

25TH SEPTEMBER 2020

St. James' School



MISGUIDED HONOUR?

A look at the teenagers' honour code
and how it is misguided

SCHOOL CAPTAINS

Introducing our pupil leadership team
for 2020/2021

UPCOMING EVENTS

What is happening round the corner?

THIS WEEK IN PHOTOS



SLAKING: THE TEENAGERS' MISGUIDED HONOUR SYSTEM

**BY RICHARD MURRAY,
HEADMASTER**

There are many fine examples of honour systems in life; not 'snaking' within a school environment is not one of them. Perhaps the finest example is within the military, where the belief in their system is so strong, that comrades are willing to pay the ultimate price for one another. It is an example of where the sense of honour pulls people together, unified in common beliefs, shared values and goals. What teenagers fail to grasp about their honour code, is that it drives people apart. Every bit of hurtful 'banter' that draws a laugh or goes unchallenged is a tacit approval of such behaviour, and a weakening of the sense of community. In not 'snaking', the mean and hurtful are protected, and instead, the injured or wronged are the ones made to feel guilty.

This misguided system is perpetuated by the bullies as a mechanism to protect themselves or justify their behaviour, and perhaps I am too tough on those who are afraid to stand apart?

With age and experience I have rationalised the internal moral struggle, and made the choice to oppose and challenge such behaviour. But for our children in their formative teenage years, these issues are more opaque. For them, it is not a struggle of good versus evil, it is a battle between morality and popularity.

This covenant is sometimes broken by the brave, but more usually once a perceived threshold has been breached. Commonly it is the damage to or loss of their property that provokes an assertion, and how disappointing it is that a sum of money, or 'those headphones', are viewed as more valuable than the wellbeing, happiness or mental health of another child. Materialism, instant gratification, and a desire to not be excluded, are major obstacles to the development of moral courage, and it is genuinely sad to see children expect 'action' when they have lost something, but demand nothing when it happens to others, or does not refer to something material.

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TELLING VERSUS TATTLING

	
To keep yourself or others safe	To get someone else in trouble or avoid blame
Concerns someone's safety	Threatening to tatttle on another in order to control someone else
The problem is important and urgent	Has something to gain from tattling
Someone is being hurt or is in danger	No one is in danger or being hurt
An adult is needed to help solve the problem	Can be solved without adult intervention
Is important	Is unimportant

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The 'snake' is often a convenient scapegoat for those children who are unable to accept responsibility for their misdoings. It is not their actions which are wrong, it is the passing of information which aided their 'capture' that is reprehensible. This self-denial is a classic teenage mind-set; the ability to absolve themselves of blame by shifting the focus is a well-worn path.

What would I have children do? Vigilante justice or become tell-tale story tellers? The truth is neither, and both. Self-regulation is important within communities, including schools, and therefore children must take responsibility for challenging the poor behaviours they witness. However, with issues of severity or complexity, the skill and experience of staff are essential in bringing matters to a successful conclusion. In these cases, it is vital that issues are reported quickly.

For me the message is this; we must stand together against those people or behaviours that undermine our values and beliefs, and begin to measure the wellbeing of ourselves and others more highly than our possessions. **We must each take responsibility for our actions and inactions, and win the personal struggle between what is easy, and what is right.**

Introducing Prep & Senior Captains for 2020/2021



Head Boy- Rafael Mitros
Head Girl- April Howden

Sports Captains-
W- Miya Mitros
B- Alexander White
L- Dawid Roszczewski

Prefects-
Nenyasha Mutondo
Mikolaj Gierynski
Sanhithi (Sunny) Badam
Duncan Weir
Librarians-
Dilakshi Kesharwani
Sasha Dube

Eco- council- Charles Major

Anti-Bullying- Katie Dann

We are delighted to announce the School Captains and Prefects for this academic year for the Prep and Senior Department.

The Prep Captains took part in a rigorous selection process which involved an election, in which each of the nominees gave a speech and the remaining pupils submitted a vote for each of the vacant positions.

In a change to the usual system, this year pupils had to take part in the entire selection process virtually.

The positions are all filled by Prep 6 pupils apart from the Eco-Committee in which Charles Major in Prep 5 was selected by his peers.

All of the pupils have taken on their new responsibilities with enthusiasm and they look forward to continuing their roles for the remainder of the academic year.



Prefects

Year 12 - Adam Elsayed-Todd

Year 12 - Sienna Barney

Year 13 - Trang Bui

Year 13 - Davina Hairwadzi

School Captains

Miriam Swain-Deakins

Assise Hayre

- The senior prefect selection process takes place
- in the first two weeks of term and is open to all
- pupils in Year 12 and 13.
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- This year the Head of Sixth Form has moved
- away from electing a 'Head Boy' or 'Head Girl'
- and will now be selecting School Captains. This
- reflects the equality that St. James' promotes
- and going forward the school captains will no
- longer be selected based on their gender but
- what they stand for, their passion for the role
- and their different qualities.
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- Each of the candidates wrote a letter of
- application and if successful they were invited to
- attend an interview conducted by the Head of
- Sixth Form, Mr Wilkinson and Assistant Head,
- Mr Rose. The candidates are then ratified by the
- Headmaster, Mr Murray.
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- All of the prefects are looking forward to their
- new roles and responsibilities in the forthcoming
- academic year.

Meet the Eco-Committee

This week the newly formed Eco-Committee have met for the first time to discuss their objectives for the year. The committee is formed of Prep pupils and assisted by the Bursar, Mr Major.

The first priority was to visit the Forest School to assess where a new wildlife pond could be situated.

Committee Objectives:

- Giving up two breaks per week to go litter picking in the community.
- Installing additional bird boxes / bug houses / bird feeding stations around the campus.
- Planting bulbs around the School Campus to flower at various times throughout the year to help the insects (all donations welcome).
- Creating a wildlife pond in the Forest School.
- Encouraging all pupils to bring in healthier snacks in compostable/tupperware boxes rather than foil wrappers. Additional compost bins for peelings / cores etc.
- Encouraging more lessons to be taken outdoors to help with pupil and staff wellbeing by being surrounded by nature.



UPCOMING EVENTS

NATIONAL POETRY DAY 2020

See It Like a Poet

Thursday 1st October
Lots of lively literacy



28TH SEPTEMBER
TO 2ND
OCTOBER 2020

Sparrows Neighbourhood Walk

WEDNESDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER





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