



Newsletter - 9th September 2022

Dear parents,

Welcome back to a new school year. Your children have made an amazing start to the term and have already settled well into their new classes.

You cannot have missed the sad news last night that the Queen died after serving for 70 years; I have always been fond of and greatly respected the Queen, but still surprised myself with just how upsetting I found the news when it broke. The country is now entering a period of national mourning as befits the passing of a head of state of such stature.

As far as I am aware, schools will remain open, but I will update straight away if I hear any differently. I realise some parents and children (and staff) may wish to travel to London to pay their respects on the day of the funeral and I will authorise these absences if schools are asked to remain open. However, I will refrain from speculation pending guidance from the DfE.

In school we have discussed the Queen's life today in an assembly led by Miss Hayward, focusing on her faith and devotion to duty. We will continue to celebrate the Queen's extraordinary life over the next few days, always in an age-appropriate manner.

School crossing

Apologies for the issues at the school crossing today and yesterday. We had no notice whatsoever that work was going to take place and no warning as to which paths would be closed. The men working there this morning were lovely when I went to see them (the timing of the works is not their fault after all). They have now finished the work and are clearing away the cones and barriers and reestablishing the permanent crossing. Hopefully all will be as usual ready for school pickup. If it isn't, Miss Hayward and I will be there to help at the crossing.

Coats

It may seem incredible in this weather, but some children are arriving at school without a coat. Please ensure your child comes to a school with a coat that is suitable for the weather conditions. We go outside in (almost) all weathers and the forecast is unreliable at best, so please ensure the children have a coat every day.

Wilder Kent Award

Congratulations to our amazing Forest School team who have achieved a Wilder Kent bronze award. We are so lucky to have such an amazing resource at St James' with such incredible and talented people who are so passionate about Forest School.



Designated safeguarding leads

Our designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) are trained to support children, staff and families with any aspect of safeguarding, child protection or other concerns they may have. At St James' Lucy Hayward is the lead DSL, and the deputy DSLs are Penny Wardell, Sarah Greenfield, Sarah Moriarty, Angie Pierce and me (John Tutt). Angie is also our Family Liaison Officer (FLO) and is ready to help parents with any concerns or worries they may have, including signposting support for them.

School choir at the church

We want to say a huge "thank you" to all children who sang in the impromptu choir at Judi Hammill's Induction as Vicar on Tuesday 6th September. Thank you also to Mrs Sparks for organising them in just a couple of days. The children were fabulous! Mrs Sparks wanted to pass on how proud and grateful she was to the children and parents. Lots of adults came up to Mrs Sparks and me afterwards and said how fantastic the children were. Judi was delighted too. A big thank you to all the parents who brought the children along as well.

Parent Survey

I know I said the last call was on Friday last week, but this is now the genuinely last, final call. We have had more than 200 responses (thank you!), but would like as many parents as possible to respond so we get a really representative picture. Our governors will be discussing the responses at the first meeting of the school year (21st September), so please respond as soon as possible. The link is in the email.

<https://forms.gle/2DRGYJaaaexkUJYeA>

Meet the Teacher

We have "meet the teacher" sessions for all classes in week commencing 19th September. This will be a chance to meet your child's new teacher and ask any questions. All the information in these sessions will also be sent to you separately so don't worry if you cannot make it or if sessions clash due to siblings. The meetings will not take long and will certainly be finished within half an hour. Arrangements will be in place for children to be supervised while you are with the teachers.

Reception (morning children): 20th September 11:15am

Reception (afternoon children): 20th September 3pm

Year 1: Monday 19th September 2:45pm

Year 2: Wednesday 21st September 2:45pm

Year 3: Thursday 22nd September 3:30pm

Year 4: Monday 19th September 3:30pm

Year 5 and 6: Wednesday 21st September 3:30pm

Drop in for parents and carers of children/young people

I have attached a flyer to this email with more information for those interested.

Dates for the diary

Here are some dates for the term ahead. We may need to move some dates around if schools are asked to close for the Queen's funeral, but will let you know as soon as we find out.

19th September: Meet the teacher for years 1 and 4

20th September: Reception meet the teacher

21st September: Year 2, 5 and 6 meet the teacher

22nd September: Year 3 meet the teacher



26th September: Reception start full time
24th October: Half term break
31st October: INSET day – school closed for staff training
3rd November: Flu vaccinations
8th November: Parent consultations
10th November: Parent consultations
5th December: Christmas performances this week

Thank you all as always.

John Tutt

