



## Headteacher's Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers,

The first half-term of Autumn is always one for setting expectations, working through new routines and structures and helping all our children settle into the new school year. Despite being long, everyone has done so incredibly well, and we are so fortunate to lead and serve such a wonderful group of students. With the usual lessons and structures all ticking along with great success, I have enjoyed reflecting on some things old and new that make our school special.

Fridays this term have been dedicated to tennis and we once again welcomed Wimborne Tennis Club to come and provide expert coaching to all classes. The children have loved taking part and we have seen tennis become a staple part of break and lunchtime play – so much so we invested in a collection of new nets so more children can get involved.

It has been wonderful to see so many children attending the clubs and extra-curricular opportunities on offer – they are an opportunity to try something new, get involved in something they love or make new friends. We have, for the first time, successfully introduced peripatetic music lessons for piano in year 3 and 4 with the hope of adding guitar in the New Year. With the new clubs list now available, why not take some time with your children to support and encourage which club (or clubs) they might want to attend next term.

After a successful trial in the Summer term, Forest School for Reception has been a huge success and Mrs Shergold continues to provide such wonderful and stimulating learning in our fledgling outside space. With the limitations of budget a constant pressure, I have been working hard to secure funding from external grants and charities and have so far raised £7500 to support Forest School, redevelop the Nurture Nook and fund school trips.

With the winter months upon us, our next half-term is even busier with so much excitement to pack in. For now, have a wonderful half-term break.

Mr Lawford



St. James'  
CE First School



Diocese of Salisbury  
Academy Trust

## KEY DIARY DATES

- 03/11** First Day of Autumn Two
- 03/11** Owls Parent Share
- 04/11** St Michaels Sports Leaders PE with Year 4
- 10/11** Odd Sock Day
- 11/11** Community Remembrance Service
- 11/11** St Michaels Sports Leaders PE with Year 4
- 14/11** Children in Need Bake Sale
- 20/11** Flu Immunisations
- 20/11** Squirrels Parent Share
- 21/11** PFA Movie Night
- 24/11** Year 3 and 4 Priory Cup Football Tournament
- 26/11** School Choir Performing at Olive Branch
- 28/11** PFA Mufti Day (Bring a bottle)
- 29/11** Breakfast Church
- 06/12** PFA Christmas Fair
- 11/12** Hedgehogs Parent Share
- 12/12** Owls Parent Share
- 14/12** Holt Village Hall Jingle and Mingle (Choir Performing)
- 17/12** Owls Community Carol Singing
- 18/12** Nursery and Foxes Christmas Nativity at Holtwood
- 19/12** Christmas Party Day

**LAURA ROBERTS**

Owls Teacher and Deputy Headteacher



Owls have had a fantastic first half-term and I am extremely proud of them! It has been wonderful to see them demonstrating our school values and they should be commended on their positive attitude towards learning. They have shown resilience, great teamwork and increased independence. A highlight of this half-term was our visit to Hooke Court to support our learning on the Romans. Owls enjoyed an action-packed day completing a range of exciting history activities including Roman marching, making clay lamps, Roman cookery, Roman jewellery making and weaving.

In Owls, we love to read and we have enjoyed solving the mystery of the shadow in the 'Case of the Lighthouse Intruder' by Kereen Getten. In addition to this, during our English lessons, the children have developed their understanding of expanded noun phrases and conjunctions. They have applied this learning when writing their own character descriptions linked to 'The Enormous Crocodile' by Roald Dahl. It has been wonderful to see the children working hard each week to learn their weekly spellings and making use of 'Spelling Shed' to support with this.

In Maths for both Year 3 and Year 4, the children have focused on place value and addition and subtraction. The children have been working hard in their times table daily fluency sessions to improve their accuracy and speed recalling these key facts. Year 4 have also been working hard to improve their Sound Check scores on TTRS in preparation for their MTC in June.

In our science lessons, Year 4 have developed their understanding of the digestive system and the functions of our different types of teeth. Year 3 have compared and grouped together different kinds of rocks and have learnt how fossils are formed.

Across the wider curriculum, the children have enjoyed designing and making their own pavilions. The children have demonstrated amazing creativity and teamwork. We are looking forward to sharing our design technology learning with you at our parent share event on Monday 3rd November at 2:30. In addition to this, we have enjoyed getting active during our PE sessions, developing our tennis and tag rugby skills.

As always, thank you for your continued support and wishing the whole St James' community a lovely half-term.



**OWLS CLASS NEWS**





## SQUIRRELS CLASS NEWS



### HOLLY ANNELS

Squirrels Class Teacher



What a fantastic and very busy half-term it has been I know the children are ready for a rest! The children have made an excellent start to their time in Squirrels. It has been wonderful to see them demonstrating such positive attitudes and showing commitment to their learning, I have been so impressed by the teamwork they have shown. A large amount of Squirrels class have engaged with clubs within school throwing themselves back in to life at St James. It has been a pleasure to watch the children show our school values, through endless acts of kindness and happy friendships.

Squirrels have been reading Claude in the City which provided endless giggles we even had to read some more of the same series! We have also read Flat Stanley and Rabbit and Bear – both have been loved. During our English lessons we have written our own character descriptions all about Heather from the story Lights on Cotton Rock as well as a recount on our trip to Hooke Court. The children have been so imaginative with their writing creating some lovely final pieces that we will be sharing at our parent share in Autumn 2 all about Stone Age Britain.

In maths the children have been focusing on place value, addition and subtraction. The year 3s times table knowledge is really developing with all the practice they have been doing. Squirrels class have loved PE this half term learning new skills in both hockey and tennis even managing to play some competitive games. In DT all the children showed great perseverance in order to build their very own moving monster.

Our educational visit to Hooke Court was an incredible success, with the children still talking about how much they enjoyed it now. All of Squirrels behaviour was exemplary and I couldn't have been prouder of them. May I take this opportunity to thank all the parents that came on this trip, and the parents that come in to help within our class, the work that is produced and the trips that the children are lucky to attend would not be possible without your support, we are incredibly grateful to you.

Wishing you all a restful half term.

**TRACY HOBBS**

Hedgehogs Class Teacher



The first seven weeks with Hedgehog Class has just flown by! Everyone has settled in so well – everyone has adapted amazingly to their new routines and structures in class. All the children have worked so incredibly hard and I'm so proud of the work they have produced!

This half term we have been thinking about harvest, looking at how fruit and vegetables are grown and this has linked in with your Design Technology work on making smoothies. We all had such a wonderful time preparing and blending fruit to make our two smoothies. Thank you so much for making our smoothie café event such a success and helping the children to evaluate and compare their smoothies. Afterwards the children wrote out their instructions for making smoothies in their English lessons.

All of the children loved learning about the adventures of Cat, Squirrel and Duck in the story Pumpkin Soup. Children especially enjoyed acting out the different parts in the story and writing a missing poster for Duck.

For our geography learning we have explored the topic 'Beside the Seaside'. Children have loved making their very own rockpools and sandy beaches in a tray as they looked at the similarities and differences between Wembury beach in Devon and Bournemouth beach. We also examined the human and physical features of beaches and looked at the impacted of people using beaches and not always looking after them.

Children in year 1 have been busy learning about animals in their science lessons. They have been sorting and classifying animals according to various criteria, thinking about the animal groups of reptiles, amphibians, birds, fish, mammals and insects. Materials was the focus of the year 2 science, in lessons they learnt about the different properties of materials and thought about the best uses for different materials. This ended with children exploring the best material to use to make a structure, which I know all the children thoroughly enjoyed.

This half term is equally as actioned packed as we explore the art work of Sonia Delaunay and look at the incredible work of Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale in history – we look forward to sharing our learning with you at our next parent share on December 11th



**HEDGEHOGS CLASS NEWS**





## FOXES CLASS NEWS



AMANDA WALKER

Foxes Class Teacher



Well done to all of the Foxes for completing their very first half term in school. The team have been so impressed with how the children have entered school, showing such an enthusiastic approach and coming into school with smiles on their faces every day. It is certainly a busy half term where children have to learn new routines and expectations. They have done so well with this and it has also been so lovely to see new friendships being formed – well done everyone.

Our theme has been 'I Am Special, I Am Me' and we have enjoyed hearing about everyone's family, sharing photos and talking about different family members. We have named different body parts, looked at our faces closely and then made playdough sculptures of our faces taking inspiration from Picasso. We have learnt about our senses, how to keep healthy (food and oral health) and have enjoyed looking at our community. We have loved taking a 'virtual walk' to some children's houses that live nearby and following this up with drawing maps of our own routes to school. We have also learnt so many new sounds and have started to blend these sounds together to help us read words during our RWI sessions. We have really enjoyed playing 'Fred' games to help our blending skills too. We have loved using big arm movements over the half term using scarves, painting up and down with water and mark making on large chalk boards. All of these will be a great help towards our writing journey. The children have made such progress with their letter formation; they have learnt many rhymes to help with this.

Next half-term our theme is 'Into the Woods' and this will cover learning about animals that live in woods, particularly bears. We will learn about various countries that have bears and find these on a map. We will also be learning about Bonfire Night and Christmas celebrations.

We look forward to hearing all about the children's half term adventures after the holiday.

Have a super break everyone.



## NEWS FROM THE NURSERY

What a fantastic first half term we've had in Nursery, there have been lots of new faces but all the children have settled so beautifully, and it's been wonderful to see new friendships blossom. Our topic has been Marvellous Me, we've looked at families and homes, our bodies and how to keep healthy and we've had lots of fun exploring our senses. Our Maths topics have been Patterns, Matching and Comparing and Shape and Space, we've loved exploring these concepts creatively in our provision time.

Autumn has been a big focus and the weather has been perfect for us to go on Autumn Walks around the field and down to the Forest School, collecting lots of leaves, conkers and acorns to use in our learning activities. Nursery children will be bringing home bags to make their own little Autumn Collections over half term, we can't wait to see what they'll bring back to share with us!

Mr Lawford has been joining us regularly with his ukulele to teach us new action songs, and we've been using the school hall and playground twice a week for our Healthy Movers, learning how to use our bodies with control.

This year, we opened the Nursery as part of the school's Open Evening which was a big success and we also held a parents coffee afternoon with the support of the PFA. It was brilliant to have that time for our families to connect with each other as well as the Nursery team.

Next term, our topic is 'Let's Go On a Hunt', where we'll be thinking more about woodland animals. We're also really excited for our first Nativity performance with Foxes class this year, more info to come on that!

Have a lovely half term and thank you for all your support.

Miss Jay





## YEAR 4 ISING POP

We are so privileged to be part of the Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust (DSAT) who form a family of schools who work collaboratively to ensure all our children thrive. We once again gathered with the other 27 DSAT schools at Salisbury Cathedral to sing and dance together in our annual concert. It was so lovely to see our year 4's working together as a class but also forming a chorus of joy that filled this historic building with a lively sound.



## HARVEST FESTIVAL

We once again travelled to Holtwood Methodist Church for our annual Harvest Festival. As part of our service, Reverend Nick spoke about the injustice in our world using sweets to help us understand. He shared his 100 sweets between 10 children, but when one child received 93 sweets things seemed a little unfair! The same pattern is true of our world with ten percent of the world's population controlling over 90% of the wealth.

We are incredible fortunate to have all that we have, and we therefore partnered with Wimborne Food Bank and gave generously to show how thankful we are. Donations given by our children and families have gone to support those in our community struggling with the Cost of Living Crisis. By giving generously we have come together and demonstrated all of our Christian values in abundance.

Thank you to all those who joined to be part of our service. You'll be pleased to know we shared the sweets out when we got back to school.



## CHRISTMAS SHOE BOXES

Christmas is such an exciting time for all of us (although starting in September is sometimes a bit much). As in previous years, we will once again be supporting the Samaritan's Purse 'Operation Christmas Child' project. This project seeks to make a difference to the lives of less fortunate children across the globe who are unfortunately experiencing poverty and hardship. The aim of the project is to spread joy and happiness at Christmas time through gifting children shoeboxes filled with essential items, small gifts and treats.



[Find out more](#)

Shoeboxes must be in school by **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November.**



Parent Choice Award

PRESENTED TO

**Diocese of Salisbury  
Academy Trust**St James Church of England  
First School

2024/25

edurio

## WINNERS

We are delighted to announce that our wonderful school has been recognised in the Edurio National Awards 2024 - 2025. We won the Parent Choice Award in this year's national survey, placing St James First School and Nursery top in our region and within the top 10 performing schools nationally.

Our school flourishes because of our strong relationship with parents and we are continually grateful for your support - in fact we couldn't do it without you.

## PROMOTING YOUNG LEADERS

St James' is not just about the academic success in the classroom but about giving all children the chance to try out new experiences and using these to help them grow. Leadership is one of these opportunities with young leaders across the school helping to support their peers, encourage community and ensure day-to-day life in the school runs smoothly.

## SCHOOL COUNCIL

We are pleased to announce this year's school council that were elected by each class and will be working with Mrs Trevor every other week. They will be the voice of the children within the school and lead on projects that help improve the school.

There first event is helping to organise and run our Children in Need bake sale.



## PLAY LEADERS

In the next year, we are looking to encourage the children at St James' to play an active role in leading and developing the school community outside on the playground.

Earlier this month, six year 4's attended Play Leader training with other First Schools from across Dorset. They learnt how to set up fun and inclusive activities that all children can take part in at lunch and break times.





The Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust comprises of 28 First and Primary Schools with almost 5000 students and 1000 staff. We are proud to be a part of both a supportive and constructive Trust who consistently provide a high-level of support to ensure we deliver the best possible educational opportunities for your children.

DSAT Collaborate is the name given to our professional learning network for all staff. At the heart of our school is the curriculum, the carefully planned and constructed journey that ensures learning remains 'sticky' and not forgotten. Throughout the year, DSAT Collaborate host curriculum development days for all teachers and subject leaders, as well as specific professional development for the wider support and administrative teams. This ensures our curriculum is in a process of constant refinement and never static.

This year, staff and leaders will attend up-to twenty curriculum and professional development conferences that will help to shape our teaching and learning at St James' and ultimately provide better opportunities for our children. With nurseries becoming increasing common within the school context, we are also delighted to be able to take part our first Nursery specific development day which we will be able to send our whole Nursery team to.

I find myself central to the development of our digital strategy across the Trust. The multi-faceted role looks at both the centrality of technology in ensuring we can both function effectively but also how the Computing Curriculum needs to constantly evolve to ensure our children make effective use of technology in an increasingly digital and automated world.

In April, the whole Trust will gather for our annual INSET. It is a powerful moment when 1000 staff come together in one place. Our focus this year will be how we can effectively enact our digital strategy. We will be joined by national leaders in education to exemplify how technology can support and enhance classroom learning but also consider how Artificial Intelligence can be effectively used both as a professional and how we should further support children who will grow up in a world dominated by automated technology.

## 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