



# St Joseph's Catholic Middle School

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

**Fortnightly Newsletter – Friday 14th January 2022**

## **Statement to Live By:**

**Do whatever He tells you.**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We have had a really positive start to the Lenten Term over the last two weeks and it was lovely to welcome our lovely children back after the holidays. I hope all our school community enjoyed a fantastic break with their families.

Many thanks to you all for supporting our testing on the first day back which helped in ensuring we had a safe start to the new term. It is likely that this will be a disruptive half term with children being required to self-isolate. This is also true for members of staff but we will do all we can to ensure that the education of the children is as unaffected as possible. Resources will be shared on Google Classroom if children are working from home. So far this term we have had approximately 25 COVID cases with 11 currently isolating across the school. These numbers seem to be average for the size of our school.

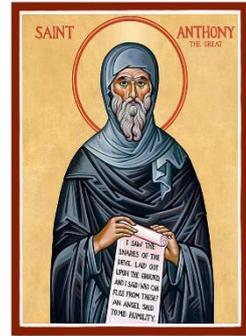
Can I ask that parents take their children for a PCR as soon as they develop COVID related symptoms and don't send them back until two negative Lateral Flow results have been determined and the child is feeling well. We have had positive cases in certain circumstances in which pupils have had no symptoms. More information on testing and self-isolating is given further on.

Last week, the pupils in KS3 have had some very informative assemblies and discussion around the dangers of online bullying and sexual harassment led by Mrs Dotchin which we will post on our website soon. I would like to share some information from the children's commissioner. Please follow the link to a guide for parents on online sexual harassment.

Unfortunately, this issue does impact children in the younger years also.  
<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/report/talking-to-your-child-about-online-sexual-harassment-a-guide-for-parents>

**Saint: St Antony, Abbot (251 - 356)**

St Antony is the originator of the monastic life. He was born in Egypt: when his parents died, he listened to the words of the Gospel and gave all his belongings to the poor. He went out into the wilderness to begin a life of penitence, living in absolute poverty, praying, meditating, and supporting himself by manual work. He suffered many temptations, both physical and spiritual, but he overcame them. Disciples gathered round him, attracted by his wisdom, moderation, and holiness. He gave support to the victims of the persecutions of Diocletian, and helping St Athanasius in his fight against the Arians. He lived to be over a hundred years old, and died in 356.



The Gospels are full of wise sayings of Jesus that seem to be ignored, and one of the most poignant of these was in his meeting with that young man who asked over and over again, insistently, "What must I do to have eternal life?". When, in the end, Jesus told him that if he wanted to be *perfect* he would have to sell all that he had and give the money to the poor, the young man went away, sorrowing; because he was very rich. What could be more of a waste than that? You tell someone what he has to do, and he is afraid to do it. And yet... 250 years later, St Antony hears the story, and does give away all that he has, and becomes the founder of monasticism. And then again, over 1,000 years later, St Francis of Assisi hears the story, and gives away his possessions (and some of his father's) and revolutionises Christianity again.

Not all the words that we speak are forgotten, even though we cannot see their effects ourselves. Let us pray that those unknown effects may always be good ones.

### **Teaching and Learning**

The pupils had an online assembly on Wednesday reminding them of the importance of being prepared for lessons and doing their best at all times. This week our assemblies focused around being prepared for teaching and learning and what makes a ready and successful learner. Please reinforce this at home by signing your child's planner weekly, helping them become independent with organisation and encouraging them to read.

All Spring Term homework is available on the website for you to look at and any pupils isolating with Covid will find work in Google Classroom. Codes were sent to parents last week but if you are still having trouble logging in please contact the school office

### **Y6 SATs**

Although we are still in the midst of a pandemic it does seem likely that our Y6 pupils will sit their SATs tests in May, w/b 9th May. In preparation for this we held a virtual Parents' evening for the parents of Y6 pupils on Thursday 13th January. A copy of the PowerPoint is available on our website under the 'Curriculum' tab and then 'Key Stage 2'. If you were unable to attend, or would like to discuss the timings and requirements with your child, please look through the PowerPoint. If you have any other questions please do not hesitate to get in touch.

In order to support your child we will be offering booster classes starting on Monday of next week. Parents will need to sign their child up via the ParentMail form that was sent out so that we can organise the staffing of these extra lessons. They will run every Monday and Wednesday until the SATs week on 9th May 2022.

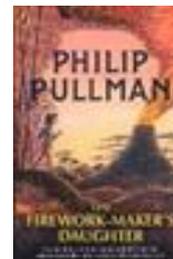
As stated at the parents' evening, we are very aware of not 'overloading' the pupils and our aim is to make sure the pupils are well prepared for the SATS and not overwhelmed or anxious. In order to do this, we will need your support and help to practise their maths and English skills whether it be through homework or discussion. We may change the curriculum slightly in the run up to the SATs

but we will always make sure that the curriculum is covered in all subject areas by the end of the year.

There will be a ParentMail form sent out in the coming days if you would like to purchase any CGP revision books. These are available in the shops but are half price when bought through school. However, please try to adhere to the ordering deadlines stated on the ParentMail.

### English News:

Happy New Year! A new year means new exciting topics! I thought I would share our English topics for this term with you so that you can support your child's learning. Our Y5 will start work on the Philip Pullman novel: "The Firework Maker's Daughter", which is a quest set in China. Year 6 are preparing for their SATs as well as studying the novel: "Goodnight Mr. Tom". Year 7 are studying Shakespeare's famous play: "Romeo and Juliet" and our Year 8 are reading "Stone Cold" by Robert Swindells, a book which tackles the theme of homelessness.



Key Stage 2 pupils will continue to receive homework and spellings, once a week and KS3 pupils will receive topic words linked to the novel or play.

Finally, I would be grateful if you could continue to encourage your child to read for at least twenty minutes, every day.

Thank you for your support.



### Winter Writing Y5

This week, the children in Year 5 have been using their creative skills to write a quality paragraph about winter using descriptive and figurative language. Here are some examples of their work.

#### A Winter's Day - By James (5M)

**An icy breeze whistled and brushed my face. Snow trickled down my jumper... cold, frosted ice cracked under my feet making them scream in pain. Life-like snow angels walking down the street; snowmen have been abandoned but they still have each other. Lobbing a snowball at someone is so tempting, but then they will become an icicle. You have to jump, dodge and run to avoid the children sledging down the hills at a hundred miles per hour.**

#### A Winter's Day - By Florence. (5S)

**A cold breeze trickled down my neck, making the hairs on the back of my neck stand up and tingle. Snowmen all around the countryside, snowball fights with people hiding behind snowmen. Me in the corner scared and shy. My friends shouting, "Come join in." Do I want to join them? I run and make a snow angel and have fun. Trees sparkle and stay as still as a hare hiding. A warm fire, waiting for a cold person to sit by it shivering away with their cold feet like ice cubes. Animals slipping on the cold, slippy, frozen ice.**

### **Year 5 Maths:**

Year 5 had a busy morning in maths. We have been investigating the perimeter of different objects inside and outside of the classroom. We had some very interesting results, especially with the perimeter of the top yard!



### **Staffing:**

I would like to welcome Miss McNamara who has been appointed as Miss Dodd's maternity cover which starts on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> January. We wish Miss Dodds all the best for the birth of her first child.

### **Ski Trip:**

I would like to sincerely apologise again to all pupils and parents affected by the decision to cancel this year's Ski Trip. I have tried to contact as many parents as possible who have emailed school today regarding the difficult decision that has been made. This decision was far from easy and we fully understand your disappointment and frustration regarding the cancellation of this trip. The decision was made to give clarity to parents as a number of restrictions are due to be still in place when the trip departs. In Italy, the issue is around unvaccinated children needing to travel with a parent in order to avoid self-isolation for 5 days, which is not possible as they are travelling with teaching staff.

I am sure you can understand that we cannot go into the vaccination status of each child but these restrictions, which the travel company has informed me will run past the time of our trip, mean that a significant number of pupils are unable to travel.

We will of course look into the option of other residential trips for our Y8 pupils to celebrate their time at St Joseph's and we hope that we will be able to provide more details in the near future.

We all want our pupils to have lasting memories of their time at St Joseph's and the Ski Trip is one of the highlights of the year. I will endeavour to work with the pupils and see what we can come up with to ensure that they have a great end to the year.

### **EcoClub Request:**

Members of EcoClub are holding a **Second Hand School Uniform Sale** at break times and lunchtimes (from 1pm) week beginning **Monday 14th February**. Please could you send any good quality out-grown new-design uniform (clothes and footwear) to school via form class collections over the next 2 weeks. Many thanks.

EcoClub: Sale organisers celebrating Eco badge awards.



### **Additional Professional Development Day:**

We have a Professional Development Day on Friday 4th February. School will be closed to all pupils on this day.

### **Clubs:**

Golf club has been as popular as ever and filled up very fast. We do however have a waiting list so if your child would like to put their name down, please contact the school office. We still have a few places on the running club on a Tuesday morning at 8.15 am and I am delighted that netball will be starting in February.

### **Bishop Wilkinson Portrait Competition:**

#### **The Brief:**

To produce a portrait of

#### **Bishop Thomas Wilkinson**

Bishop of The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle, 28 December 1889 to 17 April 1909.

The portrait can be in any two-dimensional media and should be A1 size.

The closing date for entries is

**Monday 14 February 2022**

**The winning artist will receive a £30 voucher and £50 worth of art equipment for their school.**

**[Photographs of entries should be emailed to brl@bwcet.com by noon on 14th February 2022](mailto:brl@bwcet.com)**



### **Easy Fundraising:**

Fundraising is a little difficult at this particular time whilst we're unable to hold events in person. The school is now registered with easyfundraising, so you can raise FREE donations for us when you do your everyday online shopping. All you have to do is find the retailer you want to shop with on the easyfundraising website or App, shop as usual and the retailer will donate to us when you make a purchase – at no extra cost to you.

Sign up for free at: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stjosephsmiddlepta/>

**Upcoming Events at a Glance:**

| Date     | Activity                |
|----------|-------------------------|
| 25.01.22 | Y8 Road Safety Workshop |
| 27.01.22 | Holocaust Memorial Day  |

**COVID PCR/LFD New Guidance:**

Confirmatory PCR testing following a positive result on a lateral flow device (LFD) has been temporarily suspended from Tuesday 11 January. This means that anyone who has tested (either at home or through ATS) and reported a positive LFD result will no longer be advised to get a confirmatory PCR test.

However, if you will need a confirmatory PCR test if you:

- have symptoms (in which case you need to follow the stay at home guidance, self-isolate and order a PCR test)
- wish to claim the Test and Trace Support Payment
- have been advised to take a PCR test because you are in a clinically vulnerable group
- have been advised to do so as part of a research or surveillance programme

**Self-Isolation Guidance from Monday 17th January:**

People who are self-isolating with COVID-19 will have the option to reduce their isolation period **after 5 full days** if they test negative with a lateral flow device (LFD) test on both day 5 and day 6 and they do not have a temperature. For example, if they test negative on the morning of day 5 and the morning of day 6, they can return to their education or childcare setting immediately on day 6.

The first test must be taken no earlier than day 5 of the self-isolation period, and the second must be taken the following day. All test results should be reported to NHS Test and Trace.

If the result of either of their tests is positive, they should continue to self-isolate until they get negative results from two LFD tests on consecutive days or until they have completed 10 full days of self-isolation, whichever is earliest.

Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests or anyone who continues to have a temperature will need to complete the full 10 day period of self-isolation.

Students should be strongly encouraged to test twice weekly at home and to report all results to NHS Test and Trace and to their setting. Anyone with a positive LFD test result should self-isolate and follow self-isolation guidance.

Information on the new arrangements can be found in the stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection.

### Gospel

John 2: 1 - 11.

There was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and His disciples had also been invited. When they ran out of wine, since the wine provided for the wedding was all finished, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." Jesus said, "Woman, why turn to me? My hour has not come yet." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever He tells you." There were six stone water jars standing there, meant for the ablutions that are customary among the Jews: each could hold twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water", and they filled them to the brim. "Draw some out now," He told them, "and take it to the steward." They did this; the steward tasted the water, and it had turned into wine. Having no idea where it came from – only the servants who had drawn the water knew – the steward called the bridegroom and said, "People generally serve the best wine first, and keep the cheaper sort till the guests have had plenty to drink; but you have kept the best wine till now." This was the first of the signs given by Jesus: it was given at Cana in Galilee. He let His glory be seen, and His disciples believed in Him.

God Bless  
Mr P Naughton

