

Dear Parents,



The Autumn Term is now in full swing and we hope your child has settled in well to school if they have joined us for the first time in Nursery and Reception and we hope that all of the children who have returned back to us after the holidays are settling into their new classes.

Thank you for following our uniform policy by sending children back to school in the correct uniform and following the rules for jewellery (especially not wearing earrings) and hairstyles. The

children all look very smart!

This newsletter gives you some important information for the half term ahead of us. Also, with this newsletter, as a handy separate document that you can keep near your calendar – please take a look at the ‘Diary Dates’ Please check especially the dates of the Christmas Nativity performances in case you need to arrange any time of work. It’ll be here before we know it.....!

### **Our Values for this half term**

Our values this half term are **Grateful and Generous**. **Grateful** for the many blessings we are given from God, including people who love us and people we love, along with the beautiful world God created us to live in. **Generous** with our gifts and talents to share these with others. These values are set by the Archdiocese and all Catholic Primary Schools in the Archdiocese focus on the same set of values, which are changed each half term. The values are drawn from the Catholic Schools Pupil Profile, which is on display throughout the school and in the main lobby area by the offices.

### **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, and Mrs Buckley and Mrs Hickman are the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. If you are concerned about your own your child or any other child, please speak to one of our safeguarding leads straight away.

### **Our Safeguarding Procedures at St Joseph’s**

We take our duty to keep all of our children safe very seriously. We comply fully with the standards expected by Dudley Safeguarding Children Board and Dudley Children’s Services.



### **Why have child protection procedures become so rigorous?**

Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures have intensified significantly in recent years as a result of a number of serious case reviews. As a result of these reviews all professionals working with children are expected to act with the highest level of caution and due care for the child. Professionals are expected to remember they are ‘child focused’ and must not let the fear of upsetting the parents prevent them from acting with diligence and care for the child.

You will be only too aware that professionals ‘giving the benefit of the doubt’ to parents and carers led to the tragic deaths of a number of children like Baby P, Kyra Ishaq, Daniel Pelka and sadly many others. In these cases if social workers, health visitors and teachers and headteachers had followed procedures correctly the children could have been saved before they were killed. None of us ever wants anything like this to happen to any child, anywhere.

### **What do the procedures mean for all Parents?**

Unfortunately, the atrocities committed by the few have repercussions for the millions of good caring parents in the country. More rigorous procedures are designed to ensure that the minority who mistreat children do not slip through the net but this means that millions of innocent disclosures will have to be investigated as well. In fact, these procedures apply not only to parents and carers but also to school staff, nursery workers and anyone who has contact with children. This letter is for parents but our full policy explains how all allegations are dealt with. You can find it on our website. The good news is that, whilst uncomfortable, upsetting and embarrassing at the time, where a child is not in danger and there is no cause for concern, this is identified extremely quickly and social services / Police involvement is withdrawn appropriately.

### **What if my child says something and the matter is referred to children’s services?**

We want all of our parents and carers to know that when we make a referral (usually because a child has disclosed). We never wish to cause any parent any upset, embarrassment, anxiety or distress and we know that being asked to see a social worker or Police officer can cause all of these things. However, if we do not follow the correct procedure we could be neglecting a child in need and this can have fatal consequences. As a child focused service, we must put the child first even if this is upsetting for the parents.

If your child is referred to children’s services for any reason be assured that the matter is completely confidential and will

not be discussed by anyone other than those directly involved: this is usually the member of staff who hears the disclosure or has the concern and the child protection leaders in school (either the DSL or one of our DDSLs).

Please also be assured that if your child is referred to children's services and they have contact with you this is also confidential. If you are asked to come in to school the office staff will not know anything about the matter other than that you are attending a meeting. We will make sure you are treated with dignity and respect at all times and we will make the situation as comfortable as possible. In nearly all cases the social worker and / or Police Officer will see you themselves and our staff will not be part of the meeting.

### **What if there is no action to be taken? What if there is action to be taken?**

After the Social Worker / Police have spoken with you there may or may not be further action to be taken. If there is further action we will support you and treat you with the utmost dignity and respect whilst complying with the instructions of the Social Worker or Police Officer. If there is no further action and the matter is closed we will assure you that the matter remains completely confidential. The relationship between parents and school will continue to be a respectful and supportive one. Nobody at school will make any judgements about you and very few staff will ever have known anything about the referral. As a parent you must not feel in any way inhibited about your relationship with school and you must be assured that the matter has been closed.

### **The St Joseph's Way**

Safeguarding Children is a very serious responsibility and at St Joseph's we are committed to following the procedures correctly all of the time. We realise that this will sometimes involve upsetting parents in order to ensure the child is safe. We hope that this letter makes it clear why we follow the procedures but also assure you that as a school we are also committed to treating everyone with dignity and respect. We will never make judgements and we will always treat the matter with the strictest confidence involving the absolute minimum number of school staff. Your confidentiality and dignity will be maintained at all times.

### **Harvest Mass**



Year 4 will be leading our Harvest Mass on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September in school at 9.15am. This is an opportunity to share what we have with our brothers and sisters by donating tins of food which we will donate to the Good Shepherd Appeal in Wolverhampton. Please donate what you can on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September so we can create a Harvest display in school ready for Mass on Tuesday. Thank you.

### **Please donate a tin of food or a few tins of food for our Harvest Mass**

We'll celebrate Harvest Mass on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September and will be collecting tins of food for the Good Shepherd Shelter in Wolverhampton. The Good Shepherd serve the poor and homeless of the local area and your donations help some of the most needy and vulnerable in our community.

Please send your tins of food in to school on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September so that we can put all of the donations on display ready for Mass on Tuesday morning.

Thanks so much for your support.



### **Mission, Values, Vocation and Prayer Week and Module One of Life to the Full– WB Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

This is a special focus week in school where the children learn even more about the importance of our school Mission, our school values, the importance of listening to the type of person Jesus is calling us to be (vocation) and the importance of prayer in our lives and the lives of others.

During this week we will also be teaching Module One of our Relationships, Health and Sex Education Programme – Life to the Full. 'Life to the Full' is a Catholic Relationships, Health and Sex Education programme approved by the Archdiocese of Birmingham and published by Ten Ten Resources. We will always let you know when sexual intimacy is going to be taught in Year 6 and if you wish to you have the option to withdraw your child from the lesson. **This is being taught in Year 6 during the week beginning 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023. Please let Mrs Cheema know if your child is in Year 6 and you wish to withdraw from the Sexual Intimacy lesson by Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September 8.30am.**

However, we would encourage you to think carefully before doing this as the programme is carefully designed from the point of view of Catholic beliefs and teachings and is mapped to the DfE guidance and Catholic Education Service guidance. We would also like to let you know that all of the programme content can be viewed by parents in the parent portal where there are also suggested home activities should you wish to support the programme at home.

Go to: [www.tentenresources.co.uk/parent-portal/](http://www.tentenresources.co.uk/parent-portal/)

Username: st-josephs-dy2

Password: wood-2

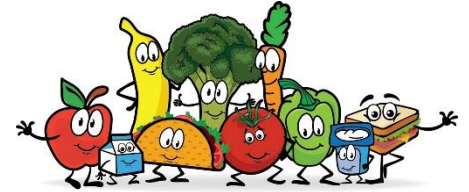
### Attendance and Punctuality



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.

### Healthy Playtime Snacks and healthy lunchboxes

Please can we ask you to only send healthy snacks for playtimes and lunchtimes. For playtime a piece of fruit is ideal, though a biscuit, very small chocolate bar or small bag of low-fat content crisps is also acceptable. Big bags of crisps, high sugar snacks or big chocolate bars are not healthy snacks and are not suitable for playtimes. We don't want to 'ban' any foods in moderation but we do need to ask you to keep a close eye on playtime snacks and help us to make sure all snacks are as healthy as possible. Similarly, at lunchtimes, please can we ask you to ensure lunchboxes don't contain big bags of crisps, big chocolate bars or any other high fat or high sugar products. A small bag of lower fat crisps, a biscuit or a very small chocolate are acceptable – but please try to keep high fat or high sugar foods to healthy levels.



We want the children to be able to enjoy a balanced diet and we feel that 'banning' any foods is at odds with making healthy choices. We would much rather help the children understand how to enjoy 'everything in moderation' and encourage them to make healthy choices wherever possible, enjoying treats in moderation. Thank you for supporting us.

### 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. Mrs Chapman (Principal) will always try to see you immediately – never hesitate to come and see me. The Assistant Principals are Mrs Cheema (Year 6 Teacher) and Mrs Buckley (Year 4 Teacher) who are both also available to help you as is Mrs Hickman (Year 5 Teacher & SENCO). 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 fester – 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!

### Parent-view

For those parents of children who have returned to Year 1 or above – 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](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk) We very much look forward to working with you this half term and we look forward to seeing you in and around school. As always, you only have to ask if we can be of any help and never forget we are here to help you if you need us. The head and deputy are the most senior staff in the school and will always do their very best to help resolve any problems or worries – come and see us!

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs S Chapman  
Principal