ST. JAMES' (C OF E) JUNIOR SCHOOL

Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day.



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

FRIDAY 16TH OCTOBER 2026

LOCKDOWN...

This week, we practised our school lockdown procedure to ensure that children are familiar with the instructions and know how to respond calmly and safely in the event of an emergency.

We were incredibly proud of how sensible and mature the children were throughout the practice. They listened carefully, followed instructions promptly and demonstrated excellent behaviour. Thank you for your continued support in helping us keep everyone at St James' safe.

GURDWARA...

On Thursday, our Year 6 children enjoyed a visit to the Gurdwara, where they had the opportunity to learn more about Sikhism and experience a place of worship first-hand. The children were respectful, thoughtful and engaged throughout the visit, showing great maturity as they learned about Sikh beliefs, traditions and practices. Experiences like these are invaluable in helping our children develop a deeper understanding of different faiths and cultures, celebrate diversity and appreciate the importance of respect and tolerance within our community.

HINDU TEMPLE...

Our Year 4 children had a fantastic opportunity today to visit a Hindu temple and deepen their understanding of Hinduism beyond the classroom. They explored the temple, learned about its significance to the Hindu community and discovered more about the beliefs and traditions practised by Hindus. The children approached the experience with curiosity, asked thoughtful questions and showed great respect throughout. Well done, Year 4, for being such wonderful ambassadors for St James'!

PARENTS' EVENING...

A reminder that our Parents' Evening will take place on Wednesday 21st October. Appointments with your child's class teacher are now available to book via Arbor. This is a great opportunity to meet with your child's teacher, discuss their progress and celebrate the things they have been achieving so far this year. We look forward to seeing you all.

ATTENDANCE...

We are incredibly proud that our attendance has been recognised as one of the Top 10% Most Improved FFT Primary Schools in England. This is a fantastic achievement for our children, families and dedicated staff team. A huge thank you for encouraging your child to attend school every day. Remember - every day matters!

Golden Book AWARDS

Our theme for the Golden Book this week has been 'Someone who has been a superstar in Circles.'

The children in the Golden Book this week are:

Alisha	Courtney
Ro	Naifa
Fiki	Hurrain
Murtaza	Abu-Bakar
Hussain	Diana
Tiara Rose	Hassan Faisal
Minahil	Ronnie
Rand	Amelia
Isaac	Zainab
Rayan	Ramina
Zainab K	Hira
Neymar	

Well done to all this week's winners.

HEADTEACHER'S AWARD

'You have planted them, they have taken root, watch them grow and bear fruit.' - Jeremiah 12:2

Mr. Walls

CHANGES TO SWIMMING ARRANGEMENTS...

After half-term, we will be making some changes to our swimming provision to ensure that children receive the best possible swimming experience and make maximum progress in developing their swimming skills.

Rather than swimming as a whole year group, classes will attend swimming individually on a rotational basis. Each class will swim for at least a half-term period, allowing us to reduce the number of children attending swimming at any one time. This will mean that children have 45 minutes in the swimming pool, rather than the 30 minutes they currently receive. The additional time in the water will provide greater opportunities to practise and develop swimming skills, build confidence and receive high-quality instruction from swimming teachers.

Boys and girls will swim together during their lessons but will continue to get changed separately to ensure privacy and dignity.
The changes will also help us address some of the practical challenges we currently experience. At present, the large number of children attending swimming together means that changing can take longer than anticipated, resulting in children returning to school later than planned. By reducing the number of children attending each session, we anticipate that changing times will be significantly reduced. We hope this will allow children to return to school on time for the end of the school day, reducing the likelihood of delays at home time.

These new arrangements will also help us protect valuable learning time in school, as not all classes will need to leave school for swimming every week. Classes remaining in school will continue with their usual curriculum learning, ensuring that their progress in other subjects is not disrupted by regular swimming visits.

Swimming is recognised as part of our Physical Education (PE) curriculum. Therefore, during the weeks when classes are not attending swimming, children will receive an additional PE session each week to ensure they continue to access a broad and balanced PE curriculum. Further details about these sessions, including what children will need to wear or bring to school, will be communicated to parents and carers by class teachers via Class Dojo.

The swimming arrangements for the remainder of the academic year will be as follows:

- 2nd November 2026 to 7th December 2026: Class 4A will attend swimming.
- 4th January 2027 to 22nd March 2027: Class 4B will attend swimming.
- 12th April 2027 to 19th July 2027: Class 3/4MS will attend swimming.

This means that, after October half-term, children in Classes 4B and 3/4MS will not need to bring their swimming kits to school. They will remain in school and continue learning their other curriculum subjects while Class 4A attends swimming.

We believe these changes will provide a more effective and beneficial swimming experience for all children. By increasing pool time, reducing the number of children attending each session and improving the organisation of swimming visits, we aim to ensure that children receive high-quality swimming teaching while making the most of their learning time in school.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many apps which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about WHATSAPP

UK AND EUROPE 16+ 13+ REST OF THE WORLD

WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service, with around two billion users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls. Its end-to-end encryption means messages can only be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp can read them. Updates to its privacy policy in 2021 (involving sharing data with parent company Facebook) caused millions to leave the app, but the new policy was widely misinterpreted – it only related to WhatsApp's business features, not to personal messages.



SCAMS

Fraudsters occasionally send WhatsApp messages pretending to offer prizes – encouraging the user to click on a link to win. Other common scams involve warning someone that their WhatsApp subscription has run out (aiming to dupe them into disclosing payment details) or impersonating a friend or relative and asking for money to be transferred to help with an emergency.

DISAPPEARING MESSAGES

Users can set WhatsApp messages to disappear in 24 hours, 7 days or 90 days by default. Photos and videos can also be instructed to disappear after the recipient has viewed them. These files can't be saved or forwarded – so if your child was sent an inappropriate message, it would be difficult to prove any wrongdoing. However, the receiver *can* take a screenshot and save that as evidence.

ENABLING FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp has unfortunately been linked to accelerating the spread of dangerous rumours. In India in 2018, some outbreaks of mob violence appear to have been sparked by false allegations being shared on the app. WhatsApp itself took steps to prevent its users circulating hazardous theories and speculation in the early weeks of the Covid-19 pandemic.

POTENTIAL CYBERBULLYING

Group chat and video calls are great for connecting with multiple people in WhatsApp, but there is always the potential for someone's feelings to be hurt by an unkind comment or joke. The 'only admins' feature gives the admin(s) of a group control over who can send messages. They can, for example, block people from posting in a chat, which could make a child feel excluded and upset.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a WhatsApp chat, you only need the mobile number of the person you want to message (the other person also needs to have the app). WhatsApp can access the address book on someone's device and recognise which of their contacts also use the app. So if your child has ever given their phone number to someone they don't know, that person could use it to contact them via WhatsApp.

LOCATION SHARING

The 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, allowing friends to see their movements. WhatsApp describes it as a "simple and secure way to let people know where you are." It *is* a useful method for a young person to let loved ones know they're safe – but if they used it in a chat with people they *don't* know, they would be exposing their location to *them*, too.

Advice for Parents & Carers

CLICK HERE

CREATE A SAFE PROFILE

Even though someone would need a child's phone number to add them as a contact, it's also worth altering a young person's profile settings to restrict who can see their photo and status. The options are 'everyone', 'my contacts' and 'nobody' – choosing one of the latter two ensures that your child's profile is better protected.

EXPLAIN ABOUT BLOCKING

If your child receives spam or offensive messages, calls or files from a contact, they should block them using 'settings' in the chat. Communication from a blocked contact won't show up on their device and stays undelivered. Blocking someone does not remove them from your child's contact list – so they also need to be deleted from the address book.

REPORT POTENTIAL SCAMS

Young people shouldn't engage with any message that looks suspicious or too good to be true. When your child receives a message from an unknown number for the first time, they'll be given the option to report it as spam. If the sender claims to be a friend or relative, call that person on their usual number to verify it really is them, or if it's someone trying to trick your child.

LEAVE A GROUP

If your child is in a group chat that is making them feel uncomfortable, or has been added to a group that they don't want to be part of, they can use WhatsApp's group settings to leave. If someone exits a group, the admin can add them back in once; if they leave a second time, it is permanent.

THINK ABOUT LOCATION

If your child needs to use the 'live location' function to show you or one of their friends where they are, advise them to share their location only for as long as they need to. WhatsApp gives a range of 'live location' options, and your child should manually stop sharing their position as soon as it is no longer needed.

DELETE ACCIDENTAL MESSAGES

If your child posts a message they want to delete, WhatsApp allows the user seven minutes to erase a message. Tap and hold on the message, choose 'delete' and then 'delete for everyone.' However, it's important to remember that recipients may have seen (and taken a screenshot of) a message before it was deleted.

CHECK THE FACTS

You can now fact-check WhatsApp messages that have been forwarded at least five times, by double-tapping the magnifying glass icon to the right of the message. From there, your child can launch a Google search and decide for themselves whether the message was true or not.

Meet Our Expert



Parven Kaur is a social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience in the social media arena and is the founder of Kids N Clicks: a web resource that helps parents and children thrive in a digital world.



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

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