

This Newsletter is being prepared following the Year Six led Stations of the Cross held at St Bartholomew's. Firstly I would thank the large number of parents who made the effort to attend. From the comments after the service people clearly felt, as I did, that this was a very moving service that provided an excellent reflection in preparation for Easter. This was clearly St James the Great at its best and I would second Fr Michael's thanks to all the children, Mrs Vassallo, Mrs Berkeley-Agyepong, Mrs Bell, Mrs Speight and all the staff. Well done to everyone and thank you again.

As we near the end of the Spring Term with two thirds of the year under our belt it is pleasing to report yet more good news – some of which you may already have noticed. Congratulations are due to the following staff who are due to go on maternity leave in the Autumn Term – Mrs Mary Berkeley-Agyepong, Mrs Tammy Lawlor and Mrs Sharron Shakespeare. Whilst this mini baby boom has the downside of losing their services for a period of time, the good news is that at present they all plan to return to St James the Great. I would reassure parents that as always we will seek to secure continuity for your children. Mr Allen has already confirmed his willingness to continue, Mrs Mascarenhas is likewise helping us out in Class 4.2 and other arrangements are in hand, subject to confirmation. I would expect to be able to provide more specific details in the Summer Term.

Mrs Berkeley-Agyepong and Mrs Lawlor are also to be congratulated for their work on the school's submission for an Environmental Award organised by the Greater London Authority across all schools in the London Boroughs. Against stiff competition for Croydon's Award, St James the Great has been awarded first prize of £2,000 and will be invited to a formal presentation in London after Easter.

SCHOOL FINANCE

Many concerns remain in regard to the whole education funding situation in Croydon. Funding shortfalls are affecting all schools and the position at St James the Great places us in the weakest position we have faced financially for many years raising strong concerns for the future. As President of the Croydon Headteachers' Association I and my colleagues have sent the attached letter to all schools for circulation to parents. Please endeavour to find time to read its contents and if you feel able put "pen to paper" as suggested.

SAFETY PRESENTATION

Approximately 30 parents and teenagers attended this interesting and informative presentation by our Community Link Policeman, PC Tony Dale. All present appeared to find the session useful in spite of some technical difficulties with Powerpoint. Thanks are due to Mrs Claire Murphy for organising this.

PLAYGROUND WORKS

The contractors have visited the site and are due to commence work on the Tuesday after Easter so our Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children can look forward to a better playground surface on their return. It is intended to put some playground marking in place early in the Summer Term which will further enhance these developments.

SECTION 23 RE INSPECTION

Thank you again to all parents who returned their questionnaires – 258 returns saw a return of over 55% which the inspector indicated was the best return she had experienced to date. Mrs Joan Lenahan will be returning on Wednesday 5th May with a colleague to complete this important process. Some weeks after this we will receive her final report which will be circulated to all families.

4.1 ASSEMBLY

I have received notes from both Fr Michael Jones and Fr John O’Toole expressing their thanks for the presentations made to them at the Assembly to mark their 25th Jubilees and Fr John’s departure. It was again good to see many parents present and well done to Class 4.1, the Choir, Mrs Bell and Mrs Cefai for helping us to mark these occasions so well.

RE NEWSLETTER

Please find attached for your information the termly RE Newsletter giving you information in regard to the RE programme for the Summer Term.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

We are increasingly concerned by the number of parents who when dropping off or collecting children are bringing dogs onto the site. Regardless of whether the dogs are on a lead or not I would remind parents that for health and safety reasons dogs are not permitted on the site.

Sadly it is also necessary to issue a further reminder requesting parents to refrain from parking on the zig-zag lines or driving onto the school site during the hours that have been clearly specified. Disregarding both of these requirements presents a very significant danger to our children.

I have also been approached by some local residents requesting parents to be more considerate at the start and the end of the school day by not parking across their driveways.

VANDALISM

Our financial position is not helped by the wanton acts of vandalism that occurred over last weekend. It appears that the seven school windows, two coach windows and one minibus window were broken deliberately. We will be revisiting out of hours security in an attempt to minimise these incidents and the £2,000 costs incurred by this incident.

REFLECTIONS IN THE ORATORY

Thank you to all parents who attended reflections in the Oratory during Lent. It is pleasing to note that you value this opportunity to take “time out” of your busy week for prayer and reflection. Therefore it has been decided that both Thursday and Friday reflections will continue for the remainder of the year.

Those of you who have not yet taken the opportunity to join in with these reflections are most welcome to attend, whether it be on an occasional or regular basis. Please be assured that there is no pressure to lead reflections unless you would like to do so and that children are welcome to attend with you. The times are as follows: Thursday mornings at 9.30 am and Friday mornings at 8.45 am.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Congratulations to our newly-elected School Council representatives:-

Class	Girl	Boy
2.1	Kira Kearney	Cian O'Connor
2.2	Nana Asafu-Adjaye	Lewis Burke
3.1	Molly McGing	Paul Goswell
3.2	Simone Santos	Antonio Cassar
4.1	Hannah Smith	Conor Lehane
4.2	Lily Hay	Oliver Cole
5.1	Rachel Desa	Thomas McManamon
5.2	Melissa Edgerton	Sean Lopeman
6.1	Michaela Newsome	Gregory Campbell
6.2	Nicola Goldsmith	Elliot Cameron
Retained Member	Hannah Stock	

We wish to extend our thanks to the outgoing Council for their sterling work on behalf of the children over the past year.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY CONSULTATION

Attached is an initial draft of the anti-bullying policy generated by means of parent, staff, pupil and governor collaboration. Your suggestions for this policy are warmly welcomed and should be submitted by Friday 30th April, marked for the attention of Mrs Vassallo.

Our thanks once again to the group of parents who generously gave of their time in order to draft this very important document.

DINNER TOKENS

Mrs Mowbray is currently spending a significant amount of administrative time chasing up payments for school meals for which a token has not been provided. We would request that as far as possible you ensure your child has a token for each day on which they are taking a meal in order to cut down on this administration. Thank you for your co-operation.

MILK ORDERS

Please ensure that all milk orders are in before the end of term in order that accurate Milk Lists can be compiled for the start of the new term.

YEAR SIX SATS

Year 6 SATs will take place during the week beginning 10th May.

UNIFORM

Please note all children should return to school in summer uniform after the Easter Break.

SUMMER TERM DATES FOR INFORMATION

- Wednesday 5th May: Class 1.1 Prayer Service at 2.45 pm
- Saturday 8th May: Croydon Catholic Schools' Football and Netball Tournaments
- Tuesday 11th May: Class 1.2 Prayer Service at 2.45 pm
- Tuesday 18th May: Class 5.2 Prayer Service at 2.45 pm

Thursday 20 th May:	Feast of the Ascension: Mass in school for KS2 at 2.30 pm, Non-Eucharistic Service for KS1 at 1.45 pm
Monday 24 th May:	Class 5.1 Prayer Service at 2.45 pm
Tuesday 25 th May:	Reception Assembly at 9.45 am
Wednesday 26 th May:	Class 3.1 Prayer Service at 3.00 pm
Thursday 27 th May:	Class 3.2 Prayer Service at 3.00 pm
Friday 28 th May:	School closes for Half Term
Monday 7 th June:	School re-opens
Thursday 10 th June:	Feast of Corpus Christi Mass for KS2 at St Andrew's at 10 am Non-Eucharistic Service for KS1 at 2.15 pm
21 st -25 th June:	Year 6 residential visit to UKSA
Thursday 29 th June:	Feast of Ss Peter and Paul Mass for KS2 and Year 2 at St Bartholomew's at 10 am Non-Eucharistic Service for Nursery-Year 1 at 2.15 pm
Wednesday 30 th June:	Croydon Catholic Schools' Sports Day at St James the Great (This date is subject to change due to a clash with Croydon Sports. The final date will be advised next term.)
1 st July & 8 th July:	Open Evenings – Nursery to Year 6
Monday 12 th July:	School Concert – 2 pm
13 th & 14 th July:	School Concert – 7.30 pm
Thursday 15 th July:	School Sports field events – pm Leavers Mass at St Andrew's at 7.30 pm
Monday 19 th July:	School Sports Day – Track events
Wednesday 21 st July:	Leavers' Assembly at 9.45 am Nursery closes for Summer break
Thursday 22 nd July:	Final Assembly at 9.45 am School closes for Summer break
Thursday 2 nd September:	School re-opens Year 5 Masses
TBC	

We would extend every good wish to you all for the Easter Season.

