

St. Joseph's Primary School
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Dear Parents,

Welcome back to this new school year and a new term. I hope you all had a great holiday and a very enjoyable summer with your children. It is lovely to see all the children back, enthusiastic and excited as they settle into their new classes and meet their new teachers. We extend a big welcome to our new parents, children and staff this term. We hope it won't be long before they feel very much a part of our school.

Over the summer break we have had both our playgrounds completely resurfaced. The school was very lucky to receive funding in the form of a grant for this work to take place. The car park is also being resurfaced and this work will continue for the next couple of weeks. Old fascia boards on the building have been replaced also. We are delighted with all the works and know that the end result will be a safer and greatly enhanced environment for everyone. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your understanding whilst all these works are in progress. Parking and entry to the school are not easy at the moment but we have to remember that it will be a super job when it is completed.

And so, with many new and exciting things happening, we embrace another term. We hope that it will be a rewarding one for all our staff and pupils. We ask God for his guidance and strength as we begin a new academic year with all the joys and challenges it brings.

We also welcome our new Reception children.

Stella Bellini

Felix Elson

Georgiana Galea

Dylan Henderson

Alolonia Raszewska

Daisy Sullivan

Patrick Brady

Mae Farley

Antoni Gutysz

Michaela Kinsella

Shannon Rooney

Ben Walton

They all look so smart in their new uniform and we hope they settle in very quickly indeed.

Beginning of Term Mass

There will be a Mass to celebrate the beginning of term. This will take place on Friday 12th September at 9:15a.m in the school hall. You are all very welcome to attend.

Welcome Assembly

We will have a special assembly to welcome our new reception children into school. This will take place on Thursday 25th September at 9:15a.m. Their Year 6 'Buddies' will have the opportunity to introduce their new child to all the other children and welcome them into our school community. We hope you can attend this assembly.

We also hope that our new Nursery children will be very happy and enjoy the wonderful opportunities afforded by our Nursery.

Dinner Money

The dinner money from this term is £1.75 per day which equates to £8.75 per week.

Many parents find it is convenient to pay for the half term. If you choose to do this please come to the school office. I would like to remind parents that if their child/children wish to change from lunches to dinners, or vice versa, then the normal six week/half term notice applies.

Morning Drop-off/End of the School Day

As many of you will have already realised, the format for dropping your children off in the morning has changed. We now ask that children are dropped at the sign in the Junior Playground rather than walking them round to the School Garden. Not only does this ease congestion but it also ensures that the children are on the playground when the whistle blows.

Having said this, there are still a small number of children who do not actually make their way onto the playground until the whistle has been blown. Could I ask that you make sure that your child is on the playground before 8:50am so as to ensure that they can be taken into their classes by their class teacher with the rest of the children.

There are two members of staff on duty from 8:40 am so you can be sure that they are properly supervised from this time.

On a similar theme, can I also ask the parents of children in years 4, 5 and 6 to ensure that the classroom door is left free for children to leave the classroom at the end of the school day. This also refers to younger siblings who should wait with their parents on the main body of the Junior playground and should not be allowed onto the school field or in the school garden at the end of the day.

Traffic Congestion at school gates!

Could I please remind you that parking is **NOT** permitted in front of the school gate. This is extremely dangerous, especially if any emergency was to occur in school. Could I please urge you to park further down the road and not block access to the school at any time. It is important that we show consideration to our neighbours in Trinity Lane and Royal Avenue.

Thank you for your help with this issue.

Uniform

Due to the recent re-organisation of resources in the school, school uniform will no longer be kept near to the school office. We therefore ask that all orders be made from Monday through to Thursday so that the office staff have time to make them up. All orders will then be sent home with the children on Friday. We ask that, where possible you send in orders and money with your child in an envelope marked 'School Office—Uniform'. Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

As always, our children have started the term looking really smart. Thank you again for presenting them so well. We (you) are always commended by neighbours and visitors on the smartness of our children in their uniforms. I know you as parents appreciate this too. It is essential that clothing is clearly labelled with your child's name, and that your child also realises that he/she must be responsible for his/her own clothes.

Some of the children have purchased a reversible waterproof/fleece jacket that you were informed of last term. If, having seen how fabulous these jackets look (and how adaptable they are for the British weather!), you would like to purchase one of these jackets (price - £14) simply contact the school office and we will place an order before half-term. There are a few of each size in stock in school but they are going like hot cakes...so grab one while you can!

Jewellery/Dress Code

Can I just take this opportunity to remind all parents that children are not permitted to wear jewellery other than stud earrings.

Additionally, wrist bands and bracelets are not allowed to be worn.

Nail polish and hair gel is not an accessory to the school uniform. I would also ask that all hair bands and bows are in school colours.

Our uniform policy and dress code request that pupils do not come into school with hairstyles such as lines, zigzags and colourings.

PE

Can I just remind you that PE is an integral part of the National Curriculum and at St. Joseph's it has always been viewed as one of the most important subjects of the curriculum since it promotes so many positive values to our young people. In light of this, if your child is unable to take part in a PE lesson for any reason it is vital that you inform the class teacher of this with a note on the day of the PE lesson that is going to be missed. Similarly, we will inform you if your child misses a PE lesson for any reason since we are sure that you are fully supportive of our stance on this issue.

Medical Matters

As this is the beginning of the school year, could all parents of children suffering from any medical conditions please inform us of all the relevant details as it is necessary to update our records on a regular basis. This does not apply to all existing children with allergies and asthma.

Could we please remind all parents that due to school policy, staff or children cannot administer any medication during school time apart from the epi-pen in an emergency and inhalers. If your child requires medication during the course of the school day, you must make arrangements to visit the school and administer the medication yourself. Please inform the class teacher and contact the school office if this is the case.

Secondary Transfer

The parents of those children in Year 6 recently received their *Moving On* booklets. Please ensure that you are aware of the various Open Evenings and ensure that you follow the guidance in the booklets. Also, please be aware that we cannot provide guidance or advice on this matter.

Absence

The Law (Education Regulations 1981) allows the school to grant leave of absence for a maximum of two weeks for a child to take part in an annual family holiday. Parents need to request this permission and the school can refuse to give its approval.

In general, holidays during term time disrupt your child's education and they inevitably miss part of the curriculum which will not be repeated. For these reasons, we ask you to think seriously before committing yourself to a holiday during term time. Please put all requests for approval of an absence in writing, prior to the absence taking place.

If your child is absent from school, could you please make sure that the school office is informed as soon as possible. In addition to this, please provide written confirmation of your child's absence to the class teacher.

ICT

Once again, the beginning of a new academic year at St. Joseph's sees our ICT provision going from strength to strength. Our ICT suite is now at full capacity containing 32 PCs which means that all of the children can work independently to develop their ICT skills during whole class lessons in the suite. Along with the other machines available throughout the school we now have a computer to every 3.5 children in the school...if you can have half of a child!! As well as this, all classes now have a visualiser to assist with the delivery of all areas of the curriculum. If you are unsure what a visualiser is...just ask your children!

As always, with the ongoing developments in ICT and its use in the workplace of the 21st century, it is vital that we continue to provide our children with the best possible opportunities to develop their ICT skills in a wide range of curriculum areas.

School Website

As mentioned towards the end of term, our newly revamped bobbydazzler of a website is currently under reconstruction and should be available to access by the end of this month.

When the website is up and running we would really appreciate your feedback on it, in terms of structure, accessibility and content. In order to assist with this we will send out a short questionnaire once the website has been operational for a few weeks. You never know...you might even be able to do it on-line!!

Broxbourne in Bloom

Our School Garden is one of the most loved areas of St. Joseph's and the way that it has developed over the last 4-5 years is a tribute to the hard work of a lot of members (both past and present!) of our school community.

Once again this year, our garden reached the final stages of the judging for *Broxbourne In Bloom* (an award that we have won three trimes in the last four years!). This year, we were 'pipped (apples probably!) at the post' by another local school which has recently opened its garden. We congratulate the winners but warn them that we want our title back this year!! Of course, we don't have a School Garden to win competitions, this is simply a bonus...the real winners are the children (and all members of the school community) who can enjoy the beauty and tranquillity of our garden throughout the course of the year.

As well as our success in *Broxbourne In Bloom* we were also awarded a Gold medal by the London Children's Flower Society for our School Garden/Grounds....it feels like the Olympics all over again!!

A special mention should go to the Gardening Committee for their efforts in maintaining the School Garden. Particular mention should go to Mrs. Baker and Mr. Casey who bring a great deal of expertise to our efforts in the garden as well as dedicating a huge amount of their own time to its maintenance. We really appreciate all their help and support.

Any new recruits to the Gardening Committee are more than welcome!

Parent Consultations

Parent Consultations for the Autumn term will take place on Friday 24th October from 1:15pm - 3:30pm and then from 4:00pm - 6:30pm. You will be able to book a slot for these consultations in the usual fashion from Friday 17th October.

The class teachers really welcome this opportunity to discuss your child's progress at this early stage in the year and we find that these 'discussions' are mutually beneficial. Due to the nature of these consultations it is important that the time slots are adhered to and we ask for your co-operation in this matter. If you feel that you would like a little more time to discuss an issue that may arise, could you please make an appointment to speak with your child's teacher at a mutually agreed later date. A variety of your children's books will be available to view on the day.

After School Clubs

All clubs started this week (week commencing 8th September) and further clubs will be introduced during the course of the year. Days and times of clubs are as follows:

Tuesday

Netball (Y6) - 3:35 - 4:20/4:30 (depending on daylight)

Wednesday

Dance (Year 1 - Autumn Term) - 3:40 - 4:20

Thursday

Football (Y5/6) - 3:40 - 4:15/30 (depending on daylight)

Gymnastics (Year - 4 Autumn Term) - 3:40 - 4:30pm

You will receive further information regarding the above from those teachers responsible for running the clubs. Many thanks to them all! If your child does attend one of these clubs, could you please ensure that they are collected promptly at the end of the session.

Special Class Events/Performances

You will be receiving a comprehensive list of events for the term shortly so that you can fill up those calendars and diaries.

Although the term has barely begun we are thinking ahead to all the wonderful things that will be happening during the course of the year. As in recent years, we have decided to spread the celebrations throughout the year so that all year groups get the chance to celebrate at different times.

Some initial dates for your diaries are as follows:

Y6 Autumn Production - Thursday 16th October (7:00pm)

Y5 Christmas Production - Tuesday 16th December (7:00pm)

Y4 Winter Production - Monday 2nd February (7:00pm)

Y3 Summer Medley Performance (Summer Open Evening) - Wednesday 8th July (Time to be confirmed)

Y2 Spring Festival - Friday 1st May (2:00pm)

Y1 Easter Production - Thursday 2nd April (2:00pm)

Foundation Stage Christmas Production - Tuesday 9th December (2:00pm)

Foundation Stage Easter Breakfast - Friday 24th April (11:00am)

We are sure that you will want to be present at the event being staged by your child/children and we look forward to seeing you at them. Further details to follow!!

Term Dates

Academic Year 2008/9

Autumn Term 2008

Monday 1st September - School closed for INSET Day
Tuesday 2nd September - School closed for INSET Day
Wednesday 3rd September - First day of Autumn Term
Friday 19th December - Last day of Autumn term
Friday 24th October - School closes at 1:00pm for Half Term
Half Term - Monday 27th October - Friday 31st October
Return - Monday 3rd November

Spring Term 2009

Monday 5th January - INSET day - school closed
Tuesday 6th January - first day of Spring Term
Friday 13th February - school closes normal time for Half Term
Monday 16th Feb. - Friday 20th Feb. - Half Term
Monday 23rd Feb - return to school
Friday 3rd April - last day of term - school closes 2.00pm

Summer Term 2009

Monday 20th April - first day of Summer term
Monday 4th May - Bank Holiday - school closed
Thursday 21st May - school closes normal time for Half Term
Friday 22nd May - INSET day
Monday 25th May - Friday 29th May - Half Term
Monday 1st June 2009 - return to school
Friday 17th July - last day of term - school closes 2.00pm
Monday 20th July - INSET day - school closed
Tuesday 21st July - Occasional day - school closed