



Dates for the diary

Remember that term dates and other dates are available on the school website via the calendar.

1 st October	Phonics workshop - 2:30pm KS2 hall
6 th October	Height and weight measuring (Reception & Y6 children only)
14 th October	Year 4 led Church Service 2pm (please note change of date) - parents welcome
17 th October	Last day of term 1
20 th October	Half term week
27 th October	First day of term 2
28 th – 31 st October	Carrot Wood this week for Year 3
4 th November	School photographer in today
6 th November	Flu immunisation for whole school
4 th & 6 th November	Parent consultations
14 th November	Parent workshop (supporting your child with anxiety)
14 th November	Parent Workshop – Supporting your Child with Worries and Fears
8 th – 10 th December	Year 1 and 2 nativities
12 th November	Sharing learning (2:45pm until the end of the school day)
13 th November	Sharing learning (8:45 until 9:15am)
19 th November	School discos
16 th December	Year 3 Christmas church service 2pm – Year 3 parents welcome to attend
18 th December	Last day of term 2.
19 th December	INSET day
5 th January	First day of term 3

Friday 26th September 2025

Welcome to the second newsletter of the school year! The children have settled in beautifully and the school year is now in full swing; I have been delighted to see the fantastic learning going on in the classes and the joy-filled playtimes.

News chaos

In keeping with the current overuse of the word “chaos” in the press, I intend to follow that theme in this newsletter. The word “chaos” consistently overpromises in the clickbait headlines of news articles, which then underdeliver.

When I read the word “chaos” I imagine a scene involving fire, wild animals, tornadoes and complete panic. However, “chaos” now seems to have been dumbed down, perhaps referring to larger volumes of traffic than expected, or an oversized pothole requiring people to sit in their cars for a little longer than they usually would.

Hold onto your hats as we unleash school-based news chaos.



Conker chaos

Are you of an age where you still get a small rush of adrenaline when you see a particularly handsome conker (maybe even sixer material)? Did you play conkers as a child? Do you remember school playgrounds littered with broken conkers (and small boys' dreams)?

A message seems to have gone home to a number of parents/children that the school needs conkers. In fact, this was only one class, and they now have conkers aplenty. Therefore, please do not bring any more in; why not drill a hole in them instead, thread a shoestring and give competitive conkering a try? After a few swings, the simple pleasure of conker-on-conker action will sweep your child away while those games consoles will be left to gather dust.

Traffic chaos outside the school

If you are a new parent to St James' you will not have seen my many rantings on anti-social parking, engine idling and driving on the pavement. Yesterday the ante was upped when a car reversed into someone else's drive on the main road (across the pavement, of course) and then beeped at an inconsiderate pedestrian who was simply trying to use that pavement without being killed. I have a strong suspicion that this was a St James' parent.

When driving in the vicinity of the school, remember that you are sitting in a ton of metal and plastic that is polluting the air around you and putting lives at risk. Therefore, please drive slowly, safely and sensibly and avoid manoeuvres near the school, especially when they mean straying onto a pavement. Park sensibly and with consideration – it is never okay to block another person's driveway or park on double yellow lines. Zig zags must be kept clear by law.

Please walk or cycle to school wherever possible – this is better for everyone.

Year 4 church service dates chaos

Unfortunately, we need to move the date for the Year 4 church service to the 14th October (a Tuesday) due to a change in church availability. The service starts at 2pm and all parents of Year 4 children are very welcome to attend. We do apologise if this makes it difficult for anyone to attend.

Newsletter subheadings chaos

Please accept my apologies for the overuse of the word "chaos" in this newsletter, and for any genuine chaos this may have caused among the school community.

A worrying WhatsApp group

St John's school have sent a letter to their parents about a group which has been sharing explicit images; local children have found that they have been added without their consent. The group includes contacts from England and France and has approximately 500 members.

WhatsApp is only permitted for children aged 13 and over. In my opinion most 13-year-olds (and many adults) lack the life experience and social skills to navigate WhatsApp appropriately – no child at St James' should have access to WhatsApp.

Instagram is also for children aged 13 or over and is not appropriate for primary aged children. A recent fatal shooting in America has been widely available to view on Instagram, popping up without warning – this will be



shocking for a person of any age to witness, but it would be unthinkable for a small child to see something so horrific.

Hopefully your child does not have a smartphone, so are not at any risk from apps, groups or images such as these. However, if they are, carefully checking devices should be a daily routine. Your internet filtering will almost certainly not block WhatsApp messages. Delaying smartphone or tablet access until your child is well past their primary years is by far the easiest way to keep them safe.

Year 6 visit to the Amelia

Year 6 visited the Amelia Scott to learn about the impact World War 2 had on the residents of Tunbridge Wells. They got their hands on historical artefacts related to a range of topics, such as evacuees, rationing, the blackout and air raids, including a 100-year-old teddy bear!



Mr Fern

Phonics Workshop

There will be a phonics workshop for parents that have children in reception on Wednesday 1st October at 2.30pm. The workshop will be led by Miss Greenfield our Phonics lead and supported by Mrs Coward. The aim is to provide information on how we teach phonics at school and how you can support your child at home. The workshop will be held in the hall located by the school office

Mrs Coward

Parent Workshop – Supporting your Child with Worries and Fears

Angela and Vikki from the Emotional Wellbeing Team are coming in to lead a workshop at the school for parents on supporting children with anxiety on Friday 14th November from 1.30pm to 3pm. Please do join us if you would like to, the more the merrier. See the flyer attached to the newsletter for more information.

Penny Wardell



Key Stage 2 Accelerated Reader Challenges

“The book to read is not the one that thinks for you but the one that makes you think.” (Harper Lee)

Whether your child is currently reading a picture book, chapter book or non-fiction book, try asking your child to tell you what it is about. Do they understand it? Is it making them think?

Here are our most recent overall Accelerated Reader winners for the last two weeks.

➤ Winners for week ending 19th September 2025:

Highest Individual Word Count	Highest Class Word Count	Highest Individual Quizzes Passed	Highest Class Quizzes Passed
Fleur in Swift Class 335,249 words	Swift Class 1,282,296 words	Alex and Nicholas in Dormouse Class 29 quizzes (Alex - 16 books, 13 articles. Nicholas - 13 books, 16 articles)	Dormouse Class 224 quizzes (120 books, 124 articles)

Dormouse class also read more than one million words that week (**1,038,050** words).

➤ Winners for week ending 26th September 2025:

Highest Individual Word Count	Highest Class Word Count	Highest Individual Quizzes Passed	Highest Class Quizzes Passed
Aaron in Chaffinch Class 239,438 words	Chaffinch Class 1,595,203 words	James in Dormouse Class 16 quizzes (15 books, 1 article)	Dormouse Class 163 quizzes (118 books, 45 articles)

Swift class also read more than one million words this week (**1,152,185** words).

A huge “Well Done” to all our winners. Keep reading!

Mrs Simpson

Have a lovely weekend.

Kindest regards,

John Tutt

