



Dear Parents,

The Autumn Term has now begun, 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 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), hairstyles and not wearing trainers. 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 for this half term are: Compassionate - Thinking about one another and showing love and kindness. Loving - Showing love to everyone as Jesus teaches us to. 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 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 the time. We realise that this will sometimes involve upsetting parents 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 always maintained.



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.



Ace Attendance

Our Ace Attendance initiative is now an embedded part of St Joseph’s and we have congratulated a large 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!

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.



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

We have re-stocked the food bank at the front of school. PLEASE use the foodbank if you need anything at all. If you are able to donate too, that's great, but our food bank is there to help. Anyone can find themselves struggling from time to time and if we can help a little we are more than happy to do so.



Pupil Premium – you can help us access precious extra funding – very easily – IT'S NOW MUCH EASIER TO BE SUCCESSFUL!

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.

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 21st September 2026

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.

PSHE and RSHE at St Joseph's



To cover the compulsory elements of PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economical Education) and RSHE (Relationship, Sex and Health Education) we use a programme called – . **'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.

Mrs Cheema will let you know in advance of the lesson taking place.

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: 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.



Mental Health Awareness – wear yellow on Friday 9th 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 6 will be leading our Harvest Mass on Tuesday 20th 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 19th October** so we can create a Harvest display in school ready for Mass on Tuesday. Thank you.



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 on silent. If you need to take a call we respectfully ask for you to do this outside of the school building and finally we ask parents not to talk as this is distracting for the children, the staff leading and means that other parents can't hear what's going on in the hall. Thank for helping us to keep everyone safe and happy.

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



School Trips

We do our very best to provide wide-ranging trips and experiences linked to the curriculum to help enhance children's learning. On average we aim to provide one trip per term. Last year, following a consultation with parents we set up the option for parents to pay in instalments throughout the year or to pay the total cost of each trip. Unfortunately, there was many parents who did not pay for trips and the school was left to cover the cost which was just over **£7000**. Obviously, this is not something school can continue to do as our budget simply does not stretch! We do our best to make trips as affordable as possible and already subsidise ALL TRIPS from our school fund. But we cannot cover a deficit of £7000. If you are struggling to pay, please feel free to speak to the office or myself rather than avoiding payment. We don't want to be in the position where the children don't have the enjoyment of school trips but we simply need parents to help us pay for them. Thank you for understanding.



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.



Parentview

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.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Chapman', written in a cursive style.

Mrs S Chapman
Principal

Dates for the Autumn Term 2026

Tuesday 8th September – Year 6 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Friday 11th September – Year 5's class saints day – children to wear their own clothes to school.

Tuesday 15th September – Year 5 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Friday 18th September – Year 2's class saints day – children to wear their own clothes to school.

Friday 18th September – Flu Vaccinations

WB Monday 21st September – Mission, Vocation, Values and Prayer Week.

Tuesday 22nd September - Year 4 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Thursday 24th September – Year 4's Trip from Year 3 that was postponed to Wroxeter City.

Friday 25th September - Year 6 celebrate their class saint and can wear their own clothes to school.

Monday 28th September – Year 6 Road Safety Workshop

Tuesday 29th September – Year 3 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Thursday 1st October – Year 6 trip to Alton Castle

Friday 2nd October – Lent Harvest Fast Day

Tuesday 6th October – Year 2 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Wednesday 7th October – Reception Teddy Bear Road Safety Workshop

Friday 9th October – Wear yellow to support Mental Health Awareness Day.

Friday 9th October – Year 4's Assembly at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Friday 9th October – Joseph's Jigsaw saints day – children to wear their own clothes to school

Tuesday 13th October - Year 1 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Friday 16th October – Year 6's assembly at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Friday 16th October - Nuresry's class saints day – children to wear their own clothes to school.

Saturday 17th October – School Parish Mass in Church at 6.00pm

WB Monday 19th October – Black History Week in school.

Monday 19th October – Parents' Evening

Monday 19th October – Please donate tins for Harvest

Tuesday 20th October - Year 6 lead Harvest Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Wednesday 21st October – Reception visit to see The Snowman at Birmingham Rep

Wednesday 21st October – Whole school enrichment day with a focus on fencing

Friday 23rd October – School Closed for children.

Monday 26th October – Friday 30th October – School closed for Half Term.

Monday 2nd November - School Closed for children.

Friday 6th November - Year 4 celebrate their class saint and can wear their own clothes to school.

Tuesday 10th November - Year 5 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Wednesday 11th November – whole school photos

Friday 13th November – Year 5's Assembly at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Monday 16th November – Antibullying, Anti-racism and Internet Safety Week in school.

Tuesday 17th November - Year 4 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Wednesday 18th November – Year 4 trip to the Motor Museum

Tuesday 24th November - Year 3 lead Mass at 9.15am, please join us if you can.

Tuesday 24th November – Year 6 trip to Steel House Lane

Wednesday 25th November – Year 3 trip to Dudley Museum

Sunday 29th November – The Holy season of Advent begins.

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

Wednesday 2nd December – Year 1 trip to The Black Country Museum

Thursday 3rd December – Nursery trip to Wonderland

Tuesday 8th December – Bambinelli Mass!

Wednesday 9th December – Year 5 trip to the cinema

Thursday 10th December – Mini Reports to go home

Friday 11th December – Christmas Jumper Day.

Friday 11th December – Christmas Fair and Party Day

Monday 14th December – EYFS (Nursery and Reception) – Nativity Play at 2.20pm.

Monday 14th December – Carol Concert at 5pm in our Church.

Tuesday 15th December – KS1 Nativity Play – 2.20pm.

Wednesday 16th December – Year 3 to share the Annunciation and Visitation at 9.15am.

Wednesday 16th December – Year 4 to share the Birth of Christ at 2.15pm.

Thursday 17th December – Year 5 to share the story of the Shepherds at 9.15am.

Thursday 17th December – Year 6 to share the story of the Wisemen at 2.15pm.

Friday 18th December – End of term celebration assembly 9.15am – join us if you can.

Friday 18th December – Carols and readings around the tree at 2.30pm.

Friday 18th December – school closes for Christmas.

Tuesday 5th January – Children return to school.



St Joseph's Communication Flowchart



Step 1

Class Teacher or
Office



Step 2

Assistant Principal
Mrs Buckley or
SENDCO
Mrs Hickman

Step 3

Principal
Mrs Chapman

This is the first point of contact between families and school.

The table below clarifies whether the communication requires the attention of your child's class teacher or if the school office is more appropriate.

Teachers are available most days after school and appointments can be made by contacting the school office.

If further support is required, Mrs Buckley is available.

This can be organised through the school office or in collaboration with the teacher currently dealing with the query.

For SEN specific queries, Mrs Hickman can support.

Having followed Steps 1-2, if a matter needs further attention, it can be brought to Mrs Chapman.

This can be organised through the school office or in collaboration with the member of staff previously involved.

Anything of an urgent safeguarding matter can be brought straight to Mrs Chapman.

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



St. Joseph's Communication Flowchart



Step 1

Class Teacher or
Office

Class
Teacher

• School events information
(please check diary dates first)

- Home learning queries
- Behaviour issues/concerns
- Learning concerns

- Home/pastoral/friendship concerns
- Concerns regarding academic progress

Office
Staff

- School events information/ changes to usual school day
- Reporting an absence / Attendance / Holiday queries
 - School Clubs
 - Payment queries
 - Medication/injuries
 - Appointments
 - Dinner queries

Step 2

Assistant Principal
/ SENDCo

Assistant
Principal

- Escalated behaviour concerns
- Initial complaints re. behaviour
- Ongoing behaviour correspondence

SENDCo

- Escalated SEND concerns
- Initial complaints re. SEND concerns/practice
- Ongoing SEND correspondence
- Parent and Family support

Step 3

Principal

Principal

In addition to concerns escalated through Steps 1-2, the following queries can be raised directly with Mrs Chapman.

- Issues which relate to Safeguarding concerns.

- Requests for school appeals or reference requests can be made directly to the Mrs Chapman via the office.

• Before requesting an appointment, please ensure that you have followed the steps in this flowchart.

NB. Anything that would normally be raised with Mrs Chapman can be raised with Mrs Buckley in her absence.