



Headteacher's Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers,

It seems almost unbelievable that we have reached the half-way stage of the year and it is six months since I welcomed you for the first time. It can sometimes be difficult to remember all the small changes and improvements we have made as a school, but as I look back and reflect, I'm sure you will agree that we have much to celebrate.

Of course, at the heart of our wonderful school is the children! It is easy to focus on the big calendar events that we know and love, however, it is something small that caught my attention this term. As part of an Academy Improvement Meeting (a day of school inspection), we were reviewing the progress made since we introduced our new handwriting scheme in November. It was so encouraging to see that the time invested by the staff and children is having a dramatic impact on their writing in class. I know this is being repeated across the school where the children continue to learn and live out our core values of Love, Hope and Truth.

Spring is starting to show its colours, with the early rising snowdrops a pleasant surprise in the car park and the daffodils starting to poke through beside the playground. We have so much look forward to in the second half of this year and more opportunities for your children to thrive. We have a whole host of trips and visits planned as well as some exciting events in school, so please add the key dates to your diaries and watch out for the school e-mails.

I never miss the winter months and certainly look forward to enjoying the morning and evening sun in my usual spot outside each day.

Have a restful half-term.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Lawford



KEY SPRING TWO DIARY DATES

- 20/02** First Day of Term
- 02/02** World Book Day / Library Official Opening
- 03/03** PFA Disco
- 09/03** Ocelot Farm Visit
- 09/03** Whole School Author Visit
- 09/03** Year 2 SATS Information Evening
- 16/03** Year 1 Phonics Information Evening
- 17/03** Puma Easter Experience at Wimborne Minster
- 28/03** Easter Service (Holtwood Methodist) +
- 31/03** Last Day of Spring Term



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

In collective worship this term, we have focussed on our core value of truth. We have learnt to be honest and speak out against injustice. We have learnt why James wrote to the early church with his message "I will show you my faith by my deeds." Therefore, if we believe it in our hearts, we should show it in our actions.

LAURA ROBERTS

**Snow Leopards Teacher and Assistant
Headteacher**



It has been a fantastic start to 2023 in Snow Leopards. This half-term, one of our highlights has been reading our class text, 'Varjak Paw' by S.F Said. The children have been captivated by the action-packed storyline and many are excited to read the sequel.

Snow Leopards have also been brilliant historians and have enjoyed learning about the Ancient Egyptians. Next half-term, we will be reading an Egyptian-themed text, 'Secrets of a Sun King' by Emma Carroll. This is a gripping adventure story and one I am sure the children will enjoy!

During our English lessons, the children have written their own persuasive holiday advertisements. They have worked hard to experiment with ambitious vocabulary and varied their sentence construction for impact - they are making superb progress!

In Mathematics, we have explored multiplication and division. The children have shown resilience applying their understanding to a range of problem-solving tasks. In addition to this, the children have also explored finding the perimeter of shapes. Fractions will be the focus of next half-term.

Without a doubt, Snow Leopards are full of creativity and continue to amaze me with their wonderful ideas and vivid imaginations. This has been showcased through their amazing art work this half-term on exploring patterns. Moreover, the children have worked collaboratively to put together some brilliant spy-themed dances.

We have ended this half-term with a focus on internet safety and enjoyed our workshop led by Bournemouth Community Trust. The children have shown an excellent understanding of the importance of being responsible users of technology.

Wishing you all a lovely half-term break.



SNOW LEOPARD CLASS NEWS





PUMA CLASS NEWS



ISOBEL ASHBY

Puma Class Teacher



This half term has been super exciting and fun filled in Puma Class. We have had several outside visitors in, undertook science investigations and performed creative dances!

We have read exciting whole class texts, our favourites so far are *Unfortunately The Milk* by Neil Gaiman and *Hotel Flamingo* by Alex Milway. Both stories, have had the children in fits of giggles and have inspired their creativity and imagination. We have discussed the possibilities of dinosaur police, globby green aliens and cheeky animals who are running a hotel! During our English lessons, the children have written their own portal story using 'The Way to the Zoo' by John Burningham as inspiration. We have learnt all the varying tools that are needed to create description and suspense. The children then wowed me by jam packing their stories with similes, alliteration and show not tell!

In maths, Year 2's have explored money and multiplication and Year 3's have learnt multiplication and division. As all Puma's have recently started multiplication, they have shown great resilience and determination to work independently and express their reasoning, using mathematical talk.

The children have shown great passion in our Art lessons, perfecting the skill 'painting with scissors'. This has challenged their cutting, proportion and composition skills. However, they have all focussed and worked really hard to create beautiful collages.

In computing, the children have shown great team work skills by collaborating and encouraging one another to 'give it a go'. They have learnt about data bases, questioning and created binary trees. Finally, in history they have shown great understanding and knowledge towards their topic of 'local study of railways'. They have compared different localities and their ways of transport. The unit came to an end with a talk with a railway historian where the children showed great engagement and questioning skills!

On Monday this week, we have had a workshop led by Bournemouth Community Trust, learning about the importance of internet safety. The children were really engaged and showed lots of enthusiasm.

Mrs Hobbs and I are so pleased with all the fabulous learning we have undertaken this half term! We are excited to see what is next. We wish you a great and relaxing half term.

SARAH MILWARD

Lynx Class Teacher



This has been a short half term but in Lynx Class we have managed to pack so much in!

Our maths focus in Year 1 has moved from place value to 20 to addition and subtraction to 20. This has proved exciting as now we are dealing with adding and subtracting tens and ones. As I have mentioned before, the maths mastery method enables us to dig deeply into mathematical concepts to ensure deep understanding and the ability to apply learning across different areas and problems. Anything you can do at home, with money (coins), cooking (weights and measures) and learning number bonds to 20 (0 +10, 1 +19) will really help your child succeed in this area of mathematics.

For English, the children have written their own fabulous stories based on the story of Wendel's Workshop, which I know many of you saw and enjoyed reading at Parent's Evening. We are currently writing non-chronological reports about old toys, linked to the History they have been doing with Mrs Trevor.

Art has been a favourite this half of term and the children seem to have thoroughly enjoyed sketching and mono block printing using a variety of media. The progress over the half term and the detail the children have been including in their sketches has been wonderful to see.

In our Scarf lessons (PSHE) the children have been learning about how to stay safe and healthy. They loved the visit from Harold and the Life Education team. Some of the things we have been looking at this half term, include, stranger danger, internet safety (where the children made super posters), medicines, and loss.

Our Geography for the next half of term will be focusing on the weather, including looking at the consequences of global warming. In the summer, we will be looking at where our food comes from and visiting Launceston Farm (details to follow nearer the time).

Thank you for all your help and support with the reading; this really does underpin all areas of English including composition, punctuation, grammar and spelling. If anyone – parents, carers, grandparents are interested in listening to children read then please let me know, we would really welcome this.

Wishing you all a lovely half term break!



LYNX CLASS NEWS





OCELOT CLASS NEWS

AMANDA WALKER

Ocelot Class Teacher



We can't believe we are at the end of this half-term already – it has flown by! The children have all worked so hard and will no doubt be looking forward to some rest over the holiday with family and friends.

This half-term has had a strong focus on events and objects from the past – we have looked at dinosaurs, fossils, artefacts including telephones, communication tools and how we listened to music over the years. Our key text has been 'Lost and Found' and the children have loved using our outside stage area to perform the story using our class story map. In the story of 'Lost and Found' the characters travel to Antarctica, so we have found out where this continent is in relation to where we live and have discussed what we would see there. We have also looked at the Arctic polar region and the animals we may find there. We have loved making igloos using construction blocks.

Next half-term our theme is 'All Creatures Great and Small' and we will cover learning about lifecycles including frogs and chickens. We will be looking at farming in the past and compare it to farming now and finding out where our food comes from. We are very much looking forward to our farm visit to Launceston Farm, this will really embed our classroom learning.

We hope you all have a super break and look forward to seeing you back in Spring Two.





HOOKE COURT SPECIAL REPORT

As this newsletter arrives in your inbox, our year 4 children will be arriving home from a busy few days at Hooke Court. Time away from home is always exciting for our children and they were a credit to the school. Their first day focussed on the Egyptians, which they have been studying in school. The children have made Egyptian jewellery, learnt to write hieroglyphics and tried their hand at some Egyptian cooking.

After an evening around the campfire, Day Two was an action packed day of low ropes, orienteering and team building activities finishing with an evening of search and rescue. The final morning had a science focus with children working in teams to create and launch model rockets.

Can I say a personal thank you to Miss Roberts, Miss Ashby, Miss Bishop and Mrs Patience who helped organise this fantastic opportunity.





'I have had lots of fun and especially enjoyed the low rope course and the orienteering. Hooke Court has been the best fun and I have made lots of amazing memories'



'Hooke Court is the best place ever! I really enjoyed the Egyptian learning and when I was mummified!'



'I have had the best time. I liked shelter building with my friends and the food has been brilliant!'





The Priory Heads meeting Bishop Stephen Lake at Wimborne St Giles for his visit to rural Diocese schools in Dorset.



THE PRIORY HUB



As the newly appointed Regional Director of Education, I have the pleasure of working with schools within the Priory Hub, a group of four local schools: St James' First School, Wimborne St Giles First School, Trinity Verwood First School and Cranborne First School. One of the real advantages of working as a hub is that we get to share our ideas and approaches across the schools. Earlier in the term, Mrs Walker opened her classroom to other EYFS teachers from the hub to see her excellent classroom practice and the exemplary behaviour of the children.

I have also been really pleased to see how dedicated the staff have been to the development of reading, most notably the new library and book banding systems. This should help your child continue to find books that they can read and enjoy.

Whilst I have only been working with the staff of St James' for the last half term, I can instantly see what a dedicated team of professionals they are, and how much they care about your child's education. It makes me feel very lucky to work with them – I hope you feel that too!

Kate Masters

Regional Director of Education



LIBRARY LAUNCH SET FOR WORLD BOOK DAY

The works on the library are officially complete and now in use across the school. Thank you to all those who have supported the process of making the library a success. We will be holding an official grand opening on the 2nd March, which just so happens to be World Book Day. More details to follow after half-term.



KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

As with all schools, our number one priority is keeping children safe. One part of this is ensuring we provide your children with an up-to-date understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Next term, we are taking part in the NSPCC's national 'Speak Out. Stay Safe.' online programme.

It aims to help children understand abuse in all its forms and to recognise the signs of abuse in a child friendly way. Children are taught to speak out if they are worried, either to a trusted adult or Childline. In the online assembly, the *Speak Out. Stay Safe.* messages are delivered in a fun and interactive way with the help of their mascot Buddy as well as special guest appearances from Ant and Dec.



Daniel Lawford

Designated
Safeguarding Lead



Laura Roberts

Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead



PARENT GOVERNORS

I consider it a huge privilege to serve the St James' community as a Parent Representative on our Governing Body. The role of Governor is one of oversight; monitoring, encouraging and (my personal favourite!) celebrating the successes. In practice this means I've had the opportunity to get involved in many different aspects of school life including staff recruitment, accompanying trips, classroom visits, chatting to pupils and even labelling library books and cleaning out the pond!

I am in a unique position on our governing board in that my children are current St James' pupils: I see the benefit of all the hard work going on behind the scenes through the experiences of my own children. After a difficult couple of years, I feel so positive about the position we are now in at school and the direction in which we are heading. I very much hope that my small contribution as a governor will help to ensure St James' continues to go from strength to strength long after my children have moved on.

As a link governor, I hold specific responsibility for oversight of our Reception class and enjoy working closely with Mrs Walker and her team. I am immensely proud of our early years provision at St James' and the fabulous start we are able to give our youngest pupils. Recently I have also taken on responsibility for overseeing SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and I look forward to ensuring that we are providing the best possible education and school experience for every pupil at St James'.

As for me, my hobbies include gardening, drawing and swimming. Professionally I am a Veterinary Surgeon and have worked, primarily, in companion animal general practice. A career break to raise my children has provided an opportunity to take on new challenges, such as school governance. I can be found at school drop off and pick up every day so please feel free to say hi and ask any questions that you may have.

Kate Myers-Smith



LIFE EDUCATION WORKSHOPS

Earlier this term we welcomed Kate from Life Education & SCARF to deliver PSHE workshops across the school. Each year group received an age appropriate session about the body and we even got to meet Harold, the SCARF Giraffe.

Ocelot - All About Me

Lynx - My Wonderful Body

Puma - Meet the Brain

Snow Leopards - It's Great to be Me



"What a wonderful session!" Lynx class thoroughly enjoyed the interactive session which was so engaging"