

# St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School February 2010



What a marvellous occasion our ICT Open Evening was as we celebrated our achievement in obtaining ICT Mark accreditation.

## Term Dates

### Spring Term 2010

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February – school closes normal time for Half Term

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> Feb. – Friday 19<sup>th</sup> Feb. – Half Term

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2010 – return to school

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April – last day of Term – school closes at 2.00pm

### Summer Term 2010

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April – first day Summer Term

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> May – Bank Holiday – school closed

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May – school closes normal time for Half Term

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2010 – INSET Day – school closed

Monday 31<sup>st</sup> May – Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2010 – Half Term

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2010 – return to school

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2010 – last day of Term – school closes 2.00pm

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2010 – INSET Day – school closed

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2010 – Occasional Day – school closed

One more INSET Day to be confirmed

### Autumn Term 2010

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September school closed for INSET Day

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September school closed for INSET Day

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September first day of the Autumn Term

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December last day of the Autumn Term – school closes

2:00p.m

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October school closes normal time for half term

(Half Term Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October – Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October)

Return Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2010

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Dear Parents,

What an exciting and busy month this has been at St. Joseph's. After a rather wobbly start to the term with heavy snowfall and school closures we sure made up for any lost time! Apologies for this newsletter being a few days late but February has just flown by and we are all just catching our breath at St. Joseph's after a very eventful few weeks!

Towards the end of January I was delighted to have been chosen as a National Leader in Education. This position will afford me great opportunities to bring many more new and exciting ideas to St. Joseph's and ensure that we continue to be at the forefront of the most recent developments in education. As a result of this achievement our school is now a recognised 'National Support School'. This in turn means that we are recognised for our outstanding successes in terms of Governance, Leadership, Teaching and Learning and superb resources to name but a few. We are now in a position where we can offer support and guidance to other schools who are currently underachieving.

Last week we also celebrated some wonderful achievements at St. Joseph's. It was a time to reflect and take stock of how far we have come on our ICT journey. In the past 6-7 years we have made such advances in ICT, not only in terms of the resources but in teaching and learning and most importantly in pupil confidence - ensuring that ICT is now an integral part of our curriculum. It was wonderful to see so many of you attend this evening. The children took the lead role and it was clearly their night. What a superb job they did - we, like you were very proud of them indeed. This was also commented on by our county adviser who was very effusive about the confidence and politeness of all of the children who helped on the evening. Our thanks go to all who attended and helped to make the evening so special, including Councillor Lyn White, Mr Charles Walker MP, our school adviser Mr McKeon, colleagues from other schools, governors and of course, last but not least, those parents who were able to share in our success on the evening.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff at St. Joseph's for all their hard work and commitment to this event. It is through their dedication that our school continues to go from strength to strength. Our ICT team deserve special mention. I would like to thank Miss Puccio, Miss Mehmet and Mrs Angelides for continuing to promote and develop the ICT curriculum in our school.

On behalf of all concerned I would like to say a special thank you to Mr Gorton for all he has done, not just for last week but indeed over the past few years to further develop ICT in the school. He deserves great credit for all he has achieved. Our primary colleagues continue to be amazed at the provision we are able to offer here at St. Joseph's and much of that has happened through the persistence and hard work of Mr Gorton.

Many thanks again to you all for your support on the evening, and indeed your continued support of the school. It is very much appreciated. It was wonderful to hear such positive comments on the night from many parents and the written feedback received has indeed been very, very complimentary and positive. It makes the organising of such an evening so worthwhile and we will certainly be considering similar events in the future.



### Buddy Assembly

I hope those of you who were able to attend our 'Buddy' Assembly enjoyed the opportunity to see your child/children formally welcomed into our school community. The new Reception children were introduced and welcomed by the other children in the school. We feel that the Buddy system has been a great success. The younger children have so enjoyed having an older 'Buddy' to chat with and the older children seem to have taken on the responsible role very well indeed.

### Book Week

As in previous years, our Book Fair continues to be a great success. We thank you for supporting the various Book Fairs that we host so well. The school benefits from the sales and the money goes straight towards our school library.

### Mother's Day Treat

On Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March there will be a 'Mother's Day Afternoon Tea' in the School Hall from 3:00pm where any mums, aunts or grandmas can come and enjoy a bit of pampering and a little chat. We look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible for this special treat!

### Haiti Fundraiser

At our recent Mufti day we managed to raise £1000 for the victims of the Haiti earthquake. Many thanks to all of you who contributed and to the boys and girls who even parted with their own pocket money! Many of you may know Sr. Judith Russi, a frequent visitor to our school who helps us with staff training. We are sending the money directly to members of her religious order - Our Lady of Mamur. They are a Belgian order but do work worldwide, and some of the Sisters are based in the Dominican Republic on the border with Haiti. They work in Haiti on a variety of medical and housing projects. We feel that in this way the money is getting directly to the people who need it.

### Art Week

Recently, we had a whole school 'Art Week' from 25<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> January although in some year groups it lasted even longer!!!! This was led by Miss Mehmet and it provided a wonderful opportunity for the children to learn about different artists and then be creative themselves using a range of different media. It was a very successful week and some samples of the work are in the School Hall on display for all to see.

### Techno Bases

Those of you who attended our ICT Open Evening last Wednesday will have seen our new 'Techno-Bases' in operation in Year 4, 5 and 6. These designated ICT areas within the classrooms are a wonderful addition to our already outstanding ICT provision and the children certainly enjoy working in these 'hi-tech' areas. Many thanks to Mrs Rooney and Mr Beech for their help adding the 'finishing touches' to these areas...they are real 'bobby-dazzlers' now!!

### Foundation Stage Reading Seminars

On Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January Mrs Reynolds led two meetings on the teaching of reading in Reception. Both sessions were very well attended and parents appeared very appreciative of the fact that they were given a much deeper understanding of the teaching of phonics and how this promotes children's ability to learn to read.

### 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Mass Celebration

It was wonderful to see so many of you at the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Mass with Bishop Nicholls on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February at the parish church.

This was a lovely celebration not only of the church's anniversary but also of the splendid book penned by our very own Mr Kinton - what an achievement! We have acquired some copies for the school library so that children will always be aware of their 'heritage' in relation to the parish and I'm sure that many of you acquired your own personal copy on the evening. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr Kinton on the publication of his book which has involved many hundreds of hours of research and hard work on his part. If any of you were unable to attend the Mass itself but would like to purchase a copy of the book, they will be available in the church for the foreseeable future.

### Y6 Sainsbury's Depot Visits

On Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> and Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February, our Year 6 children visited the Sainsbury's Depot at Waltham Point to take part in a variety of workshops aimed at developing their understanding of how a large retail organisation functions and related to economic well-being. These visits were organised through CHEXS (Cheshunt Extended Schools) and we are indebted to Mr Peter Maiden, our Extended Schools co-ordinator, for organising these visits and providing our children with such marvellous opportunities.

### Reports and Parent Consultations

Parent Consultations for this term will take place on Wednesday 31st March 2010. The school will close at 1 p.m. on this day. The consultations will run from 1:30pm - 4:00pm and 4:30pm - 6:30pm in the School Hall. Appointments can be made in the usual way from Friday 19th March. You will have received your child's report prior to the consultations and will be able to discuss the content of the report with the teacher during your appointment.

The class teachers really welcome these opportunities to discuss your child's progress and the report 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.

### St. Joseph's Day

On Friday 19th March there will be a whole school mass to celebrate the Feast Day of St. Joseph. You are all very welcome to attend. Mass will begin at 9:15am in the School Hall.

### Street Art!

Just before half-term, Mr Paul Hearn, the Deputy Head at Nicholas Breakspear School visited St. Joseph's for the day. During the course of the morning, Mr Hearn toured the school and spent time in the Key Stage 2 classes seeing how the curriculum is delivered in the primary phase. After lunch, Mr Hearn then worked with the children in Years 5 and 6, demonstrating his skills as a former 'Street Artist'. The children thoroughly enjoyed these sessions and we thank Mr Hearn for visiting us and sharing his skills with us. It was wonderful to hear Mr Hearn singing the praises of our school and the children that he met/worked with during the course of his visit.

### Sports Update

Our football and netball teams have been training hard during the last few weeks in preparation for their remaining league games and various tournaments in which they will participate in the coming weeks. Just before half-term our football team were due to play Downfield School but the sudden cold snap meant that the game couldn't go ahead as planned....what happened to the under-soil heating?! This game will now take place on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Our netball team did manage to play a game before the frost hit, and despite losing 4-1 to a very strong Holy Trinity team, the boys and girls acquitted themselves very well and were a credit to St. Joseph's in their determination and sportsmanship. Their most recent game

against Dewhurst School saw our netball team lose 4-1 despite playing very well indeed.

After the Easter break we will once again begin training/practices for the District Sports. Having relinquished our 'crown' for the first time in five years at last year's event, we will be going all out to regain our title! Further details of practices will be available in the March newsletter...but feel free to start some 'personal training' with your children during the Easter break....not too many Easter eggs!!

### International Schools

We received great news recently in terms of our application to achieve the 'International School's Award. Miss Corrigan has been leading this project and we have just received the 'Intermediate' award - the first phase of a much larger accreditation which we hope to achieve in the coming 12 months. Such awards are a recognition of the fact that at St. Joseph's we offer a wide and diverse curriculum which provides our children with a broad and balanced education which prepares them fully for the challenges with which they will be faced as they progress through the education system and beyond.

### Anti-Vandalism/Litter Poster Assembly

On Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February a representative from Broxbourne Council visited the school to present an assembly to our Key Stage 2 children in relation to an 'Anti-Vandalism/Litter' poster competition being held in the borough. This was a very informative assembly and we look forward to seeing the children's poster in the coming weeks. The closing date for the competition is 31<sup>st</sup> March and all entries should have the child's name, school address and age on the reverse. Good luck everyone!!

### Internet Safety Talks

At the end of January, officers from Cheshunt police visited the school to deliver talks to all of our Key Stage 2 children concerning Internet Safety. This is an increasingly important issue as technology becomes increasingly expansive in terms of the ability to interact with possible 'strangers' through a variety of media. Whilst we have tried to organise evenings to highlight the issues involved, we have had very little response to these events and are desperate to ensure that we provide you with some important information regarding this. Hence, we have compiled an 'Internet Safety' booklet which we are sending out next week which we strongly urge you to read and discuss with your children. This leaflet will also provide you with various websites that you can visit for further information.

### Governor's Morning

Our Governors visited the school on the morning of 20<sup>th</sup> January. They met first with staff members leading the subject area that they are linked to. This was followed by a presentation of our School Bankers and their success to date. Afterwards the Governors visited all the classes and carried out informal observations of 'school in action'. It was a very positive morning and during the visit the children were very happy to share thoughts and experiences about their learning with the Governors.

### End of Term/Easter Break

School closes for the Easter break on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April at 2:00pm. We return to school for the start of the Summer term on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2010.

### Tesco Vouchers For Schools

The Tesco Vouchers For Schools scheme for 2010 began on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March. This scheme has enabled the school to 'purchase' some wonderful resources for school, particularly in relation to ICT. Last year 'you' collected nearly 30, 000 vouchers which is a huge amount for a school of our size....but I'm sure that we...or should I say 'you'...can get past the 30, 000 mark this year. To help with this, next week on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, Tesco for Schools & Clubs has teamed up exclusively with the Daily Mirror to give readers the unique opportunity to collect additional vouchers for their local schools and clubs to help them save for fantastic equipment! Each voucher featured in the paper is worth three times the value of a voucher obtained in store! The scheme runs until 9<sup>th</sup> May and if you could ask friends and relatives who shop at Tescos for any vouchers that they may not want, this would certainly help us to reach our target....and maybe even push towards the 40, 000 mark!!!

### ICT Open Evening Feedback

Many thanks to those parents who have already returned their feedback forms in relation to our ICT Open Evening. If you have not yet done so, could you please take a few minutes to complete the form...a few words will do...don't worry about filling the box!!!!

Another marvellous achievement for St. Joseph's as we are instituted as a National Support School.

