



Dear Parents and Carers,

A Belated Happy New Year and Welcome back to school!

First of all, I would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year and I hope that you and your family enjoyed a peaceful Christmas break. Thank you so much for the many cards and gifts which were sent in for staff before Christmas. Your generosity is never expected and is very kind – thank you.



Inspections



We were so very proud to share our CSI (Catholic School Inspection) Report with you prior to the Christmas break-OUTSTANDING in all areas of the Inspection Framework. Our last inspection was 2018 under different framework and different criteria so we are very pleased and proud that we have been able to once again be awarded the highest judgements in all areas.

The first week back at school was certainly busy too with our OFSTED Inspection. 2015 was our last OFSTED Inspection under a different framework and again with different grading criteria. The overall judgement for schools has now been taken away and schools are judged in the specific areas of Leadership and Management, Personal Development, Behaviour and Attitudes, EYFS and Quality of Education. We are not yet permitted to share the outcome with parents, but we are very pleased and look forward to sharing the full report when we are given permission by OFSTED to do so.

Jubilee Year – Pilgrims of Hope



Pope Francis has decreed that 2025 will be a year of Jubilee, a holy year which happens every 25 years in the Catholic Church.

This Jubilee Year 2025 will be centred on the theme “Pilgrims of Hope”. It is marked by the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican. The Holy Father officially opened the Holy Year with the rite of the Opening of the Holy Door of the Basilica of St. Peter on 24/12/24 and it will be finished on Tuesday 6th January 2026. The door stands for Jesus;

whoever enters through that door will be saved. In this Jubilee Year, our Pope Francis, after opening the Holy Door, was the first entering through that door. He invites all of us, the pilgrims of Hope, entering through that door, so that we may enter into God’s life to share God’s salvation.

In school we have created our own special doors – at the front of the school, leading to KS1 playground and KS2 playground – we ask that all who walk through them allow Jesus to enter into their hearts.

We are also planning special visits to religious places during this special year so that we can become pilgrims too.

Smart Watches

For safeguarding purposes we need to ask that children do not bring smart watches into school. There have been cases in other schools where children have used smart watches to take inappropriate photos. For this reason and following advice from safeguarding agencies we need to ask for parental support in telling children not to bring these watches into school. Mobile phones are currently handed into the school office in the morning and collected after school to keep children safe, smart watches if worn to school can also be handed into the school office where they will be kept safe until the end of the day. Thank you.



Trinity Club

Trinity Club is a parent group that runs here at St Joseph’s. Tea, Toast and Talking is the main aim! Everyone is welcome to attend, and we really look forward to welcoming new parents. Our next event is Wednesday 5th February at 9am and the focus is online safety and what parents can do at home to keep children safe online! Please join us if you can!

Congratulations to Miss Oakley



We would like to share the wonderful news that Miss Oakley has given birth to a baby girl over the Christmas break! Both Miss Oakley and baby are doing very well and we’re keeping all the family in our prayers.

Basic Skills

As we continue our commitment to go above and beyond in preparing children for life in modern Britain and preparing them for their next stage in education, this term we are focusing on the basic skill of brushing teeth! Our local area has been identified as an area with a high cavity rate and so we ask parents to please support us in our drive to improve oral hygiene and dental health.



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 myself, Mrs Chapman and Mrs Cheema, Mrs Buckley, Miss Oakley and Mrs Hickman 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 this half term are Grateful and Generous

Grateful: Being grateful for the blessings that we have in our lives.

Generous: Generous in sharing our gifts and talents with others.



Please support us in maintaining our high uniform standards

Please ensure that children come to school in the correct uniform. Earrings (even covered with plasters), trainers, hair shavings and leggings with skirts are **not allowed**. Please see the uniform guide below taken from our school website.

Boys

Royal Blue St Joseph's pique polo shirt: either plain Royal Blue jumper or Royal Blue St Joseph's sweatshirt: grey trousers. Sensible black shoes

Summer Alternative: Knee length grey shorts, sensible shoes (no flipflop sandals)

Girls

Royal Blue St Joseph's pique polo shirt: either plain Royal Blue jumper or Royal Blue St Joseph's sweat-shirt: grey skirt/grey uniform trousers. Sensible black shoes.

Summer Alternative: Blue Gingham dress: either plain Royal Blue jumper/cardigan or Royal Blue St Joseph's sweatshirt, OR knee length grey shorts. Sensible, flat-heel shoes. (no flip-flop sandals)

PE Kit

All children should have: Plain black shorts: a plain white T-shirt and a pair of pumps: all kept in a PE bag.

Children are welcome to bring tracksuit bottoms and tracksuit tops for outdoor PE during the cooler weather. Trainers, boots or fashion shoes are not allowed.

Hair styles

Hair shaving and sculpting (e.g. tram lines, ticks and other shavings) are not allowed. Hairstyles must be smart and neat. Use of gels or styling products should be minimal. For safety reasons all long hair (boys and girls) must be tied back at all times. Highlights, dyeing and colouring of hair is not allowed.

Nail varnish is not allowed.

Jewellery

As a safety precaution and to prevent accidents during PE and other activities, the wearing of any item of jewellery in Nursery or Main School is strictly forbidden without exception.



St Francis' Forest



If you follow us on social media you may have seen the development of St Francis' Forest. This is an outdoor area which we have been developing for outdoor learning. Soon we will be installing a digital weather station, wildlife cameras, bird watching tents and an observation station! We have purchased class sets of boots so we'll do our best to keep the children mud free! During this term we are also hoping to have a pond installed to give children the opportunity to go pond dipping and look at pond life.

Events in school



Please find attached a list of dates for the term ahead. Class teachers will also be letting you know dates for Parent Workshops where you can come into school and take part in a lesson with your child – the focus this term is Writing.

Don't forget that we have Mass in school every Tuesday at 9.15am and Merit Prayer and Liturgy each Friday at 9.15am too where everyone is welcome to join us.

Wrap Around Care

We have been working with Beechwood Primary School (the school across the road) to provide wraparound care for the families of St Joseph's. We have been looking at ways we can work together so that our families have access to high quality breakfast and after school care. We are very much hoping that this is something that can be launched after ½ term. Beechwood are hosting an open afternoon on **Monday 27th January**, where perspective parents can go and have a tour of the school and see the staff and the provision between 3:15pm -3:45pm. This is a great opportunity to see the facilities and look at what they have to offer!

Attendance and Punctuality

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 unauthorize 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. The Children's Commissioner has produced some excellent resources related to attendance which we will be sharing in school. One important point to note from the Children's Commissioner is that – **'if you miss 30 minutes of school a day this amounts to 19 days lost each year.'**



<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/back-into-school/resources-for-children-and-young-people/>

Thank you for your support.

Sacramental Preparation

Catholic children from **Year 3** will have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion later this year. As part of the preparation there will be meetings for parents to attend. Once these dates have been finalised with Fr Louis we will let parents know. The date for First Holy Communion is **Saturday 17th May at 10am** in Our Blessed Lady and St Thomas of Canterbury Church, Dudley, we will soon confirm the date for First Reconciliation which will be held in school.



Catholic children from **Year 6** will have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Summer Term, Bishop Timothy Menezes has confirmed the date of **Wednesday 9th July at 6.00pm** in Our Blessed Lady and St Thomas of Canterbury Church, Dudley. Details of the meeting for parents will follow in due course.



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.

Take care,

Mrs S Chapman
Principal

Spring Term 1 Dates 2025

- Tuesday 21st January – Year 3's Mass – 9.15am, please join us if you can.
- WB Monday 27th January – Brilliant in Britain Week and Ten:Ten Module 2
- Tuesday 28th January – Year 2's Mass – 9.15am, please join us if you can.
- Friday 31st January – Year 1's Assembly – 9.15am, please join us if you can.
- Tuesday 4th February – Year 1's Mass – 9.15am, please join us if you can.
- Wednesday 5th February – Trinity Club about Online Safety – 9am, all parents are welcome.
- Monday 10th February – Parent's Evening – appointment letter to follow.
- Tuesday 11th February – Year 6's Mass – 9.15am, please join us if you can.
- Thursday 13th February - School Poetry Recital – 2.20pm, please join us if you can.
- **MONDAY 17th – FRIDAY 21st FEBRUARY HALF-TERM**

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- Tuesday 25th February – Year 5's Mass – 9.15am, join us if you can.
- Tuesday 4th March – Year 4's Mass – 9.15am, join us if you can.
- Wednesday 5th March – Ash Wednesday – Lent Begins.
- Thursday 6th March – World Book Day
- Tuesday 18th March – Year 2's Mass – 9.15am, join us if you can.
- Wednesday 19th March – Whole School Retreat – Pilgrims of Hope
- Friday 21st March – Year 3's Assembly – 9.15, please join us if you can.
- Tuesday 25th March – Year 1's Mass – 9.15am, please join us if you can.
- Tuesday 1st April – Year 6's Mass – 9.15am, please join us if you can.
- Monday 7th April – Mini Reports to go home to parents.
- Monday 7th April – Year 3 Palm Sunday Liturgy 2.30pm, please join us if you can.
- Monday 7th April – Lenten Service in Church at 5pm.
- Tuesday 8th April – Year 5's Mass – 9.15am, please join us if you can.
- Tuesday 8th April – Year 4's Last Supper Liturgy 2.30pm, please join us if you can.
- Wednesday 9th April – Year 5's Agony in the Garden Liturgy 9.15pm, please join us if you can.
- Thursday 10th April – Year 6's Stations of the Cross Liturgy 2.15pm, please join us if you can.

THURSDAY 10th APRIL 3.15pm SCHOOL CLOSING FOR THE EASTER BREAK.

