



FRIDAY NEWS

4TH
SEPTEMBER
2026

The official newsletter of St James CE Primary School



It has been a wonderful start to the new school year, and it has been fantastic to welcome everyone back to school. I hope you all had a lovely summer break and are feeling refreshed and ready for the year ahead.

The children have made a fantastic start and have been busy settling into their new classes and getting to know their new teachers. It has been lovely to see so many smiling faces around school. Our teachers and support staff have worked incredibly hard over the summer to create welcoming, positive and purposeful learning spaces where every child can feel happy, safe and ready to learn. The classrooms look fantastic, and I know the children are excited about the learning opportunities ahead.

We have also been busy making some improvements to our school site over the summer. Our pathways have been tarmacked, providing safer and more accessible routes around school, and new gates have been installed to further improve the security of our site. We have also had new CCTV installed, helping us to maintain a safe and secure environment for our children, staff and families.

Of course, we couldn't start the new school year without a little bit of fun! The children had a fantastic first day enjoying the bouncy castles. There were plenty of smiles, laughter and excitement, and it was a brilliant way to begin the year together.

As we look ahead, I am really excited about all that we will achieve together this year. There are so many opportunities ahead for our children to learn, grow, achieve and make wonderful memories.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. I look forward to working with you and your children throughout what I am sure will be another fantastic year at our school.

Welcome back, everyone — it is wonderful to have you with us!

Meet the Teacher Sessions

7 MON	09:00–09:45	Meet the Teacher - Class 3, 4 and 5	School event
	14:30–15:15	Meet the Teacher - Class 6, 7 and 8	School event

8 TUE	09:00–09:45	Meet the Teacher - Class 6, 7 and 8	School event
	14:30–15:15	Meet the Teacher - Class 9, 10 & 11	School event

9 WED	09:00–09:45	Meet the Teacher - Class 9, 10 & 11	School event
	14:30–15:15	Meet the Teacher - Class 3, 4 & 5	School event



Keep checking the Class Dojo App for more calendar updates. We'll send a full calendar of events soon.

Speak to your child's teacher if you are not connected to our Class Dojo.

Top Tips for SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S RETURN TO ROUTINE

Returning to school after the holidays can be challenging for some children and young people, and both families and education settings can play an important role in helping them readjust. Consistent routines, clear expectations, and supportive communication can support children and young people's wellbeing, self-regulation, and academic success. These practical tips can help make the transition back to school feel more manageable.

WELCOME BACK!

1 START EARLY



Gradually reintroduce school-day sleep, meal, and wake-up routines around a week before term begins. In education settings, familiar routines and expectations can also be introduced from the start of term to help pupils settle back in. A gradual and predictable approach can make the transition feel less abrupt and give children and young people the time they need to readjust to the structure of school life.

2 REBUILD ROUTINES TOGETHER



Involve the children and young people in your care in the rebuilding of familiar routines at home and in education settings. Having a say in their daily schedule can increase predictability for them and give them a greater sense of control. This might include discussing morning routines at home or reviewing classroom timetables, expectations, and activities together at the beginning of the school day.

3 ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBILITY



Giving children and young people age-appropriate responsibilities can help foster their autonomy and engagement. For younger children at home, this might include getting dressed independently or checking their school bag. In education settings, children and young people could organise their learning materials, complete simple classroom tasks, or follow a familiar morning routine. These manageable responsibilities can help them feel more involved in the school day while developing useful skills.

4 RECONNECT WITH PEERS



Re-establishing friendships can help children and young people feel more confident and connected when they return to school. Families might arrange opportunities for their children to speak to or spend time with school friends, while educators can use group activities, 'buddy' systems, or collaborative tasks to help rebuild classroom connections.

5 SUPPORT HEALTHY NUTRITION



Regular, balanced meals, particularly at breakfast, are linked to improved concentration, behaviour, and academic outcomes. Families can gradually return to familiar school-day mealtimes, while education settings can reinforce healthy eating routines at the start of term and signpost breakfast provision where available. Consistent access to food can help support children and young people's energy levels and concentration throughout the day.

6 COMMUNICATE OPENLY



Talk to the children and young people in your care about how they feel about the return to school and give them the opportunity to share any worries or questions. Anxiety around going back to school, particularly when starting a new year group, can be common, and children and young people may benefit from your reassurance and support. Parents and educators can all help with this by listening calmly to concerns and questions, and sharing relevant information with one another where appropriate.

7 RECONNECT WITH LEARNING AND PEERS



Light educational activities before term begins can help children become familiar with learning routines again without creating any unnecessary pressure on them. In school, low-pressure recap activities and familiar tasks from the previous year group can serve a similar purpose during the first few days back. Keeping learning positive and achievable can help rebuild children's concentration, confidence, and academic motivation as they settle back into their usual routine.

8 PRIORITISE SLEEP



Ensure the children and young people in your care get age-appropriate sleep and begin returning to their usual bedtime habits before term starts. Reducing screen use before bedtime may also support better sleep quality. Educators can also be mindful that tiredness may temporarily affect children's concentration, behaviour, and emotional regulation as they readjust to school routines.

9 PREPARE AHEAD



Organising uniforms, bags, lunches, and other school essentials in advance can reduce unnecessary stress when school mornings begin again. Educators can also help by preparing pupils for any changes to classrooms, timetables, staff, or behaviour expectations. Giving children clear information about what to expect ahead of time can make the return feel more familiar and help build up their confidence and independence.

10 BE PATIENT AND FLEXIBLE



Children adjust to changes in their routines at different rates, so your patience and flexibility can be important during the first days and weeks back. Some may settle quickly, while others need longer to adapt to earlier mornings, classroom expectations, or busy schedules. Parents and educators can support children and young people's readjustment by maintaining consistent routines, all the while recognising that concentration, behaviour, or confidence may temporarily look different for them.

Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillett is Associate Vice Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School, and a business development specialist for Minds Ahead, which works with schools to improve their mental health provision.



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