



St James' Church of England Junior School

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"With exploring minds, and faith; we grow and learn together."

23rd November 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

You will be aware from previous communications shared with you that, as a school we have prioritised the areas of attendance and homework participation as part of our School Improvement Plan. This decision was based on a significant drop in attendance for the academic year 2021-2022. For the best part this was directly down to the further hindrance of Covid. Another legacy of Covid school closure, is that children were participating less in homework since the return from home schooling. Our reading records showed this and engagement in Spelling Shed and Timestable Rockstars, which play a key role in our homework routine, were also down.

From the return to school closure, our school staff have worked extremely hard to try and catch up to lost time caused by school closure, and wanted to address any further lost opportunities for learning caused by absence or reluctance to engage with homework.

The great news is that the picture is improving this year. As can be seen below, our school attendance has not just returned to normal levels, but is actually beyond the usual levels. The number of persistent absentees is down from 33 at same point last year, to only 6 currently, and we currently have 81 children with 100% attendance thus far this term.

Levels of participation in homework have also improved. Records from Atom Prime, Spelling Shed and TTRS show more children joining in with the weekly tasks and reading records show improved levels of engagement in reading at home. Teachers also report that weekly spelling scores are starting to improve and 103 of our children showed an improvement in their timestables understanding last week.

This is great news and we would like to encourage our children further, so will be hosting a special reward for children who have completed **at least 90% of their homework tasks and have attendance of above 98% for the term**. These children will be invited to enjoy a Christmas movie with hot chocolate and popcorn on the afternoon of Monday 19th December.

Each term, we will be starting afresh so children who have strong attendance for Spring term, and have strong homework routines will be invited to attend a spring-time treat.

Best regards,

Mr A Beattie, Headteacher



