

The week ahead @ Saint James

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

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Friday 12th December

Issue 168

Collective Worship

Wed 17 th Dec	Thurs 18 th Dec	Fri 19 th Dec		Mon 5 th Jan
Christmas lunch	Year 3 and 4 Christmas service at St James Children only	Class Christmas parties	Last day of term – normal finish time & Night Owls open	First day back after Christmas break



A message from the Senior Leadership team

This week we have enjoyed superb Christmas performances from Year 2 and 3 in school and Year 5 and 6 at St James Church. We would like to take this opportunity to extend an enormous ‘thank you’ to Reverend Vicky and everyone at St James Church for allowing us to use the church again this year. It certainly makes the performance feel even more special.

Although we may only have a week to go before the end of term, there’s still plenty to look forward to in school. With Christmas parties, Christmas dinner and a Christmas service at the church still to look forward to, it’s going to be an exciting and enjoyable lead into the Christmas break.

This week’s theme:

Hanukkah

This week’s story:

The miracles of Jesus

(different stories of Jesus taken from the Qur’an)

Lessons learned from the Great Fire of London guide the way, as Year 2 make sure fire is kept at bay!

In 1666, London blazed for days. A long dry summer, densely packed homes, and flammable building materials were a recipe for disaster. When a stray spark at a bakery on Pudding Lane became an inferno it destroyed much of London: this became known as the Great Fire of London.

The fire was a huge financial blow to the city. The cost of the fire was estimated to be £10 million at a time when London's annual income was only £12,000 and many people were financially ruined.

Although in isolation this is an interesting history lesson, what else could be learned from this tragic event? Quite a lot, apparently.

At the time, to protect the properties of their customers and to reduce their own losses, most London insurance companies began employing up to thirty ‘watermen’ to put out fires (however, the term ‘fire brigade’ was not used until the early 19th century).

Now, nearly 360 years later, people are still learning from this devastating disaster – namely the Year 2 children at Saint James Primary School! After learning about the inadequate provision prior to this historical event, the children decided to make a comparison to the fire safety equipment used today. Making their way around the school, the children noted the fire extinguishers, fire alarm sensors and triggers, fire marshal points, fire exits and clear signage. None of which they would have expected to see at the height of the Great Fire. Similarly to later in the year, when the children will learn how the Titanic disaster helped influence new regulations on the provision of life boats, the children were able to see practical examples of how fire regulations and provision were informed by the Great Fire of London.

Whilst the children have enjoyed learning about the Great Fire of London this term, we’re sure they feel comforted to know that they live in 2025 rather than 1666 and that, should they have the misfortune of experiencing a fire, a well-trained and efficient nationalised fire brigade will soon be on the scene. Although there is little evidence to substantiate stories of insurance firemen leaving a building to burn if it wasn’t insured or was insured with a rival company (any fire left unchecked could spread through whole neighbourhoods and leave the insurance companies with large scale losses so mutual co-operation was actually extremely important) the modern equipment, response time, fitness and training of modern firefighters would certainly provide the children with further reassurance.

We imagine that, when the fire broke out at Thomas Farriner's bakery in Pudding Lane on 2nd September 1666, the infamous baker could not have imagined the devastation it would have caused and that, remarkably, pupils living over 80 miles away and nearly 360 years later would still be learning about the impact of that fateful day.



To enhance their writing, our Year 6 children become spies for the day – they’ve got a License to Quill!

Close to exhaustion, he was now almost too tired to feel how much pain he was in. But for the glucose and caffeine tablets in his survival pack, he would have ground to a halt hours ago. He knew that if he didn't find the rendezvous point soon, he would be physically unable to continue. Then he would be thrown off the course. "Binned", as they called it. They would like that. Swallowing down the taste of defeat, Alex folded the map and forced himself on...

Don't worry, this isn't the extract from a book entitled 'A day in the life of a child at Saint James Primary School'! It is actually a section from the book *'Stormbreaker'*, the first in a series of novels about Alex Rider, a young teenager who is a trainee spy, entrusted to mission akin to those of Ian Fleming's James Bond.

A fabulous stimulus for creative and engaging writing, the only difficulty is trying to get a cohort of Year 6 children, who are used to life's creature comforts, to relate to these experiences. How do you enable children to empathise with feelings generated by incidents and events outside of their own frame of reference? You suddenly, without warning, take them from the comfort of their classrooms to enlist them in an impromptu boot camp that, at least in some way, recreates the conditions endured by Alex Rider in his MI6 training.

We imagine OFSTED might have had concerning comments to make, if the daily practise of Miss Howell, Mr Magrane and Mr Thompson involved blowing a whistle and barking loud and direct orders at children. However, that is what they were met with, as the doors to their classrooms were thrust open and children were directed to the MUGA.

Quickly falling into line, the new 'recruits' surveyed the sight in front of them; agility ladders, followed by hurdles, hoops, and straight-out sprinting formed the endurance challenge that lay ahead of them. Method actors throughout, the Year 6 staff were convincing as the nameless and brash training officers who tested Alex Rider to the limit.

Periodically, as our trainee spies tackled the course in front of them, a whistle was blown and orders barked to 'drop' and do press-ups and sit-ups or perform star jumps. Their familiarity with the staff involved was a subconscious reassurance for the children, knowing that they were reenacting the experience in a safe environment.

Whilst we're not convinced that the children are ready to be recruited by MI6 or the SAS yet, we are convinced that they are far more able to write with more knowledge, understanding and authority after their experience at boot camp!



From classroom to Claus: Year 1's festive first-class delivery

We have heard that the Royal Mail has recruited 16,000 temporary workers to help with deliveries and sorting over Christmas. In addition to the extra employment, extra temporary space (equivalent in size to 20 football pitches) has been created between the five seasonal centres across the country!

Whilst we know that Christmas cards and presents account for a lot of this need, we are also aware of another reason why additional provision needs to be in place: letters winging their way to 'Reindeerland' to be placed under the nose of Santa Claus. Of those letters, we know that at least 68 were penned by the Year 1 children from Saint James.

Although we're sure that many of the children could reel off a list of dozens of presents they'd like to see bursting out of their stocking on Christmas morning, our marvellous Year 1 children didn't forget their politeness and manners as they put pencil to paper. Resisting the urge to list every conceivable gift idea in their 'Christmas list' the children gave careful thought to what they would really like and offered their kind thoughts and appreciation to the kindly addressee.

Finally, on Tuesday this week, the children trekked through the school to post their letters at the specially arranged post box situated outside the school office. These were then dispatched to the post office and, by the time you read this, are hopefully in the hands of Santa.

Whilst we know there is little time left before Christmas Day, the children in Year 1 are eagerly anticipating a response both in writing, before Christmas and in a stocking, on Christmas morning!



Making waves for a great cause: Lilou swims the extra mile for Great Ormond Street

We can imagine that most people would baulk at the prospect of swimming 10 kilometres. The few brave enough to accept the challenge would surely need to undertake a programme of intense training just to reach their 10k target.

However, when the challenge is two-fold, to swim the distance and raise a significant amount for charity, we anticipate only a minimal amount of people would succeed. Certainly very few primary age children!

As you will be aware, Lilou, in Year 6, was brave enough to take on this challenge and, after weeks of training, finally made her attempt last weekend. As kilometre after kilometre passed, her training was obviously paying off, as Lilou's limbs were not aching like she anticipated. Then, rather than happily rest when she reached her impressive target, Lilou pushed on to complete a further 2 kilometres! For many, swimming 2 kilometres would be a challenge in itself, let alone after already completing 10 kilometres!

So, we know Lilou met and exceeded her distance objective but what about her £1000 fundraising target? Lilou smashed that as well, with the latest total being in excess of £1415 raised for Great Ormond Street hospital!

Well done Lilou – we are extremely proud of your amazing achievement!



Our basketball teams are really *hoopy*; they have a *shot* at being champions after securing a place in the next round

The cost of putting on an exhibition match with the Harlem Globetrotters (the world-famous exhibition basketball team) is rumoured to be in excess of \$150,000. We cannot begin to imagine how much it would cost to organise a whole tournament of games for that team of talented athletes. However, there is one thing we are sure of – Miss Howell recently organised two separate basketball tournaments across our local cluster of schools and didn't command a fee anywhere close to that: in fact she did it for the love of it!

We would like to offer huge thanks to Wildern's PE leader, Mr Zealander, who enabled the tournament to be held at Wildern Secondary School and ensured the sports hall was perfectly set up and that Wildern Sports Leaders were available to help the event run smoothly. It was even a pleasure to see a number of our former pupils fulfilling this role.

With our very own Miss Howell organising the tournament, the pressure was on for our two teams to perform. Thankfully they did their coach and teacher proud showing impressive skill, determination, and teamwork. A special mention need to be given to the girls on the B team, who faced a team of boys (as their school didn't have enough girls) and held their own brilliantly!

We were impressed with the performances of both teams, who modelled excellent examples of sportsmanship throughout: the A team finished in second place (narrowly beating Berrywood on goal difference) whereas the B team impressed everyone with their resilience and sense of fair play.

We are excited to announce that our A Team will be competing in the next round of the tournament, which will be played on 16th December. We know they'll perform excellently and be shining representatives of the school.



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Jumping for Joy: Saint James children enjoy the Wildern Skipping Festival!

We would like to clarify that the enthusiastic athletes representing Saint James Primary at Wildern a couple of weeks ago weren't 'jumping for joy' because they were skipping school, they were 'jumping for joy' because they were skipping **at** school!

An excited and energetic group of our children entered the skipping festival held at Wildern Secondary School: an event full of energy, laughter, and plenty of fancy footwork!

Led by Wildern's fantastic Sports Leaders, including a few familiar faces who were former Saint James pupils themselves, our children were guided through a variety of creative skipping techniques. From speedy sprints to rhythmic routines, they embraced every challenge with enthusiasm and the same level of impeccable behaviour that is a hallmark of teams representing Saint James.



On behalf of all the enthusiastic participants, we would like to say a huge thank you to Miss Fulton and Miss Howell who accompanied the team and cheered them on throughout the whole event. It was wonderful to see our pupils not only improving their skills but also building confidence and teamwork in such a positive environment.

Saint James Primary School witnesses Bishop Rhiannon's divine design, as she reveals the inspiration behind her mitre, cope and stole

This week we were privileged to welcome Bishop Rhiannon, the Bishop of Southampton, to Saint James Primary School. During her visit, Bishop Rhiannon met with our Christian Values team and a group of children planning and leading child-led Collective worship as well as visiting our Year R classes. However, the highlight of her visit for the whole school was the Collective Worship she led about her journey in faith.

Whilst all the children had been told that Bishop Rhiannon would be taking Collective Worship, if anyone had arrived a couple of minutes late, they could have justifiably believed they were attending an ecclesiastical fashion show! As well as Bishop Rhiannon sharing how her faith developed from when she was at primary school, through to being ordained as a Bishop, she shared the different items of clothing she wears in her role.

Beginning the Collective Worship dressed in a smart green two-piece suit, Bishop Rhiannon gradually changed into the clothes she would wear, when conducting services and duties as the Bishop of Southampton. When we consider people who have hailed from other walks of life to become clothing designers, former Spice Girl Victoria Beckham might be someone who comes to mind. However, we heard from Bishop Rhiannon how she had been instrumental in designing her cope, stole, mitre and crozier to include things she held dear to her, in her calling to God.

We learned that the script emblazoned on her cope (a long semi-circular cloak) included the wording of the seven 'I am' statements Jesus made in John's gospel; 'I am the Bread of Life, I am the Light of the World, I am the Good Shepherd, I am the Resurrection and the Life, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, I am the True Vine, I am the Gate for the Sheep'. However, it also included depictions of children and adults including Bishop Rhiannon on roller skates (as a child we assume!) due to it being something that used to give her pleasure! Coupled with a thoughtfully designed mitre (a Bishop's hat consisting of two stiffened, shield-shaped halves front and back) and a crozier (shepherd's crook) fashioned from the horn of a Welsh Ram by a Scottish Shepherd to represent her Welsh heritage, every item had thought and sentimental reasoning behind the design.

It was a pleasure and honour to be visited by Bishop Rhiannon and undoubtedly a more relaxed visit for her too; about eighteen months ago Saint James Primary School hosted the interviews for the position of Bishop of Southampton. She recounted, during Collective Worship, how it was the smiling face of Mrs Marsh and the children she encountered that made the challenging interview process more enjoyable and bearable!



Christmas Dinner 2025

With the festive season approaching, we are delighted to announce our Christmas lunch for the children will be served on Wednesday 17th December. On this day the children are welcome to wear a Christmas jumper, hat or headband with their school trousers or skirt (please note this is not a non-uniform day). We look forward to it being a fantastic lunch and an enjoyable, shared celebration of Christmas.

Any meat used for roast dinners in school is always carved from a roasting joint and is not reformed. This ensures a superb quality meal but does necessitate a small price increase for Christmas lunch. This minimal increase is needed to counter the increased cost of turkey. It will automatically be deducted from your balance, when you order the meal.

If you pay for your child's dinners, the cost for the Christmas lunch will be a reasonable £3.25 per pupil due to the increased cost of turkey. For children who would like a Christmas lunch, please place your order in advance via your Aspens account. We have included a copy of the menu for 17th December, adjacent to this message.

We look forward to enjoying Christmas lunch with your children on Wednesday 17th December.



Free webinar for parents of children with autism or ADHD


Autism & ADHD: Strategies To Improve Sleep


Join us for our free webinar.



Our SEN team would like to alert all parents of children with ADHD or autism to the following free webinar. It will be of particular use for children who are struggling to sleep.

The webinar is hosted by Helen Rutherford, a Specialist Sleep Practitioner from The Sleep Charity.

 **Date:** Wednesday 17th December

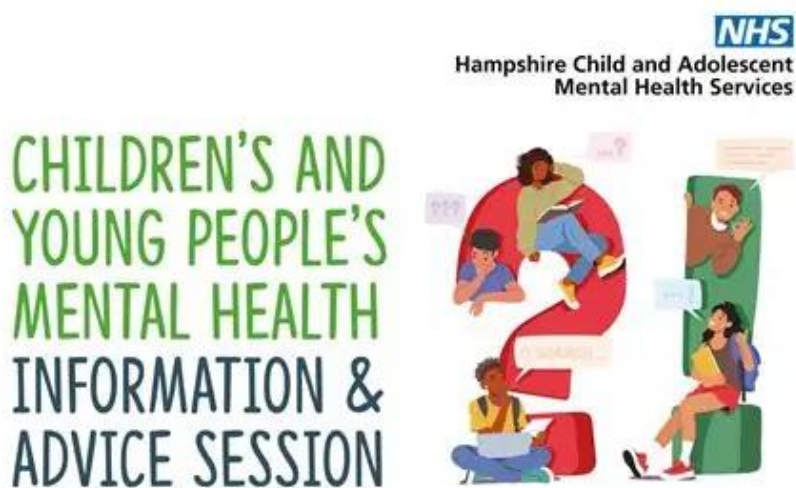
 **Time:** 10am - 11am

In this webinar, Helen will explore:

- ✓ What happens when children sleep, including how it supports their learning, behaviour, and development, and how this knowledge helps you choose strategies that truly make a difference.
- ✓ Why general advice isn't always enough in supporting your neurodivergent child, and how you can adapt strategies to their needs.
- ✓ Practical take-away strategies to help your child build healthy, lasting sleep habits.

To sign up for the webinar please follow the link below:

<https://www.witherslackgroup.co.uk/advice-and-support/events/webinar-autism-adhd-strategies-to-improve-sleep/>



The first Wednesday of every month

10am - 2pm

The Arc, Jewry Street, Winchester, SO23 8SB



You can book an appointment on our website



Or just drop in and see us

If you are concerned about a young person come and chat to one of our clinical team.

hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/events/



Christmas at St James

Advent Carol Service

Sunday 30th November at 6.30pm
A candlelit service of readings and music

Special Lives Service

Sunday 14th December at 4pm
A Christmas service to remember loved ones who have died.
Write their name on a star and place it on our
Special Lives Christmas Tree.

Candlelight Carol Service

Sunday 21st December at 6.30pm
A joyful service of readings and carols celebrating the Christmas story.

Children's Christmas Activity Morning

Monday 22nd December 9.30am to 12:00am
Children's fun and activities celebrating the Christmas story
To book a place contact Jan on 07519759269 or
stjameswe.childrenswork@gmail.com

Christingle Nativity Services

Tuesday 23rd December at 5pm
Wednesday 24th December at 4pm and 6pm
Children are invited to come dressed up as a nativity character.
Please book for this service from 1st December.

Midnight Mass

Wednesday 24th December at 11.30pm

Christmas Day Communion

Thursday 25th December at 10.30am

Everyone is very welcome!

Please see our website for more details

www.stjameswestend.org.uk

St James is a member of the Inclusive Church network



Handwriting

We are excited to share that we are now following Ruth Miskin's Read Write Inc scheme for handwriting. If you would like to practise this with your child at home, there are some useful videos that can be used by following the QR code attached:

LET'S WRITE

a/d/g/o/c/q/u/y/b/p



Free holiday activities & meals for eligible children this winter!

Children in Reception to Year 11 receiving benefits-related free school meals can enjoy fun activities and healthy meals for free this Christmas through Hampshire's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme!

Spaces are limited - book now!
Scan the QR code below to check if you're eligible, find local HAF schemes, and book your child(ren)'s place



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Solent Hotel and Spa (PO15 7AJ)



Integr8 Dance

Weeke Primary School (SO22 6DR)
Winnall Primary School (SO23 0NY)
Unit 12, Winchester (SO23 0LD)

Please keep an eye on the FISH website as it will be regularly updated with available HAF schemes: <https://fish.hants.gov.uk>

