



## HEADTEACHER'S WELCOME

Dear Parents and Carers,

As this newsletter arrives in your inbox, the children of St James' First School and Nursery have spent the day ensuring the dancing never stops to raise money for Abby's Heroes. At the time of writing, and with gift aid contributions, the children, parents, carers, neighbours and wider community have raised a mind blowing £4000. This figure is more than double our original target and shows the weight of compassion and togetherness we can demonstrate. There is a verse in the book of Ecclesiastes from the Bible which says...

*"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labour: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up."*

I love the idea that when two people are working together, we have a good return for our labour. But when one struggles, there is someone to pick them up. Never has that been more evident than in our school community – so thank you for your support.

Next term will be a whirlwind of events, and we have so much to look forward to (and get organised for!) We of course have the rearranged Sports Day and the Summer Social which is shortly followed by our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations on the 18<sup>th</sup> June. Education on our site at Gaunts Common has of course been around since the Victorian times but St James' School at Gaunts Common is turning fifty and we would love you to join us for our celebration service, enjoy our 'St James' through the ages' display and stay after school for a community picnic. This event is not just open to parents and carers but also those who have been associated with St James' in some way.

The summer term will culminate with our whole school production of Alice the Musical at the Layard Theatre. This is always a tremendous celebration and the children and team are already working hard to make it special. So as the sun fades on Summer One, can I say thank you to my staff for their continued efforts and dedication to ensure everyone thrives in our labour together and for being there to scoop up whoever falls down.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Lawford



St. James'  
CE First School



Diocese of Salisbury  
Academy Trust



### KEY DIARY DATES

- 02/06 First Day of Summer Two
- 06/06 Hedgehog's Parent Share
- 06/06 Vicky Slade MP Visiting School
- 09/06 Phonics Testing Week
- 09/06 MTC Testing Week
- 10/06 New Reception Information Evening
- 12/06 Year 4 Leavers Service at Salisbury Cathedral
- 18/06 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations
- 23/06 Year 4 Bikeability
- 24/06 Year 4 Bikeability
- 27/06 Transfer Day
- 03/07 Owls Parent Share
- 10/07 Squirrels River Study Visit
- 11/07 New Reception Transition Event
- 14/07 End of Year Reports Sent Home
- 16/07 Alice the Musical Matinee Performance
- 17/07 Alice the Musical Evening Performance
- 22/07 Year 4 Leavers Service
- 23/07 Thank You Service

**LAURA ROBERTS**

**Owls Class Teacher and Assistant  
Headteacher**



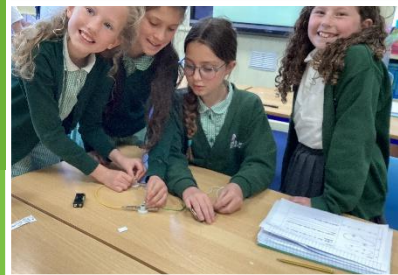
What an amazing half-term we have had! Although it has been short, it has certainly been action-packed.

Some of our favourite highlights of this half-term have included performing our Spider Web and Barber Pole Maypole dances at the May Fayre and watching the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra perform at Poole Lighthouse. The Hooke Court residential was yet another wonderful opportunity for Year 4. The trip was full of exciting activities and the children demonstrated brilliant teamwork and resilience. I was extremely proud of them all and we certainly made lots of special memories together.

Within our reading lessons, we have been enjoying 'The Night Bus Hero' by Onjali Q. Rauf. This book explores many important issues and promotes the message of kindness and helping others. In English, we enjoyed reading 'Tell Me a Dragon' by Jackie Morris and then used this as a stimulus to design our own dragons. What amazing creativity was shown! The children then wrote their own superb non-chronological reports about their dragons. With the Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check quickly approaching, we continue to work hard at recalling our times table facts. Both Year 3 and Year 4 have also completed learning linked to fractions and money.

In R.E, I have been impressed by the children's understanding of Pentecost and their thoughtful contributions. Our Art lessons have seen the children develop their techniques using clay in order to create their own coil pots. Within our history lessons, the children have developed their knowledge of the Vikings considering where they came from and reasons why they settled in Britain, their daily life and what Viking battles were like.

Our final half-term is set to be extremely busy with Year 4 Leavers' celebrations, our final parent share event, our whole school production of Alice the Musical at the Layard Theatre and lots of exciting learning opportunities. Wishing the whole St James' community a lovely half-term.



**OWLS CLASS NEWS**





## HOOKE COURT SPECIAL REPORT

Year 4 had a brilliant two-night residential stay at Hooke Court. They fully immersed themselves with all the activities on offer and were all superstars. Day one was definitely action-packed and the children enjoyed creating their own dens in the woodland area and then in the afternoon showed great determination and teamwork to complete the low ropes course. In the evening, the children loved using their creativity to make their own fossils from clay. Day two saw Year 4 complete a range of exciting history activities. The children worked together to cook a delicious Anglo-Saxon feast, created their own clay rune pendants and even recreated an Anglo-Saxon battle! To end our final night, we enjoyed an evening full of fun and laughter as we sang lots of songs around the campfire. On our final morning before we headed back to school, we enjoyed making and launching our own rockets! What an amazing time we had and lots of special memories were made!

*Mrs Roberts*



*"I liked the low ropes course and had lots of fun."*





*"I really enjoyed the campfire with Dave. We sang lots of funny songs and he did some amazing magic."*



*"I enjoyed cooking an Anglo-Saxon feast. I helped make the bread with Ethan which was delicious."*



*"I really enjoyed launching our rockets because they went 100 metres into the air!"*





HOLLY ANNELS

Squirrels Class Teacher



What an incredible half-term we have had! I continue to be amazed with the brilliant learning that has taken place and the teamwork shown.

During our English lessons, we have focussed on writing a non – chronological report all about koalas, inspired by our book ‘The koala who could’! They have excelled in drawing on previous knowledge and skills to craft an informative piece of writing. Their creativity and independence always blows me away! In our reading sessions, we have enjoyed ‘The Boy Who Grew Dragons’ together which has had us all on the edge of our seats waiting to find out what happens next and created lots of laughter and giggles. Year 2 and 3 both had a go at reading and creating poems, with year 2 also looking at performance poetry and how to engage the reader.

In maths, both year 2 and 3 have been learning about fractions. They have shown a solid understanding in fractions through positive engagement and accurate problem solving.

Year 2 loved sharing their scientific knowledge with parents at our most recent parent share. They even had a go at creating a cress bunny and planting a sunflower seed which we are carefully watching in school!

The May dancing was fabulous with Squirrels all working together to create a performance that they were truly proud of, the routine was really tricky and required lots of concentration but everyone showed great teamwork skills and came together to perform with no adult help. Our history learning has been a particular highlight of the half term with all the children learning lots and enjoying discovering new facts about the Ancient Greeks!

Next half term is set to be busy with sports day, the end of year show and lots more learning including Geography work all about rivers. I wish you all a lovely week’s holiday, and look forward to hearing all about it!

SQUIRRELS CLASS NEWS



**TRACY HOBBS****Hedgehogs Class Teacher**

Wow it almost seems impossible that we are at the end of another half term! It has been short but very busy. It started in the best way possible with a visit from Ben at the Treehouse Theatre Company. He came into school and immersed us in the drama of the Great Fire of London. The children had the opportunity to dress up, create their own character and join in the fight to stop the fire spreading! The children had an amazing time and learnt so much from the experience.

We continued our learning on the Great Fire of London in both our history and English lessons. We looked at Samuel Pepys's diary and a fictional story called 'Toby and the Great Fire of London'. We then wrote our own story of the fire and we can't wait to share these with you at our parent share on Friday 6th June at 2:30 in the school hall.

All of the children had great fun learning our country dance routine for our May Fayre. I was so impressed by how quickly the children learnt and remembered all the dance steps. They were all so excited to be able to perform in front of such a large audience – I now cannot wait for us to learn our dance routine and perform it in Alice the Musical.

It was brilliant to see so many of you at our science parent share this half term. The children loved planting their sunflower and cress seeds as well as testing their knowledge with labelling, sorting and quiz activities. Throughout the term they have been learning about the parts of plants and trees. They have identified various springtime flowers, and explored how changes in the sun's energy lead to changes in the weather which encourage plant growth.

Our art project for this half term has focused on using clay to make a useful 3D sculpture. We looked at the work of Rachel Dormor who creates finely thrown porcelain tableware taking her inspiration from drawings of fruit. To create our own pots, we explored shaping plasticine to make the shape of a bowl and we made observational drawings of fruit. The children then chose the fruit they were going to use for their bowl design before pinching and shaping the clay. Finally, they painted the fruit design onto their bowls before glazing them. We are all looking forward to displaying our work at our parent share next half term.

I hope you have a wonderful half term break and the children are well rested for an incredibly full final term - when we will be writing our own explorer story and designing front covers with moving parts in design technology. We will also journey to South East Asia for our geography work on Kampong Ayer as well as dancing and singing for our show! I'm excited just thinking about it

**HEDGEHOGS CLASS NEWS**



## FOXES CLASS NEWS



AMANDA WALKER

Foxes Class Teacher



We've had a fantastic half-term in Foxes Class. Our theme has been 'Once Upon a Time' and our learning started with a 'hook' based on the text 'Jack and the Beanstalk' when we found magic beans, alongside a cow, a boy and a giant! We then learnt this story in our 'Talk for Writing' sessions and enjoyed retelling it using our stage area in provision and to all the parents during our recent Parent Share.

We have loved learning about plants this half-term and finding out what they need to help them grow. We have conducted an experiment to see where beans grow best (with water and sunlight, with sunlight and no water, with water and darkness and with darkness and no water) and enjoyed watching what happens to these beans. We have planted carrots, beans, sunflowers and cress – thank you to Mrs Jenkins for supplying our seeds. We then used our cress as part of our English session and wrote instructions to make a cress sandwich. We really enjoyed sharing this experience during our Parent Share at our Royal Tea Party. Thank you for supporting this experience parents. Some children had mixed feelings about the cress sandwich but I'm glad to say most of the children were willing to try them!

Over the half term we have also learnt about castles and have been able to find out about their features. We have used key vocabulary when we have made our own castles from Lego, large blocks and Duplo. We loved finding out who would live in a castle and this led us on to talk more about the monarchy.

We've been fascinated by the city of London and have enjoyed exploring it using the Beebot robots and creating maps of the area. We are able to name some of the landmarks around London and have painted pictures of Big Ben, described the Houses of Parliament and have an understanding of the history of the Tower of London.

Next half-term takes our learning around the world! Our theme is called 'Let's Explore our Wonderful World' where we will explore different continents, animals, and arts/crafts within them.

Wishing you a restful half-term holiday and look forward to seeing you all soon.



**Year 4 Cross Country**

In late April, a team of 13 runners took part in a fantastic cross-country fixture at Castle Court School with many other primary and first schools. Our children ran valiantly and embodied our vision and values in their effort and determination. Whilst we didn't win the overall team prize, a special mention must be given to Bethany who was first in the girls race and took us all by surprise - what a fantastic and dominant run!

**Hedgehogs Launch Great Fire of London Topic in Style**

Hedgehogs class had a wonderful morning learning all about the Great Fire of London. Ben from Treehouse Theatre told the story of how the fire started and devastated our capital. The children became part of the cast as they dressed up and acted out the story to bring their learning to life. Despite their best efforts with the bucket, they couldn't stop the fire either.



**NEWS FROM ACROSS THE SCHOOL**



**May Pole Dancing**

We had a wonderful afternoon celebrating some rich traditions at St James'. Children from all classes, joined by parents, carers and wider family, performed a number of country dances culminating with Owls dancing around the maypole. A huge well done to all the children who, despite the heat, danced their hearts out.

Our afternoon wasn't over and it was wonderful to come together as a community for cream teas, cake and ice cream (and a huge amount more). Well done and thank you to St James' PFA for all your hard work - it is a blessing to the school.

**Year 3 and 4 Multi-Skills Festival**

We had St Michael's CE Middle School competing as part of the Year 3 and 4 Multi-skills festival. Children took part in a variety of six different athletic events, scoring points for their team. Whilst we weren't the overall winners, everyone competed with great commitment and did St James' proud. A huge thank you to the Year 8 Sports Leaders who led all the sessions and the PE Department for making us feel so welcome. Witchampton CE First School and Pamphill CofE First School you made excellent travel companions so thank you for sharing a coach with us.



## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AI solutions are trained on a large dataset of text to learn patterns and relationships and generate text, images, sound or even video based on the data they are trained on. As such, users can ask a question, provide a prompt or provide other source material and the AI solution will provide them with a response.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

#### 1. Accuracy

AI language models generate their responses based on the data they have been trained on. This might include inaccuracies and may include them in their response

#### 2. Bias

AI can perpetuate existing biases present in the data they are trained on. This could lead to biased responses and the reinforcement of stereotypes.

#### 3. Sense

AI solutions do not have the ability to understand the context or meaning of a question or prompt. This could result in either inaccurate or irrelevant non-sensical responses.

#### 4. Accountability

AI solutions do not have the ability to take responsibility for their responses they generate. This could cause confusion if the response they give is taken as fact.

*The percentage of 13- to 18-year-olds who said they had used generative AI increased from 2 in 5 (37.1%) in 2023 to 3 in 4 (77.1%) in 2024.*



It is clear that AI will continue to grow in popularity and use at home and school. We have a responsibility to help educate our children about AI, its positive applications but also its dangers.

Why not read this [Parent Guide](#) to find out more.

## 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