St.James'
CEC Primary School

Mission Statement

By working together, we enable our children to flourish as enthusiastic and successful learners, prepared to make a positive difference in God's world.

New Parents' Guide to St James' CEC School

We're delighted that you have chosen to send your child to our school. We hope that these notes will help you to feel at home quickly and feel a part of the St James' School community. If you have any questions or things that you're still not sure about after reading them, then please do ask either your child's class teacher or Mrs Herniman and Mrs Lavender in the office.

The School Website – This is a very good place to start looking for anything that you're not sure about. There is a lot of information here, including the latest newsletter, photos and updates about activities. Furthermore you can see all of the events that are of interest to parents listed in the Calendar there. When we closed the school at short notice because of snow, it was announced on the website even before it was announced on the radio. Similarly, we announced the decision about whether to run sports day on a rather overcast day on the website.

Newsletters – Newsletters are the main way of communicating general school information. They are usually published on Thursdays and are also available on the website. Please do make sure that you get a copy of the newsletter each week so that you can be kept fully informed with all that's going on in and around the school.

Curriculum News – At the start of each term, we arrange Curriculum News meeting for parents at 3:00 in their children's classroom to set out the things that the class will be doing during the term and how best you, as parents, can help and support your child. This year, for the first time, we will be publishing the presentations that teachers give at these meetings on the school website. This means that any parents who are unable to attend will be able to know what was said and have access to the same information.

Class Assemblies – These assemblies are run by the children in one class. Each class will have two class assemblies a year. Normally, these will be in the Autumn and Summer term for the children in Reception and KS1. They run from 10:00 to around 10:30. It's a good idea to be there earlier, to be sure of a good seat. We would warmly encourage you to make every effort to be there for these two assemblies. It means a great deal to the children.

Gold Book, Stars of the Week, KS1 Golden Assembly, Class of the Week, Smiley Faces and Certificates – The school seizes every opportunity to acknowledge achievements and reward success. As well as Smiley Faces, which are given in class for good work and behaviour and result in a certificate after the child has accumulated 10 of them, there are a number of other awards.

- **Gold Book** – When your child does a really outstanding piece of work, then the teacher may decide that it warrants more that a Smiley Face and will send your child to me to have their name put in the Gold Book. This book, of cream leather, sits in a golden box in the display stand in the reception area of the school. I will write in their name, their class, the date and a short description of their achievement. In addition to this, I'll give them a headteacher's sticker and take a photo of them sitting in my chair, which I'll send home for you to enjoy and to remind your child of that amazing piece of work they did. Please display this photo somewhere, as it represents a significant achievement for them. I also give them a ride back to class in my chair. They love this. So do I!

- **Stars of the Week** – Each week in Monday's whole-school assembly, the teacher will read out the names of 2-4 children in their class who have shown excellent character traits – eg kindness, patience, thoughtfulness, perseverance etc. They will be called out to the front, given a 'Stars of the Week' sticker and have their photo taken to go home.
- **Golden Assembly** – In Golden Assembly, which happens every half term, two children from each class are given medals for outstanding all-round performance. Normally, they will come home with a picture of themselves too.
- **Class of the Week** – I choose one class each week as the 'Class of the Week'. They win custody of Fergus – our lovely toy monkey – for the week. The class also share a bag of Minstrels.

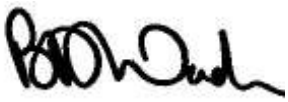
Parents Evenings – We invited parents to meet with their child(ren)'s class teacher twice a year – once in the Autumn term and once in the Spring term. Children are also invited to attend these. At these 10-minute meetings (15 mins in Year 6), children's targets and progress are discussed. It's important to be at these meeting so that you can be really up to date about how your child is doing in school and so that we can form an effective partnership for their benefit.
If you have concerns, questions or issues of a pressing nature, it's best not to wait for these meetings, but rather make an appointment with your child's class teacher as soon as you can. The dates for Parents Evenings in 2011-12 are 18th/ 20th October and 20th/ 22nd March. Both run from 4pm to 7:30pm.

Sports Day – Sports Day is run in the Summer term. Next year's date is Tuesday 19th June. It will start with a family picnic at 12noon and we will start the activities and races at 1pm. It is run in the school's four houses. These houses are named after children's authors and have their own colour: Fine (Blue), Lewis (Green), Dahl (Red) and Rosen (Yellow). Your child will be allocated to one of these houses and will have older children to look out and care for them. Again, this is a date for your diary.

Head's Open Forum – Each half term, I have an informal open forum to which parents are warmly invited. These are held at 2:30 in the staffroom and are open to all parents whether they have things that they would like to chat over with me or not. It's also a useful place for me to be able to talk over ideas that I have with parents. There's always a drink and a biscuit too! The first few dates for this are 19th September and 19th November. The rest of the dates are in the school calendar on the website. However, do remember that my door is always open!

Home School Diary – Your child will have a home-school diary in their book bag. This is a good way of communicating with the child's teacher, although if you have something more pressing to discuss, it's always best to talk face to face or over the phone.

I do trust that this will help to explain some of the things that will be new to you, when you start the school, but are very much part of the fabric of St James' CEC School. If you have any questions, we're always happy to answer them.
Yours faithfully



Bruce Waelend – Sept 2011