

The week ahead @ Saint James

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

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Issue 170

Tues 13th Jan	Thurs 15 th Jan	Thurs 15th Jan	Thurs 15th Jan	Thurs 29 th Jan	Thurs 12 th Feb	Fri 13 th Feb
Community Science Show 5.30pm – 6.30pm	Census Day Special menu ‘Build your own taco’	Closing date for Year R applications	SJSA film night	SJSA film night	Last day of the half-term for children	INSET Day = (no children in school)

A message from the Senior Leadership team

Happy New Year! We hope you had a peaceful and relaxing Christmas holidays. It has been lovely to see the children back in school and engaged in their new learning; popping into classrooms this week, it has been great to see so many children smiling and engaged in their learning.

We have already enjoyed an innovative start to the New Year, with a ‘Drop your pencil’ day. The children spent a whole day engaged in their learning without picking up a pen or pencil to write with. It was fascinating to see the creative ideas generated by staff to provide engaging learning opportunities. You can read about some of these below.

Collective Worship

Epiphany



This week's theme:
Epiphany

This week's story:
Philip and Nathanael
John 1:43-51

When we proposed ‘Drop your pencil day’, little did we know that children would pick up a variety of foodstuff as an unlikely alternative!

Appearances can be deceptive! It may have only been the second day back after a two-week Christmas break, but across the school it seemed like pupils had gone on strike this Tuesday. Reports were leaked that every child at Saint James Primary School refused to pick up a pencil or pen for the whole day, ensuring that no writing was able to take place. So, why was this? Was it a protest that the school holidays weren’t long enough or that they felt the school day should bear more of a resemblance to the previous two Tuesdays (a couple of days before Christmas day and New Years day, respectively)? No, not at all. The children were simply enjoying ‘Drop your pencil day’, a day when they could embrace learning without the need to write.

If you were to take a stroll down the corridors of the school, you could easily have been pulled into a lively discussion prioritising the equipment needed to survive in a flooded land (inspired by the text Floodlands) or asked for your assistance in constructing a paper mache volcano which would be used for the dual purposes of demonstrating the physical impact of an eruption and the chemical reaction of mixing an acid (vinegar) and carbonate (baking soda). The school was a hotbed of enthusiasm and excitement, with many imaginative and engaging learning opportunities taking place.

In Year 1, the lack of pencils didn’t hold the children back, as they completed some vibrant, interesting and colourful pictures using implements you’d be more likely to find in a stew or a fruit bowl than a paint box in the classroom! From carrots, potatoes and broccoli to apples, pears and oranges, the children explored the images that could be created by printing with the different fruit and vegetables. However, the contents of a salad drawer and fruit bowl weren’t the only foodstuff that could be found in the classrooms on Tuesday.



Whilst it would have been undeniably difficult not to be drawn into the aforementioned activities in the classrooms across the school, we think it would have been nearly impossible (and require a lot of will-power) to walk past the Year 4 classrooms in particular!

Famously, Gene Wilder, Johnny Depp and Timothée Chalamet have all portrayed on film the enigmatic Mr Willy Wonka, from Roald Dahl’s classic, ‘Charlie and the Chocolate Factory’. However, on Tuesday, all of the children in Year 4 had the opportunity to emulate the famous chocolatier and gain entrance to his fabled Chocolate lab. In an exciting hook for their upcoming writing journey, the children all received a mythical golden ticket permitting them entrance to a wonderful world of exploring chocolate.

Continued overleaf

Once settled in the lab, they had the chance to explore a multitude of different types of chocolate to investigate how appealing they were. Showing remarkable restraint to resist the temptation to taste, the children explored how the chocolate smelled, as well as the wrappers, packaging, shapes and moulds.

Whilst we value and celebrate all differences at Saint James Primary School, we can say with some certainty that no child bears a physical resemblance to an Oompah Loompah, one of Willy Wonka's diminutive and secretive workers. However, for the foreseeable future, the children are excited to be adopting this role and designing a new chocolate bar for the reclusive chocolate maker. To gain inspiration they looked at a variety of adverts, thinking about what would truly appeal to the chocolate connoisseur.

Whilst we are anticipating some creative and unusual combinations of flavours, when the children's designs become reality, you will be pleased to know that, like Saint James Primary School, Willy Wonka's lab is a nut-free environment. Therefore, the teachers had the difficult task of removing all the nut-based chocolate before allowing the children to investigate. With allergy awareness being paramount, staff removed these chocolates before bringing the boxes to school. Extracting and then consuming any chocolate that contained nuts, we cannot imagine many occasions when being diligent is so rewarding!



Ready, Set, Glow - explosive Science set to light up Saint James Primary School

If you were told that your child could be watching dramatic explosions as well as the building and launch of a rocket in our school hall, you could be forgiven for thinking it was during a film night and the showing of the latest *Marvel* or action movie. However, you would be wrong. Although you might expect these activities to be confined to a Hollywood studio or backlot, they will be happening live in the Saint James school hall!

We are delighted that Saint James Primary School has been awarded a Royal Institution Science Grant, enabling us to host an exciting day of Science for our pupils on 13th January. This also includes a professional development session for school staff, so that we can incorporate further engaging and enriching ideas and investigations into Science lessons.

In addition, we will also be holding a Community Science Show for families on the same evening. The show, which will take place from 5.30pm to 6.30pm, promises to be an engaging and interactive event, showcasing the wonders of Science for all ages.

Tickets for the show will be available to purchase at a cost of £5 per ticket, with all proceeds being used to develop our outdoor pond area for the Scientific study. This project will provide even more hands-on learning opportunities for Saint James pupils in the future. There are only 200 tickets available so these will be sold on a first come first served using the following link:

<https://sjsa.sumupstore.com/product/science-show>

The following is a brief synopsis from the team delivering the show – it certainly sounds thrilling:

'Dive into Science and be ready to get hands-on with surprising experiments, shocking facts and the odd explosion! This show is packed full of experiments for families to try at home as well as our trademark fiery demos. Join us as we learn how to build a rocket..... and launch it!'

We look forward to welcoming as many families as possible to this exciting celebration of Science!



Saint James scores a striking new look – with new kits donated by Hunters Auto Electricians

Football kits may come and go, but there are some that have stood the test of time for their iconic status. Often what constitutes an iconic shirt isn't purely based on the kit itself, but the players and team wearing it and for the special moments they created.

Sometimes, these kits have been worn by the greatest players of all time. Other times, they have been worn by teams that are looked upon fondly by football fans, for the great things they did in a moment in time. In the top ten most iconic football kits of all time, the Barcelona kit (adorned with Unicef on the front), the Paris Saint Germain kit (with Opel across the front) and the Arsenal kit (with JVC emblazoned on it) all rank highly. However, from this season, we would now like to offer a new kit to these illustrious offerings; the Saint James kit with 'Hunters Auto Electricians' written on it.

The all-blue kit with contrasting white lettering, along with the vibrant pink goalkeeper's shirt, is finally a kit that is worthy of our fabulous football teams, this season. Whilst the names emblazoned across the aforementioned kits are massive, global organisations we are proud to have our kit supplied by a local company with links to Saint James, Hunters Auto Electricians. Neil Hunter, the proprietor of the company, is the father of Max (currently in Year 6) and Jake (who left the school two years ago). We would like to extend an enormous 'thank you' to Mr Hunter for such a kind gift. We have every confidence that it will receive significant exposure this season, with the potential for both of our football teams to progress far in their respective competitions.

When we had professional photographers in school a few years ago, to take promotional photos for the website, they resisted taking many of the children playing football because it is such a difficult sport to capture well on camera. Therefore, we think Mr Walsh and Mr Whitlock have done an excellent job photographing some of our exciting and talented players modelling the new kit whilst striking the ball!



Taco 'bout tasty – we've got an enticing special menu for Census Day next week

We're sure that only a couple of weeks ago, if someone was to mention a Census and Census Day, many of our children would immediately think of Joseph, returning to his hometown of Bethlehem with the heavily pregnant Mary. As we know that they were finally accommodated in a stable, as there was no room in any inn, we strongly doubt that there was any impressive food on offer. Thankfully, the same presumption will not be made about our upcoming Census Day at Saint James Primary School!

Next Thursday, 15th January, we will be offering a special menu to recognise Census Day at Saint James. The funding the school receives for the upcoming year is based on how many children order a school meal on this day. Therefore, we would strongly encourage as many children as possible to order a lunch.

If the idea that your child's lunch might help shape the future of the school is not motivation enough, there is another incentive on offer too, as well as a safety-net for those concerned they might not like the food they're served. A special, novelty pencil sharpener will be given to every child in Year R, 1 and 2 who orders a school meal on the 15th January. If you, or your child, is concerned that they might not like the meal, you are welcome to send them with a packed lunch on the day, as well.

We have heard that the cost of a cooking or food preparation class can cost between £30 and £100 per session. However, this is an addition aspect added for free to the dining experience on the day! The exciting theme of 'Build your own taco' lends itself to some culinary creativity; with a choice of fillings and accompaniments (see the attached menu) there are lots of ways for the children to customise their lunch. Maybe we'll discover some exciting new combinations on the day that are worthy of the menu in a Michelin star restaurant!



Free SEND webinars

We would like to draw your attention to a number of free webinars that are being run to support parents of children with SEND. Facilitated by the Witherslack Group, the upcoming webinars focus on neurodiversity and developmental language disorder.

Some of our families accessed the first webinar in the series this week on 'Emotionally Dysregulated Behaviour' and we have heard favourable feedback about this online resource. However, please feel free to access the other two free webinars to be held in January:

'Neurodiversity: ARFID & PICA Explained', on Wednesday 14 January, 10:00-11:00 am <https://www.witherslackgroup.co.uk/advice-and-support/events/webinar-neurodiversity-arfid-pica-explained/>

'Development Language Disorder: Signs, Support & Strategies', on Wednesday 21 January, 10:00-11:00 am

<https://www.witherslackgroup.co.uk/advice-and-support/events/webinar-development-language-disorder-signs-support-strategies/>