

St James' Weekly News

St James' C of E Primary School
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Date: Friday 17th April 2026



Doug Stitcher

Mr D Stitcher, Head Teacher

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome back! I hope everyone had a lovely break; and those of you celebrating had a wonderful Easter.

It's been a very busy first week of the Summer Term. We have began celebrating 100 years of Blackburn Diocese with a series of sessions about the kindness of God. The children have been learning all about what it means to be kind and talking about people they know who they consider to be kind.

In other news, you will have received a School Spider message from me on Tuesday about the proposed Specialist Inclusion Base and the forthcoming consultation period. This begins on May 8th as we cannot start it until after the local elections on 7th May.

If everything goes to plan, we hope to have some significant changes to share with you that will benefit the whole school community.

Speaking of the election, just a reminder that due to the local elections,

the Nursery will be closed to pupils on Thursday 7th May 2026. This is due to the closure of the Catholic church opposite Key Stage 2 which means the Local Authority need to choose another building to accommodate the voting.

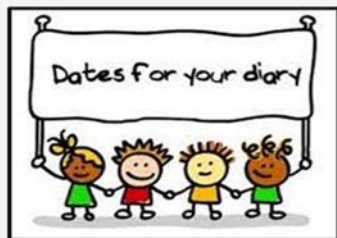
The rest of the school (Reception to Year 6) will be open as normal. I apologise for the inconvenience caused, but unfortunately, I am not legally allowed to say no to the Local Authority if they ask us (trust me, I tried!)...

The summer term is always very exciting and very busy so please make sure we have your correct contact details so that we can share all the latest information with you going forward.

Have a lovely weekend.

Mr D. Stitcher





Wednesday 22nd April 2026

Celebrate Earth Day

Thursday 23rd April 2026

Year 4 Trip Liverpool World Museum

Monday 4th May 2026

May Day School Closure

Thursday 7th May 2026

Polling Day (EYC Closed)

Monday 11 May to Thursday 14 May 2026

SATs Week

Monday 1st June – Wednesday 3rd June 2026

Winmarleigh Hall Residential

Year 6 Maths Club

Tues 14/04 – 12/05 3:05pm – 3:50pm

Year 6 Reading Club

Thurs 16/04 – 07/05 3:05pm – 3:50pm

Year 1M Phonics Club

Mon 20/04 – 11/05 3:05pm – 3:50pm

Year 2 Reading Club

Tues 21/04-13/05 3:05pm – 3:50pm

KS2 Gymnastics Club

Tues 14/04-12/05 3:05pm -3:50pm





£1 Non-Uniform Day

To celebrate



Earth Day!

Wednesday 22nd April 2026

All proceeds will help the WOW
Ambassadors buy books for our school
about the impact of pollution and how
we can help protect our planet.





Newsletter

Mental Health Support Team

April 2026

MHST? Who are we?

The Mental Health Support Team (MHST) provides an accessible service for students from primary age to year 13 who may be experiencing a range of mental health difficulties with their mental health.

The team are based within education settings and cover Year 1 to Year 11 in Blackburn with Darwen and Burnley, Burnley College, Year 7 to Year 8 in Preston and Year 7-12 in Heywood, Rossendale and Ribblesdale and Ribble Valley (including Nelson and Colne and Accrington College).

If you have noticed your child is feeling frequently sad, worried or anxious and feel they may need support from our team, please speak to a member of staff at your child's school, who can support a referral to the service. You can also speak to your GP.

Team News

Hi everyone,

We hope you all had a relaxing Easter break and enjoyed some of the sunshine we had.

Staff from the team have also had some time off over the bank holiday weekend. We have been busy putting new resources together, creating workshops and of course still continuing to see some young people at Children's Centres and online. This issue of the MHST Newsletter contains information and signposting for Mental Health Awareness Week coming up in May and also some tips around supporting your child with exam stress.

Young Peoples Column

During the easter holidays we met as a group and spent time reflecting on the topic of Mental Health and Stigma, we had an interesting discussion and have shared our thoughts with the Communications team at LSDF who are in the process of developing a campaign looking at this topic.

We also spent time looking at a clip of the MHST video which is fun for older kids to hear. This video will show young people who get referred to the team what they can expect on their first appointment.

Finally we spent time working with staff on designing a booking package, we are hoping to work on this over the next week or so and also some tips around supporting your child with exam stress.

Signposting and Information

Click on the images or scan the QR codes

Exam stress

Navigating exam season - free resources

Exam stress

Exam stress

SUPPORT RESISTANCE GUIDANCE

ParkPlay

SAVE THE DATE
GET JOB READY
THURSDAY 16th APRIL 2026
10am - 3pm

Careers advice for young people - New Directions

Follow us for regular updates and helpful tips:
facebook.com/cyren-east-mhst
twitter.com/cyrenmhst

Mental Health Awareness Week

11-17th May 2026

Mental Health Awareness Week this year will take place from Monday 11 - Sunday 17 May 2026. The theme, as set by the Mental Health Foundation, is to **Take Action**.

Mental Health Awareness Week 2026 invites us all to Take Action to protect and improve our mental wellbeing, as well as the wellbeing of others. This year's theme highlights that meaningful change often starts with small, everyday actions — from starting an open and honest conversation, to making time for rest, connection, and self-care, or offering support to someone who may be struggling. Taking action can also mean recognizing when we need help and feeling able to seek it without fear or judgement. Throughout the week, we'll be sharing ideas, resources, and activities designed to encourage positive steps and collective responsibility. By taking action together, we can help break down stigma, build resilience, and create a culture where mental health is valued, supported, and prioritised all year round.

WAYS TO TAKE ACTION FOR MENTAL HEALTH

- Talk to a friend or someone you trust about anything that's on your mind.
- Reflect on your feelings, and take positive steps to look after yourself.
- Create healthy habits: the getting more sleep or eating your body.
- Set boundaries with social media and activities that are stressful or overwhelming.
- Learn about mental health to understand yourself and others better.
- Be kind - reach out to others who are struggling.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK 2026

ACTION

FOR YOURSELF FOR SOMEONE ELSE FOR ALL OF US.

[CLICK HERE](#)

Exam Stress

How to help your child manage exam stress: Tips for parents

Work with your child to find revision strategies that work for them.

Validate their feelings - these are normal! Offer support and solutions.

Encourage them to take revision breaks and plan to do enjoyable activities.

Plan a treat or an activity to celebrate the end of exams.

Encourage a good bedtime routine.

Reinforce and reassure that you will be proud of them no matter what.

Make sure they are eating and drinking regularly.

Remain positive and hopeful.

Get aside 1-2 times so they can talk to you about any worries.

Work with to develop relaxation techniques.



WALK FOR WATER WEEK

The Worship Committee wants to raise money for WaterAid after learning that some girls must walk 5 km to collect fresh water instead of attending school.

696 million people in the world – almost one in ten – don't have clean water close to home. For women and girls, the burden is even greater, with many walking for hours every single day to fetch water – denying them the opportunity to go to school, earn a living, and take control of their futures.

All classes will walk up to 5 km over the week beginning 20th April.

Please bring in a £1 donation to help raise funds for WaterAid.

Walk For Water



St James' C of E
Primary School



St James' C of E
Primary School

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



Early Years SEND Parent and child Sing and Sign group Supporting children with their communication



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 and child Sing and Sign play session

Why attend?

- ✓ Learn the Makaton signs to popular nursery rhymes.
- ✓ Create your own Sing and Sign Nursery Rhyme book.
- ✓ Have fun, make friends and learn signs.

Where and When?

- 📍 Shadsworth Family Hub, Shadsworth Rd BB1 2HR
- 🕒 Monday's: 20th April - 18th May 10a.m-11a.m
excluding 4th May Bank Holiday

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.





NURSERY POLLING STATION – PARENT INFORMATION

Dear Parent/Guardians,

We would like to inform you that the Early years Centre will be used as an official Polling Station for the upcoming local election on **Thursday 7th May 2026**.

The nursery will not be opened to children on this day. This is due to safeguarding and site requirements.

The rest of the school will continue to operate as normal.

We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your understanding.





Please ensure your child brings a standard **school book bag** instead of a rucksack/backpack to school. Due to limited storage space on classroom hooks, rucksacks are causing health and safety issues. Book bags are required to keep cloakrooms tidy and safe.

Thank you for your cooperation.





Cool Milk



Notice regarding Change of School Milk Supplier for KS1 & Early Years Centre

We would like to inform you that from Monday 13th April 2026, the school will be changing our milk supplier to Cool Milk.

This change has been made following a review of our current provision to ensure we continue to offer high quality products while maintaining value for money and reliable service. The milk provided will continue to meet school food standards and will remain fresh, appropriately stored and suitable for children.

Mid- morning milk provides a much-needed nutritional; boost and keeps children hydrated between breakfast and lunch. Children will receive free milk until the age of 5. After that, they can continue to reap the benefits of fresh mid morning milk at a subsidised cost.

If you'd like to opt in simply register your child at www.coolmilk.com/parents or scan the QR code below to register.

Should you have any questions or need help, send us a message on www.coolmilk.com/contact or give us a call on the number listed below.

Tel: 0800 321 3248





KEY STAGE 1 & EARLY YEARS CENTRE

FUEL YOUR... LITTLE HEROES!



Dear parent/guardian,

As you may be aware your child's school has a milk scheme, administered by Cool Milk. Mid-morning milk provides a much-needed nutritional boost and keeps children hydrated between breakfast and lunch. Children receive free milk until the age of 5. After that, they can continue to reap the benefits of fresh mid-morning milk at a subsidised* cost.

If you'd like to opt in and have not already done so, simply register your child at www.coolmilk.com/parents. Your child(ren) will continue to receive free milk whilst under the age of 5 and Cool Milk will get in touch with further information by email shortly before their 5th birthday.

For children who are already over 5, it's not too late – our scheme is flexible! As well as being able to register and make payment straight away, you can join and cancel the scheme at any time. We offer yearly, termly and half termly payment periods and a recurring payment option to give you one less thing to remember.

If you already have an online Cool Milk account for a sibling, you can manage your account, make payment and add extra children by logging in at www.coolmilk.com/parents.

Should you have any questions or need any help, send us a message at www.coolmilk.com/contact or give us a call on the number listed below – we're here to help!

Kind regards,

Cool Milk

☐ : 0800 321 3248
☐ : www.coolmilk.com



SCAN TO REGISTER

*Milk for under-5s is fully funded by DHSC via the Nursery Milk Scheme. Milk for over-5s is subsidised by Defra via the School Milk Scheme.

Cool Milk at School Ltd | Cool Milk House | Kingsley Park | Kingsley Road | Lincoln | LN6 3TA | ☎ 0800 321 3248 | 🌐 www.coolmilk.com



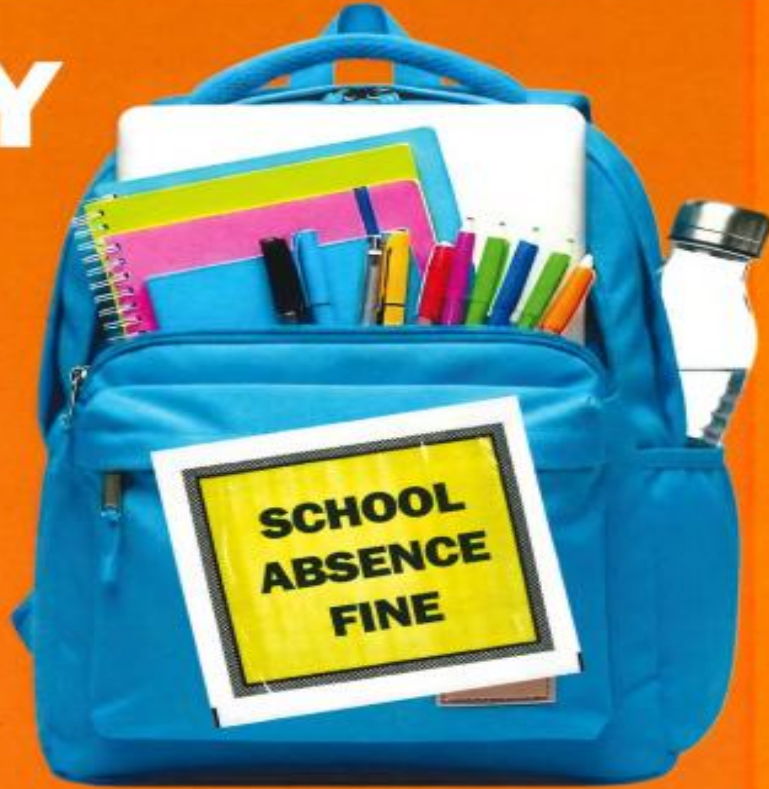
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PENALTY NOTICE FINES

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





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



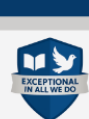
RENEW YOUR CODE!

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.





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 1 st and Tuesday 2 nd September 2025 Wednesday 3 rd September 2025 Friday 24 th October 2025 Monday 27 th October – Friday 31 st October 2025 (inc) Monday 3 rd November 2025 Thursday 18 th December 2025 Friday 19 th 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 5 th January 2026 Tuesday 6 th January 2026 Friday 13 th February 2026 Monday 16 th February – Friday 20 th February 2026 (inc) Monday 23 rd February 2026 Friday 27 th 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 13 th April 2026 Monday 4 th May 2026 Friday 22 nd May 2026 Monday 25 th May – Friday 29 th May 2026 (inc) Monday 1 st June 2026 Friday 17 th July 2026 Monday 20 th 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 17 th April	Friday 24 th April	Friday 1 st May	Friday 8 th May	Friday 15 th May	Friday 22 nd May
Year 1 1F and 1M	Monday 13 th April	Monday 20 th April	Monday 27 th April	Monday No PE	Monday 11 th May	Monday 18 th May
	Tuesday 14 th April	Tuesday 21 st April	Tuesday 28 th April	Tuesday 5 th May	Tuesday 12 th May	Tuesday 19 th May
Year 2 2A and 2K	Wednesday 15 th April	Wednesday 22 nd April	Wednesday 29 th April	Wednesday 6 th May	Wednesday 13 th May	Wednesday 20 th May
	Thursday 16 th April	Thursday 23 rd April	Thursday 30 th April	Thursday 7 th May	Thursday 14 th May	Thursday 21 st May
Year 3 3L and 3S	Monday 13 th April	Wednesday 22 nd April	Monday 27 th April	Wednesday 6 th May	Monday 11 th May	Wednesday 20 th May
	Wednesday 15 th April		Wednesday 29 th April		Wednesday 13 th May	
Year 4 4A and 4R	Monday 20 th April	Thursday 23 rd April	Monday 27 th April	Thursday 7 th May	Monday 11 th May	Thursday 21 st May
	Thursday 16 th April		Thursday 30 th April		Thursday 14 th May	
Year 5 5B and 5M	Friday 17 th April	Monday 20 th April	Friday 1 st May	Monday No PE	Friday 15 th May	Monday 18 th May
		Friday 24 th April		Friday 8 th May		Friday 22 nd May
Year 6 6H and 6V	Tuesday 14 th April	Monday 20 th April	Tuesday 28 th April	Monday No PE	Tuesday 12 th May	Monday 18 th May
		Tuesday 21 st April		Tuesday 5 th May		Tuesday 19 th May





attendance ~~MATTERS~~




CONGRATULATIONS TO CLASSES 3L WHO ARE THE ATTENDANCE WINNERS FROM LAST WEEK!

WHO WILL BE THE WINNERS NEXT WEEK?

95%
and
above

90% -
94.9%

Below
90%

RG	91.4%
RW	93.3%
1F	88.0%
1M	93.3%
2A	92.3%
2K	87.0%
3L	98.4% 
3S	94.7%
4A	89.3%
4R	95.3%
5B	97.2%
5M	90.7%
6H	92.7%
6V	98.0%

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		Aydaan A, Muhammed Isa R, Muhammed Umair M, Fizza S & Anabia	
RG	Zidan H. & Mustafa Hussain S.	RW	Odai A & Ayaan M
1M	M.Husayn A & Mohammad Ali S	1F	Zayn Y & Mohammad Ryan M
2A	Ibrahim S & Ibrahim M	2K	Zikra MH & Unaysah R
3S	M. Dawood & M. Aayan	3L	Taqwa T & Isa A
4R	Ayesha G & Muhammed Eesa P	4A	Rumaisa R & Haashir A
5B	M.Tayyab & M.Malik	5M	Srishta B & Inaaya A
6V	Lubabah B & M. Siddiq M	6H	Ajwa. M & Aizah. N





Year Group Updates

Forest Pre-School & Nursery

"This week in nursery, the children have had a wonderful time enjoying their Forest School experience. They showed great creativity while making clay snails, carefully shaping and decorating their designs. Around the fire, the children thoroughly enjoyed toasting s'mores, learning how to stay safe while experiencing something new and exciting. The water area was also a big hit, with lots of different equipment to explore, encouraging teamwork, problem-solving, and imaginative play. In the classroom, the children have been fascinated by learning about the life cycle of a butterfly. They particularly loved reading *The Hungry Caterpillar*, which helped them understand how a caterpillar transforms into a beautiful butterfly. It has been lovely to see their curiosity and enthusiasm as they explore this topic through stories and discussions."

Action

"Pre-School Parents: Please check your emails/council portals for information regarding your child's school place."

Reception

Welcome back! We hope you had a lovely half term. This week we have been recapping our maths knowledge, subitising, number bonds and repeating patterns. In drawing club the children have enjoyed the traditional tale 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. They have learnt about primary and secondary colours and used colouring mixing to create beanstalks!

Easter.

Action

Children will be in their new phonics groups next week, so they will be sent home with new books towards the end of next week. Please continue to support your children by playing games such as 'I spy' to help with blending.



Year Group Updates

Year 1

"The children had an amazing time at the zoo. Exploring different type of animals. Can they name all the animals they saw? This week, we have been learning about instructions texts. We have learnt about how to make Gingerbread people."

Action

Spelling test will be completed on the coming Monday and they will receive new spellings and Maths homework on Monday as well.

Year 2

We have had a lovely first week back. The children have started to read a new fiction text in English called 'The Magic Finger'. We have a busy week next week! On Wednesday is World Earth Day and to help celebrate this the children will be in non-uniform, completing a range of exciting challenges all to do with caring for our environment.

Action

"Please ensure your child is reading and completing their homework. If you have any queries please come and speak to your class teacher.



Year Group Updates

Year 3

Year 3 have made a strong start to the summer term after just one week back! In PE, we have begun our athletics unit, focusing on sprinting and correct starting positions to develop speed, technique, and control. In maths, we are continuing to consolidate our understanding of division, building confidence in applying known facts to solve problems accurately and efficiently. In DT, the children enjoyed designing and making healthy sandwiches, carefully considering ingredients and the importance of a balanced diet. In science, we have started learning about rocks, comparing different types and exploring their properties using scientific vocabulary to support clear observations and explanations.

Action

"If your child has school dinners, please remember to book them in advance to ensure they receive a meal of their choice."

Year 4

Year 4 have had a brilliant first week back. We are enjoying reading 'The Water Horse.' In Maths we have been learning about decimals and our new topic in Science is States of Matter.

Action

Thursday 23rd April is our trip to Liverpool World Museum. Please can you ensure children are wearing the correct uniform including their blue jumper with sensible footwear. Children must bring a disposable water bottle with their lunch in a disposable bag.





Year Group Updates

Year 5

Welcome back to a new term. The final one before Year 5 head into Year 6. We are currently working extremely hard to ensure all the children have got the core skills needed for next year. We are completing more mathematic, reading and writing skills and the children have been working really hard. Well done to all.

Action

Year 6

"In maths, we are currently focusing on converting units of measurement. The children have been working hard to understand how to confidently switch between different units, applying their knowledge to a range of problem-solving questions. In reading, our focus has been on developing inference skills. The children are learning how to read between the lines, using evidence from the text to support their ideas and deepen their understanding."

Action

"As the SATs draw nearer, we are continuing to build confidence and resilience, ensuring that all pupils feel prepared and supported. You can help at home by encouraging regular reading and discussing texts together, as well as practising basic maths skills where possible. Please ensure Century Tech homework is completed by your child."



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](#)

Twitter: [@st_blackburn](#)

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

