

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

30th November 2018

December Newsletter



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Christmas time is fast approaching and the autumn term has really raced away. It's a busy and exciting time in school and we want to make sure you are kept up to date with all of the dates and times for our nativity plays, carol concerts and other special events for the special season of Advent and Christmas. You can find all of the important dates and times that you might need in the separate 'December Diary Dates' flyer that accompanies this newsletter. The newsletter itself also contains lots of useful information about school and we would be really grateful if you could find 5 minutes to read it carefully.

The Holy season of Advent and our values this half term

This Sunday, 2nd December is the first Sunday of Advent. Advent is a season of getting ready for Jesus in two ways. For the first few weeks of Advent the Church asks us to prepare our lives for the time when Jesus comes again. In the later part of Advent we focus on preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas. We are asking the children to think about ways that they can follow the example of Jesus in their daily lives – for example being even more forgiving, kind, respectful, helpful, tolerant, polite and caring. If Jesus were to come back to the world this Advent he would be happy to know that we are trying our best to be good people.



Our values this half term are **faith filled and hopeful**. All of us can be **faith filled** and this value is relevant to people of all faiths and denominations. The **hope** of the Church lies in Jesus and our belief that his example will help the world to be a safer, fairer and more peaceful place for all people. Again people of all faiths share this **hope** for a better world. The values of **faith filled and**

hopeful link totally to the season of **Advent** and all it brings to us.

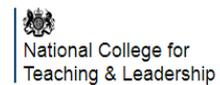
Fantastic News - Inspection Outcomes



The school received its **Section 48 Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship Inspection** in September. Two Diocesan inspectors judged every aspect of the inspection to be **OUTSTANDING**. Thank you for all of your support – this exceptional achievement is thanks to the families, children and staff of the school and is another achievement for the whole St Joseph's community.

Did you know?

St Joseph's is recognised by the government for its high standard of provision and has been designated as a **National Support School**. This means we help other schools to improve by sharing our good practice in teaching and learning.



Mr Hinton is a **National Leader of Education**, one of a small number of head teachers across the nation who have been judged by the government to be expert school leaders. This means he provides support to other schools and head teachers to help them improve their schools.

We are proud to help other schools but we are never, ever complacent about St Joseph's. We're proud to have been judged as **Outstanding** but we never take it for granted. We work hard every day to ensure we are providing your child/ren with the best education and care we can – **nothing is more important to us and we are here to help you if you have any concerns whatsoever.**

School and Parish Mass this Sunday in Church at 11am



Please join us for this special celebration if you possibly can. We would be delighted if there are any more children from Years 1 to 6 who could volunteer and join the choir. These special masses are an important part of our school and parish life and we are very grateful for your support. Please join us if you can – everyone is very welcome.

Fr Louis' Induction Mass at Sacred Heart Church in Tipton on Tuesday 11th December at 7pm

Our new Parish Priest, Fr Louis, will be officially inducted at this special Mass and celebration. Fr Louis is particularly keen to invite the children and families to this Mass. He has asked the school to organise a group of children to sing and we are trying to encourage as many children as possible to come along. Everyone is invited to stay for refreshments afterwards and all you need to do is let us know you are attending so we can let the parishioners know numbers. If you can find the time to attend this special event in the life of the Parish we would be really grateful. In particular, Fr Louis would be very grateful if we could organise a group of children to sing after Communion. Please let us know if you are able to attend and will let the Parishioners know for catering numbers (you can tell us whether you require catering afterwards or not).



School Closures in bad weather



At St Joseph's we open the school if it is safe to do so and if we can make sure we can get enough staff into the school to look after the children. The decision to close is never taken lightly and we consider the safety of

you and your children walking or driving to school and also the weather forecast for later in the day. We try to give you plenty of notice and will normally decide to close the school well before the day starts. Very rarely we may be forced to close the school even after the children have come in – for example if we lose heat, power or water supplies, or if the weather worsens after school has started.

- We will send you a text message or message you via the Xpressions App.
- We will post a message on the school website

If we know school won't be open at all we will text/message you and put the information on the website by 7am in the morning.

If the weather is bad but we are opening, we will also put a message on the website and send messages by 7am in the morning to keep you updated.

In any case – check the school website (at the top of the home page) for the latest info in any bad weather. You should also receive a message.

Testing the message service – let us know if you did not receive your test message

We sent a 'test message' to everyone on Thursday 29th November. If you did not receive this, please contact the office and let us know. We will check we have your up to date number and also contact our service provider if there are any issues. We will then text you again to check the system is working.

Let us know if you change your number!

If you change your number/s please be sure to let us know straight away!

Christmas Fair donations / Christmas Fair next Friday 7th December

Please, if you can, could you send us any additional donations you may have of the following goods:

- Chocolates and Sweets
- Bottles of pop/ beer/ wine/ spirits
- Cuddly toys that are clean and in good condition
- Toys and games that are in good, clean condition
- Toiletries and gift items / fancy goods



The Christmas Fair is next Friday at 3.30pm. There will be Christmas tunes from our live DJ, tea, coffee and pop on sale and a variety of stalls at pocket money prices. Father Christmas will also be here in his grotto and a visit costs £2 with a small present. See below for details of our 'Fast Track Father Christmas' service as well that can save you lots of time!

Visits to see Father Christmas on Friday 7th December / Fast Track Father Christmas!

We offer you two options for visiting Father Christmas next week:



1, Visit Father Christmas at the Fair and see him as a family

Father Christmas will be at the Christmas Fair next week and you can come and visit him as a family and take photos if you like. The cost is £2 per child and includes a small present.

OR

2, Your child can visit Father Christmas during school hours (FAST TRACK) but you won't be able to visit as a family at this time

If you go for this option your child will be taken to the grotto by one of our Christmas elves (who look ever such a lot like our teaching assistants!) and will spend the same amount of time talking to Santa as they would at the fair. The only difference is they will do this during school time and we cannot accommodate families.

Have a think about what suits you best. If you want to see Father Christmas at the fair just come along and join the queue – he will be here right up until the end of the fair. You can pay the elf at the grotto!

If you want to use the 'Fast Track' please send £2 in to school any day up to an including next Friday. Make sure it's in an envelope with your child's name on and marked 'FATHER CHRISTMAS' and we will make sure your child goes to see Father Christmas BEFORE the fair!

Christmas Dinner

On Wednesday 5th December children can choose to have a Christmas Dinner in school. The options are a traditional roast turkey Christmas Dinner, a Quorn roast vegetarian alternative and a halal turkey dinner. There are no sandwiches, jacket potatoes or pasta on this day, only the Christmas Meals listed here. Remember that all children from Reception to Year 2 inclusive receive FREE school meals provided by the government. If you pay for school meals the cost is £2.30. **If your child would like a Christmas Dinner please come and fill in the slip at the office (or phone the office) with their menu choice. If your child doesn't like any of the options – remember to send them with a packed lunch on Wednesday 5th December – thanks a lot!**



Nativity plays



All of the dates and times for our Nativity plays are listed in the Diary Dates flyer and are all the same as were sent out in September and October so hopefully you already have them booked in. At each play the Year 6 children will be selling raffle tickets with prizes including a bottle of wine or a box of chocolates or a selection box. The money we raise from the

raffles helps to pay for the extras for the children such as a gift from the school and pop and biscuits for the parties. Tickets cost £1 and we are grateful for your support. As always, there is no obligation to buy at ticket.

Evening Performances

Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 children all perform evening nativity plays. Please check the dates carefully because we do need the children to come back for the evening performance, most importantly if they have an acting part. There is nothing worse than one of the stars of the show not coming back – please check with your child’s teacher from Year 1, Year 2 or Year 6 about acting parts. Children in Years 3,4 and 5 are encouraged to come back and sing in the play whilst Year 6 children have acting parts. Please do all you can to support us and remember that children MUST have an adult in the audience at all times and must not come back in the evening without an adult.

Christmas Party and Disco Day / Donations of Tins of Food and £1 towards the Disco

On Tuesday 18th December all of the children will have their Christmas Parties and Discos. This day is an OWN CLOTHES day for all of the children. We invite you to donate £1 towards the cost of the Disco and also send in a TIN OF FOOD for the homeless and poor of The Good Shepherd Shelter.



No need to send in party food – we provide pop and biscuits – let us know any allergies

As the children have literally only just had their lunch straight before the party – we’ve stopped asking for donations of party food and instead we provide pop and biscuits at party time. Don’t worry about sending in any donations – please just highlight any allergies to the teachers and feel free to suggest or send in alternatives to the pop and biscuits if need be.



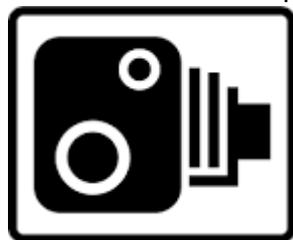
Theatre Group Performance

On Monday 17th December all of the children will be treated to a performance of ‘The Night Before Christmas’ by the B Tales professional theatre company. This is provided free of charge for all of the children and is a real treat. We first started working with the B Tales last Christmas and since then have welcomed them back at Easter and in anti-bullying week. The children can look forward to a funny, entertaining and heart-warming retelling of the Christmas story that is religiously accurate. It really is a Christmas treat for the whole school.

Mission Awards

Our awards scheme that recognises children’s commitment to living out the mission statement of our school has been very popular with several medals presented last half term. Applications can be made once per half term and there is one Mission Award to apply for throughout the year. The children can apply in October, December, February, April, May or July – once they are successful they will be awarded the Mission Award medal for that year group. Application forms have been sent out (see Mrs Chapman if you need another one) and the Mission Team (pupil group) will assess all of the applications with Mrs Chapman ready to present the medals before the half term holidays. The deadline for returning the application forms this half term is Monday 10th December. Please bear in mind that the criteria for the mission awards are challenging and must be evidenced – you may need to help your child with their application. Any children whose application does not meet the standards will be well looked after and helped and encouraged to reapply in February.

Dropping off on the zig-zag yellow lines – illegal from 8am onwards



It is an offence to stop or park on the zig zag yellow lines outside schools – this includes stopping to drop off children or passengers. The zig zag yellow lines are there to minimise road accidents by keeping roadways clear for children to be able to cross the road. **There are regular mobile CCTV vehicles patrolling the area around the school and a number of parents have been fined so far this term.** More importantly, stopping on the yellow zig zag lines makes the road around the school dangerous for the children and is an offence in law. Please, please drop off or park elsewhere where it is safe and legal to stop. Please think carefully about the potential danger stopping in the restricted area causes.

Free School Meals / Pupil Premium – you can easily help the school get more funding to spend on the children

If you receive certain benefits you could help the school to obtain precious extra funding called ‘Pupil Premium.’ As you know, all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 receive a free school meal every day – **however, if you receive benefits it’s still important to apply for free school meals – even if your child is in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 – that is the only way the school will receive pupil premium funding.** It’s the same case if your child is in Year 3, 4, 5 or 6 and they prefer to bring their own lunch – **if you apply for free school meals you need never actually take a free meal – we will still receive pupil premium funding for up to 6 years.** This funding is **very precious** to us and is spent 100% on the children – helping them to achieve the highest standards possible and make the best progress they can. Applying is quick, easy and confidential – a form is included with this newsletter. We are very grateful for your help.



Holidays in Term Time are not authorised – please do not break the law



Please remember that government legislation means holidays in term time are not authorised. Taking a holiday without authorisation (an unauthorised absence) can lead to a penalty fine and / or the school taking your child off the register and you having to find a new school upon your return. We automatically refer all unauthorised absence to the local authority Education Investigation Service. Fines are collected and retained by the local authority – the school does not receive any income from fines. As a school we simply operate as the law sets out and we do this because it is important that children are in school during term time. Our classes are fully operational right up until the last day of each term – we don’t have ‘toy days’ or ‘wind down weeks’ – we treat our responsibility to educate your children very seriously and our classes run as normal right up until the end of term. If you take your child out of school for an unauthorised absence they really are missing out on learning – even if it is at the end of a term.

We are here to help you – keep in touch

The learning, safety and happiness of your child/ren are our top priority – that is why we are all here. We try our best to be the most effective school we can be but it is inevitable that



things will go wrong from time to time. The important thing is that you know we will always try our best to sort out any problems or difficulties as quickly as possible. Everyone is on hand to help you. You can see your child's teacher after school and you can always leave a message for them as well. Mr Hinton (Head) and Mrs Chapman (Deputy Head) will always try to see you immediately – never hesitate to come and see us. Mrs Cheema is our senior teacher and is also available to help with any matters.

It is very important if you have any worries or niggles – however small – to let us know straight away. We will do everything we can to help and we have an excellent track record of being able to sort things out. Never let anything get worse– it's always best to sort things out and it's our pleasure to help you. All you ever have to do is LET US KNOW!

Parentview

We need your help! Many of you kindly submitted reviews of the school on Parentview last year – thank you so much. We now need to ask you to complete another review as all reviews are archived after 365 days. We really need to attract some new reviews to give OFSTED an accurate picture of our school. All we ever ask with Parentview is that if you have a problem – please **LET US KNOW FIRST SO WE CAN TRY TO SORT THINGS OUT!** Obviously, if you are happy with the work of the school – we would really appreciate it if you could share your views with OFSTED via PARENTVIEW. **THANKS SO MUCH!**



www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk

See you soon

We all very much look forward to seeing you in school during the coming weeks.

With very best wishes,

Mr Hinton,
Principal.

Kind hands, kind words...like Jesus

Diary Dates for December

Sunday 2nd December: First Sunday of Advent: Holy Season of the Church.

Tuesday 4th December: Year 5 Mass, 9.15am.

Thursday 6th December: School Nurse Drop in Session at 9.15am. Drop in or let the office know in advance – our School Nurse Mel will be here for you.

Friday 7th December: Please donate tea, coffee, sugar and long life milk together with biscuits / cakes for the Café at the Christmas Fair.



Friday 7th December: Christmas Fair with Father Christmas 3.30pm – 5pm.

Monday 10th December: Key Stage 2 Nativity Performance at 2.20pm. The hall will be open from 2pm – please don't arrive before this time as we need time to clear up after lunch.

Monday 10th December: Key Stage 2 Evening Nativity Performance at 5.30pm. Children need to be back at school and the hall will be open to parents at 5pm. Please don't arrive before 5pm as we may not have enough staff available to look after everybody. Every child in the evening performance needs an adult in the audience at all times.



Tuesday 11th December: Year 4 Mass, 9.15am.

Wednesday 12th December: Year 1 and Year 2 Nativity Performance at 2.20pm (hall opens to parents at 2pm – please don't arrive before this time as we need to clear up after lunchtime!)

Wednesday 12th December: Year 1 and Year 2 Evening Nativity Performance at 5.30pm. Children will need to back and the hall will be open for parents from 5pm. All children will need an adult in the audience at all times. (Please don't arrive back at school until 5pm as we may not have enough staff on site to look after everybody)



Thursday 13th December: Morning Nursery and Reception Nativity Performance at 10.45am. The hall will be open at 10.30am – please don't arrive before 10.30am as the children will still be practising.

Thursday 13th December: Afternoon Nursery and Reception Nativity Performance at 2.20pm. The hall will be open from 2pm – please don't arrive before this time as we need to clear up after lunchtime.

Monday 17th December: Please donate a TIN OF FOOD for the poor and homeless this Christmas. We will display all of the tins ready for Mass on Tuesday and our assemblies on Wednesday before we send them to the GOOD SHEPHERD SHELTER in Wolverhampton.



Tuesday 18th December: Year 3 Mass, 9.15am.



Tuesday 18th December is OWN CLOTHES DAY AND CHRISTMAS DISCO DAY. There will be parties in class – no need to send in any pop or food – the school will provide pop and biscuits for everybody. Morning Nursery are welcome to come in for the Nursery Disco from 1.15pm – 1.45pm. Please donate £1 towards the cost of providing the Disco if you can. Thanks so much.

Tuesday 18th December: 5.30pm in Church: Christmas Carol Service. Children need to be at Church for 5pm – please do not arrive at Church any earlier as it will be closed. Every child in Church will need an adult in the audience at all times.



Wednesday 19th December: Merit and Attendance Awards Assembly at 11am.

Wednesday 19th December: Carols and Readings around the Christmas Tree at 2pm. Please join us.

Wednesday 19th December: Children break up for Christmas at 3.15pm



Monday 7th January 2019: School reopens for the Spring Term.