

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

February Newsletter 2017

Dear Parents,

Half Term Newsletter

We break up for half term on Friday. This newsletter gives you some important dates in advance for next half term and some other useful information. It all also gives us the opportunity to wish you and your family a very safe and enjoyable half term week.

Diary Dates

Friday 17th February: Year 4 Assembly

Friday 17th February: All clubs end this week

Friday 17th February: Break up for half term

Monday 27th February: Back to School

Tuesday 28th February: Sponsored Pancake Flip – come and watch the event and enjoy a pancake!

Tuesday 28th February: Year 3 First Holy Communion Parent's Meeting 3.30pm until 4.30pm

Wednesday 1st March: Ash Wednesday: The Holy Season of Lent begins

Friday 10th March: Year 3 Assembly, 2.30pm

Sunday 12th March: School, Parish Mass at 11am. Year 3 First Holy Communion Enrolment, Year 6 Confirmation Enrolment

Friday 17th March: Year 1 Assembly (for St Joseph's Day which falls on Sunday)

Tuesday 21st March: International Link Day in school celebrating our link with SP118 Primary School in Wroclaw, Poland. Live link ups during the day and lots of activities.

Tuesday 21st March: Date correction: there now WILL be Mass as normal on this day.

Thursday 23rd March: Drop in with Nurse Mel, 9:15am

Friday 24th March: Reception Class Assembly, 2.30pm

Monday 27th March – Friday 31st March: NEW Mission Week in school. A week of celebrating the school's mission: 'At St Joseph's we work learn and grow together guided by Jesus' teachings' Lots of activities to celebrate and live out our mission in the widest possible sense.



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Kind hands, kind words...like Jesus

Part of St John Bosco Catholic Academy Company
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Friday 31st March: 9.15am: Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 MISSION WEEK performances about our school values of kindness, equality, respect, forgiveness and truth (dancing, mime and music) (Hall opens to parents at 9.15am)



Friday 31st March: 2.30pm: Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 MISSION WEEK performances about our school values of kindness, equality, respect, forgiveness and truth (dancing, mime and music) (Hall opens to parents at 2.20pm)



Tuesday 4th April: Year 3 will act out the events of PALM SUNDAY at 2.45pm

Wednesday 5th April: Year 4 will act out THE LAST SUPPER at 2.45pm

Wednesday 5th April: Our Lenten CHURCH SERVICE where the children will act out the events of HOLY WEEK. Mrs Hancox will send out details. Children at Church for 5.30pm – starts at 5.45pm until approx. 6.30pm. Children need an adult to be in the congregation at all times.

Thursday 6th April: Year 5 will act out THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN at 9.15am

Friday 7th April: Merit and attendance assembly at 11am.

Friday 7th April: Year 6 will act out THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS at 2.15pm

Friday 7th April: Break up for Easter Holidays

Monday 24th April: Back to school

Thursday 27th April: Drop-in with school Nurse Mel, 9:15am

Monday 1st May: School closed for May Day Bank Holiday

Pupil Premium / Free School Meals Applications – You could receive a £25 Tesco Voucher!

For a limited period we are offering a £25 ‘thank you’ voucher to everyone with a child in Reception to Year 6 who applies for and is awarded free school meals. This applies to new applications between 15th February 2017 and 7th April 2017 that are successful. We have some funding available to provide the ‘thank you’ vouchers. We are able to offer this gift because if you apply for free school meals and are successful – **the government will give the school valuable funding for your child for up to 6 years.**



The school receives valuable government funding for every child that is eligible **and** has successfully applied for free school meals. The only requirement is that parents complete the confidential application form and if the family qualify, the school is given generous extra funding for up to 6 years. Those of you who have been coming to St Joseph’s know that this school spends generously on provision for the children, providing a beautiful, modern school that is well resourced. **WE NOW URGENTLY NEED YOUR HELP.** School budgets are being cut and we desperately need to access any funding we possibly can. Please help us to access **PUPIL PREMIUM FUNDING.**

If you receive **ANY** of the following benefits you could qualify:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit

- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit Run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

Applying is easy and you are not required to provide any additional documents. You can apply online at <http://www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/your-council/council-tax-and-benefits/benefits/free-school-meals/> or you can complete the paper form attached to this letter. We have also text you the online application.

It is especially important that parents from Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 apply. All of the children in these classes receive a free meal every day – **BUT YOU STILL NEED TO APPLY ONLINE IN ORDER FOR SCHOOL TO BE GIVEN THE FUNDING!** If you think you might qualify for funding, **PLEASE, PLEASE APPLY.**

Head Lice Alert



There have been a few cases of head lice recently. Please check your child's hair carefully and if necessary apply a treatment as per the instructions. Please can we remind everyone that as per the home-school agreement, all long hair (girls AND boys) should be tied back at all times in school. Thanks a lot.

Contributions to the cost of swimming, clubs and trips – we need your help

At St Joseph's we heavily subsidise the cost of swimming, trips and clubs to keep the cost to parents as low as we can. For example, we ask for £2 a week towards the cost of swimming when the actual cost is closer to £6 per week. We regularly reduce the cost of trips for everyone by £3 or £5 each and are proud to offer this support. We are always sympathetic and supportive towards genuine hardship and no child ever misses out on experiences. **We have to ask parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the costs of some experiences – otherwise we would not be able to cover the costs fully ourselves.** We keep costs down as much as we can and the contributions we ask for are much lower than what most schools expect. **Unfortunately we are facing a situation where we are not receiving enough contributions towards the cost of swimming, trips and clubs and as such we may have to cancel such experiences because we can't afford to put them all on.** We are always here to help in cases of genuine hardship but I do need to ask you to think carefully about making a contribution if you can afford to. **The school will soon no longer be able to fund swimming and trips if contributions remain low.** Please can I urge you to make your contribution if you possibly can. **Thank you for understanding this situation.**



Young children at parent workshops – please help us with this!

We love welcoming parents and family into our parent workshops and we understand that you need to bring young children with you. **Please can we ask for your help, though?** If you bring young children to a workshop **please can you make sure they don't disrupt the class.** We know little children need to wander around and talk freely – but if they are disrupting the lesson would you please take them into the corridor to settle them. It is very difficult for the children and the teachers to carry on with their lessons if little ones are wandering around, making a noise and distracting children. All we ask is – please take the little ones out to the corridor and settle them down before they come back in. If your little one just can't settle – you may need to take them home on that occasion. **We really love having everyone in** – but we also have to ensure the class and the teacher can do their work. Thanks for understanding!

Focus Catholic School's Pupil Profile Values for next half term



Our focus values from the Catholic Schools Pupil Profile next half term are **'attentive and discerning'** We have spent the past half term focusing on **'grateful and generous'**. All Catholic schools in the Archdiocese focus on the same set of values each half term. We teach the children about these values in class, in Religious Education, in assemblies and in Masses.

Being **attentive** means listening to God and what he asks us to do. It means trying hard to be the type of person he wants us to be. Being **discerning** means thinking carefully about the choices we make and the things we do – trying to make the choices God wants us to and thinking of others in all we do and say.

Lent: Pray, Fast and Give Alms

The Holy Season of Lent begins on Wednesday 1st March (Ash Wednesday) Lent is a time when we are asked to pray, fast and give alms. Lent is always a major focus in our school and there are a number of special experiences that form part of our devotions during this very special time. There are always ample opportunities for the community to **pray** together and in Lent we continue to pray as a community with opportunities to reflect on the Stations of the Cross, additional Lenten assemblies, a Church service and acting out the events of Holy Week before the Easter holidays. There is an opportunity for the children to undertake an age appropriate **fast** on Friday 7th March which is CAFOD Lent Fast Day. We ask everyone to fast (give up) their playtime snack and give some pennies to CAFOD instead. In turn this **fast** helps the children to **give alms** to the poorest and most marginalised in the world through CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development) There is a further opportunity for **giving alms** with our **sponsored pancake flip** on Shrove Tuesday. Details below.



Sponsored Pancake Flip

We will be holding our annual Sponsored Pancake Flip on Tuesday 28th February. A separate flyer and sponsor form has been sent out. Parents are warmly welcomed to come and watch their child's time on the 'Pancake Assault Course.' All money raised will be split between local, national and international charities and there will also be a donation to the St Thomas' Church maintenance fund and the school fund that pays for extras for the children. If you can, please collect some sponsors for your child's Pancake Flip. Even small donations all add up to make a difference for our charities and the Church / School – so no amount is too small. Sponsor forms should be returned to school by Monday 27th March. We will let you know how much we raised and exactly where we sent the money to.

Pancakes for everyone

On Shrove Tuesday we will provide every child with a hot pancake and the option of lemon and sugar. Gluten free pancakes will be provided for children with allergies. Pancakes are a traditional food eaten ahead of Lent which is a time of fasting and abstinence in the Church. Parents can buy pancakes and hot drinks at the Pancake Flip as well!



New: Library Service in school

Over the past few months we have been busy upgrading and restocking our school libraries in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. We are very grateful for the help and support of Miss Wilkes, the librarian from Bishop Milner Catholic College, who has been working very closely with us. We are now ready to offer all children from Years 1 to 6 a regular library service run by a qualified librarian!

After half term the children will visit the library once a month. They will bring home one fiction and one non-fiction book to read. We will text you when the book is due back in the next month. Please read the books with your child and look after the books. We are offering this new service even though we lose hundreds of pounds worth of reading books every term – because lots of reading books are not sent back to school. A simple rule will have to apply to the library that no new book can be issued until the old book has been returned. If you lose a book and would like to offer to pay for the replacement this would be very much appreciated and will mean your

child can continue taking books out of the library. **Please take care of the school's books – they are expensive and valuable.**

NEW: Mission Week and Mission Week Performances

Monday 27th March – Friday 31st March is our new MISSION WEEK. We will spend the whole week celebrating and learning more about the school's mission which is 'At St Joseph's we work, learn and grow together guided by Jesus' teachings' Our slogan to support this mission is 'Kind hands, kind words, like Jesus'



The week will include learning about different cultures and different religions to show our respect and tolerance for others just as Jesus taught. We will also focus on fundamental British Values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, respect and tolerance. We will also focus deeply on Jesus' teachings and working and learning together as part of the St Joseph's family.

The week will end with some performances of music, dance and mime about our school's values. Please come and join us on Friday 31st March for the performances which will, as always, be uplifting and enjoyable.

Parent's Evening – did you attend?

If for any reason you missed Parent's Evening you are encouraged to make an appointment to see your child's teacher after school. We want you to be fully informed of your child's progress so please just let your child's teacher know.

Keep in touch

At St Joseph's we are genuinely committed to making sure your children are safe and happy. We try our best to prevent any problems from arising but inevitably things **can** and **do** go wrong from time to time. If something goes wrong, if there is a problem or if you or your child are unhappy for any reason it is vital you **let us know straight away**. No problem is too small and the quicker we know about things the quicker we can sort them out.



School Leadership Team

Mr Hinton (Headteacher) and Mrs Chapman (Deputy Headteacher) are the two most senior staff in the school and we can normally help you immediately – so don't hesitate to come and see us or phone us. If we can't speak to you there and then we will always call you back as soon as we possibly can. Mrs Hancox is the assistant headteacher and Mrs Cheema is the senior teacher. They are also available in person or by phone to help. There is **always** a member of the senior team in school during school hours so there is **always** someone here in authority to help you. Just let us know.

Parentview

Thank you to everyone who has submitted their review on Parentview. We desperately need some more reviews! **All we ask is that if you have any problems with the school you let us know first so we can try to put things right.** Just go to www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk –Thanks for your support.

Mrs Cardy – our SENCo

Our Special Educational Needs coordinator is Mrs Cardy, who is also the SENCo at Bishop Milner. Mrs Cardy is at St Joseph's on **Mondays and Fridays** and you can book in to see her or just pop in before or after school. Just let us know if you'd like to meet up or have a chat on the phone.



Between Mrs Cardy, your child's teacher and the senior team, we can help with learning difficulties, social and emotional difficulties, pastoral welfare matters, health matters and indeed any concern you may have – you only have to let us know and we promise to do everything we can to help.

Safeguarding of Children

The designated safeguarding lead is Mr Hinton and the deputy designated safeguarding lead is Mrs Chapman.

School Nurse

We can ask our lovely school nurse, Mel Dowling, to contact you at any time if you have any health concerns about your child. In addition Mel is here once a month (dates in the diary above) and you can simply book to see her via the school office. Mel can support you with a full range of health matters and can make referrals to other health professionals. For example she can provide help with children's sleep matters, behaviour at home, eating concerns, bed wetting, nightmares, glue ear, skin conditions, on-going health matters and so on.



Thanks for reading this newsletter. Have a safe and happy half term week and we very much look forward to seeing you next half term.

Have a lovely half-term!

Yours Sincerely,

Mr M Hinton,

Principal