

St James' Weekly News

St James' C of E Primary School
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Date: 18th December 2025



Doug Stitcher
Mr D Stitcher, Head Teacher

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Well, that's it for the year! After around 14 weeks of learning, activities and fun, the Autumn term of 2025 has come to an end.

We've had an amazing week in school. We were visited by Santa (who was looking particularly youthful this year!) and we had our Christmas Spectacular yesterday.

Every child performed with their year group singing a combination of contemporary and traditional Christmas songs.

We even had some performances from staff!

At this time of year, we have the opportunity to reflect. I would like to thank you all for your support so far this year. It's so important that school and home work together; and our partnerships continue to go from strength to strength. So, thank you!

I would also like to thank all the staff that go above and beyond to ensure that every day at St James' is exciting and safe. I can see from their faces that they are all ready for a break!

I would like to wish you all a relaxing and refreshing break.

And to those of you celebrating, I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

And finally, just a quick reminder that school closes to children at 3:05 pm on Thursday 18th December and re-opens to children at 8:35 am on Tuesday 6th January 2026.

We look forward to seeing you all in 2026 to do it all again!

Have a lovely weekend.

Mr. D Stitcher





A huge thank you to Bill and May who came with freshly popped popcorn & candyfloss and filled the hall in school as pupils eagerly lined up. The pupils were all very excited and it was safe to say that the popcorn and candy floss was a massive hit with everyone.





Applying for a Primary school place

You must apply for a primary school place a year before your child can start school. The school starting age is 4.

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-primary-school-place>

Your child will be 3 or have just turned 4 when you apply.

Applications open in September each year and close on 15 January 2026.



Child born between

1 Sep 2021 - 31 Aug 2022

1 Sep 2022 - 31 Aug 2023

1 Sep 2023 - 31 Aug 2024

1 Sep 2024 - 31 Aug 2025

Starts primary schools

Sep 2026 Sep 2025 - Jan 2026

Sep 2027 Sep 2026 - Jan 2027

Sep 2028 Sep 2027 - Jan 2028

Sep 2029 Sep 2028 - Jan 2029

Apply





Winter

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme is a scheme funded by the Government and delivered by local councils, providing healthy food and fun activities to children and young people, with free places available for those on free school meals.

Sessions will include a variety of fun activities, including sports, music, arts and other exciting opportunities to learn and develop skills like meeting new friends, alongside a nutritious meal each day.

For information on how you and your family can get involved this Winter, please visit www.getstuckin.org.uk or call the booking team on 01254 784105 and quote your FSM code.

**FREE PLACES AVAILABLE FOR THOSE
ELIGIBLE FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS &
VULNERABLE FAMILIES INCLUDING SEND**






Free Early Years Education

HOW MANY FREE HOURS YOU CAN GET PER WEEK

	2 year olds	3-4 year olds
* Working families	30 hours	30 hours
*Families receiving additional Government support	15 hours	N/A
All families - Universal offer	N/A	15 hours

*eligibility criteria applies
some eligible families of 2 year olds will be eligible for 15 hours Government support AND 15 hours working families

www.blackburn.gov.uk/free-early-education



RENEW YOUR CODE!

Please remember to renew any free childcare codes by signing into your childcare choices account and reconfirming your details to ensure your child remains eligible for their free early years education entitlement. Statutory guidance requires all parents to reconfirm their entitlement for each term. We cannot accept codes that have not been reconfirmed and approved by BwD. For further information please visit <https://www.gov.uk/free-childcare-if-working/confirm-details-up-to-date>

Thank you for your support.





How to get your code

- 1 Visit ChildcareChoices.gov.uk** to check your eligibility.
- 2 Speak to your provider** to understand their arrangements and to see if they can offer your child a place.
- 3 Apply for your code online.** You'll need your National Insurance number (or unique taxpayer reference if self-employed), the date you started or are due to start work, details of any government support or benefits you receive, and your child's UK birth certificate reference number (if available).
- 4 Give your code to your provider.** You may find out if you're eligible straight away, but it can take up to 7 days to get your code.
- 5 Reconfirm your details** on your childcare account every 3 months.

Application deadlines

To get your 30 hours childcare code, apply by:

- **31 August 2025** to use it from 1 September 2025.
- **31 December 2025** to use it from 1 January 2026.
- **31 March 2026** to use it from 1 April 2026.



See what support you could get

You can find out using the eligibility checker on our website. Simply scan the QR code or search 'Childcare Choices'.

Using your childcare hours

- If you meet the criteria, you can **start using your hours the term after your child reaches the right age**. Terms start on 1 January, 1 April, and 1 September.
- **Check or update your details every 3 months** to keep getting your childcare hours. Don't worry, you'll get a reminder when it's time.
- **You can use your hours alongside other schemes** like Tax-Free Childcare or Universal Credit Childcare. You can mix and match between nurseries, childminders and pre-schools.
- **You may be asked to pay for certain optional additional services on top of your entitlement hours**, although these must not be a condition of accessing your government-funded place. Speak to your provider for more information.
- **Different providers might have their own rules** for using childcare hours. Check that their hours work for you.

Use our **online eligibility tool** to check what options are available to you.





ST JAMES' SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY PATTERN 2025/2026

AUTUMN TERM 2025 INSET 1 & 2 Re-open on Closure after School Mid Term Closure Re-open on Closure after school on INSET 3 Number of openings 75	Monday 1st and Tuesday 2nd September 2025 Wednesday 3rd September 2025 Friday 24th October 2025 Monday 27th October – Friday 31st October 2025 (inc) Monday 3rd November 2025 Thursday 18th December 2025 Friday 19th December 2025
SPRING TERM 2026 INSET 4 Re-open on Closure after School Mid Term Closure Re-open on Closure after school on Number of openings 55	Monday 5th January 2026 Tuesday 6th January 2026 Friday 13th February 2026 Monday 16th February – Friday 20th February 2026 (inc) Monday 23rd February 2026 Friday 27th March 2026
SUMMER TERM 2026 Re-open on May Day Closure Closure after School Mid Term Closure Re-open on Closure after school INSET 5 Number of openings 65	Monday 13th April 2026 Monday 4th May 2026 Friday 22nd May 2026 Monday 25th May – Friday 29th May 2026 (inc) Monday 1st June 2026 Friday 17th July 2026 Monday 20th July 2026





PE Dates

Please note the upcoming **PE dates** for your child's class. On these days, children should come to school **wearing their PE kit**.

Class	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Reception RK and RW	Friday 9 th January	Friday 16 th January	Friday 23 rd January	Friday 30 th January	Friday 6 th February
Year 1 1F and 1M	Monday -No PE Thursday 8 th January	Monday 12 th January Thursday 15 th Jan	Monday 19 th Jan Thursday 22 nd Jan	Monday 26 th Jan Thursday 29 th Jan	Monday 2 nd February Thursday 5 th Febr
Year 2 2A and 2K	Tuesday 6 th January Wednesday 7 th Jan	Tuesday 13 th Jan Wednesday 14 th Jan	Tuesday 20 th Jan Wednesday 21 st Jan	Tuesday 27 th Jan Wednesday 28 th Jan	Tuesday 3 rd February Wednesday 4 th Feb
Year 3 3L and 3S	Wednesday 7 th Jan	Monday 12 th January Wednesday 14 th January	Wednesday 21 st Jan	Monday 26 th Jan Wednesday 28 th January	Wednesday 4 th Feb
Year 4 4A and 4R	Thursday 8 th January	Monday 12 th Jan Thursday 15 th Jan	Thursday 22 nd January	Monday 26 th Jan Thursday 29 th Jan	Thursday 5 th February
Year 5 5B and 5M	Monday No PE Friday 9 th January	Friday 16 th January	Monday 19 th Jan Friday	Friday	Monday Friday
Year 6 6H and 6V	Monday No PE Tuesday 6 th January	Tuesday 13 th January	Monday Tuesday	Tuesday	Monday Tuesday



attendance ~~MATTERS~~



CONGRATULATIONS TO CLASS 3S WHO ARE THE ATTENDANCE WINNERS FROM LAST WEEK!

WHO WILL BE THE WINNERS NEXT WEEK?

95%
and
above

90% -
94.9%

Below
90%

RG	86.7%
RW	96.0%
1F	93.3%
1M	94.2%
2A	97.1%
2K	93.3%
3L	90.5%
3S	98.9%
4A	86.5%
4R	96.3%
5B	91.3%
5M	97.3%
6H	95.4%
6V	98.0%



If your child is absent due to illness, the office must be informed before 08:35 on that day.





Year Group Updates

Forest Pre-School & Nursery

Have a lovely break everyone!

Action

Please continue to check FamlyApp for updates.

Reception

We have had a very exciting Christmas week!
The children have had a lovely time.

Action

We wish all our families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!





Year Group Updates

Year 1

"Have a lovely break everyone

Action

Year 2

We have had a lovely final week of the Autumn term. On Monday all the children completed their art press print in the style of William Morris. On Tuesday, we had our Christmas party, with a visit from a very special guest...Santa! On Wednesday, the children performed 'Wonderful Camels' in front of the whole school for our music talent show. Finally, a big well done to 2K who performed their church service so wonderfully this morning.

Action

"Wishing you all a happy and healthy new year. We look forward to welcoming you back to school on Tuesday 6th January 2026."





Year Group Updates

Year 3

We are so proud of Year 3, they gave us an amazing performance in the talent show this Christmas, despite a last minute change of song! Well done Year 3 for a super term. We can't wait to do it all again in the New Year. Merry Christmas everyone!

Action

"Please continue to read with your children over the holidays. Thank you!"

Year 4

What a great end to the term we have had in Year 4! To start off the week, the children enjoyed the year group Christmas party which was followed by the Christmas Talent Show. Here, the children performed Feliz Navidad to the rest of the school where they were superb! Year 4 have also been enjoying other festive activities in class such as timestables mosaics and making festive images using coordinates.

Action

Continue to practice your timestable over the Christmas break and read regularly!





Year Group Updates

Year 5

"Year 5 have had a truly fantastic final week before the Christmas holidays! In maths, the children impressed us all by confidently multiplying 3-digit numbers by 2-digit numbers, using both efficient strategies and the formal column method with great success. Their focus, resilience and enthusiasm for learning were exceptional. We were also incredibly proud of their wonderful performance in the Christmas talent show. Their beautiful rendition of the classic 'Somewhere in My Memory' was sung with confidence, teamwork and festive spirit, making it a very special moment for everyone watching. What a brilliant way to end the term—well done Year 5! 🎄 ✨"

Action

Enjoy the festive holidays with your loved ones making new memories and remember to complete your Century tech homework.

Year 6

"This year has been full of special memories, hard work, and fun. One of the year 6 highlights was taking part in their last school pantomime, which we will always remember. From January, they will face a year full of new challenges, and we are confident they are well prepared to meet them with enthusiasm and determination. Mrs Valli & Miss Hussain would like to say a huge thank you for all your support throughout the year. You have helped us with your child's homework, encouraged them when learning felt challenging, and celebrated their successes with us."

Action

"We wish you and your families a happy, safe, and restful holiday, and we look forward to seeing everyone in the new year."





Prayer for the Week

Dear God

Help us to love the world we live in.
Help us to have the courage to be exceptional in all we do.
Help us to respect the people around us
Thank you for making our school your home.

Amen



Follow the school on social media to keep up to date on what is happening in and around school!

Facebook: [@StJamesCofEBlackburn](https://www.facebook.com/StJamesCofEBlackburn)

Twitter: [@st_blackburn](https://twitter.com/st_blackburn)

Please note that you don't need to have an account to view our social media pages.

