

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to this month's newsletter. The new school year has well and truly started and the children have been working very hard in lessons. It has been a pleasure welcoming our new families in Early Years and those families who have joined us in other year groups. I hope that you will enjoy being part of our special school community. Thank you to all the parents and carers who attended our recent Parent Information Evenings, it was a wonderful opportunity to meet with you and share key information about your child's learning. I apologise for not being available on the evenings, due to a recent family bereavement.

Mrs M Murphy

Harvest:

Friday 06 October was CAFOD's annual Family Fast Day. Millions of families are facing a food crisis that could be worse than any we've lived through before. This is a crisis created by other disasters: climate change, and conflict in Ukraine, mean food prices are skyrocketing. All around the world including here, in the UK, families are finding it harder than ever to put food on the table.

Part of our school Harvest celebrations has been to ask for donations of non-perishable foods that we delivered to NOAH, a Luton based charity who seek to help the most disadvantaged in the local community. They rely heavily on donations and we thank you for your generosity, as we understand how difficult it is for all families at this time.

Every donation was gratefully received and will make a real difference to those who need it most.



October 2023

The Rosary:

October is the month of the Rosary. In school during assemblies and class collective worship, we have been exploring and praying parts of the Rosary with the children. We ask parents and children to continue to pray the Hail Mary at home as a family.



Hail Mary, full of grace, The Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of they womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.

Amen

Diocesan Schools' Mass

The annual Diocesan Schools' Mass was celebrated on **Friday 06 October** with Bishop David. Pupils and staff representatives from all the schools in the diocese gathered together in St Mary's Church, Dunstable.



This was a wonderful opportunity to gather together to share our faith and to celebrate our Catholic Schools.

High School Applications!

As the deadline for applications is fast approaching we would like to remind you of the following if you have not already sent in your application:

- ◆ Please state **3 different school preferences** to ensure that you are not allocated a school you do not want.
- ◆ Complete the supplementary form and obtain the certificate of Catholic Practice from your local priest.

Your application must be submitted by 31 October, otherwise it will be deemed a late application and will impact on your choice of school.



Handwriting Heroes!

Handwriting and presentation skills have always been an important part of the curriculum at St Josephs' but, this year, we are promoting these essential learning 'tools' even more!

Research shows that being able to handwrite fluently and easily, improves memory, self-esteem and focus. It is also an essential part of learning and developing reading skills.

We want all our children to feel comfortable and at ease with a pen or pencil in their hand. Regular handwriting sessions, intervention groups, rewards and incentives to keep trying when things are challenging are all part of the school's drive towards everyone becoming a Handwriting Hero!



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Fairtrade:

As you are aware we are a Fairtrade school and we were delighted to welcome back our Fairtrade Tuckshop, which we ran with huge success in previous years.

Despite a growing awareness of Fairtrade products sourcing tuckshop items has been a real struggle and I would like to thank Mrs Dino and the Fairtrade team for all their hard work in restarting this wonderful initiative.

The tuckshop visited classes in EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 this week. We are initially selling a variety of individually wrapped Fairtrade biscuits. Every biscuit purchased helps to support Fairtrade farmers in developing countries, giving them a fair wage and opportunities to sustain their livelihood. In this way we are serving our global neighbours in the name of Jesus.

Over the coming months we hope to add more items to our tuckshop and we will keep you updated with any further developments.



Everyone a Reader! Everyday Day a Reading Day!

It seems never a truer word was spoken. And, at St Joseph's, we have always believed that reading is at the heart of everything we do!

We continue to invest into our school wide reading scheme and provide each year group with new books as often as is necessary.

We also re-invest in our ever-popular Reading Race and now every year group has at least 12 titles on its 'track'. These titles represent age appropriate 'must reads' and are there to be enjoyed with your child! The Reading Race begins after the October half term.

Please support the school as we promote reading for pleasure and the benefits it brings by reading at home with your child as regularly as you can.



Black History Month:

Black History Month has been part of the fabric of the UK since the late 1980s and in recent years there has been a renewed need to celebrate the achievements and struggles of Black communities throughout history, right up to the present day.



Black History Month is a time for education and reflection and this year the theme is 'Saluting our Sisters.' It highlights the crucial role black women have played in shaping history, inspiring change and building communities.

In school we have been taking part in a range of activities to promote awareness.



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Flu Vaccinations:

The Annual Flu Vaccination programme is due to commence shortly. In preparation for the immunisation you will receive a ParentMail, along with a consent form which needs to be completed by **Friday 03 November**.

The school nursing team is scheduled to visit St Joseph's on **Tuesday 07 and Wednesday 08 November** to administer the flu vaccination.



School Photographer:

The school photographer is scheduled to be in school on **Thursday 02 November** to take individual portraits of the children.

We hope to arrange family and class photographs later in the school year.

We will advise you when dates have been set.



Contact details and pupil medical information:

Please ensure that all your telephone numbers and address details **are correct and regularly updated**, in particular changes to mobile numbers. **This is extremely important in the event of an emergency.** It is also essential that you advise the school of any medical conditions relating to your child and that you keep the school updated of any changes to medication for our records.

ParentMail:

ParentMail is our main source of communication to parents and carers and we would advise for ease of access and instant notifications, that the ParentMail app is downloaded to all mobile devices.

We would also like to remind parents and carers to update any changes to their email or mobile numbers via the app. If you are having any difficulty accessing ParentMail then please contact the KS2 office who will be happy to help you.



School Parking:

You will be aware through recent ParentMail correspondence that local residents have made us aware of inconsiderate parking and verbal abuse by our parents and carers, whilst dropping off and picking up their children from school.

Whilst, we appreciate there is limited parking around the school, we are trying to work together to ensure that we respect and value the local neighbours and area.

Parents should not be blocking driveways, parking on residents' drives, confronting residents or stopping in the middle of the road. This is not a safe way for our children to travel to school and their safety is paramount. We continue to seek advice from the local authority in regard to parking difficulties and Traffic Control will be increasing patrols in the area.

