

St. James' C of E Primary School

Information for Parents

2015-2016

A Warm Welcome to St. James' C of E Primary School

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to our school! Thank you for choosing St. James' and in so doing, putting your trust in us at such an important stage in your child's life. We aim to provide a happy and welcoming atmosphere in a secure and stimulating environment in which children can develop in confidence, making personal, social and academic progress and work towards becoming an independent learner.

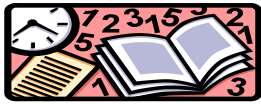
In this information pack you will find details about the experiences your child will have primarily in Reception and also as they progress through the school. It also includes some practical information about day to day aspects of school life and our curriculum. Please do not hesitate to ask any member of the Reception team if there is anything else you wish to know. They will be very happy to help.

Please take time to look at our admission page for additional information.

We hope you have a rewarding and enjoyable time with us at St. James'.

Mrs. Lisa Harford
Headteacher





School Day

Our school day starts at 8.35 a.m. and ends at 3.00 p.m. with an assembly held each day. Gates open at 8.25 a.m.

The hours spent in teaching during a normal school week are as follows:

Foundation Stage	Age 4-5	21 hours 40 min.
KS1	Age 5-7	
KS2	Age 7-11	24 hours 10 min.

Reception Classes

Initially Reception children will go into school via the front playground during the settling-in/staggered days period. After this, children will make their way round to the back of the school where they are supervised by a member of staff. At the end of the day children in Reception leave via the outside doors of the Reception classrooms in the front playground.

Whole School timetable:

Reception and Key Stage 1		Key Stage 2	
8.35-8.50	Registration	8.35-8.50	Registration
8.50-9.50:	First morning session	8.50-9.50	Lesson 1
9.50-10.10:	Assembly	9.50 -10.15:	Lesson 2
10.10-10.25:	Play time	10.15-10.30:	Assembly
10.30-11.45:	Second morning session	10.30-10.45:	Play time
11.45-1.00:	Lunch time	10.45 – 11.45	Lesson 3
1.00-2.15:	First p.m. session	11.45-12.30:	Lesson 4
2.15–2.30:	Play time	12.30 – 1.30:	. Lunchtime
2.30-3.00:	Second p.m. session	1.30-3.00:	PM session (no afternoon break)

We come together as a whole school twice a week; on Mondays for collective worship and Fridays for our celebration assembly. The whole school also play together at play time on Mondays and Fridays.

General Communication

School to Parents

We are very much aware of the need to maintain excellent communication with parents. Most frequently we use email and text. Please keep us up to date with any changes to your mobile or email address.

Our newsletter ('Scoop') is emailed to you fortnightly with dates, information and achievements, alternating with the PTA Newsletter.

You are also welcome to follow Mrs. Harford's blog: www.mrsharfordsblog.wordpress.com

The school Twitter account @StJamesCofE is also full of our current activities.

Our Google calendar is imbedded in our website. You can find and download the calendar at <https://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=stjamescofeprimary%4ogmail.com&ctz=Europe/London>

Finally, letters which have been sent home with the children can also found on our website.

Emergency School Closure

Information about school closures due to bad weather or other emergencies, can be found on www.glosclosedschools.com and on twitter @Glos schools.

Parents to School

The school office is manned most of the day, but schools are busy places and you may reach our answer phone from time to time. If so, please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as possible if you require an answer. We do check it regularly through the day. Please let us know in good time if you plan to take your child from school for appointments (e.g. dentist, doctors) by giving a letter to the class teacher and/or letting the office staff know. Any messages to the School Office, teachers or other members of staff, permission slips/contributions etc. should be in an envelope and either given to your child to pass to their teacher, or put directly into the black post box outside the office. This post box is secure and is checked and emptied every day.

Payments to School – in secure and clearly labelled envelope

Payments for trips etc. can be made by cheque, payable to St. James' Primary School, or by cash (correct money please).

Payment for lunches and residential trips in KS2 are made on line through ParentPay.

Please note we do not have the facility to accept credit or debit cards.

Attendance, Absence Accidents & Illness

Attendance

At St. James' C of E Primary School we regard attendance as a very high priority. You may like to familiarise yourself with our attendance policy which you will find on the website. Attending school on a regular basis is the key to your child doing well at school and will set them up with good habits for later life and the working world. Leave of absence during term time is dealt with according to Government legislation, and permission to remove your child from school for holidays will be refused unless there are exceptional circumstances. Please refer to the 'School Attendance' leaflet and the additional information on Leave of Absence, which indicates the circumstances which do not qualify as 'exceptional'. Also, please see the leaflet on 'Penalty Notices'.

Absence

If your child is poorly, please notify us on the first day of absence. You can leave a message on our answer phone or send an email to school. If no explanation is received we will phone parents to obtain a reason (as part of our safeguarding children policy). On return to school, please send a short note to the teacher confirming the reason for absence.

If children need to arrive or leave school other than at the normal time (e.g. for a medical or dental appointment), please let us know beforehand. If your child requires lunch you should let us know before 10.00 a.m. stating a meal choice. You will find a copy of our lunch menu on our website.

If you are taking a child out of school or bringing them back after an appointment, please ensure you sign them in/out at reception. This is essential as we would need to use this list in an emergency.

Accidents & Illness

We have fully qualified first-aiders in school to deal with any immediate emergency. Most importantly, we ask for an up-to-date contact number for you on the data form, so we are able to contact you in all eventualities.

If your child has medical needs it is most important that you inform us so that a health care plan can be drawn up if necessary. If your child has specific medical conditions e.g. nut allergy, please come and see us so that we can make specific arrangements if required. If your child suffers from asthma, you should provide us with an inhaler which will be kept in school at all times. The inhaler should be clearly named.

From time to time your son/daughter may need to take a prescribed medicine during the day. Staff are not legally required to administer medicines but will do so if you are unable to come into school. You will need to obtain a form from the front reception to give permission to do this, and the medicines must show evidence of being prescribed to your child i.e. a pharmacist label with your child's name on it.

We ask that medicines are not kept in children's bags or pockets for obvious reasons.

Leave of Absence during Term Time

I would like to make you aware of Government legislation regarding attendance regulations for pupils at school. The most important of these is in relation to term-time family holidays. Below is a quotation directly from the Department for Education Circular:

*'Amendments to the 2006 regulations **remove** references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Headteachers **may not grant any** leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances.'*

I draw your attention particularly to the second sentence of this paragraph. Clearly there are many situations which may constitute exceptional circumstances, but as a general rule, I interpret 'exceptional' in this context as being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child, which outweighs the loss of teaching time.

Exceptional circumstances will not include reasons such as:

- the holiday is cheaper
- attending a wedding
- fits in better with work/ only time parents get time off work (unless an official letter from the employer verifying this is submitted with the request)
- to celebrate a birthday/anniversary.

It is very difficult for the governing body and me to provide parents with a list of what constitutes an exceptional circumstance and whilst it will be important to look at the whole situation in making decisions about any individual request, it has been agreed that our policy will be to normally refuse requests.

The effect of this change means that the government expects it to be extremely unusual for leave of absence, including for holidays in term time, to be permitted by schools.

May I therefore ask that if you do need to take your child out of school during term time, you are very clear in your request as to how the circumstances are exceptional. If this is not clear then under the new legislation, I will not be allowed to grant leave. Without doubt, holidays are best taken out of term time, during one of the 13 weeks holiday that the children have away from school.

In addition to this new legislation there are also new regulations in place in which the imposition of penalty fines for parents and carers taking children out of school in unauthorised circumstances will now be imposed more strictly by the Local Authority. You should also be aware that the rates and the timings of imposition of penalty fines will also become much more stringent.

Meals Drinks/Milk Snacks

Meals

School meals are prepared on the premises by the County caterers. All pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1 are entitled to a hot school meal at no cost to parents under the Universal Free School Meal scheme. Menus are sent home and are on our website and the children are asked to make a choice at the beginning of each day. However, you may wish to provide your child with a packed lunch from home. If you do this, we ask that you do not give your child nuts as we have a number of children in school with severe nut allergies. We also ask that pupils do not bring poultry based snacks to school for 'Freedom Friday' for a similar reason.

Drinks/Milk

If you wish your child to have milk, you will need to sign up to the 'Cool Milk for Schools' scheme. Applications to Cool Milk should be done directly through them, either by applying on-line or by using an application form available in the school office. Children can have free milk until the end of the month in which they turn 5 years old after which time you will be required to pay.

We encourage our children to drink water through the day, so please ensure they arrive with a full water bottle which can be topped up during day if necessary.

Snacks

At morning break, all Reception and Infant children will be given a free piece of fruit or vegetable. Junior children should bring in a piece of fruit/dried fruit, or similar, to keep them going until lunchtime. We ask everyone not to send chocolate or sweets as snacks, or provide fizzy drinks. Also, each week we have 'Freedom Friday' which the children look forward to: they are able to bring cereal bars, crisps or any other healthy snack (though not sweets, poultry based snacks or nuts).

If your child has any food allergies, please ensure that your child's teacher is aware of this.



School Buddies



All children starting in Reception are teamed up with a Year 6 'buddy' – we like to see the older children as their 'big friends'. The children are given the opportunity to read together and play games. We have found this to be very beneficial; it helps the younger children in the playground and supports the development of the leadership skills of the older pupils.

Uniform



Please ensure that ALL uniform is clearly labelled as we are not able to identify anything that is not.

Our uniform is as follows:

Boys	Girls
Red 'bordeaux' sweatshirt with school logo (only available via school) White Polo shirt with logo (only available via school) Grey trousers Grey socks Black shoes*	Red 'bordeaux' sweatshirt/cardigan with school logo (only available via school) White polo shirt with logo (only available via school) Grey pinafore dress, skirt or trousers Red and white summer dresses Grey tights / white socks Black shoes*
*Children will not be permitted to wear boots, 'fashion' shoes, open-toe sandals or trainers Jewellery, including earrings, is NOT to be worn	



PE and Games

PE/Games kit should be kept in school at all times. Reception children are not required to have their kit in until they start full time in school.

Indoor PE Kit	Outdoor Games Kit
House T-shirt (only available from school office) Black shorts	House T-shirt (only available from school office) Black shorts White socks Trainers (velcro preferred for younger children) Warm tracksuit



Forest School for Reception Children



Reception children will be participating in our Forest School. We will provide waterproof trousers but your child will need the following items left in school.

- Wellies
- Old waterproof coat (which can get dirty!)

Other Useful Information



Music Tuition

Currently peripatetic teachers for guitar, piano, woodwind and violin teach in school. All these teachers are self-employed, and if you would like your child to learn to play one of these instruments you should contact them by leaving a written note of your request and details at the school office, who will pass it on to the relevant teacher.

School Nurse

If you have any concerns about health, or require advice from the School Nurse, please let us know and we will arrange for her to contact you.

Assembly and RE

As a CofE school Christianity underpins our ethos and values. We have regular collective worship, and most Tuesdays this is led by the Open the Book team from St. Philip and St. James' Church. Reverend Natalie and Reverend Nick join us fortnightly for worship too. If you would prefer your child not to take part, please let us know.

After School Club

We have an in-school after school club for childcare provided by St. Philip and St. James' After School Club. This club is not run by school, so if you would like to register your child with them, you will need to contact them directly on 07761 055553 and speak to Emma.

After School Activities

We are fortunate to be able to run many and varied after school clubs. Some are run by teachers who volunteer and are free to parents; others are run by external organisations who charge a fee. We try to spread the opportunities across all years. Clubs change at the beginning of the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms.

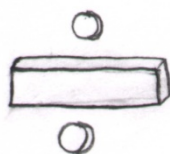
The Curriculum

We offer a wide ranging and comprehensive curriculum that is creative and stimulating. It is based on the National curriculum and supporting strategies.

The Core Curriculum consists of: English, Mathematics, Science and ICT. Children in both Key Stages also study a range of **Foundation subjects**: History, Geography, Design Technology, Music, Art and Physical Education. In addition, children are taught Religious Education, PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) and Citizenship. Children throughout Key Stage Two receive tuition in spoken French. For each subject area we have a scheme of work that ensures breadth and depth of study and progression throughout the school. We are increasingly making links between different areas of the curriculum in order to re- enforce learning. Computing is used to support learning in many curriculum areas.

English

We aim to develop pupils' abilities to communicate effectively in speech and writing, to listen with understanding and to enable them to be enthusiastic, responsive and knowledgeable readers. We aim to develop and promote listening and discussion skills throughout the pupil's school life. Children are encouraged to use their language skills to talk constructively about their work, to share ideas and to solve problems. We aim to foster a love and enjoyment of reading for personal pleasure as well as improving pupil's ability to read fluently, accurately and with understanding. In written work we aim to achieve a balance between development of pupils' creativity and the acquisition of basic skills. We aim to develop confidence and foster the ability to communicate ideas and creativity through writing.



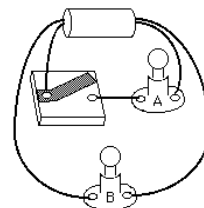
Mathematics

We aim for our pupils to become highly numerate with the ability to apply their knowledge to problem solving and everyday situations. We want to develop confident mathematicians who find the subject enjoyable. Children are presented with a variety of approaches to learning and we encourage both independent and co-operative work. Activities are designed to promote the use of investigative and problem solving skills. A wide range of resources are used including calculators and computers. Each child takes part in regular 'Mental Maths' sessions with the aim of improving their speed of calculation.

Science

We want our pupils to have a growing understanding of the world in which they live. Our teaching of science has three main aims:

- To increase subject knowledge. This is through the main subject areas of : living things, materials and their properties and physical processes.
- To teach children the skills necessary to carry out systematic scientific investigations
- to encourage a sense of awe and wonder



Wherever possible, we teach science through investigation.

Computing

Competence in computing is absolutely essential in today's world. Children are taught computer skills throughout their time at school. By Y6 they are competent in word processing, desk top publishing, simple data bases and spread sheets, graphics and the internet. In addition to the teaching of generic skills, ICT is used to support many areas of the curriculum. Children are taught in the computer suite and in their classrooms. Interactive white board technology is used for teaching and learning in most classrooms.



Religious Education



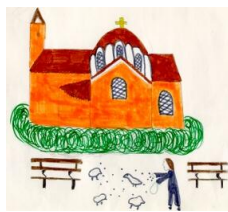
Our teaching of Religious Education is based on the locally agreed syllabus.

Christianity forms an important area of study along with the teaching of other major world religions, reflecting Britain as a multi-cultural, multi-faith society.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education and school worship. If you wish to withdraw your child, please see the headteacher.

Art & Design

Art enriches personal experience. We believe that it contributes to the spiritual well-being of the individual, providing a sense of identity that stretches intellectual ability and emotional responses.

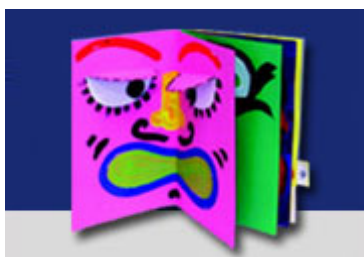


Pupils are encouraged to develop their creative, imaginative and practical skills through a balanced programme of art, craft and design activities. In the

process we hope they will develop an awareness and appreciation of their surroundings, be able to express feelings and experiences through a variety of media, grow in confidence and gain enjoyment. They engage in 2D and 3D work using a variety of media.



Design & Technology



Through Design and Technology pupils gain the knowledge, understanding and skills required to design and make quality products using a range of materials, components and tools. They also learn how to evaluate and improve products and to appreciate the impact of technology on everyday life. D&T activities are usually 'blocked' over two or three consecutive days.

Geography

Geography is the study of people and places, and the interaction between them. The study of Geography helps the children make sense of their surroundings and the wider world around them. We aim to develop geographical knowledge, skills and understanding and help children develop a sense of identity through learning about their own area and country and about localities in other countries.



History

History is taught to all children in both Key Stages. We want to encourage children to have a keen interest in the past and to acquire the necessary skills to investigate and understand it. This will give them a better-informed perspective on the present world and knowledge of how the past has affected the present. Knowledge is gained by direct teaching, by use of books, artefacts, ICT, videos, visitors to school and visits to museums and places of historic interest.

Music



We seek to create real enjoyment in music and singing. Children listen to a variety of musical styles and learn to express their responses. They compose, perform and evaluate their own and others' work. They perform as a whole class and in small groups using a range of percussion instruments and keyboards. KS1 music is taught in year groups: KS2 receive a weekly lesson from a specialist music teacher. In addition to fulfilling the requirements of the National Curriculum, the school offers extra-curricular ensembles including the Choir, Recorders, Folk Guitar and other instrumental groups. Hymn practices take place weekly for the whole school, and instrumentalists are given the opportunity to perform in assemblies. Professional artists visit the school for workshops and performances, and pupils take part in external musical events. The school owns a professional PA system and digital multi-track recording equipment which are used for a variety of events and purposes. Peripatetic teachers visit the school weekly, and currently offer violin, flute, clarinet, guitar and keyboard lessons on a private basis through Gloucestershire Music.



Physical Education

All children participate in regular physical activities. We aim for children to receive at least two hours planned activity per week. At KS1 activities include dance, gymnastics and games. These continue to be developed throughout KS2 as well as athletics, swimming and outdoor pursuits.



Dance develops expressive movement using music from a variety of cultures. Gymnastic skills are taught and practised individually and in small groups. Games skills such as throwing, kicking, hitting and passing are taught individually and in small groups to emphasise teamwork. Athletics skills such as running, throwing and jumping are taught and sometimes developed to competition standard. A range of after-school sports activities are on offer to the children. These currently include football, netball, cross-country, tag-rugby, gymnastics, dance, golf and summer sports. The school runs teams in various sports. Children are made aware of the value of physical education with regard to physical and mental health, teamwork, a healthy lifestyle and for pure enjoyment. To this end, the whole school participates in a regular 'Wake And Shake' exercise before morning registration which is both invigorating and fun.



Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship

PSHE and Citizenship is integrated fully into the school's aims and values, and is actively promoted on a daily basis. PSHE and Citizenship strives to equip children with the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary for adult life.



For example, it teaches children to make informed, safe and healthy choices, how to develop successful and respectful relationships and how to be responsible, active citizens. All classes take part in a weekly timetabled circle time and discrete PSHE and Citizenship lessons. The school also has a school council, which provides children with the opportunity to express their views and make their voices heard.

Modern Foreign Languages



Children throughout Key stage Two receive weekly introductory tuition in spoken French.