

St James' Catholic Primary

"Great News"

Tuesday 13th October 2026

HARVEST MASS

Father Owen celebrated a beautiful Harvest Mass with the whole school. It was wonderful to come together as a school community to give thanks and reflect on the importance of helping others. Thank you to all parents, carers and staff for your kind and generous donations. These have now been gratefully received by the Food Bank at St Barnabas and will provide valuable support to local families in need.

PARENT SURVEY

Thank you to all parents and carers who completed the Academy Trust Board Summer Parent Survey. We greatly value your feedback, which helps us to celebrate our strengths and continue to improve our provision.

We are delighted that the responses were overwhelmingly positive, with ten out of eleven areas scoring above the national Ofsted averages, many by a significant margin.

Highlights included:

- **93.2%** of parents said their child is happy at St James' (Ofsted average: 84%)
- **95.5%** of parents said their child feels safe at school (Ofsted average: 85%)
- **90.9%** of parents said the school ensures pupils are well behaved (Ofsted average: 75%)

These results reflect the dedication of our staff, the support of our families and, most importantly, the wonderful children who make St James' such a special place to learn and grow.

Whilst we are extremely proud of these outcomes, we are always striving to improve. One area highlighted for further development was the level of support pupils receive to help them succeed. Whilst **55.6%** of parents agreed that the school provides the support their child needs, we would like to reassure families that a wide range of support is available to all pupils at St James'.

Our staff work hard to ensure learning is accessible and appropriately challenging for every child. Teachers use a variety of adaptive teaching strategies including scaffolding, targeted small-group support and individual intervention where appropriate. Some pupils may also benefit from personalised learning programmes tailored to their individual needs.

In addition, we are fortunate to have access to specialist provision, including:

- Weekly support from our Speech and Language Therapist.
- Close partnership working with Educational Psychologists.
- A dedicated Sensory Room for children who may benefit from a quieter, regulated environment.
- Lunchtime support provision.
- A wide range of targeted interventions to support academic, social and emotional development.

If you feel your child would benefit from additional support, please speak to their class teacher in the first instance. Parents' Evening on **Monday 16th November** may provide a useful opportunity to discuss any concerns you may have.

Our SENDCo, **Miss Chapman**, will also be available throughout the evening to speak with parents, alongside our Speech and Language Therapist, **Alison Shearer**.

STAFF UPDATE

It is with great sadness that we say goodbye to **Mrs Duggan**, our Pastoral Manager, who will be taking early retirement at the end of this half term.

Throughout her time at St James', Mrs Duggan has provided exceptional care, guidance and support to countless children and families. Her kindness, dedication and unwavering commitment to our school community have made a lasting impact on the lives of many.

On behalf of everyone at St James', we would like to thank Mrs Duggan for her many years of outstanding service and wish her a long, happy and well-deserved retirement.

SPOOKTACULAR DISCO

We are delighted to be hosting our annual **Spooktacular Disco** on **Thursday 22nd October**.

Children are invited to come to school in their fancy-dress costumes for the entire day. There is no charge for dressing up and children who would prefer not to wear fancy dress are welcome to come in their own clothes.

Disco timings are as follows:

- **Infants:** 4:30pm to 6:00pm
- **Juniors:** 6:00pm to 7:30pm

Tickets cost **£5 per child** and include snacks and a drink. Places can be booked via the School Money app. We would greatly appreciate your support for this event, as all proceeds will be invested directly into our school fund to benefit all pupils.

In addition, there will be a special spooky-themed after-school crafts club running from **3:30pm to 4:30pm** for children of all ages (Activity 1 on the School Money app).

We would also be very grateful for any Halloween decorations that families may be able to lend or donate for the event. If you can help, please contact the school office.

NEW SCHOOL PLAYGROUND

We are excited to announce that during half term and the first week following our return, the large playground will be resurfaced and transformed with a range of colourful games and activity markings. The children have thoroughly enjoyed contributing their ideas and designs, and we are looking forward to incorporating as many of their suggestions as possible into the finished playground.

Whilst every effort will be made to minimise disruption, some temporary changes will be necessary to ensure everyone's safety during the works. As a result, the staff car parks will be used as temporary play areas and staff will instead park in the church car park.

This may result in increased traffic and reduced parking availability in the church car park, for which we apologise in advance and thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

100% ATTENDANCE CELEBRATION

A huge well done to all of our pupils who achieved **100% attendance during September**. Excellent attendance really improves the progress and attainment that children make and helps them to make the most of every opportunity in school.

Our next attendance prize draw will take place on **Thursday 17th December**. Pupils who maintain **96% attendance or above** will be entered into the draw for the chance to win some fantastic prizes.

Thank you to all parents and carers for your continued support in promoting excellent attendance and ensuring children arrive at school every day on time, ready to learn. Together, we can help every child achieve their very best.

SCHOOL DINNERS

It has been wonderful to see increasing numbers of children choosing school meals and enjoying the wide variety of dishes on offer.

Our recent **American Diner-themed lunch** proved particularly popular and was thoroughly enjoyed by pupils. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to our kitchen team for going above and beyond to create such a memorable experience.

We have also been working closely with the nutrition team at Mellors to develop an exciting new winter menu, which will be introduced after the half-term break. Copies of the menu will be sent home over the coming days and will also be available on the school website.

If your child has any dietary requirements, food intolerances or allergies, please contact the school office so that we can ensure the appropriate arrangements are in place and provide the safest possible dining experience for your child.

NUT-FREE SCHOOL

To help keep all children safe, our school is now a **nut-free zone**. We ask that no foods containing nuts are brought into school, either as snacks or in packed lunches. This will help reduce the risk to pupils with severe allergies. Please also note that **Wotsits (cheesy puffs) and Custard Cream biscuits are not permitted** as snacks or in packed lunches.

FREE BREAKFAST CLUB – START THE DAY THE RIGHT WAY

Our popular Breakfast Club runs daily with two convenient sessions: from 7:30 am until 8:45am– £1.50 or from 8:15 am until 8:45am – free of charge. Children can enjoy a choice of toast or cereal, plus a drink. More than just breakfast, it's a chance for them to spend time with friends and enjoy fun activities before the school day begins. Breakfast Club is the perfect way to kick-start the day positively, leaving children happy, energised, and ready to learn!

SPECIAL MULTI-SPORT WRAPAROUND

Our special multi-sport sessions on a Tuesday are proving to be extremely popular. Please book Activity 5 on the app, if you would like your child to attend. Snacks and a drink will be provided. Please collect your child by 6pm.

TOP-UP PAYMENTS

In an emergency (e.g. an urgent appointment), you can book onto breakfast, after-school or wraparound clubs on the actual day. Simply pay the correct top-up on the app and inform the office.

DID YOU KNOW?

Parents can get money back/support for Breakfast Clubs, After-School Clubs and Wraparound through Tax-Free Childcare. The Government adds £2 for every £8 you pay (up to £2000 per year per child). This is effectively a **20% subsidy**, not a full refund. If you are eligible for Universal Credit, you can claim back up to **85% of childcare costs**. This is paid after you report and provide receipts. Speak to Mrs Boyce if you would like to apply for this.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Event	Date/Times
School Reopens	Monday 2 nd November
Anti-Bullying Week/Odd Sock Day	Monday 16 th November
Parents Evening	Monday 16 th November (2:30-6pm)
Christmas Dinner/Xmas Jumper Day	Wednesday 2 nd December
KS1 Nativity Dress Rehearsal	Monday 7 th December
Reception Panto at the Hub	Tuesday 8 th December (9:30am)
EYFS Christmas Crafts	Wednesday 9 th December (9am – 10am)
KS1 Nativity Matinee	Wednesday 9 th December (2:30pm – 3:15pm)
EYFS and KS1 Xmas Party/Santa visit	Thursday 10 th December (wear own clothes)
Hattersley Brass perform at Tesco	Thursday 10 th December (4pm)
KS1 Nativity	Thursday 10 th December (6pm – 7:15pm)
KS2 Carol/Brass Concert	Friday 11 th December (2:30pm in church)
EYFS Nativity Dress Rehearsal	Monday 14 th December
KS2 Christmas Party	Monday 14 th December (wear own clothes)
EYFS Nativity	Wednesday 16 th December
Choir Sing at Tesco	Wednesday 16 th December (1:30-2:30pm)
Attendance/Special Recognition Assembly	Thursday 17 th December
Last Day of Term	Friday 18 th December
School Reopens	Tuesday 5 th January 2027