

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL
NEWSLETTER
FEBRUARY 2024



CANDLEMAS AND LENT

On 2nd February, we celebrated Candlemas when we remember when Jesus was presented at the temple. Father John from St Joseph's Church blessed our class candles at a Mass celebration and helped the children understand that we renew and bless our class candles to remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World.

"Lent is a significant period for many Christians worldwide. It lasts for six weeks and prepares people for the celebration of Easter, in a similar way that Advent leads up to Christmas. Although Advent is a time of celebration and eager anticipation, Lent is typically observed with solemnity and preparation for commemorating Jesus' death and resurrection at Easter. From Ash Wednesday until Easter Sunday, it has been customary to fast or abstain from something. Much like how we prepare for significant events in our personal lives, such as weddings or birthdays, Lent calls for us to ready our minds and hearts to remember the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus."

We have prepared for Lent in school by making Lenten promises. We have placed them in a book to keep on our prayer table and we can remind ourselves of what we have promised to do.

Can you do something this Lent to help another person or to be extra kind to someone?

STAFFING NEWS

We have four new members of staff this term: Miss Nicholls and Mrs Davis have joined our Pre-School team, and Mrs Giles and Mrs Scordo will be working with our Midday Supervisors. We welcome them to St Joseph's and look forward to working with them all.

LENT FUNDRAISING - CAFOD

We are joining with St Edward's Junior School in raising funds for CAFOD during Lent. We will be holding non-uniform days on Fridays during Lent (23rd February, 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd March) to raise money to help people across the world feed their families. This is a voluntary event in exchange for a donation.

You can find out more information on the link below – contributions can be made directly to CAFOD or brought into school and placed in the CAFOD collection boxes.

<https://cafod.org.uk/give/appeals/lent-appeal>

EXCITING NEWS – A MESSAGE FROM POPE FRANCIS

We are delighted to announce that the children in Breakfast and After School received a reply from Pope Francis following their letter to send him Christmas greetings.

'The Holy father is grateful for the kind greetings sent to him for Christmas and the New Year. He prays that Jesus our Lord will pour out his blessings of joy and peace upon all the young people of the world and he sends his blessing.'

READING AWARDS (Reception and KS1)

The children are very excited about getting their Reading Merit awards. Please help your child collect their merit stamps by reading with them as much as you can.

WORLD BOOK DAY AT ST JOSEPH'S

As part of our commitment to developing your child's love for literacy and reading we are celebrating WORLD BOOK DAY at St Joseph's on Friday 8th March.

More information to follow.

PROMPT START TO THE SCHOOL DAY AND COLLECTIONS

We have noticed a growing number of late arrivals and whilst we appreciate the traffic in the town is a serious issue, it is vital that children are not missing the first part of the day. We are keen to reduce lateness and we will be following up with parents where there is persistent lateness.

1) Pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 must arrive in school by 8.45 am.

Lessons start promptly at 8.45 am - we open the doors for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 for a staggered drop-off at 8.40 am to allow all children to be in place for the start of school. Lessons begin after registration at 8.45 am.

The School day ends at 3.15 pm and children will be released from class when the 3.15 pm bell rings.

2) Pre-School gates open at 8.40-8.50 for morning drop-off, and at 11.40 or 12.10 for lunchtime/afternoon drop-off.

Children are dismissed at either 11.40 am or 3.10 pm.

EARLY COLLECTIONS

If you need to collect your child early for any reason you must inform the school office and state the reason. This should be via email, telephone call or written note at the earliest opportunity. You must also state who is collecting your child. Please collect your child via the school office. Your child will be brought to you – please understand this may sometimes take a short while as adults need to be freed from class to bring your child to you.

Your support is greatly appreciated with the above - it helps safety and the smooth running of the school and Pre-School.

REPORTING ABSENCE (SCHOOL AND PRE-SCHOOL)

A reminder that it is important that you contact the school office at the start of the day on the first day of any absence, and then continue to keep in regular contact if the absence continues. Please use the Absence tab on your ParentMail account to send the school office a message. Alternatively, the school office 24 hour answerphone service is also available for reporting your child's absence.

Our Attendance Policy has recently been reviewed by the Local Academy Committee of Governors and can be viewed on the school website under Our School, Policies tab

<https://www.stjosephsrcinfant.bucks.sch.uk/our-school/policies/>

LIP BALMS IN CLASS

An increasing number of children are bringing lip balms in to school. Please can you make sure these have your child's name on and remind your child that they should not be sharing their lip balm with other children. If we feel a child is not able to use this responsibly we will request they do not bring it to school.

CHILD ILLNESS

It is essential for adult and children's health and wellbeing that pupils should be absent from school for 48 hours from the last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting if the cause is known to be viral or is unknown.

We have also had cases of specific illnesses including chicken pox, scarlet fever, slapped cheek (parvovirus 19) and hand, foot and mouth reported to us before half term.

It is very important that you make sure we have up to date contact numbers to reach parents or a named emergency contact should a child become ill during the school day.

BIRTHDAY TREATS

For Health & Safety reasons, please do not give children sweets, chocolates or cake to bring into school for class birthday treats. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

Birthdays are celebrated in class in Pre-School and during the weekly Star Awards assembly in school where we have the 'Birthday Bench'.

GOOD TRAVEL PLAN AWARD 2024 – MODESHIFT STARS

We are delighted that St Joseph's school has been awarded **Good Travel Plan 2024** by Modeshift STARS for our continued work on the school travel plan.

Well done everyone - we have achieved this fantastic award by working together and your support of our school travel plan.

Let's keep up the great work to reduce parking congestion and pollution from cars, and continue to choose to travel actively when we can. Thank you to all parents, carers, staff and pupils who have supported us in our campaign to help keep children active and safe on the journey to and from school.



Keep fit on the school run!

Why not walk, cycle, scoot or park and walk some or all of the journey to school?

5 minute Walking Zone Maps

Walking is a great way to get to school. If you live too far away or don't have time to walk the whole way to school, have you considered **Park and Stride**. Why not park your car further away from school and walk the last part of the journey?

As we head towards the Spring and better weather, walking is a great way to get to school. If you live too far away or don't have time to walk the whole way to school, have you considered **Park and Stride**.

Our Walking Zone display map at the front of the school shows the 5-10 minute walking zone from our school.

Please remind your child to complete the interactive WOW Travel Tracker in class (Year R, 1 and 2) for their journey to count towards the monthly WOW (Walk once a Week) badge.

PARKING ISSUES

Once again despite many reminders and letters we still watch cars trying to turn in the short space in front of the site gates on Hazell Avenue. There are only a few people who now do this and repeat offenders are being reported. This behaviour causes difficulties for drivers needing to access the school, prevents emergency vehicles attending the site swiftly and is a real danger to pedestrians as cars frequently mount the pavement when turning.

We do appreciate that traffic and parking are real issues, and this is the same outside all schools. Ours is particularly dangerous because we are situated at the end of a cul-de-sac with no turning space. The road signs advise this but many road users choose to ignore the message.

Our good news is that, according to the Walton Matters flier - the Junction protection markings and school zig-zags have been approved for Hazell Avenue, Turnfurlong Lane and Ramworth Way.

We hope this will deter people parking in this area and enable local police and highways to enforce penalties on those drivers who drive dangerously. We do not yet have a date for the work to be carried out but we are hoping it will be as soon as the weather improves.

Authorised vehicles only are allowed on school grounds at any time.

TERM DATES

School returns: Monday 19th February 2024

Last day of Spring Term: Thursday 28th March 2024

School Returns: Monday 15th April 2024