



### Dates for the diary

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

20 <sup>th</sup> January	Young Voices at the O2
10 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 1 Church service – 2pm start. Year 1 parents are welcome to attend.
12 <sup>th</sup> February	Last day of term
13 <sup>th</sup> February	INSET day – school closed
16 <sup>th</sup> February	Half term week
23 <sup>rd</sup> February	First day of term 4
25 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 6 Parents Residential Meeting 6 – 6.30pm
4 <sup>th</sup> to 6 <sup>th</sup> March	Y4 Amelia Scott visit (1 session per class)
5 <sup>th</sup> March	World Book Day
16 <sup>th</sup> to 18 <sup>th</sup> March	School book fair
23 <sup>rd</sup> March	Year 6 residential week
31 <sup>st</sup> March	Year 5 Easter Church service 2pm – Year 5 parents are welcome to attend.
1 <sup>st</sup> April	RE day – Easter
2 <sup>nd</sup> April	Last day of term 4
3 <sup>rd</sup> April	Easter holidays
20 <sup>th</sup> April	First day of term 5

### Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Happy New Year and welcome back to school! I hope you all had a lovely Christmas break and that 2026 has started well for you.

Are you old enough to remember the Dolby Noise Reduction button on your personal cassette player? It was supposed to eliminate the hissing through your headphones, but just made your favourite tunes sound dull and muffled. Well, this week our focus has been on staying open, resulting in our “Noise Reduction” button being activated. However, we can assure you that things have happened this week and children have learned stuff. We will have more to share later in the term.

### Snow and ice

The point where you truly reach adulthood must be when you wake up, see it has snowed and then regard this as a logistical challenge rather than an opportunity for fun.

It has been challenging weather this week – we always try our best to grit the car park, but it is a large area and we have limited supplies. On some occasions we may only be able to grit pathways to the entrances; in these circumstances, please stick to these paths and keep your children with you.



As with the water, we try to make a decision early about whether it is safe to open or whether we will open with adaptations in place, and then communicate by 7am at the latest (hopefully earlier than that). A complicating factor with snow and ice is the journey Stuart and I must take (separately – we don't live together) via the wild hills of Crowborough to get here. The snow was laying on the roads and paths when I left this morning.

The school has never closed before due to bad weather, and we have no plans to in the future, but the possibility is always there. Parents will be emailed, the Kent School Closures website will be updated and we will add a banner to the top of the website.

### **Applications for places in reception for September 2026**

The application window is still open for parents who have children starting school in September next year. It will close on the 15<sup>th</sup> January. Remember, that if you would like to apply for a space at St James' you will need to also complete a Supplementary Information Form (available on our website or via the school office) if you feel your child will fall into one of the criteria.

### **NHS Emotional Wellbeing Team Parent Survey**

A Trainee Education Mental Health Practitioner from the NHS Emotional Wellbeing Team, called Sophie Parker, is carrying out a project as part of her postgraduate university course which involves doing surveys with parents, pupils and staff. The project aims to discover how the Emotional Wellbeing Team can enhance and complement the existing forms of mental health support at our school; this information will be useful to us as well. Please find attached a link to the Parent Survey - it would be great if you could take a few minutes to fill this in, and all responses are anonymous.

Penny Wardell

[NHS Emotional Wellbeing Team Parent Survey – Fill in form](#)

### **Key Stage 2 Accelerated Reader Challenges**

#### ➤ **Winners for the last week of Term 2, week ending 18<sup>th</sup> December 2025:**

Individual Highest Word Count	Class Highest Word Count	Individual Most Quizzes Passed	Class Most Quizzes Passed
<b>Arthur</b> in Badger Class <b>816,154</b> words	<b>Badger</b> Class <b>984,036</b> words	<b>Frankie</b> in Vole Class <b>14</b> quizzes	<b>Nightingale</b> Class <b>62</b> quizzes

#### ➤ **Overall Winners for Term 2 2025:**

Individual Highest Word Count	Class Highest Word Count	Individual Most Quizzes Passed	Class Most Quizzes Passed
	<b>Kestrel</b> Class		



<b>Naomi</b> in Nightingale Class <b>1,452,412</b> words	<b>9,600,869</b> words	<b>Gianna</b> in Badger Class <b>100</b> quizzes	<b>Badger Class</b> <b>653</b> quizzes
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Every Key Stage 2 class read more than one million words last term and six classes read more than five million words last term. Wow!

As of the end of last term, we had 26 Word Millionaires and 3 Multi-Millionaires. Fantastic!

➤ **Winners for this week (9<sup>th</sup> January 2026):**

Individual Highest Word Count	Class Highest Word Count	Individual Most Quizzes Passed	Class Most Quizzes Passed
<b>Arthur</b> in Badger Class <b>623,588</b> words	<b>Badger Class</b> <b>1,917,203</b> words	<b>Arthur</b> in Badger Class <b>16</b> quizzes	<b>Badger Class</b> <b>133</b> quizzes

These classes also read more than one million words this week:

- Kestrel – **1,387,282** words
- Osprey – **1,065,822** words
- Nightingale – **1,006,865** words

2026 is the National Year of Reading, so please keep reading everyone. We are so proud of your achievements.  
Mrs Simpson

Have a great weekend.

John Tutt  
Head Teacher

