



## End of Year Newsletter – 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022

Dear parents,

Well, that's it – we have reached the end of another year together. These last two weeks in particular seem to have been extraordinarily busy with lots going on and most recently topped off (or welded shut) by two extra warm days. It is surely a relief though that the hot, Mediterranean, sunny blue skies are forecast to be replaced by the rain, grey skies and mediocre temperatures that traditionally herald the arrival of the school summer holidays. To be fair, I think most of us would be happy with something in the middle.

It may have escaped your notice that the amber weather warnings for heat were replaced with a yellow warning of thunderstorms on Wednesday. I hope you all prepared accordingly; a yellow weather warning apparently means you "should plan ahead".

Sports Day thankfully escaped thunderstorms or rainy deluges and was hugely enjoyable and well run thanks to Sarah Greenfield on the infant side and Michael Hodges on the junior side. Thank you to both of them. The children had a great time; I hope that you did too if you came to watch.

Thank you to the PTA for the Summer Fair last weekend. It was wonderful to see so many of you here supporting the school. Thanks to all those who came and helped, or just came and supported, and particular thanks to Kirstin Lane, our PTA chair who does so much to get these events organised.

Also worthy of mention are the discos, the Year 6 week away in Derbyshire, the Y6 party and (of course) their leavers' play (performed in a hall where the air temperature was just a few degrees below the melting point of lead). Then we have Year 3's Carrot Wood residential, Year 3 and 4's visit to Tonbridge Castle (where 180 children were knighted in one morning), the Ugly Bug Ball, the dance competition and choir concerts at the Assembly Hall, the church services and all of the many other things I have not mentioned. Every one of these require people to give up their time, take responsibility and get involved. We are truly blessed at St James' that we have so many people (staff and parents) who are willing and happy to step up and help and to give the children these amazing experiences.

Sadly, we are saying "goodbye" to a few of these wonderful people this week. Sarah Herman is leaving us after 14 years; Michael Hodges is leaving after 7 years to become a deputy head and Beth Ivory is leaving us to pursue a career beyond working in schools. Rachel Raistrick is leaving us to move onto another school after 21 years with us. Pete Sellicks has been working at our Forest School and he is also moving on. Both Claire Ball and Holly Shortland are beginning their maternity leave. We will miss all of them enormously.

What an eventful year we have had. Year endings always seem a strange anti-climax after the children have left on the last day. With such a hectic end of term, the contrast this year will feel even stranger on that final commute, arriving home and sighing "well, that's that then". Once the calm has subsided and before the holidays have come to an end, the time arrives to start thinking about the year ahead. For those children and adults who are leaving us for pastures new it is a time of excitement mixed with little anxiety at the prospect of facing the unknown; for those who stay with us it is a chance to contemplate the next chapter of their school journey through St James'.



For all of us, adults and children, leavers and remainers (in the St James' sense that is - let's reclaim those words) let's make each and every moment count, move forwards as a community, get excited about our learning each and every day and leave no regrets or lost opportunities in our wake. What can all of us do better next year, than we did this year? For me, that's a fairly long list, but we all have to start somewhere and September 2022 seems as good a time to start as any.

### **Uniform**

Our updated school uniform policy is available to view on our school website.

### **Thank you to St James' church**

I would like to say a big "thank you" to St James' church for their £1500 donation to the school. In a school every penny counts and we are very grateful for their generous contribution.

### **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.

### **Andy from CBeebies**

Andy has recorded a shout out for St James' and this can be found by clicking on the link in the email. Thank you so much to Joseph's parents (from Ash) for sending this in.

### **Ugly Bug Ball**

On Tuesday, Key Stage 1 and Reception had their Ugly Bug Ball to celebrate the end of their topic "A Bug's Life".

Everyone came dressed as a bug and we spotted lots of ladybirds, bees and butterflies, as well as spiders and caterpillars. There was also a glow worm, several beetles including stag beetles, snails, a woodlouse and a stick insect!

We finished our sharing assembly with a musical parade around the school, led by Year 2. All the children in the juniors came out and joined our celebration, clapping along to our music!

For the rest of the day, we did lots of activities in our classrooms, painting rocks to make bugs, cutting up fruit and vegetables to make insects, using paper to create snail pictures, a sensory carousel to explore different textures and some classes even had a beetle drive!

Thanks to all who helped on the day and to the parents for helping to create some marvelous costumes!

The Lower Phase Team



## Kent Libraries Summer Reading Challenge

A reminder that this challenge has now begun and is open to all primary school children aged 4 – 11 years. Information about this was sent out earlier this term and it has been attached once again for you.

### Accelerated Reader Challenges (Key Stage 2)

I would like to commend all children for their continued engagement in, and enjoyment of, a range of reading activities this year. It therefore gives me great pleasure to announce this term's winners as well as this school year's winners.

#### Term 6 winners:

Highest Individual Word Count	Highest Class Word Count	Highest Individual Number of Quizzes Passed	Highest Class Quizzes Passed
<b>Ethan</b> in Nightingale Class <b>1,812,829</b> words	<b>Nightingale</b> Class <b>5,899,006</b> words	<b>Divit</b> in Dormouse Class <b>118</b> quizzes	<b>Badger</b> Class <b>340</b> quizzes

#### This school year's winners:

Highest Individual Word Count	Highest Class Word Count	Highest Individual Number of Quizzes Passed	Highest Class Quizzes Passed
<b>Divit</b> in Dormouse Class <b>10,187,695</b> words	<b>Kestrel</b> Class <b>39,482,599</b> words	<b>Divit</b> in Dormouse Class <b>523</b> quizzes	<b>Badger</b> Class <b>1,715</b> quizzes

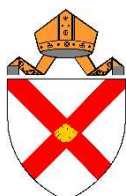
#### New for this Summer!

Accelerated Reader is software the children in Key Stage 2 use to build their reading skills in our classrooms all year long. This Summer, they can continue to enjoy their reading experiences at home. In addition to reading books of their choice that help them grow as readers, they can also complete quizzes for those books using the AR website. This will be open for the Summer from Monday 25<sup>th</sup> July to Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> August, between 9:00am and 3:00pm.

The challenges set for Key Stage 2 that have run throughout the year will run this Summer - individual word count and individual number of quizzes passed as well as the highest class word count and the highest class quizzes passed. We very much look forward to celebrating individual and class achievements when we return to school in September.

Each Key Stage 2 child has their own log-in for the AR website and they are very familiar with using it to access and complete the quizzes. We expect the children to complete any book quizzes taken at home independently, just like they do in school. They should remember to read all the questions carefully and do their best. Please use the link below to access Accelerated Reader for your child. Our link is unique to our school and it cannot be accessed through search engines. <https://ukhosted71.renlearn.co.uk/2240930/>

Please be aware that not all books are on AR and so books chosen to read may not have a quiz available to complete. New books are added all the time, so it is worth checking. <https://www.arbookfind.co.uk/> has all the books listed on the AR website. You can search for a book title and it will tell you if the book is available and its Quiz Number.



If your child is taking part in the Kent Libraries Summer Reading Challenge, they may also be able to take a quiz for the books they read, if they are available.

If you have any questions about this or your child has problems when accessing the site, please contact me through my class email ([badgerclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk](mailto:badgerclass@st-james.kent.sch.uk))

Wishing you a very happy Summer of reading!  
Ms Simpson

**Dates for the diary**

21 <sup>st</sup> July	Last day of term 6
22 <sup>nd</sup> July	First day of the summer holidays
1 <sup>st</sup> September	INSET day (school closed to children)
2 <sup>nd</sup> September	First day of new school year

Remember that term dates are available to view on the school website.

Have a lovely summer and see you all back again in September.  
Thank you all as always.

John Tutt  
Your very proud headteacher

