



Newsletter

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This Week at St James'...

When I first came to St James' in 2015, it was a Lower School; within a term, Bedford Borough Council decided to change their system to a two tier primary/secondary model, in line with most authorities across the country. We embarked on a journey which has included significant building work, curriculum development, staff recruitment and re-branding. A big focus for us all has been preparing our school for the introduction of what are quite controversial end of KS2 Statutory Tests. I don't object to testing children (we do quite a bit of tests in school), but I have always found the end of KS2 Tests to be quite difficult to administer because of the way in which they are used to judge schools and children, and because of this a lot of unnecessary pressure is placed on children, parents and staff. I have always tried to ensure there is a measured approach to these tests and ensure that everyone involved understands that they are just a snapshot of what children can do, and that they really don't tell good teachers much that they don't already know.

This week, our first Year 6 cohort sat their tests, and for many people here at St James', it's their first experience of externally set and marked tests being taken—it's the culmination of a lot of hard work and effort from both children and staff. I couldn't be more proud of everyone—our children have worked incredibly hard, not just this week, but over the full 4 years I have known them; watching their concentration and focus has been a privilege to see, listening to them supporting and looking after each other even more special. They have been just incredible! Unfortunately, there isn't a test which measures the quality of character, but if there were, these children would ace those tests and get Grade As across the board! Regardless of the results (which we will receive towards the very end of the summer term), we have children here who will go on and be hugely successful in their next schools and beyond in their adult lives, not just because they have skills in English and maths, but because they have strong, moral, decent characters and are just great people to be with and know. And as their parents, you should all feel incredibly proud of every single one of them. I am—it is a pleasure and a privilege to work in this school, which really is quite special and fantastic!

Wishing everyone a peaceful and restful weekend,

Maria & all the team at St James'



Thanks to Jessica, we were able to meet the League 1 Winners Trophy, won by Luton Town FC who have been promoted up to the Championship for the next season. Jessica told us all about the big celebrations in Luton, and about how she was able to join the open-top bus parade through town, stood on the stage with all the team, and even met the mayor and other dignitaries at the Town Hall. Being so close to a football trophy was a brilliant experience for us all (and we were very careful not to drop it!). Thanks so much, Jessica, and congratulations to everyone at Luton Town!

St James' Summer Raffle

Due to the success of the Christmas Raffle, Year 6 have decided to hold a Summer St James' Raffle. We are trying to raise funds for our Year 6 leavers to go on a residential trip as a class. Some parents are finding it difficult to pay the full amount of the cost of the trip, so we are trying to do various fundraising events to help support families and to reduce the overall price of the residential. Any surplus money will go towards the school. In order for the raffle to go ahead, we kindly ask for raffle prize donations. This could be toiletries vouchers, bottles, chocolates, hampers etc. Please send any donations to the School Office by Monday 3rd June. We hope there will be some fantastic prizes. Tickets for the raffle will be on sale after half term, more information to follow. The Raffle will be drawn on Sports Day at the family picnic. Please help by supporting the school.



Important Dates for the Term Ahead

Date & Time	Event	Classes Involved	Staff Lead	Special Notes
Weds 22nd May	Summer Sports	Years 5 & 6	IL, TKL	
Thurs 23rd May	PSA Disco	All classes	PSA	See separate letter
Fri 24th May 2.30	Class Assembly	Robins	CD	
Mon 27th-Fri 31st May	HALF TERM			
Mon 3rd June	Fire Service visit	Year 2	SBG	
Tues 4th—7th June	Year 6 residential	Year 6	IL	
Thurs 6th June	Visit to St Albans	Year 3	GH	
Thurs 6th June	Summer Sports	Years 1 & 2	SBG, NB	
Mon 10th-14th June	Phonics Screening	Years 1 & 2	NB	
Mon 10th June	Athletics	Years 5 & 6	TKL, IL	
Tues 11th June	Height & weight screening & hearing checks	Year 6, Robins	DS	
Tues 11th June 6.00pm	Induction meeting for new YR parents		CD	
Weds 12th June, 3.30	Pupil Governors Bracelet & Key ring sale	Whole school	CD	
Fri 14th June	Tennis	Year 6	IL	
Fri 14th June 3.00-3.30	Book Blink	All years	Class Teachers	Please allow enough time so that you can be finished by 3.30
Mon 17th June	Tennis	Years 3 & 4	GH, LR	
Mon 17th June	Dental Checks	Years R & 1	DS	Consent forms & information will be sent home shortly.
Mon 17th June 3.00	Story session for new YR		CD	
Fri 21st June morning & lunch	Sports Day & picnic	All years	GH	
Fri 28th June 2.30	Class Assembly	Year 2	SBG	
Tues 25th June 11.30	Story session for new YR children		CD	
Mon 1st July 9.30	Stay & Play session for new YR		CD	
Tues 2nd, Weds 3rd July	Biddenham Transition days	Year 6	IL	
Thurs 4th July	Sing On performance @ Corn Exchange	Year 4	LR	
Fri 5th July 2.30	Class Assembly	Year 5	TKL	
Tues 9th July 9.30	Stay & Play session for new YR		CD	
Tues 9th, Weds 10th July	Lincroft Transition days	Year 6	IL	
Weds 10th July	Moving Up morning	All classes	MS	
Fri 12th July 2.00	Music Concert	All children who have received instrument lessons this year	MS	Guitars, drums, recorders, piano—parents invited
Mon 15th July 5.00	Summer Show	Whole School	GH	'Proms in the Playground'
Tues 16th July 2.00	Family picnic for new YR starters		CD	
Weds 17th July 2.00	Leaver's Service	Whole School	IL	



Please remember on sunny days to ensure your child has a sunhat to wear at playtimes. Please ensure all hats are named. We don't mind hats not being royal blue, but please don't allow hats which are over the top in terms of decoration, or which contain inappropriate images or messages. Keep them simple, please!

If your child also needs sun cream, please apply this in the morning, using all-day, long lasting product. Unfortunately, we do not have capacity for staff to apply sun cream (imagine 10 staff trying to apply cream to 170 children, there's just not enough of us!). Please do not allow your child to bring in sun cream, as this could pose a risk to other children if shared (skin allergies etc)