The week ahead @ Saint James

"Be strong and courageous and do it!" 1 Chronicles 28:20

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Sat 31st Oct	Mon 2nd Nov	Tues 10th Nov	Wed 11th Nov		Thurs 12th Nov	
Closing date for Secondary School applications	First day back after half-term	Tour for parents of prospective Year R pupils	Parents' Evening 3.40pm – 7.00pm	Individual and Sibling photographs	Parents' Evening 3.40pm – 6.00pm	Tour for parents of prospective Year R pupils

A message from the Senior Leadership Team

What a half-term it's been! We have enjoyed seeing the children flourish in their new classes; growing in confidence and independence while taking part in memorable and engaging learning experiences. It has been a pleasure to welcome our new children and families into the Saint James 'family', and to see so many of you in school for this week's Book Look. We look forward to welcoming you into school again for Parents' Consultation Evenings after half-term.

We have also seen some impressive performances on the sports field, with our boys' and girls' football teams continuing the winning form they established last season. While the teams and players may have changed, the consistency, determination and quality of performance suggest that normal service has well and truly been resumed!

After such a busy and successful half-term, the children have certainly earned a well-deserved break. We look forward to welcoming everyone back to school on Monday 2nd November, refreshed and ready for another exciting half-term as we begin the journey towards Christmas.

We continue to encourage you to offer your suggestions for how we can make our fantastic school even better. Please feel free to offer your constructive contributions to this week's Question of the Week; *'What is the one thing you would change about Saint James Primary school?'* The link to the question can be found opposite.

Collective Worship



This week's theme:
Divali – Festival of light

This week's story:

Don't Hide Your Light
Matthew 5.14-16

Question of the week

What is the one thing you would change about Saint James Primary school?

https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/FJUV3hWb3a

Our Year 6 Pupils Make Their Mark at the Ballot Box, But Who Finished in *Poll* Position?



Sir Robert Walpole is generally regarded as the United Kingdom's first Prime Minister and was democratically elected as a member of parliament. However, we consider the term 'democracy' to be used quite loosely in this instance as only a small proportion of adults could vote; women could not vote, and many parliamentary seats were controlled by wealthy landowners and local elite. This disparity is also present in the amount of men and women who have served in the highest political office. Of the 58 people who have held the position of Prime Minister since Sir Robert Walpole only three have been women. That's roughly 95% males and 5% females over the history of the office!

However, please be assured that there is far more parity at Saint James Primary School, when it comes round to our elections for Head boy and Head girl. The split of children representing the school in the highest position on the student body has always been 50:50. Furthermore, the level of democracy is also far more all-encompassing than when Walpole became Prime Minister in 1721. All the children in Year 6 were invited to vote, as well as all the staff. However, how do you regulate such an important process? How can we reassure you that the process was truly democratic and untainted? By inviting an impartial visitor who is fully versed in the UK political processes and landscape, of course.

Continued overleaf

To support us on ballot day, we had the coup of having a bonafide, serving Member of Parliament in attendance. Liz Jarvis, MP for Eastleigh since the General Election in 2024, met with our Year 6 pupils; answering questions and hosting a hustings for the candidates to set out their manifestos. Considering democracy, as one of our British Values, Ms Jarvis talked about her experiences of being voted into parliament and some of the most interesting and inspiring events that have shaped her political career.

Unsuccessful candidates in a General Election often fade into obscurity and a non-political life until deciding whether to stand again, the next time elections come round. However, due the quality of the candidates standing in our head pupil elections, and the closeness of the voting, the same is mercifully not true for our children. The immediate runners-up have been awarded the position of Deputy-head boy and girl, whereas all the other candidates will be fulfilling the prestigious position of prefect for the rest of the academic year. Whilst not wishing to cast any political aspersions, we highly doubt the quality of all candidates in a General Election or a by-election would be so equally capable of filling the role. For this academic year our Head boy and girl will be Hugo and Amelie, whilst the Deputy head boy and girl will be Alex and Elise. Ably supporting them as our fantastic prefects will be George, Joy, Janina, Maria, Roya and Rosie. We would like to congratulate all these children for such an impressive achievement. We know they will be a model of excellent attitude and behaviour, as well as fantastic ambassadors of Saint James Primary School.

We would also like to extend an enormous thank-you to Liz Jarvis for enlightening our Year 6 children about her political experiences and the process of democracy. We're sure she was able to meet some impressive political allies and adversaries of the future!

Miss Howell beats bananas, sumo wrestlers, Spider-Man *and the clock!*

In Marvel comics and films, we know that Spider-Man is an enduring character who is rarely beaten. We also know, from our limited knowledge of Pokémon, that Pikachu is the figurehead of the series, which must surely attest to his popularity and apparent invincibility. Finally, we doubt many members of our school community would be confident of holding their own against a sumo wrestler. However, we can proudly proclaim that Miss Howell can now say she has the beating of all of the above. Even more impressively, she can also claim to have beaten two bananas and Buzz, Woody and Jessie from Toy Story!

So, has our inimitable Year 6 teacher finally begun to reveal the superpowers we always suspected she possessed? On this occasion, no, unless you count maintaining an impressive pace over 10 miles!

As you will be aware, last Sunday Miss Howell took her place on the start line of the Great South Run. Positioned in the second wave of runners, she began implementing a carefully considered strategy, weaving through slower runners while maintaining a steady pace comparable to many of those in the wave ahead. Although the official distance was 10 miles, she likely covered considerably more by travelling almost as far sideways as she did forwards while navigating through the crowds! It was during these finely honed strategic manoeuvres that Miss Howell overtook all manner of superheroes, animated characters and even pieces of fruit!

While she always had a target time in mind, the scale of the occasion, combined with over 26,000 fellow runners, left some uncertainty as to whether it would be achievable. Perhaps unsurprisingly, for those who know her, these factors proved no hindrance whatsoever. Miss Howell crossed the finish line in an outstanding time of 1 hour and 20 minutes, placing her comfortably within the top 20% of runners.

As impressive as achieving a personal time goal and overtaking such a colourful range of competitors may be, neither was Miss Howell's ultimate objective. Her primary aim was to raise awareness and vital funds for Myeloma UK, and in this respect she was every bit as successful. Wearing a strikingly bright running vest, perfectly complemented by matching nails and hair colour, it would have been difficult to miss the runner representing this worthwhile blood cancer charity.

And what about the fundraising? Was the amount raised as impressive as the time it took Miss Howell to complete the race? Absolutely. The £2,000 she raised will make a meaningful contribution towards research, treatment and support for those affected by this devastating disease.







While many of us might baulk at the idea of running 10 miles, supporting Miss Howell's efforts through a donation was clearly a challenge the school community was more than willing to embrace. She would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who donated and helped her achieve such a remarkable fundraising total.

If you would still like to donate, it's not too late.
Please use the link below:
https://ajbellgreatsouthrun2026.enthuse.com/pf/jess-howell

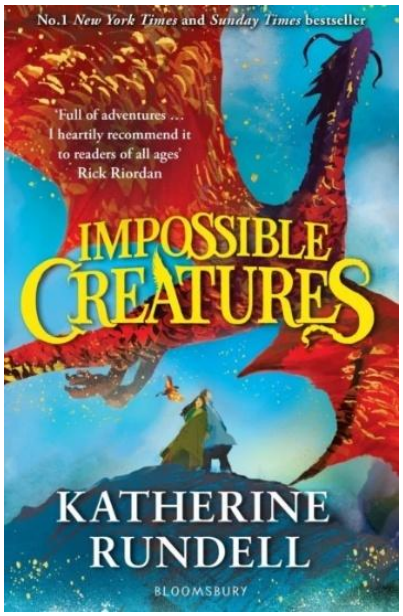
Has Christmas Comes Early? It's a *novel* idea!

A stroll through any major supermarket this weekend will undoubtedly give you the impression that Christmas is not far off. Aisles packed with mince pies, Christmas chocolates and Advent calendars belie the fact that we are not yet at the end of October! Usually, we would consider this to be far too early, however this year we are part of the issue! After submitting our designs for Christmas cards, so they can be printed and distributed well in advance of the festive season, and entering the Christmas card competition for our local MP, we are now presenting all our Year 6 children with an early Christmas present!

In celebration of the National Year of Reading 2026, Her Majesty the Queen is gifting every child in Year 6 with a book to help inspire a love of reading. As a passionate book lover, Queen Camilla is keen to impart this love onto younger generations.

The book chosen is a specially produced copy of *'Impossible Creatures'* by Katherine Rundell. Rundell, who was named Author of the Year at the British Book Awards in 2024, has produced many acclaimed titles; *The Explorer, Rooftoppers*, and *Impossible Creatures* are probably some of her most widely loved publications.

We hope our Year 6 children enjoy their early Christmas present!



'The day that Christopher saved a drowning baby griffin from a hidden lake would change his life forever.

It's the day he learned about the Archipelago—a cluster of unmapped islands where magical creatures of every kind have thrived for thousands of years, until now. And it's the day he met Mal—a girl on the run, in desperate need of his help.

Mal and Christopher embark on a wild adventure, racing from island to island, searching for someone who can explain why the magic is fading and why magical creatures are suddenly dying. They consult sphinxes, battle kraken, and negotiate with dragons. But the closer they get to the dark truth of what's happening, the clearer it no one else can fix this. If the Archipelago is to be saved, Mal and Christopher will have to do it themselves.'

Impossible Creatures – Katerine Rundell

Pupil Power Prompts Positive Change

Last week, when we introduced our current initiative to promote pupil voice, we cited the example of climate activist, Greta Thunberg, who has inspired millions of children around the world to call for action on climate change. Without a doubt, young people speaking with a united voice have helped make climate issues a major topic in governments, schools, and the media.

Those of you who are regular readers of the newsletter will remember that, in the past, our own Year 6 pupils have held their own campaign against Climate change, including peaceful protests during Collective Worship and outside the school at the end of the day. They even made a representation at a meeting of Eastleigh Borough Council over concerns to do with flooding that have been exacerbated by climate change. This can still be viewed, using the following link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96ubgxtd8Fs&list=PLGkyYH64e2nLkXaqZ7Epbw2bEYq_kUUCP&index=4

The power of Pupil Voice is undeniable and in harnessing it, we can achieve an even better school. Therefore, we were expecting some pertinent and perceptive comments, through our *'Question of the week'* forum. However, what we couldn't be sure on was the volume of comments. Would the question inspire and engage children? Would they want to contribute? The answer, as we're sure you can imagine, was a resounding 'Yes'! To date, we have had a staggering 73 responses in our pupil voice post box.

We are thrilled that so many of the comments, reveal how intrinsic our Christian values are to our children's thinking. Some of the enlightening and empathetic comments included:

'Help them and tell a teacher so they don't feel worried.'

'Ask them what they are worried about and play with them.'

'Comfort them.'

'Go and sit with them to help and maybe chat or communicate.'

Continued overleaf

One of the practical suggestions included the installation of a 'buddy bench' or 'buddy area' that children who are worried or anxious can go to. Whilst we thought this was already in place, we were surprised to find that the bench had been supplanted by an unappealing seat with barely enough space for one person to sit (not ideal for a 'buddy' bench!) and the sign that identifies it is so faded, it is almost unreadable. Therefore, we are going to reinstall a brightly coloured bench with similarly bright signage, to reinvigorate this potentially powerful provision.

We are proud to say, this will be the very first action taken from this current focus on pupil voice.

We would like to extend a big 'thank you' to Mrs Hunter for generating our *'Question of the Week'* and driving the recent emphasis on pupil voice. Please remember that you are welcome to contribute your own suggestions to *'Question of the Week'*, via the link to a Microsoft Form at the top of the newsletter. This week's question is *'What is the one thing you would change about Saint James Primary school?'*

We are looking forward to reading some innovative, informative and perceptive suggestions although, like we intimated last week, we are unable to fund, or convince the Local Education Authority, that plans to convert the field to either a theme park or a multi-storey car park are a viable idea!









