



5th September 2025

Dear Parents,

The Autumn Term has now begun, 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.....!

School Improvements

Even though school was closed for the summer break lots of work has been taking place! As you can see from the scaffolding around the building, we are in the process of having a completely new roof – hopefully this will keep us warm and dry for many years to come! Inside the building new carpet and flooring has been installed throughout the school making it look very smart! We have also had new fire doors installed to ensure that we are fully compliant with fire regulations and the boys and girls toilets in Key Stage Two have been completely refurbished – they look like hotel toilets and are very smart!



Our Values for this half term



Our values for this half term are Eloquent and Truthful. Eloquent: speaking clearly and proudly about the teachings in the Gospel. Truthful: Telling the truth and spreading the Good News through our words and our actions.

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, 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 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. 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.

Operation Encompass

Our school is also part of Operation Encompass to help ensure that all of our children are looked after following incidents which may happen outside of school. Operation Encompass is a police and education early information safeguarding partnership enabling schools to offer immediate support to children experiencing domestic abuse.



Operation Encompass ensures that there is a simple telephone call or notification to a school's trained Designated Safeguarding Lead /Officer (Mrs Chapman) prior to the start of the next school day after an incident of police attended domestic abuse where there are children related to either of the adult parties involved.

Information is shared with a school's Designated Safeguarding Lead prior to the start of the next school day after officers have attended a domestic abuse incident. This sharing of information enables appropriate support to be given, dependent upon the needs and wishes of the child.

Smart Watches



In order to keep everyone safe children who bring in mobile phones to school (Years 5 and 6) if they walk home, hand them into the office before school and collect them after school – there is a form for parents to complete to give permission for this. There have been a number of incidents in OTHER SCHOOLS where children with smart watches have been using them to take photos of other children without their consent. This is a great

safeguarding concern and for this reason we ask that children do not wear smart watches in school so that we can keep everyone safe. Thank you for understanding.

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.

Pupil Premium – you can help us access precious extra funding – very easily!

Please apply for free school meals if you are on a low income and / or receive benefits. As well as receiving a free school meal or sandwich every day (if you choose to take it), you will generate significant funding for our school for many years to come – funding that is all spent on better provision for the children.

Please visit <https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/benefits/free-school-meals/> for full details and to apply instantly online.

Ace Attendance

Our Ace Attendance initiative began last year and we have already congratulated a number of winners! All you have to do is get your child/children to school on time for a week to get a place in the draw that takes place each half term! You get an entry for each child so if you have three children who are on time for school for a week you get three entries into the draw.

At the end of each half term a winner will be drawn, and the parent will win a £50 voucher and the child a £10 voucher!

How does occasional absence affect my child?

Missing occasional days from school may seem unimportant at the time; however, this can have a significant impact on your child in the long term:

% of attendance in a school year	Number of days absent	Weeks missed
98%	4	Less than 1 week
95%	9.5	Nearly 2 weeks
90%	19	Nearly 4 weeks
85%	28.5	Nearly 6 weeks

A pupil with 85% attendance is missing nearly half a term of learning time each school year.

Regular absences can result in poorer outcomes over time. Research shows that pupils who miss between 10% and 20% of school (which is between half and one day per week on average) stand only a 35% chance of achieving five or more good GCSEs, compared to 73% of those

who miss fewer than 5% of school days.

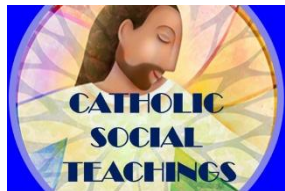
Late arrivals also add up over time – being 10 minutes late each day adds up to two weeks of lost learning time over the whole school year.

Food bank

Thank you to everyone who has been able to donate food to the food bank at the front of the school. We now need people to take the food! **PLEASE take anything you need** to make a meal, part of a meal etc and if you are able please make a donation in the donation box – this money goes to our school fund which we ALWAYS spend on our children!



Catholic Social Teaching and British Values



Throughout the curriculum and beyond children learn about the 7 principles of Catholic Social Teaching - Working in Solidarity, Care for Creation, Community & Participation, Dignity of Workers, Help for the Poor & Vulnerable, Human Dignity & Solidarity and how they link to British Values – Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, Respect & Tolerance.

St Joseph's Way – See our website for more details

At St. Joseph's we develop children's character through the 'St. Joseph's Way' curriculum. In order to build character, we define the behaviours and habits that we expect students to demonstrate. We want to support our pupils to grow into adults who are polite, respectful, grateful and who put others before themselves. We believe that, as pupils practise these behaviours over time, they become habits that positively shape how they feel about themselves and how other people perceive them. As philosopher Will Durant states, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." (1926)

Mission, Values, Vocation and Prayer Week and Module One of Life to the Full– WB Monday 22nd September 2025

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 22nd September 2025. Please let Mrs Cheema know if your child is in Year 6 and you wish to withdraw from the Sexual Intimacy lesson by Monday 22nd 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.

The Life to the Full Parent Portal Login details for St Joseph's are:

Go to: www.tentenresources.co.uk/parent-portal/ **Username:** st-josephs-dy2 **Password:** wood-2

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.

Mrs Hickman – SENCO Support

Mrs Hickman, our Year 4 teacher is also our School SENCO – supporting children with additional needs. Mrs Hickman regularly meets parents and holds meetings with lots of other professionals to ensure that children with additional needs have their needs met as much as possible by our mainstream school. If you have any worries about your child and would like any advice or support Mrs Hickman is available to speak to first thing every Wednesday morning – no need to book, just let the school Office know you want a chat.

Mental Health Awareness – wear yellow on Friday 10th October



Each half-term as part of our St Joseph's Way Curriculum we focus on a different life skill. This has included, using cutlery correctly and tying shoelaces. This half term we are focusing on mindfulness and mental health. As part of our focus this term we are taking part in Mental Health Awareness day on and are invited children to wear yellow to school. Children can wear one item or more of yellow clothing, or their own clothes if they don't have anything yellow to wear. We are requesting a donation, if possible, towards the young mind's charity. Thank you for your support.

Harvest Mass / Liturgy

Year 1 will be leading our Harvest Mass on Tuesday 14th October 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 13th October** so we can create a Harvest display in school ready for Mass on Tuesday.



Parents welcome in school

The children love having their parents in school! There are opportunities to join in a lesson with your child each term – see your child's class newsletter for dates! Parents are also welcome to join us for Mass in school on a Tuesday at 9.15am and Prayer, Merit and Liturgy on a Friday morning at 9.15am. When you are in school it is important that any younger children you may bring with you are fully supervised and don't interrupt lessons or worship. Please feel free to come to sit in the reception area if you need to settle little ones. Also, for health, safety and safeguarding reasons we must insist that no drinks are brought into the school and that mobile phones are not visible. If you need to take a call, we respectfully ask for you to do this outside of the school building.



Thank for helping us to keep everyone safe.

Weekly Mass in school

Fr Louis begins his retirement on 10th September – his last school Mass will be Tuesday 9th September. Fr Arul Sammy is our new Parish Priest and will begin his time in Dudley and Tipton from 25th October. During the time between Fr Louis leaving and Fr Sammy starting I am hopeful we can invite a priest to celebrate Mass in school each Tuesday. If this is not possible, we will still worship together with children leading prayer and readings – parents are still invited – but we will not be able to celebrate in the Eucharist unless we have a priest join 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. 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! We have a communication chart to show you who to contact if you need to speak to someone in school.

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
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.



*Give Ofsted your view
on your child's school*

Fairtrade Fortnight



This Fairtrade Fortnight we are focusing on Fairtrade for tea workers! Please join us for a drop in Fairtrade Tea morning on Tuesday 23rd September between 9.15-10.30am! This is a lovely opportunity to pop into school and have a chat with fellow parents and we're hoping to have cake too!

Democracy Day – Monday 15th September

The children will be learning about Democracy – one of our British Values. Children from Year 6 will be acting as candidates and campaigning around school for children to support their colour! All children will then vote for the colour they like the most! The winning colour will be the colour of choice to be worn on own clothes day on Monday 22nd September.



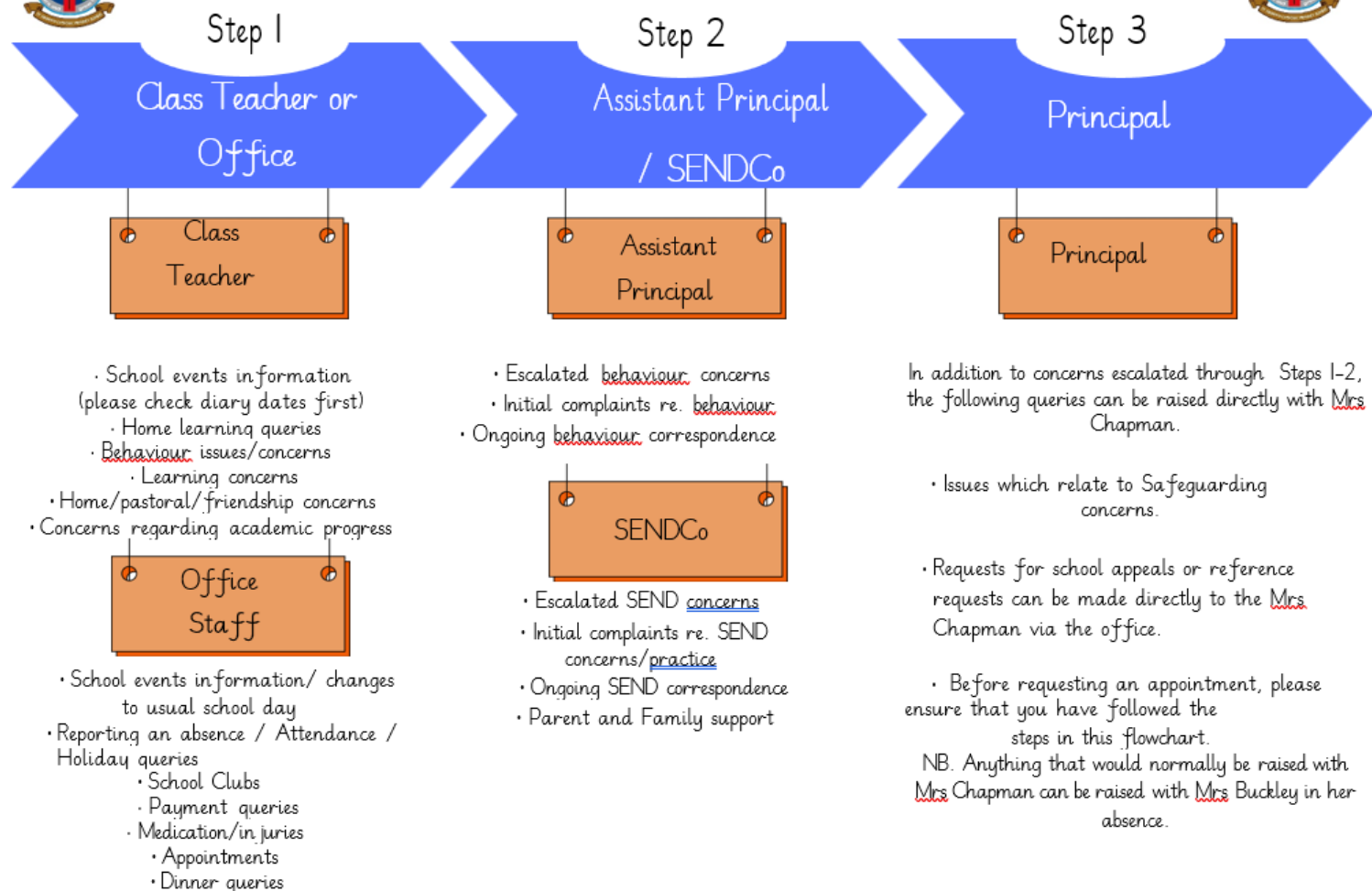
Yours Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Mrs S Chapman.

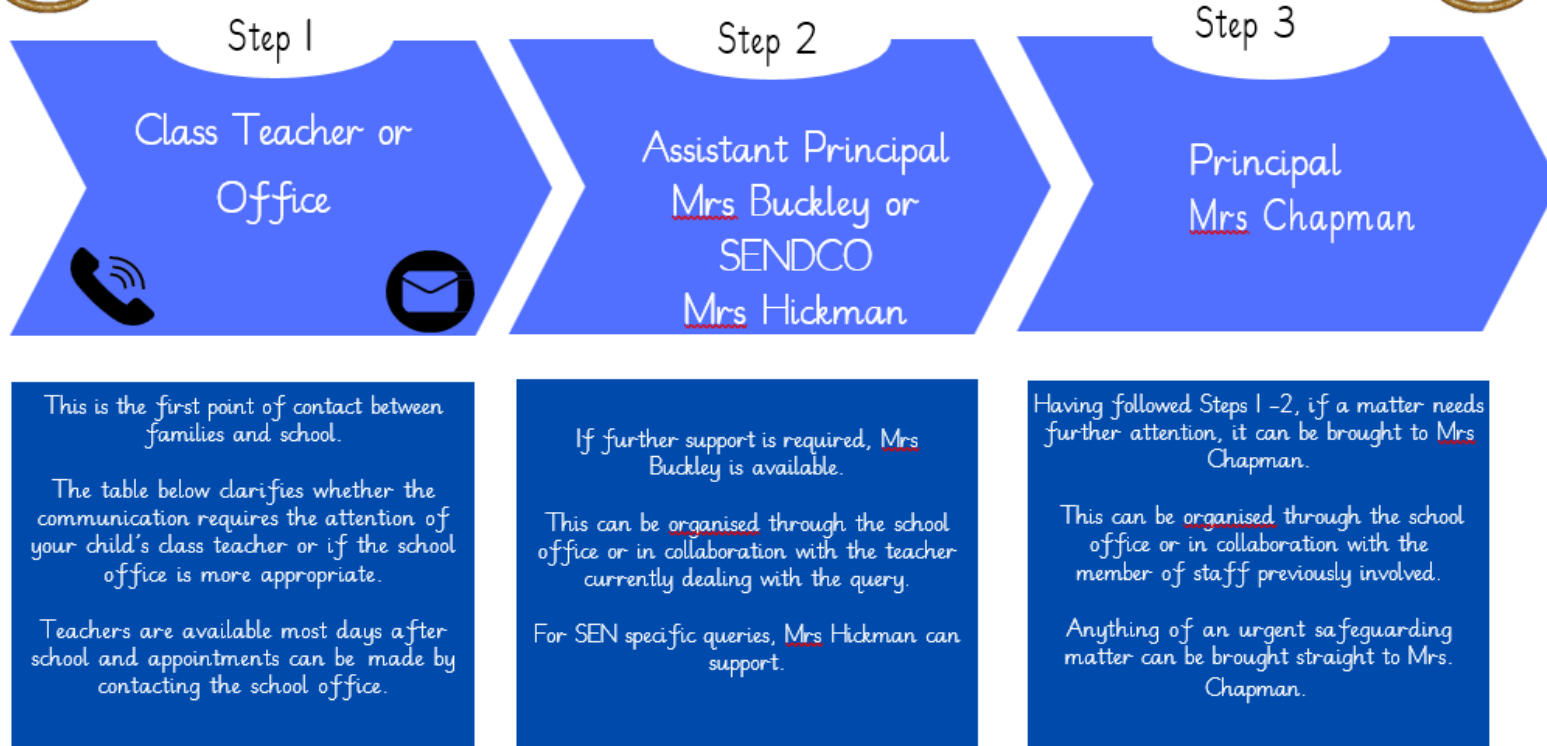
Mrs S Chapman
Principal



St. Joseph's Communication Flowchart



St Joseph's Communication Flowchart



"At St Joseph's we work, learn and grow together guided by Jesus' teachings"

Dates for the Autumn Term 2025

Monday 15th September - Democracy Day

Tuesday 16th September – Year 5 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Friday 19th September - Year 2 celebrate their class saint and can wear their own clothes to school.

Monday 22nd September – Own clothes day

WB Monday 22nd September – Mission, Vocation, Values and Prayer Week.

Tuesday 23rd September - Year 4 lead Mass / Liturgy at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Friday 26th September - Year 6 celebrate their class saint and can wear their own clothes to school.

Monday 29th September – Official launch of the ST Gabriel the Archangel Multi-Academy Trust

Tuesday 30th September - Year 3 lead Mass / Liturgy at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Wednesday 1st October – Flu Vaccinations in school

Tuesday 7th October – Year 2 lead Mass / Liturgy at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Friday 10th October – Wear yellow to support Mental Health Awareness Day/ Year 4's Assembly at 9.15am

Monday 13th October – Donate tins of food for harvest if you can.

Tuesday 14th October - Year 1 lead Harvest Mass / worship at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Friday 17th October – Year 6's assembly at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

WB Monday 20th October – Black History Week in school.

Tuesday 21st October - Year 1 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Friday 24th October – School Closed for children.

Monday 27th October – Friday 31st October – School closed for Half Term.

Monday 3rd November - Year 4 celebrate their class saint and can wear their own clothes to school.

Tuesday 4th November - Year 5 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Monday 10th November – Antibullying, Anti-racism and Internet Safety Week in school.

Tuesday 11th November - Year 4 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Friday 14th November – Year 5's Assembly at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Tuesday 18th November - Year 3 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Tuesday 25th November - Year 2 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Sunday 30th November – The Holy season of Advent begins.

Tuesday 2nd December - Year 1 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Monday 8th December - Nursery celebrate their class saint and can wear their own clothes to school.

Tuesday 9th December – Year 6 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can – Bambinelli Mass!

Thursday 11th December – Christmas Jumper Day.

Monday 15th December – EYFS (Nursery and Reception) – Nativity Play at 2.20pm.

Monday 15th December – Carol Concert at 5pm in our Church.

Tuesday 16th December - Year 5 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Tuesday 16th December – KS1 Nativity Play – 2.20pm.

Wednesday 17th December – Year 3 to share the Annunciation and Visitation at 9.15am.

Wednesday 17th December – Year 4 to share the Birth of Christ at 2.15pm.

Thursday 18th December – Year 5 to share the story of the Shepherds at 9.15am.

Thursday 18th December – Year 6 to share the story of the Wisemen at 2.15pm.

Friday 19th December – End of term celebration assembly 9.15am – join us if you can.

Friday 19th December – Carols and readings around the tree at 2.30pm.