

Headteacher: Mr D Lawford



St. James' CE First School and Nursery

St James' CE First School
Gaunts Common
Wimborne
BH21 4JN

T: 01258 840669
E: office@stjames.dsat.org.uk
W: www.stjames.dsat.org.uk

Friday 19th September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

The sun is shining as we end our second full week. It has been wonderful to welcome Foxes class full-time this week and watch how wonderfully they have settled into school life at St James'. They all had the privilege of an afternoon in the Forest School with Mrs Shergold which now forms part of their ongoing provision. Owls class were at Trinity Verwood today rehearsing for the Year 4 Concert at Salisbury cathedral next month. So, all in all, life at school is starting to get busy.

Scholastic Book Fair

Next week, we welcome the Scholastic Book Fair which is an opportunity to buy some new books for the home. The PFA have kind agreed to host this event and the Book Fair will be open during the following times.

24 th September	25 th September	26 th September	29 th September
08.15 – 08.45	08.15 – 08.45	08.15 – 08.45	08.15 – 08.45
14.50 – 15.30	14.50 – 15.30	14.50 – 15.30	

Easy Fundraising

As part of the PFA's effort to generate funding from alternative revenue streams, they have recently registered for Easy Fundraising. Did you know that whenever you buy anything online, you could be raising a free donation for us? There are over 8,000 retailers ready to give us a donation every time you shop online via easyfundraising. Not only that, but once you raise your first £5, easyfundraising will double it!

<https://join.easyfundraising.org.uk/st-james-ce-vc-first-school-wimborne/gox80o/c2s/MYMwZxL2/CE056/facebook/>



Attendance

Each September, we remind our families about the importance of regular school attendance. The Department for Education (DfE) requires schools to do all they can to support every child and family to attend school regularly. This includes following up quickly on any concerns, working in partnership with parents and also services such as the Local Authority. Quite simply, children do better at school if they attend regularly. It is surprising how quickly a few absences add up: a child with 96% attendance has actually missed nearly 10 days of school. The full attendance policy is on the school's website. Here is a summary of the most important bits:

Believe & Achieve "I will show you my faith by my deeds" James 2:18

Love | Hope | Truth

Telling the school if your child is absent

Parents/carers must contact school by 8.45am on the first day of their child's absence and then each day afterwards. This is important safeguarding: if your child is not at school in the morning and you haven't told them to expect this, then they must check that your child is safe.

Requests for absence during term time

Headteachers are only allowed to grant leave of absence from school in exceptional circumstances (defined as rare, significant, unavoidable and short). Requests should be made using the Request for Leave of Absence form (available from the school website or office) and must be submitted before any absence is taken.

As a general guide, the following might be considered as 'exceptional':

- Immediate family weddings, christenings or funerals;
- Immediate family member returning home from Service Duty;
- Occasions of religious observance;
- Other situations where a 'compassionate' element is applicable.

Generally, the following cannot be considered 'exceptional':

- Family holidays and breaks;
- Parents' profession or place of work making it difficult to align school and work holidays;
- Educational visits arranged by family members during school time;
- Family birthdays or other events;

After applying for term time absence, parents/carers will be notified of the Headteacher's decision as quickly as possible. If the absence is not agreed, then it should not be taken. For unauthorised absences such as these, the school will consider requesting that the Local Authority issues a fixed penalty notice (FPN).

Lateness

Punctuality is also important: lateness disrupts learning. If your child arrives at school after 8.45am, they will be registered as 'late'. Lateness beyond 9.15am will be counted as an absence for the morning session, unauthorised unless the school receives an acceptable reason. If your child is often late, we will contact you to discuss this.

Monitoring attendance and punctuality

Children's attendance is regularly monitored. Parents will usually be contacted if a child's attendance drops below 96%. We continue to work closely with the Local Authority and advice is taken where there are concerns about a child's attendance.

Medical evidence

Occasionally, a child's attendance becomes so low that the school cannot authorise any absences without seeing medical evidence, such as a prescription or a GP appointment. If this was in place for your child during last summer term, please note that this continues during autumn term until the school has seen regular attendance.

Kind regards,



Mr Lawford

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Love | Hope | Truth