

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School: Newsletter 13.12.24

Mission

Together we love, learn, follow Jesus

Vision

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, through an open and generous heart, we learn together as a family in faith, following the gospel values of love.

Values

Hope Thankfulness Collaboration Compassion Friendship Resilience Empathy Creativity Justice Respect

A Message from Miss Dewhurst: Yuletide activities have been in full flow today in school.

Children and staff came dressed in Christmas jumpers and Christmas attire as we celebrated with a festive lunch. The whole school joined in singing songs and carols in the hall. There is something truly magical about this time of year and something so magical about St. Joseph's.

A huge thank you to our families for their generous donations to Home-Start. This is a great example of how we can help to spread the true meaning of Christmas: by thinking of others, as Jesus taught us.

We look forward to more festive activities next week, with Christmas parties and pyjama day to help raise money for CAFOD, along with finishing all of our work and topics in class. The children and staff are going to be as busy as the elves at the North Pole!



Pope Francis: *The Holy Spirit is the source that fans the flame of hope. His presence in our lives helps us to both have hope and radiate it for humanity, which greatly needs it.*



Happy Birthday this week to:

Darcy F

This week spotted by pupils: Oscar A

For being kind and checking on a friend when they were sad.

Classroom Round Up: What a wonderful week we've had in **Class R/1**. In English, we have been reading Peter Rabbit's Christmas Present Hunt. The children have enjoyed making predictions, exploring new vocabulary in the text, in addition to sequencing and retelling the story. Maths wise, Year One have been focusing on identifying and sorting 2D and 3D shapes, while Reception have been focusing on shapes in the environment and day & night. In science this week, we compared how different balls bounce when different levels of force are applied. The children were surprised to find out that the sponge ball bounced higher than the basketball. To end the week, the children participated in a range of different Christmas craft activities during our festive themed stay and play session.

We have had another festive week in **Cl 2/3/4**. In R.E., the children responded creatively to the Gospels where the angels brought God's news to Mary and Joseph, they did this through creating their own hymn, prayer or piece of artwork. The children enjoyed exploring new mindfulness poems in English and have been dedicated to learning their poems for their performances. We have started our DT unit for this half term and have been busy evaluating existing Christmas gift boxes and practising constructing 3D shapes out of nets.

And just like that, we are almost at the end of an incredibly busy autumn term in **Cl 5/6**! This week, the children have been writing their own Highwayman stanzas in English and I could not be prouder of them. Each and everyone of them is unique yet in the style of Alfred Noyes which really isn't easy. In geography, we have been looking at the impact change in land use has on biodiversity which links to our 'save the planet!' unit. In R.E., we have been exploring the story of David and his relationship with God which has been very thought provoking. And finally, in PE we have been dancing through the ages which has been incredibly fun! In our final PE lesson on Monday, we will be entering the noughties where some 'interesting' moves will appear!



School Attendance:

	This Week	This Year
Yr R	100%	97.1%
Yr 1	95%	97.2%
Yr 2	95.5%	95.3%
Yr 3	93.3%	95.3%
Yr 4	90.9%	96.9%
Yr 5	98.8%	95.8%
Yr 6	100%	97.8%
Total	96.7%	96.5%

Award Winners

★ CI R/1:

★ Dojo Champion: **Freddie**
★ School Values/Mission: **Ginny**—Creativity—for contributing creative ideas and raising interesting questions during this week's science experiments, demonstrating her love for learning

★ CI 2/3:/4

★ Dojo Champion: **Elliott**
★ School Values/Mission: **Tiffany**—Respect—for always being respectful to all adults and children that she meets. Also, contributing exceptionally deep answers in our RE lessons.

★ CI 5/6:

★ Dojo Champion: **Eliza**
★ School Values/Mission: **Harley**—Compassion—for always being incredibly supportive of his peers

Governing Board Update: Governors have continued to work hard, holding a full Governing Board meeting for the term earlier in November to discuss the school budget, agree school holiday dates for 2025 - 2026 and look at all the school improvement work that has been undertaken this term relating to safeguarding our pupils and staff and curriculum developments.

Governors also met to finalise arrangements to advertise our Headteacher vacancy and this is now live on the Lancashire County Council vacancy site. Please do make any of your friends or relatives aware of this vacancy who may be interested in applying.

End of Term: Don't forget, school closes at **1.15pm on Thursday, 19th December** for the Christmas holiday.

We re-open on **Monday, 6th January**.

Please check the information in the Newsletter about PE and Forest School days as these will change for some classes / year groups. We will also send a reminder out at the start of term.

Happy Birthday over the Christmas break to:

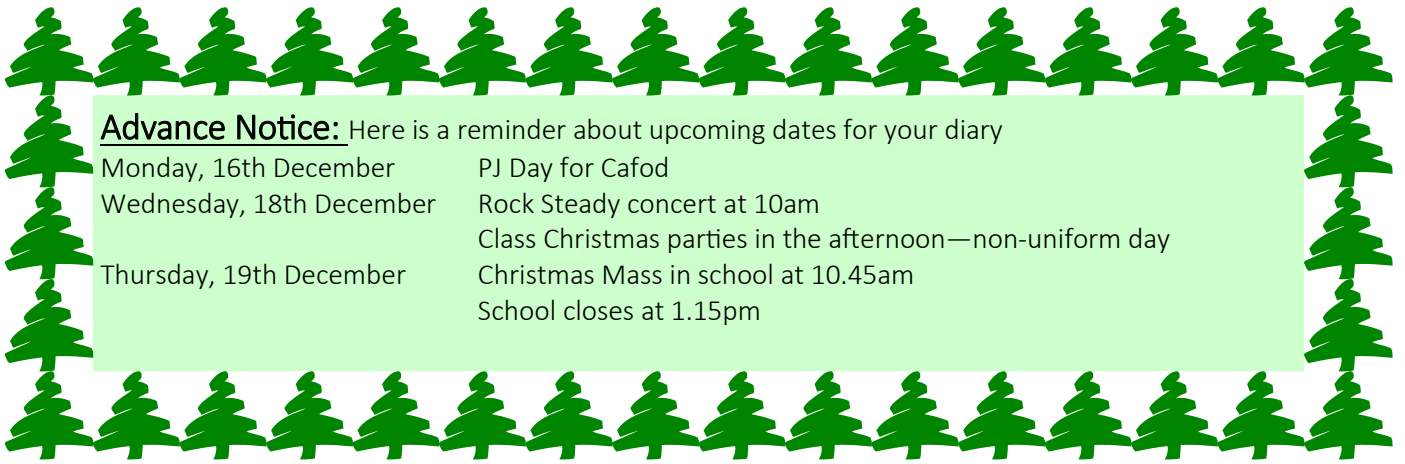
Harley, Brandon, Evangelina,
Esmail, Emelia & Arthur M

Children's Liturgy: Sunday is the third Sunday of Advent. It is called Gaudete Sunday – meaning Joy. In the Gospel we hear John the Baptist preparing people for the coming of Jesus. The people were very excited. John told them they had to change their lives for the better and share what they had with others. Are you always good at sharing? Can you think about a time when you didn't have something you needed or wanted and someone else shared with you? How did you feel when they shared with you? When you share your toys or sweets with someone how does it make you feel?

Does it make you feel happy? As Sunday is Gaudete Sunday can you think of one thing that makes you happy? We are all lucky as we have people who make us happy. Not all children do. We also all need people to share our worries with, and who are willing to share their time with us to help us. We all need people who love us and care for us. What could you do this week to share and spread some joy in our world? Especially how could you share joy with someone who is lonely, poor or who needs some help either.

We would love to see you on Sunday at 9:30am Mass - Children's Liturgy Room.

This is the last newsletter before Christmas. All the Children's Liturgy team wish you a very Happy Christmas. Please do come to the Christmas Family Mass on Christmas Eve at 6pm. Children's Liturgy Team



Advance Notice: Here is a reminder about upcoming dates for your diary

Monday, 16th December	PJ Day for Cafod
Wednesday, 18th December	Rock Steady concert at 10am
	Class Christmas parties in the afternoon—non-uniform day
Thursday, 19th December	Christmas Mass in school at 10.45am
	School closes at 1.15pm

Sunday Gospel: When the crowds asked John the Baptist, “What must we do?” He answered, “If anyone has two coats they should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.” There were tax collectors too who came for baptism, and they said to him, “Master, what must we do?” He said to them, “Don’t collect any more than you should.” Then he said to some soldiers, “Don’t force people to pay money to make you leave them alone, but be satisfied with your pay.” By now, a feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John the Baptise might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, “I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not good enough even to untie his sandal strap.” Luke 3: 10-18 (Wednesday Word)



Individual Liberty
 We have the freedom to choose and pursue the hobbies and interests we enjoy. We respect the choices of others and support them in finding and sharing their talents.



Spring 1: PE and Forest School Days

When we return to school after the Christmas break, uniform will be as follows. Please note that PE for some classes will be on a different day to this half term:

- CI R/1—PE on Wednesday & Thursday
- CI 2/3/4 - PE on Thursday & Friday
- Year 2 & Year 3—Forest School on Wednesday
- Year 4—Forest School kit for Stanley Grange on Thursday*
- CI 5/6—Forest School on Wednesday; PE on Thursday & Friday

**please note, pupils will be able to do PE in their Forest School kit but they will need a change of footwear – trainers for PE and wellies or boots for Stanley Grange.*

Christmas events: On Wednesday, we are looking forward to performances from our Rocksteady stars. If your child is involved, band leader Arthur is happy for them to wear something to either “rock” or to celebrate Christmas.

Our class parties will be taking place after lunch, during the afternoon when snacks will be provided for them.

Pupils can come to school in their own clothes for the day, but please be mindful that appropriate clothing for a school day is still expected. They will also need a coat and suitable footwear for being outside at playtime and

lunchtime. There will not be a Forest School session for Year 4 on Wednesday.



Reindeer Food: If you would like to buy a packet of homemade reindeer food, there are some still available. They are on sale for £1 each with all proceeds going towards buying craft materials for school!



Rainbow Raffle: Our festive raffle will be drawn on Wednesday (December 18th). Please return tickets and money—including any unsold tickets—to the school office no later than 9am on the 18th. Additional tickets are also available from the office if you need any.

As well as our eight colour hampers, other prizes are :

- ⇒ 4 PNE tickets for a home game
- ⇒ 2 x £20 The Village Barber Entries
- ⇒ Brindle Players Pantomime show
- ⇒ Rascals entry
- ⇒ Bird house/gift - Fly Away Homes
- ⇒ Nets Bar voucher
- ⇒ £15 voucher for Gregson Lane Chippy
- ⇒ A Raw and Order voucher
- ⇒ A family photo shoot with Red Curl Photography



Recent Correspondence

Please find below a list of information that has been sent out this week.

Remember to check School Spider for all communication from school:

Christmas holiday clubs

Volleyball Competition: Cancelled

Festive Stay & Play: 13.12.24

Reminders for Friday (13.12.24)

Wednesday Word: 11.12.24

School Meals: 16.12.24

Christmas Thank You: A special “thank you” present has been given to our lollipop man Ron. Our Head Boy Charlie, Head Girl Darcie and Penelope paid him a visit to say thank you for all he does to keep our pupils safe.



Jam Coding: If your child is CI 2/3/4 or CI 5/6, they should have brought home details about the next after school club being run by Coach Dalya. The Stop Motion club will start on Thursday, 9th January and run for five weeks. Details about how to book a place for your child are on the flyer that has been sent home.



**SCHOOL
ADMISSIONS
PRIMARY
SOUTH**

Do you have a child starting primary school in September 2025 and living in Lancashire?

Closing date: 15 January 2025

You **must** apply even if a brother or sister is already at the school, or the school is linked to your child's nursery. Please read the admission criteria for your chosen schools on the website, or get a copy from them.

Apply for a school place now by scanning the QR code or visit lancashire.gov.uk/schools



If travel cost is an important factor in your school preference, please check the guidance on our website, or call 01772 532109.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Between 1 October and 31 January schools are consulting with you to make sure admission arrangements meet future needs. To find out more please visit www.lancashire.gov.uk/schoolplaces and click 'school admission policies'.

lancashire.gov.uk



**Lancashire
County
Council**



Sacramental Preparation: If your child is in Year 4 and you would like them to prepare for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion, please remember to return the slip to school by Tuesday morning (December 17th). If you need a further copy, please speak to Mrs Cox.

PJ Day: Don't forget, on Monday pupils will be enjoying a festive film in school during the morning. They can come to school in their PJs or loungewear—but remember they will also need suitable footwear and a coat for going out at playtime and lunchtime. They can bring a small treat to enjoy during the film. In exchange, we would be grateful for donations for CAFOD.

CAFOD
Catholic Agency for
Overseas Development



St Joseph's

CHRISTMAS ART COMPETITION

Children are invited to create a piece of
artwork based on the theme
'Winter Wonderland'

*All entries must be handed into
Miss Ollerton by Wednesday 18th
December.*

**A winner will be chosen from
each year group.**



10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SAFETY OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON.

The holiday season, marked by Christmas and New Year, brings joy and togetherness but also presents unique safety challenges for children, families and educators. From busy holiday shopping, traveling and family gatherings to managing digital activity during school breaks, staying safe during this period requires heightened awareness. This guide offers practical tips to help families and educators maintain a more secure and fulfilling festive period.

1 MONITOR DIGITAL ACTIVITY

Children spend more time online during school holidays, increasing exposure to potential dangers such as cyberbullying, inappropriate content and online predators. Balancing screen time, avoiding harmful websites and ensuring children engage positively online can be difficult without proper monitoring tools. Set clear boundaries, encourage open discussions about online safety and use parental controls to manage content exposure and screen time effectively. Regular check-ins and positive reinforcement around digital habits encourage safe online behaviour.

2 PRACTICE FIRE SAFETY PROTOCOLS

The incidence of house fires increases during Christmas due to greater use of candles, cookers and electrical decorations. Open flames, electrical overloads and the need for quick response plans can make fire safety challenging. Ensure smoke detectors are operational, keep fire extinguishers on hand and teach children how to respond in case of a fire emergency. Avoid leaving cooking unattended and use fire-safe candles to prevent mishaps.

3 CREATE TRAVEL SAFETY PLANS

More families tend to travel during the holidays, resulting in busier roads, increased traffic accidents and weather-related hazards. Weather conditions, road rage, fatigue and busy airports can all compromise travel safety. Pack emergency kits and adhere to seatbelt laws. Plan routes in advance and allow extra travel time to avoid rushing and mitigate risks on busy roads.

4 BEWARE OF ALLERGIES

Holiday meals often involve many foods that may contain allergens. Cross contamination, unclear labelling and lack of allergy-friendly options can lead to severe reactions. Communicate any allergy needs to hosts, provide safe food alternatives and carry necessary medications like antihistamines or EpiPens. Teaching children how to advocate for themselves and recognise dangerous foods also contributes to safer celebrations.

5 PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS

Cold weather and seasonal socialising can increase the spread of viruses like flu and COVID-19. Crowded gatherings, schools out of session and frequent travel can lead to higher infection risks. Emphasise hygiene, encourage vaccination, disinfect surfaces and isolate symptomatic individuals. Communication with children about proper hygiene practices is essential to reduce the spread of illness.

6 STAY VIGILANT ON THE ROAD

Increased holiday traffic heightens the risk of accidents for both drivers and pedestrians. Distracted driving, pedestrian safety and inclement weather can complicate road safety. Encourage pedestrian safety practices, avoid distracted driving and never drive under the influence.

7 MAINTAIN SAFE DECORATIONS

Festive decorations such as Christmas lights and candles can pose electrical, fire and choking hazards if mishandled. Frayed wires, toppling Christmas trees, small ornaments and open flames can be difficult to control, especially in busy households with children. Inspect and maintain decorations, secure Christmas trees, place fragile or small items out of reach and ensure candles are never left unattended. Testing smoke alarms and using flame-retardant decorations can significantly reduce risks.

8 SET BOUNDARIES FOR GIFTS

Some toys and gadgets can present choking, sharp-edge or safety risks, particularly for young children. Ensuring that gifts meet safety standards and are age appropriate can be complex with so many options available. Inspect all toys carefully and ensure any tech devices have parental controls. Setting expectations around safe gift use and discarding packaging that poses a risk also helps to prevent accidents.

9 ADDRESS STRESS & FATIGUE

Holiday pressures can lead to burnout, which affects both physical and mental health. Overpacked schedules and a lack of downtime can cause stress and fatigue, leading to accidents or poor decision making. Incorporate rest, maintain regular routines and seek support to reduce stress. Encourage activities that promote relaxation to create a healthier, happier holiday experience for everyone.

10 DRINK RESPONSIBLY

Alcohol is commonly present at holiday events, raising concerns about safety and supervision. Excessive alcohol consumption can lead to accidents, impaired judgment and lack of supervision for children. Designate responsible adults, limit consumption and provide transportation alternatives for guests. Teaching moderation and modelling responsible behaviour in front of children ensures that celebrations remain positive and secure.

Meet Our Expert

James Whelan is a chartered health and safety consultant with 10 years of experience in promoting family and community safety. Specialising in risk assessment and preventative strategies, he has worked with educational institutions, public health agencies and community groups to deliver safety education and training.



The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/safety-over-the-festive-season>