



Be COVID Aware

Do not come onto school site if you have any Coronavirus symptoms, & get tested. Maintain social distancing at all times. The symptoms are:

- High temperature
- New, continuous cough
- Loss of or change to sense of smell or taste

Newsletter

8th January, 2021

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Happy New Year! And what a start to the new year it has been, the decision to delay the re-opening of school less than a week ago seems to be an age away, and of course we start the year in another Stay at Home Lockdown—I do hope you are all coping with the new restrictions and that you and your families are well. Unfortunately, the DfE only published its specific guidance for schools last night, and as yet I have not had the chance to read through and understand what all the implications are for our school. We have also not yet received any information about how Free School Meals will be handled during this Lockdown. Once I have had the chance to read through everything, I will of course let you all know. Thank you for all your messages of support and encouragement, they really do mean the world to us, especially as the messages coming from the DfE are anything but encouraging or supportive.

My plan is to try and keep it so that we can accommodate any child who needs to be in school. However, this is completely dependent on staff availability. Obviously, if too many staff are absent from school, then I will need to close individual bubbles, and if teachers become unwell, we won't be able to provide the best quality remote learning and support for children. It is vitally important that we all work together to ensure that COVID does not spread around our school family and everyone has a responsibility to act in the best interests of everyone.

Please read the attached letter from Vicky Head and Martin Purbrick carefully and take on board what you are being asked to do. The number of cases in Bedford Borough are extremely high, and we all need to try and reduce the number of households who are mixing. We are told that schools are safe for children, and yes, we work extremely hard to keep St James' as safe as possible for them. However, we know that children can spread the illness and our staff are susceptible to contracting COVID. If I have to close bubbles, the reality is that there will be keyworkers who will not be able to go to work, and in many cases these keyworkers are the people who are working in the COVID wards saving lives, who are directly involved in the vaccination programme, or who are supporting keyworker children in other schools, and of course we will only ever get back to our lives if these people are able to do their jobs.

I am fully aware that every key worker has the right to send their child to school, but I am also aware that there are some situations where children do not need to come into school, because a parent is at home not carrying out paid work, and I implore you to consider your situation—if **your child can be at home, then that's really where they should be.**

This is not about us not wanting to teach children, but is coming from a place of genuine concern and worry. Currently, Mrs Lawless is isolating, and although she can work from home, it isn't ideal as she has limited access to resources; we hope she will back to school soon. Mrs Botrogno is unwell with COVID and I do not yet know when she will be returning to school. Mrs Hawkins is very unwell with COVID, and I do not anticipate her return to work any time in the near future. Mr Lorenc's wife is extremely unwell, in hospital, fighting COVID, yet he is in school every morning at 6am making sure the site is ready for us all. Our staff are extremely dedicated to your children, but the threat of COVID is felt very keenly by us all, and we need you to help us keep our school COVID free so that no other member of our staff is affected and we can keep classes open for those families who really do need us.

If your child is unwell, please keep them at home—there are a number of minor symptoms which could be COVID related, and we want to minimise the risks as much as possible. Please stay safe and well, we'll all be back together soon,

Very best wishes,

Maria & all the team at St James'



Pat completed his 100 mile cycle ride on New Year's Day—he had to change his original plan due to COVID restrictions, but he did it in 7 hours 52 minutes, and has raised just over £2000, of which half will come to St James'. Thank you for all your support, and huge thanks for Mr Tapley's incredible achievement!



We have welcomed two new staff to St James'.

Mrs Sui Wong joins us as our Finance Officer covering Mrs Usher's maternity leave (no news yet!), and Ms Katie Ross joins us as a Learning Support Assistant based in Year 6. Both Sui and Katie are very welcome, and we look forward to working with them - what a strange time for them to be starting new jobs!

Home Learning Packs—paper copies of home learning packs will be available for collection on Mondays from 10.00 –3.00. You do not need to email or telephone us to request these, just come to collect. We ask that you collect these on Mondays only.

I'd really like this newsletter to reflect news from all our school family, whether at home or in school, and would like to use it to celebrate some of the wonderful things happening around us. So, to that end, I am inviting everyone, children and adults, to contribute articles for the newsletter.

I'm looking for Lockdown reflections, exciting news events, top tips to share with others, interesting websites/online events/things to do, recommended local places to visit for exercise (eg walks we can do...) - anything really, which can help us all to stay connected and keep going during Lockdown. Photos are also very welcome.

Please send me anything you'd like to contribute to head@stjamesvaschool.co.uk by Thursday afternoon.



Epiphany

This week, Christians celebrated Epiphany—it's the time which marks the arrival of the Three Wise Men at the stable to see Baby Jesus, is traditionally the time when Christmas decorations come down, and comes at the time when we're thinking about the new year ahead of us. The word 'epiphany' means a moment of revelation or insight and of course, at new year, we often assess our lives and make resolutions, promises, about how we might change our lives for the better.

The Wise Men brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh for the Baby—strange gifts for a baby maybe, but these were gifts fit for a king. Their journey to Jesus bearing these gifts invites us to reflect about the gifts we might bring, in order to deepen our relationships with each other and with God and the new year is a perfect time to think about this.

This year, amongst all the challenges presented by Lockdown, it seems to me that it's even more important we take some time to think about our special gifts and talents, and how we might use these to bring comfort to those around us, showing love, compassion and understanding to the people we meet in our everyday lives. This year, we can be the Wise Men, travelling through the complexities of life bringing gifts to share and bringing light and love to the people we meet.

Dear Parent/Carer,

I would firstly like to wish you a happy new year and I hope that you managed to get some of a break over the Winter break.

As we are well aware COVID 19 is not looking like it is going anywhere soon and the impact of having flu alongside COVID is very worrying for both your child and your families. Although the schools are closed, we have community clinics in your local areas to be able to continue vaccinating and protecting your children against flu.

We are in the process of actively calling every parent whose child has a consent form with us (electronic or paper) and who did not have a vaccination on the schools date either due to absence or refusal, and booking in to our community clinics. If you do not receive a call by the end of next week or wish to get your child booked in sooner please call us to book into a clinic appointment.

If you did not return your consent form (paper or electronic) and would like to book into a community clinic, please contact the team on 0300 790 0594 to book an appointment.

There are two vaccinations on offer this year:

FLU NASAL SPRAY

This vaccination is the Gold standard of the flu vaccines as it gives the best coverage. It is a simple spray of the vaccination up each nostril. Please note this vaccine does contain pork gelatine, and therefore may not be suitable for some of you.

FLU INJECTION

As of late last year, the flu injection became available for all children. This vaccine is good but is more of the silver standard; it provides good coverage. It is administered via a needle in the upper arm. This vaccine does not contain pork gelatine, so is the best alternative for any child who cannot have the nasal spray.

Please advise the person whom you are speaking with to book an appointment which choice you are making to have.

Kindest Regards

Becky Twist

Clinical Delivery Manager

Using X Box or Play Station to access HWB

Accessing your remote learning. An alternative method of accessing remote learning during times of lockdown.

X Box

1. Plug a key board in to the X box USB slot
2. Go in to my games and apps
3. Find Microsoft Edge and select
4. Type in: HWB and log in as you would in school
5. You can then access your work through one drive and use key packages including:
 - Word
 - Teams
 - Excel
 - PowerPoint
 - Your emails
6. To move around you use the X Box control or plug a mouse



Play Station

1. Identify the Play Station internet browser icon (it is WWW with dots around it)
2. Press the PS4 logo on the controller
3. Go to the library and find options for games and applications
4. Go in to applications and you will find the internet browser
5. Type HWB into the browser and log in as you would in school
6. You can then access your work through one drive and use key packages including:
 - Word
 - Teams
 - Excel
 - PowerPoint
 - Your emails



One of our parents sent us this screenshot—how to use X Boxes and Play Stations to access Microsoft Teams

This will be helpful if you have limited numbers of computers at home.



I

Happy New Year Ms Soulsby,

How was your Christmas? I hope it was good, we had a lovely, quiet, happy and blessed time.

Did you get everything you asked for? I asked for love and I got that, but I get love everyday, and so do you.

I also asked for the Harry Potter Night Bus Lego set, and I got that and finished it today.

Our elves had to stay a bit longer because they can't cross the borders, we also sprinkled Reindeer food over our garden.

How was your new year?

Did you celebrate with your family? What was your favourite part? Mine was the countdown, and the fireworks. I wonder how they did the turtle with the world on it. It probably was a screen reflecting it in the sky.

But wasn't it B-e-a-utiful? Let's hope we have a better year this year and no more lockdown!

My New Year's resolution is to help out more, another one is to spend less time on my devices, and the last one is to spend more time with my family.

I wish that COVID-19 goes and we get to see each other again, I also wish that Mrs Hawkins gets better, and that everyone gets the love they need during lockdown.

From

Harry T Year 5.