



St Joseph's R.C. Middle School

Friday 10th September 2021

The family of St. Joseph's loves, learns and grows together as followers of Jesus

Dear Parents, Grandparents & Parishioners,

A warm welcome back to everyone, we do hope you've all had a relaxing summer holiday especially with many of the restrictions coming to an end across the country. It must be a great relief to our parents to have our schools back up and running with QE and HMS still sadly closed. It was wonderful to see all our pupils back this week, especially Y5 who seem to have settled in after such a long break and with limited transition opportunities on offer before the holiday. After an initial day's transition our Y5 pupils seem to now know their way around school and are gaining lots of confidence in a new environment. Many thanks to parents in Y7 and Y8 for being so patient and supporting our COVID Lateral Flow testing arrangements.



Can I also welcome all our new families who have joined our school in various year groups this term. Thank you also to everyone who has already welcomed Fr Jeff Dodds to the Parish community. Fr Dodds will be visiting schools over the next few weeks and hopefully opening our new Chapel at St Joseph's.

Our schools are running almost near to normal now with pupils mixing more freely in the playground, assemblies and at lunch times. However, we are asking that handwashing stays in place and pupils wear masks on public transport for now.

We have been busy over the holiday with newly refurbished classrooms and painting around school. Please pop in if you would like to have a look around.



As always myself, Kate Seddon Deputy Head or Mr Rosier are available most days either before or after school, if anyone would like a chat. The health and safety of both staff and pupils has been at the heart of everything we have planned and comprehensive Risk Assessments are available to view on our school websites.

Parents in school:

Parents are now welcome in school without a mask but we ask that you sanitise hands on entering the school building.

St Joseph's Open Days

A school where children thrive...

Visit one of our Open Days on Tuesday 28th or Wednesday 29th September or our Open Evening on Wednesday 29th September at 6:30pm, to discover the best educational opportunities for your child.

To arrange a visit please call: 01434 605124 or email parentcontact@hexhamstjosephs.uk



Reception 2022 Admissions:

If your child was born between 1 September 2017 and 31 August 2018, your child is due to start reception class in September 2022. You can apply online for a school place from 1 November 2021 until 15 January 2022. <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/School-admissions-places-appeals-1.aspx>

Middle School Admissions:

If your child was born between 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013. Your child is due to start Y5 in September 2022. Online Admissions Portal for middle, high and secondary schools will open on the 12th of September 2021 the closing date is 31st October 2021. <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/School-admissions-places-appeals-1.aspx>

High School Admissions:

If your child was born between 1 September 2008 and 31 August 2009. Your child is due to start Y9 in September 2022. Online Admissions Portal for middle, high and secondary schools will open on the 12th of September 2021 the closing date is 31st October 2021. <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/School-admissions-places-appeals-1.aspx>

A warm welcome and a sad goodbye:

Can I welcome Miss Cowie our new Marketing Administrator, Mr Flynn Cover Supervisor and Miss Jones TA. I would also like to welcome Mr Wright who is teaching DT this year to replace Mr Rogstad. Miss Cowie will be hosting our social media and school websites this year and we are happy to share good news stories - Please phone the school office and we will share pupils' successes out of school.

Over the summer one of our TAs, Mrs Shield, was successful in a new post and we wish her well for the future.

Sports Clubs

We have close partnerships with a number of Hexham sports clubs from golf to archery and swimming to netball. If you need help please call Mr Secker at St Joseph's and we can point you in the right direction.



A new term is never easy for parents, with preparation and financial outlay, so a big thank you from all of us at St Joseph's, as the children look fantastic in their polished shoes and smart uniforms. Our school uniform policy has not been altered and our school community can take pride in our pupil's appearance. Perhaps most importantly, a uniform means that pupils don't have to worry about peer pressure when it comes to clothes. When everyone is smart and looks the same, worrying about what you look like isn't so important. With this in mind can I remind everyone that trainers are not part of our uniform. Parents that have not purchased traditional polishable shoes but instead black trainers either Air Force One, Converse, Vans or other types will be asked to make sure that your next pair of shoes are normal shoes. Can I ask that girls do not wear angle length boots or Dr Martins but sensible school shoes - boots worn to school are allowed but must be changed on arrival. We will make a note of this and expect parents to follow our policy strictly going forward. Can I also stress that makeup, nail polish, coloured hair or jewellery apart from a watch, studded earrings and a crucifix necklace are not allowed. Pupils will not be able to take part in sports clubs or PE lessons for Health and Safety unless ear studs are removed before the lesson. Can I advise those that have recently had ears pierced to purchase plastic ear studs as they are extremely cheap and safe. We ask that girls wear either navy school trousers or a navy skirt.



Homework/Pastoral/Academic Communications: We would appreciate it if parents could continue to support us over the next term with any homework. Core subjects maths and English will continue to set weekly homework, however, all other subjects will now post homework on our website every half term for pupils to complete. This will enable parents to keep a track of what is required whilst also giving pupils some flexibility in tasks and when they want to complete it. Please click on the curriculum tab then move to homework and the appropriate Year group to access.

Over the next few weeks we will be carrying out baseline assessments in maths, English and science for Y5 and Y6 pupils and CAT4 tests with our Y7 and Y8 pupils. The results of these will help us to ensure that your child receives the best support in the right areas.

Communication with class teachers will continue this year via parentcontact@hexhamstjosephs.uk your email will be forwarded to the relevant member of staff.

This year we are planning to hold pastoral and curriculum parents evening, with the first pastoral evening on Tuesday 21st September and Wednesday 22nd September. You will be invited to make an appointment for this shortly. All subjects have a curriculum map which can be viewed on our website along with other information you may find helpful. It's a great chance to see what the children will learn and how you can play a big part in their learning.

St Joseph's Breakfast and Learning Club: As well as a large number of curriculum clubs starting next week, I am delighted that we will be launching our morning wrap around facility with a revamped Breakfast and Learning Club. This will run Monday to Friday from 7:45 am to 8:40 am - Pupils will be able to access morning clubs and registration groups from the Breakfast and Learning Club. We aim to provide the best resources to ensure the children have the best possible experience so parents can get off to work. Pupils will also have a choice of cereals, juice and toast.

A booking slip must be completed before your child attends St Joseph's Breakfast and Learning Club. Bookings can be made through an online ParentMail form. Any cancellations with less than 24 hours notice will still incur a charge. The cost of the club will be £3.50 per day paid through ParentPay. Children who are entitled to pupil premium funding will receive free attendance. However, they must register in advance. The club will mainly be housed in the school hall and staffing will be arranged around pupil demand. If demand exceeds available spaces, we will allocate on a first come first served basis.

St Joseph's Breakfast and Learning Club drop off: - Children attending the club will enter through the main doors, ring the bell and wait for a member of staff to come and sign them in.

After School Wraparound - pupils from St Joseph's up to Y6 are able access wraparound care at St Mary's Kidz Zone at St Mary's First School. Please phone 07763930244 for more information and to make a booking.

Clubs: A clubs letter has been sent via ParentMail. For those pupils wishing to take part in the Running and Hockey club, a ParentMail form has been sent to enable parents to give consent.

Clubs that take place during the school day can be attended without permission.

September can be a very warm month, so can I again ask parents to make sure that children have hats and sun cream applied in the morning when they feel it is necessary. Can we also ask that all children have a warm coat for those not so warm days. Please can I also remind everyone that classes will be using our field for breaks and lunch times and a pair of outside trainers is strongly recommended to stop mud circulating around our school.

Events this week

Our Y5 pupils completed their first golf lessons in glorious sunshine and all our pupils were spectators of the Tour of Britain cycle race which went right by the school. The tour organisers arranged for all our pupils to watch in safety and we all found it thrilling to see the speed of the cyclists and how tightly bunched they were!



Accident on Allendale Road

Yesterday, a St Joseph's pupil was hit by a car on the crossing point adjacent to the bus layby on the Allendale Rd. Thankfully the pupil is safe and recovering with minor injuries. Can I remind all pupils to not cross the road until the green light is on. The area is manned by staff but children need to understand the dangers of oncoming traffic. We will continue to remind pupils in school of the importance of road safety but I would appreciate it if parents could reiterate this. I would also ask parents to park carefully and respectfully around the Causey Hill/ Highford Lane junction and again remind pupils to cross the road there with care. Pupils are often excited when leaving school and forget to concentrate when approaching busy roads.

Upcoming events

Monday 13th September is Roald Dahl Day

Pupils are asked to come into school dressed as their favourite character from one of Roald Dahl's books, We are asking for a £1.00 donation. There will also be a second hand book stall for pupils every two weeks on Tuesday break time's, all books will be 50p. More information will follow.

Thursday 23rd September and Friday 24th September

The photographer will be in school.

Friday 24th September

We will be supporting the McMillan Coffee morning in school.

More information will follow shortly.



A Note from Father Chris

Dear friends,

I wanted to take the opportunity to write to you all and say thank you. Thank you for ten happy years as your Parish Priest; thank you for your witness of faith and kindness, thank you for your friendship and support. I have learnt so much and received so much from the Lord during the past decade. First in Hexham and later as a partnership of parishes, Jesus has blessed us and I thank God for that. The relationship between a priest and his people is a privileged one; through the ups and downs of life we seek to serve God in communion with the whole Church. It is around the Altar where we have heard the Word and received the Eucharist together, we go out to change the world in love. We have enjoyed great celebrations in Church (and afterwards!); sought the Lord and together tried to become more truly missionary disciples. Looking back I want to ask forgiveness for any occasions when I have let anyone down. Looking forward, I know that you are blessed with two new priests. I will take each of you and your new priests with me in prayer, please pray for me too. Finally, I would like to say thank you to everyone who has supported me and the mission of the parishes during the last decade. On a more personal note, thanks for the generous gifts, cards and prayers. As I celebrated my final Mass at Hexham on the Assumption I was struck by the faith of Our Lady and I know she is very close to us. Her acceptance and courageous response to God stands as a reminder to us that when we put God first, everything else falls into its proper place. You are in my prayers. With every good wish, Father Christopher Warren

COVID 19 UPDATES

A big thank you for all KS3 parents who organised their child to arrive on time for the lateral flow tests completed on the first few days of term. It went very smoothly and the children coped extremely well. We have since tested these pupils again and given them a box of lateral flow tests to use at home. Please continue to test twice a week at home and inform us if you have a positive test. If your child does test positive they must then take a PCR test to confirm the result.

We rely on you as parents to comply with our controls and also to follow government guidance outside of school in order that the risk of bringing COVID-19 into school is significantly reduced. This guidance will outline the key principles set out in the Government guidance and the control measures that will mitigate risk. We aim to include as much as we can at this point, but we need to bear in mind that guidance and circumstances can change frequently and at short notice. We will update this document with any additional information as time goes on.

Can I remind parents that our school risk assessment procedures are on our school website and are updated in line with any changes to Government guidance.



Staggered starts and finishes:

These are continuing to ensure a calm and orderly entrance to and exit from school. We are also hoping that it may lessen the congestion for our KS2 pupils on Allendale Road so that it does not coincide with the dismissal of Queen Elizabeth and Hexham Middle School pupils.

We appreciate that timings may not be perfect for all families or may be different to other siblings/friends/family member's schools, but please understand that all school sites are set out differently and have different risks involved.

Music: Instrument lessons will be starting up this term and we are looking forward to inviting year 5 pupils to take part in this. A letter from Mr Rosier will be sent out on Monday outlining which instrument lessons we offer. Please can Y5 parents return permission slips by **Friday 11th September 2021**. Please note: If you are in Y6, Y7 and Y8 and have received instrument lessons in the past these will continue as normal and you do not need to return any slips. Children who have their own instruments will be required to bring them into school each week; those that will be hiring an instrument will receive these in their first lesson.

This year, we are delighted to be able to run all musical activities. In the first half term we will be having a Y5 and Y6 instrument night to encourage new starters. Full instrument lessons will commence as well as musical ensembles. Please keep an eye on your ParentMail for further details in the upcoming weeks.

Contents of Packed Lunches: Could I take this opportunity to remind parents that as an accredited Healthy School, packed lunch boxes must be nutritionally balanced and should not include fizzy drinks, chocolate or high fat crisps. By the same token, please try to increase the amount of fruit, yoghurt, brown bread, vegetables and unflavoured water, wherever you can. Nuts or foods containing nuts are not allowed. This is because of the number of children who have quite severe allergic reactions, often life-threatening. Obviously these children avoid consuming nuts themselves but they can react in the same way if simply in a room where nuts can be found in another child's lunch box. I am sure you will understand that we have to be very careful and I appreciate your support.

School Meals: Please Visit the Parents Hub - School Meals to find out more - School lunches at St Joseph's are both exciting, tasty and nutritionally balanced. If you would like your child to enjoy a hot meal at lunch time, please ensure they tell their form teacher during registration. Please ensure that your child has credit on their school dinner account. You can do this by registering for ParentPay. As the lunches are prepared and cooked on the premises each day, our cook Mrs Hudson can easily accommodate changes to the numbers. The cost of school meals is again not increasing from £2.40 a day (NCC schools average cost is £2.50).



Pick up Arrangements: Please can we ask that parents ensure their child know their collection arrangements for the day. Pupils will be dismissed at their designated time and will be expected to make their way to the arranged meeting point.

Absence from School: Just to remind parents and carers to please ensure that you contact the school office on the first morning of your child's absence from school.

Driving Notice: Please can we remind parents to drive slowly at all times. Please can parents be aware of taxis dropping children off in the morning also. Please take extra care and attention. Thank you.

Pedestrian Access : Please follow the directions and zebra crossing point in the car park. gates will be locked at 9 am - Please press the buzzer.

Morning Gates: Can I ask parents not to arrive earlier than specified to avoid year groups mixing. A member of the senior leadership team is available in the morning to pass on messages to staff members.

Our fortnightly newsletter is a really important way of staying in touch. Please do take the time to read and digest it. Newsletters are sent home via email every two weeks and posted on Facebook. Each newsletter is also published on the school website under the 'Parent' section (then click on 'Newsletters') on the bar of the

home page. We look forward to a happy and positive year ahead and working once again in partnership with you all.

Gospel:

Jesus and his disciples left for the villages round Caesarea Philippi. On the way Jesus put this question to his disciples, "Who do people say I am?" And they told him. "John the Baptist," they said; "others Elijah; others again, one of the prophets." "But you," he asked, "who do you say I am?" Peter spoke up and said to him, "You are the Christ." And he gave them strict orders not to tell anyone about him. And he began to teach them that the Son of Man was destined to suffer grievously, to be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and to be put to death, and after three days to rise again.

Adapted from Mark 8:27-35

The 24th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year B

May I wish you all a lovely weekend.

Mr P Naughton