



Monday 1st December 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

The weeks are flying by and school gets increasing busy as we approach Christmas. The children are working incredibly hard in their lessons across the curriculum and in preparing for their upcoming Christmas Nativity plays and Carol Service. We hope many of you and your families will be able to join us for these special performances.

The Season of Advent

Advent is the first season in the Liturgical Year of the Church. It starts on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day. In school and in church, we use an Advent Wreath to help us count down the weeks to the celebration of Jesus' birth. The four candles of Advent represent the four Sundays of Advent, and they respectively symbolize hope, peace, joy, and love. In some homes and parishes, people will also light a fifth candle on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day to represent the birth of Jesus; this candle, when added to the Advent wreath, is typically white and larger than the other candles and is placed in the centre of the wreath.

During the 1st two weeks of Advent, the Scripture readings focus on the Christian belief that Christ will come again and how we need to be ready for that. We use words and phrases like 'Awake' and 'Be Ready'. The 2nd two weeks focus on Advent as a time during which we get ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus. As a season of preparation, it is also a time when we reflect upon how we live our lives and we seek forgiveness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, which enables us to start afresh.



Advent Appeal - Donations to Food Banks

Throughout Advent we will be collecting donations of kettle meals (e.g. Pot Noodles), chocolates, new socks and small toiletries to be given to those in need this Christmas. Members of the Mini Vinnies will meet together with parishioners and other Youth SVP and Mini-Vinnie school groups from across the parish to pack these and write Christmas Cards on Monday 15th December.



What's been going on in school recently?

In addition to all the fantastic learning in our classrooms, we have also been learning outside the classroom; here are a few of the highlights from the last few weeks...

Our Year 4 pupils demonstrated exceptional musical talent and comportment during the Walsall Schools Music Christmas Concert 'Once Upon a Christmas'. They sang magnificently, and their behaviour was impeccable. I extend my gratitude to the parents who attended and supported our young performers.

During Anti-Bullying Week, we participated in Odd Sock Day, which provided a valuable opportunity for our pupils to explore the critical themes of bullying prevention, understanding its nature, and learning appropriate responses should such situations arise.

Our curriculum has been enriched through engaging Design & Technology experiences across various classes. Pupils have been exploring practical skills, including sandwich making, bread baking, sewing, and soup preparation, which offer hands-on learning opportunities.

Cycling and bicycle safety have been prominent themes recently. A group of Year 3 pupils successfully completed the 'Learn to Ride' programme with Walsall Council, mastering bicycle riding without stabilisers within our school grounds. Year 4 participated in a 'Bike Fix' workshop, learning essential maintenance skills such as puncture repair. Our Year 6 pupils commenced Level 1 Bikeability training, though their Level 2 training was postponed due to inclement weather. We will communicate the rescheduled date to parents in due course.

Our Year 5 pupils enjoyed an educational visit to the National Space Centre in Leicester, which significantly enhanced their scientific understanding and provided an immersive learning experience.

As a diocesan school, we recently joined staff and students from across the Archdiocese in a live-streamed prayer and reflection session focusing on the Jubilee Year: Pilgrims of Hope. Although this Jubilee Year approaches its conclusion, we remain committed to our school mission of "Guided by Jesus, Learning Together, Striving for Excellence" and the Mission of the Archdiocese: "Forming Christ-centred pilgrims of hope with kind hearts, questioning minds, a thirst for knowledge and a hunger for justice."

Our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) parents were warmly welcomed to a special Advent Stay & Pray event last week. This beautiful occasion allowed parents, grandparents, staff, and children to participate in a meaningful prayer time, followed by engaging craft activities. Parents of pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 will have similar opportunities to join their children for Stay & Pray events, with specific dates detailed at the end of this newsletter.



EYFS & KS1 Nativity Plays & KS2 Carol Service

As we approach our Nativity Plays and Christmas Carol Concerts, I kindly request parents' cooperation in supporting our performers. These events take significant preparation and result in potential nervousness for our children and staff. To ensure a positive experience for all, I recommend:

- Arriving in good time
- Watching performances quietly
- Switching mobile phones to silent
- Watching the entire performance/service
- Encouraging ALL children, not just your own
- Remaining seated to avoid disrupting performances or blocking other parents' views

These considerations will help create a supportive and respectful environment for our young performers.

Nativity Plays

Nursery, Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 retell the story of the birth of Jesus in their own special way.

Monday 8th December at 2pm

Tuesday 9th December at 9.30am

Wednesday 10th December at 9.30am

Teachers are currently processing Nativity ticket requests and your tickets should be with you in the next few days. Please remember to bring along your tickets to the performances. Numbers of parents allowed at each performance are limited for Health and Safety reasons due to fire regulations.

KS2 Carol Service

KS2 Pupils (Years 3 - 6) will lead a Carol Service at St Joseph's Catholic Church, Darlaston on **Tuesday 16th December at 2pm**. Families are warmly encouraged to attend, no tickets are necessary. Come along and listen to the children's beautiful singing ... there will also be a chance to join in with a few carols yourselves too!



WOLVES SLEEPOUT!



I am immensely proud to celebrate an extraordinary act of community service. Seven members of our St Joseph's staff, alongside colleagues and students from St Thomas More Catholic School and Fr Craig, participated in the Molineux sleepout. Their remarkable efforts raised over £2,000 for The Good Shepherd Wolverhampton and the Wolves Foundation, supporting homeless and vulnerable individuals. We were the top fundraisers of the event, and I extend heartfelt thanks to everyone who offered encouragement and made donations.



  

BLESSING of the BAMBINELLI

At all weekend Masses on the 13th & 14th December we will bless baby Jesus crib figures

The beautiful Advent Tradition, 'Bambinelli Sunday', was instituted by Saint Pope John Paul II during his Papacy.

The tradition follows that on the Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday) children and adults bring their Baby Jesus figures from their homes to St. Peters Square where they are blessed by the Pope.

So on the 3rd Sunday of Advent everyone is invited to bring their own baby Jesus crib figures to Mass that day to be blessed. It can be one you've made or one that you usually use each year.

A suggestion is, following the blessing, that you take your 'Bambinelli' home, wrap it and open it on Christmas morning where the youngest member of the family would place it in the crib.



Dates for your diary...

DATE	EVENT
Monday 1 st December	Key Stage Two Online Safety Assembly with Walsall Council. Parents of pupils in Years 3 - 6 are invited to attend.
Tuesday 2 nd December	Whole School Advent Mass in school at 2.30pm - Parents & carers welcome
Wednesday 3 rd December	Year 2 DT Day
Wednesday 3 rd December	Year 3 & 4 Advent Stay & Pray for Parents & Carers at 2.45pm
Thursday 4 th December	Year 1 - Year 6 Theatre Visit to The Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton to watch Sleeping Beauty. Please note, pupils will need to be collected late from school on this day. (In previous years this has been approx. 5.30pm but we await more information from the theatre about the running time of the show, nearer to the time)
Friday 5 th December	Own Clothes Day - Children are asked to donate items to make our Christmas Fair a big success! EYFS & KS1 pupils - Donations of Christmas chocolate please (Selection boxes, boxes / bars / tubs of chocolate) KS2 pupils - Donations of bottles for the Bottle Tombola - full ones please! - Alcohol, fizzy drinks, squash etc.
Monday 8 th December	EYFS & KS1 Nativity for Parents at 2pm
Tuesday 9 th December	EYFS & KS1 Nativity for Parents at 9.30am
Wednesday 10 th December	EYFS & KS1 Nativity for Parents at 9.30am
Tuesday 9 th December	Year 5 & 6 Advent Stay & Pray for Parents & Carers at 2.45pm
Wednesday 10 th December	Christmas Dinner Day!
Thursday 11 th December	Year 1 DT Day
Friday 12 th December	Christmas Dress up day - come to school in your Christmas jumper/ dress/ t-shirt or just with a bit of tinsel in your hair or a Santa hat on! Y4 pupils will be singing at the Senior Citizens Christmas Party at St Thomas More school on this day and staying for lunch. More details to follow. St Joseph's School & Parish Christmas Fair 3.30pm - 4.30pm. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Please come along and support this event after school in the hall.
Saturday 13 th December	Bambinelli Mass, 4pm at St. Joseph's, Darlaston. All families are very welcome. Children are encouraged to take along the Bambinelli (Little Baby Jesus figure) they have made to Mass. The figures will be blessed by Fr Craig during the Mass. Please let the school office know if your child will be attending the mass and would like to read.
Monday 15 th December	Nursery & Reception Christmas Visit to Tanglewood
Monday 15 th December	Year 1 & 2 Advent Stay & Pray for Parents & Carers at 2.45pm
Tuesday 16 th December	KS2 Carol Service in St Joseph's Church, Darlaston at 2pm. Families, parishioners and friends welcome
Wednesday 17 th December	Christmas Craft afternoon



Thursday 18 th December	Class Christmas Parties during the afternoon-Children to wear uniform to school but they may bring 'party clothes' or Christmas outfits with them in a bag to change into after lunch.
Friday 19 th December	Christmas Culture Day - children are encouraged to come to school wearing something that reflects their own culture e.g. national dress, colours of the flag etc. A day to celebrate our differences and be proud of our cultural background! On this day the children will spend time learning about Christmas celebrations around the world. Break up for Christmas!
Monday 5 th January	School closed to pupils - Staff Training Day
Tuesday 6 th January	School re-opens to pupils for the Spring Term