Bramble's News

Being the best we can be

20th January 2023

A message from Mrs Gynn

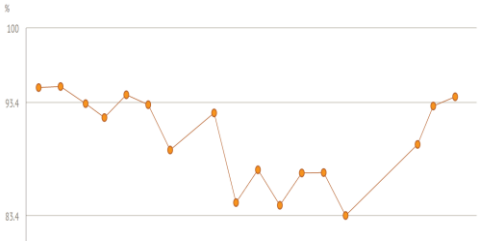
Parent drop-ins.

Our first phonic drop-in sessions have been held this week. It has been so lovely to welcome parents into our lessons. The focus has been phonics with year 1 parents. They had the opportunity to speak with Mrs Finch, our Phonics Lead and visited lessons to see exactly what the children were learning and how it is all taught. The sessions were lovely, with really positive feedback from the parents.

We are looking forward to welcoming Reception and year 2 parents in the next few weeks. Please contact Mrs Finch if you would like to join these sessions.

We are also planning to cover other curriculum areas. The subject some parents are asking for is maths. Please let me know, when you see me on the playground, if you too would like to find out all about maths.

Attendance



It is lovely to see that our attendance figure continues to rise. We are currently at 90%. However, we are still lower than the national average, so please keep up the good work.

Please do your best to keep on sending your children to school and continue to get them to school on time. This figure will then continue to rise.

I would like to welcome Mrs Robinson to the St James team. She has joined us in Poppy class this week and has thoroughly enjoyed her first few days with your children. ☺

Please do not confuse her with Miss Robinson, who has worked at St James for some time and is someone you already know.

Reading Buddies with The Abbey Junior Academy. Both year 1 and 2 had a lovely time with year 5 and 6 children on Monday. Year 2 went to the Abbey and Year 5 came to St James. Everyone enjoyed sharing stories together.

I hope you have a lovely weekend and look forward to seeing you on Monday.

Reminders…

Homework Splats

These have been posted on Class Dojo this week.

Deadline is w.b.25th March in Reception / Wednesday 27th March in Year 1 / Thursday 28th March in Year 2

Children can bring in any finished projects at any time throughout the term.

Jewellery

Our uniform policy states that jewellery **should not** be worn in school. This includes crucifix necklaces.

This is a health and safety policy.

Please remove items of jewellery before the children come to school.

. Online safety is a key priority for parents and teachers alike. It is so important that we all work together to ensure that children remain safe whilst using devices. Please take a look at the advice on the last page of this newsletter. I hope you find it useful.

School uniform

School uniform should be worn every day, except for PE days. PE kits should be school colours only.

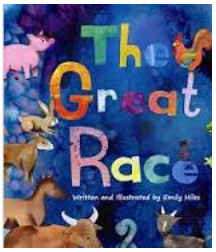
Please do your best to send your children to school in the correct clothing.

Being on time, sets up the day for success.

Children can see friends, get ready for learning and of the teacher's instructions.

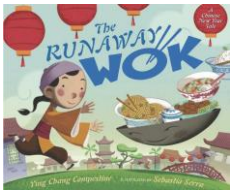
Phonics start at 9.10 a.m. It is essential that all children are ready for this lesson.

This week's book recommendation:



This weekend, we see Chinese New Year being celebrated. Here are a few books to share with children of all ages.

I am sure that the library would stock them or something similar.



Certificates have been awarded to:

World of Words	Great reading, writing, speaking and listening or drama work	Charlie in Buttercup Class
Let's Investigate	Fantastic maths or science work	Laura in Daisy Class and Eugen in Dandelion Class
Exploring the World	Super history, geography or religious education work	Poppy in Bluebell Class
Being your best		Aibin in Snowdrop Class
Wow!		Crystal in Sunflower Class

We celebrated with:

Remi-Cairo, who is now 4!

Alice and Freddie, who are now 5!

Dumitru, who is now 6!

Edward, who is now 7!

Happy Birthday to you all!

Handwriting Award

Sammy in Bluebell Class ☺

Attendance cup awarded to:

up Class – the 2nd week! –

Well done!

Our value for January is:

Caring - Inclusion

InMAT

Values:

Inclusion

Integrity

Initiative

Inspiring

Star Readers

Lorenzo

Arthur – who has 50 reads!

A wonderful achievement – well done!

What will be happening in our school?

Lots of children received 5 Dojo points this week, having been in school every day. Dojo points will continue to be issued this week. ☺

27.1.23 – Snowdrops' class assembly

Parents are welcome to join us for this assembly at 9.05 a.m.

26.1.23 – Late Gate – all children arriving at school on time will receive a sticker

27.1.23 – MUFTI day – Odd Dress Day

Children can come to school dressed strangely! All donations for the Friends of St James

1.2.23 – NEU Strike Day

3.2.23 – Number Day

2.2.23 - Pantomime comes to St James

Please ensure that payment has been made by 27.1.23; £3.00 per child

10.2.23 – Term 3 finishes

20.2.23 - Training Day

21.2.23 – Term 4 begins / Pancake Day

w.b. 27.2.23 – Reading Week – (2.3.22 – World Book Day)

An event for your diary

Curriculum Drop-in sessions this term:

Focus = Phonics

More information to follow

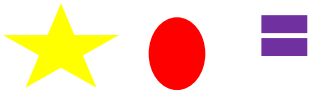
Friends of St James Events – Spring term

Mufti Day's St James Infant & Pre-School 2023

- Friday 27th January 2023 Mufti Odd dress day -Everyone comes dressed as oddly as possible – unmatched shoes and socks, mismatched colours, etc. be as creative as possible

- Friday 24th February Mufti- Crazy Hat Day

- Friday 31st March Mufti -We will be asking for chocolate for the Easter Fayre Tombola instead of the £1

- Friday 28th April Mufti -Stars, Spots, & Stripes Day 

- Friday 26th May Mufti - its Pyjamarama day

- Friday 30th June Mufti Day - We ask for a bottle for the Summer Fate Tombola instead of £1

- Thursday 20th July - A single colour Day (students to wear red, white, pink, blue or green from head to toe)

At National Online Safety we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information they need to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one topic of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

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In today's digitally connected world, children and adults are constantly presented with new ways to engage, react and contribute. We're sociable beings; it's a natural human instinct, especially amongst younger audiences, to want to belong and join in. Viral Challenges (as they're often known) draw on these emotions and, as the name suggests, spread and gather pace very rapidly. New challenges are constantly emerging and evolving. They're often completely innocent, raising awareness of worthy causes or simply providing amusement. However, they can have much more sinister undertones, putting children at risk of physical harm or, in extreme cases, fatal injury.

What parents need to know about ONLINE CHALLENGES

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

As well as having the potential to cause actual physical harm, some challenges can be extremely upsetting for children. Many are created with the sole purpose of instilling fear in an individual in order to coerce them into doing things that could have a long-term emotional effect on them.

VARYING LEVELS OF RISK

As a parent or carer, it's important to take a balanced view and understand that not everything online has the potential to do harm. Mass-following and interaction can be a force for good. For example, the Ice Bucket Challenge, which swept the nation, set out to raise money and awareness of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). At its height, over 28 million people uploaded, commented on, or liked Ice Bucket Challenge related posts on Facebook. It's equally important to be aware though that online challenges often have a darker side. Malicious trends and challenges can expose children to dangerous or even life-threatening situations, so it's critical that parents and carers are aware of the latest risks and understand what steps to take to mitigate them.

'FOMO' - FEAR OF MISSING OUT

The 'Fear of Missing Out' (FOMO) is a strong emotional characteristic, particularly displayed in young people. The nature of viral challenges encourages children to explore and push boundaries. They tap into FOMO by feeding on a child's natural desire to join in, be accepted and share experiences with their friends and the wider online community. A recent study also found that FOMO is one of the greatest causes of Social Media addiction.

National Online Safety®

STRIVING FOR LIKES

In a major study by the Children's Commissioner, it was found that children as young as ten years old are reliant on 'Likes' for their sense of self-worth. A major concern around viral challenges is not knowing how far children will go to earn 'Likes'. Couple this growing appetite for acceptance with commonplace peer pressure and the potential problem is compounded. The result is that when young people are drawn into online challenges, because it is what all their friends are doing, saying 'no' can seem like a very hard thing to do.

"The coolest person at school will start a trend and then everyone copies her"
Merran, 12, Year 7

"If I got 150 likes, I'd be like that's pretty cool it means they like you"
Aaron, 11, Year 7

Top Tips for Parents

COMMUNICATION & MONITORING

It's important to talk to your child regularly and monitor their online activities. Encouraging honesty and openness, will give you a much clearer viewpoint of how your child is interacting online and what concerns they have. Create an atmosphere of trust. Ensure they feel they can confide in you or another trusted adult regarding anything they may have seen or experienced online that's upset them.

THINK BEFORE ACTING

As with most concerns in life, let common sense prevail when it comes to Viral Challenges. Young people need the freedom and space to explore and going in all guns blazing may well be counter-effective. Address the importance of safety and wellbeing, both online and offline, by getting the facts and understanding the risks. Start a discussion about the Online Challenges that may have captured your child's interest, gauge their likely involvement and explain the importance of thinking and acting independently when it comes to participating.

SETTING UP EFFECTIVE PARENTAL CONTROLS

As with all online activity, ensuring you have effective parental controls set up on all devices will help filter and restrict the dangerous or inappropriate content you don't wish your child to access. Additional measures for protecting your child include checking the privacy settings on your child's devices, monitoring their friends list, ensuring their personal information is safe and secure and keeping a watchful eye on the content they're sharing.

REPORTING & BLOCKING

Parental controls can only go so far in blocking potentially harmful content. A rise in the decoding of social media algorithms, has led to age inappropriate content increasingly appearing on platforms and apps used by children. Where possible, you should regularly monitor what your child sees online and flag/report any content which is inappropriate or dangerous. You should take the time to talk to your child, define what you consider to be appropriate content and show them how to report and block users/accounts themselves.

VALIDATE SOURCES

Not everything is as it seems. Some people create fake content that's designed to 'shock' in order to encourage rapid sharing. If your child has seen something online that has triggered concern you should encourage them to, check its origin, verify that it came from a credible source and check the comments made for any clues to its validity.

FACING REALITY

Trends and Viral Challenges can be tempting for children to take part in; no matter how dangerous or scary they may seem. As a parent or carer it can be difficult to keep pace with the very latest Online Challenges emerging. In recent months these have included potentially dangerous crazes, including the 'Bird Box' challenge, which was inspired by Netflix's popular film and encourages followers to upload videos of themselves attempting everyday tasks while blindfolded. The best advice is to keep talking to your child. Show that your taking an interest and not just prying. Ensure your child knows they don't have to get involved and if they're unsure, let them know you're there to talk before they consider participating. Children often need reassurance that not everything they see online is real. If your child has viewed distressing or frightening content it's important to talk to them about their experience, support them and, if required, help them find additional support.

SOURCES:
https://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/fake-news-twitter-spread-further-faster-real-stories-research-political-a8267991.html | https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2209102/Teen-dies-copying-gas-game-Tree-YouTube.html
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https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-29011707 | https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-wellbeing/fear-of-missing-out-fomo-one-of-greatest-causes-of-social-media-addiction-study-finds-5897529.html
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