



HEADTEACHER'S NEWSLETTER

Friday 28th February 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

It was lovely to see so many of you attending Parents' Evenings this week. The relationship between the home and school is so important and we know that this relationship not only improves the academic achievement but also the development of the whole child – we want all children to feel happy and safe and for St Joseph's to be welcoming to you all.

As you know, our Challenge Partners Review took place earlier this month and we are very proud of the report that has been sent to us. We have published the whole report on the school website but I have included some quotes from the report below:

Leaders have sustained a positive climate for learning, where staff are committed to ensuring that all children grow in confidence, learn to develop their resilience and enjoy the challenge in new learning.

Governors are sharply focused on raising standards. They give clear direction and are increasingly accessible to staff and parents.

A focus on ensuring strong subject knowledge and pedagogy across the curriculum is paying dividends and contributing to improving standards.

The well-being of pupils and staff has a high priority.

Links with the community are extensive.

Excellent relationships underpin the positive climate for learning. Teachers are skilled in managing behaviour and motivating pupils to try hard. For their part, pupils are lively, enthusiastic learners.

We will be working on the areas for development and we have added these to our School Development Plan. Please do take a look at the whole report.

Thank you to those parents who completed our parent questionnaire during the week. Please ensure that you send back completed questionnaires by Tuesday at the latest so that we will be able to share the findings with you all.

Teachers have all been talking to you all about the importance of reading at home. Please do ensure that you are reading with, and listening to, your children each day. Children in Year 6 need to be heard reading too!

On Wednesday, Year 6 led us all beautifully in prayer and song for our Ash Wednesday Mass. Parishioners spoke to me after the mass to say how beautiful the hymns were and how amazing the singing was. Fr Mark spoke to us all about what we can do during Lent making sure that our almsgiving, prayer and sacrifice are all linked. It was so lovely to see our pupils approaching the liturgy with respect and reverence. Where one Year 6 class led the Mass beautifully, another supported their Reception buddies so well. The relationship that is developing between Reception and Year 6 really is something to be proud of.

World Book Day is this Thursday 5th March. This year, children (and adults) can come to school dressed in their pyjamas and bring along their favourite bedtime story. We have chosen to wear pyjamas, rather than dress as a book character, as we want to promote sharing a story at bedtime and the importance of reading to and listening to your children read each evening. We will also be having a storyteller visit us on the Monday and Tuesday, sharing stories connected to our local area.

If you would like to share a story with a class in your home language this week, please speak to the office or your child's class teacher. We are so fortunate to have so many parents who speak different languages, it would be amazing to share these with our whole school community.

Over the half term holiday, the decorators were in school to make a start on our new school library. The spare classroom on the ground floor has been redecorated and the new carpet has been laid. We have met with a designer during the week, discussing the ideas from the children to ensure that these are incorporated in to the plan. The plan will take another couple of weeks to be finalised and then the furniture will be made to fit the unusual shape of the room. You will all be invited to come and visit when it has been completed.

In a couple of weeks, it is National Science Week. The children will be carrying out a range of different science activities throughout the week and they will be eager to share these with you. If you have a science background or your work relates to science in some way, please speak to the school office about sharing some information with us all.

At the beginning and the end of the day, a number of parents are coming in to school speaking on their phone. Our playground is now a mobile free zone. Please put phones away once you enter the school gates. Greet your child with a smile, not a mobile.



Thank you for your continued support

Nicola Doherty (Headteacher)