



Summer 2023

Alumni Newsletter

To all of our new and existing alumni, thank you for being part of our network, we hope you enjoy our second newsletter.

St James' Alumni Careers Event

In the Spring term, we hosted our first ever Careers Cafe event for Year 9 pupils. This was an excellent opportunity for them to think about careers ahead of GCSE options and the feedback from pupils



was extremely positive. This event was organised in partnership with State Talking, a fantastic organisation aiming to raise the aspirations of pupils across Greater Manchester. We are extremely proud that this initiative is the passion project of one of our past pupils and are very grateful that they support our alumni network and careers programme at St James'.

On the day, pupils heard from a range of speakers including six alumni who gave talks and answered students' questions. They were social media and influencer marketing expert Hannah O'Donoghue from Hannah Is Social, Lizzie Lowe, whose embroidery has been featured on designs by Hussein Chalaya, Zandra Rhodes and Burberry, solicitor, Gemma Whitby (Horwich Farrelly), Paul Payne, who is an import





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clerk with Allseas global logistics and Patrick Riordan, senior account manager at SysGroup.

We are already looking forward to hosting this event again next year so if you would be interested in taking part, please look out for an email next academic year.

A message from the Headteacher, Anthony Pontifex:

May I start by thanking you for your participation in our alumni network, we do value the input you are able to offer and we are proud that our earliest alumni are from the class of 1985 and we are now at over 100 members! Staying connected really does benefit our whole school family and however you support; be that your offer to come and speak to children, support with mentoring or your capacity to support pupil wellbeing, it is all of great value.



Our values really do embody everything we do here at St James, they are simple but powerful: Family, Faith, and Excellence. We have recently appointed our Y10 Prefects who are all divided into Family, Faith, and Excellence groups and they have fully immersed themselves in their new roles. Perhaps some of you remember having this responsibility at school and subsequently quoting it on your CV! Our Faith Prefects are busy planning our Summer reflection for all children at the end of term, whilst our Family and Excellence Prefects are preparing to welcome the newest members of our St James' family on Y6 Transition day.

The Catholic ethos permeates our school and our school mission 'to educate and develop global Catholic citizens' is lived out every day and one example of this is the way in which our children have raised much needed funds for our chosen school charity Mary's Meals. You can find more information about this charity here [Homepage | Mary's Meals \(marysmeals.org\)](http://marysmeals.org). If any of our Alumni would like to get involved with our charity work, please do feel free to get in touch. Each and every one of our children has also participated in a retreat this year, allowing them to develop their faith as they journey through St James'.

This year, there have been a plethora of trips and visits for our children to get involved in including a trip to Manchester Thunder Netball, a netball residential at PGL, theatre visits to watch An Inspector Calls and The Lion King, a trip to the Battlefields, a visit to Oxford University and a pilgrimage to see the Relics of St Bernadette to name but a few. We have also had a number of children complete their Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award which some of you may also have completed when at school, such a



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fantastic achievement. We look forward to our next residential at the end of the term to Paris and Germany.

Our sporting success has continued with a good number of children involved in the extracurricular sports offered and many representing our school with pride and enthusiasm. Some highlights include: The Year 9 and 10 female Sports Leaders hosting a tournament supporting the Barclays and FA initiative 'Let Girls Play', the U15 girls football team who are through to the third round of the sistersport cup and the Y10 boys football team who won the Stockport Schools Cup, an amazing achievement. The Y8 boys were also victorious in two local cups and there have been numerous successes in athletics.

To keep up to date with all school events, if you do not already do so, I would encourage you to follow us on Twitter [@StJamesCheadle](https://twitter.com/StJamesCheadle) and to visit our website www.stjamescheadle.co.uk as it is full of useful information including the latest news updates

Thank you again for your commitment to our alumni network.

Share the network

Getting sign-ups to networks like these is done through our personal connections and word of mouth. If you are still in touch with any other former St James' pupils then please share [this link](#) with them and encourage them to sign up.

Let us know what you've been up to

We are really keen to hear stories and testimonials from former students which can help contribute towards our school careers programme. Being able to hear from relatable alumni who also went to St James' about what they've been up to since they left can help to inspire and motivate students. If you are able to do a short write-up (150-200 words) about yourself and your career that we can share in our newsletter then please email it to d.rarity@stjamescheadle.co.uk

A message from Clare Linford

Clare has taught at St James' since 1999 and many of you will remember her as your Head of Year or teacher of Business.

I started my teaching career at St James' in March 1999 when I was lucky enough to be given St James' as my final placement for my university degree. I knew then that it was a special place to be, so when the opportunity arose to apply for teacher of Business Studies as my first teaching job, I didn't need to think about it. I accepted the job and began life as a full time member of staff in September 1999. I was a joint form tutor to 7S with Miss O'Connor until the following year when I took over my own form. It was during this time that I decided I would love to pursue a pastoral role



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in school and to that end, I applied for a Head of Year job to cover Ms Woods maternity leave in 2003. This is a role that I absolutely loved, helped by the fact that the year group were a truly delightful group of children. I continue to be Head of Year 20 years later and I have worked with some amazing pupils throughout that time. Living locally, I occasionally bump into former pupils and it is so amazing to see that lots of them are still close friends, or keep in touch with people they went to school with. St James' truly is a family and it is so lovely to hear that the friendships that were formed here, continue to this day.

I particularly love seeing Year 7 pupils walk through the door knowing that I taught their parents, as it is a testament to St James' that people choose it as the school for their children based on the education and care that they received.

I have 3 children, and my eldest son is a past pupil of St James', my daughter is currently in Year 9 and my youngest son is in Year 7. I had no hesitation in sending them here where I know they receive the best education and the best pastoral care.

I have enjoyed many trips out of school with different groups of children over the years. I took a Business class to Disneyland Paris in 2001, I have accompanied the Year 8 annual trip to France on several occasions, I thoroughly enjoyed visits to The Western Front on 3 separate occasions, and I took a group of Business students to Lancaster to compete in The LionHeart Challenge - an initiative funded by GMP. It is on such trips that you truly see a "St James' pupil". It always gives me immense pride when people comment on the behaviour of the pupils and commend them for representing St James' so well.

I consider myself to be very lucky to teach at St James'. I have loved being a member of staff for the past 24 years. I feel like I have made an impact in lots of ways, but more importantly, you as pupils have had an impact on me. Meeting and getting to know lots of different pupils is a joy and a privilege and I intend to continue to enjoy my job as a St James' teacher for the foreseeable future.

Alumni events

While we are not in a position to organise any alumni events or reunions, we would be happy to facilitate this if there was an interest in organising one from some alumni. If this is something you are interested in organising or hearing more about then please email d.rarity@stjamesheadle.co.uk

Thank you once again for signing up to the St James' Alumni Network. If you have any further questions or want to know how you can get more involved in the network in the future please get in touch.