



Dates for the diary

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

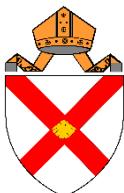
9 th February	Safer Internet Week
10 th February	Year 1 Church service – 2pm start. Year 1 parents are welcome to attend.
12 th February	Last day of term
13 th February	INSET day – school closed
16 th February	Half term week
23 rd February	First day of term 4
25 th February	Year 6 Parents Residential Meeting - 6 until 6.30pm
4 th to 6 th March	Y4 Amelia Scott visit (1 session per class)
4 th March	Secondary schools transition meeting – 6pm (see below)
5 th March	World Book Day (see below)
16 th to 18 th March	School book fair
23 rd March	Year 6 residential week
30 th March	NHS school health – Hearing screening for all reception classes
31 st March	Year 5 Easter Church service 2pm – Year 5 parents are welcome to attend.
1 st April	RE day – Easter
2 nd April	Last day of term 4
3 rd April	Easter holidays
20 th April	First day of term 5

Friday 6th February 2026

Dear parents and carers,

Next week is Safer Internet week with the theme of AI so, in that vein, this newsletter will embrace the sunlit/bleak/utopian/dystopian future ahead of us. To (mis)quote **The Terminator** (1984): "Listen and understand. The St James' news is here. It can't be bargained with. It can't be reasoned with. It doesn't feel pity or remorse or fear. And it absolutely will not stop, ever – until it's been read."

In the spirit of deference to our AI overlords-in-waiting, I asked them to put together a couple of paragraphs to start this newsletter:



As we move further into the term, I'm delighted to share with you the latest news and achievements from across our school community. It has been a vibrant and productive two weeks, filled with excellent learning, exciting opportunities, and countless moments that reflect the hard work and enthusiasm of our pupils and staff.

In this edition, you'll find updates on recent events, upcoming dates for your diary, and celebrations of the fantastic things happening both inside and outside the classroom. I continue to be inspired by the dedication and positivity shown by our students, and I'm grateful for the ongoing support of our families as we work together to help every child thrive.

To be honest with you, I asked for an AI opening so that I could mock it. I am ashamed to see that it makes complete sense – far more sense than my effort. It was uplifting, celebratory and professional; exactly the sort of opening that hardworking parents are entitled to when they read the first two paragraphs from their children's primary school newsletter. It is probably just like the opening lines in newsletters from normal primary schools – just like the ones that your friends send their children to.

Like many of us, I face the prospect of being replaced by AI.

Secondary school transition meeting – some Q & A

I have had a few questions about this meeting, so here are the answers:

Question 1 - Is it compulsory to attend?

It is not compulsory – I have no legal authority over you so would be breaking the law if I compelled you, by force or threat, to go to a meeting in the school hall. The same laws apply to me forcibly compelling you to attend meetings in different places, such as libraries, bandstands or car parks.

Question 2 - Is this just for parents whose children may take the 11+?

No. The first half of the talk is about the available secondary options for all children, after which I deliberately stop for a couple of minutes before talking more about the 11+ tests. People are welcome to leave at that point, or at any other point (I refer you back to the answer to question 1).

Question 3 - I have older children who have been through the process and know which school choices I am making already. I have already been to one of your talks before. Is it worth me coming along?

If you have been to one of these talks before, little will have changed. It is completely up to you whether you feel it would be useful.

As a reminder, here is the blurb about the event from the last newsletter:

On 4th March, in the junior hall, parents are invited to a talk on the secondary options once your children have left Year 6. Usually Year 5 parents attend, although others are welcome, although if your child is any younger than Year 4 this may be premature (unless you enjoy listening to a man talking in a school hall) as a lot can change in a few years. The meeting will cover the options available and some information on the 11+ Kent Tests for those unfamiliar or unsure. This meeting is earlier than usual to give Year 5 parents plenty of time to make some big decisions. This meeting is for adults only please. As a warning, it will be me doing the talking. The meeting usually lasts around an hour but can be longer if there are questions. Parents are welcome to leave when/if the



realisation dawns on them that their precious time is being wasted – most usually choose to stay out of politeness.

School lunch survey feedback

Thank you for the time you took to complete the survey last week – 128 of you were kind enough to share your thoughts. I have shared the outcomes of the scored questions below, but have omitted the comments as many of them were quite specific but, be assured, we have read every single one.

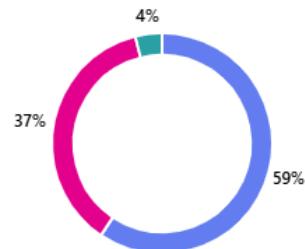
We also talk to the children of course and get their opinions – there were a couple of comments about that.

We are liaising with our school meal providers to use this feedback productively and to continue to improve the offering to our children.

1. How many children do you have at St James'?

[More details](#)

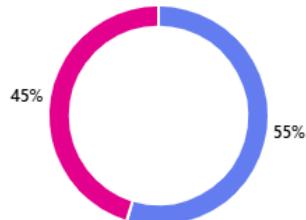
- 1 child 76
- 2 children 47
- More than 2 children 5



2. Do you pay for schools meals (so have children in Key Stage 2 - Years 3 to 6) for any of your children?

[More details](#)

- Yes 70
- No 58



3. Please rate the school meals for quantity - 1 being not enough and 5 being a real gut-buster.

[More details](#)



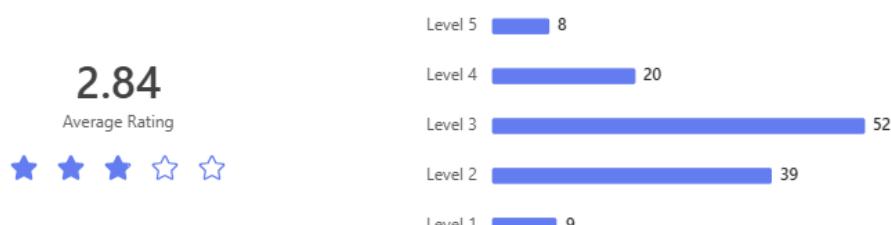
6. Please rate school meals for quality - 1 being very poor and 5 being outstanding

[More details](#)



8. Please rate the school meals for choice - 1 being no choice and 5 being an excellent choice

[More details](#)



10. If you have a child with a food intolerance, please rate the choices available to them (leave blank if not applicable)

[More details](#)



Kent Young Carers

Kent Young Carers is the countywide service for Young Carers aged 5-18 across Kent. Young Carers are taking on caring responsibilities for a family member with a long-term illness, disability, mental health or substance misuse issue. [Kent Young Carers \(imago.community\)](https://kentyoungcarers.imago.community)

KYC works with schools, communities, and statutory and voluntary agencies to identify hidden young carers. Following assessment, KYC offer a range of short-term interventions including signposting, one-to-one support, in school support, workshops and a free travel pass for those in secondary education.

If you would like any more information or would like to register your child as a Young Carer, click on the link above or contact Penny Wardell at school on senco@st-james.kent.sch.uk

Safer Internet Day

Safer Internet Day is taking place on the Tuesday 10th February 2026, with celebrations and learning based around this year's theme: **Smart tech, safe choices – exploring the safe and responsible use of AI**

Safer Internet Day is the UK's biggest celebration of online safety. Each year it covers an online issue or theme that speaks about the things young people are seeing and experiencing online. Created in consultation with young people across the UK, this year Safer Internet Day will be focusing on the ever-increasing use of artificial intelligence and how to stay safe when engaging with it.

This Safer Internet Day will explore how our young people are engaging with AI and encourage them to share their experiences and ideas about how to stay safe. On Monday, St James', children will all get involved in an interactive assembly to introduce this year's theme. On Tuesday's main event day, each class will have a lesson that personalises this learning to their own experiences. They will also engage with live lessons being broadcast by top online safety advocates, including: The BBC, Natterhub and TeachSheCan. They will be given information on what to look out for, how to stay safe and where to seek help if unsure.

Of course, we'll be suggesting that they speak to 'a trusted adult,' if they are ever worried and unsure what to do. Maybe you're an expert in this field already? If not, don't worry – you can always find information online by searching for the "UK Safer Internet Centre." There you will find resources about this year's theme and further information.

In addition, are you making the most of our school's subscription to National Online Safety (NOS)? There are thousands of videos, fact sheets and training packages to help you feel more confident in parenting children to stay safe online. We can't recommend having a look at this site enough – the resources are excellent, and our teacher-parents have found it a great support too!

School Uniform

Please ensure your child has a coat each day and appropriate school shoes. If it is raining children are welcome to wear wellies or boots to school and change into school shoes on arrival.

Football

The girls' team took part in the "Avenue to the Angels" tournament at St Greg's on Thursday 22nd January. The team kept up their winning ways by qualifying in second place to reach the finals, which will be held at Tonbridge Angels ground sometime in May. Another awesome performance from the girls!



The boys' squad participated in a similar tournament on Thursday 5th February. The team performed strongly, winning 2 and drawing 3 of their matches, conceding no goals and remaining unbeaten. Well done boys!

New kit

We have been super-lucky to be sponsored by a local gym company, which has enabled us to get a brand-new kit for both teams. We love how they've turned out, and the children are wearing them with pride!



A word from Foundry (who have paid for our new kit):

We're delighted to be sponsoring the St James football team's kits this season!

For those who don't know us yet we're a small group personal training gym in Crowborough for people who want to get stronger and stay consistent. No mirrors, no phones, just coached sessions that help you progress.

We're proud of the supportive environment we've built. All ages, all abilities, all goals - everyone's welcome. You'll also see us out in the community supporting local teams, events, and the people who make Crowborough what it is.

You can find us here: Unit 1 Hole Farm, Lye Green, Crowborough TN6 1UU

For more info visit <https://foundryfit.com/locations/east-sussex/crowborough/>, or better yet pop in and say hi.

We'd love to meet you. Foundry Crowborough Team

World Book Day

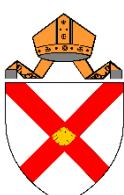
Once again, we will be celebrating this year's World Book Day on **Thursday 5th March 2026**.

As we enjoy the fun in reading, children are invited to:

- Wear their pyjamas and bring their favourite bedtime reading book with them.
- Wear clothes that they like to read in and bring their favourite book with them.
- Choose a story (fiction) book character and come to school dressed like that character and bring that book with them. Please use clothing or other items you already have at home to make your own costume rather than buy one.
- Choose an information (non-fiction) book and dress up as the subject of their chosen book and bring that book with them. Rather than a complete outfit, they could wear a t-shirt related to the book or just bring in a prop related to the book.
- Wear their school uniform and bring their favourite book / bedtime reading book with them.
- Dress up and wear a costume related to their favourite book and bring in that book with them.

Home-made costumes can be as simple as:

- a hat or head band
- a mask
- a badge
- a prop
- a puppet (made using a spoon, sock or glove)



Whatever you choose, we are really looking forward to the day!

Please make sure any books brought to school on the day are **named**. Your child does not have to be able to read their favourite book themselves; if it is one they love listening to, they can share it with others by talking about it.

Book tokens and World Book Day £1 books

Each child will receive their 2026 World Book Day £1 book token soon.

- **EITHER** swap it for one of the specially published World Book Day £1 books
- **OR** use it to get £1 off ANY book or audiobook costing £2.99 or more from participating bookshops, supermarkets or high street retailers which can be found here: <https://www.worldbookday.com/books-and-tokens/books/participating-retailers/>

If you would like to preview this year's special £1 books, please go here: <https://www.worldbookday.com/books-and-tokens/books/>

We are very much looking forward to celebrating the fun in reading and enjoying lots of books with our children on this year's World Book Day.

Thank you so much for all your support.

Mrs Simpson

Key Stage 2 Accelerated Reader Challenges

In the last newsletter, I should have also included the winners for the week ending **16th January**. Here they are:

Individual Highest Word Count	Class Highest Word Count	Individual Most Quizzes Passed	Class Most Quizzes Passed
Naomi in Nightingale Class 232,417 words	Kestrel Class 966,128 words	Daniel in Deer Class 16 quizzes	Deer Class 74 quizzes

Here are our most recent winners:

➤ **Winners for last week (30th January 2026):**

Individual Highest Word Count	Class Highest Word Count	Individual Most Quizzes Passed	Class Most Quizzes Passed
Arthur in Badger Class 279,484 words	Chaffinch Class 1,235,250 words	Spencer in Dormouse Class 30 quizzes	Dormouse Class 167 quizzes

Nightingale Class also read more than one million words this week (1,104,656 words).



➤ Winners for this week (6th February 2026):

Individual Highest Word Count	Class Highest Word Count	Individual Most Quizzes Passed	Class Most Quizzes Passed
Gianna in Badger Class 452,550 words	Chaffinch Class 1,884,277 words	Gianna and Usman in Badger Class and James in Chaffinch 15 quizzes	Badger Class 137 quizzes

Many congratulations to all of the above for their achievements with reading and quizzing.

"...the brain is like a muscle, and if you don't exercise it by reading and doing creative stuff, it'll get weak and mushy." From Jeff Kinney (American author and illustrator) best known for creating, writing and illustrating the children's book series Diary of a Wimpy Kid.

Please keep reading everyone; it's good for your brain!

Mrs Simpson

Have a great weekend.

John Tutt
Head Teacher

