



Dates for the diary

| | |
|--|--|
| 17 th June | New reception parents' welcome evening |
| 18 th June | Sports Day (Infants morning, Juniors afternoon – please see message below) |
| 29 th June | Summer fair |
| 2 nd & 4 th July | Parent consultations (all years except Y5) |
| 10 th July | Summer disco |
| 22 nd July | Year 6 leavers' service (2pm start) |
| 23 rd July | Last day of the school year |
| 2 nd September | INSET day |
| 3 rd September | First day of the new school year |
| 9 th September | Early Years start part time |
| 16 th September | Early Years start full time |

Newsletter – Friday 14th June 2024

This being summer (sort of), with the end of the school year approaching, we are looking forward to concluding with our traditional seasonal events. Sports day is, of course, the first of these and takes place on Tuesday next week.

My one achievement from primary school was from a sports day in 1983 and my mum still has the certificate to prove it – a pink certificate that says: “1st place in the Bunny Hop Skip”. If anyone has any idea what that race involved or whether it is still practised, please let me know as I have no memory of the event. But (as Liam Neeson would put it) I clearly had a very particular set of skills. Skills I had acquired over a very long sports day career. Skills that made me a nightmare for other children attempting to bunny hop skip as quickly as I did.

To be honest though, sport and me have never really been a good combination, particularly when there was a ball involved. In secondary school the group of children without the talent, wherewithal or health to be a part of the school A, B or class football/rugby/cricket teams were gathered into a group widely known as the “Rabbits”, which was led by a biology teacher. Needless to say, I was a Rabbit. The Rabbits would spend their Tuesday afternoons aimlessly kicking/throwing/missing a ball, sometimes bent double with the “stitch” or puffing on an inhaler, while our biology teacher (in an unflattering 1970s tracksuit) randomly blew a whistle with one hand and held his toupee in place with the other.

I am therefore delighted times have moved on and that our Sports Day celebrates children taking part, being active and having fun. It has been lovely watching the children enjoy their pre-sports day games with beaming smiles and a healthy sense of competition.

Remember that Sports Day is weather dependent – if the grass is too wet it becomes very slippery. We will go ahead if at all possible, but will postpone if necessary. I am not repeating my faux pas from a decade ago when I cancelled based on a grim forecast and the rain never appeared – not a day has passed since that I have not



recalled the angry parental mob at the office hatch. We will make any decision after seeing what the weather is like on the day.

Sports day details

We have decided to organise Sports Day a little differently this year. We will be carrying out the teamed sports activities over the week prior to sports day, as part of our day to day learning. On Tuesday 18th June we will have the races, for which we would love parents that can to join us. The KS1 races will start at 10.30am on the Infant field. You are then invited to stay for a picnic lunch with your children, before the KS2 races on the Junior field in the afternoon. Parents of KS2 children are welcome to arrive from midday if they wish to picnic; KS2 events will begin shortly after 1pm.

Staffing news

After 17 years at St James', we are very sad to tell you that Mrs King is retiring at the end of this academic year. Mrs King's exploits over the years have been as memorable as they have been crazy; her glitter obsession has been legendary. Mrs King (or Trish as she is known in school) has said that St James' is a place that you cannot just give up in one go, so rather than going "cold turkey" she is going to continue supporting the school with Carrotty Wood, our special RE days and various other exciting things. Therefore this is really just a partial "goodbye", and for that we are very grateful.

We are also very sad to be saying farewell to Mrs Featherstone who is also retiring after 17 years at St James'. Mrs Featherstone has always championed the children, leading our School Council for many years. She has organised our international mornings, supported the children's passion for environmentalism and given countless hours of her life in service to our children and community; like Mrs King, Mrs Featherstone is what St James' is all about and we are all going to miss her when she leaves at the end of this school year.

Both Mrs King and Mrs Featherstone are much loved by us all and we wish them a well-deserved long and happy retirement.

Message from the School Council

At School Council we talked about Clean Air Day and why it is important. Clean Air Day is important because if everyone uses less fossil fuels the air will be less polluted. It can also help to protect the environment and people with asthma. So on this day people should consider using less fossil fuels. We suggest you walk instead of drive to school or work (if you can) to save using your car. Though we are not many, we can make a big difference together.

Clean Air Day is on the 20th June (next Thursday).



KS2 Choir



The KS2 choir went to the Assembly Halls on Tuesday evening to perform at the Singing Festival. They all sounded wonderful and it was great to see how it all came together. A massive well done to all the children involved.

Mrs Holland

I would just like to add a massive well done to Mrs Holland – the choir were so amazing on Tuesday evening I was quite emotional with pride, and that is thanks to all of the children and the hard work of Mrs Holland and the other staff who worked so hard with them. I would also like to add just how amazing all of the other schools were who took part – a really lovely evening!

Me (Mr Tutt)

Year 4 Anglo-Saxon Day

Year 4 had an exciting, fun filled day of activities. An Anglo-Saxon expert called Peter came in and showed us different tools and weapons and we learnt how to make a shield wall in battle. We completed challenges, such as passing trading materials to get safely to shore. At Forest School, we made Anglo-Saxon coins using Pewter. Later, we played games to learn about food and how they lived. We also learnt about early writing using runes and drew illuminated letters. At the end of the day we discovered how Anglo-Saxons buried their kings and queens with their possessions.

By Jack, Vida and Elsie



Important PTA message

Our annual Summer Fair is fast approaching, and we are eagerly looking forward to an exciting day filled with fun and community spirit. However, to make this event a success, we need your help.

We are currently short of volunteers to run the class stalls and assist with various tasks throughout the day. Without sufficient support, we may have no choice but to cancel the fair, which would be a great disappointment to our children and the entire school community.

We are urgently seeking parents to volunteer for the following roles:

Manning class stalls - Contact your class rep directly

Setting up, this is the day before and on the morning before

Helping with clean-up afterwards

Your participation, even for just a few hours, can make a significant difference. If you are able to help, please sign up here - <https://www.stjamespta.co.uk/volunteer>

We truly appreciate your support and hope to work together to create a memorable and enjoyable Summer Fair for everyone.

11+ registration open

If you would like your child to sit the 11+ Kent Tests then you will need to register them online. Registration opens on 3rd June and closes on 1st July. Children who are not registered will not be able to sit the tests; however, parents who have registered their children can change their minds at any time, so if in doubt it is best to register them. Children need to sit (and pass) the tests in order to access a place at a grammar school.

Registration is via the KCC website: [Kent Test - Kent County Council](#)

If you were not at the meeting on Wednesday please note that you need check that you receive a confirmation email after registration. If you do not, you will need to check you have completed it correctly. You also need to ensure you choose the right St James' – our DfE number is 886-3322 our our URN is 118725.

Harp lessons

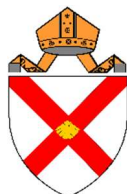
If your child is interested in having harp lessons at school, please send an email to Nikki at plinkplonkharp@hotmail.co.uk before the end of June. The harp is an ideal first instrument as it sounds nice from the very first lesson! Prices start at £13.75 per month and there is no need to have a harp at home unless you want to. If you have any difficulty getting in touch with Nikki about harp lessons, please contact me – I may be able to pull some strings.

Key Stage 2 Accelerated Reader Challenges

Here are the winners from Term 5 2024:

| Highest Individual Word Count | Highest Class Word Count | Highest Individual Number of Quizzes Passed | Highest Class Quizzes Passed |
|---|--|---|---|
| Divit in Owl Class 2,041,291 words | Kestrel Class 9,552,308 words | Raffi in Badger Class 45 quizzes | Badger Class 350 quizzes |

Fantastic news - last term, every Key Stage 2 class read **over 1.4 million words**.



In addition to Divit, these children also read over one million words last term:

- George in Kestrel Class – 1,796,888 words
- Hanako in Chaffinch Class – 1,306,325 words
- Kate in Badger Class – 1,057,246 words

Here are this week's winners (14th June 2024):

| Highest Individual Word Count | Highest Class Word Count | Highest Individual Number of Quizzes Passed | Highest Class Quizzes Passed |
|---|--|---|--|
| Naomi in Fox Class 486,732 words | Swift Class 1,338,106 words | Fleur in Deer Class 17 quizzes | Deer Class 94 quizzes |

Many congratulations to all the children for their achievements.

Looking for something new to read?

If you are that reader who has devoured everything your class and school has to offer, as well as the local library and are constantly on the lookout for new things to read, try the Book Trust website. The Book Trust sort their recommended favourites into rough age ranges, from 0 to teens, so there should be something for everyone. Every month they post a list of the best new books being released. You can find the June list here:

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/booklists/b/book-we-love-in-june-2024/>

If you are curious to find out what was recommended in previous months, then look here:

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/our-recommendations/best-new-books/>

Happy reading everyone!

Mrs Simpson

Kindest regards,

John Tutt

