



Friday 18th September 2026,

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the first newsletter of the new school year!

If you or your child are new to our school, you are very much welcome to our school family and we look forward to getting to know you better in the weeks ahead. All of our new pupils have all made a fantastic start and we are very impressed with the way they are settling in.

We pride ourselves on being a listening staff, so please don't hesitate to come and speak to us about any concerns you may have. Equally, it is always lovely to hear positive feedback about the school and how your children are finding their experience.

The children have started the new school year with big smiles. They have settled quickly into school routines and are working hard; they are full of energy and enthusiasm for their learning - a great start to the new academic year - well done everyone!

Thank you for supporting our uniform policy- the children look very smart in their uniforms, which shows the pride we have in our school. A reminder about uniform expectations can be found in your child's planner. Some allowances have been made up until now while families sourced correct uniform items but **from Monday 21st September**, pupils without the correct uniform will lose their golden stamp. As always, if you are having genuine difficulty sourcing the correct uniform, don't hesitate to speak to us and we will see what we can do to help. We always have a selection of nearly new uniform and provide termly opportunities for parents to help themselves to these items free of charge - let's continue to help each other out by donating outgrown uniform to school.

We look forward to sharing examples of the children's learning with you throughout this year - please follow the school's Facebook page to stay up to date with what's going on.

<https://www.facebook.com/StJosephsCatholicPrimaryDarlaston>

Our school website has been undergoing some changes recently - please bear with us as we work on updating it over the next few weeks.

There is LOTS of information in today's newsletter, please take the time to read it and note down the important dates. Thank you!



Catholic Life

Catholic Pupil Profile: This half term, we will be focussing on the virtues **Compassionate and Loving**.

Our pupils are growing to be **compassionate** towards others, near and far, especially the less fortunate; and **loving by** their just actions and forgiving words.

Catholic Schools help their pupils grow by being compassionate and loving in the way they are treated especially when a pupil is in trouble; and by opening their eyes to those who suffer poverty, injustice or violence.



Each week, children from each class who have demonstrated these virtues are celebrated in our celebration assembly on Friday morning. Parents of chosen children will be notified and invited to attend.

Wednesday Word: You will receive a link to a copy of the Wednesday Word which is a reflection on Sunday's Gospel reading each week. Please take the time to share this with your child.



Season of Creation: The Season of Creation began on September 1st, which is the World Day of Prayer for the care of creation. The season runs until October 4 on the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi. This links to the Catholic Social Teaching of 'Stewardship of God's Creation'. As Catholics, we are called to look after our environment at a local level, and also to petition those in power to care for the needs of all, especially the poor and

marginalised in our world.

Since our return to school, each class has been joining in with a short prayer time with One Life Music each day. The children are enjoying the chance to reflect on the wonders of God's World and to thank and praise God for his creation.

This year in school, caring for God's creation will be a particular focus for our children as we work towards achieving the CAFOD Live Simply Award.



Whole School Retreat Day



Last week we welcomed Dan and Emily from One life Music into school to lead us in a whole school retreat day. The day was a fabulous celebration of Jesus the Good Shepherd. Reflecting on Psalm 23, we had great fun together, learnt some new music and sign language, and spent time in prayer. It was a really joyful day that has left the staff and children renewed in faith!



Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction

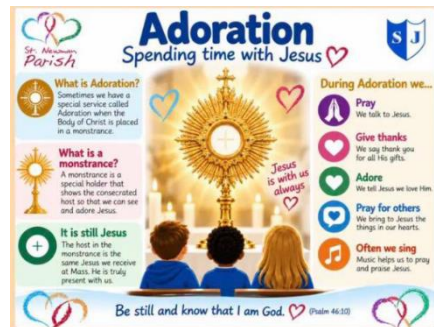
On Friday, Fr Craig came into school to help KS2 explore what we mean by the Blessed Sacrament and that in Adoration, we gather to adore Jesus, truly present with us in the Eucharist.

We talked about why Catholics gather for Adoration. We come simply to be with Jesus. We look towards him present in the Blessed Sacrament and give him our attention, our love and our worship. We don't always need lots of words. Sometimes we can simply be still and know that Jesus is there and we are there with him.

We then did exactly that as we gathered for Adoration and Benediction.

In silence we brought Jesus our own needs, the people we love and the needs of our world. We thanked him for the many blessings in our lives. We adored him, sang his praises and allowed ourselves simply to spend some time in his presence.

Thank you to Fr Craig for helping us to understand more about Adoration and helping us to be still in the presence of Jesus.



Phone Free School

By law, schools are now required to be phone free environments. In line with our mobile phone policy and recent government guidance, pupils should not bring a phone to school unless it is absolutely necessary, for example because they are walking home alone or due to parent access arrangements. Any pupil who brings a mobile phone to school **MUST** hand it in to the school office staff before going onto the school playground / into classrooms. Any pupil bringing a phone into school must have written permission from a parent. Phones will be to be locked away in the school office throughout the day and can be collected again after school.





After School Tuition

We are incredibly lucky to have such a dedicated and generous staff team at St Joseph's, many of them give up time after school to offer free additional tuition to many of our pupils. **If your child has been invited to an after school tuition group, we strongly urge you to take up this generous offer for your child.**

We do know that some children can be reluctant to stay but ask that parents explain what a great opportunity it is and that the adults are trying to help them with their learning - children do not always understand what is in their own best interests! Tuition is designed to be helpful and is definitely not a punishment. Pupils staying for after school tuition are able to bring a small (nut free) snack with them to eat at the start of the club if they wish to.

As always, we want the very best for your child. Let's work together to help the children achieve the very best they can.



Parents Evening

Parents Evening will be held in school on Thursday 22nd October from 2pm - 6pm. A booking link will be emailed to you next week so please look for it to make an appointment to speak to your child's teacher about how they are getting on in their new class.

The children's books will also be available for you to see on this date.



At St Joseph's, we believe parental engagement is fundamental to pupil progress. Whilst we do not set written homework, we ask that you support your child's learning by hearing them read nightly and discussing what they have read to check they understand.

Additionally, practising spellings and number fluency—addition, subtraction, and times tables—remains essential. Please consult your child's curriculum overview or class page on our website for further details. If you need any further advice or information, please speak to your child's class teacher.

Curriculum Information

Information about what your child is learning in school in Years 1 - 6 will be emailed out to you by the school office each half term and can also be found on the class pages of the school website. We hope you find the information useful and welcome your feedback about them.

Nursery and Reception parents will receive a weekly overview of what the children are learning. This can be found on the class website and will also be emailed out by the school office.





Breakfast Club

Our government-funded breakfast club has got off to a great start, with around 60 pupils joining us regularly. **The club opens from 8.15am and is free for all pupils from Reception through Year 6.**

Nursery pupils are able to attend at a cost of £2 per day. To make the most of breakfast time before the school day kicks off, we'd love pupils to arrive between 8.15 and 8.30am.

It's a brilliant opportunity for them to tuck into some nutritious food—cereal, fresh milk, fruit, and toast—and also have chance to play with their friends.

Pupils should come into the free club via the Key Stage 1 gate and head through the hall door.

If your child is attending our free breakfast club, please book your child's place on SCOPAY to help us make sure we have adequate staffing levels in place and plenty of food ready!

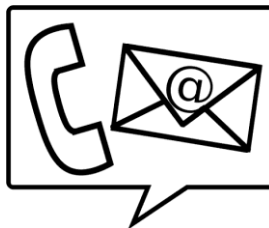
We would love to hear what you think about breakfast club so far. Is it helping your child feel ready for the day ahead? Is it helping you as parents? If you've got any ideas for making it even better, we'd also like to hear from you.



Communication with school

If there is a need to contact school, to speak to or pass on a message to the office or teaching staff, please use the school telephone number 0121 5686496, call into the main school office or email: postbox@st-josephs.walsall.sch.uk. Messages can also be written into pupil's school planners.

Please ensure your contact details are kept up to date throughout the school year.





School Dinners

We are delighted to share that over the summer, we have upgraded our kitchen facilities in school. We're now cooking meals on site rather than relying on delivered provisions, which has made a real difference to the quality and freshness of what we're serving to our pupils. Our partnership with ABM catering so far has been brilliant, and we're particularly pleased with the standard of food being prepared daily within our school.

The impact has been immediate and noticeable. Our pupils are showing real enthusiasm for their meals, with more and more choosing to eat a school lunch each day. The children themselves have been vocal about how much they're enjoying the food, which speaks volumes about how well this is going. We'd like to thank members of last year's school council, who worked alongside Mrs Hannett and Miss Wellington in selecting our catering provider.

For families whose children haven't yet tried a school lunch this term, we'd encourage you to support them in giving it a go. It's worth noting that **all pupils in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 are entitled to a free daily meal. Families in receipt of universal credit across all year groups are now eligible for free school meals too.** The link to apply for free school meals is: <https://go.walsall.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-meals/apply-free-school-meals>

Families with no recourse to public funds may apply for Free school Meals by collecting a paper application form from the school office.

If your family is not entitled to free school meals, the cost of a Nursery child's meal is £2.40 per day, and for all other children it is £2.60 per day—excellent value for the quality of a freshly cooked meal each day, a salad bar that the children can help themselves to, and a pudding.

Please help us by booking your child's meal in advance on SCOPAY.

We are also pleased to report that our kitchen has achieved a five-star food hygiene rating!





School attendance is a high national priority. Rules around attendance have become stricter, reflecting the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in a child's educational journey.

We cannot stress enough how vital it is for children to be present and on time every day. Each lesson builds upon the last, and frequent absences or late arrivals can significantly impact a child's progress and understanding. Moreover, good attendance habits formed now will serve your children well throughout their lives. We appreciate your support in ensuring your child attends school consistently and arrives promptly each morning.

Legislation states that we are not able to grant holiday requests – in fact it is illegal for us to do so. Furthermore, holidays in term time will result in the local authority issuing parents with a penalty notice. Therefore, we ask you to ensure that all holidays are booked outside of term time. The local authority will also fine the parents of children who are persistently absent or late to school.

Please make sure your child is in their classroom by 8.55am at the latest each day. If the gate has already been closed and your child enters school through the main school office, they will be marked as late. If your child will be absent from school, please notify the school office of the reason by 9am.

Celebrating the Harvest

On Friday 16th October, we will gather together as a school for our Harvest Mass. If you are able to spare any tinned or packet goods for our Harvest appeal, we would be very grateful. Please send in donations from Monday 12th October onwards.

On Friday 16th October, pupils are encouraged to come to school in their own brightly coloured clothes. During the school day we will learn about the work of CAFOD and help to 'Brighten up this Harvest and build a better world.'

Children will receive an extra gold stamp for donating to the Harvest Appeal.

The produce donated will be sent to the Good Shepherd, Wolverhampton.





Applications for Reception Class or Year 7 Secondary School next September

Is your child due to start Reception or move into Year 7 next September?
School applications are now OPEN!

- Children born between 1 September 2022 and 31 August 2023 can now apply for a reception class place starting in September 2027. **Primary school applications close on 15 January 2027.**
- Children born between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016 can now apply for a Year 7 secondary school place starting in September 2027. Secondary school applications close on 31 October 2026.

The school application process is now fully online. If you need any help, please get in touch. Please apply for your child's place at <https://go.walsall.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-admissions>



Macmillan Cancer Support

On Friday 25th September, the Mini-Vinnies will be holding a cake sale at the end of the school day on the school playground to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support, a charity close to many of our hearts.

We would be grateful of donations of cakes for the pupils to sell and ask that children and parents bring along a small amount of money if they would like to buy a cake.

Many thanks in advance.





Behaviour Policy & Golden Stamps

Our school rules are:

Ready, Respectful, and Safe.

Our pupils have been engaging in thoughtful discussions so far this term about what these rules mean in various school settings - from classrooms to corridors to the playground. For those interested in learning more, our behaviour policy is available on the school website.

Pupils from Reception -Year 6 will continue to receive a golden stamp in their planners at the end of each school day if they have been 'golden' in school.

Please try not to panic if your child does not receive a stamp on an odd occasion. None of us are perfect and children will invariably make mistakes at times! Please encourage your child to see losing their stamp as a learning opportunity to reflect on what to do differently next time.



Children from Reception - Year 6 are also divided into four House Teams named after the patron saints of the UK: St David, St George, St Andrew, and St Patrick. This system allows pupils to earn house points for their team, with the winning house announced weekly and a special award presented at the end of the school year. We hope this will continue to foster a sense of teamwork amongst pupils and allow our Year 6 pupils opportunities for leadership in school.

Congratulations to the Year 6 House Captains, who have been democratically elected to lead their House by members of their House team. I am sure they will prove to be excellent role models throughout the school year!

Year 6 Walking home from school

We know that when they get to Year 6, many pupils are eager to start walking home from school without their parents. Many parents also want them to have some experience of this before they start high school. However, experience shows us that this is best done in the summer term of Year 6, this gives them long enough to build their confidence in making their own way home. By then, we are back to having lighter evenings rather than worrying about children walking home in the dark, particularly if they have stayed for an after school club. At the point when you do decide your child is ready to walk home alone, written permission is required from parents before staff will allow them to do so.

We urge all parents to wait until after Easter in Year 6 before allowing their child to walk home alone - let's keep our children safe together!



Curriculum Staffing News

Music Lessons- At St Joseph's we recognise the importance of a broad and balance curriculum and the huge benefits of music for the children both academically and emotionally. We continue to have weekly music lessons in school this year for every class with a highly skilled and qualified music teacher. This year we have a new music teacher through the company Rockit Music, who we have been working with now for a number of years, with great success. Mrs Burgoyne (or Mrs B.) is quickly getting to know the children at St. Joseph's and is delighted to be with us on Tuesdays and Fridays each week.

Drama Lessons - This term, we have also introduced speaking and drama lessons into our curriculum. All pupils in EYFS and Key Stage 1 are already enjoying a weekly lesson with Emma from ClassActTheatrix; these will continue until Christmas. Key Stage Two pupils will have a weekly drama lesson in either this half term or next half term. We look forward to seeing the children grow in confidence through these fun lessons.



Parking outside school

We kindly ask all parents and carers to park safely and considerately when dropping off or picking up children from school. Please allow extra time in your journey to park a little further away and walk, helping to reduce congestion near the school gates.

Please remember that it is **illegal** to park on the yellow zig-zag lines outside the school, as these areas must be kept clear for the safety of our pupils. We also ask that you show courtesy to our neighbours by not blocking driveways or access points.

Thank you for helping us keep our school community safe and respectful.





We have a number of children in school with severe nut allergies.

Please do not send any products containing nuts into school in lunchboxes or as birthday treats.

Thank you.

School Snack Time

Fruit is provided daily, free of charge to children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and 2.

Pupils in Years 3 - 6 are encouraged to bring a healthy snack - fruit or vegetables to eat at break time.



PARENT 'LEARN WITH ME' PHONICS & READING LESSON DATES

Parents are invited to join their children in their phonics / reading lesson in school this half term. Unfortunately, due to limited space in the classrooms, only 1 parent is able to attend with each child and we are not able to accommodate younger siblings as this is disruptive to the children's learning.

Nursery - Wednesday 30th September 9-9.20am **OR** 2.55pm - 3.15pm (Come and join Nursery for story time!)

Reception - Tuesday 6th October at 9am

Year 1 - Wednesday 21st October at 9am

Year 2 - Monday 12th October at 9am

Year 3 - Tuesday 13th October at 9am

Year 4 - Thursday 8th October at 9am

Year 5 - Thursday 15th October at 9am

Year 6 - Wednesday 7th October at 9am



A prayer for the new school year

Lord Jesus,

We ask for Your help as we begin this new school year.

Allow us to experience Your presence in the many blessings You put before us.

Open our eyes to the new challenges and exciting opportunities that this new school year brings.

Open our heart and mind to new friends and new teachers.

Give us a generous spirit to be enthusiastic with our learning and courage to accept new opportunities.

Help us to be attentive to one another and let us experience Your presence in our new friends.

Jesus, inspire us to do our very best throughout this year.

Amen.

Important Dates for your diary...

DATE	EVENT
Tuesday 22 nd September	Year 5 to Mass at St Joseph's Church, Darlaston at 10am. Parents / carers are welcome.
Tuesday 22nd September	Reception Parents are invited to join their children and Fr Craig for a special welcome prayer time in the school hall at 3pm.
Wednesday 23 rd September	Year 6 Macbeth Workshop in school
Wednesday 23rd September	Year 6 Parents Meeting about the Year 6 Residential and SATS 3.30pm - 4.15pm - ALL Year 6 parents are strongly encouraged to attend.
Friday 25 th September	Macmillan Cake sale on the playground from 3.15pm onwards. Donations of cakes to sell gratefully received. Please come along at the end of the day to buy some cakes with your children. Thank you!
Saturday 26th September	School and Family mass at St Joseph's Church, Darlaston at 4pm. All families are welcome. Please let the school office know if your child would like to be involved in helping to lead the liturgy by reading.
Tuesday 29th September	Year 4 to Mass at St Joseph's Church, Darlaston at 10am. Parents / carers are welcome
Tuesday 29th September	Reception Phonics Information Meeting for Parents at 3.25pm
Tuesday 29th September	Nearly New Uniform available in the school hall for parents - all items free
Tuesday 29th September	Allergy Awareness Assembly for pupils

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

'Guided by Jesus, learning together, striving for excellence'



Wednesday 30 th September	Rockit Music Assembly for pupils
Thursday 1 st October	National Poetry Day
Friday 2 nd October	Carbon Monoxide Safety workshops for Year 2 and Year 5
Monday 5th October	Nursery Parents Phonics Information Meeting at 9am OR 3pm
Tuesday 6 th October	Year 3 to Mass at St Joseph's Church, Darlaston at 10am. Parents / carers are welcome
Tuesday 6th October	Reception Class 'Learn with Me' Phonics for parents at 9am
Wednesday 7th October	Year 1 Parents Phonics Meeting at 3pm - Come and find out about the National Phonics Test Year 1 pupils are required to take in Year 1.
Thursday 8 th October	Year 5 & 6 visit from local police officers
Friday 9th October	Year 6 Class Assembly for parents & carers at 9am
Friday 9 th October	Year 5 & 6 Anti- Racism workshops
Monday 12 th October	Year 2 Class 'Learn with Me' Reading for parents at 9am
Tuesday 13 th October	Year 3 Class 'Learn with Me' Reading for parents at 9am
Wednesday 14th October	Baptism Information Coffee Morning at 9am for parents & carers who want to know more about their child being baptised into the Catholic church.
Thursday 15 th October	Year 4 Outdoor Adventurous visit to Woodlands
Thursday 15th October	Year 5 Class 'Learn with Me' Reading for parents at 9am
Friday 16th October	Come to school in brightly coloured own clothes - bring in donations of tinned/ packets of food for our Harvest celebration. Thank you! Harvest Mass in school at 2.15pm - parents and carers welcome.
Wednesday 21st October	Year 1 Class 'Learn with Me' Phonics for parents at 9am
Thursday 22nd October	Parents Evening appointments with class teachers between 2pm - 6pm. All appointments must be booked in advance.
Friday 23 rd October	Break up for half term!
Monday 26 th October - Friday 30 th October	School closed for half term holiday.
Monday 2 nd November	School re-opens to all pupils.