

*"I think that it is important for everyone to be happy because no one deserves sadness in their lives." Eliana (Y5)*

### Introduction

Hello SJF! We hope you are enjoying school life and embracing learning. Our fifth newsletter aims to look at the importance of healthy eating, especially during the festive period where we can easily over-indulge.

### A Reminder



### Attendance and Punctuality

It goes without saying that good attendance and punctuality results in good learning. At SJF, we aim high to achieve 98% attendance.

Being on time is also important because we do not want anyone missing out on learning. If you are having difficulties with getting your child to school on time, please contact Mr Smith so we can try to help you.

### National Poetry Competition

## It takes just one poem...

Our SJF Poets were presented with their wonderful poems and prizes during assembly by the SJF Eco Team and our Healthy Minds Champions. The theme was **The Environment**. A huge 'congratulations' to them all!



A collection of their poems can be found in our SJF Poetry Anthology available online via our website which you can view via this [here](#). We hope you will enjoy them as much as we did. A hard copy of the Anthology was presented to every class teacher so that the children can read and enjoy the wonderful poems.



**What made you want to be a teacher?** I always wanted to be a teacher or a police officer. Those were my two dream jobs. I wanted to be a teacher because I had known some great teachers and I wanted to be like them. After university I worked for the Metropolitan Police for a while before training to be a teacher.

**How do you help people when they are sad?** That's a really good question. I think it's important to put yourself in their shoes and the most important thing is to listen and understand. Sometimes I try to help by giving an answer or I might try to help them find the answer for themselves. It is important to show them that they have someone on their side. Also, if I promise to do something I always try hard to do it, because that's important.

**What is your favourite place to visit?** Some places I like to visit just because they are interesting, and some places are I like to visit because there are people there who are special to me – my friends and family. I'm from south-east London and where I am from reminds me of this area Sheffield, which is why I like it so much. Sheffield is a great place, but I do love to go home and catch up with my family too because they are all very special to me. I also like being by the seaside at any time of the year, and in the countryside, because I love walking. I really enjoy going on holiday with my family abroad. My children are all grown up now and so I love it when they all come home and we can spend time together.

**Which University did you study at?** St Mary's University College, Strawberry Hill in Twickenham, near where the famous rugby stadium is. Later I trained to be a teacher at Sheffield Hallam University.

**What is your favourite takeaway?** There is a real debate in my house because my children love a Dominos pizza, but we like Chinese food, especially sweet and sour and chicken chow mein.

**What do you like to do in your spare time?** We have a cockerpoo called Jake, and we enjoy going for walks with him. I really like catching up with family and friends; going to the cinema; the theatre; watching football too. I've always supported Charlton Athletic, a team local to where I grew up and I used to have a season ticket. I sometimes watch Chesterfield FC matches, and other non-league football matches. We love spending time with our kids. So, when they're home, we sometimes do different things as a family.

**What is your favourite country to visit, and why?** We've had quite a few holidays in Madeira. We also like France and Spain and I have Belgian family.

**What song would you be and why?** 'I lost my keys, I lost my phone,' by Zipparah Tafari (BGT finalist) – I think the title says all you need to know!

**Have you ever met anybody famous? If so, who?** When I was young, I did some acting and was in a few shredded wheat adverts that were shown on the telly in the 1990s. It was then that I met Brian Clough, a famous manager of Nottingham Forest, and he said he would give me a trial, but he never did! I also met Bryan Robson who used to be captain of England and Manchester United, Gary Lineker (Match of the Day) and Peter Shilton who were also very famous England footballers a few years ago.

When I was a teacher in my last school, my Y5/6 team won a national football competition and our school team went to Wembley to play in a national final in front of 55,000 people before the League One play-off final in 2007. The children even used the changing room that the England team normally use and were treated like VIPs. After we played the match, we were invited to be on 'Look North' and 'Calendar News', and we met the presenters and everyone in the studio, which was fun. I also worked at Wimbledon as a security guard when I was at university, and met lots of famous tennis players as I escorted them around. I've also been on a gameshow called 'Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?' and met the host, Chris Tarrant, but I didn't win! It is nice to meet famous people, but they are all just you and me, really.





**Do you have a secret passion?** That's a really good question. I like reading, I like music too – and catching up with my extended family. They live all over the UK and when we get together we have day-long parties. We talk and spend time together. If we meet when the weather is hot then we have water fights and lots of fun!

**What's your favourite biscuit?** You can't beat bourbons. When I was little me and my brother called them boing-boings.

**What's your favourite film?** The first film I ever saw was Star Wars. I also like Harry Potter films, Shrek, Toy Story and Monsters Inc. too.

**What job did you have before teaching?** I was a Business Analyst for a company called Prudential. I worked with some remarkable people and it was an interesting job. Before that, I worked at New Scotland Yard and met different people as part of my job, sometimes, politicians and the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. The Deputy Commissioner was my boss at the time and it was a really interesting job.

**Have you ever had a class pet?** When I went to primary school, we had goldfish in one class and a hamster in another. The rules about school pets have changed now, but I think I would like to have a SJF pet. I have thought about having chickens at school, but we would have to be very careful because there are lots of foxes about and we would have to make sure that the chickens were looked after over the weekends and during the holidays. I also think therapy dogs are a good idea.

**Did you always know that you wanted to be a teacher?** I really wanted to be a teacher and always loved teaching. I was given more responsibilities and so became a Deputy Headteacher. When the Headteacher job came up, someone asked me to visit and have a look, and when I did I was so impressed by the children, who were fantastic, just like they are today. I thought that it would be amazing to be headteacher here.

**What is your favourite season?** Summer because and we can do lots of things and I can see my family who live far away, in the six weeks holiday - which is great. My job is very busy, which means I usually have to do lots of work at the weekends, so I like it when I can have a longer break in the summer and do other things.

**What made you want to work here at SJF?** Well, I'm going to tell you something very interesting. In 1995, when I worked for the Metropolitan Police, I was thinking that I might like to teach, but I lived in London and never thought that I would ever do anything else. I chatted to my father-in-law who told me that he knew a Headteacher. He said that he would ask him to help me. Every month this Headteacher sent me information.

Seventeen years later, when I applied to be Headteacher here at St John Fisher, I was shocked to realise that the Headteacher who had sent me the information, every month, all those years before, in 1995, was, in fact, Mr McGurrian, and the school he was Headteacher of was St John Fisher! The lady who used to post everything to me was Mrs Battams who I ended up working with, until she retired a few years ago! It is such a small world!

Like I said in an earlier answer, the moment I visited I knew there was something very special about the school, and I thought the children were absolutely fantastic. When I started, there was lots to do to improve the building. I asked the children what they would like me to do. I expected them to say 'we want a sandpit' or 'improve the playground' but they just asked for "toilets that aren't smelly"- and I kept my promise to sort it.

**What is your favourite subject to teach?** I love teaching history, that is my favourite subject. I enjoy learning about the past and finding out about amazing and important people, including ordinary people like me. History is not just about Kings and battles, although learning about those can be really interesting as well. When I was at school, I sometimes struggled with Maths so when I became a teacher I was determined to enjoy it and make maths lessons lots of fun, and I tried to help children because I knew what it was like to struggle. So, I also love to teach maths and art. To be honest, I just really enjoy teaching.

**Thank you, Mr Barratt.**



## Healthy Minds at Christmas

With Christmas just a few weeks away, we know that the festive period can be somewhat of a challenging time to eat well. After all, the holidays are the season of good cheer, and many of us are eating out or indulging at home more than we might do at other times – we know that it's hard to remind ourselves to eat enough fruits and veggies daily, so teaching our kids healthy eating habits is a whole other story. It can be tricky for kids to grasp why healthy eating is so important. For them, [nutrition](#) doesn't matter, and it's all about what tastes good. So this month, we've got an interesting article that we would love to share with you:

### How To Encourage Healthy Eating Habits and Teach Children To Love Vegetables



Let us be honest, chocolate can sometimes taste a whole lot nicer than carrots, but there are lots of simple ways to teach children how to eat healthily.

Being armed with a long list of yummy recipes certainly helps, too!

Read on to discover the best ways to encourage healthy eating habits in your kids. They'll be eating up those vegetables in no time.

### The importance of developing healthy eating habits early in life

Throughout childhood - and even their teens - kids are always growing. You blink once, and they're five. You blink again, and they're fifteen! Before you know it, your "little one" is taller than you and possibly stronger, too! And that's great! That's exactly what we're after (even if it feels like time is flying by too fast).

In developmental terms, childhood is a crucial stage for establishing strong bones and muscles. Children need calcium, Vitamin C, Vitamin D, fiber, and protein to fuel their growth. **Where do they get those nutrients from?** A healthy diet, of course, but you cannot always be around to tell them what to eat, especially as they grow older and more independent.

Developing healthy eating habits early in life has a massive impact on our food preferences and eating habits as a teen and adult. So much so, that researchers have found [a link between childhood obesity and health problems later in adulthood](#). Encourage your children to eat veggies now, and your words of wisdom will continue to benefit them throughout their lives, decreasing the risk of developing health issues, later on.

### Five tips for encouraging healthy eating habits

We all know that, even with the best intentions, getting your kid to eat the right foods can be something of a struggle. Our tips for encouraging healthy eating habits should make mealtimes a lot easier for both of you.

#### 1. Family Mealtimes

Make your mealtimes a chance for the whole family to get together. Children love the predictability and comfort of having the family together at least once a day. This will also give you a chance to introduce new foods to your child, encouraging them to try things they'd otherwise push to the side of their plate. If they see their parents/older siblings modeling healthy eating, then even better! We know some children are fussy and reject foods because it is unfamiliar, but turn it into a learning opportunity mentioning *judging a book by its cover*, or perhaps a first impression they had about someone who is now a good friend. The structure of a family mealtime can also help children to develop a healthy relationship with food. Children are less likely to skip meals later in life if they are already used to having regular and planned mealtimes.

#### 2. Be a Role-Model

We touched on this just above, but it's worth spending a little more time on. As a parent, your kids will naturally look up to you and mirror your behavior. If they see you regularly eating unhealthy snacks and not prioritizing a healthy diet, they are likely to follow suit. So try to model healthy eating habits at home — certainly while



you're in front of them at least! Asking your children to eat an apple while you snack on a packet of chips is just not going to work! Especially since children generally don't like being told what to do! Endeavor to do this outside of the house, too. If you're out on a day trip, make sure you search for healthier options whenever you can. When faced with an ice cream parlor or a whole foods shop as a mid-afternoon snack, go for the latter. A little treat now and again is fine, but ice cream won't be seen as a treat if you have it all the time!

Remember that your own attitudes towards healthy eating will stay with your children for years, so try to make a positive impact! Instill the belief that a body is a temple, and it's the only one you've got, and should be powered by clean goodness and not just junk food devoid of nutrients. That said, it's a balance so remember to allow some delicious treats, but try to avoid linking eating with stress, control, decision-paralysis, and anxiety.

### 3. Stock up with healthy snacks

The foods you have in your house are the ones that both you and your children will be eating. This sounds obvious but sometimes we forget that stocking our cupboards with unhealthy snacks is just encouraging bad habits. After all, you can't eat it if it's not there!

When your child wants a snack, it's great if there are several healthy options available to them. This helps healthy eating feel like standard practice and not a punishment! So try to stock up with lots of colorful fruit and vegetables (and keep sweets and biscuits to a minimum). You will notice your child eating more healthily. And remember, this is a good time to instill good understanding of why your child wants to snack. If they're hungry, teach them that their body needs fuel, and what is better? A hit of sugar or a long, slow release of energy? If they're snacking because they're bored, it's important they recognize this through [self-reflection](#) to prevent mindless eating in the future.

### 4. Try healthy foods more than once

Your child might have refused to eat a particular fruit or vegetable once, but it does not mean that they cannot try it again. Many children can be a bit unsure about new foods, which often means that they will not even try them. But if they see that same food appear on their plate a few times, the sense of familiarity might help convince them to give it a go.

*So what happens if your kid tries a healthy food, but isn't a big fan?*

Our sense of taste tends to change as we get older, so give it another go a few months later. Or try prepare the food in a different way. Straight up broccoli won't be very appealing to most kids, but if it's with a cheesy sauce or buried in a stir-fry, it might be just the ticket in giving it another go.

Ask your child to have just two mouthfuls of the food that they are not keen on and, over time, they might just start to change their mind. Remind them to think about their reactions too. Is it just knee-jerk "yuck" response? Is it the texture that they are not sure about? The flavour? Encourage your child to be more and more expressive in their descriptions, as this might help you find creative solutions.

### 5. Adapt traditional family recipes

The chances are that many of the recipes you have already tried at home could stand to have a few more veggies thrown in. For example, a simple spaghetti bolognese can be made even healthier by adding in finely diced carrots, celery, and mushrooms. Chopped finely, they won't even know they're in there.

The beef mince could be replaced with Quorn, tofu or lentils to create a super healthy vegetarian dish. The most important part? Try to get your children involved in coming up with, and even preparing with you, creative alternatives.

When children are invested in the preparation of the food they are going to eat, then they are far more likely to want to try it, even if they're beetroot brownies. So get them in the garden growing veggies and salad ingredients, and draw them into the kitchen with age-appropriate tasks like rinsing, grating, mixing, measuring, cutting and cooking (for older children).







**What did the first snowman say to the second snowman?**  
*It smells like carrots out here!*



Our Film of the Month!

**The Bad Guys | Rating: U | Release Date: April, 2022**

After a lifetime of legendary heists, notorious criminals Mr Wolf, Mr Snake, Mr Piranha, Mr Shark and Ms Tarantula are finally caught.

To avoid prison, the animal outlaws must pull off their most challenging con yet, becoming model citizens. Under the tutelage of their mentor, Professor Marmalade, the dubious gang sets out to fool the world that they're turning good.



**December fact: International Hug Day** – hugs are meant to be random act of kindness, a selfless act performed just to make others feel better. This year's International Free Hugs Day is celebrated on Dec 4<sup>th</sup>. Give all your loved ones hugs this day. Grab the ones you love and wrap your arms around him or her in a big, snuggled bear hug. If someone is far away, send an e-hug or send them a hugging poem to celebrate hugging during the festive holidays.

Word of the Month: **Conciliate** (to make more friendly or less angry)

