



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

8 th June	Phonics & tables checks this week
9 th and 11 th June	Year 5 parent consultations
10 th June	Year 6 trip to Birling Gap
17 th June	New entrant meeting 6:30pm
30 th June	Sports Day (change of date)
30 th June & 2 nd July	Parent consultations for all year groups except Y5
2 nd July	Transition/taster day and Reception stay and play for new entrants
4 th July	PTA summer fair
8 th & 9 th July	Year 6 play performances to parents
10 th July	Reception singing performance to parents (2:45pm) - note change of time
14 th July	Year 6 Leavers' service (2pm)
17 th July	Last day of term

Friday 5th June 2026

Thank you for your support over the last week – we clearly made the right Sports Day decision. I know this is something many parents get very excited/disappointed about, and that many have to make arrangements in order to come and watch, but we all want to make it as special as possible for the children.

We are going to do our very best to have a proper Sports Day on 30th June – third time lucky! To inspire us further, I have included the rousing speech from one of the lesser-known Shakespeare plays (Much Ado About Sports Day) - Act V where the children are about to nervously return to the school field after a heavy downpour:

*“Once more onto the field, St James’, once more – or litter the running track with our damp beanbags.
Let us stiffen up the sinews, summon up the blood and disguise fair nature with good natured &
competitive running and jumping over little hurdles.
Dishonour not your sporting houses - on you noblest children!
Now I see you standing like greyhounds in the slips, straining upon the start-line.
The game's afoot: Follow your spirit, and upon this whistle, cry:
'God for dry grass, Sports Day and St James'!
....then start running.”*





Kenneth Brannagh as Headteacher Henry in the 1989 movie adaptation of William Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Sports Day"

Right, that's enough of that - this newsletter will now be weather and Sports Day free – items containing eggs & spoons, bean bags, hoops, weather or forecast related content will be strictly censored in the hope that we can sneak up on 30th June without the clouds even noticing.

Earlier today we sent you a letter from the Chair of Governors which contains information about some upcoming changes to the leadership arrangements. I hope Judi's letter reassured you that St James' will continue to thrive next year – we are lucky to have a lot of very talented people working at this school. We have been asked by a school in need to share some of our St James' love, and turning them away does not feel compatible with our values. I am determined that there will be no negative impact on this school – although remembering another 400 or so names is going to be a bit of a challenge for such an old brain.

Staffing

We are sadly saying "goodbye" to two members of our teaching team at the end of the academic year.

Jude Ledger has been with us for 8 years, first as a Teaching Assistant and then as a Teacher in Year 1. Jude is moving back to Wales, and we wish her the very best in her new school.

Liane Sparks has been teaching at St James' since 2004 and has decided to start a well-earned retirement at the of this academic year. She shared a wealth of experience and wisdom with our team over the years.

We will miss Jude and Liane immensely.

Joining us are Adele Smith who is returning from adoption leave later this month, and Jen Burns who has been teaching in Year 4 this year and starts full-time in September. We are delighted to have them both on the team.

We will update you late June/early July with your child's teacher for next year.

Lucy Hayward will change her job title to Head of School from September, while I will adopt the title of Executive Headteacher – a fancy way to describe someone who runs more than one school. Once the arrangement is over, we will revert to our current job titles.

TT Rock stars day

On Tuesday 16th June we will be holding our annual Times Tables Rock Stars Day. The children are invited to dress up in rock star outfits and practise their times tables whilst listening to live music!





Year 6 Workshop

Year 6 had a visit from two local police officers and had a workshop informing them about the changes they might experience when they get to secondary school. They had a reminder about how to stay safe when crossing the roads, how to use social media safely and who to go to if they have any issues.

Here are some reviews from the children in Owl Class:

'It made me feel better about going to secondary school and it calmed my nerves a lot.' Ivy

'I found it very interesting.' Jess

'I found it really reassuring.' Olivia



Coats

Please ensure your child has a coat every day – if they do not, they cannot play outside with their friends when the weather is rainy. Do not leave this decision to your children, but pack them off with a coat in their bag, even if the weather looks amazing. Remember that all children should always have a waterproof coat in school each day and that we have storage for each child to also have a pair of wellies in school at all times.

Parking around the school

Okay - back to this old chestnut! Please park sensibly, legally and with respect for our neighbours. The church hall car park is needed for parents with children at the pre-school and other church users. People's driveways are needed by the people who live there. Parking on double yellow lines makes the road less safe for all road users, but particularly the most vulnerable – those on foot; our children and those from other schools.

End of Season Football Review

What a fantastic season it has been for both our girls' and boys' football teams – we've been so proud of how they've represented the school this year, getting active and having fun! We've also been super proud to wear our new school football kits, kindly sponsored by Foundry.



Girls' Team

Our girls have enjoyed an outstanding season, demonstrating great skill, teamwork and determination throughout the year. In the league, they played 7 matches, winning an impressive 6 and losing just 1, scoring a remarkable 28 goals along the way. Their excellent performances saw them finish as runners-up in the Girls' Premiership.

The girls also represented the school brilliantly in tournaments at St Gregory's and Tonbridge Angels, successfully progressing through to further rounds with some excellent displays of football. One of these was qualifying for the Kent School Finals in South East London, where they proudly represented the West Kent area against some of the strongest school teams in the county.

The team also came agonisingly close to tournament success at the West Kent and Tonbridge & Malling Finals held at Tonbridge Angels Stadium. They remained unbeaten throughout the competition (only drawing one game), only missing out on first place by goal difference. It was a wonderful achievement and a testament to their hard work and commitment all season.

Boys' Team

Our boys' team also showed tremendous character and resilience throughout the season. In the league, they played 5 matches, finishing the campaign in style with an excellent 5-1 victory against Langton Green, showcasing the progress they have made as a team.

The boys also performed strongly in tournaments at both St Gregory's and Tonbridge Angels Stadium. They competed brilliantly against strong opposition and were unfortunate to narrowly miss out on progressing to the later stages.

We are all incredibly proud of every player who has represented the school this season. Their enthusiasm, attitude, teamwork and commitment have been amazing. Thanks to all the staff and parents for their brilliant support this season too.

Mr Fern

Key Stage 2 Accelerated Reader Challenges

I am really pleased to announce the following winners:

➤ Winners for week ending 22nd May 2026:

Individual Highest Word Count	Class Highest Word Count	Individual Most Quizzes Passed	Class Most Quizzes Passed
Kate in Nightingale Class 279,101 words	Stoat Class 1,536,328 words	Reuben V in Fox Class 10 quizzes	Stoat Class 78 quizzes



- **Chaffinch** and **Nightingale** also read more than one million words this week.

➤ **Winners for last term (Term 5 2026):**

Individual Highest Word Count	Class Highest Word Count	Individual Most Quizzes Passed	Class Most Quizzes Passed
Naomi in Nightingale Class 1,028,848 words	Nightingale Class 4,358,986 words	Finley in Fox Class 32 quizzes	Deer Class 256 quizzes

- **Kestrel Class** also read more than 4 million words last term.
- **Ten classes** read more than one million words last term, **eight** of which read more than two million words.

Individual Highest Word Count	Class Highest Word Count	Individual Most Quizzes Passed	Class Most Quizzes Passed
Yudai in Kestrel Class 809,073 words	Chaffinch Class 1,530,433 words	Gianna in Badger Class 14 quizzes	Badger Class 65 quizzes

- **Nightingale, Kestrel, Dormouse** and **Swift** also read more than one million words this week.

Many congratulations to our overall winners. Just remember, **“Everyone is a reader, some just haven’t found their favourite book yet.”** Unknown

Mrs Simpson

John Tutt
Head Teacher

