



Newsletter – 3rd February 2023

Dear parents and carers,

Friday 13th struck after all in my last newsletter – I incorrectly put the 13th February as the date at the top of the letter. Apologies.

I would also like to apologise for the lack of a newsletter last week – I have not been well recently with a cough that just won't go away but, as always, I have been soldiering on, inspiring (but hopefully not infecting) the team with my brave and humble resilience.

Thank you for your support on Wednesday – I will message as early as I can before each scheduled strike day. The next planned days are the 2nd, 15th and 16th March. There may be more, fewer or the same number of classes affected. Hopefully something will be agreed before then. There is a possibility however that more dates will be announced and other unions may be re-balloted to join the strikes.

Road safety person

We know that the road crossings on Ferndale and Sandrock Road are often compromised by inconsiderate road users and so we are looking at ways to improve road safety for children and parents walking to school. One idea from a parent that I thought was a very good one was to re-institute a good old fashioned lollipop person.

To be honest, I thought the school could just buy a uniform and lollipop, and then a brave volunteer could stand in the road at the crossing and help the children, but it seems it's more complicated than that. Apparently we are not allowed to set up our own "vigilante" school crossing patrol (a maverick, who doesn't play by the rules but gets results) but have to go through official channels.

Therefore we have contacted KCC about setting up an officially sanctioned school crossing patrol and will send more information once we hear back from them. If we are turned down, I may need to ask for your support.

Photographer request

Around the school we have many photos of the children (photos of your children, not mine – that would be weird) doing all sorts of wonderful learning. I might not be the world's best noticer, but I noticed this week that most of these children have now left the school – in fact some photos are fairly old and I would not be surprised if one of them was now a St James' parent.

This is a roundabout way of asking whether there are any parents or contacts out there, with some relevant expertise, who would be willing to come into school and take some pictures that we could use to update these photos and those on the school website. These really do enhance the shared areas around the school and are much loved by the children, staff and visitors. Please do get in touch if you think you can help.

Car park safety

Please ensure your children are not allowed to run among the staff cars in the car park but keep them under your close supervision.



Maths information session for parents

When was the last time you had to multiply two-digit numbers using just a piece of paper and a pencil? Do some of the new-fangled ways children are taught to work things out these days confuse you? Our Maths team, led by Simon Wyke, will be leading a session in the junior hall to talk you through how we teach Maths at St James' from Reception through to Year 6. This will take place after school on Wednesday 8th March – please come to the junior hall (via the main school entrance) for a 3:30pm start. All welcome.

Parking

This is another plea to please park legally and responsibly in the roads around the school. I have again contacted the parking enforcement team and asked them to step up their patrols around the school. Please be kind and considerate to our neighbours and leave the roads and pavements safe for the children.

Term dates

Term dates for 2023 – 2024, including INSET days, are now on the school website.

Netball update

The seven's netball teams have had a very successful series of league matches. This term, the A team have won all their games and played some great netball. The B team have won all but one of theirs. Considering that the B team is made up of year 5 children and most of their opposition are year 6 this is exceptional.

St James B v Southborough 6-0

St James B v Speldhurst 4-3

St James B v St Matthews 1-13

St James A v Southborough 10-0

St James A v Speldhurst 12-2

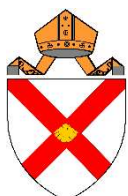
St James A v St Matthews 5-2

We also are able to put out two High 5 teams and a boys' team which shows what a popular sport netball is at St James' and it is great to see so many children of all abilities wanting to join in and coming to netball club.

Sue Gibson

Building work progress

The junior field path is finished! Thank you to the PTA for the fundraising that made this possible for us. The new path will enable the children to do the daily mile on the field all through the school year.



The foundations have been finished for the new build and the steelwork has arrived. I have included a photo below so you can see how things have been getting on.



Forest School

The children have loved taking part in the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch, having made bird feeders at Forest School for the last few weeks to encourage the wildlife out from the bushes. We now have 2 particularly friendly crows, some cheeky magpies, a few increasingly bold great tits and 5 devoted robins, 4 of which will now feed from the children's hands. The children have never been so still and so quiet for so long!

We also spotted a green woodpecker, a great spotted woodpecker, a song thrush, 2 pairs of goldcrests and a firecrest, numerous pigeons and blackbirds, blue tits, coal tits and long tailed tits. Our Forest School is thriving!

The groups have also been enjoying National Storytelling Week. Together, they have invented stories using interesting things found in the woods and transforming them with their imaginations into magical props to be used by the heroes of their tales. We were all entertained by the brilliant results, involving magic ice creams, trips to stars, grumpy triceratops with missing horns and football games with squirrels.

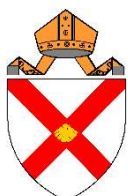


Mrs Hadley

Year 4 news

Year 4 enjoyed a Visit from Bishop Simon last week and Reverend Judy this week to help them answer their RE question 'What kind of world did Jesus want?'

The children asked lots of interesting questions and learnt what a Vicar and Bishop do in their jobs, how they choose to live, and help others.





Mrs Jones

Messages from the English Team:

World Book Day 2023

This year, we will be celebrating World Book Day in school on Monday 6th March 2023. More information to follow soon.

Book Fair

Help us celebrate reading at our Book Fair which will be held in school in early March. Look out for the Book Fair letter coming home soon.

Mrs Mill, Ms Simpson and Miss Stock

Accelerated Reader Key Stage 2 Challenges – 02.02.23

This week's winners are:

Highest Individual Word Count	Highest Class Word Count	Highest Individual Number of Quizzes Passed	Highest Class Quizzes Passed
Divit in Chaffinch Class 1,328,677 words	Chaffinch Class 6,125,432 words	Divit in Chaffinch Class 32 quizzes	Chaffinch Class 153 quizzes
(+384,924 words in one week)	(+1,427,844 words in one week)	(+15 quizzes in one week)	(+42 quizzes in one week)

A special mention to:

- **Kestrel Class** who also read over one million words in one week.
- **Stoat Class** who passed 39 quizzes in one week

Thank you for all your support with your child's reading.

Ms Simpson

Dates for the diary

Here are some dates for the remainder of the term ahead.

w/c 6th February Year 1 classes visiting The Amelia this week



w/c 6 th February	Safer Internet Week
7 th February	Year 1 led church service 2pm – Y1 parents welcome to attend
10 th February	INSET day – school closed for children
13 th February	Half term week
20 th February	Children return to school
6 th March	World Book Day (rescheduled due to planned strike)
8 th March	Maths information session for parents after school
16 th March	Shared science learning – 2pm (parents welcome to attend)
28 th March	Year 5 led church service – Y5 parents welcome to attend
29 th March	Easter RE day
31 st March	Last day of term
17 th April	Children return to school
	Year 6 leave for their residential week
1 st May	Bank holiday
2 nd May	INSET day – school closed for children
8 th May	Bank holiday (coronation)
9 th May	Year 6 SATs week begins
29 th May	Half term week begins
5 th June	Children return to school
1 st September	INSET day

Kindest regards,
John Tutt

