



# St. James The Great

ROMAN CATHOLIC (VA) PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

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## NEWSLETTER



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

No 5

February 2009

**M**onday morning at 6.30 am the first telephone call answered was from a colleague Headteacher asking whether St James the Great was going to be open. My journey to school took four times longer than normal by which time thoughts about the decision whether or not to close were somewhat sharper. It is a difficult decision, not least because of the inconvenience closure can cause particularly to working parents. In addition the children would have loved the expanse of snow across our site. As I enter my 21<sup>st</sup> year at St James the Great I reflect on the fact that apart from a late start to the Autumn Term 1993 due to building and the third day of the last local authority instructed schools to “business as usual”. On those two somewhat different, a letter posted to all people at the gate plus telephone calls somewhat. Our telephone system was whom we had a mobile phone contact. families. There was a small delay in of you due to problems with some successful. If you do have a mobile text on Monday morning and again Monday evening for Tuesday please send your number to the office so we can update our system and verify your number. The use of our website to relay a message also appeared to work well, especially when we got the “month” correct!! With so many people unable to get into work it was, I think, the right decision and it was pleasing to see many families enjoying the situation and to witness a wide variety of snowmen about. Many people commented on the fact that people seemed to have more time for each other so perhaps there is a ‘silver cloud’ to such situations. With our communication systems so well tried and tested I would hope for a 100% success rate should such a situation occur again. If you have any comments that would help us improve this please let us know. “Normal service” has now been resumed. Finally I would like to thank all the staff who maintained contact throughout and confirmed a willingness to run a “skeleton” operation were it felt necessary. This was appreciated. Thanks also to Mrs Spinks, Mr Parry, Miss O’Connor and Sheila Williams for getting in on Monday to man phones etc., a good team effort yet again.



### KINGS COLLEGE STUDY

Parents with children in Years 4, 5 and 6 will have received home information about the study we have been asked to take part in linked to levels of activity and pupils’ BMI. This is a totally confidential study from which we will receive no information in regard to individual pupils or survey returns. They have, however, agreed to give us a general overview for us to report back to you. The study was explained to the children by Dr Anne Mullen and two of her colleagues and we would urge you to seriously consider participation to enable the study to receive sufficient response to make it meaningful.



A Voluntary Aided School in the Trusteeship of the Archdiocese of Southwark.  
The school holds an Intermediate International Schools Award.

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## **SCHOOL TELEPHONE SYSTEM**

As a direct result of our communication routes to parents following the bad weather issues, I am pleased to advise you that after half term a further dial option will be available when you telephone the school that will provide up-to-date information. This will also advise regarding return for trips etc. When dialling you will get the following options:

- Dial 1 for general school information
- Dial 2 for administrative queries
- Dial 3 for the Finance section
- Dial 4 for admissions and attendance matters

**THANK YOU** to Joe and Les for all their work in clearing the drive and pathways during the period of snow. A number of parents expressed their thanks to them and this was appreciated.

## **CONDOLENCES**

We would express our sincere condolences to Stefano Capone (Year 6) and his family on the sudden loss of his elder brother last weekend. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family at this sad time. They are appreciative of your kind thoughts and have requested that their privacy be respected at this time. The funeral will be a private family occasion.

## **SPONSORSHIP**

Many of you will be unaware that our Christmas Fayre proceeds are due to be boosted by the agreement of Barclay's Bank to match fund one of the stalls. This could increase the takings by £750 and I would record sincere thanks to the Gibbons family for organising this on our behalf. These efforts are particularly appreciated in the current climate where sponsorship is much harder to come by.

## **CAN YOU HELP IN THIS WAY?**

With our Summer Fete rapidly approaching do you know anyone or any company who would be willing to either to take out an advertisement in our Fete programme at £20 a page or £10 for half a page? 1,500 plus copies of the programme are distributed which potentially represents good value to an advertiser. Matched funding to a given limit is also an option and would be acknowledged in the programme as well as offering advertising at the stall sponsored. Please see what you can do!! Thank you in anticipation. Please contact Bridie Willis on 07801 814748 if you can help in any way.

## **SCHOOL CD**

There are still a significant number of CDs awaiting exchange for the original CDs. Please do this by half term in order to guarantee a replacement.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO MICHAEL MONFRIES** who won the "Mann and Overton" Christmas Card design competition. We hope he enjoyed his gift voucher prize. Well done.

## **ASSEMBLY DATE CHANGE**

Due to another commitment it became necessary to change Class 4.2's Assembly date. Please note this will now take place at 3 pm on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February.

## **RE NEWSLETTER**

We are pleased to attach the Spring Term RE information leaflet which we hope you will find helpful.

## **ANALYSIS OF REPORT COMMENTS – SEE ATTACHED**

We have again undertaken an analysis of the parental comments placed on the returned pupil report forms at the end of the last academic year. This proves very useful and we will address the issues raised. We hope you find this of interest.

## **REMINDER**

**SCHOOL CLOSES TODAY, THURSDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, FOR THE HALF TERM BREAK AND RE-OPENS ON MONDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY. WE HOPE FOR SOME FINE WEATHER AND AN ENJOYABLE HALF TERM.**

### Analysis of Report Comments July 2008

Year group 07 - 08	Positive Comment	Working on Highlighted Areas	Issues arising	Notes on issues
Nursery	35	5		
Reception	50	7	Request for more individual support Request for additional work for home support	In place Referred to year 1 class teacher
Year 1	48	3		
Year 2	29	4		
Year 3	34	12		
Year 4	45	3	Request for referral	Referral made
Year 5	26	5	Request for referral	Referral to Inclusion Manager
Year 6	28		See note below	

- Only 28 report returns from year six parents as the reports were not sent out until the last week of term due to the issues which arose with the SAT results.
- Numbers in each year group reflect those reports returned with comments

**Comment from parent of Year 6 pupil**

**“If education is defined as, ‘a conversation between generations,’ our son has had an excellent ‘chat’ at St James the Great. We will be delighted if his next school is so good!”**