



St. James' Church of England Primary Academy  
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**7th February 2025**

## Newsletter

*A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity. Proverbs 17 v 17*

Dear Parents and Carers

We are into the shortest month and the half term break is just on the horizon. We have celebrated lots of success and achievement so far in 2025, not just individually, but collectively. The children's writing and work presentation goes from strength to strength and we can't wait to show you at parent's evening next month. Our curriculum projects continue to engage and excite the children, from space to explorers, chocolate to festivals and we have had a number of external visitors remarking on what a happy place St. James' is. It genuinely is and we will try our hardest to showcase our amazing children more via the website and social media.

### **Worship**

We were treated to a Year 1 led worship yesterday, with Bourne and Stour classes. They gave us the message of resilience and how God is always on our side. Thank you all for being brilliant.

On Monday, I talked about Candlemas, the Christian celebration 40 days after Christmas (yes, it really is), when baby Jesus was presented at the temple by his parents. He was immediately recognised by Simeon, who had no knowledge of Jesus being there, and referred to as 'the light of the world' for the first time. Simeon also said 'my eyes have seen your salvation, Lord', he knew the impact this little child would have on the world, and continues to do so, over 2,000 years later.

### **Dodgeball Champions**

If you are a follower of the St. James' PE team Instagram, you will already know that last week St. James' were crowned dodgeball champions of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. As a result, we have qualified for the next stage of the competition in Bristol, where we play other teams in the south west regional championships. It's all very exciting. Our mixed team won the final 7-3. Miss Martin (a former Great Britain dodgeball trialist herself), took the team and offered her expert advice - the children were magnificent throughout.

At St. James', we try to offer a real breadth of sports and activities available to our children. Of course we still participate and learn mainstream sports, but the introduction of sailing, flag football, archery, handball and dodgeball are just a few of the exciting opportunities that make St. James' even better. A huge thank you to our dedicated sports department for facilitating these amazing sessions for our children.



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## Tom Hayes (MP) Visit

We were delighted to welcome Tom Hayes, our local MP, to school this week where he took the opportunity to talk to some of our pupils and staff about some important issues including SEND, online safety and having local playgrounds. He was very keen to encourage the children that he wants to represent their voices too and some of our Academy Council will be writing letters to him to express their views on online safety and smart phones.

He would also like to hear the view of parents, so if you are able to fill out the survey on <https://www.tomhayes.org.uk/safer-phones-bill-survey> , your voice will count too before the parliamentary debate on the 7th March.

Don't forget, it's Internet Safety day on Tuesday as well, so it's the perfect opportunity to talk to your child about staying safe online and on phones.

Why not have a look at [our website for some useful information](#) or check out the [Internet Safety Day Resources](#).



## Children's Mental Health Week

Did you know that, according to The Children's Society, 'in the last three years, the likelihood of young people having a mental health problem has increased by 50%. Our [Good Childhood Report 2022](#) shows that children's happiness continues to decline. **Now, five children in a classroom of 30 are likely to have a mental health problem.**'

This week we have been encouraging our children to think about the importance of good mental health as well as physical health. On our PE days, we always include a session on mental health and wellbeing, but this week, we have been using resources which, through the characters of Pixar's *Inside Out* and *Inside Out 2*, encourage children and young people across the UK to discover how getting to know who they are can help them build resilience, grow and develop.

The Dorset Mental Health Support Team in Schools Team is running a free webinar on 'healthy masculinity and online influences' for parents and carers on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February. Please click on link to sign up. <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/bcp-cst/free-webinar-healthy-masculinity-and-online-influences-for-parents-carers-and-guardians/e-lqkolph>

There is also another parent and carer free webinar on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March from Discovery Project – see details at the end of this newsletter.



## Road Closures Around School

The road works continue to affect King's Park Drive and Southbourne Road and is expected to take at least 3 more weeks. Please plan your journey to and from school accordingly. Thank you.



## Head Lice

We have been made aware of head lice in school. They are very common in young children. They are not caused by dirty hair, but by head-to-head contact. To help minimise the spread, please ensure **ALL** long hair is tied up at school, and please regularly check your child's head. Information is on the NHS website on how to treat.



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## World Book Day

We are excited to announce that Thursday 6th March 2025 is World Book Day, and as always, we have lots of exciting activities planned to celebrate!

- Dress Up and Reading Buddies

We invite all children to come dressed as a character, animal, or object from their favourite book. During the day, children will also have the opportunity to share a favourite book with their reading buddies, so please encourage them to bring in a book they love.

Reading is a vital part of education, and we aim to inspire a lifelong love of books in all our pupils. World Book Day is the perfect opportunity to immerse children in stories, spark their imagination, and develop their enthusiasm for reading.

- Books at Bedtime - A Virtual Event

Our much-loved Books at Bedtime event is back again this year and it's going virtual! Children are invited to join us online at 6:30 pm to listen to a bedtime story read by some of our wonderful Teachers. The session will last approximately 20 - 30 minutes, and a link to join will be sent out closer to the date.

- World Book Day Token

Every child will receive a £1 book token to exchange for a free World Book Day book or to use towards an other book of their choice.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.worldbookday.com/books/>.

- Extreme Reading Challenge

We are challenging pupils (and staff) to take part in our Extreme Reading Challenge! We would love to see photos of children reading in unusual, funny, or surprising places safely, of course! Whether it's reading in a treehouse, on a swing, or somewhere completely unexpected, let your creativity shine. To enter, print your photo and hand it in to the school office with your name and class written on the back by Friday 28th February. The best photos will be displayed in our school library!

- Scholastic Book Fair is Coming Soon!

We are also pleased to announce that the Scholastic Book Fair will be visiting our school from Tuesday 24th June to Monday 30th June. This is a fantastic opportunity for children to explore and purchase a wide range of books. More details will be shared closer to the time.

We truly appreciate the support of our parents and carers in making World Book Day such a special event each year. Thank you for encouraging and celebrating reading with us and we look forward to a fantastic day! (Mrs. Jacobs)



## Attendance and Fines

As a school, we are under increasing pressure to improve our attendance at St. James'. Pre 2020 we would be aiming for 97% whole school attendance with about 5% of children categorised as 'persistent absentees' (below 90% attendance). Today's attendance is 94.9% and 'persistent absentees' at 13%. Whilst these are better figures than national average, we have a duty to improve children's attendance. The school is held to account by the local authority and directed to issue letters and fines. Whilst I will always prioritise positive relationships with families, sometimes we have little or no option than to issue a fine based on term time absences, such as holidays and lateness.

As a parent, I completely understand the monetary saving in term time for a holiday, I also know the benefit of visiting other places and the wellbeing of family time, however there is a legal obligation to attend a place of education.

When your child is absent for the equivalent of 1 day every fortnight, they miss out on a significant amount of learning from school. Thank you for your support.



## School Meals Information

Our school meals continue to tantalise the taste buds. They really are a marked improvement on what the children were previously provided. Having an onsite kitchen was always a vision of mine, and it really is proving fruitful. Happy children, eating healthy food.

I am aware of a few concerns, particularly with Year 5 and 6 children, who have the last sitting. Relish have an electronic system which is operated alphabetically, so children do have to line up in register order. This is so that they serve all children the correct food. We have added 5 minutes onto their hall time to allow for this, so hopefully they are not waiting for long. I have looked at this, and it is unfortunate, but logistically, it's the only way they can serve over 300 meals correctly. The wait time is not more than a few minutes.

The relish staff are freshly preparing the food on a daily basis, the Head chef (Dan) starts early and is assisted by 4 other team members throughout the morning, Mrs Sidney and Miss Gerrish then serve the food to the children.

Staff are starting to eat with the children, and I have had the pleasure of eating with Year 5 and 6 this week, so I will closely monitor the lunchtime routine, and ensure that we have happy children. As always, please let us know if there are any concerns you or your children have. It's not always easy to get it right with regards to children's diets, but with menu changes and different choices, hopefully we can get it right.

I have a meeting with Relish and the head chef to talk about menu choices after half term, including themed weeks, and I have asked a number of children to give me their wish list for the new menu.

Thank you for your support. Just a few reminders.

- All parents must pre order by midnight the day before
- The menus for the next 3 weeks have been amended due to logistics issues; therefore, parents who pre ordered for January will need to go back into the Relish website to reorder their child's lunches
- All payments must be made through Arbor meal payments as usual
- We are aware of some accounts not reflecting a credit balance in Relish. Our providers are working with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party 'Pebble' to resolve this issue asap



## School Uniform

We continue to look our smartest and we are taking pride in our appearance and our belonging to St. James'. Please try to ensure your child is dressed appropriately, following our uniform policy. Our uniform details are all on the [website](#) and children should be wearing their winter uniform, with a school tie. The summer uniform comes into effect in May. Thank you for your support.



## PE Days

All children must wear their school PE kit all day on their PE day. Your child's PE days will be:

**Mondays** - Harbour

**Tuesdays** - Early Years

**Wednesdays** - Year 1 and Year 4

**Thursdays** - Year 2 and Year 5

**Fridays** - Year 3 and Year 6



## Key Dates

The calendar section on the website should give you major events throughout the academic year, but I will give concise reminders below:

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February** - Bengal Class Worship - 9am

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February** - Early Years Parent's Outcome - hall

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February** - Break up for half term (normal finish time)

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> - Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March** - Year 4 Hooke Court residential

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March** - Galilee Class Worship - 9am

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March** - World Book Day – Dress up as a book character and virtual books at bedtime 6pm - 7pm

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March** - Ducklings and Tadpoles Class Worship - 9am

**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March** - Biscay Class Worship - 9am

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March** - Parent's evenings - hall

**Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March** - Year 3 Roman Day

**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April** - Mediterranean Class Worship - 9am

**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April** - Break up for Easter holidays (finish at 1:20pm)

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2025** - Sports Day, King's Park Stadium

As always, please check our website for your child's learning and important information on the year group pages. Also, the calendar section will give you important dates in advance. You can also see pictures and news on our social media accounts (Facebook and Instagram), follow us to find out more about the amazing things happening at St. James'. Thank you for your continued support.

**Alastair Brown**  
Headteacher

*Learning as a family in Jesus, through Love, Hope and Forgiveness. Matthew 19:26 "with God all things are possible."*

*'The school's values are firmly rooted in the Christian ethos of the school. Pupils know why learning through 'love, hope and forgiveness' matters. They make clear links with these values and the school rules to 'be ready, be respectful and be safe'. Leaders have high expectations for behaviour, and pupils live up to them. In lessons, pupils listen carefully and are keen to learn. As a result, they achieve well.'* **Ofsted report, January 2023.**

*'Every pupil and adult flourishes within the family at St. James'.* SIAMS report June 2022.



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## UNDERSTANDING YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH

This course explores...

YOUNG PEOPLE'S  
MENTAL HEALTH

SELF-COMPASSION

HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR  
YOUNG PERSON

WHAT RECOVERY  
REALLY MEANS

KEEPING WELL WHEN  
CARING FOR OTHERS

This interactive and reflective course explores experiences of being a parent/carer/supporter for a young person with mental health difficulties and how recovery can look for individuals. It's an opportunity to learn more about skills, strengths and values alongside a Discovery NHS Trainer, Parent Peer Specialist and Young Person's Peer Specialist in a supportive, non-judgemental space.

**FREE Webinar (7pm-8:30pm)**  
**Monday 31st March 2025**



To attend, just enrol with  
**Recovery Education Centre (REC)**  
via QR, phone **01202 584478**, or email  
**[dhc.recovery.educationcentre@nhs.net](mailto:dhc.recovery.educationcentre@nhs.net)**





# St. James' Church of England Primary Academy

## Term Dates 2024-2025

### AUTUMN TERM

Inset Day	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2024
Inset Day	Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September
First Day	Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> September
Half Term	Monday 28 <sup>th</sup> October – Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> November
Last Day	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> December (finish at 1.20pm)

### SPRING TERM

Inset Day	Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
First Day	Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> January
Half Term	Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> February – Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> February
Last Day	Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April (finish at 1.20pm)
Inset Day	Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> April

### SUMMER TERM

First Day	Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> April
Bank Holiday	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> May
Half Term	Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> May – 30 <sup>th</sup> May
Inset Day	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June
Last Day	Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July (finish at 1.20pm)



# St. James' Church of England Primary Academy

## Term Dates 2025-2026

### **AUTUMN TERM**

Inset Day	Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2025
Inset Day	Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> September
Inset Day	Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> September
First Day	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> September
Half Term	Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> October – Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> October
Last Day	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> December (finish at 1.20pm)

### **SPRING TERM**

Inset Day	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
First Day	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
Half Term	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> February – Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> February
Last Day	Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> March (finish at 1.20pm)

### **SUMMER TERM**

First Day	Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
Bank Holiday	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> May
Half Term	Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> May – 29 <sup>th</sup> May
Inset Day	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2026
Last Day	Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July (finish at 1.20pm)