

St James' Weekly News

St James' C of E Primary School
Earl Street
Blackburn
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office@stjames.blackburn.sch.uk

Date: 6th February 2026



Doug Stitcher

Mr D Stitcher, Head Teacher

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I hope you've all had a good week.

Firstly, there was an error in last week's newsletter with the dates for half-term. Just to clarify, we break up after school on **Friday 13th February 2026** and return on **Monday 23rd February 2026**! We nearly gave you an extra week off there! Apologies for any confusion this may have caused.

Next week, the last week of this half-term, is our parents' evening. Hopefully, you have made your appointment on School Spider by now, but if not, there is still time. We are looking forward to seeing all of you next week. Please remember, members of the Senior Leadership Team will be available in both buildings on both evenings.

We will also have our annual book fair running (details about this have been sent out separately) and we encourage you to come and browse the range of books available to purchase!

You may have heard a lot in the press about the new Ofsted Inspection Framework and the new school report cards. We are due a visit from Ofsted in around a year's time and we know, because they said it last time, they will be looking at attendance in detail!

So once again, please do everything you can to get your child to school on time every day and avoid booking holidays during term-time. We will increasingly be asking to see evidence to explain absences and, as you can see on the next page of the newsletter, you risk being fined or prosecuted if you choose to keep your children off school. Please do contact us if you need any support and we will do whatever we can to help!

Let's get our attendance above the national average!!

Have a lovely weekend.

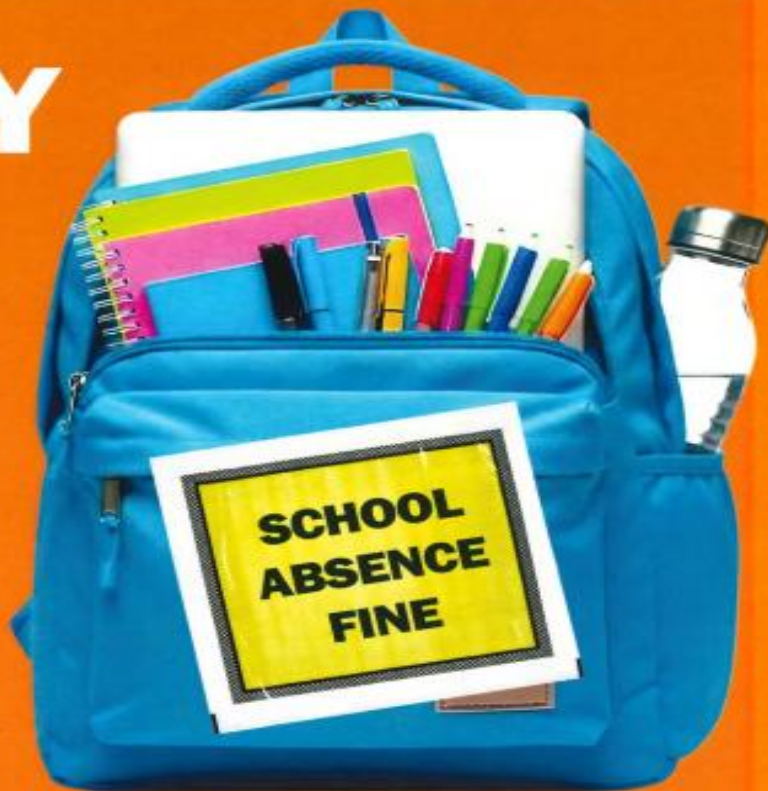
Mr D. Stitcher





PENALTY NOTICE FINES

If your child misses school
without authorisation you
may be issued a fine



FIRST OFFENCE

If a parent receives a penalty notice for a child, they will need to pay **£160 (within 28 days)**. However, the fee is reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days of the notice.

SECOND OFFENCE

If a parent receives a second penalty notice for the same child within three years, it will cost a flat fee of **£160 if paid within 28 days**. There's no option to pay a lower amount.

THIRD/ FURTHER OFFENCES

A parent cannot get a third penalty notice for the same child within three years of the first one. If the parent reaches the limit again within those three years, other actions will be taken instead, like **legal steps or other attendance interventions**.

For further information please visit our website by scanning the QR code or email education.welfare@blackburn.gov.uk



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Primary School

Headteacher: Mr D. Stitcher BA (HONS), PGCE (Dist), NPQH, NPQEF
Deputy Headteacher: Ms V. Moore BEd (HONS), NPQH
Email: office@stjames.blackburn.sch.uk



Friday 6th February

EYFS & KS1- Parents 3:15pm – 4pm

Monday 9th Feb

Book Fair - KS2 Parents 3:15 – 4pm

Tuesday 10th February & Thursday 12th February

Spring Term Parents Evening

Tuesday 10th February

1M Parents Evening 12:40pm- 4:40pm

Wednesday 11th February 2026

Pancake Day (see attached poster)

Friday 27th February 2026

Reception School Trip

Thursday 5th March 2026

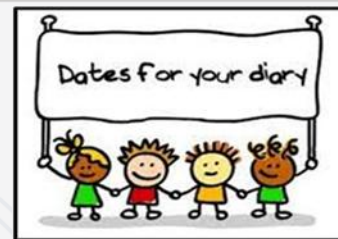
World Book Day Lunch

Wednesday 18th March 2026

Easter Lunch

Wednesday 22nd April 2026

Earth Day Lunch



Year 2 Maths Club Mon 12th Jan – 2nd Feb 3:05pm-3:50pm

Year 4 Kurling and Boccia Club Tues 13th Jan – 3rd Feb 3:05-3:50pm

Year 2 Reading Club Tues 13th Jan – Tue 3rd Feb 3:05pm – 3:50pm

Year 6 Maths Club Tues 13th Jan – 3rd Feb 3:05pm-3:50pm

Year 5 and 6 Wellbeing Club –Thurs 15th Jan – 5th Feb 3:05pm- 3:50pm

Year 6 Reading Club Thurs 15th Jan – 5th Feb 3:05pm – 3:50pm





Safer Internet Day 2026

Tuesday 10 February



Coordinated by the UK Safer Internet Centre

saferinternetday.org.uk

On Tuesday 10th February, we will be celebrating Online Safety day in school. This is a time for open a discussion about how we use the Internet.

How to engage with Safer Internet Day on social media safely

Safer Internet Day is a time to celebrate the safe and responsible use of technology through channels that are accessible and promote positive spaces for children and young people. To accommodate all of our supporters for Safer Internet Day, we will be engaging with schools and other organisations on Safer Internet Day across Bluesky, Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn this year. Please remember to follow us and join in the conversation.

Our theme this year is about making smart choices with AI. Following widespread media reporting and public scrutiny of the AI, it is important for schools and other organisations to take proportionate precautions to ensure their communities are appropriately safeguarded. If your organisation does choose to share images across any social media platform, we recommend that images do not show young people's faces. Alternatively, ensure that young people's faces are out of focus or unrecognisable.

Your support to champion good online safety practice will ensure this year's Safer Internet Day is celebrated safely and responsibly..

For more ways to get involved in the campaign please visit

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2026>





Pancake Day

American Style
Pancake
with a
Choice of Toppings
Cinnamon Sugar
&
Chocolate Sauce
or
Traditional
Sugar & Lemon



Lancashire
County Council

LANCASHIRE
CATERING SERVICE



Pancake Day is coming to St James'! Wednesday 11th February

We are excited to announce that we are adding a special treat to our lunch menu! In addition to our delicious daily meal, we will be serving American Style Pancakes. We want everyone to join the fun – even if your child usually brings a packed lunch, they are more than welcome to tuck into a warm stack with us.

Free for Reception, Year 1, Year 2 & Pupil
Premium children.
£2.60 For Year 3,4,5 & 6

Please head over to the School Spider app right now to book your child's meal. Don't miss out on the tastiest lunch of the week!



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WORLD BOOK DAY®

5 March 2026

The reading for fun charity



BEGINNING READERS

Cyfraith yn unig
Wales only

Eile amháin
Ireland only



EARLY READERS



FLUENT READERS

Eile amháin
Ireland only

Eile amháin
Ireland only

Choose your £1 book for free!

with your World Book Day® book token

Books are available in shops from 12 February until 15 March 2026.

Sponsored by



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TIDDLERS AND TODDLERS



£1

10am–11:30 AM

Term Time Monday Morning

**St James' Church Lounge, St
James' Church Blackburn**



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Early Years SEND Parent Workshop

Supporting children who refuse or avoid food



Are you a parent/carer living in Blackburn with Darwen with a child age 0-5 years with SEND?

If so, come and join our Parent information workshop

Why attend?

- ✓ Gain an understanding of why eating can be difficult for your child.
- ✓ Learn practical things you can do to help your child at home.
- ✓ Know when and where to go for additional support.

Where and When?

- 📍 Livesey Family Hub, Andrew Close, Blackburn BB2 4NU
- 🕒 Thursday 12th March 1pm - 2.30pm

To register your interest please email: eysend@blackburn.gov.uk with your name, contact telephone number, child's name and date of birth.

Please note we will confirm if you have a place via email.






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**. If your child has their ears pierced, earrings must be removed before school.

Class	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Reception RK and RW	Friday 9th January	Friday 16th January	Friday 23rd January	Friday 30th January	Friday 6th January	Friday 13th Feb
Year 1 1F and 1M	Monday -No PE Thursday 8th January	Monday 12th January Thursday 15th January	Monday 19th Tuesday 20th January	Monday 26th January Tuesday 27th January	Monday 2nd February Tuesday 3rd February	Monday 9th February Tuesday 10th Feb
Year 2 2A and 2K	Tuesday 6th January Wednesday 7th January	Tuesday 13th January Wednesday 14th January	Wednesday 21st January Thursday 22nd January	Wednesday 28th January Thursday 29th January	Wednesday 4th February Thursday 5th February	Wednesday 11th Feb Thursday 12th Feb
Year 3 3L and 3S	Wednesday 7th January	Monday 12th January Wednesday 14th January	Wednesday 21st January	Monday 26th January Wednesday 28th January	Wednesday 4th February	Monday 9th Feb Wednesday 11th Feb
Year 4 4A and 4R	Thursday 8th January	Monday 12th January Thursday 15th January	Thursday 22nd January	Monday 26th January Thursday 29th January	Thursday 5th February	Monday 9th Feb Thursday 12th Feb
Year 5 5B and 5M	Monday No PE Friday 9th January	Friday 16th January	Monday 19th January Friday 23rd January	Friday 30th January	Monday 2nd February Friday 6th February	Friday 13th Feb
Year 6 6H and 6V	Monday No PE Tuesday 6th January	Tuesday 13th January	Monday 19th January Tuesday 20th January	Tuesday 27th January	Monday 2nd February Tuesday 3rd February	Tuesday 10th Feb



attendance ~~MATTERS~~



CONGRATULATIONS TO CLASSES 4R WHO ARE THE ATTENDANCE WINNERS FROM LAST WEEK!

WHO WILL BE THE WINNERS NEXT WEEK?

RG	85.2%
RW	96.5%
1F	97.2%
1M	87.8%
2A	97.6%
2K	96.7%
3L	90.0%
3S	92.6%
4A	93.0%
4R	99.3%
5B	97.1%
5M	95.3%
6H	94.0%
6V	92.3%



95%
and
above

90% -
94.9%

Below
90%

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





St. James' Stars of the Week!

Well done everyone, we are very proud of you. Who will be receiving a certificate next week?

Pre-School & Nursery		Hisham K, Ibraheem A, Hafsa N & Sidra	
RG	Jannat M. & Lidya H.	RW	Waheeda F & Khadija S
1M	Ibraheem P & Meela B	1F	Amina K & Ahmad P
2A	Munashe M & Rafia Z	2K	M Adam B & M Ayaan M
3S	M. Aayan H & Huda A	3L	Hassnain A & Anastasia A
4R	Safia S & Zoya B	4A	M. Eisa A & Aaminah P
5B	Zara R & Khadija B	5M	Rehan Q & Aaisha U
6V	Mitzie-Leigh R & M Zayn B	6H	Subhana S & Robyn S





Year Group Updates

Forest Pre-School & Nursery

"This week, our nursery children have been busy drawing hens, developing their mark-making skills. Mark making is an important part of early writing in the EYFS, helping children build hand strength, coordination, and confidence as they begin to share their ideas through drawings and early writing. We have also introduced a new writing area in the nursery to encourage children to explore writing independently. Alongside this, we are promoting writing in all areas of learning, giving children lots of meaningful opportunities to make marks, draw, and write as part of their play."

Action

Parents' Evening will take place next Tuesday and Thursday.

Reception

This week in Drawing Club we read the text 'The Little Red Hen'. The children enjoyed using masks and acting this out. In the discovery we discussed why items may be stuck in the ice, how they got there and the different states of matter. The children are enjoying our PE unit of gymnastics, ask them to show you the different jumps they have learnt!

Action

"Please make sure reading is completed on a daily basis and planners are signed to reflect this. We are very much looking forward to our trip next term, if you have not given consent or contributions, please do so asap."





Year Group Updates

Year 1

As part of Year 1 funding raising we are looking at running 'Pancake mornings'. If you would like your child to have a pancake please speak to a member of the Year 1 team.

Action

Please ensure you sign the children's diary once they have read their books.

Year 2

This week the children have started to complete an experiment in Science to observe if seeds can grow without soil. We are doing this by completing the Hydroponics Farm Method. We also went down to KS2 to visit the Book Fair. The children were all very excited to see the range of wonderful books and stationary.

Action

"We look forward to welcoming you to Parents Evening on Tuesday and Thursday next week. Please continue to read with your child and ensure Reading Records have been signed. "





Year Group Updates

Year 3

"In maths, the children have been developing their understanding of sharing and grouping. They've been using practical resources and drawings to help them divide amounts equally and spot groups within numbers. Our English lessons have been full of magic! The children have been exploring poetry inspired by wizards and potions. They've enjoyed playing with descriptive language, powerful adjectives and alliteration to create their own spellbinding poems."

Action

"Please practise your 3x tables at home. QR codes for Hit the Button are on the back page of homework books."

Year 4

Year 4 have had a brilliant week this week. In English we have been analysing parts of Journey to Jo'burg. In Maths we have been learning how to calculate the perimeter of a shape. The children particularly enjoyed investigating which toothpaste is the best at removing stains in Science this week.

Action

Please ensure children are reading regularly at home. Planners should be signed at least 3 times a week.





Year Group Updates

Year 5

"This week, the children have been exploring newspapers. They have looked at the features and read examples before attempting to writing their eyes own. They will continue this next week.

Action

Please check if you have a parents evening booked with your teacher. If not, please contact the office

Year 6

"This week in Maths, we have begun learning about area and perimeter. The children have discussed the different formulas and the importance of remembering both the formulas and the key differences between area and perimeter. As part of this unit, we will also be exploring a range of shapes. In English, we have been researching spotted lizards from the novel Holes. The children will be using their research to write a non-chronological report. We have focused on understanding the importance of purpose and audience when writing information texts."

Action

"Please continue to encourage your child to use Maths Bots to practise their arithmetic and improve their score. If your child gets any questions wrong, please ask them to write these in their planner and show them to their teacher so we can discuss them and address any misconceptions. It is also very important that your child reads regularly. We encourage children to talk about their book with an adult and look up any unfamiliar words to help develop their understanding and vocabulary. This will make all the difference to their progress. We thank you for your continued support."





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



February

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.

