



## HEADTEACHER'S WELCOME

Dear Parents and Carers,

We once again come to the end of another busy half-term and we have so much to celebrate – not least our successful Ofsted. We had been awaiting our Monday morning phone call for over two years, and I think I'm still a little shocked that they have been and gone. Our report was a tremendous validation of all the tireless work and dedication of the whole team and I am incredibly proud of them and of course the children they serve. However, Ofsted was just one moment and no report will really summarise all that makes St James' special, although this newsletter does a pretty good job.

One of my personal highlights of the term was having Bob Hartman with us as part of World Book Day. It was a joy to see all the children dressed up as their favourite book characters and laughing hysterically as Bob told some of his own stories alongside some well-known Bible stories. We finished the day together as a community in the Peace Garden where we learnt the story of Zacchaeus, who was an outcast and rejected by his community. However, through the love of Jesus he learnt from his mistakes, repaired broken bridges and was shown love when no one else would. This message of inclusion, despite our differences, is one we continue to promote and build with our children and one we see outworked in our vision and values.

Some eagle eye parents will have spotted St James' popping up in local Tesco stores as part of the Stronger Starts program. We are hoping to raise £1500 which we will invest in our fledgeling Forest School which will begin to take wing this term. In fact, over the course of the year, we have raised over £6500 by applying to various charitable grants and trust funds which helps support the work we do against the backdrop of growing economic pressures on school. If you know of any funds or charities who might support our work, I would love to explore this further as it continues to enable the enrichment work we do with the children of St James'.

As we look ahead into next term, I think it would be fair to say that the Summer Term is my favourite. Whilst it always ends with a bitter-sweet goodbye as we cheer on our Year 4 leavers, it filled with so much fun and joy. Sports day is just around the corner, we have so many visits and trips booked in and then our end of year show will take us deep down the rabbit hole as we perform Alice in Wonderland!

As always, a huge thank you for your continued support. Have a wonderful Easter break and I look forward to welcoming you all back in the Summer Term.

Yours faithfully

Mr Lawford



St. James'  
CE First School



Diocese of Salisbury  
Academy Trust

### KEY DIARY DATES

- 21/04** Bank Holiday
- 22/04** INSET Day
- 22/04** Interim Reports Sent Home
- 23/04** Hooke Court Parent Information Evening
- 24/04** Reception Vision Screening
- 29/04** Year 1 & 2 Sports Festival at St Michaels
- 30/04** Year 3 & 4 Rounders Tournament
- 02/05** May Pole Dancing followed by PFA Cream Tea
- 05/05** Bank Holiday
- 06/05** Class and Leavers Photos
- 07/05** Hooke Court Residential
- 08/05** PFA Committee Meeting
- 09/05** New YR Transition Session
- 13/05** Year 1 and Year 2 Parent Share
- 15/05** Foxes Parent Share
- 16/05** PFA Mufti Day
- 16/05** New YR Transition Event
- 17/05** Breakfast Church
- 20/05** Squirrels and Owls Lighthouse Visit (BSO)
- 21/05** Sports Day followed by PFA Summer Social
- 23/05** Last Day of Term

**LAURA ROBERTS**

Owls Teacher and  
Assistant Headteacher



It has been a brilliant half-term in Owls!

This half term, we have enjoyed reading 'Varjak Paw' by S.F Said and the children have been working hard as a class to develop their fluency skills. It was wonderful to see the children's costumes on World Book Day and the children enjoyed a day of book-related activities. Our class highlight was our session with Bob Hartman. The children loved creating their own characters and stories together and laughter definitely filled the classroom! During our English lessons, Owls have written some fantastic persuasive adverts about their own new chocolate products. In addition to this, they have written their own superhero stories based on Eliot the Midnight Superhero where they have included dialogue and interesting vocabulary.

Our maths lessons have seen learning focused on fractions and for Year 4 we have also started learning about decimals. The children have continued to impress us with their dedication to become fluent with their times table facts and they are showing great progress with this.

This half-term saw Owls develop their geography learning on the different types of biomes around the world. Furthermore, they have also enjoyed their computing learning linked to creating their own animations. Owls enjoyed our educational visit to Winchester Science Centre where we took part in a day of action-packed activities. The children represented St James' wonderfully and I was very proud of them all.

The children have also this half-term impressed us with their design technology learning linked to mechanical systems. The children have designed, made and evaluated their own pneumatic toys whilst carefully considering the design request and their design brief. They showed wonderful creativity and were extremely proud of their final outcomes.

We have another exciting half-term planned after the Easter break. Owls are particularly looking forward to Maypole dancing, Hooke Court, our visit to Poole Lighthouse to watch Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and sports day to name a few things.

Wishing everyone a wonderful Easter break.



**OWLS CLASS NEWS**





## SQUIRRELS CLASS NEWS



**HOLLY ANNELS**

Squirrels Class Teacher



What an extremely busy half-term it has been with different trips, events and our parent share! This half-term saw Squirrels become Scientists and they embraced the opportunity to celebrate Science week with a visit to the Winchester Science Centre. We loved our educational visit taking part in a day of action-packed activities. The children represented St James' wonderfully and I was very proud of them all. Thank you to all the parents that helped, we would not have been able to make this a success without your support.

Another class highlight was sharing our English learning with family members at the parent share. Over the last half term, the children have worked hard at their writing and reading of stories and created some amazing final outcomes. We wrote a story all about Bear and Little Bear visiting the fair. We have also practiced reading stories and had a go doing this on world book day to Foxes class. What fantastic hard work was demonstrated!

The children have impressed us with their design technology learning linked to mechanisms. Squirrels have developed their understanding of fairground wheels, they carefully considered the design request and their design brief when creating their final outcome. It was wonderful to see the children's costumes on World Book Day and the children enjoyed a day of book-related activities.

This half term, we have enjoyed reading 'The Hodgeheg' by Dick King Smith and 'The Accidental Prime Minister' by Tom McLaughlin. Our maths lessons have seen learning focused on measurements and all the children are starting to become fluent converting between grams and kilograms and centimetres and metres, with year 3 looking at millilitres and litres! The children have continued to impress us with their dedication to become fluent with their times table and number facts and they are showing great progress with this.

There are so many exciting events and opportunities to look forward to next half-term with Maypole dancing and Sports Day to name a few! I can't wait to see what Squirrels can achieve. Wishing everyone a happy and restful Easter!

TRACY HOBBS

Hedgehogs Class Teacher



This has been such an action packed half term that time has just flown by. World book day was the first big event and the children absolutely loved creating a class story with the author Bob Hartman. He was a wonderful story teller and the class were so keen to produce their own storyboards for 'Lollibob and Twinkle's Space Adventure.' The children have also written some amazing pieces of writing in their English lessons firstly writing diary extracts in character as Mary Anning, then character descriptions for Julia Donaldson's 'Baddies' and finally producing non-chronological reports on the Outback of Australia, linked to our work in geography.

For our geography learning this half term we have been studying weather and climate. We had great fun launching our topic by making tornadoes in a jar and reading all about 'Wild Weather'. We have revised our knowledge of continents and oceans and explored hot places near the equator and cold places at the north and south pole. We also looked at deserts exploring both the Sahara and Antarctica comparing and contrasting the two places.

Linked to our learning in geography Hedgehog class looked at wind power in their Design Technology lessons. They learnt all about stability and strength in structures as they examined different types of windmills. Their cutting skills were put to the test as they carefully created sails to attach to a base made out of paper cups. After much trial and error, we all eventually got our windmill sails turning in the wind and our structures stable – great effort everyone!

In maths this half term the children have been solving problems involving length, height, mass and capacity. We had great fun working out the capacity of containers as well as comparing different class room objects to find out the longest and the shortest!

Our trip to the Science Centre in Winchester was also full of excitement as we learnt about minibeasts in a workshop and explored all the wonderful activities and exhibitions especially learning all about sound. However, I think the highlight for most children was the planetarium where we were able to view the stars and planets. It was lovely to have such a hands-on experience and make special memories with the children.

Thank you again for all your hard work and support you give every day to the children in Hedgehogs. I hope you all have a fantastic Easter holiday, the children have definitely earned a break - they have been working so hard! I'm very excited about next half term as once again we will be brushing off our dancing bells and we will be experiencing the wonderful Treehouse Theatre Company as we learn all about the Great Fire of London! We will also be getting our hands dirty, making clay pots in art and planting seeds and plants in science.



HEDGEHOGS





## FOXES CLASS NEWS

AMANDA WALKER

Foxes Class Teacher



We've had a great Spring 2 term and have really embraced our theme 'All Creatures Great and Small.' We were so excited about our class trip to Launceston Farm and this was definitely one of our highlights. We were lucky with the weather and we were well looked after by the staff at Launceston. We enjoyed learning about what makes a healthy soil and the important part worms play in this. We loved digging for worms and enjoyed counting to see how many each group had found. We also had the opportunity to make our own bread rolls. We were shown some wheat and some of us had the opportunity to grind the wheat to make flour. Making our own bread rolls was very exciting and they smelt and tasted delicious after they were baked. The children had such a great time and we loved seeing them so engaged across the day and we were very proud of how respectful they all were on their very first, class trip.



Our learning this half-term has been centred around animal lifecycles and the farm. This started with the children exploring the lifecycle of a frog. We were lucky enough to observe the changes from frogspawn to tadpole in our classroom and have loved seeing the tadpoles swimming around their tank. The children loved creating their own lifecycle pictures to show their understanding of this process. Later in the term we enjoyed learning about animals and their babies on the farm. We were able to have some cuddles with 2 very cute lambs in the Nursery, 'Dolly' and 'Daisy'.



We enjoyed sharing our learning this half term with parents using glockenspiels. We loved singing and performing and worked hard to keep the beat when playing the glockenspiels.



Next half-term our theme is 'Once Upon a Time' and we will cover learning about plants and growth. We will be learning about what is needed to help plants grow and carry out some planting of our own. We will also have a big focus on Kings and Queens and learn about how and where they are crowned. We will learn about many London landmarks too and where these are in relation to each other using maps.



## NEWS FROM THE NURSERY – LET'S GO ON A HUNT

The Butterflies and Caterpillars have been immersed in the exciting theme of "Animals Big and Small." Through various activities and stories, they have explored the wonderful world of animals and nature.

The children delved into the book "Farmyard Hullabaloo," which introduced them to the lively environment of a farm. They learned about different farm animals, their sounds, and the roles they play. Discussions about what farms are and what we can grow on them were a big part of our learning. A memorable moment was when the children got to meet some baby lambs, bringing the farm experience to life!

With "Dear Zoo," the focus shifted to the woodlands and the importance of protecting our natural surroundings. The children compared animals found in our country to those around the world, fostering a global perspective on wildlife. This book also sparked conversations about conservation and how we can care for the woodlands around us.

### Special Experiences

- Discovering Spring: The children enjoyed observing the signs of spring, such as blooming flowers and insects, through outdoor activities.
- Celebrating Our Mums: Mother's Day was celebrated with heartfelt crafts and activities, allowing the children to show their appreciation for their mums and the special people in their lives.

Next term, our focus will be "Let's Get Growing." The children will explore plant life cycles and gardening through the beloved books "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" and "Jasper's Beanstalk." This theme will emphasize the importance of caring for our environment and understanding how plants grow.

We are excited for the upcoming term and all the new learning adventures it will bring!





## OFSTED REPORT

As you are all aware, last month St James' First School and Nursery welcomed Ofsted to come and inspect our school. This has been a long time coming for both the school and the nursery and we are delighted to be able to share the outcomes of our inspection which are overwhelmingly positive. Much has changed in the landscape of inspection since we were last visited in 2014 and the way in which the school is judged and reported on are significantly different. As such, the report captures only a small flavour of some of what was celebrated during the two-day inspection but perhaps lacks the word count to really do justice to what we know and love about our school. Word limit and structure aside, we are delighted!

As I am not as limited in words as the report is; and wanted to celebrate some of our key strengths, I have written a little more of what the Ofsted inspector fed back to us as part of their final feedback.

- Phonics and Reading were recognized as significant strengths. The offer for reading was clearly articulated, and it was evident that reading is seen as the gateway to learning. Strong outcomes were supported by expert teaching in both phonics and reading sessions.
- In Maths, the focus on fluency continues to have an impact. The work being done in Year 1 and 2 is strong, and what was observed in Year 1 was then reinforced in the Year 4 classroom. The structure of maths lessons was evident, and the inspectors noted the expert instruction supported by modelling either under the visualizer or using pictorial representations.
- The ambitious art curriculum is making a clear impact. Children were able to talk successfully about their current learning, focus artists, and techniques they have used. In History, where the curriculum is further embedded, children spoke passionately about their learning and could articulate previous learning.
- Behaviour was noted as calm and purposeful. Strong routines were embedded into the life of the school. Children play happily together, and children and parents were both able to articulate that bullying was not an issue at St James' - and where it did occur, it was taken seriously.
- Personal Development was highlighted as a strength. Children were clearly able to articulate how the school's visions and values impact them. They commented on the impressive provision for enrichment and how this provides children with the opportunity to develop further.
- The intentionality in the Reception classroom was strong. Children could talk confidently about their learning, and the inspectors witnessed countless rich discussions. There is a strong culture of opting in, and the inspector was overwhelmed with the self-efficacy of a group of boys who readily sat down at the writing table to show off their writing skills.
- The Parent View survey results were outstanding, with high percentages of parents and carers expressing satisfaction with the school. The inspectors also praised the sense of community and the dedication of our staff team, which uniquely defines our school.
- For our Nursery, this was their first inspection under a school-led framework, and the inspectors were confident in the continued success of the Nursery.

So whilst our report summarises our school as 'Good' in all categories, we know that St James' is defined by its heart, soul, and deep sense of community, ensuring no child is left behind.

## WORLD BOOK DAY

An annual highlight is always World Book Day which sees the whole school dress up as their favourite book character to celebrate our collective love of reading and literature. This year was no different with some truly unbelievable costumes from Mr Men to Chitty-Chitty Bang Bang! The day was also extra special as we welcomed author Bob Hartman to St James'. Bob has written over 100 children's books based on stories from the Bible and made us laugh and smile at so many of his stories. He then worked across the school to talk about the process of story writing and helped each class construct their own story.



## RHYMING BIBLE

It was an absolute privilege to welcome Saltmine Theatre Company to St James' for their performance of the Rhyming Bible. The adaptation of Bob Hartman's Rhyming Bible journeyed through the Bible, starting at the creation of the Earth, and ending with the story of Jesus at Easter.

The children were captivated by the performance, laughing and singing along and thoroughly enjoying themselves. The opportunity to see live theatre every year is so important and will no doubt inspire our children as they start rehearsals for our own big show!

A special thank you to the Bishop Wordsworth Educational Trust who gave a full grant to cover the cost of this performance.

## CELEBRATING OUR CHRISTIAN DISTINCTIVENESS

As both a school and Trust we celebrate our Christian values and how they affect our attitudes and actions. Over the course of the Spring term, we have been able to explore these in some of the events across the school including World Book Day and a special visit from a theatre company.

## LETTERS ARRIVE FROM SUDAN

Early on in the Spring term, all the children were able to write letters to our friends in Mangbond Primary School in South Sudan. They were each given a photo of an event in the life of St James' to share what school life is like in England. Last week, we received a special letter with some amazing replies. We will be using these as part of our worship next term but this one highlighted to me just how fortunate we are.

This is Mangbond Primary Schools' Main Water source. It is also used by the Community around as it has treated water that can be used in homes. In school, we use it to fetch drinking water. Which is This water point has really helped reduce cases of typhoid from drinking untreated or unboiled water.



## LOVE NEVER FAILS

In our final week of the term, we celebrated with a special Easter Service. The theme this year was 'Love Never Fails'. During our time together, we explored how Christians believe in the power of Jesus' love to bring light out of darkness, to give forgiveness for our wrong doings and acceptance for all.

A huge well done to all of those who took part, reading scriptures, writing and sharing prayers or singing as part of the choir.

## PARENT SHARE EVENTS

This half-term we have also continued our busy schedule of Parent Share events. These are such a wonderful moment where children share their work with their parents and carers, and we are able to collectively share their successes together. This term, Foxes performed on the glockenspiel, Hedgehog's shared their learning about Mary Anning, Squirrel's shared their stories they had written and Owls showcased their pneumatic toys.



## UPCOMING PARENT SHARE EVENTS



13<sup>th</sup> May (14.00 – 15.00) Year 1 and 2 (School in Bloom)



6<sup>th</sup> June (14.30 – 15.00) Hedgehogs Great Fire of London



15<sup>th</sup> May March (14.00 – 15.00) Foxes Royal Tea Party



3<sup>rd</sup> July (14.30 – 15.00) Owls French Café



## PRIORY SPORTS FESTIVAL

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> Priory Sports Festival took place towards the beginning of the Spring term with a team of Year 4 children heading over to Trinity Verwood to compete with the four Priory schools. It was another fantastic competition in which both our teams performed admirably. By the end of the final, the scores were tied and Wimborne St Giles were eventually crowned victorious on a complicated goals scored rule.

However, our children performed amazingly and demonstrated all our school values in abundance. Whilst our wait for silverware continues, our children are the greatest prize!

## SPORTS LEADER PROGRAM

Over the last term, we have welcomed in Sports Leaders from St Michael's Middle School who have been leading sessions across the school. This term, Year 2 enjoyed the Spring sun and took part in a variety of multi-skills activities. A huge thank you to those leaders who planned and delivered such fun activities for our children.

Next term, we will be taking a team of Year 3 and 4 students to St Michael's to compete against a number of other Wimborne schools.

## KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

Our number one priority is to keep your child safe. Our safeguarding team work closely with the wider school team to ensure that there are robust and clear procedures in place and that staff receive regular training. If you have a concern, please speak to a member of the safeguarding team.



Daniel Lawford  
Designated Safeguarding Lead



Laura Roberts  
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead



Claire Mallon  
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead



## USING AND REVIEWING PARENTAL CONTROLS

Phones and computers are, and to some degree, will always be an essential part of our children's lives growing up. However, unfiltered and unmonitored access to the internet is one of the greatest risks our children face. While not foolproof, parental controls can help with this, filtering out inappropriate content, limiting the ability to spend real money, capping screen time and generally making devices safer for young people.

So, this Easter break, why not take 10 minutes to read this super helpful [parent guide](#) and double check your parental control setting.

## PFA NEWS

The PFA continue their tremendous fundraising efforts and events this term include a whole school disco, a valentine's day hot chocolate and food bank donation, a pancake party and a barn dance. Their work continues to support not only the ongoing work on the school but also saving towards future capital investments that fall outside the scope of the school's normal budget.

For more information about upcoming PFA events, why not check out their Facebook page.

