

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Newsletter - February 2022



15.02.22

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your continued support of our school through all the changes we have had to make due to COVID restrictions. We have been very sorry that we haven't been able to allow parents into school, especially for Collective Worship – thankfully after the half term break we can begin to invite parents back into school!

WELCOME BACK!

Welcome back into school

After half-term we will resume whole school Collective Worship. Currently, we still have daily Collective Worship in school, but on a rota, so that we aren't all gathering in the hall at the same time. After half-term, with us being able to gather together as a whole school, we are able to invite parents back into school to join us. Parents are welcome to join us for Mass – led by a different class each week – on a Tuesday morning at 9.15am, and for Friday Merit Assembly at 9.15am.

Parents / carers are asked to wait at the front of the school before Mass / Assembly. Children will gather in the hall and then visitors will be welcomed into school by a member of staff and be seated on the top corridor. We ask that on arrival visitors use hand gel, and anyone who wishes to is welcome to wear a mask. At the end of the Mass / Assembly, visitors will be shown out of school by a member of staff – we'll be sure to give you a wave first!

Having visitors in school is a new thing for many of our younger children, we politely request that visitors enter and leave the school quietly so as to not distract the children. If you are bringing younger children into school with you and they become unsettled please feel free to bring them to the school reception area to settle them before returning to the top corridor.

Please find a list of the dates for each class leading Mass / Assembly at the end of this newsletter.



Safeguarding: Keeping Children Safe

Our school is committed to safeguarding and safe practices and you can read our policy on our website. The designated safeguarding lead is Mrs Chapman, and Mrs Cheema, Miss Oakley and Mrs Smith are the deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. If you are concerned about your own child or any other child, please speak to one of our safeguarding leads straight away.



Our values next half term are Intentional and Prophetic

We are **Intentional** in the way we live and use the resources of the earth, guided by conscience and Jesus' teachings; and **prophetic** in the example we set to others.

The God Who Speaks

The focus piece of scripture for next half term is Luke 1: 38, where Our Lady promises to say 'Yes' to God's plan for her. The scripture reminds us all that it is often very difficult to do as God wants us to, but that like Mary, we can all do something beautiful for God and for each other by responding to God's call for us to be good and kind:

'I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me as you have said.'



Shrove Tuesday – Tuesday 1st March

Children will be taking part in CAFOD's Walk Against Hunger sponsored event. All the children will be given a time slot to walk as far

as they can around the playground whilst carrying a small bag, to understand what it must be like for some people who have to walk a long distance to get food. Please help us to support CAFOD by sponsoring your child either per lap, or by making a donation of whatever you can afford. Thank you.



We will be entering the Holy season of Lent

In Lent we are asked to pray, fast and give alms as we journey with Jesus towards Easter. We're doing lots of work in school to help the children to connect with the season of Lent.

Ash Wednesday – Wednesday 2nd March

Father Louis will be in school to carry out a special act of worship and to share ashes with the children and staff.



We're praying and reflecting even more

As well as the normal routines of daily collective worship, assemblies and prayers throughout the day, we are having additional special assemblies throughout Lent to learn about each Station of the Cross. In the final week before the Easter break, the children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 will share special Holy Week assemblies – please see dates / times at the end of this newsletter as parents / carers are welcome to join us for these.



There are opportunities to fast and give alms this Lent

The children are learning that 'giving alms' doesn't have to mean giving money or physical items. Giving alms can be 'giving love' – giving a smile, a hello, giving forgiveness, kindness, friendship, or showing care and concern for others. We are helping all of the children to find moments in their lives where they can 'give alms' in such a way that doesn't have to cost anything.

Giving alms can also mean charitable giving and there are a couple of opportunities to make physical donations if you are able to this Lent. We are very aware of the difficult financial circumstances many people find themselves in at this time so we have deliberately limited what we are inviting you to donate towards. As always, please only donate if you are able to – you are under no obligation to make donations if you do not wish to or you are unable to.



CAFOD Lent Fast Day –Friday 11th March – Fast and Give Alms

On this day, we invite the children to give up (fast) their playtime snack and donate some money to CAFOD instead. This year, CAFOD will use all of the funds raised to provide food in overseas communities where there is severe malnutrition.

If you are happy for your child to participate, please encourage your child to fast (give up) their Friday playtime snack and donate some money to CAFOD instead. By fasting we experience (just for a very short time) a tiny taste of what it must be like for those who are starving and thirsty.

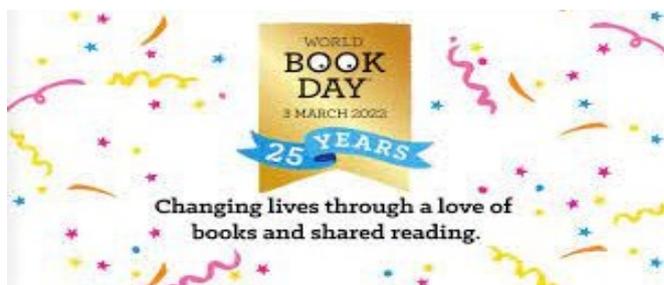
Please donate what you can to CAFOD if you are happy and able to do so.

Give Alms: Donations for The Food Bank in Dudley

We have developed a lovely relationship with the Black Country Food Bank in Dudley. Thank you for the many donations already this year. During Lent we will continue to collect food for the foodbank and the children will deliver our donations, which are always very well received. Please donate tins of food on a Tuesday during Lent if you can.

Making a difference near and far

By supporting CAFOD and the Black Country Food Bank we are helping those in need in countries far away (CAFOD) and those who are in need close by in the communities of Dudley.



World Book Day – Thursday 3rd March

World Book Day is a very popular event! We will be taking part this year and invite the children to come to school dressed as their favourite book / comic book character. Children can also wear their own clothes on this day – children don't have to dress up if they don't wish to. All children will receive a £1 book token to take home.

Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance at school is mandatory by law. Any one of us can be running late from time to time for good reasons, but children must ordinarily arrive at school at the correct start time and as per school registration rules, they will be marked late if they arrive after the start time. We reserve the right to monitor persistent lateness and this will be recorded as unauthorised absence, which can ultimately lead to intervention from the Education Investigation Service, and possible penalties. Please support regular attendance and regular good timekeeping. Thank you for your support.



Year 6 Confirmation – Thursday 14th July at 6.30pm in Church

Year 6 Confirmation has been arranged with Bishop Stephen Wright. Bishop Wright will visit the children in school during the afternoon and the Sacramental Mass will take place in Church at 6.30pm. Details of parent meetings to help prepare the children will follow soon.

Year 3 First Holy Communion – Saturday 14th May 10.00am in Church

The Mass will take place in Church on Saturday 14th May at 10.00am. We will have a special Mass in school on Tuesday 17th May followed by the traditional tea party for the children afterwards. Details of parent meetings to help prepare the children will follow soon.



School Trips

As we continue to return to pre-COVID normality, the teachers are beginning to organise class trips. Before a trip is booked, 'interest' letters will be sent out to parents to find out if the cost of the trip can be covered. Once this check has been completed a trip may / may not be booked. School ALWAYS makes donations to school trips but sadly can't meet the cost of the whole trip which is why this check has to be completed to ensure it can be paid for.

Good luck to Mrs Asrar!

If you have been up to the school office recently you will have noticed that Mrs Asrar is getting bigger as she gets ready to have her baby! Mrs Asrar leaves us to begin her maternity leave on Friday 18th February. We wish her all the very best and look forward to meeting her little one soon!



Welcome Mrs Mich!

We have been very fortunate to find Mrs Mich, who will be taking over Mrs Asrar's office duties during her maternity leave. Mrs Mich is a lovely lady who is only too happy to help you with anything you need – please pop by and say hello!





Follow us online

You can keep up to date with what's going on in school by reading the blog on our website – www.st-jo-dud.dudley.sch.uk, on Facebook and through our Twitter page. We keep our social media accounts very up to date with photos of things happening in school!



Parking outside school

Please can we remind parents not to wait and / or park on the yellow zig-zag lines at the front of school. Parking on the yellow lines is dangerous and could cause a serious accident. Please can parents who are using the services of a taxi ask the driver not to drop off or wait on the lines either. West Midlands Police have provided us with referral forms, which can be collected from the office, to report people who are persistently waiting / dropping off on the yellow lines. Please help us by parking sensibly on Hillcrest Road.



Ofsted Parent View

Parent View is used by both Ofsted and the school to monitor and respond to the thoughts and opinions of parents. Ofsted use Parentview to inform their evaluation of the school and school leaders use it to plan for improvements and check that parents are happy with what is provided at the school. It's really important we have as many reviews on Parentview as possible. All we ever ask is that if you are not happy with something you let us know first so we have the chance to put it right. Equally if you are happy with what the school provides, it would be much appreciated if you could tell us, and Ofsted, by submitting a review!

Please go to www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk and leave your review – we are very grateful for your support.

Keep in touch

Your parental satisfaction, and the progress, safety and happiness of your child is the top priority for the school. We try hard to do the best we can in all areas but we know that things can and do go wrong. What is important is the way these problems are sorted out. Never, ever hesitate to get in touch for help with any matter, however small it may seem. You can speak to staff on the door in the morning or you can call the office. Teachers will always call you back, and I can usually speak to you straight away. If for any reason we can't get to you immediately we will always ring you back as soon as we possibly can. Never hesitate to make contact; most things can be resolved and the sooner we know about your concerns, the sooner we can address them.

With every kind wish as always,

Mrs Chapman

Principal