



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

We will love one another in Christ knowing that Jesus loves us very much



Newsletter 22nd December 2023

Our attendance target is 98% Please strive to make every effort to ensure your child attends school every day.

Attendance	Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
w.c. 11.12.2023	93.1%	87.4%	93.7%	94.5%	97.7%	95.3%	96%
w.c. 18.12.2023	91.9%	98.4%	96.3%	96.8%	91%	89.6%	96.7%
Advent Term	97.1%	95.9%	94.8%	97.7%	96.6%	94.9%	95%

Dear Families,

We have finally reached the end of what has been a wonderful Advent term. As we approach the celebration of Christ's birth, the staff have been working extremely hard to ensure that the children are prepared for Christmas. Thank you to everyone for all your support throughout the term, especially the most recent attendance at our Advent Mass and the children's Christmas performances.

Can I also take this opportunity to thank all of our staff at St Joseph's including Fr Adrian, Fr Endre, Deacon Martin Bell and dedicated Governors for all your hard work this term. The children have been an absolute credit and are ready for some downtime at home.

Although a number of winter viruses have started to impact on our school attendance figures in recent weeks, particularly in Year 1, I cannot thank parents enough for communicating on a daily basis with the school office when your child has been poorly. This helps us carefully track the virus we have in school so we can keep parents informed.

The last two weeks have been full of activity and I was delighted with the children's behaviour at our Christmas parties in school and Tuesday's fantastic pantomime visit. Many thanks to the PTA for both subsidising this visit and providing refreshments for the children to enjoy at the Tyne Theatre.



Last week the kitchen team provided a wonderful festive Christmas lunch. The feedback from the children was extremely encouraging. This is a really important time of year for children to have a hot nutritious

meal. If parents would like to change their child from packed lunch to school meals after the holiday, please contact the school office.



Can I remind parents that apart from Grass Roots and breakfast club all clubs will start in week two of the Lenten Term. A list of clubs for parents to sign up to will be sent out soon. For those pupils that would like to take up the opportunity of private music lessons with our peripatetic teachers for piano, violin and guitar please contact the office. School subsidises lessons for many families; more information will be given on your initial enquiry as there is a criteria for funding private music lessons.

All the staff are excited for what 2024 will bring at St Joseph's and I wish everyone a peaceful Christmas holiday.

Term Dates 2023/2024

Friday 22nd December - School will close at 1:15pm

Monday 25th December - Friday 5th January 2024 - Christmas Holidays

Monday 12th February - Friday 16th February - Half Term

Friday 29th March - Friday 12th April - Easter Holidays

Monday 6th May - Bank Holiday

Monday 27th May - Friday 31st May - Half Term

Dates for Diary

School reopens on Monday 8th January 2024

Christmas Church Services

Christmas Eve at St Anne's Church, Carols at 6:30pm, Mass at 7:00pm.

Christmas Day at St Joseph's Church, Mass at 10:00am.

Boxing Day at St Anne's, Mass at 11:00am.

Staffing Update

Mrs Alder will be Deputy Head Teacher until the end of this academic year in Mrs Johnson's absence. We also welcome Miss Carr as Year 2 class teacher until the end of this academic year. We wish them both well in their new posts.

Reception Class 2024 - 2025

For children who are due to start Reception Class in September 2024, the closing date for submitting applications is Monday 15th January.

Children's Achievements out of School

If your child has achieved an award in an out of school activity, we would like to hear about it and will mention it in our next newsletter. Please email details to info@stjb.bwcet.com

Awards

	Pupil of the Week	Gold Book - Advent Term
	15 th December	22 nd December
Reception	Frankie B - for making fantastic progress with his reading.	Chester - for caring for all of his classmate and being a wonderful part of our class.
Year 1	Lottie - for fantastic progress in her phonics and reading.	Frazer - for being a hardworking, bright and kind pupil and making us all so proud of his progress.
Year 2	Marnie - for being a good friend and always looking out for her classmates.	Blake - for working so hard this term and making lots of progress especially in reading.
Year 3	Amelia - for being kind to her classmates.	Imogen - for always giving 100% in class and going above and beyond. She is a fabulous role model to her peers.
Year 4	Sam - for great contributions to class discussions this week focussing on Sacrament of Reconciliation. Well done Sam!	Lucy D - for being a wonderful hardworking member of class with a very mature and sensible attitude.
Year 5	Jai - for taking a very active part in whole class discussions and question and answer sessions.	Robyn - working hard in everything you do. You are a highly valued member of our class.
Year 6	Noah - for showing care and consideration to others. Well done!	Emma - for just being lovely and always demonstrating positive qualities to others.
Year 6		Louie - for being a great role model.

	Golden Chair
	15 th December
Reception	Daisy - for growing in confidence and trying her best.
Year 1	Joe - for being a shining star in the classroom! Always making us smile.
Year 2	Harry - for great work ethic in English when writing his report to Santa.

Year 3	Charlotte - for working so hard in history and always putting her hand up.
Year 4	Isabelle - for wonderful talk partner this week. Working together and encouraging her partner. Great work Isabelle.
Year 5	Robyn - for excellent history work on cradles of civilisation.
Year 6	Oscar - for fantastic effort in lessons this week. Well done!

Curriculum Driver Award	
	15 th December
KS1	Levi - for demonstrating the importance of Enrichment in their everyday lives.
KS2	Alexa - for demonstrating the importance of Enrichment in their everyday lives.

Class News

Reception

Miss Duffield and Mrs Lewis are immensely proud of the term Reception Class have had to start their journey at St Joseph's. They have each settled in seamlessly and have made some amazing progress and special friendships this term.

As we prepare for Christmas, in the final week of Advent, we have enjoyed lots of festive activities. In forest school, we have been making ice ornaments, we have enjoyed a trip to the theatre and have had lots of fun playing games, dancing and eating yummy food at our class Christmas party!

In our Christmas performance this year, we dressed up as angels and sang and danced beautifully on the stage for all our families to enjoy. The children really impressed us with their resilience and confidence. Well done Reception class!





Year 1

Well here we are! Christmas is finally upon us.

What a fantastic term we've had. I am so proud of all the children in Year One for all of their hard work and determination to succeed in their learning.



We've had so much fun these last couple of weeks. From Christmas parties, to visits from Santa, trips to the cinema and the theatre, a wonderful Christmas lunch and much, much more.

We have focused much of our learning this last week or so on the season of Advent. The children have been thinking about waiting and what this means to them. We have thought about the importance of the birth of Christ and how this is the true meaning of Christmas amongst all the fun and games.

A big thank you to all the parents and carers of our wonderful Year One pupils for your continued support. We wish you all a lovely Christmas and a happy New Year.





Year 2

Year 2 have had been very busy over the last few weeks. We have fully embraced all advent celebrations this term and enjoyed sharing in different festive activities. This week we loved dancing at our Christmas party and found the pantomime at the Tyne Theatre hilarious! We have been very crafty and made lots of different things to share with you at home this Christmas.

We have revisited the Christmas story and acted out different parts to share our learning with each other. We loved performing our Christmas plays for you all and hope you enjoyed watching it as much!



Year 3

What an amazing term Year 3 have had! We've all enjoyed so many lovely lessons and fun activities this term, and now we're definitely ready for Christmas!

In English we have just finished our second book which we have been focusing on. It is called "The Barnabus Project" and follows Barnabus who is classed as a failed pet. He is half elephant, half mouse who is kept a secret alongside his misfit friends. They set off on an adventure to escape the secret lab they're kept in and find their place in the big wide world! We have loved reading about their adventures and writing a brochure to find these imperfect pets a home! We have even designed our imperfect pets which would be perfect for someone else! We have loved this book as a class and have rated it 5 stars!



In RE we have been learning about baptism and were visited by Deacon Martin who showed us how a baptism is performed. We asked him lots of interesting questions and learned so much! Thank you for coming in!

This week we visited the pantomime and had the most amazing time watching Peter Pan save everyone from nasty Captain Hook! We all have very sore throats after screaming "It's behind you" at the crocodile so much, but it was worth it!

As if this week couldn't get any more exciting, we also had our Christmas party day which was so much fun and a special visit from Santa - he managed to squeeze a visit in before the big day next week and we were very thankful!



Year 4

In RE lessons we have been learning about The Sacrament of Reconciliation which is in preparation for our First Holy Communion next year.

We looked at the different parts to the Sacrament of Reconciliation including the confession, the penance, the act of contrition and then the absolution from our sins. We then worked with a partner and took on the roles of the priest and the sinner. Here we are saying the words that Father Adrian would say...*'I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.'*



At the beginning of December, Year 3 and 4 lead a wonderful Advent Mass at St. Anne's church. The children read and sang beautifully. Thank you to all those families and parishioners who came to support the children.



Year 5

Recently, Year 5 have had exciting times visiting the Tyne Theatre to see the pantomime Peter Pan, received a visit from Santa, and had a Christmas party.

The children have still been working hard though. In RE they freeze framed waiting situations in the context of Advent. In science, they have been investigating how the rotation of the Earth causes day and night using scientific models. They recapped the heliocentric nature of the solar system and found out how the earth's tilted axis is responsible for our seasons in the northern hemisphere.

Well done Year 5 and Merry Christmas!



Year 6

Well, after a jam-packed Advent term, we've made it to Christmas!

We've been busy right up to the end and the children should be very proud of themselves for how hard they've worked. We enjoyed our Advent RE topic and learning about mountains in our Geography lessons.

Our Christmas play was a great highlight, and we loved performing so much!

In our last week of school, the pantomime at the Tyne Theatre was fantastic and so funny! Thank you to the Friends of St Joseph's for our treat bags.

Father Endre joined us for a lovely liturgy, looking at how Jesus is the light of the world.

We had great fun on our Christmas party day, enjoying the time with our friends.

This morning, we had a relaxing Christmas movie morning, and we came into school in our pyjamas. The hot chocolate treat was delicious!



Gospel

Sunday 24th December 2023 - Luke 1: 26-38. The Fourth Sunday in Advent, Year B

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, so highly favoured! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob for ever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?' 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you,' the angel answered, 'and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Know this too: your cousin Elizabeth has, in her old age, herself conceived a son, and she whom people called barren is now in her sixth month, for nothing is impossible to God.' 'I am the handmaid of the Lord,' said Mary, 'let what you have said be done to me.' And the angel left her.

On behalf of Fr. Adrian, Governors and Staff, we hope you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

God Bless,

Paul Naughton



The 12 Online Safety Tips of Christmas

FOR CHILDREN WITH NEW DEVICES

Christmas is almost upon us once again, and soon some lucky children will be excitedly tearing the wrapping off a new mobile phone, tablet or games console. For some of them, it will be the first time they've owned a device that connects them to the online world. Even for older children, a new device means new corners of the digital landscape to explore – and, unfortunately, new risks to be aware of.

We've put together our top tips so that you can guide your young ones in enjoying their new digital gifts safely and responsibly throughout the year to come. Merry Christmas!

1. ALWAYS SET A PASSWORD

If your child's new device has a password protection feature, use it! It'll help to keep their private information safe and will deny others access to their device without permission. Your children's passwords should be something memorable to them – but something which other people can't guess (It's also a good idea for parents to write it down in case it gets forgotten!).

2. SET UP 'PARENTAL CONTROLS'

This really is an essential when your child gets a new device, so they're protected from the outset. Most phones, tablets and consoles allow you to customise their settings to determine which games your child can play, how they can communicate (and who with), what content they can access and so on. It will give you peace of mind that they can't inadvertently do something they shouldn't.

3. PAY ATTENTION TO AGE RATINGS

One of the first things children want to do with any new device is play games and explore apps. Before they download anything or install a new console game, check its age rating. Many popular games and apps have content that's not suitable for younger ages. The safest long-term solution is to adjust the device's settings so they can only download and use games and apps appropriate for their age.

4. KEEP NUMBERS AND DEVICES PRIVATE

Make sure your child understands that they should never share their phone number with someone they don't know or accept a friend request from them. They should also appreciate that it's a good idea to mainly keep their device out of sight, never lend it to a stranger, and never put it down somewhere that other people could steal it or take it to use without asking.

5. HAVE 'THE MONEY CONVERSATION'

Before your children start using their new device in earnest, talk to them about in-app purchases and other ways that money might be spent through their device. Once they understand, you might want to agree on a spending limit and reassure them that they can come to you if they're uncertain, or if they have made a purchase by accident.

6. DISCOURAGE DEVICE DEPENDENCY

Of course, children who've just got a new device will naturally want to spend as much time on it as possible. But whether they're zapping bad guys, watching videos or connecting with friends, it's easy for them to get attached very quickly. Gently remind them that having family time, going outdoors and getting some exercise are still fun, too. And the device will be there when they get back.

7. EXPLAIN SECURE WIFI NETWORKS

Your home WiFi is protected by a password that only your family knows, whereas public networks (like those found in coffee shops, for example) can be accessed by anyone. It's important that your child grasps this difference because, if they're using a portable device on an unsecured network, then a hacker could access their personal information without them even knowing.

8. LIMIT SCREEN TIME

Using a device for too long, especially just before bed, can interfere with a child's sleep quality and reduce their concentration and overall enthusiasm. It might be helpful to agree on certain times of day when they don't use their device. Most devices' settings let you specify a screen-time limit, helping your child to stay fresh and focused in order to perform well at school.

9. ONLY PAIR WITH KNOWN BLUETOOTH DEVICES

Your child may want to connect to another device via Bluetooth, so they can listen to music wirelessly or share pictures and videos with nearby friends. But if they use Bluetooth to link with a device that they don't know, they're at risk of a stranger being able to see their personal information or having someone transmit a virus onto their device.

10. TURN LOCATION SETTINGS OFF

It's safest to disable the device's location services (if it's a portable device) so your child doesn't inadvertently make other people aware of where they are. You can usually do this via the device's privacy control settings. Turning location on settings off not only means your child's whereabouts can't be tracked by others, it also significantly extends battery life.

11. STAY AWARE OF THE SURROUNDINGS

It's quite common to see adults not looking where they're going while engrossed in their phone. Children are even more easily distracted. In some cases, children have been hit by cars or cyclists because they were staring at their device and lost track of where they were. Remind your child that screens and walking don't mix. If they need to use their device, they should stop in a safe place first.

12. BE THERE IF THEY NEED TO TALK

Even when you've made a device as secure as you can, there's still a possibility of your child seeing something that bothers them, or someone they don't know attempting to contact them. If this happens, listen to their concerns, empathise and reassure them. Once they've explained what happened, you can decide if you should take further action like blocking or reporting another user.



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