


# Headteacher's Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of our first half-term, there is so much to celebrate and be thankful for. Following our Harvest Festival, I have been reflecting on the idea of stewardship: caring for all that God has entrusted to us and using what we have to make a difference to others. Our children have demonstrated this ability to give back in abundance. Supported by your generosity, they have shown that even our youngest members have something valuable to offer our community.

In 1 Peter 4:10**,** we are reminded to use the gifts we have received to serve one another and to be good stewards of God's grace. This is a wonderful reminder that giving is about more than donations; it is also about sharing our time, kindness and talents.

I would also like to say a heartfelt thank you to all our staff for their incredible dedication to the school, serving your children diligently regardless of the challenges they face. I wish to also acknowledge all that Miss Roberts has stepped into during my absence both at St James and Wimborne St Giles. My knee surgery proved more complicated than expected, but surgery was successful and I am well on the way to recovery and hope to be back with you in full health during the next few weeks.

I hope you all enjoy a restful half-term break, and I look forward to sharing all that next half-term brings.

Many thanks



Mr Lawford



St. James' CE First School

Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust

## KEY DIARY DATES

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|---|---|
| **02/11** | First Day of Autumn Two |
| **03/11** | St Michael's Sports Leaders |
| **06/11** | PFA Movie Night |
| **13/11** | Children in Need Mufti Day (Spots and Stripes) |
| **13/11** | Children in Need Bake Sale |
| **13/11** | Deadline for Christmas Shoe Boxes |
| **14/11** | Odd Sock Day |
| **19/11** | Year 3 and 4 Priory Cup Football |
| **27/11** | Pupil Power Assembly – Surfers Against Sewage |
| **04/12** | PFA Mufti Day (Hamper Donation) |
| **08/12** | Truth be Told at the Nursery |
| **09/12** | Hedgehog's Parent Share |
| **11/12** | PFA Christingle |
| **14/12** | Owls Parent Share |
| **16/12** | Owls Carol Singing in the Community |
| **16/12** | Squirrels Parent Share |
| **17/12** | Christmas Nativity at Holtwood Methodist |
| **18/12** | Christmas Party Day (including Christmas Meal) |
| **04/01** | INSET Training Day |
| **05/01** | First Day of Spring One |

**LAURA ROBERTS**

Owls Teacher and Deputy Headteacher



Owls have had a wonderful first half-term! I have been incredibly proud of their enthusiastic attitudes towards learning and the fantastic work they have produced across the curriculum.

During our whole-class reading lessons, we have thoroughly enjoyed reading 'The Secret Seven' and 'Edward Tulane'. The children have been captivated by both texts and have demonstrated thoughtful ideas when exploring the stories and characters. In our English lessons, we have used the picture books 'Jumanji' by Chris Van Allsburg and 'The Dinosaur Next Door' by David Litchfield to inspire some imaginative character and setting descriptions using a range of conjunctions and expanded noun phrases.

In Maths, both Year 3 and Year 4 have focused on place value, addition and subtraction. It has been fantastic to see the determination and perseverance the children have shown when applying their learning to challenging problem-solving and reasoning tasks. Year 4 have also been working incredibly hard during their daily times table fluency sessions, developing their accuracy and speed when recalling these important facts.

In Science, Year 4 have developed their understanding of the digestive system and explored the different types of teeth and their functions. Year 3 have enjoyed investigating different kinds of rocks, comparing and grouping them according to their properties, as well as discovering how fossils are formed.

To bring our learning about the Romans to life, Owls enjoyed a memorable visit to The Ancient Technology Centre in Cranborne. The children enthusiastically took part in a range of exciting hands-on activities, including making cob bricks, roman marching and weaving.

Owls have also shown fantastic creativity and determination during their Design and Technology lessons, where they designed, made and evaluated their own unique and colourful cushions in a wonderful variety of shapes and designs.

To end a brilliant half-term, Year 4 enjoyed a special visit to Salisbury Cathedral, where they took part in the iSingPop concert alongside other Year 4 children from DSAT. They were a credit to the school, performing with confidence, enthusiasm and joy.

As always, thank you for your continued support. We are incredibly proud of everything Owls have achieved this half-term and wish the whole St James' community a happy half-term break.





## OWLS CLASS NEWS

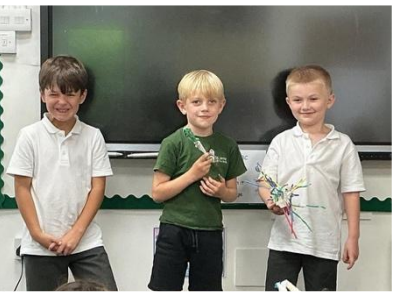

















# SQUIRRELS CLASS NEWS













## HOLLY ANNELS

**Squirrels Class Teacher**



What a fantastic and very busy half-term it has been! 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.

They have loved our castles DT unit and have really lived out the school value of love with the care and help they have given to their friends. I really can't believe it is half term already! 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 Hotel Flamingo which provided endless giggles and a desire to read all the other Hotel Flamingo books, and we have now moved on to The Hodgeheg – a story all about a hedgehog who wants to cross the road! During our English lessons we have written our own character descriptions of Traction man from the Traction Man book as well as a recount on our trip to the ancient technology centre. The children have been so imaginative with their writing, creating some lovely final pieces that we have proudly displayed on the walls in our classroom. In maths the children have been focusing on place value, addition and subtraction.

Year 3's doubles 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 team games! Our educational visit to the Ancient Technology Centre was an incredible success, with the children still talking about how much they enjoyed it and enjoying showing visitors the willow and wool weavings that we brought back. All of Squirrel's 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 would not be possible without your support, we are incredibly grateful to you.

## TRACY HOBBS

### Hedgehogs Class Teacher



This first half term with Hedgehog Class has just flown by! Everyone has settled in so well - I can't get over how grown up and mature the year 2 children have been this first half term, and the year 1 children have adapted amazingly to their new routines and structures in class. All of the children have produced some fabulous work and they should all be incredibly proud of themselves!

We began the year with our history topic exploring, 'Toys Through Time' and were very excited to have a 'hands on history 'loan box from the Museum of East Dorset. Hedgehogs absolutely loved playing with the 'pick up sticks', 'Jacks', marbles, Jacob's ladder and pop gun to name just a few. Children also brought their own favourite toys in to school to share with the class. Through their learning the children examined the different materials used to make toys 100 years ago compared to toys today.

In art and design, we have been looking at the artist Georgia O'Keeffe as part of our work on seasonal drawings. The children have learnt different sketching techniques and applied these to drawing leaves. For the final piece of art work, they have sketched leaves and used watercolours to show their autumnal colours. Outside in forest school hedgehogs also had the opportunity to print with leaves and press leaves and flowers onto material.

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. Meanwhile in year 1, children have been sorting and classifying animals according to various criteria, thinking about the animal groups of reptiles, amphibians, birds, fish, mammals and insects.

All of the children had worked incredibly hard on their phonics, reading, spelling and handwriting this half term. In English they have written fantastic character descriptions inspired by the book The Squirrels Who Squabbled by Rachel Bright. We finished the term writing recounts of our visit to the church to celebrate our harvest festival.

I hope you all have a fantastic autumn break and am looking forward to welcoming the children back to explore the world where we live and perform with puppets!











## 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. We have been so proud of how well the children have settled into school life. They arrive each day with enthusiasm, big smiles and a readiness to learn. Starting school is a huge milestone, and the children have worked incredibly hard to learn new routines, follow expectations and become part of our school community. It has also been wonderful to watch new friendships blossom.

This half term our theme has been 'I Am Special, I Am Me'. The children have loved sharing information about their families through photographs and discussions about the special people in their lives. We explored different parts of the body, studied our facial features and created playdough self-portraits inspired by the artwork of Picasso.

As part of our learning, we discovered how our senses help us understand the world around us and talked about ways to keep healthy, including healthy eating and looking after our teeth. We also learned about our local community, taking virtual walks to some children's homes and creating maps to show our own journeys to school.

In our phonics sessions, the children have worked hard to learn many new sounds and have begun blending sounds together to read simple words. They have especially enjoyed playing 'Fred Games', which have helped them to become more confident readers.

To support early writing skills, the children have taken part in lots of large-scale movements using scarves, water painting and chalkboards. These activities help develop the muscles and coordination needed for writing. We have been delighted with the progress the children have made with their letter formation this half term.

Next half term, our topic will be 'Into the Woods'. We will be learning about woodland animals, with a particular focus on bears. The children will explore where different bears live around the world and locate these countries on a map. We will also be learning about Bonfire Night, Diwali and Christmas celebrations.





# NEWS FROM THE NURSERY

Our nursery children have had a lovely start to the autumn term in our topic Marvellous Me, settling into routines, building friendships and getting to know one another. We've enjoyed lots of outdoor adventures, including walks to the trim trail and a fun puddle walk, making the most of the changing autumn weather and spotting the autumnal changes.

We've explored autumn through playdough, making our own crumble and investigating autumn leaves. We've also been developing our fine and gross motor skills by practising our cutting skills and making big rainbow shapes to strengthen our shoulders in preparation for writing. It's been a wonderful half term of exploring, learning and growing in confidence. In our next topic, we will be doing lots of searching through nature as we look at 'We're going on a Bear Hunt' as well as 'Leaf Man' before the run up to Christmas.







# HARVEST FESTIVAL

We once again gathered at Holtwood Methodist Church for our annual Harvest Festival—a joyful opportunity to give thanks for all that we have and to reflect on how we can share God's blessings with others. Our theme this year was stewardship: the understanding that everything belongs to God and that we are called to care wisely and generously for all that He has entrusted to us. Through one of Jesus' parables, we explored how each of us can use what we have—however great or small—to make a positive difference and support those in need.

Recognising how fortunate we are, we partnered with Allendale Community Centre to support local people facing the pressures of the cost-of-living crisis. The generous donations from our children and families were a wonderful expression of gratitude, compassion and community spirit. By sharing our harvest with others, we brought our Christian values to life in a meaningful and practical way. Thank you to everyone who joined us for the service, to our families for giving so generously, and to the team at Holtwood Methodist Church for their warm welcome and hospitality.





# YEAR 4 iSING POP

What a wonderful and memorable day our Year 4 children had at Salisbury Cathedral for the DSAT iSingPop celebration!

This special occasion brought together children from across our Trust to celebrate their time in primary education and the community that connects us all.

It was magical to see such an iconic building filled with the energy and enthusiasm of so many young voices. The uplifting songs, with messages of unity, friendship and belonging, created a wonderful celebration of worship. The children sang and danced with confidence, excitement and joy.

Their enthusiasm was infectious, their behaviour was excellent, and they represented our school beautifully. I felt incredibly proud watching them embrace the experience and contribute to something bigger than themselves.

It was lovely that some families could join us. For those unable to attend, please know that your children did you proud and were part of something genuinely uplifting.

As our Year 4 children move through their final year with us, occasions like this remind us how much they have grown. It was a privilege to share such a joyful experience with them and a day I will remember fondly.

Mrs Trevor

Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust

# 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 13th November.**

# 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.



# 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



Rebecca Peckham

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead



Hannah Hardyman

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead