

The momentum of the academic year continues unabated and as a result we are behind schedule with this year's Newsletters. Much has gone on and I will try to cover as much as possible with apologies for any omissions.

It was very pleasing to receive our Investors in People Award and the award plaque is now proudly in place at the front of the building. My thanks to all those who were interviewed for the assessment and to Mrs Vassallo for her work on the documentation. The report will soon be available to read on our school website. Currently we are awaiting the result of our Arts Mark submission co-ordinated by Mrs Scott-Cree and our Active Mark award co-ordinated by Mrs Berkeley-Agyepong. We are also currently looking at a possible Charter Mark proposal and the Healthy Schools Award. These submissions are all very time consuming and I would record my thanks to all concerned with them. Parents may wonder why we undertake these submissions. The main reason centres on the benefits they provide to the school as part of our ongoing school Self Assessment and Review Processes whilst providing a level of external assessment that is useful to staff and governors. They also enhance the school profile locally and nationally and we are confident you share our joy in these successes.

Christmas and New Year have faded into the distance. Clearly the children had a good break. It was disappointing that our Friends Association had to cancel their New Year's Eve function, which has run for eighteen years, due to lack of support.

The Committee are reviewing their annual programme as a result of this with a view to assessing what type of function, if any, may suit New Year's Eve. This disappointment was, however, compensated for by the highly successful Race Night at which the Friends Association raised over £1,000. Many thanks to all who were able to support this event. Much of the Association's focus has now turned to the very big biannual event, our School Fete. This is the Association's major fundraising source and I would ask everyone to "lend a hand" where they can. In the light of the school budget position external funds are going to be increasingly critical to the school. The Friends Association has an ongoing commitment to our Minibus and coach provision and are keen to assist with the funding of an environmental area for the pupils and external covered areas initially for Key Stage one pupils. I feel sure you will see these as excellent projects and give your support to our Fete collection dates as follows:-

7th-11th April:

14th-17th April:

6th-9th May:

Groceries

Packets of Wrapped Sweets

Plants/Cakes

We will accept these items at anytime but these dates provide a focus for collection of items for the Fete. We are still accepting books, bottles (full) and unwanted gifts for tombola/craft stall/Bric-a-Brac. The day already has a full programme that will see the return of regulars such as the abseiling and dray horses in addition to new attractions – many focused for the children. **“PLEASE PUT THE FETE DAY IN YOUR DIARY”**. In line with tradition we will be holding two **non-uniform days** to support two of our Fete collections as follows:-

1. Friday 11th April – Bottles
2. Thursday 8th May – Groceries and Sweets

PLEASE GIVE WHATEVER SUPPORT YOU CAN TO THESE COLLECTIONS.

BUDGET

I would like to express my thanks to all those parents who have advised me that they have taken up the issue of the very poor funding given to Croydon Schools this year and in particular in connection with our own deficit position. You may have noted from recent press coverage that some additional funding has been forthcoming although it is nowhere near sufficient to remedy the situation and accordingly pressure continues to be brought to bear. Croydon Headteachers' Association has asked all Headteachers to invite the parents (with their children), Governors and staff and others to join in a lobby of Croydon Councillors from 5.45 pm onwards on Monday 28th April outside Croydon Town Hall as a special meeting has been called by the Council to discuss the situation. Please lend your support if you are willing and able.

POLITE REMINDERS

School Library – Several difficulties have been experienced whereby parents with children have congregated in this area prior to the start of the school day. The noise levels have made sessions running in the ICT room very difficult and cleaning staff have drawn my attention to litter and crumbs that are left in the area when children have been allowed to consume food at this time. The Library Co-ordinator has also had to spend a significant amount of time replacing books that have been used during this pre-school period and not returned to the shelves. **Please note this area is only available for waiting in in the event of inclement weather, at all other times only pupils participating in pre-school sessions should be in the building.** We would ask those using this area when the weather is bad to use it as a library and accordingly respect the levels of quietness required in such an area, and refrain from eating and drinking in the Library area.

Staffroom – Any parents needing access to the Staffroom, or wishing to see staff who may be in the Staffroom, are requested to enquire at the office first rather than entering or knocking directly on the Staffroom door.

SCHOOLS IN FOCUS (CROYDON ADVERTISER) – I know many of you saw the article in a recent copy of the Croydon Advertiser. The reporter spent over two hours in school, one of which was spent with members of our student council (hence the Barbie and cheeky girl quotes crept in!!). I believe the school was reported very positively and in the light of the budget situation reported above I would quote our “raison d’etre” from the Advertiser article which confirmed our ongoing aim to ensure St James the Great remains one of the most successful primary schools locally and nationally with your continued support.

EASTER RESIDENTIAL VISIT – 14TH-18TH APRIL 2003

A tremendous sign up for this week with 68 children from Years 4 and 5 journeying to the Isle of Wight accompanied by 11 adults. Here’s hoping the weather is kind to them. We wish the group a very enjoyable week. Parents are asked to note the school’s mobile telephone number in order to check safe

arrival and estimated return time as detailed in our letter to those joining this trip. **The number is 07745 960676.**

CHESS CLUB – CAN YOU HELP?

This Club has gone from strength to strength and thanks are due to Miss Berry for her work with this group. She is keen to extend this provision and would welcome support from any parents, with an interest and basic proficiency in Chess, on Monday evenings 3.30-4.30 pm. If you may be able to help on a regular basis please contact Miss Berry directly or drop a note into school. Many thanks.

REMINDERS

CATHOLIC CHILDREN’S SOCIETY

It would be helpful if these Lenten collecting boxes could be returned to school before the end of term.

END OF TERM

The final open Assembly of the Term will take place on Friday 11th April at 9.45 am. This will be an extended Assembly to allow for the issuing of certificates etc. and all parents are welcome to attend.

LAST DAY OF TERM – THURSDAY 17TH APRIL

All parents are invited for an Easter Liturgy led by Year 3 supported by Year 2, at 9.45 am on the last day of term. Refreshments will be available at the end of the Service. School closes at 2 pm on this day – please ensure your child is collected promptly.

N.B. Nursery parents should note that the last day of term for Nursery children is Wednesday 16th April.

NEW TERM

Please note we return to school on Thursday 1st May and children should return in Summer Uniform. We would remind you that Monday 5th May is a Bank Holiday and school will be closed on this day.

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS – YEAR 6

Please note your final school photograph will be taken on the first day of the summer term, 1st May. Please make sure you return to school in full summer uniform.

TEAM PHOTOGRAPHS will also be taken on this day and therefore members of the football and netball teams should have their kits in school on that day.

MILK ORDERS

Please ensure your milk orders are with the office by Friday 11th April. Many thanks.

TOKEN COLLECTIONS

Your continued support is appreciated for all the ongoing collections. The Boxtops collection has just ended but please send in any tokens you may have as these will be accepted as part of next year’s collection of these tokens.

NEW COLLECTION – CADBURY ‘GET ACTIVE’ INITIATIVE

Please collect wrappers from Cadbury products in order for us to receive free sports equipment for St James the Great.

WEB SITE

www.stjamesthegreat.org – please note an emailing list has now been set up on the site. If you would like to be added to our emailing list for future developments please take a moment to register on the site.

FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

CIRCUS

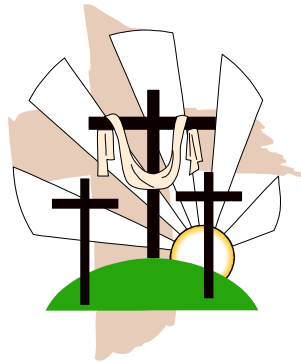
Please remember the Circus is coming to St James the Great on Sunday 13th April at 2 pm. Tickets are available from the school office. Why not consider making it a family afternoon out and inviting relatives and friends?

CRYSTAL PALACE FC

We have been informed by Selhurst Park that they are willing to offer discounted tickets for members of our school for their final two matches of the season against Rotherham (April 19th) and Stoke City (April 26th). These will cost £10 for adults and £5 for juniors/concessions. If you wish to order tickets for these matches please telephone the ticket hotline on 020 8771 8841 and quote our school reference number 94747. Please note tickets are not available on the days of the matches and do not include the main stand.

BOOKSHOP

Our school bookshop continues to open on Thursday afternoons and it is great to see so many children attending. As usual, on the last Thursday of each month we will be selling pens, stationery and other small items. These items will also be on sale during our last opening in April, on **Thursday 10 April**. It is possible that the Easter bunny may have left some small chocolate treats for the children too! Once again, we would request that children whose parents only wish them to save for and purchase books do not send them on the last session of the month. Bookshop is generally very busy on these occasions and it is almost impossible for the volunteers running the shop to keep track of who is and who isn't allowed to make such purchases. Thanks for your all your support.



This is the final Newsletter for the Spring Term and on behalf of all at St James the Great we would extend our early good wishes for a Happy Easter and restful break.

