

Dear Parents

There is a real buzz of expectation in the school this morning about our 50th Birthday Celebrations today. These include fun activities in our Houses all relating to the 1970s or the number 50. The Nursery children are having a 70s disco to mark the event and we will all be learning some cool dance moves! I can't wait to join them for some Bee Gees hits.

We will then gather with over a thousand others for the grand finale at 6.30pm this evening at Westminster Central Hall. Doors open at 6pm. The programme is packed with a variety of different performances from all three St James schools. The Prep pupils are performing Shakespeare, Sanskrit and a musical medley. We are proud of them for the work they have already put in and we can't wait to see them on stage. It is still not too late to book a ticket if you would like to attend. If you have booked then you will need to show your QR code at the door in the evening.

We have so much to celebrate this term, and I am delighted to be able to share the wedding photos from Miss Baillieux and Miss Chetwin's special days that took place over the holidays. We wish them and their families all the very best for the future.



At home we are celebrating the birth of our second grandchild who was born in the early hours of Easter Friday. Her brother Wilfred, who is now two and a half, is as besotted as his grandma is! The baby's name is still to be announced.



In our assembly on Tuesday last week, we celebrated the remarkable life of Pope Francis. The Pope was an inspiration to so many, both within the Catholic faith and to people across the world of all faiths and none. He sought to bring communities together and to bring peace where there is conflict. The children were delighted to learn that, not only did he meet Spider-Man, but he also loved football. Pope Francis had both a Messi football top and one belonging to Ronaldo in a glass case in his residence. He called sport a noble pastime and encouraged the youth to play sport competitively. In this touching clip you can see him receiving Ronaldo's jersey from his mother and hear him speaking about the benefits of sport.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Rpwr_1JERw.

I was struck by the truth in Pope Francis's words when he said; *'When one realises that life... is a gift, that love is the source and the meaning of life, how can they withhold their urge to do good to another fellow being?'*

Our children are always wanting to do good to others and it is lovely that, thanks to Chef Suzie, we are now starting to make a small difference to the lives of others by working more directly with Under One Sky. The Year 5 children started our new sandwich making initiative last Friday during tea and toast. The sandwiches they made went straight to feed the homeless people living around Waterloo Station. We are using the remains of the cheese, salad and humous to fill the sandwiches and thus reducing our food waste. We hope to provide regular batches of St James sandwiches made by the children each week.

Another way that we are looking to reduce our food waste is to allow the children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 to choose what they would like to eat from the food counter as the older children have always done. This has been going very well and has allowed them to select a wider range of the food on offer. We have also simplified the menus and responded to the feedback from parents about what the children like most.

This term we would like to invite you to come and have lunch with your child in the dining room. You can then experience what lunchtime is like and sample our amazing food. Here is the new [menu](#) and the dates for you to book into the 'family lunchtime'. [SchoolCloud - St James Preparatory School](#) book for either the 20 May or 22 May.

For our global charity work this year we are raising funds for Masibambane College that is located in Orange Farm, South Africa. The college was established by the non-profit organisation Education Africa. I have had the pleasure of meeting the headteacher at our Leadership Conference and I am delighted that we can make a positive impact to their school by helping them to purchase a much-needed water tank and an electrical generator. Ms Parker-Wood is planning to visit the college at the end of the year.

We have earmarked Friday, 23 May and Friday, 20 June for the children to participate in fundraising activities. There will be scooter/bike washes, sponsored walks, arts & crafts, and bake-sales! Your child's teacher will be in touch with class-specific details closer to the time.

This term we are focusing on building reading skills and developing a love of books. To this end, we have a group of parent helpers who will be listening to reading in school each week.

We have been asked by Waterstones Book Shop once again to host an author visit and we will be inviting the pupils from local schools to join us. On the 21st May we will have Rachel Morrisroe, the bestselling author of the *How to Grow Magic* books launching her new book to an audience of Year 4 to 6 pupils. The Upper School Book Club will be reading her book together. This, along with the introduction of the 'borrow box' of books for younger siblings to enjoy in the courtyard while they are waiting for their brothers or sisters, should help to encourage everyone to read more.

We have introduced a new range of free lunchtime clubs that are run by the teachers to enhance the curriculum even further and these are proving popular with the children. We hope that the children are benefitting from them

The other new initiatives for this term are that we have launched our *Smartest Class Award* and our Best Attender Prize. The class that is voted by the senior leadership team for the Smartest Class Award will have a special tea party with me in the staff refectory and an extra playtime. To gain the award the children in the class need to be smartly dressed at all times and make sure they are wearing the correct uniform

The Best Attender Award will go to pupils in the school with the highest attendance levels, and who are always on time for registration. They will be getting a special award at Prize Day.

We are blessed with some beautiful summer weather and we are keen to keep the children protected from the sun. To this end, please can you apply suntan lotion before your child comes to school and ensure they have a school sun hat and a water bottle. The sun hats can be purchased from the uniform shop.

I wish those of you who celebrate the saint a belated Happy St George's Day for Monday the 28 April and I do hope to see lots of you at the celebration tonight. Please note that Monday is a Bank Holiday so we will see you all back on Tuesday 6th May.

Best wishes

Mrs Wyatt

