

Time moves relentlessly on! We are half way through both the school year and spring term. Where did Christmas and the New Year go? Keeping up with events with the busy lives we all seem to have these days is a problem but I will try to cover as many events as I can, but apologise if anything is missed.

PLEASE NOTE SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED THIS FRIDAY, 16th FEBRUARY FOR A STAFF TRAINING DAY AND HALF TERM. SCHOOL RE-OPENS ON MONDAY 26th FEBRUARY.

BEACON STATUS

Our school has much to celebrate and the award of Beacon Status at the beginning of the year is welcomed not least for the recognition it gives to the work of staff, children and parents. As a school we are now looking to maximise the benefits of the award and I will keep parents updated through Newsletters.

FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

What an impressive committee we have! The New Year's Eve event was excellent and ran like clockwork. Thanks are due to the considerable efforts of many committee members who worked a very full day preparing the hall for the event and in clearing up afterwards. No sooner had they caught their breath than they were underway again organising the recent "Music Evening". With just under 100 attending this function a very different but highly enjoyable evening was had by all, as testified by the many comments

received following the event. Thanks are due to our performers Chris and Ruth Speight (singers) and Max Thomas (Flautist) for the brackets they performed. I know the committee will not mind if I single out Stella Gumley for ensuring the evening went well through the provision of an excellent meal. We will certainly consider running such an event again at some time in the future – so if you missed it this time you may get another chance!

FUTURE EVENTS

Please note the following dates in your diaries. Information will be issued separately:-

Saturday 3rd March: Quiz Night
 Sunday 18th March: Children's Event*
 Saturday 7th April: Race Night
 Sunday 20th May: Summer Fete

*Please note this was a change of date as a result of us being able to book Roller Skating for Years 2-6 and an Entertainer for Nursery, Reception and Year 1.

The Friends Association is dependent upon you all so, **PLEASE SUPPORT THESE EVENTS.**

CURRICULUM EVENING – WEDNESDAY 9TH MAY 2001

FIRSTLY, I AM SORRY BUT FOR TWO REASONS IT HAS BECOME NECESSARY TO RE-SCHEDULE THIS FOR A THIRD TIME DUE TO:-

1. The discovery that Wednesday 7th March clashes with a First Communion meeting for St Andrew's parents, which would have

disenfranchised a significant number of parents in year 3.

2. The school has a legal requirement to produce a policy to deal with drug misuse and related issues.

As a result of the above and a golden opportunity we have received to obtain the services of Croydon's Drug Team to undertake a presentation to parents on this very important issue we are proposing a revised programme as follows:-

1. Parents' meeting on **Tuesday 3rd April** from 7.30 -9.00 pm.

a) At the meeting we will present to parents our revised DRAFT PHSE Policy, which will incorporate the legislation on Drugs Education in addition to PHSE issues in which we include sex education and other related issues such as bullying. This is a consultation exercise prior to the Draft Document going to Governors for amendment/approval.

b) We will receive a presentation from Croydon Drugs Team to assist parents in understanding and dealing with these matters at a home level.

PLEASE BOOKMARK THIS DATE AND ENDEAVOUR TO ATTEND - IT IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR ALL OF US. WE WILL ISSUE A REMINDER NEARER THE DATE.

CURRICULUM EVENING on Literacy and Numeracy will now take place on **Tuesday 8th May.**

CONDOLENCES

Whilst much news is good we sadly have to express our sincere condolences to two members of staff. Firstly to Mrs Cefai on the very sudden and unexpected loss of her mother this week. During the same week Mrs Tuck lost her father-in-law, again suddenly. We extend our sincere condolences to both families and I know you will all keep them in your prayers.

WELCOME BACK

We are pleased to welcome Mrs Bell back to school. She has been appreciative of the support she has received following the death of her father.

WEB SITE

I am pleased to report that our school web site is now "live" and can be accessed from www.stjamesthegreat.org. Please have a look. Any comments or suggestions will be welcomed. It is in the early stages of development but we were keen to get it live. The web cam picture linked to the weather page is currently only useful in the daytime – we are hoping, however, to rectify this over the coming months. Techies among you may be interested to note that the school internet connection has now gone ADSL and that we are hoping to install a new interactive whiteboard into the ICT room as a Beacon school development.

TOKEN PROMOTIONS

Thank you for your ongoing support. We are currently collecting:-

1. **Time Computer – Software for Schools Tokens** (Daily Telegraph, Sunday Telegraph, Times, etc.)
2. **Tesco Tokens.**
3. **Tetley Tokens** (Sports Stuff for Schools).
4. **Free Books for Schools Tokens** (Walkers Crisps, The Sun, News of the World).
5. **Sainsburys** – please see attached.

The Sainsburys scheme is a good one but relies on people registering and nominating the school individually. School points are added via their Rewards Card which is available from all Sainsburys stores. The awarding of points in no way affects customers benefits from the reward card scheme. If you use Sainsburys – even if only occasionally – then please register for the scheme. Every point received counts. Two copies of the registration form are attached and more are available from the school reception area. **PLEASE ENCOURAGE FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS TO REGISTER.** If you nominated us previously there is no need to re-nominate us. If

you are unsure, however, please nominate us to be certain.

FOOTBALL COACHES

My thanks to our Saturday morning football coaches for the excellent reception they gave to Malcolm Wicks MP and local councillor Raj Chaudry. They were very impressed with what they saw, not least the dedication and skill of the Dads and Mums concerned. They have gone away promising to see what can be done for the drainage of our field to prevent the disruption to training sessions and matches due to wet weather. We must now wait and see.

Malcolm Wicks was further impressed by the large number of staff who turned up on a Saturday morning for a brief discussion period with him. Definitely above and beyond the call of duty – many thanks to them all.

MENINGITIS VACCINATION

I am asked by the Health Authority to advise parents that the programme of vaccination run by the school health service is now completed. Anyone aged 17 years or under who has not yet been immunised can obtain vaccination from their GP. Clearly this has been a very successful programme supported almost 100% at St James the Great. If you have family members in the 17 or under category still to be vaccinated I would urge you to action this as soon as possible.

FROM OUR SCIENCE CO-ORDINATOR

The British Association for the Advancement of Science is holding a day of science workshops on Saturday 17th March, to mark the beginning of National Science Week. They will take place at the Imperial College, the Science Museum and the Natural History Museum and are particularly suitable for 6-16 year olds. For further information phone 020 7973 3059/3061 or e-mail elaine.Stanley@britassoc.org.uk.

BOOK SHOP

I would record my appreciation for the work undertaken by Mrs Sharon Barrett in running our school book shop over recent years. She has, however, now decided to stand down from this

role. Her support of this venture will be greatly missed.

I am grateful to Mrs Helen Stock who has agreed to stand in for Sharon for the time being.

FIRST COMMUNION DRESS SALE

We are again hosting this sale which will take place on Tuesday 6th March from 3.00-4.30 pm in the school hall. All welcome.

ASH WEDNESDAY

The children will take part in a penitential service and distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday, 28th February. Parents are welcome to these services which will take place in the main hall as follows:-

- 2 pm: Nursery and Key Stage 1
- 2.45 pm: Key Stage 2

Parents are welcome to bring morning Nursery children to the 2 pm service.

Arrangements have been made for those children who have made their First Holy Communion to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at times arranged with individual class chaplains during the period of Lent.



A Beacon School of Excellence