



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 3rd December 2021

office@stjamesvaschool.co.uk
head@stjamesvaschool.co.uk

This week has seen the start of Advent, and as I writes, classes are busy decorating the school for Christmas. We're missing all of you for a second year but there's a lovely atmosphere around school and some lovely ideas for decorations.

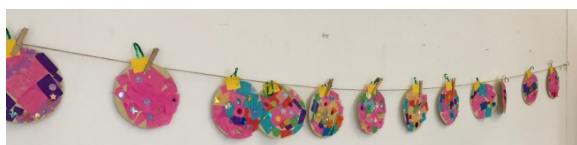
During Advent, we take the opportunity to decorate our Jesse Tree. The Jesse Tree is an ancient Christian tradition and is a family tree for Jesus—we decorate it with symbols of the people who came before Jesus, beginning with Adam and Eve and journeying through the Old and New Testaments until we reach Mary and Joseph. It is called a Jesse Tree because of a verse in Isaiah; '**a shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots**'. Isaiah's hope was that a king (Messiah) would come from the royal line of King David (Jesse's son) and rule the people with justice. Christians believe that this Jewish hope for a Messiah is fulfilled in Jesus, so all the old stories from the Old Testament become the stories leading up to His birth. Using the Jesse Tree in school allows us to enjoy Advent as a season beyond simply being a countdown to Christmas. Our Jesse Tree is located in the Year 3 classroom, so everyone can see it as they come into school.

You may be aware of on-going controversies about whether schools should or should not be holding face to face performances this Christmas. We took the decision some time ago not to have any face to face events in school, which includes our assemblies and our planned Christmas shows. We decided this so we could limit any potential outbreaks of COVID amongst children, staff and families. We have decided that we will combine our usual Christmas show and service, and create a video which we will be able to send home for you all to enjoy. We know that having families in school for these sorts of events is important and special, but we also know how important it is for everyone to be well this year. Cases across Bedford are still quite high, and I know that there are many schools who have very high rates amongst children and staff—so far, we have had sporadic, isolated cases and I am convinced this is because of our shared cautious approach; if we can keep this going, then we will all be able to enjoy our plans this Christmas. I am so grateful for your support and encouragement, it really does make all the difference.

Finally, I offer apologies—I completely forgot to attach information regarding the Santa Challenge—it's here this week!

Wishing you all a very happy and peaceful weekend,

Maria & all the team at St James'



Safeguarding

You may be aware of the horrific events surrounding the death of six year old Arthur Labinjo-Hughes, whose parents have been found guilty this week of his murder and child cruelty. It's a truly tragic case, and whilst we do not yet know what part agencies such as his school, social services, police and health care played in the lead up to his death, it is only right that we stand back and re-evaluate our practices here at St James'.

All staff here are trained to spot the signs of children who are at risk of serious harm, as well as those children and families who might need additional support. Staff are trained to report any concern to me as the Designated Safeguarding Lead, no matter how trivial. Where we are concerned, we will contact you and share these concerns with you. Sometimes, we will need to take our concerns further and contact Bedford Borough Children's Services—this is because we might need additional advice, or further investigation is required, or a safeguarding threshold has been reached. Referring to Children's Services does not necessarily mean your child will be taken away from you, nor does it mean that we have made a judgement about you, but we do need to take further action to ensure their safety and well-being. There will be different outcomes if we make a referral—sometimes no further action is needed and we continue to monitor your child; sometimes we are asked to carry out an Early Help Assessment with you; sometimes the Local Authority will decide to contact you or they may start a statutory assessment/investigation. **We will always act in what we believe are the best interests of the child.**

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility, including yours. You will be aware of situations away from school and might have concerns about a child or family. We encourage you to report these concerns. You are not telling tales or interfering, and you can make your concerns anonymously, if you need to, but you may see and hear things that other agencies, including school, won't. Please don't assume that someone else knows, and remember your information could be incredibly important.

If you do want to raise concerns, you can contact Bedford Borough on 01234 718700, or the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000, or you can talk to me as the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. Please give as much information as you can.

If I am not available, both Mrs Morton and Mr Leach are also trained as designated Safeguarding Lead and act as Deputy DSLs in my absence. We can all be contacted on 01234 352721 or you can email head@stjamesvaschool.co.uk

If you are ever concerned that a member of staff has harmed a child, you must report this to me. If you are concerned that I have harmed a child you should contact David Fraser, Chair of Governors (chair@stjamesvaschool.co.uk) or contact Bedford Borough on the number above.

By being alert and looking out for the children in our community (whether they attend St James' or not), we can ensure that our children are safe, which I know is our **shared**, number one priority.

Maria Soulsby

Upcoming Dates

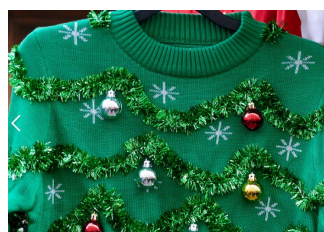
Tues 7th Dec	Vision Screening Robins Class (School Nursing Team) 2.30 Y2 rescheduled assembly & concert
Fri 10th Dec	Christmas Jumper Day Flu immunisations
Mon 13th Dec	Santa Dash
Tues 14th Dec	Christmas Lunch Mrs Simi Rai, our new teacher, visiting Robins class
Weds 15th Dec	PSA Christmas Bazaar
Fri 17th Dec	End of term 1.30pm

All dates and activities are subject to change due to the emerging COVID situation—we will always tell you as soon as we know/have made decisions.



Christmas Jumper Day will take place on **Friday 10th December**. It is a fundraising event held each year. Children (and adults!) may wear a Christmas jumper and donate to Save the Children. As much as possible, we'd love to see home-made, reused or recycled jumpers rather than buying new ones.

We cannot wait to see your chosen jumpers on 10th December!



COVID

Please remember that if your child shows any COVID symptoms you must keep them at home and arrange for them to take a PCR test. Please also be aware of the minor symptoms. If you are in any doubt, please keep your child away from school. If your child displays any of the listed COVID symptoms, we will isolate them from others and contact you to arrange collection.

We will provide remote learning activities for children who are at home due to COVID and are well enough to learn—this will be ready for the second day of their absence, allowing teachers the first day to prepare all the necessary resources. There will also be times when, due to teacher illness and absence, we will not be able to monitor or provide remote learning or run Teams sessions. Please be aware that teachers do not have the capacity to provide remote learning for any other circumstances, including leaves of absence.

For children entitled to Free School meals (due to benefits) food parcels will be provided as soon as possible by Caterlink.

Thank you so much for all of you who exercise caution and for keeping your children at home if they are showing any symptoms of COVID, your actions are really helping to keep down transmission of the virus .

Symptom	Coronavirus <i>Symptoms can range from mild to severe</i>	Cold <i>Gradual onset of symptoms</i>	Flu <i>Abrupt onset of symptoms</i>
Fever	COMMON	RARE	COMMON
Fatigue	SOMETIMES	SOMETIMES	COMMON
Cough	COMMON	MILD	COMMON
Loss of taste/smell	COMMON	SOMETIMES	SOMETIMES
Sneezing	NO	COMMON	NO
Aches & pains	SOMETIMES	COMMON	COMMON
Runny or stuff nose	RARE	COMMON	SOMETIMES
Sore throat	SOMETIMES	COMMON	SOMETIMES
Diarrhoea	RARE	NO	SOMETIMES FOR CHILDREN
Headache	SOMETIMES	RARE	COMMON
Shortness of breath	SOMETIMES	NO	NO

Flu Vaccinations – 10th December 2021—Action required today

We have been advised that the NHS immunisation team has now rescheduled their visit to St James' Primary to carry out the Flu Immunisation on the 10th December 2021.

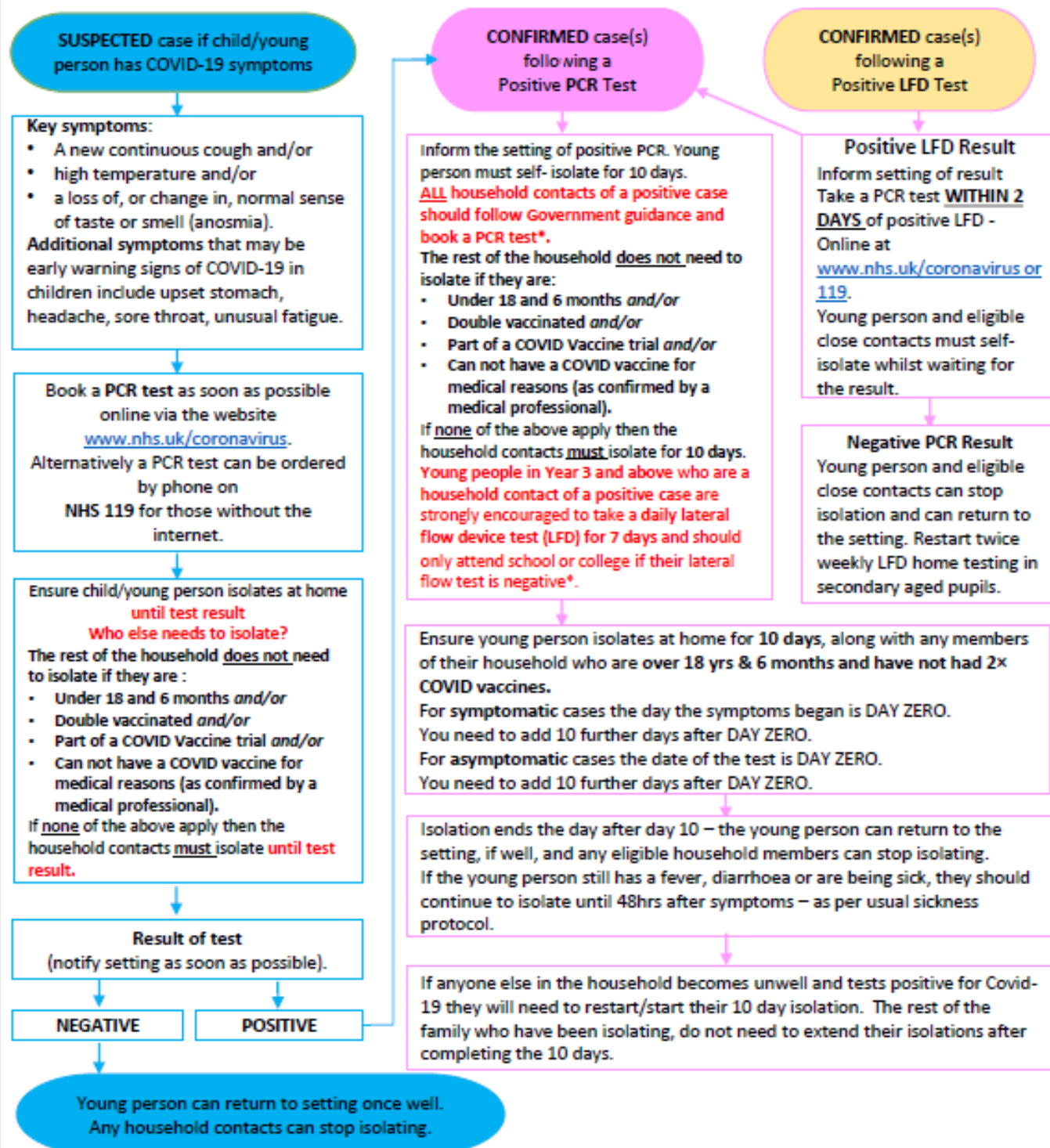
Please see attached letter regarding the Flu Immunisation for your child/children which St James' are sending out on behalf of the NHS immunisation team.

Please complete the consent form via the link on the attached letter. Please ignore this request if you have already completed this form earlier in November. The immunisation team has extended the deadline for the completion of consent forms to a later date of the **3rd December 2021**. Only one parent/carer needs to complete the consent form on behalf of their child/children. The flu vaccination is being offered to all children from Reception year up to year 11 this year. If your child has had their vaccination elsewhere, but you have previously completed the school consent form, please submit a non-consent form so that your child does not receive an unnecessary second dose.

If you have any queries regarding the flu vaccination please contact the NHS team direct via the telephone number or email address on the letter attached.

COVID-19 Guidance for Parents/Carers in Bedford Borough Education Settings From 1st Nov 2021

For any **SUSPECTED** or **CONFIRMED** case of COVID-19 in a young person please follow the flow chart below.



- Mask should be worn by young people in Year 7 and above (Year 5 and above in Middle Schools) in all communal areas outside the classroom, and on school and public transport.
- *If you have recently (within 90 days) had a positive PCR test for COVID-19 you are exempt from testing by both PCR and LFD within 90 days of a positive PCR test result, unless you develop new symptoms.
- LFD tests are used for identifying Covid-19 infection where there are no symptoms and should not be used if you have any symptoms.
- If you have had a COVID-19 vaccination you should still take part in the LFD testing as you may still transmit the virus.

Dawn Until Dusk

Although the dark evenings are back with us we are still enjoying outside play. We have torches for the children and they all wear high visibility jackets. The darker evenings also lend themselves to having a disco indoors without the lights on in the hall and just our flashing lights, the children request this often this time of year and have great fun playing musical games.

We still have plenty of spaces available throughout the week including Mon-Fri breakfast clubs and Mon, Tue and Friday after school clubs.

Please call for availability during office times which are :- 07.30-09.00 and 15.00-17.30. If you would like to register your child with us please pop in to see us and we will be happy to help.

Our mobile number is-07826 100013

Cathy, Jess and Kelly

Dawn until Dusk Ltd
4 Warren Court, Lodge Farm, Sandy Lane, Chicksands,
Shefford, Bedfordshire, SG17 5QB
Tel:01234 930505 Mobile:07826100013
Email:info@kidsdawnuntildusk.co.uk

Free Event

COME AND VISIT SANTA ON HIS MAGIC BUS

SANTA SCOOT

Merry Christmas

Pressie Time

Mowsbury Park
Wentworth Drive, Bedford MK41 8DQ
Sunday 12th December
Drop by any time 10am to 12pm

Start from the Wentworth Drive Car Park and follow a trail to find the magical Christmas bus. Bikes and buggies also welcome. All children receive a free gift from Father Christmas.

Please do not attend if you, or anyone in your household, feel unwell or have symptoms of COVID-19.

Thanks to Grant Palmer Limited for supporting this year's Santa Scoot

GP
Grant Palmer Limited

Voluntary Contributions

There are a number of activities which we offer for children, for which we ask parents to make a voluntary contribution in order to help cover the costs. These are always for non-statutory activities, things we don't have to do but think are good for the children to enjoy. We base these costs on what the event costs for each child and never factor in an element of 'profit making'. If we do not receive voluntary contributions to cover the costs associated, then the school would have to fund these out of its own budget; sadly we don't have the budget to do this, so would have to cancel the planned activity.

We have recently sent home letters to children across KS2 about swimming, and have asked parents to contribute to the costs of the transport, which is quite significant. More than half of the forms returned by families have not included any contribution to this transport cost, which totals £420. The statutory curriculum states that the school must provide for swimming lessons, and the cost of the actual lessons is factored into our budget. If we can not secure the funding necessary for the cost of transport, we will have no choice but to reconsider how many children we can take swimming this and in future years.

We appreciate times are tough at this time of year, but your contributions are really important; even if you can't pay the full cost we've asked for, please re-consider and make a contribution.

Our full charging policy can be found on our website.

MERRI CHRISTMAS TREES

2021 FUNDRAISER

Do you want to experience being able to choose your Christmas tree direct from the field and raise funds for **St James Primary** at the same time? If your answer is yes, then visit MERRI Christmas trees based in Oakley, Bedfordshire.

When you purchase your MERRI Christmas tree simply mention that **St James Primary** told you about the fundraiser and MERRI Christmas Trees will gift £5 of your purchase to your chosen charity.

There are three possible ways to buy a MERRI Christmas Tree;

1. TAG your tree for collection or delivery* at a later date
2. CHOOSE your tree then have it cut down to take home that day
3. PRE-ORDER your tree for collection or delivery* at a later date.

Tree tagging at MERRI Christmas Trees starts at the end of October.

To book a visit to the farm, please visit www.ticketsource.co.uk/merri

Then come January why not spare your car from needles and have your tree collected and raise funds for Sue Ryder, Moggerhanger too.

Tree delivery (by MERRI) and Treecycle (by Sue Ryder) available for following postcodes; MK40, MK41, MK43, MK44 and MK45 (plus NN10 for delivery)



MERRI Christmas Trees

Queens Close, Oakley
Bedfordshire
MK43 7TB

(opposite Oakley Post Office)



www.merriflowers.co.uk

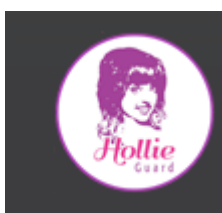
merrichristmastrees@yahoo.com

To book a visit to the farm, please visit www.ticketsource.co.uk/merri



MAKING SURE YOUR HOME DOESN'T HAVE AN OPEN DOOR TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSERS

A guide for parents and carers



[Hollie Guard Personal Safety APP](#) - this app may be useful for adults or children who walk alone—it allows you to send a notification when you have arrived safely at your destination and triggers an alert if you don't arrive at the time expected, and provides information about your location.

Recycle 4 Charity

Your Ink Cartridges Could Help Us Raise Funds!



Recycle Yours Here!

Ink recycling box is found in the main school entrance foyer.

Tuesday, 30th November 2021

Christmas Dinner – Tuesday 14th December 2021

Action Required by Monday

St James' Christmas Dinner will take place on Tuesday 14th December 2021. Please complete the attached form if you wish your child to have a Christmas Dinner in order to give Caterlink advance notice of numbers – all Christmas dinners **must** be pre-ordered. **If you do not order a dinner by Monday, we will assume your child does not want a school meal and will bring a packed lunch into school on that day.**

For children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 the cost of the Christmas Dinner will be £2.22 (You will not have to pay for a Christmas meal if your child is in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 or if your child receives free school meals). Some children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 may have already paid in advance for the Christmas Dinner if you have pre-paid for your child's meals in advance. Those who haven't paid and intend to have Christmas Dinner, please return payment and slip in a sealed envelope, clearly stating your child's name. Payment can be made via cash, cheque or by paying online via Caterlink if you have previously set this up. If paying by cheque please make all cheques payable to Caterlink.

Christmas Dinner Menu:

Roast Turkey served with Sausage, Sage and Onion Stuffing and Gravy

Or

Feta, Spinach and Cranberry Puff Pastry Roll (V)

Meals are served with Roast Potatoes, Carrots, Peas and Brussel Sprouts

Dessert – Christmas Pudding Rice Krispie Cakes

Please note, jacket potatoes will not be available on Tuesday 14th December.

Please return all reply slips no later than Monday 6th December 2021.

Thank you.

Christmas Dinner – Tuesday 14th December 2021

I would/would not like my child to have a Christmas Dinner

(child's name): _____ Year _____

Please tick food option: Roast Turkey

 Parsnip and Sweet Potato Loaf (V)

Year 3, 4, 5 & 6 Children Only: I enclose £2.22 – (please ignore if payment has already been made in advance.)

Special dietary requirements - for allergy reasons only

(Please state): _____

Please ask for: Alister Barclay
Direct line: 07775 998385
E-mail: alister.barclay@bedford.gov.uk
Date: November 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Santa Challenge
Cycle, Scoot or Stride to Santa in Lapland
Monday 29th November to Friday 10th December

Your child's school is joining the SANTA CHALLENGE, a virtual Christmas trip to Lapland, where we count up their active travel trips during the two weeks of the competition.

So what is that?

This is where children walk, scoot or cycle to school. Each time a child travels actively, they will be credited with one mile. These miles will be used to map the school's journey to Lapland. We will be adding up all of the miles completed by the schools taking part in Bedfordshire to see whether we can reach our goal of arriving at Lapland, 2,000 miles away.

Why now?

We want to encourage as many children as possible to travel actively to school. As we get nearer to Christmas we thought it would be great opportunity to keep everyone walking, biking and scooting. While the weather is getting colder and the days shorter, we believe there are still opportunities to be bright and stay safe when wheeling or on foot. Being active can warm us up and cheer us up.

We understand that walking, cycling and scooting is not always an option. So that everyone can get involved, we also include Park and Stride or Park and Scoot. Simply park up five to ten minutes away from the school and walk or scoot the rest of the way. Your family still gets the benefits of an active journey and the roads around the school stay safer for everyone.

Join us on our Scoot to Santa

Another date for your diary is Sunday 12th December from 10am-12pm. You are invited to join us for a Santa Scoot at Mowsbury Park. Starting at the car park off Wentworth Drive, follow the trail to Santa and his magic bus, where all scooting children will receive a gift.

We look forward to seeing how far the school can cycle, scoot and walk during the Santa Challenge, and it would also be great to see you at the Scoot to Santa if you can make it.

Good Luck!

Yours Sincerely



Alister Barclay
Travel Plan & Engagement Officer



Get involved in the
Santa Challenge 2021
Cycle, Scoot or Stride to Santa

Monday 29th
November to
Friday 10th
December

Walk,
scoot or
cycle to
school



Remember, if you live too far away Park & Stride or Park & Scoot