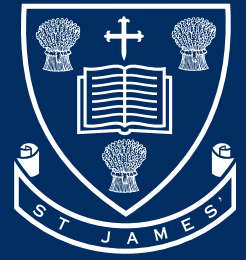


School Newsletter

December 2019



It gives me great pleasure to write to you at the end of another very successful and productive term. The release of national school performance data from the Department for Education (DfE) has further confirmed the successes of our 2019 GCSE results. St James' students achieved excellent results that were significantly above national averages, resulting in a strong performance for a second successive year in terms of the Progress 8 accountability measure. They acknowledge strong performances across a wide range of subjects but special mentions for German, Drama, Food and Nutrition, Resistant Materials, Art, History and Mathematics. I am very proud of the education we provide for all our young people and the acknowledgement of this by the DfE is testament to the hard work of both staff and students in school.

I am especially pleased with how our year 7 students have settled into school life and are thriving. The number of parents choosing St James' as first choice has significantly increased for the first time in four years and initial projections from admissions suggests this number will grow again next year, a sign that St James' is once again the school of choice for our community.

A highlight of the term was the visit of Bishop Mark who came and formally opened our new chapel, part of the continuing exciting St James' re-brand. As previously communicated, the next step is to develop our new PE uniform; which will be available to purchase from the Easter holiday. The designs will be shared with all members of the school community in the New Year, with a view to the new uniform being phased in for all students over the period of a year. This will allow parents who have just purchased the "old" PE kit to make the transition over the period of 12 months.

I would encourage you to follow us on twitter @StJamesCheadle and to visit our website www.stjamescheadle.co.uk as it is packed full of useful information, including latest news updates, for both students and parents.

As always, I am thankful for your support in continuing to help us by guiding your children to show respect for our school values of Family, Faith and Excellence. I would also be grateful if you would ensure that your children arrive to school on time, wear the correct uniform and school shoes, not trainers. We have been reiterating the importance of regular school attendance

and punctuality through assemblies, exploring the strong relationship between regular attendance and excellent results. We value your support reinforcing this message with your children in the New Year.

A final reminder that school will close for the Christmas break on Friday 20th December 2019 at 12:15pm and we will re-open to students on Tuesday 7th January 2019 at 8:30am.

As well as being a school holiday, it is also time to celebrate the birth of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. I hope you have a wonderful Christmas, and that you take the opportunity to celebrate not just a 'festive season' but also remember the wonder of the Incarnation. It is one of the loveliest church services of the year.

May I wish you all a peaceful, happy, holy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

Mr A Pontifex, Headteacher



YEAR 7

It's hard to believe Year 7 are now approaching the end of their first term at secondary school. They have had to take in so much information and remember so many new things. I am so proud of how they have settled into the routine of secondary school. They have grown so much since that first day, which was full of nerves and trepidation. It has been an absolute pleasure getting to know them all and it has been pleasing to see their enthusiasm for all their new subjects.

Some thoughts from Year 7 about day 1:

The morning of my first day I was terrified. I didn't know where to go, how to get there or what I needed for each class. I was nervous, but the teachers seemed nice and trustworthy. They even let me go for lunch early to help me get into the swing of school life. I was thrilled and glad when I got home to see my family. I really wanted to go back but I was still a bit nervous when the second day came.

On my first day at St James' I was worried about the amount of homework and making new friends. Now on my third week here I feel a lot more confident in finding my classroom and feel I am coping with the homework well. I'm proud of myself for making new friends surprisingly quickly. I'm going to have an amazing year at St James'.

On my first day here I felt very nervous and excited. I was worried that I wouldn't be able to find my way round school and there would be lots of homework that I would find very hard to do. But now that I have settled in, it isn't so hard.

On my first day I was really worried because of the amount of homework we get, because at primary school we would learn many subjects but only get homework for Maths and English. I then realised that I've actually been coping really well and I manage to get the homework done on time. I am still finding it a little bit hard to make friends but I'm sure I'll find my way.

The retreat to Linnet Clough in September was a great way for the pupils to get to know the other members of their form and lots of new friendships started to blossom. The pupils had lots of time to reflect on their faith during the day and share any worries about the transition from Primary to Secondary school.

They showed great team work throughout the day and it was really inspiring to watch them display tremendous courage on the high ropes. It was also wonderful to see them supporting each other as they took the "Leap of faith".

I had been to Linnet Clough before with my Scout group and had a bad experience. I was scared and my friends were on the other minibus. After a few activities I got to know these people and could trust them a bit more.

At Linnet Clough the first thing we did was talk about our worries about high school and Miss Cheshire used "magic" to wash them away. After that we did trust building. We all had to sit on each other's lap and stay there for as long as we could. We were motivated by the chocolate prize. After that we dipped our fingers in paint and stamped them around our form tree with the words Family, Faith and Excellence. For the last thing we did the "leap of faith". That was the best, though some of us didn't do it all the way. Overall the trip was a whole lot of fun!

Later in the month, several of Year 7, along with the rest of the school, took part in the "European Day of Languages Bake off" and baked some delicious cakes, which were sold the following day to raise money for Macmillan cancer support. Well done to all those who took part!

- Aimee W
- Imogen M
- Beth L
- Neve H
- Emily S
- Gracie-lee G
- Eleanor R
- Alex O
- Michaela B
- Ellie D
- Efe I
- Caitlin E



It was lovely to see so many parents and carers at the Welcome Mass in October. The participation from the pupils was excellent and there were some very brave readers up at the lectern. They all read beautifully and it was a lovely atmosphere. Forms have worked hard together throughout the first term preparing for assemblies and Morning Prayer and lots of pupils have got involved in the extra-curricular activities offered at school, which is highly commendable, especially when they have so many new challenges already.

The Year 7 football team reached the semi-finals of the Stockport Schools 5-a-side competition. After coming through a group consisting of Laurus, Kingsway and Marple Hall, they beat Harrytown in the quarter-final before losing 2-4 to Cheadle Hulme School.

Four of our Year 7s, Quinn T, Revel A, Amy M and Debora L represented their year group when Bishop Mark came to visit school and bless the chapel in November.

It has been a very busy but enjoyable and rewarding term. I look forward to welcoming the year group back after the holidays. Have a lovely Christmas!

Ms Cheshire
Head of Year 7





YEAR 8

It has been a busy and successful term for Year 8. We returned from our lovely summer break, refreshed and ready for the challenges of Year 8.

We started the year on a positive note and by the end of the first week our achievement point total was looking very healthy, a sign of things to come perhaps.

Our core values of Family, Faith and Excellence remain at the forefront of everything that we do in Year 8.



FAMILY

As a family, we have been thinking a lot in assembly about the importance of always being kind and recognising that words can be very powerful and can have a huge impact on the way someone is feeling. Over Christmas, I will be asking the pupils to think about how they can choose their words very carefully when they are communicating with others, especially over social media.

Being part of St James' means there are lots of opportunities to represent the school in different things. I was pleased to see that lots of Year 8 pupils have put themselves forward to be in our upcoming production "The Addams Family". We are very much looking forward to seeing lots of Year 8 talent.

FAITH

Year 8 forms have been in charge of leading Morning Prayer this term and have worked hard to produce some beautiful and thought provoking liturgies.

In the final weeks of this term, the Year 8 leadership teams have been selling candy canes with messages attached. They are charging 50p and all the money raised will be going to The Wellspring in Stockport. As a year group, we often think about others who are less fortunate than ourselves and we know the importance of raising money to help.

As a whole school, we are collecting food items for The Wellspring and Year 8 are doing exceptionally well with their collection.

EXCELLENCE

GO DIGITAL

Back in September, The Go Digital team came into school to deliver an assembly on the topic of future pathways in digital technology. We then selected a group of pupils to go forward to the workshop that they held in school, to learn more about the future of ICT and its place in society. The pupils were an absolute credit to us and worked really hard, showing lots of enthusiasm and learning how to program a robot. A small team hand picked from the day are going forward again to "deep dive" into the world of digital technology – more information will follow.

CAREERS BREAKFAST

Throughout the term, the Year 8s have taken part in a number of careers breakfasts where guests have come into school and taken a group of pupils into the board room to talk about their jobs and what skills and qualities they need. So far we have had: a software developer, a policeman, a vet, a doctor, a geotechnical engineer, a chartered surveyor and a hair stylist from Trevor Sorbie.

The pupils have gained a real insight into these different careers and have found the sessions fun and informative – a big thank you to Mrs Rarity for organising them for us.

I would lastly like to wish all Year 8s and their families a happy and peaceful Christmas time and I look forward to seeing you all in the New Year



YEAR 9

During this term our Year 9 students have been showcasing their excellence in a number of different sporting, creative arts and academic activities.



MUSIC

Charlie K-W was invited to perform at our Year 11 presentation evening at Stockport Town Hall. He played 'Sonata in A Minor' beautifully on the piano and really captured the celebration of excellence during the evening. It was a pleasure to listen to Charlie on the night. #Excellence

DIGITAL HER EVENT

10 of our Year 9 girls were selected to take part in a Digital Her event. This was run by the UK's leading privately owned IT and business consultancy. Our students won an experience day at one of their roadshows at Manchester Digital. The girls had to build a Lego village to a set specification using a technique called Agile. The staff running the day said they had completed the task lots of times with adults, but we were the first school group. When it came to the feedback stage, they struggled to find anything the girls could improve on and said their village was by far the best they have ever seen! Well done to Mia K-H, Louise L-S, Niamh H, Eve K, Jessica E, Nicole I, Isabella G, Lizzie G, Lucy B, Arianne C for their participation! #Excellence

DODGEBALL

Our dodgeball team took part in the Stockport Schools dodgeball tournament recently. They played a host of local schools, winning every game they played. The boys showed fantastic togetherness as well as a high level of skill to win the competition which involved mainly Year 10 pupils. The following Year 9 boys took part; Josh A, Seamus G, Aaron D, Zavier D, Harvey G and Finley W. #Excellence



BADMINTON

Our badminton team consisting of Seamus G, Jamie D, Aaron D and Zavier D took part in the Stockport Schools badminton tournament. They were unbeaten against all the other local schools, winning the first round tournament without dropping a single game. As a result they qualified for the Stockport Schools badminton finals in which they remained unbeaten once again beating Hazel Grove High School, Werneth School and Laurus Cheadle Hulme. They will now progress through to the Greater Manchester County round of the National schools Championships representing St James' and the Stockport borough at the finals in the New Year. A fantastic achievement and we wish them all the best at the next stage. #Excellence



ART

Our students have been studying Pointillism and perfecting their skills in the technique of stippling. We have some fantastic artists throughout Year 9 who have produced some excellent work demonstrating the development of their technique to help them prepare for GCSE Art. The artists are Dylan M, Luke A and Emma T. #Excellence



THE ROSARY

During the month of October our pupils were praying the Rosary. Two pupils from each form volunteered to lead the Rosary during assembly to their peers. They showed great confidence and reflection in the prayers to honour the Virgin Mary. Each form continued to pray the Rosary throughout the month of October. #Faith



THE RIVER BOLLIN

Our Year 9 students have been experiencing some learning out of the classroom at the River Bollin. They were studying how rivers work in preparation for their Geography coursework. Experimental learning at its best! #Excellence



YEAR 10

It has been a busy first term for Year 10 and we are extremely proud of the hard work and commitment that many pupils are showing towards their GCSE studies and their extra-curricular activities both in and out of school. The Year 10 theme this year is Growth and Preparation. We have focused on all aspects of growth; physical, mental and spiritual. The idea of this theme is to help students to grow into the best versions of themselves. We have already started to see a change with many pupils taking greater responsibility for all aspects of their lives.

EXCELLENCE

We are delighted that the recent termly data shows an increase in the number of pupils in the 1 and 1,2 Club. A huge congratulations must go to William W, Fiona B, Lily Rae B, Charlotte K and Abby M who gained ATL 1 from all subjects and 88 pupils who are in the 1,2 club.

Our target for next term is to see even more pupils join the 1,2 Club as 28 pupils missed out due to just one subject.

FAMILY

Year 10's commitment to charity work has continued with pupils developing a greater responsibility for those less fortunate. We have collectively raised an impressive £264.42 for Prem Dan, a charity based in Mumbai aimed at educating children of low income groups, providing them with nutrition and other facilities. This has involved pupils organising many events from lollipop sales to a penalty shootout. Pupils have also collected tins and packets, producing Christmas hampers for the Wellspring Centre.

There has been a wide range of activities and experiences on offer this term to help motivate and inspire pupils. These have included a study skills session, a session delivered by trainee teachers on aspirations and an assembly led by Tom Cheesewright, an applied futurist who shared his vision of tomorrow. Tom predicted Ebby W as "one to watch on the Manchester tech scene" after Ebby's insightful questions.

Business Studies students worked hard to organise and host a Christmas afternoon tea for the local elderly community.

Abby M, Mia P, George F and Joe G represented Year 10 when Bishop Mark Davies, the Bishop of Shrewsbury, opened our new chapel.

Charlotte K was the first pupil at St James' to be awarded the silver Duke of York Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award, which is a fantastic achievement.

All of these experiences have helped Year 10 pupils grow in confidence. We look forward to building on this next term with the launch of the Prefect Passport. This will involve pupils actively participating in the wider life of the school in preparation for prefect applications in the Summer term.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR

Pupils in Year 10 do not just excel in school. Here are just a few of the examples of extra-curricular excellence that we have celebrated this term:

Katie C competed at Blackpool Winter Gardens, representing the North West of England dancing amongst other children and adults from all different parts of the country.

Katie had to compete in another competition in May to qualify and was selected to represent the North West of England. We are very proud of Katie who went through to the quarter finals.

Tom O has recently been selected for a National Emerging Talent Pathway for the England Deaf men's football team.

- Donny R has been promoted to Amateur level in Boxing.
- Eve S and Maddie G were referees for a Year 5 Hockey event.
- Caitlyn G continues to be a member of Everton U16 Girls Football Team.
- Chloe M is starring in Aladdin at the Heald Green theatre club.
- Andrew S is a member of the United Foundation Football team.
- Ellie L came first in a North West figure skating competition.
- Red B and Khia W are members of Stockport County Football.
- Cameron B-A is a member of Port Vale Football Club.
- Kanye N is a member of Sheffield Football Club.
- Ruby D completed a scholarship in dance.
- Will W landed the male lead in the school's production of The Addams Family.

May we take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and wish you a peaceful Christmas.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Thursday 9th January 6.30pm
Year 10 Work Experience Evening





YEAR 11

The Year 11s have shown a positive and determined attitude towards their mock exams, working hard all term to be as well prepared as possible. This has included attending after school catch-up sessions and trying out a variety of revision techniques during form time. By preparing revision resources, such as flashcards or mind-maps, whilst completing their individualised revision plans, students now possess a bank of resources that can be re-used in the summer GCSEs.

Of course, the December exams can be a stressful time for students so my room, FX1, has been open every lunchtime for pupils to drop in and chat, relax, revise or get on with homework. Mindfulness sessions have also started in the chapel every Wednesday lunch. Our senior prefect team played a key role in the blessing of the new chapel; reading eloquently when Bishop Mark led the service for members of our school community. The prefects are great representatives of the school and are excellent role models who continue to work actively in promoting literacy, sustainability and wellbeing within school.

Although the mock exams may be viewed with trepidation by some, they do actually provide an opportunity to showcase the many talents that our students have. For example, Year 11 have produced some outstanding preparatory work for their mock Art exam, (pictured). The PE class also impressed when completing their mock practical. Our sporting teams in general continue to excel, with the netball team remaining the force to be reckoned with in the area and a boy's football team growing in confidence by the game, as shown by their polished 5-2 victory against Our Lady and St John's of Blackburn in their most recent cup game.

The termly data always provides a useful opportunity to assess how a student's attitude to learning has been affecting their progress. This term, eight students managed to score all 1s for attitude, which proves their exceptional approach to their studies. Congratulations to Joe C, Sarah O, Louise C, Neve C, Georgia L, Tom C, Matthew A and Joe R. Here's hoping more students join this elite club next term.

We want students of St James' to leave with the best results possible so that they can achieve whatever goal they have for the future. The three leading Catholic colleges in the area have all promoted their college in assembly, whilst the well-attended Careers Convention proved the great breadth of options and opportunities available to our students. I am very grateful to the support of parents, especially regarding attendance at such evenings, and also to my tutor team whose care and commitment towards their forms is fantastic. I have been so impressed by the growing maturity of Year 11 and am confident that if this continues they will leave St James' with the skills and qualifications they desire. I wish them all a safe and restful Christmas that celebrates the hard work already done and I look forward to an exciting and successful 2020.



ATTENDANCE NEWS

In order to celebrate attendance at St James' we provide regular initiatives where pupils can win prizes for their achievements and have their efforts rewarded.

Last half term, pupil's achieving 100% attendance were recognised by receiving a chocolate reward and a praise postcard through the post.

Following the October half term, we have presented trophies and a tub of chocolates to share, to the best attending form in each year group. This incentive will continue throughout the year, and will extend to a trophy being awarded to the form in each year group with the most improved attendance.

During assemblies, year groups enjoy the fortnightly attendance lottery we hold. This incentive is to reward short term attendance of 100% for a 2 week period. The winner is pulled from a draw and wins a £5 voucher.

The prizes for the end of this half term will be a chocolate Santa and a praise postcard for pupils who have achieved 100% for this half term. Pupils who have 100% attendance for the whole term will receive a selection box and a praise postcard.

We have also introduced another prize draw to congratulate 100% attendance through the month of December. Pupils who have been in school every day will be entered into a draw for a £50 voucher. This prize is for each year group. We will also be rewarding the student with the most improved attendance in each year group with a £50 voucher.

Please remember to inform the school by 9.00am if your child is going to be absent. Please do not email your child's form tutor, but call the absence line on 0161 482 6900 (option 1) or email the Attendance Officer on;

c.hanley@stjameschadle.co.uk

Excellent attendance at St James' is taken very seriously; our students must strive to attain 100% attendance.

ATTEND TODAY ACHIEVE TOMORROW

Mrs C Hanley
Attendance Officer

St James' Catholic High School
St James' Way, Cheadle Hulme
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SK8 6PZ

0161 482 6900
www.stjameschadle.co.uk



With God
all things are possible

Matthew 19:26

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