

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

November Newsletter 2017

20th November 2017

Dear Parents,

The second half of the autumn term is well underway and before we know it December will be upon us! The dates of all the Christmas Nativity Plays and our Carol Service are all listed again for you in the separate 'diary dates' list together with all other dates for the rest of the term. In this newsletter you will find lots of important school information that we invite you to read carefully.

Your support with all matters relating to school is greatly appreciated.

News Items

XPRESSIONS APP

Thank you very much indeed for supplying us with your mobile numbers and email addresses that will be used as your login and password for XPRESSIONS. Switching our texting service to XPRESSIONS will save us a lot of money that we can spend on the children instead.

We are now ready to make the transition to XPRESSIONS so we need everyone to download and log into the XPRESSIONS APP for Android and Apple (free to download) We are making the switch from Monday 27th November – so it's really important you download and log in for the first time before this date.

We will send some reminders out and if you need any help you only have to ask. Thank you so much for helping the school to save a lot of money by switching to the XPRESSIONS APP.

Holidays in term time

Holiday absence and extended leave in term time is not allowed and there is legislation that confirms this. If you take your child out of school without the authorisation of the head teacher you are liable to be prosecuted by the local authority and fined. Please don't not ask us to defy the legislation as it is very embarrassing and upsetting for everyone when absence authorisation is refused.



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Kind hands, kind words...like Jesus

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Please do not ask to see myself or Mrs Chapman to notify us of any absence without first seeing Miss Dunn in the office for the appropriate paperwork. There have been cases of families claiming we have authorised absence when we have not done so. From now on, we cannot discuss any absences with you unless you have completed the necessary paperwork in advance.

Only in the most exceptional circumstances (e.g. a death) can we consider authorising even a few days of absence and this must be supported by genuine, verifiable evidence in advance. In any case, no absence can be discussed until the paperwork has been completed.

In all cases the head teacher's decision is final and the head teacher is not obliged to grant any leave of absence for any reason.

CAFOD Harvest Fast Day

Thank you for your generosity and support. The children gave up their playtime snacks and spent the morning in solidarity with the world's poor and starving. We only ever ask for pennies but as usual you were more than generous and we raised £124 for CAFOD. Thanks very much indeed for your support.



Sickness bug



As you know we do encourage good attendance, however when children are affected by a viral 'bug' we follow the NHS / Public Health England advice of requiring that children stay off school for 48 hours after their last episode of being sick or suffering from diarrhoea. This guidance is to help schools limit the spread of these viruses through cross-infection. **If your child is sick, suffering from diarrhoea or has an upset stomach they must stay off school for 48 hours after the last episode of being sick or diarrhoea in order to prevent the bug from spreading to others.**

Can we also ask you to encourage your child to wash their hands regularly in order to reduce the risk of this virus spreading?

School Uniform

We need to ask for your continued support in order to maintain high standards of uniform. In recent weeks we have experienced a number of children coming to school not in proper uniform. Please can we respectfully remind you:

- Hair dyeing or highlighting is not allowed. Hair strings are not allowed.
- Hair designs are not allowed – no tram lines, borders, engravings, sculpture or patterns
- Girls may wear a skirt or trousers (dresses in summer) **Leggings are NOT part of the school uniform and should not be worn in place of trousers nor under a skirt.**
- Earrings are not allowed. Jewellery is not allowed.
- Nail varnish is not allowed
- Long hair (boys and girls) must be tied back at all times



- Hair bands, bows and ribbons should be reasonable in size and plain in colour, preferably in royal blue, navy blue or grey to match uniform colours
- School shoes must be worn – no trainers, boots or fashion shoes.

Christmas Jumper Day



On Friday 15th December we are having our very own Christmas Jumper Day. All of the children can wear their Christmas jumpers and tops. If they don't have a Christmas Jumper (or don't want to wear one) – that's no problem – any jumper or top that's suitable for school is fine! On this special, fun day in school ahead of our Christmas holidays, we invite you to donate a TIN OF FOOD for the GOOD SHEPHERD SHELTER so that we can help to care for those who are not as lucky as we are this Christmas. This is a simple but very useful ADVENT OFFERING that we invite you to undertake.

Christmas Dinner

Christmas Dinner is on the menu on **Tuesday 12th December 2017**. All Reception and Key Stage 1 (Years 1 & 2) children can enjoy the meal free of charge and the cost for Key Stage 2 children is £2.30. If you've applied for and been awarded free school meals there is no additional cost.



Free School Meals – Apply Online – Confidential – Quick – No Paperwork – No Phone Calls!

Just search online for Dudley MBC Free School Meals Online Application. Not only could your child receive free school meals – you will generate precious extra funding for the school to spend on the children. Please apply if you have a child/ren in Reception or Years 1,2,3,4,5 or 6. We cannot get the extra funding (pupil premium) unless you apply and are awarded free school meals. You might be surprised to know that one successful application generates thousands of pounds of funding for the school over 6 years – so please, please apply.



Christmas Fair and donations

The Christmas Fair is on Friday 8th December. We rely on your generous donations for stock for the stalls. Please send your donations in each Friday or indeed any day of the week! There is no expectation of you to donate but if you are able to – we are really grateful.

Father Christmas – Friday 8th December

Father Christmas is coming to St Joseph's! Choose the option that suits you best!

Santa will be at the school fair if you want to visit him as a family. However, he'll also be in school in the afternoon if you want to avoid queuing at the fair – the only difference is if your child sees Santa at school during the afternoon you won't be able to join them (as you can imagine it's a big operation to get everybody through in time!) So please choose what suits you best – if you want to visit as a family– see Father



Christmas at the fair (you won't have to queue for too long!) or if you want your child to see Father Christmas with their classmates and don't mind not being there yourself – then choose the 'afternoon option'. It costs £2 per child to see Father Christmas and every child receives a small present. Children using the 'afternoon option' please send £2 on Friday morning, 8th December, in an envelope with your child's name and 'FATHER CHRISTMAS' written on! If you're seeing him at the fair – you just pay at the fair. Thanks a lot!

Did you receive good service and care today?



It's really important to us that you are happy with the service this school provides. We're proud to be an Outstanding school and we work hard to make sure we stay outstanding. If for any reason, however small, you are not happy you must let us know.

Often people think that 'little things' are too small to complain about – this shouldn't be the case and we want to know if something upsets you or annoys you. Please either speak to your child's teacher or come directly to myself or Mrs Chapman (Deputy Head) Examples of things we can sort out, in addition to much bigger matters that you would expect us to resolve include:

- Any problems your child is experiencing with any aspect of school life – be it work or play
- Any concerns you have about the quality of provision at the school
- Any service or treatment you / your child receives from our staff that doesn't conform to the very high standards of care expected of St Joseph's
- Issues relating to reading books or homework – for example books not being changed on time, spellings, homework and so on
- No school can be 100% perfect and we are no exception (but I wish we could be perfect!) Problems, upsets and misunderstandings can and do occur. We can't avoid this (no school or establishment can) **The St Joseph's difference is that we care so passionately about making sure you are happy so we promise to do all we can to resolve these problems.** We aim to treat every child and their family with the same care that we would wish our own children and families to be treated with and this means only the best is good enough. We promise to do our best to solve any problems that occur and appreciate you letting us know as quickly as possible if we can help.

*Let Us Know
What You Think*



Fire Drills

Full evacuations of the building take place every term. Our last drill was on Wednesday 18th October and the evacuation met all time and safety requirements.

Parent's Survey

Thank you for your positive feedback and thank you for your useful suggestions. Please see the attached survey analysis – and even more importantly – a commentary on how we have responded to your suggestions. There will be another survey later in the academic year.

School closures due to bad weather

We try our best to remain open because we know the extreme inconvenience it causes everyone if we have to close. Sometimes we have to make decisions to close because of the risk of accident or injury to children, parents and staff when travelling to school and we also have to consider whether enough staff can get to work on time in order to safely care for the children. Sometimes we make a decision to close based on weather predictions later in the day – but we never close the school unless there are genuine reasons to do so.



We aim to let you know quickly and in good time.

We will send you a text message and post the closure on the school website no later than 7.30am. In the case of bad weather, if no announcement has been made by 7.30am then the school is open. Please ensure we have your correct and up to date mobile number and also be sure to check the website.

Sometimes the decision has to be made to close the school early. We will text you if this is going to happen. If we are worried about the weather in the morning we will let you know by text that there is a possibility of school shutting early.

Sometimes (very rarely) accidents or emergencies mean that we cannot let you know about school closure by 7.30am. A good example of this was last winter when the water supply to the entire Kates Hill estate was shut down at 8am. Another example could be heating system failure. These problems rarely happen.

First Holy Communion and Confirmation Mass Dates

Year 3 First Holy Communion Mass will be on SATURDAY 19th May at 10am.



This is a new day and time for this special Mass. In common with many Catholic schools we have moved the Mass to a Saturday primarily because of major congestion at the Sunday Mass when all of the parishioners are in attendance as well. We should have far more room to allow everyone to sit in comfort as a result of the change. We also know that there are family gatherings, meals and parties for First Holy Communion and Saturday is a more convenient day for these events. Moving the Mass to 10am means there will be plenty of time for photos after Mass before everyone moves on to their family functions (it also means that the children have 1 hour less of ‘keeping out of mess’ in their beautiful clothes before Mass starts!)

Year 6 Confirmation Mass will be on Wednesday 11th July at 6.30pm in Church.

The Sacramental Mass will be celebrated by Bishop David McGough.

The Enrolment Mass for both First Holy Communion and Confirmation Mass will be at a Sunday 11am Mass in Church after Christmas. We’ll let you know the date for the Mass, as well as dates for the Parent’s Meetings well in advance but they haven’t been set just yet.



Parentview



Ofsted collects the views of parents via Parentview. Responses on Parentview are archived every academic year and also after 365 days. It is important that we receive regular feedback on Parentview. **All we ever ask is that you bring any problems to our attention beforehand so that we have the opportunity to put things right.** Please always see the headteacher or deputy headteacher in order to resolve any problems with school. Please go to www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk and submit your review. If you are not already registered with an email address you'll need to do this. It shouldn't take you long – and we are very, very grateful for your support.

Keep in touch

You can see your child's teacher after school or you can call the school and they will call you back when they are not teaching the class. We also have a number of senior staff in school who are available to help you. Any one of us can help to resolve any problems that you might have:



Miss Wisniewski (pronounced Vish-nee-eff-ski) is the acting head of Nursery and Reception Class

Mrs Cheema is our senior teacher

Mrs Chapman is the Deputy Headteacher

Mr Hinton is the Headteacher

The head and deputy are the most senior members of staff and one of us can normally see you immediately. If we can't see you (which we normally can) we will either call you straight back or you can see one of the senior teachers. If something is bothering you – no matter how small – please just let us know straight away – don't let any issues build up into something bigger. **WE ARE HERE TO HELP**

Thanks for taking the time to read this newsletter. We really look forward to seeing you in school in the run up to Christmas. Best wishes to everyone.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M Hinton'.

Mr M Hinton,
Principal

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Diary Dates for Autumn Term 2017 – November Version

Please keep these dates handy for your information!

Our values this half term are: Learned and Wise

LEARNED: FINDING GOD IN ALL THINGS WE LEARN AND **WISE:** WISE IN THE WAYS WE USE OUR LEARNING ABOUT GOD FOR THE GOOD OF OTHERS

DIARY



Monday 20th November to Friday 24th November is MISSION WEEK and ANTI BULLYING AND ANTI RACISM WEEK all week in school. Various activities celebrating and affirming the school's Catholic Mission. Our anti-bullying them is 'we are all equal and we are all different'

Friday 24th November: We will be celebrating a **MISSION DAY** in school with ONE LIFE MUSIC. Please come and join us from 2.30pm for a special celebration assembly at the end of our MISSION WEEK.

Friday 24th November: Please donate games, toys and good quality children's books for the Christmas Fair

DECEMBER 2017

Friday 1st December: Reception Class Assembly, 2.30pm.

Friday 1st December: Please donate bottles of wine, beer, spirits and pop for the Christmas Fair.

Sunday 3rd December: First Sunday of ADVENT. The Church season where we GET READY for Jesus.

Tuesday 5th December: Year 4 Catholic children will receive the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** (Confession) after Mass.



Thursday 7th December: KEY STAGE 2 (Year 3,4,5 and 6) NATIVITY PLAY at 2.20pm (doors open at 2.10pm, please don't arrive before this time) Raffle £1 per ticket.

Thursday 7th December: KEY STAGE 2 NATIVITY PLAY EVENING PERFORMANCE at 5.30pm. Children need to be back at school for 5pm.

The hall will also be open for you to take your seats from 5pm. Please don't come back to school before 5pm. Raffle £1 per ticket.

Friday 8th December: Please donate cakes, biscuits, tea, coffee, sugar and long life milk for the Christmas Fair.

Friday 8th December: Father Christmas is coming to St Joseph's! Choose the option that suits you best!

Santa will be at the school fair if you want to visit him as a family. However, he'll also be in school in the afternoon if you want to avoid queuing at the fair – the only difference is if your child sees Santa at school during the afternoon you won't be able to join them (as you can imagine it's a big operation to get everybody through in time!) So please choose what suits you best – if you want to visit as a family – see Father Christmas at the fair (you won't have to queue for too long!) or if you want your child to see Father Christmas with their classmates and don't mind not being there yourself – then choose the 'afternoon option'. It costs £2 per child to see Father Christmas and every child receives a small present. Children using the 'afternoon option' please send £2 on Friday morning, 8th December, in an



