



Headteacher's End of Year Report

Dear Parents and Carers,

As July fades into August, we have once again come to the end of another year at St James' and, as we take a moment to reflect, I am astonished by how much we have squeezed in. Whilst exhaustion levels amongst both the children and staff are always evident at the end of term, there can be no denying that this year has been a year full of joy. Paul wrote a letter to the Philippian church all about joy, in the words below, Paul's joy is expressed through three simple themes; thankfulness, partnership and good works.

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion.

Philippians 1:3-6

Firstly, thankfulness. It would be difficult for me to mention everyone by name but I am truly grateful to so many different groups of our community who have helped and supported the development of the school and ensured all our children and staff 'Believe and Achieve.' We are now two years into the current phase of school improvement. I described our progress in our latest inspection using the metaphor of decorating a house. We have been into every room, repainted every wall, changed all the carpets but now it is time to come back and paint the woodwork. This process is one of refinement and takes all the work we have already completed and ensures it is the best it can be, it is perhaps slower and fiddlier, but the final details will ensure our school is the best it can be.

And whilst our school's success is not measured by academic progress alone it would be difficult to not celebrate the key milestones and achievements of the year. In Reception, 79% of children achieved the required 'Good Level of Development' (GLD) in their foundation year (69% national average). In our statutory Year 1 phonics screening, 100% of students achieved the required score, providing a foundation for accelerated reading progress (81% national average). In Year 4, the multiplication check results were off the chart! The school average score of 24/25 is five points above last year's national average, with a 100% of students scoring above indicative pass mark of 20. None of this comes without a cost and I want to express my thanks to the tireless effort of the whole staff team who have ensured that the learning needs of every individual is supported. They have all invested far more than their contracted hours to ensure our school is a place where children thrive in their studies.

The team at all levels continue to be both diligent and committed, ensuring that every child not only achieves academic success but comes to believe in themselves. Nothing was more evident in the confidence so evidently on display as part of our end of year performance. Peter Pan was a resounding success but it was more than just a show... It is the impact of years of work, supporting children, helping them to believe in themselves, being there for them even when it's tough.



I am also grateful for leading a school that thrives on the partnerships it has fostered over many years – the work we do together as children, staff, parents, governors and wider community allows us to be greater than the sum of our parts.

This year has seen our volunteer army continue to grow! We have had countless readers listening to individuals in school, it has seen a classroom renovated, a car park levelled, old tables disposed of, a pond cleared and countless school trips supported. Volunteering allows us to focus our budget on what matters most – ensuring we give your children the best possible start to life at St James'. However, the effects of volunteering are perhaps deeper than purely academic, it is an example to our children about how society should work – that we have more to give than we should take. By volunteering we become role models for our children.

Partnership has also seen us take an active role in both our local and wider community. In November, we were joined by Treecall Consulting who helped us plant 15 new trees across our site. It is my sincere hope that in 30 years' time, some of our current students will be coming back to St James' with their children and saying, 'I planted that tree.' It was also a privilege to support the D-Day anniversary celebrations in Wimborne and was the first public outing of the St James' choir who sang a wide range of 1940's tunes, and was of course run by another volunteer.

Next year, we are excited to be welcoming the Cottage Nursery more formally into our school community. We already enjoy a very close working relationship, but, with the wind blowing in the right direction and new government ministers learning how to sign the relevant documentation the school and nursery will officially become 'St James' CE First School and Nursery' as of the 1st September. The nursery building will be officially renamed 'The Cottage' in honour of the sustained impact the nursery has had on the children of Gaunts Common and the surrounding villages over many years. I want to thank the nursery staff as they begin their new journey as part of DSAT and we look forward to working together more closely.

We also continue to explore and develop our partnerships with a wide range of charities and organisations to help support activities in school. The Mansell Pleydell Trust have given generously, allowing Squirrels class to be part of the Dorset Rural Music Choir at Blandford Church free of charge and Year R, 1 and 2 to have a Samba experience. We secured over £14,000 of funding from the Local Alliance Group that allowed us to train staff and roll out Stormbreak across the Priory Hub and we have recently received £1200 worth of funding from the Talbot Village Trust that will allow us to run bespoke music lessons in school. We are always looking for ways to enhance our schools' financial resources and if you know of any local charities, or have a particular love of writing charitable bids, I would love to hear from you.

Of course, the PFA also do a tremendous job for the school and we are grateful for the strengthening partnership we have with them. They have supported some classroom purchases and enabled us to deploy 15 iPads into the classrooms which will provide significant advantages across all curricular areas. We have a full year already planned and look forward to sharing these dates in September.

This year has seen an explosion of clubs across St James'. From Chess and Rounders to Choir and Ukulele. It has been wonderful to see so many children trying something new and attending a club. On average, each child has attended 3 clubs this year, which is a fantastic starting point to grow next year. I would encourage all of our children to do at least one club each term, whether it is a lunchtime or after-school provision.

In the sporting arena, we have seen more children compete in more events across the year and represent the school with pride. Every child in Year 1 – 4 has competed for the school in either individual or team sports. A special mention to the Netball team who won the festival at Cranborne Middle and Arthur who won the Year 4 cross country at Castle Court. We have many more fixtures and sporting events next year both within our Priory hub but also the other first schools in our locality.



Finally, we have seen many good works and are immensely proud of the achievements of all our children. The words that Paul used were that, 'he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion.' We very much feel like we have begun so much which is good and, as we move forward, we hope to be able to finish the good work here at St James'. One such new venture is parent share events in Hedgehogs which have been a resounding success and allowed parents to actively engage in their children's learning. Mrs Hobbs has been a fantastic pioneer and we will be using these across the school to give you a window into the day-to-day learning at St James'. In September, we will publish the dates for all of these so you can add them to your diaries. We didn't achieve everything we set out to achieve this year (perhaps over ambition got the better of me) but I am still very much hoping to lead the charge in fundraising for Mangbondo Primary School next year and walking the 3500 miles from Wimborne to Mangbondo as a community.

It is often at this time of year we end up saying farewell to members of staff moving on. Mrs Verlander, who has been Priory SENDCO has been an incredible asset to the team whilst covering Mrs Peckham's maternity cover. She moves onto another SENDCO position in Hampshire and will no doubt support many more children in achieving their potential. We do look forward to welcoming Mrs Peckham back as SENDCO and class teacher who has been off for two terms. We are also excited to see the school continuing to grow, not just in the quality of provision, but numerically. Reception is full, with 25 new children joining and a number of other mid-year admissions. This means our school community will grow to 111 children which is a wonderful reflection of the schools continuing strength and appeal.

We already have many exciting plans for next year, but for now, everyone needs time to rest. I wish you a relaxing summer break and look forward to welcoming you back in September.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Lawford





PETER PAN

To end the school year, our incredibly talented pupils took to the stage at the Layard Theatre to play to a sold-out audience. The whole St James' community was treated to a truly memorable and action-packed performance of J.M. Barrie's classic story, Peter Pan. We joined the Darling children, Peter Pan and Tinkerbell on their magical adventure to Neverland where they met the Lost Boys, wild warriors, mermaids, Captain Hook and his pirate crew and not forgetting Croc! What a showstopping performance it was with incredible acting from our Year 3 and 4 cast, wonderfully choreographed class dances and magnificent catchy songs. Every child really shone on stage and we were incredibly proud of them all. The excitement, joy and teamwork felt by the children was truly evident at the end of the performance with all the children on the stage singing the final song 'It's a good life'. What an exciting and joyous way to end the school year and a special highlight of the St James' calendar. We would like to thank you once again for providing costumes, props and supporting with practising lines.



What a brilliant performance I saw yesterday afternoon, with some real acting stars. It was over almost too soon, with the work that was put in to the production by everyone obvious to see. A whole school production is a real challenge but it was brought together with such aplomb.

So congratulations to you and all involved either backstage or on stage.

Sue Warnock (Foundation Governor)



Dear Mr Lawford,

Thank you so much for my invitation to Peter Pan! I had the best time. Please tell the children how impressed I was by their singing, dancing, acting, scenery and so much more! Having been involved in staging this kind of thing before, I know how much work it takes. The audience loved it and so did I! We are so blessed to have St James' as part of our Trust and I would like to congratulate you, your children, staff and wider community on all your great achievements this year.

Have a great Summer. I'm off to Neverland!

Mark Lacey

Chief Executive (Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust)





YEAR 4 LEAVERS

We are incredibly proud of our Year 4 children as their time at St James' comes to an end. What a credit they are to the school and we are so proud of their amazing achievements. A few weeks back, Year 4 were invited to Salisbury Cathedral to attend the DSAT Leavers' Service. The service was enjoyed by all and provided an opportunity for thoughtful reflections before a picnic on the green in the sunshine. In addition to this, our in-school Leavers' Service allowed the children to reflect on their wonderful journey and cherished memories over the last five years. We hope Year 4 will always look back fondly on their time at St James' and we wish them every success as they move onto their Middle School. Year 4 - remember to embrace all new opportunities and 'believe and achieve!'

Miss Roberts





SPORTS DAY SPECIAL

Sports Day is always a highlight of any school year and we had a wonderful time celebrating and competing at our annual Sports Day. Children were in mixed age teams and competed for their colour house throughout the day. The morning field events were a blend of throwing, jumping and multi-skills activities with all children earning points for their team.

In the afternoon, parents and carers joined us on the school field for our track events. We packed in almost 50 races, from the egg and spoon to mixed team relays. The children competed wonderfully throughout the day, demonstrating our value of hope for all as they cheered on their friends to achieve their best.

A huge thank you to those parents and governors who offered their time and support to set up, run the event and pack down after. We could not have done it without you.





Thank you for letting me be part of your sports day. It was the best one I can recall to have ever attended. The atmosphere was terrific and so well organised. It looked like everyone enjoyed themselves.

Coach David



I liked the relay because we all got to have a go - Max

I loved being part of team yellow because we won - Jude



I liked long jump because I jumped further than I expected - Georgia

I enjoyed the middle distance because I don't have very good acceleration but I could keep going - Albi



SUMMER OF STORMBREAK

Over the last year, we have introduced Stormbreak at St James' First School (and across the Priory Hub). Stormbreak has the simple aim of supporting and improving mental health through movement, equipping them with sustainable, transferable skills and coping strategies to thrive during the complex demands of growth into adult life. It has been a huge success across the school and we are looking forward to embedding it further. Why not take part in this year's Summer of Stormbreak (SOS) with your children over the holidays?

The **Summer of Stormbreak** will take place every **Tuesday, 9.30am - 9.50am**, throughout the summer holidays.

Each week will focus on a different theme:

Tuesday 30 July	Our important relationships 
Tuesday 6 August	Self care, taking care 
Tuesday 13 August	Resilient me 
Tuesday 20 August	Wonderful me 
Tuesday 27 August	Optimistic me 



Further resources and activities will be shared in each session, so you can carry on 'stormbreaking' together.

Sign up by scanning the QR code or visit <https://shorturl.at/4b5IL>



stormbreak

stormbreak.org.uk

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

The internet is full of harmful content, which is why web filtering is such an important tool for any family. When running properly it helps to protect your children from the bad things on the internet, regardless of whether they're trying to access that type of content on purpose or it happens by accident. While parental controls are generally lumped together as one, there are three main ways of providing them: via your Internet Service Provider (ISP), via a router or via software that you install. Each has its own benefits and downsides, and the best solution is often to use a combination of techniques to catch everything and prevent a child from bypassing your protection.

[Parent Guide to Internet Safety](#)



Daniel Lawford

Designated Safeguarding Lead



Laura Roberts

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead