



'The Phoenix'

Whitehouse News

December 2018



Diary Dates

DECEMBER

11th - Foundation Stage Nativity @10am

12th - Key Stage 1 Celebration @ 10am

18th - Nursery Nativity at 9.30a.m.

20th - K.S.2 Carol Service - Newtownabbey Mission at 10am.

20th - P.T.A. Disco during the day. This a non-uniform day (Key Stage 2 pupils dress in their uniform and then change after their carol service into their casual clothes).

21st - Christmas Holidays begin! Non-uniform day. Early closure, 11.45 (Nursery), 12noon (Years 1 to 3) 12.15pm (Years 4 to 7). No lunches or dinners.

JANUARY

4th—Term begins on Friday 4th January .

7th—'New Year, New You' Week.

14th— Nursery Jo-Jingles 9.30 a.m.

17th— GRTL parent session—Nursery 12.30 p.m.

23rd- Year 5 Family STEM night—St James' Primary School(6.30-7.30p.m)

25th-29th - Year 7 Transfer Interviews.

30th- Year 6 Parents' Transfer Information Night @6pm.

31st - GRTL parent session—Nursery 12.30 p.m.

FEBRUARY

5th- Internet Safety Day

15th - Michael Morpurgo K.S.2 Author Bash Day

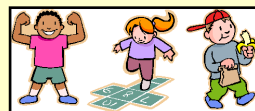
15th - School closes for holidays - Early closure - 1p.m (Yr1-3), 1.15p.m (Yr4-7)

18th & 19th - Half-term holidays

20th - School closed all day - Parent Interviews

21st / 22nd - School closes 1/1.15 p.m.—Admin and Teaching Training afternoons.

'New Year, New You!'



Our school wellbeing week kicks off on Monday 7th January 2019.

The week will cover five key themes:

- Physical fitness
- Positive mental health
- Healthy eating
- Aspirations
- Safety (road/internet/fire etc.)

From physical fun to science experiments, it will be a fantastic week! To make this possible we have asked for a contribution of £3 per child or £6 per family.

If anyone has yet to return their forms and money please do so A.S.A.P.

Starting Nursery or P1 in September 2019

A **digital admissions** process is now in place to enable parents to apply online.

- Criteria for each school will be published online from 14th December 2018.
- Online applications will be received from Wednesday 2nd January 2019 at 10am to Thursday 31st January at midnight.
- Further information can be found at <https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions>



Foundation Nativity



Blueprint 2020

September 2018/19 sees the sixth year of our dynamic six year school development strategy. This innovative and far ranging plan will bring our school to the next level in terms of learning and services to our community.

In this section we want to share some of our key strategic goals for the year ahead and then focus in on a few of the key innovations. Over the next year we will regularly report on what has been achieved and the new projects that we develop.

Strategic Leadership

To share good practice across the school and beyond to enhance staff development and pupils' attainment. This will include the development and coaching of curriculum leaders.

The continued development of Shared Education with St. James's Primary School. In particular, this will allow the schools to promote S.T.E.M. and Forest School learning as well as achieving 'Rights Respecting Schools' status.

To engage with community stakeholders to increase aspirations, attainment, early intervention and collaboration. This will include focused family learning support interventions.

Ethos

Implement and review a whole school wellbeing strategy.

Achieve the British Council's International School Award by June 2018.

Use the pursuit of the Eco Green Flag, by June 2019, as a means to educate our school community to be more eco friendly.

Learning and Teaching

90+% of pupils, in both, Literacy and Numeracy will achieve as expected or above.

December Update

This month our main area of focus for school improvement was our Early Years provision.

The Foundation Stage teachers worked with staff from St James' Primary to further develop Play Based Learning across the school.

Nursery staff continued their '**Getting Ready to Learn**' project to engage and empower parents in their children's learning.

Pastoral Care Team

Pupils' safety and care is our first priority. If you have any concerns we have a team of staff who are trained to support pupils and families. This team focuses on both child protection and wider pastoral support.

Team Leader: Mrs R. Watson

Mrs Clifford (Early Years)

Mrs Spratt (Nursery)

Talking Points: **Children's Reading**

This month we want to discuss the importance of encouraging pupils to **read for pleasure**.

Here is some interesting research about the impact of getting children to read more for pleasure:



- Reading for pleasure is a **more powerful factor in life than their background**.
- If your child reads at least 30 minutes a day it is likely to **boost reading by one full year**.
- In Northern Ireland the **hourly wage of workers with the highest levels of literacy is 94% higher** than for workers who have the lowest levels of literacy.

This Christmas do not forget books! We have a fantastic library in school and in the local area. Families can access thousands of great books free of charge!

As you prepare to go into 2019 consider some strategies to help your family read more:

- Have **regular bedtime stories** (including older pupils too!).
- Consider having **family reading times** (read a book together or everyone reads their own book at the same time).
- Mums and dads should be **reading role models**.
- Have a **weekly library visit**.