

Dear Parents,

The Autumn term is flying by and already we are hearing Christmas carols and hymns being practiced in the school hall. Where does the time go? It has been a very busy and exciting term so far at St. Joseph's. Children and teachers have all settled into their new classes and new topics and displays are clearly evident.

As always, we work hard at St. Joseph's to ensure each child achieves the best they can. Many of you will have seen the Sunday Times newspaper this week and the top 50 state primary schools in the country. We are delighted to be placed eighth in the country and the highest in Hertfordshire. A very big thank you must go to all the staff for their hard work and dedication and to our Governing Body who continue to set challenging targets for our school.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you, the parents, for your continued support in all that we try to achieve at St. Joseph's.

Remembrance Service

It was lovely that so many of you were able to attend our 'Remembrance' Prayer service led by some of our Year 2 children on Tuesday 11th November. It is at this time we remember all the deceased members of our school community, especially our lovely Sorochi Ezeakachi.

Foundation Stage

The Foundation Stage Christmas Production will take place on Tuesday 9th December at 2:00p.m. in the School hall. All parents are warmly welcomed to this event which is one of the most eagerly awaited of the whole year!

Nursery Christmas parties for morning and afternoon children will take place on Tuesday 15th December

Parent consultations for nursery parents will take place on Tuesday 2nd and Wednesday 3rd December from 3:45p.m. to 5:30p.m. and 6p.m. to 8p.m.

Sunday 30th November - Christmas Fayre

This year, to avoid possible clashes with other local schools, the Christmas Fayre is taking place on Sunday 30th November. The PFA have been very busy organising the event and each class have been busy creating some marvellous Christmas treats for you to buy! The Fayre starts at 12 noon and runs until 3:00pm....and remember that Santa is here for all of our girls and boys....not mums and dads, I'm afraid!! Such events fund the wonderful resources that benefit our school so much. We look forward to seeing you on the day....forget the credit crunch for a few hours!!!

Sponsored Bounce

As always, the Sponsored Bounce was a wonderful success and the children raised a terrific amount of money whilst having fun into the bargain!! Thank you for supporting this event and helping to raise money to benefit your children in the future.

Fireworks Display

The Firework Display organised by the PFA was a fabulous success and a great time was had by all who attended! Many thanks to the PFA for thinking of the idea and then planning it with military precision so that everyone was safe whilst enjoying the dazzling display! Well done to all of those children (and parents!) who made a guy and thank you to Mr Plank and his helpers for putting on such a wonderful display...it truly was a 'Bobbydazzler'!!!

CAFOD Assembly

On Monday 10th November we had a special assembly in school when two visitors from CAFOD came and talked to the children about their work around the world. This was a marvellous opportunity for our children to think about those children in less fortunate circumstances than themselves and to appreciate how lucky they are in comparison. As well as the assembly, the children then presented CAFOD with a cheque for £500 to support their work in other countries.

Other Faiths Week

At the beginning of this month the children enjoyed a week in which they undertook a variety of lessons on the theme of Judaism and the Jewish Faith. Each Key Stage had a special assembly and the feedback from both teachers and children alike was very positive. At St. Joseph's. we feel that it is vital that we provide our children with a good understanding of other faiths so that they can appreciate the beliefs and traditions of others in the community.

Sport Update

Just before half-term, our football team played their second fixture of the season against St. Clements School. Our Year 6 team drew 1-1 in a hard-fought game whilst our Year 5 team battled valiantly despite losing.

Just to let you know, both Football and Netball practices will continue throughout the remainder of this term but will finish at 4:20pm due to the lack of light....unless anyone would like to donate some money for floodlights that is!!!

Junior Citizenship - The Crucial Crew

On Friday 21st November, Year 6 are visiting the Young Mariners Base in Cheshunt to attend the annual *Crucial Crew* event. This is a great opportunity for the children to develop a variety of citizenship and 'life' skills in relation to what awaits them as they develop into young adults when they progress onto secondary school. The event is always superbly organised by Hertfordshire County Council and the Emergency Services and the children learn a great deal in a very short space of time.....just like they do in school every day!!

End of Term Mass

On Friday 19th December there will be an End of Term mass in the School Hall at 9:15am which you are all very welcome to attend. Children to finish early at 2:00pm on this day

ICT—School Website

As you know our new website is now up and running and we are gradually populating more of the pages in the coming months. You can of course read the newsletter via the website now and we would like to hear your thoughts on making this the primary means of accessing the newsletter in the future. As well as this, if you have any other ideas concerning the website, please let us know!

Vouchers Update

Thank you to all of you who have been sending in Morrison's Gardening vouchers in recent weeks. We are currently totalling the final number and will let you know what we have 'purchased' with these vouchers as soon as we know!!

PSHE Week

Our PHSE week has been planned to coincide with *Anti-Bullying Week*. We are very committed to eradicating bullying in all its forms at St. Joseph's and we feel that focused weeks like this certainly bring such issues to the forefront of our minds and help us to address them in a caring and sensitive manner.

Book Fair

The Book Fair will begin on Wednesday 3rd December and runs for a whole week. Each class will have the opportunity to visit the Book Fair during the course of the week and will be assigned a lunchtime when they can purchase books. As well as this, the Book Fair will be open every evening after school from 3:30pm—4:00pm. Every book purchased will contribute to free books that the school obtains....if only it was like that at the supermarket!!!

Saints Day

As you already know, we held a special *Saints Day* at St. Joseph's on Wednesday 19th November in which the children came dressed as a particular Saint for the day. The children have been learning about different Saints in their class lessons and we felt that with all their hard work and research we should celebrate with an assembly to make this day extra-special. The outfits were absolutely superb....a big thank you for supporting the children in this—days like these are very memorable for our children indeed!

SATS Week

Although we are only in November, I would like to take this opportunity to give you a reminder that the National Curriculum tests for Year 6 are due to take place in the week commencing Monday 12th May 2008. A full timetable will be sent out to Year 6 parents closer to the time of the tests. Of course, it is vital that all Year 6 children are present during the week of the tests, but of equal importance is good attendance in the weeks and months leading up to the week of the tests. It is pleasing to note that many Year 6 children currently have excellent attendance and we hope that this continues throughout the year.

Parent Consultations

It was good to see so many of you at the recent parent consultations. It is important to build up good lines of communication between school and home so that any issues or areas for development are recognised and supported early on. If you missed these meetings then please make an appointment to see the class teacher as soon as possible this term.

Christmas Post Box

The school Christmas Post Box will be ready to receive the children's mail from Monday 1st December for Christmas cards. However this year we have decided to change the way that the Post Box works. Rather than the children sending individual cards to each child in their class via the Post Box, we are asking them to use it as a means of sending one card to their own class or other classes and members of staff. If they wish to send individual cards, these should be distributed by hand. The reason behind this is two-fold. Firstly, distributing individual cards to children/classes was a huge task and involved a lot of hard work and time and it will be much quicker and easier to distribute the 'class' cards. In addition to this, it could also save you time and money....what a bonus!!

Orchestra Assembly

As always, our School Orchestra have been working very hard in the weekly early morning sessions with Mr Kinton and Miss Gunn and we will have the opportunity to see (or should that be hear?!) the fruits of their efforts at a special Orchestra Assembly on Wednesday 3rd December at 9:30 am. Parents of those children are invited to attend...as indeed are any other music-loving parents! We look forward to another musical treat from our gifted musicians!

Parent Governor Election

We are delighted to welcome Mrs Hayes onto the Governing Body after recently being elected Parent Governor of St. Joseph's School. We hope she will enjoy the opportunity to work with our wonderful Governing Body in continuing to make St. Joseph's a truly wonderful school.

Year 5 Christmas Production

Year 5 are currently busy preparing for their Christmas Production which will take place on Tuesday 16th December at 7:00p.m. All Year 5 parents are welcome. Children younger than Year 5 age are not permitted to attend this evening event so please make alternative arrangements for them.

Wednesday 17th December - School Christmas Dinner!

Children will finish early on this day at 2:00pm

Please note that if your child currently takes packed lunch, they can be included in school dinners for this week so that they can have Christmas dinner together.

There will be no afternoon Nursery on this day.

Academic Year 2008/9

Friday 19th December - Last day of Autumn term

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