important that you keep all people/organisations with responsibility for caring for your child informed so that they are aware of the potential dangers and any restrictions that may apply to the activities your child is permitted to do.

The '**Recognise and Remove**' leaflet produced by the Department of Education and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure is available on the Department of Education's website <http://www.deni.gov.uk> and provides guidance on the signs to look out for.

Keeping everyone informed about concussion is in your child's best interests and parents/guardians have a key role in making sure that information is passed on to their child's teacher, sports coach, youth leader or other care provider.

Yours faithfully

Paula Cunningham

Autism Courses for Parents

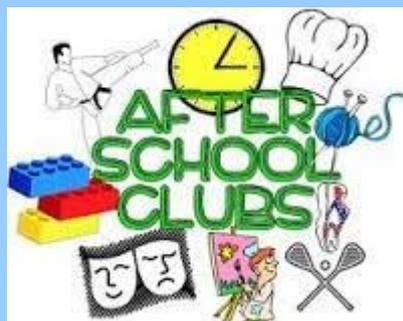
Hazelwood Integrated Primary School are hosting a number of courses for parents provided by Middletown Centre for Autism.

The courses below take place from 11.00am until 1.00pm. If you are interested in attending, please contact Hazelwood Integrated Primary School on 02890770421 to book a place.

Date	Training Title
Mon 24 Sept	Autism Learning Styles and the Impact of Visual Teaching Methods
Mon 1 Oct	Autism and Sensory Processing
Mon 8 Oct	Autism and Transitions
Mon 15 Oct	Autism and Anxiety Management
Mon 22 Oct	Autism and the Promotion of Positive Behaviour
Mon 29 Oct	Make and Take

After School Clubs

Our after school programme is now underway with Judo on a Monday afternoon and, as you have been informed, a number of after school clubs begin this week (Mon 17th September). Mrs Heaney has organised a variety of after school opportunities for our children and she is already planning the next set of clubs. For this block, children were offered: Judo, Multisports, Dodgeball, Art, Football and Drums. Children should all know which clubs they are able to attend. Some clubs still have a few spaces remaining, so if you are interested, please contact the office.



Living and Learning Together