



# Governor Newsletter

March 2025

## Message from the Chair of Governors

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff, and Students,

As we approach the Easter break, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on what has been a highly productive and rewarding term at our school. On behalf of the Governing Board, I extend my heartfelt thanks to Mrs Murphy, our dedicated staff, supportive parents, and, most importantly, our wonderful students for their hard work and enthusiasm.

### School Progress and Achievements

We continue to see significant improvements across key areas of school life. Our School Development Plan is progressing well, with a strong emphasis on supporting teachers, enhancing inclusive practices, and ensuring every child receives the best educational opportunities. Notably, our attendance remains above the national average, demonstrating the commitment of both families and staff in supporting learning.

Our curriculum enhancements in subjects such as Maths, Art, PE, and Computing have been particularly successful, with external visitors recognising the high level of pupil engagement and discussion. Recent CPD for teachers has focused on AI in education as well as online safety, which will further strengthen our educational approach.

It has also been wonderful to see the huge array of extra-curricular opportunities that have been available to the children this term. Year 4 have been on their residential to Hindleap with the Year 6 annual excursion to the Isle of Wight to follow in the summer term. All other year groups have been on trips to RHS Wisley, Chelsea Football Club Training Ground as well as local landmarks. We've seen participation in lots of inter-school activities across the school with a 36 strong St James contingent participating in cross country this weekend, and all children in Years 4-6 having swimming lessons across the year. Creating these opportunities for all children is a real passion for Mrs Murphy and the team and it has been great to see this come to fruition.

In this newsletter  
you can expect:

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Chair's Message

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What we have  
done this term

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## Message from Chair, continued..

### Wellbeing and Safeguarding

The welfare of our students remains at the heart of all we do. This term has seen continued commitment to safeguarding, behaviour management, and emotional support, ensuring a safe and inclusive environment for all. The introduction of new pastoral strategies and attendance initiatives has had a positive impact, and we appreciate your support in reinforcing these efforts.

### Community and Parental Engagement

It has been wonderful to see such strong parental engagement through workshops, surveys, and events. Your input is invaluable, and we remain committed to fostering strong home-school partnerships. Our continued involvement in local projects, including litter-picking with our MP and councillors and supporting nurseries in school readiness, further demonstrates our school's dedication to the wider community. We would always love to see more parent volunteers at school so if you have not already registered, please contact the School Office who can guide you through the process.

### Parent Governor Election in the Next Term

Following some changes to the Governing Body during this academic year, we will be holding a Parent Governor election during the course of the Summer Term. I am really grateful for the valuable contribution that our existing Parent Governors bring to the Board and I am excited to be able to add to that number before the end of the academic year.

We are particularly keen that our Governing Body represents the entire school community so if you are interested in hearing more about this, please do reach out to me as Chair of Governors, or Andrew, our Vice Chair, or to the School directly and we would be happy to provide some information on the role and the process.

### Looking Ahead

With summer term on the horizon, we are excited about the opportunities ahead, including further curriculum developments, extracurricular enhancements, and continued progress in our School Development Plan. The Summer Term is always a special time as we prepare to say goodbye to our Year 6 students, many of whom have been with the School since 2018, and look ahead to welcoming our new intake of Reception pupils in September and continuing to build on the strong foundations we have set.

Finally, as we enter this time of reflection and renewal, for everyone observing Easter and other faith traditions we wish you all a peaceful and restorative time with loved ones. We look forward to seeing you all refreshed and ready for another inspiring term.

With best wishes,

Greg Pearce  
Chair of Governors

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# What we have done this term: Our Committee updates

## Learning and Welfare

The school focus on attendance continues to show impact with the figures building on the improvement seen last term. The committee was pleased to hear feedback from St James pupils on how it feels when they miss school, with them recognising that it has an impact on their learning. With this in mind, attendance will continue to be a priority for the school and we once again thank you, the parents and carers, for the part you play in this endeavour. As part of the committee's role in monitoring curriculum development, we often hear from subject leaders and this term we had an interesting and informative presentation on Religious Education at St James. With inclusivity and openness being key to our vision and ethos, this subject is taught as open questions, for all faiths and none, to provoke thought and understanding. You may have heard your children mention Windows, Mirrors and Doors – if not I encourage you to ask them!

**Alex Guest, Chair of Learning and Welfare Committee**

## Finance

We continue our monitoring of expenditure against the school's plan to ensure the best outcome for our children. Regular site walks are conducted by Mrs Murphy, senior staff, our Caretaker and me to ensure the premises are safe and maintenance is optimised where needed against the constraint of limited budgets. The school continues make notable achievements in site and premises improvements. And this term has seen:

- A new ship has been installed in the Infant playground, enhancing outdoor play opportunities.
- A new canopy outside the Durrant building was successfully installed in January 2025 with funding secured via Surrey CC and usage of school reserves. This addition enhances our before and after school care offering.

Further plans include:

- Playground upgrades are in progress, and we await funding approval from Surrey County Council.
- The KSI kitchen development project has been approved and should be installed during the next term. This development once installed will enhance our KSI development and provides the potential expansion of our before and after school care offering.
- Resurfacing of the EYFS outdoor area has been scheduled for Summer 2025.

**Greg Pearce, Chair of Finance and Accommodation Committee**

## Personnel

This term, we continue to refine our personnel strategies to ensure that we deliver exceptional opportunities for every student. Professional development remains a cornerstone of our vision, with a focus on high-quality CPD. This term, we have strengthened staff training, including increasing the number of First Aiders and AI awareness training for all staff. We are actively evaluating all courses to ensure they lead to meaningful improvements in staff performance and positively influence student outcomes. To attract more outstanding talent, we continue to refine and advance our recruitment strategies, with some new roles currently being advertised. Prioritising staff wellbeing, feedback from recent surveys has been actively taken and impactful changes implemented. A dedicated staff wellbeing committee also consistently monitors and promotes initiatives to support the team. Governors have also reinforced their commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). In addition to completing our own training, we ensure this vital work aligns with the school's broader vision, fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for all.

**Ellie Field, Chair of Personnel Committee**

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*Thank you for reading!*

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