



19/12/18



### **Non – Uniform days**

Today (Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>) is the last day that children need to wear school uniform to school. Thursday is Christmas dinner day and Friday is a mufti day for the talent show. However Key Stage 2 children will need to change when they get home on Thursday because they need to wear their uniform when they go to the church in the evening for the Carol Service. Could children arrive at the church between 5.40pm and 5.50pm to be ready for the service to start at 6.00 pm.

### **Congratulations**

All of the Nativity Plays by the younger children so far have been magnificent. It is great to see such confidence in children acting and singing in front of a big audience. Tonight the audience will be the biggest yet. We have reached the capacity of the hall with the tickets that we have allocated and cannot fit any non-ticket holders in. Please, please, please remember to bring your tickets with you if you are coming to the Key Stage 1 play tonight. I am afraid that there will be 'no room at the inn' for non-ticket holders.

### **Santa**

It was great to be visited by Santa on Monday. He asked me to thank the Friends of St Joseph's for preparing such a wonderful grotto for him to meet the children in and that he was very impressed by the manners shown by the children of St Joseph's School.

### **Make-A- Wish Foundation**

The school council decided that the charity they would like to support through our Christmas performances is the Make-A-Wish Foundation. This charity makes dreams come true for children with critical illnesses. They believe that... 'a child's life shouldn't be about illness, hospitals and diagnosis – it should be about wonder joy and hope.' I think it is very fitting that our school council have chosen to support this charity at a time when wonder, joy and hope are filling our lives leading up to Christmas. The audiences so far have been very generous. Please give what you can if you are attending one of the remaining events.

### **Dogs**

For many years we have had a general rule that no dogs are allowed on the school site, mainly because some children are scared by dogs. I have been asked by one dog owner, who occasionally needs to collect children, if she can bring her dog onto the site for a particular reason. In this instance I have decided that the reason is a valid one and have given her permission. Reasonably some other dog owners have supposed that the ban on dogs has been lifted and have brought their dogs on-site. That is not the case. Please continue to keep dogs off the school site unless given specific permission.

### **Mr Riley**

We are very grateful to Mr Riley who stepped into the temporary role of class teacher for year 4. He will be working at a different school next term so we will be saying thank you and farewell to him on Friday. We are hoping that Mrs Maroney will be back as class teacher in the new year.

### **International Fair**

Last week's International Fair was another success with some very inventive ideas used for gifts from around the world. We raised over £300 which will add to the money the Friends of St Joseph's have to enrich the learning experiences of your children. One of the huge hampers in the raffle has yet to be claimed. If you have ticket number 268 please bring it in and Mrs Way will pass the hamper over to you.

If it is not claimed by the end of school on Friday the prize will go to the owner of the 'reserve' winning ticket which happens to be Mrs Spry.

### Next term's topics

Foundation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Houses and homes - Is everybody's home the same ?	British Values - What would Aliens think of Planet Earth ?	Discoverers- How brave were Neil Armstrong and Christopher Columbus ?	Earthquakes and Volcanoes -What makes the earth angry ?
	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
	Digestion - What happens to the food we eat ?	World War 2- How could Hitler have convinced a whole country to follow him ?	The Vikings – Were the Vikings always victorious and vicious ?

More details about what the children will be learning about can be seen on the school website under the curriculum tab.

### Mr Dyson

I can't let Mr Dyson's (temporary) departure go by without passing on my personal thanks for everything he has done for the children of St Joseph's (so far). He was a breath of fresh air when he joined us in September 2015. He was integral to our successful Ofsted inspection in 2016 and has continued to drive improvements since then. The children, rightly, see him as the funniest member of the staff but also appreciate improvements to their learning that he has contributed to hugely. He has been a great support to me. I feel he is ready for this step up in his career and he will learn very quickly which can only be to the benefit of our St Joseph's children when he returns.

### Attendance

As we approach the end of term we are still just short of our target of 96% attendance. The average for the whole school stands at 95.73% with Class 3 the top attenders with an impressive average of 97.41%. Any child with an attendance figure of less than 90% is classed as a persistent absentee and is likely to be contacted by the Educational Welfare Officer and asked to provide medical evidence for any future absences. Over the course of the year an attendance of 90% would mean that four whole weeks of schooling will have been missed. Research has shown a direct link between high absence and lower achievement in school. We have 27 children in the persistent absentee category, which is more than is expected for a school of our size. Lateness is another barrier to children performing to their ability in school. Fifteen minutes late each day is the same as two full weeks of absence. If you have been regularly late this term please adjust your morning routines so that you can give your children the best chance of doing well in school. On the bright side we have 49 children who have attended school every day this term, well done to all of them. Another 8 have only missed only part of one day. They have received a small reward today to recognise their outstanding attendance.

### Sports Clubs

In the first week back in January a number of children who have shown an interest in netball will be invited to stay for netball practice each evening, to be ready for a tournament in the second week back. Invitations to other clubs will go out in that first week so that clubs can start in the week beginning the 14<sup>th</sup> Jan. During that week, in addition to the netball competition, we will also have a table tennis day with coaching for Years 3,4,5 & 6 and an indoor rowing day for years 5 & 6.

### Merry Christmas

Thank you to the children who took the trouble to write cards for staff members. Nearly all of you remembered to use capital letters for names! There will be Mass at St Joseph's Church on Christmas

Eve. Mass will start at 6.00 pm but there will be carol singing starting half an hour earlier. Please have a happy and holy Christmas. We return to school on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> January.