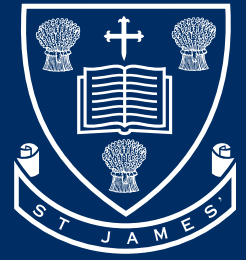


School Newsletter

December 2020



As we approach the end of our Autumn Term and prepare for the joyous occasion of Jesus' arrival at Christmas, we take the opportunity to reflect on what has been an extremely busy and challenging time. Despite all the changes and uncertainty due to Covid, our students and staff have demonstrated our three values of Family, Faith and Excellence in everything they have done. We are extremely proud of the manner in which our students have behaved. They have shown real resilience and positivity, engaging with remote learning when it has been necessary to isolate and acting maturely when in school, adhering to our new ways of working.

Our Year 7 have settled so well into life at St James' and are a real credit to you as parents and carers. They are a delightful year group and we are sure they will continue to approach school life in such a positive and engaged way.

We place great emphasis on our purpose "to educate and develop global Catholic citizens" and this term our students have had many opportunities to participate fully in school life including a sponsored readathon for CAFOD, Christmas candy cane delivery for charity, Chelwood Foodbank collection, a plethora of clubs, extra curricular activities and Mini DASH to name but a few.

If you do not already do so, I would encourage you to follow us on Twitter @StJamesCheadle and to visit our website www.stjamescheadle.co.uk as it is full of useful information including the latest news updates.

Our school term will end on Friday 18th December at 12.15pm, we have various activities planned for the final day allowing students to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas, as well as spending time with their Forms.

We know that Christmas will not be the same for many of us this year and we may not be able to celebrate in the traditional ways but we know that amongst continued uncertainties, God should remain our central focus at this most holy time. We are reminded that this is not just a 'festive' season but a time when we remember the incarnation. Whilst we may not be able to attend Mass in person this year, we can instead celebrate virtually with many local churches live streaming Mass.

I would like to wish you a peaceful, happy, holy and healthy Christmas with all good wishes for the New Year. We look forward to welcoming our staff and students back to school on Monday 11th January at 8.30am.

Mr A Pontifex, Headteacher



YEAR 7

The Year 7s have settled in so well at St James'. I know I certainly felt nervous before returning to work in September after such a long time away so I was so impressed with the calm way that they have adapted to their new surroundings. They regularly show our school values of Family, Faith and Excellence and it has been a real pleasure seeing them integrate into school so successfully.

The value of Family has been consistently shown by the Year 7s. They are very caring and compassionate towards one another, whilst they are always polite and good humoured in class. This kindness has been very obvious in the tremendous amount raised for the Wellspring Advent appeal and 7M's fantastic sponsored run in aid of the Christie. The Year 7s have displayed great character and have been working together on activities during Form time that encourage resilience and team building.

Ordinarily, our new members of the school community would go on a retreat away from school but this year our value of Faith has been covered by regular visits to our Chapel. In these visits, students complete many of the ice-breaker activities that would usually be covered on retreat and these activities help students familiarise themselves with the school and our values. The well attended Eco Club has also keenly portrayed the enthusiasm that our Year 7s have towards key global issues such as sustainability and stewardship.

The value of Excellence is displayed daily through the huge number of value points received by the students. The Year 7s have shown an incredible attitude to learning, completing work to the best of their ability and immersing themselves into new and exciting subjects. There is clearly a lot of talent within the Year and I hope students continue to show a passion for learning in 2021. The attendance at extra-curricular clubs and at the library has been striking, with many students showing a clear desire to take on new skills and experiences. I hope that they soon get the opportunity to showcase such talents by representing the school in sporting fixtures or by performing in front of an audience.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Form Tutors for their care and support. They, and our pastoral manager Mrs Chadwick, are an integral factor to the way that the Year 7s have settled. I hope that the students have enjoyed their first term and I would like to thank them for showing such positivity, humour and enthusiasm. I wish all members of Year 7 a very merry Christmas and look forward to welcoming them back in the New Year.

Mr Cawley
Head of Year 7





YEAR 8

Year 8 returned to school in September eager and ready to learn. It was a real pleasure to see them all again and they soon got back into the swing of things, despite inevitable changes around school. Although many of the pupils probably felt like they were still in Year 7, having lost part of the year to lockdown, they took it all in their stride and showed how adaptable and resilient our young people are.

We just about made it to the celebration of European Day of Languages in September before several year groups had to self isolate. In our European virtual bake off there were many lovely cake designs of different representations of European countries. Emmie 8E was the overall winner. Well done to all involved! The Year 8 group has adapted well to Zoom lessons, as and when has been necessary. The minority of pupils who remained in school, when most of the year group were isolating, forged new friendships and showed incredible patience with hybrid lessons. Parents' Evening took place via Zoom, which although unusual, was very successful and lovely to finally meet, albeit virtually, lots of parents having not had the opportunity to do so in Year 7.

There have been several pupils attending the Catch Up sessions before school, which I am sure they have found beneficial, after missing part of their face to face learning over lockdown. This will continue in the new year. All pupils are welcome.

School Council elections took place this term. There were some outstanding applications. Well done to all who applied and congratulations to Megan 8A and Nicole 8E, who were elected. I am sure they will do an excellent job of listening to and expressing the views of their Year group.

On Friday 13th November 4 pupils, Quinn 8M, Revel 8J, Amy 8J and Debora 8M took part in the Mini Dash meeting with the Diocese, where they got to virtually meet with pupils from other schools and discuss Noah's lockdown in the ark in comparison to their own experience. They enjoyed the meeting and having the chance to explore their faith.

"In the latest mini-DASH the theme was togetherness. We first discussed Noah and his covenant and how we can relate his experiences to our own during lockdown. We made small clay pots. Later, we concluded that we are like clay and God is our shaper. He moulds us all to solve our purpose and are all made with an individual twist. I enjoyed doing mini-DASH because it allowed us to explore our feelings and faith in an engaging, creative way. I am glad I took part in it."

"I had an amazing experience at Mini-DASH. It was interesting to see other schools' opinions on how Noah and his family felt in the ark. I enjoyed making clay pots and feeling the clay forming under my hands. I hope to enjoy this opportunity once more"

Whilst many extra-curricular activities have been suspended, pupils have been working really hard academically and an astonishing 63 pupils received an average ATL score of between 1.0-1.5 in their lessons. As 1 represents outstanding, this is a truly excellent achievement. Congratulations to all those pupils. Our attendance lottery has also continued this year, with those pupils having to self isolate but attending Zoom lessons included in the lottery. Our winners so far have been Joe 8A and Patrick 8C. Well done!

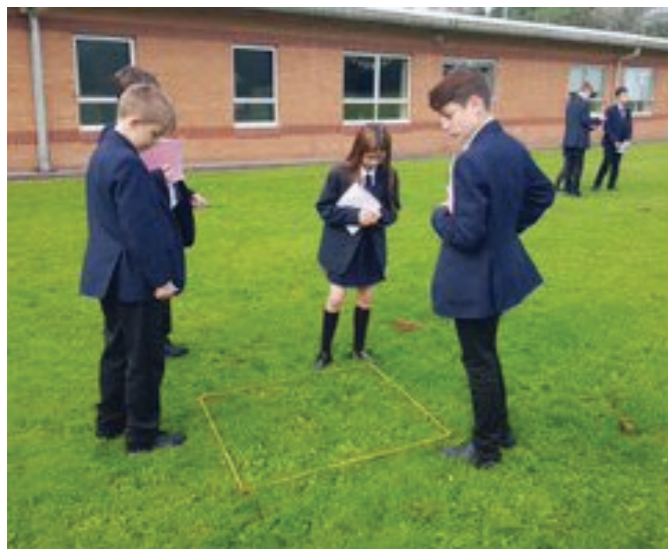
Value points for Family, Faith and Excellence have been awarded to pupils by staff during lessons and the current top achievers for each form are as follows:

8J	Declan	65
8A	Hana	64
8M	Caitlin	80
8E	Emmie	59
8S	Esther	68
8C	Kynon	90

Well done to all these pupils. There are many others not far behind them! We are in difficult times, but the pupils have shown great resilience and determination this term and I am very proud of them. Thank you for your support and also for all the recent donations towards the WellSpring.

I hope you have a safe and lovely Christmas with your families. God bless.

Ms Cheshire
Head of Year 8





YEAR 9

"With God all things are possible." Never has that been more relevant than it has been this term. We have faced the most challenging times of our lives and our pupils have responded to everything that we have thrown their way in the most amazing fashion.

We always try and encourage the pupils to show resilience throughout their lives and they have done so in abundance over this last term. From arriving in school to be told they are then going home to self isolate for 2 weeks, to gathering together in their Year group bubble at break and lunchtime in one area, to attending their lessons online, the pupils have been truly amazing in adapting to our "new normal". I am so proud.

And yet, they continue to work incredibly hard. Our recent termly data shows that a huge number of the pupils achieved either a grade 1 or a grade 2 in their ATL scores which is superb.

As you know we have 3 core values at St James', Faith, Family and Excellence and they underpin everything that we do. Mrs Bennett, our school Lay Chaplain, has been visiting the form rooms during registration and working with the pupils to deliver a prayerful and thought-provoking liturgy. The pupils responded respectfully and with enthusiasm. We have also recently asked the pupils to fill a box with food that we can take to the local Food Bank and yet again, each form has risen to the occasion and helped contribute to this very worthy cause. We have continued our annual Advent fund raising event selling candy canes to the rest of the school, and once again, we have raised a fantastic amount that we can add to the Food Bank appeal.

I have been so impressed with the number of value points that the Year 9s are picking up on a daily basis. Over the term, Year 9 have achieved over 4200 value points between them, which is an amazing achievement. Special mention must go to the following pupils who have achieved over 50 value points since September:

Crystal	9J
Amber	9C
Oliver	9C
Spike	9C
Callum	9J
Kate	9E
Thomas	9C
Corin	9J
Luca	9C
Iris	9J

I also want to say a massive well done to Charles 9A, Kate 9E and Rodrigo 9A who achieved 12 ATL 1s in their termly data.

I want to also take this opportunity to say a big thank you to my fabulous Year team whose hard work and care contribute to the pupils' wellbeing and progress on a daily basis; Mrs Moss, Mrs Grainger, Miss Purkiss, Miss Sweeney, Mrs Floyd, Mrs Booth and Miss Hewson. Finally to Mrs Chadwick who is an integral part of the Year 9 team – Thank you for everything you do for the Year group.

Never has a school holiday been more deserved than this one. I hope that everyone takes advantage of the rest that they have worked so hard for. Have a wonderful Christmas and I look forward to seeing you all for what I hope will be a much brighter 2021.

Mrs Linford
Head of Year 9





YEAR 10

It was lovely to welcome our Year 10 pupils back to school in September after an extended period of time away. Most of them looked fresh faced, ready to learn and had grown taller than the last time I had seen them!

Year 10 have started their Key Stage 4 journey where for the next two years they are completing the subjects they have chosen for their options. It is imperative that they apply themselves across all their subjects and start to take responsibility for their own learning, through being excellent in everything they do and continuing to meet our high standards and expectations.

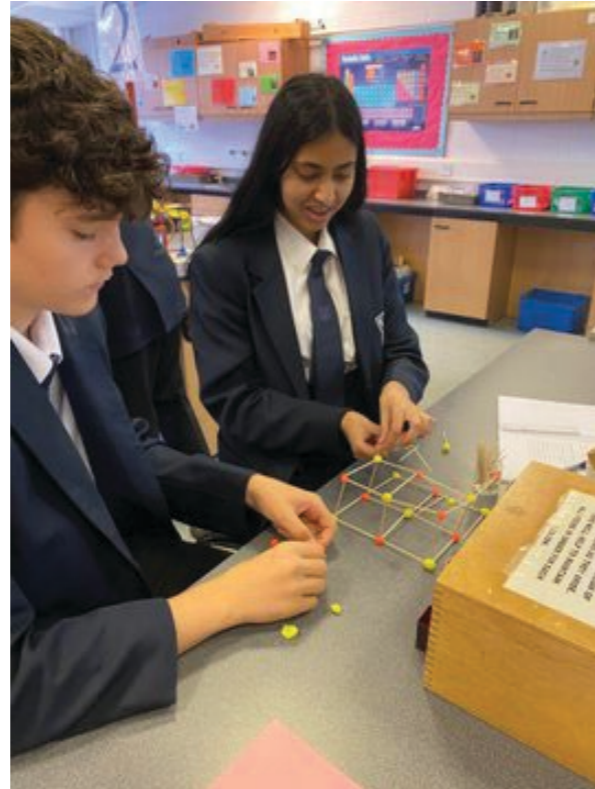
This term has provided its own challenges and obstacles to overcome, however, as a Year group they have fully engaged with remote learning and still managed to produce some fantastic work that their teachers have been very complimentary about. The attendance has been good for all the Catch Up lessons that have been provided during lunchtimes and after school to help close the gaps in their knowledge. This just goes to show how conscientious they remain as a Year group.

We have demonstrated our school value of Family through understanding and respecting the new routines and guidelines within school and maintaining them to ensure that our school family remains safe and our school community is well looked after. We have had a regular Form time focus and discussions around mental health and well-being as our students' welfare remains our priority.

During our Advent journey, Year 10 has been reflecting on the preferential option for the poor and vulnerable and what we can do to help. We have also been supporting the whole school collection for the Wellspring and Chelwood Food Bank. During Morning Prayer we have been reflecting on current issues in society and in the world and have been writing prayers along this theme with help from our school Lay Chaplain, Mrs Bennett.

I would like to wish Year 10 a peaceful and joyful Christmas to spend time with their friends and family and look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

Mr Maidment
Head of Year 10





YEAR 11

We were delighted to welcome Year 11 back into school in September and despite several periods of isolation the majority of pupils have remained focused and have impressed us with their positive attitude and resilience. It has been a very busy term with apprenticeship and college applications to be completed, prefect applications and interviews, revision and mock exams, Advent services and much, much more...

FAITH

The value of Faith has been vitally important this term and has helped us to face many challenges. Mrs Bennett, the school Lay Chaplain has delivered Morning Prayer to all Year 11 in which they had the opportunity for both reflection and prayer. Pupils were encouraged to consider something they are thankful for alongside thinking about those who lost their lives due to war and those who continue to struggle throughout the world.

Year 11 prefects took part in the virtual Advent service in which they read the bidding prayers.

Abby 11C, Cameron 11C and Lily Rae 11C embraced the opportunity to record a voiceover for CAFOD. The results were so impressive and professional. Please take a look at Abby as the voice of CAFOD's most recent Advent assembly video

<https://vimeo.com/484403694/18aee0435c>



FAMILY

The value of Family was evident in the high quality of prefect applications received in September. The applicants' genuine care for the St James' community and their desire to contribute to school life was very apparent. Our team of 30 prefects have already started to display their leadership skills in their new roles and we are very proud of them all.

Following the application procedure, pupils applying for senior prefect positions took part in interviews with Mr Pontifex, Dr Nye and Ms Woods. This was an experience that pupils excelled in and our job of selecting a Head Boy and Girl and Deputy Head Boy and Girl was made very difficult.

We were delighted to appoint the roles to four very worthy candidates; Cameron 11C, Abby 11C, Ellie 11J and William 11M. This is what they had to say about being a prefect and a pupil at St James'.

"The relationships between teachers and students has encouraged me to take up the role of Head Boy" said Cameron.

"The school has taught me that the bare minimum is never acceptable. This was also true during the selection process for prefect" said William.

"To be a prefect you do not need to be perfect, but you do need to put in as much effort as possible" said Abby.

"I have really enjoyed my time at St James' and it has led me on this path to become Deputy Head Girl. It has given me the confidence ready for the next stage of education and to continually improve myself as a person" said Ellie.

The value of Family has also been shown by Year 11 pupils who have generously donated goods for the Chelwood and Wellspring Centre Christmas Collections. The prefect teams have been integral in publicising and collecting items from the whole school community.

Our prefect team have additionally begun a socially distanced mentoring programme with Year 7 pupils this term which will be expanded to include more pupils from Year 8 and 9 in January. We have witnessed the value of Family first-hand as the prefects have helped, advised and been a listening ear to their mentees.



EXCELLENCE

The value of excellence was reflected in the impressive termly data and assessment results received in November. We are delighted that 115 pupils, our biggest number ever, are in the 12 club. A special mention must go to the following who received ATL 1 in every subject; LilyRae 11C, Aliza 11S, Fiona 11A, Charlotte 11M, Daniel 11E, Killian 11E, Molly 11C, Ciaran 11M, Millie 11J, Charlotte 11S, Abby 11C, Enrique 11C, Eve 11E, Ellie 11J, Nathan 11J, Finn 11M & Alicia-May 11A.

The mock exams ran very smoothly and show the hard work and determination of many pupils who will hopefully gain confidence from their successes. The resilience of pupils at this time shone through and more than one pupil said that the exams had not been as bad as they had expected! We look forward to great things from Year 11 in the real examinations in the summer term.

20 Year 11 pupils successfully submitted InvestIN applications to take part in a virtual careers session. This involves tasks and discussions, hearing from industry professionals and receiving careers guidance. InvestIN provides students aged 12-18 with the opportunity to work alongside top professionals in some of the world's most competitive and desirable careers - law, medicine, investment banking, engineering and many more. We were

delighted to be able to fund these placements this term and look forward to hearing all about them.

It is hard to believe that Year 11 have just two terms remaining at St James'. We look forward to welcoming them back in 2021 when it will be important that they make the very most of their remaining time. It will pass very quickly.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support, and to thank Form Tutors and Pastoral staff for all their patience, kindness and hard work.

Wishing you and your families a wonderful Christmas.

Ms Woods & Dr Nye
Heads of Year 11

ATTENDANCE

This term has brought with it challenges which we, as a school, have never had to face before. And this has been especially noticeable in terms of the attendance of our students.

However, these challenges have necessitated change and we have seen a number of positives in terms of how we can support students who are not physically in school. Most notably the use of online lessons and provision of work on Show My Homework to support students who are self isolating.

Surprisingly, despite the national picture and the concerns many people have in relation to mixing with others, we have seen that our whole school attendance (non-Covid related) has actually slightly increased. This is testament to the attitude and ethos of our students and families who clearly value their education so much.

We never want to see students out of school so it has been hard to see students self isolating and at times the school has felt a much

emptier place. This being said, we are grateful for the quick and effective communication of parents in informing us of any positive Covid cases so we have been able to identify close contacts and prevent the risk of further spreading of the virus.

We have been able to reintroduce our attendance lottery this term to reward those students who have good attendance and this will continue throughout the academic year.

Going forward we hope to see a continued focus on positive attendance from our students, especially as we know the impact this can have on their academic outcomes and progress.

Thank you once again for everyone's efforts and understanding in ensuring students are in school whenever possible.

Mrs C Hanley
Attendance Officer

SPIRITUALITY

Developing the faith of our young people is an integral part of life at St James'. We provide as many opportunities as possible for students to actively engage with their faith.

Our Lay Chaplain, Mrs Bennett, has been leading each Form in Morning Prayer on a rota basis allowing all students to have an opportunity to pause and reflect, praying for theirs and others needs. Students are led in prayer each morning in their Form and each day also ends in prayer, this is an important part of our school life.

We know that being a witness to our faith in our everyday actions is as important as our prayers and students have embraced this with many gaining 'Faith' value points and giving generously of their time to help others. Our school charity this year is CAFOD and students have engaged with this in their participation in Family

Fast Day. The response to our Foodbank appeal led by our Year 11 prefects has been fantastic and we are so proud of the way in which our students have acted out their faith.

Some of our younger students have been involved in a new club called REthink and this is another fantastic opportunity for pupils to consider some of the bigger life issues rooted in Catholic values. In November some of our Year 8 pupils took part in Mini DASH, which is an event organised by our Diocese, Shrewsbury, and it was certainly enjoyed by all even though the experience was a new way of doing things via Zoom. On the last day, all students will participate in a virtual Advent service, a fitting way to end our first term of this academic year at St James'.

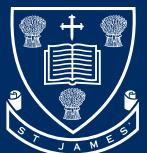
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With God
all things are possible

Matthew 19:26



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