



Headteacher's Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers,

As the Autumn Festival closes out our first half-term together, I want to share how incredibly proud we all are of the children at St James' First School and Nursery. They have all made a tremendous start to the year and I know that from this strong foundation they will go on to achieve at the highest level.

It is also wonderful to celebrate things that are new and the Autumn festival is a fresh event on the PFA calendar. Of course, being one school and nursery together is also new and I want to extend a huge welcome to our nursery parents who will potentially be reading this newsletter for the first time. It is so wonderful to have you as part of the community and I look forward to sharing in this adventure together.

Whilst some things are new, there are many things that remain the same. One of which is the strength of our community being the bedrock to the Schools ongoing success. In recent weeks, I have personally benefitted from community coming together to offer support in times of need, and it is something we see in action on a daily basis. Whether it is volunteers giving up their time to hear children read, the PFA raising vital funds for upcoming projects or parents taking part in school trips. We shouldn't underestimate how unique this is and the strength it can give us.

During this term, I have been challenged to think about our global impact our community can have and it was wonderful to join with our worship leaders for our first video call with our partner school in South Sudan. In a country torn apart by war, the level of need is so great and we have a part to play in making a difference. I have tasked our Worship Leaders in helping lead our fundraising effort over the next year.

With so much to look forward to next half-term, I hope you have a restful break and I look forward to welcoming you all back in November.

Mr Lawford



St. James'
CE First School



Diocese of Salisbury
Academy Trust

KEY DIARY DATES

- 04/11** First Day of Autumn Two
- 05/11** St Michael's Sports Leaders leading PE with Owls
- 06/11** Year 3 Priory Football Competition
- 12/11** Odd Sock Day for Anti-Bullying
- 12/11** St Michael's Sports Leaders leading PE with Squirrels
- 15/11** Mufti-Day for Children in Need followed by Cake Sale
- 15/11** PFA Movie Night
- 05/12** Hedgehog's Parent Share
- 07/12** PFA Christmas Fair
- 15/12** St James' Choir Performing at Holt Village Hall
- 19/12** Nursery Christmas Party
- 19/12** School Nativity at Hinton Martell Church (followed by Mince Pies)
- 20/12** Nursery Nativity at Holtwood Methodist Church
- 20/12** Last Day of Autumn Two

LAURA ROBERTS

Owls Teacher and Assistant Headteacher



Owls have had a brilliant first half-term! I have been extremely impressed with the teamwork they have demonstrated and the enthusiasm they have shown towards our learning.

During our whole class reading lessons, we have enjoyed reading 'The Secret Seven' and 'Edward Tulane'. 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 and setting descriptions linked to 'Jumanji' by Chris Van Allsburg and 'The Dinosaur Next Door' by David Litchfield.

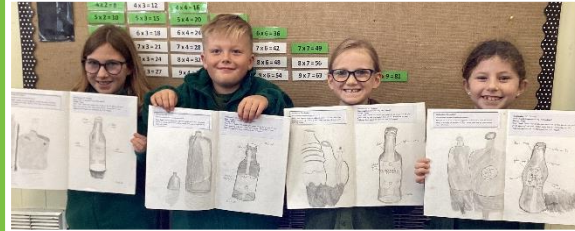
In Maths for both Year 3 and Year 4, the children have focused on place value and addition and subtraction. It has been wonderful to see the perseverance the children have shown when applying their learning to problem solving and reasoning tasks. Year 4 have been working hard in their times table daily fluency sessions to improve their accuracy and speed recalling these key facts.

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. Both Mrs Trevor and I have been very impressed with the knowledge the children have developed and their scientific enquiry skills shown.

Without a doubt, Owls have been given some great opportunities this half-term. It was a pleasure to accompany Year 4 on their visit to Salisbury Cathedral where they took part in the iSingPop Concert with the other Year 4 children from DSAT. They were a credit to the school and performed with confidence and enthusiasm. In addition to this, this term, Owls have been given the wonderful opportunity of learning to play the ukulele. The children have so far completed half of their lessons with Mr Arthur from Dorset Music Service. They are extremely excited to showcase their learning at the final performance scheduled for Wednesday 4th December.

To support our learning on the Romans, Owls enjoyed a visit to The Ancient Technology Centre in Cranborne. The children completed a range of exciting activities including making cob bricks, blacksmithing and weaving.

In our art lessons, the children have focused on developing their observational drawing skills and have been inspired by the work of Picasso. For their final outcome, the children created their own 3-D bottles which they are extremely proud of. As always, thank you for your continued support and wishing the whole St James' community a wonderful half-term.



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. 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 we have now moved on to *Kate on the case* – a detective story set on a steam train! During our English lessons we have written our own character descriptions all about T bear from *Hotel Flamingo* as well as a recount on our trip to the harvest festival. 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. Their 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!

Our educational visit to the ancient technology centre was an incredible success, with the children still talking about how much they enjoyed it now. 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



The first seven weeks 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!

This half term 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 flowers and leaves. For the final piece of art work, they have sketched leaves and used watercolours to show their autumnal colours.

For our history learning we have explored the topic '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. We also had a go at making our own peg dolls. Through their learning the children examined the different materials used to make toys 100 years ago compared to toys today.

Materials was also 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 wrote fantastic character descriptions in English inspired by the books *The Squirrels Who Squabbled* (by Rachel Bright), *Ravi's Roar* and *River* (both by Tom Percival). 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

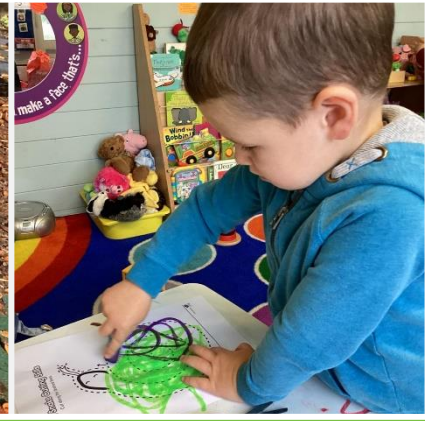


I cannot believe we are at the end of our very first half term; time has flown by. The Foxes team have been so impressed with how the children have entered school, showing such an enthusiastic approach and coming into school with smiles on their faces every day. It is certainly a busy half term where 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 collaged 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, large chalk circles on the playground and mark making on large chalk boards. All of these will be a great help towards our writing journey.

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 celebrations such as Bonfire Night, Diwali and Christmas.

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

It's remarkable that we've reached half-term already! They say time flies when you're having fun, and this term has certainly been enjoyable. The children at St. James' Nursery have adapted beautifully to their new routines, and you should all be very proud of their progress.

This term's theme has been "Marvellous Me," where we've explored the senses, delved into the human body, and learned about kindness towards friends. We've also embraced the beauty of Autumn! The children have had a great time exploring pumpkins and leaves, engaging in sensory play to discover various textures and the smoothness of the pumpkins. We've discussed the vibrant colours of the season, and they've produced wonderful artwork inspired by nature. It has been delightful to watch them explore the St. James' first school grounds, having fun on the Trim Trail and in the Maze.

Our reading list this half-term has included delightful stories such as "Rainbow Fish," "Room on the Broom," and "The Gruffalo." In mathematics, we've counted sticks outdoors and practiced measuring and counting while baking. When we return, we will continue our Autumn exploration with "Going on a Bear Hunt." If you find any interesting autumnal items in nature during the half-term break, please bring them in to share with the class. We will also start preparations for our Nativity! More details will follow soon, so please save the date – 20th December 2024.

Please note that our email address has changed. You can now reach us at nurseryoffice@stjames.dsat.org.uk. Please use this email address to report any illnesses, holiday requests, bookings etc. We wish everyone a great half-term and look forward to more exciting adventures in the coming term!



SINGING 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.



Diocese of Salisbury
Academy Trust



HARVEST FESTIVAL

The idea of a harvest festival in churches was first introduced in the 1800's with hymns and readings to give thanks for the bounty of the fields and orchards. The festival has changed over the years and today tends to focus on charitable giving and sharing of food with those who do not have access to basic provisions. On Tuesday 15th October, the St James' children and the wider community gathered at Holtwood Methodist to continue this tradition. The theme was Hope at Harvest and our service was a lively collection of songs, readings and an interactive message by Reverend Nick.

We once again partnered with Wimborne Food Bank and we were so grateful for the many donations given by our children and families that will go 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.



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 15th November.**



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.

WORSHIP LEADERS

Our worship leaders play a pivotal role in helping to share our collective worship, engaging with our local and wider community and helping prepare practically for collective worship each day.

This term, our worship leaders had the opportunity to speak to the headteacher and children at Mangbondo Primary School in South Sudan. This school for close to 700 students is in desperate need of our help and support both to support the renovations of their crumbling buildings but also to provide the basic resources they need for school life. Our worship leaders will help to coordinate our fundraising effort in the next few months.



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



Claire Bischoff

Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT 'IN-GAME' CHAT

Video games are continuing to grow in popularity – including, of course, among children and young people – and the emergence of gaming communities has acceleration by the inclusion of chat functionality across many different titles. While in-game chat isn't inherently a bad thing, it can create some concerns about online safety and the people that children might be interacting with.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHAT

There are a number of ways that gamers commonly chat with one another online. As the name would suggest, in-game chat happens within the game itself. There's also party chat: a group voice conversation that console users can have with anyone on the same platform. This tends to be more commonly used by players who already know each other. Finally, many gamers – especially on PC – will chat via a third-party app such as Discord.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

Whether it's text- or voice-based, in-game chat is frequently open to all players to use. Many games default to making it an opt-in function, but some don't: meaning a child could start seeing messages within the game from people they're playing with, regardless of whether they know those individuals or not. While most strangers won't necessarily have ill intent, there are some who may behave inappropriately when chatting to a child – intentionally or otherwise.

DANGER OF GROOMING

It's been reported that some young gamers have encountered older players online who pretend to be a lower age to manipulate children, sending gifts in exchange for chatting and sending photos. Just as on any messaging platform, it's good to advise young people to avoid speaking to strangers; emphasise that they shouldn't accept gifts from anyone online that they don't know.

BULLYING AND ABUSE

While some in-game chat can turn toxic because of how a match plays out, others turn that way because of people who engage in trolling – in essence, behaving in an offensive and abusive way simply to cause pain or get a rise out of whoever they're talking to. These 'trolls' often lean on racial slurs, anti-LGBT sentiment and other hateful rhetoric; they normally feel most confident preying on younger, more impressionable gamers.

POTENTIAL FOR PRIVATE CHAT

If a player would like a re-match with a stranger after meeting them in the game, they can send a friend request, or use the party chat together in the future. For the most part, this is harmless – but it might lead to messages being exchanged in private. This could then escalate to the sharing of private information, and potentially attempts to manipulate or scam younger players.

COMPETITIVE ATMOSPHERE

Certain games are very competitive, and players can sometimes get upset if they feel a teammate is underperforming, an opponent won unfairly, or they're just a bad loser. This can lead to unpleasant messages that stray away from playful 'trash talk' and wander into the territory of bullying. Some players have been known to get incredibly abusive in situations like this, and the impact of this on a young gamer's emotional wellbeing could be severe.

LOCK-DOWN IN-GAME CHAT

In-game chat can often be disabled in the game's settings. This allows children to play without risk of contact from strangers – but it will need to be done in each individual game. Text chat appears in the corner of the screen in many titles, so it's normally easy to take a quick glance and see what's being said. With voice chat, explain to children what behaviour is inappropriate, so they can spot the dangers themselves.

REPORT POTENTIAL OFFENDERS

Most games offer a robust means of reporting other players, so you can flag an account as potentially harmful. This normally leads to the account not being matched with yours in the future and, if that person's conduct breaks any of the game's rules, they may be banned from playing entirely. This is done within the game itself, so each title has a slightly different process, but these tend to be designed for simplicity.

CONSIDER OTHER CHAT OPTIONS

If a child wants to play with people they know, consider using party chat or a third-party service like Discord. This allows everyone involved to chat on a private server and even enjoy each other's company while playing different games. It's also far more secure, as anyone looking to join will need to request and be granted access – normally by whoever is hosting the chat.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Make sure children understand the differences between being competitive and being abusive. Talk about what constitutes unusual or inappropriate behaviour from strangers online. Be clear that if anything ever concerns or worries them, they should tell a trusted adult as soon as possible. Empower children to identify the risks of in-game chat for themselves and reassure them they won't get in trouble for seeking help if anything goes wrong.