



Archdiocese of Birmingham

St. Joseph's News

Friday 8th September 2023



Dear Parents, Carers, Pupils, Staff and Parishioners,

A Student's Prayer for a New School Year

Lord Jesus, I ask for Your help as I begin this new school year.

Allow me to experience Your presence in the many blessings You put before me.

Open my eyes to the new challenges and exciting opportunities that this new school year brings.

Open my heart and mind to new friends and new teachers.

Give me a generous spirit to be enthusiastic with my studies and courage to accept new opportunities.

Help me to be attentive to my teachers and let me experience Your presence in my new friends.

Jesus, inspire me to do my best this year!

Amen

Dates for your Diary

Wednesday 13 th September	School Mass led by Y6	2.00pm
Friday 15 th September	Swimming starts for Year Four	
w/c 18 th & 25 th September	New curriculum workshops (dates below)	
Friday 6 th October	Reception Welcome Service (details to follow)	2.00pm
Wednesday 25 th October	Parents' Evening (school finishes at 2.15pm)	2.30pm – 5.30pm
Friday 27 th October	School closes for half-term	3.15pm
Monday 6 th November	Return to school	8.55am

School Term Dates 2023 -2024

Autumn Term 2023	Spring Term 2024	Summer Term 2024
Monday 4 th September 2023 to Friday 27 th October 2023	Monday 8 th January 2024 to Friday 9 th February 2024	Monday 15 th April 2024 to Friday 24 th May 2024
HALF TERM	HALF TERM	HALF TERM
Monday 6 th November 2023 to Friday 22 nd December 2023	Monday 19 th February 2024 to Thursday 28 th March 2024	Monday 3 rd June 2024 to Monday 22 nd July 2024
END OF TERM	END OF TERM	END OF YEAR

Teacher Days –

Monday 4th September
Tuesday 25th July
3 tba

Friday 19th February – MAC training day

Bank Holidays –

Friday 29th March 2024
Monday 6th May 2024

St Joseph's Parish

Mass at St Joseph's Church takes place every **Sunday morning at 9.45am**. Please do try to attend Mass as often as you can.

Welcome Back!

I hope that you have all had a good holiday and summer. It is lovely to see everyone looking so well! I would like to welcome you all back and give a special welcome to the new children who have started and also a very big welcome to all of our new staff! I am sure that you will be very happy at St. Joseph's.

The staff and I would also like to thank you for all the gifts and cards we received at the end of last term, we were all touched by your generosity and thoughtfulness. Thank you!

Swimming

Swimming this term will be for Year Four and will start this coming Friday 15th September. You should have received a letter regarding this today.



Parents Workshops

We will be holding Parental Workshops in school in the coming weeks. These are based on the National Curriculum and designed to show you a little of what your children are learning in school, so that you can help them at home. You will receive letters about these next week.

Monday 18 th September	2.00pm	Y2 workshop
Tuesday 19 th September	2.00pm	Y4 workshop
Friday 22 nd September	2.00pm	Y3 workshop
Monday 25 th September	2.00pm	Reception workshop
Tuesday 26 th September	2.00pm	Y4 workshop
Thursday 28 th September	2.00pm	Y5 workshop
Friday 30 th September	2.00pm	Y6 workshop

After-School Clubs

We will be running two after-school clubs this half-term, Art Club for Y3 and 4 on a Tuesday and Multiskills for Y5 and 6 on a Thursday. Unfortunately due to so many people not paying for sessions last year, we have had to make the decision that the whole half-terms sessions must be now be paid for when booking your child's place.

Places will be given on a first-come, first-served basis and will not be held. Bookings will open on Monday and the **half-term must be paid in full to reserve your place**. In the event of your child being absent from school on the day of the club, the credit will be rolled over to the next term. No refunds will be given for missing clubs for any other reason, as there were children regularly not attending last year when others were waiting for places.

The cost for the half-term is as follows;

Multiskills	Y5 & Y6	starts Thursday 14 th (7 sessions)	£21.00
Art Club	Y3 & Y4	starts Tuesday 19 th (6 sessions)	£18.00

All clubs will finish at 4.15pm and children must be picked up on time by a responsible adult.

This half-terms virtues are: Compassionate & Loving

*If you have any safeguarding concerns please contact one of the safeguarding team;
Mrs Ashley, Mrs Pattinson, Mr Caffrey and Mrs West*

School Dinners / Sandwiches – IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Please note that due to the way dinners are ordered it is not possible for you to change your child's meal type on a day-to-day basis. Recently we have had a number of children coming in with sandwiches on certain days, or coming with money for dinners when they usually have sandwiches. The kitchen produces almost 200 meals a day and has to account for various allergies and dietary conditions, and it is not possible for them to keep track of who is having different meals on different days. If a meal has not been pre-ordered for your child, we may not have enough food available to provide them with a meal. Meal types can be changed at the end of each half-term if you wish to, but this must be pre-arranged through the school office.



Dinner Money

Dinner money is £13.50 a week and should be paid to the office every Monday. If any families' circumstances have changed over the holiday regarding free school meal entitlement, please let us know as soon as possible. Also, just a reminder that current Government legislation means that all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 now get free school meals regardless of entitlement.

Children from Y3 upwards have to pay for their meals unless you are entitled to free meals. If you think that you may be entitled to free school meals and are not currently receiving them, please come in to the school office. Please note that if you receive ANY Working Tax Credit, you are not entitled to receive free school meals and you will need to pay for your child's meals. If you receive Universal Credit you are only entitled to free school meals if your earnings are LESS THAN £7,400 per year.

Y6 Secondary Transfer Applications for September 2024

All children in Year 6 should have received a letter before the holiday with details on how to apply for a secondary school place for September 2024. Online application is now open on the Birmingham City Council website at <https://eadmissions.birmingham.gov.uk/prefs.php> If you need any assistance with this, please come into school and we will be happy to help.

Secondary Transfer preferences for school places must be submitted to the City council by Tuesday 31st October 2023. Please ensure that you have applied for places by then, as late applications are less likely to get the school of their choice.

Uniform

It is wonderful to see all of the children looking so smart in their uniforms! I would just like to remind you of a few of our policies regarding uniform in school.

- Please ensure that your child's name is clearly written or sewn into each item of uniform as this will make it much easier to find it if it gets lost.
- Also as it clearly states in our prospectus; "The school does not permit children to have 'extreme' hairstyles that could serve as a distraction to others. Shaved patterns, lines and colours are not allowed. Hair should be all one length and not 'stepped' or shaved at different levels."
- For health and safety reasons, we do not allow children to wear any jewellery in school. The only exception to this is small gold studs, which should not be worn on days when your child has P.E. or swimming. Members of staff are not allowed to remove earrings, and no responsibility will be taken for any child who removes their own earrings. Hoop or Creole earrings, necklaces, bracelets and rings are not allowed in school.



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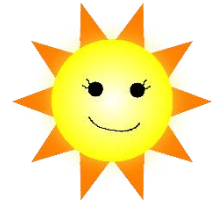
- Mobile Phones are not permitted in school unless it has been agreed with myself in advance. Any mobile phones in school have to be given into the school office at the start of the day and collected at the end.

Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club starts again on Monday. All children who have attended Breakfast Club regularly last term will need to complete new registration forms if you haven't already. Please note that the cost of Breakfast Club is £1.50 per day. All places are allocated and must be applied for.

The POD Mayor's Weekend Event – TOMORROW!

Nechells POD are hosting a 'Mayor's Weekend Event' tomorrow (Saturday 9th September) from 12pm until 4pm at the POD. There will be lots of lovely activities such as circus skills workshops, face painting and picnic food. It is looking like being a lovely day so why not go along and join in the fun!



**Smart Money
Award 2023**

HSBC Smart Money Award

We are very proud to announce that we have been awarded the HSBC 'Smart Money' Award and we are proudly able to display the HSBC Award logo on our website and newsletters. Huge thanks to all of our children who took part in money awareness workshops and especially Miss Teague, who have worked very hard to achieve this. Well done to you all! We will be doing further work with HSBC over the coming year.

Online Safety Newsletter

Also attached to your newsletter today is our monthly Online Safety newsletter.

Pastoral Team

In school we have a team of safeguarding DSLs, Wellbeing staff and we also have a Pastoral Team. Our Pastoral Team is made up of myself (Mrs Ashley), Mr Caffrey, Miss Teague, Mrs Pattinson, Mrs West, Mrs Koumi, and Miss Crane.

Class Attendance – weekly attendance treats

As you know, it is very important that children attend school every day, both for their wellbeing and academic achievement and also to encourage good habits of their future working life.



Every week, the class with the highest attendance will be rewarded with a certificate and an extra day during the week to attend our lunchtime 'Board Games' club. At the end of each half term, the class with the most certificates will be given a treat!

Attendance at School

I would like to give you a quick reminder of our procedures regarding school attendance and the importance of making sure that your child is in school every day. As parents, and carers, it is a legal duty to ensure your child's attendance at school. If your child is unwell and unable to attend school due to illness, it is important that you telephone school to let us know before 9.30am on the day that they are absent. You should do this for each day that they are off school to make sure that your child is marked correctly in the attendance

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register. Medical appointments should be made outside of school hours, and school should be notified in advance of any appointment your child may have in school time.

Reasons such as holiday, travelling abroad (for any reason), weather (where school is open), birthdays, days out, illness of anyone other than the child themselves etc, are not valid reasons for absence from school and will be recorded as **unauthorised absences**.



Birmingham City Council currently operate a 'FAST track' attendance scheme, which picks up low absence rates of individual children. The expected school attendance rate for a child in Birmingham is 95%. Where a child's attendance falls below this, their attendance is monitored. **Please note that any covid-related absence (with appropriate proof) is not counted in official absence figures.** Where a child is absent frequently due to reasons of illness, we can request proof of illness (ie a doctor's note) and make referrals to the school nurse. **If a child has more than ten days of unauthorised absences in a school year, you may be fined or even prosecuted by the city council.**

We have attached a letter from Birmingham City Council with your newsletter today, with further information about the Fast Track scheme and expectations of attendance in Birmingham. If you have any queries or concerns regarding absence from school, please do not hesitate to contact us, we will be happy to help. Thank you for your support with this.

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School Attendance

A very important message for all Parents/Carers

Dear Parent/Carer,

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School is working in partnership with parents and the Local Authority to improve school attendance. **We would like to congratulate the many parents who make sure their children attend school regularly.**

Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class. Are you aware that children who do not attend regularly:

- do not achieve well in exams
- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- are more likely to become involved in crime
- miss out on opportunities in further education and the world of work?

How does your child compare?

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons

Absence can only be authorised by the Head Teacher, within the boundaries set by the Education (Pupil Registrations) (England) Regulations 2006. ***Head Teachers may not authorise leave during term time except where the circumstances are exceptional.***

Please remember that parental illness, going shopping, visiting family, truancy, not wanting to go to school, alleged bullying (speak to school immediately to resolve the issue) are not acceptable reasons to be absent. All of these will be recorded as unauthorised absence, including if your child arrives at school after the close of registration.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school with support from staff and peers can provide children with stability. The routine of school offers a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their children receive appropriate education.
Failing to send your child to school regularly without good reason is a criminal offence.

Legal action that may be taken includes:

- **Issuing penalty notices:** Each parent receives a penalty notice for each child who has unauthorised absence. The penalty is £60 or £120 depending on how soon payment is made. So, if there are two parents and two children the total penalties could be up to £480. Failure to pay may result in prosecution.
- **Taking parents to court for unauthorised absence:** Education Act 1996 Section 444(1) - court can fine each parent up to £1000 per child, order payment of prosecution costs and/or impose a Parenting Order.
- **Taking parents to court for persistent unauthorised absence:** Education Act 1996 Section 444(1A) - court can fine each parent up to £2,500 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs, impose a Parenting Order and/or sentence you to a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Being taken to court could result in you having a criminal record.

Frequent absence can add up to a considerable amount of lost learning and can seriously disadvantage your child in adult life.

If your child's level of absence is of serious concern, the school will offer advice and support to improve attendance. After this, any unauthorised absence may result in the School and the Local Authority taking legal action.

Again, we would like to thank those parents who make sure their child is attending school regularly and are therefore benefiting fully from their educational opportunity.

Yours sincerely,



Lead Attendance Officer

Education Legal Intervention Team
Alternative Provision, Attendance, and Independent Education Service
Birmingham City Council