

Dear Parents & Carers,

A huge 'well done' to all our children for their hard work and enthusiasm during this first half term of the academic year! We break up today for a week – we look forward to seeing all the children back for Autumn term 2 at the usual times, ready and eager to learn! Our Collective worship theme this week has been based around the Miracles of Jesus including 'Bartimaeus', 'The Raising of Lazarus' and 'The Feeding of the 5000'. Please find again a 'dates for your diaries' attachment to this e-mail which will be updated and included regularly. Please note dates for fundraising days, Children in Need, Crazy Hair Day and non-uniform days etc next half term.

PE Kits/Days

Please note a change in PE days – see letter attached from Mr. Brenta. Reception remain on a Wednesday; Years 1&2 are now to wear PE kits each Monday; Years 3&4 each Tuesday; Year 5 on a Wednesday and Year 6 on a Thursday. This will be for the whole of Autumn Term 2.

FSM Vouchers – Autumn Half Term

You will have received a text if this applies to you – if your child/ren is/are eligible for Free School Meals, you will receive vouchers of £15.00 per child to cover the half term. This will come to you as before via your e-mail account we have on record. Do remember to check spam/junk e-mails which will come to you with vouchers from the company EdenRed. You should receive these vouchers today.

St. James' Church Clubs for all St James' Families

Two new clubs will be starting at St. James' Church, Jacob will be overseeing them and you are all warmly invited:

Bible Story Club will run from 3.45-4.15pm each Monday during their free community cafe and will include a Bible story, games, craft and quiz (ages 4-11);

Ready Steady Grow is a group for parents and their children (aged 0-4) on Thursdays 10-11am. There will be tea, coffee, toys, Bible stories and singing.

These clubs will start after half term. 'Bible Story Club' begins on Monday 1st November and 'Ready Steady Grow' begins on Thursday 4th November.

Reception Admissions 2022-2023

All the information you may need regarding Reception applications is attached again. We are holding Open Days to show you around St. James' School before you make this very important decision for your child. Please book a place by emailing office@st-james.southwark.sch.uk with your preferred date. We will email you with confirmation. Dates available are: **Tuesday 2nd November 2021 10am, Tuesday 9th November 10am and Tuesday 23rd November 2pm.**

Parent Courses

Help your child with Maths and English: we are delighted to be able to offer this 5-week course, starting Wednesday 10th November 1pm-3pm at Old Jamaica Road, aimed at KS1 level, although all parents and carers are invited to join. We are also offering the very popular Parent Gym course every Wednesday morning from 10th November, why not combine the two and come to school every Wednesday! Please see Mrs Brenta for further details of both courses and to add your name to the list as numbers are limited.

Half Term Activities

Please find attached a flier from London Wildlife Trust advertising activities to do with your families during Half Term as well as another from Southwark Council advertising activities at the Thomas Calton centre celebrating Black History Month.

Shout Out Youth Theatre

Please find attached a flier advertising a new local youth theatre which will start to run each Tuesday and Thursday in November at Keeton's Hall. Miss Jess is starting this independently from school due to lots of local demand. Do e-mail her at shoutoutyouththeatre.com for more information or to express your interest!

Alexis Street Parking/Driving

As you know we actively encourage all our parents and carers at both KS1 and KS2 to walk, cycle or scooter to school to protect our children both on the roads and of course from terrible air pollution. We have a large number of children who suffer from asthma and the pollution really does affect them. During the Cherry Garden School redevelopment there is now very little parking or road space for turning, making it even more important to leave your car at home. As you will have noticed the road closures are now in operation and there are a number of lorries arriving on-site. If you really do need to drive, please do try and park away from Alexis Street, and walk that little bit further to ensure the safety of all our families. The barriers at the beginning and end of the day also remain in place for the safety of our children.

Punctuality

Punctuality remains a major concern across both key stages, with many children each day being brought in regularly as much as half an hour late. Children are missing out on so much learning and this causes a great deal of disruption to our office staff who are busy spending the first part of each day ensuring children are safely delivered to their classes, who in turn are also disrupted when your child arrives. Children really do miss out on important early learning when they arrive late. Please do remember our start times and the fact we stay at the gates for a few minutes longer than these each day. Many thanks in advance for making a real effort to get your child/ren to school on time. Lates are recorded and monitored, if your child has missed their teacher taking the register the absence will unfortunately have to be recorded as unauthorised, as per guidelines issued to us by the DfE. This absence will then affect your child's overall attendance figure.

Absence

If your child is absent from school, please do let us know at the earliest opportunity. We have a number of ways to do this - please call the office at either site, there is an answerphone should your call not be answered, as occasionally our office staff are not at the desk. You can also send us a text or an email, or report via the free Studybugs app: <https://studybugs.com/>

If we have not heard from you we will then call you on the first day of absence, followed by a text or email if we have been unable to speak to you. If we have no contact regarding an absence this too will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, until you are able to inform us of the reason for absence.

School Uniform

Today we're sending a tie home with your child/ren. We promised everyone a free tie in the Summer term and sadly have been waiting for them to be delivered for quite some time. Please do ensure children come back for Autumn 2 with full school uniforms and plain black footwear. Plain burgundy jumpers/cardigans which match the school colour are always acceptable and can often be cheaper than buying directly from our supplier. Do also ensure all items are labelled with children's names – it's really frustrating for everyone when uniform items go missing!

Wishing you, the children and our whole school community a super Half Term break!

**God bless,
from the St. James' team.**