



Dates for the diary

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

31 st March	Optional information session for parents about play 9am
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
27 th April	NHS school health – Hearing screening for all reception classes
8 th May	Second hand uniform sale
18 th May	Sports day
5 th June	Second hand uniform sale

Friday 27th March 2026

Dear parents and carers,

I've been left with a mammoth task this week and have very large Doc Martins to fill. Yes, whilst Mr Tutt is on the Year 6 residential I am responsible for running the school however, more worryingly, it's on me to write 'The Newsletter'!

I have a feeling that, as Mr Tutt packed his bags ready for his week away, he was probably more concerned that the newsletter wouldn't happen than what else might befall the school this week. After all, I have a proven track record of 'quiet' weeks in charge. Those parents who have been at St James' for a while might remember the minor event back in March 2020 when Mr Tutt was hospitalised after a bike accident and I had to put the school into its first National Lockdown due to the outbreak of the pandemic. Then, whilst he was at a previous Year 6 residential in June 2021, and I had to instruct 270 pupils to self-isolate, again due to Covid. Then there was the year when I confidently said at 9am one morning, 'Ofsted won't call today' and within 2 hours they had. As I write this on Monday, I'm waiting with bated breath to see what this week will bring. As Mr Tutt said in his letter last Friday, 'What could possibly go wrong?'

Is 14:59 on Friday too soon to say that all has been well and we've had a fantastic week here?



Sports Day – Monday 18th May

Big announcement - Sports Day this year is scheduled for Monday 18th May 2026. We have moved this earlier in the year to try to take advantage of the better weather in May. I hope we haven't ruined May as a result!

KS1 and Early Years will complete all activities in the morning and will KS2 complete races in the afternoon.



Parents are invited to attend the morning for children in Years R to 2 and the afternoon for children in Years 3 to 6. As in previous years, you will be able to have a picnic lunch with your children on the field, weather permitting on the day. Further information will be sent out nearer the date.

Waterproof kit

I think the weather on Wednesday shows that anything can happen in a day. We had sunshine, showers, wind and hail (or snow if you ask some over-dramatic people). Please make sure your child always has a waterproof coat in school, even if it's T-shirt weather when they leave the house. The welly storage we ordered was unfortunately delayed due to current world events; however, I am pleased to say we have now been given a delivery date for the first week after the Easter holidays. Just in time for the good weather to arrive in full. Thank you for your patience with this.

Some of you may have noticed that Miss Greenfield was on the gate on Wednesday during the strong winds and hail. I thought it was only appropriate that I continue the St James' tradition of delegating gate duty in poor weather. Oh, the power!

Play update

We're now almost 6 weeks into our Craze of the Week scheme, and the children seem to be really enjoying the activities so far. There's been dancing, dressing up, skipping, hula hooping, a wild week of balls (apologies for the incessant 'bumped head' phone calls) and lots more. As we move into the Summer Term, and the likelihood of playtimes on the fields increases, the aim is to reintroduce some of the 'craze' activities the children are now familiar with on a longer-term basis, thus allowing more choice each day. I have to say that organising and driving this scheme has brought me real joy - seeing so many children happily engaged in their play, branching out in what they choose to do or who they choose to play with, has been wonderful. Not to mention, seeing a child learn to skip for the first time or having the high honour of being invited to join in skipping with a group of Year 5 pupils. The number of bean bags now residing in trees around the playground brings me less joy however, all life is a lesson, and if this whole endeavor helps children to realise the importance of looking after things, then a few bean bags seems a small price to pay for a valuable life lesson. And you never know, if we get another windy day like Wednesday, they may well return to us soon.

Work to put down an all-weather surface for EYFS & KS1 has almost finished. This will extend the space the children can use every playtime and should give our children more opportunities to get back to nature and play in a slightly different way than they can on a tarmac playground.

Next Tuesday, 31st March, I will be giving a short presentation with more information about the changes we are making to playtimes and the reasons behind these. This is open to all parents and will take place in the KS2 hall at 9:00. If you would like to attend, please come to the main school office.

Creative crazes at St James Primary School!

Creativity is a big part of our learning at St James', and the children enjoy exploring different mediums – currently Year 5 are investigating how to make 3D sculptures in Art from foil, wire and clay to represent bodies in motion. Playtimes have also been a time for children to develop their creativity, as this week's craze has been chalk, with children collaborating to produce a range of fantastic murals, letting their imagination take them on different journeys.



On the 15th of April, it will be World Art Day 2026. The theme is 'A garden of expression: Cultivating community through art.' I will be inviting creatively minded children to help create a mural in the quiet area that will showcase our ability to work together as a community to create an inspiring piece of artwork which will be situated where we can all enjoy it.

Mrs Williams



Reflection Garden Taskforce Update

Spring has arrived, with the bulbs so many of you kindly donated before Christmas pushing through and flowering in the sunshine, the children noticing and enjoying the first blooms of the year. The bulbs planted by the Juniors gate have struggled to survive being trampled by many feet but have now benefitted from the protection of the temporary orange fence erected around them.

Work has continued in the Reflection Garden itself, with the children helping to clear another flower bed to the delight of one of our robins who came to gobble up any tasty bugs we uncovered! We filled the space with some beautiful wallflowers that we had grown from seeds kindly donated by Mr Fleming. We are looking forward to even more flowers blooming in the sunshine!

A massive thanks to all the parents who donated bulbs and helped to plant them, and to the many children who have worked so hard to create a beautiful, peaceful space.

Mrs Greenaway



Nourish Food Donations

Nourish collects non-perishable food and essential items to create emergency food parcels. These parcels are delivered directly to local people in crisis—including families, individuals, and those facing illness or debt—across the Tunbridge Wells, South Tonbridge, and surrounding areas.

St. James' school has a collection box in the foyer by the school office. As we approach the school holidays many families may struggle more at this time. If you feel you are able to, please use this link for donation ideas. [Give Food - Nourish](#)



Book Fair

Thank you so much to everyone who visited the Book Fair last week. It was so lovely to see you! An even bigger THANK YOU if you purchased books. Your generosity has given us over £500 worth of rewards with Scholastic which we will use to purchase books for classrooms and / or the school library.

Keep celebrating the Joy of Reading with FREE books for our school

Did you know that you can contribute towards our school rewards with Scholastic at any time (not just at the Book Fair)? You can do this by purchasing books through the **Scholastic Online Shop**. Every order over £10 earns 20% of the order value back to us through their Reward Scheme. We are then able to use these rewards towards even more FREE books for our school.

You can browse or shop at any time, using this link: [Scholastic Shop - Scholastic Shop](#) . If you are making a purchase, scroll down to the “Find your school tab” and enter the school postcode (TN2 3PR). This then links your purchase to us and we earn more rewards.

Book appeal!

If you have any pre-loved “graphic novels” which your child no longer reads, we have many children at St James in Year 2 upwards who would love to read them. If you are happy to donate them to us, please send them into school; the children would be extremely grateful. Thank you. Here are some examples of the very popular ones:



Key Stage 2 Accelerated Reader Challenges

➤ Winners for last week (20th March 2026):

Individual Highest Word Count	Class Highest Word Count	Individual Most Quizzes Passed	Class Most Quizzes Passed
Kate in Nightingale Class 658,730 words	Kestrel Class 1,376,014 words	Reuben V in Fox Class 31 quizzes	Deer Class 118 quizzes

- **Nightingale** and **Deer** Classes also read more than one million words last week.

➤ Winners for this week (27th March 2026):

Individual Highest Word Count	Class Highest Word Count	Individual Most Quizzes Passed	Class Most Quizzes Passed



Jarvis in Dormouse Class 281,459 words	Swift Class 1,330,527 words	Imogen in Deer Class 23 quizzes	Deer Class 117 quizzes
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- **Chaffinch** and **Dormouse Classes** also read more than one million words this week.

Many congratulations to all our winners in each class as well as the overall winners in Key Stage 2.

Happy Reading everyone!
Mrs Simpson

Have a great weekend.

Lucy Hayward
Deputy Head Teacher

