

Our Lady & St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School Newsletter - Issue 15- 9th January 2026



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Dear Parents, carers and parishioners,

Happy New Year!

We hope that you and your families had a lovely Christmas break. The children have returned to school brilliantly this week and are straight back into routines—thanks for your support with this. The Spring Term is an exciting time in school with lots of activities and events. We hope you get a moment to look through the diary dates and see what's going on this term.

Have a great weekend,

David, Joanne and Sam

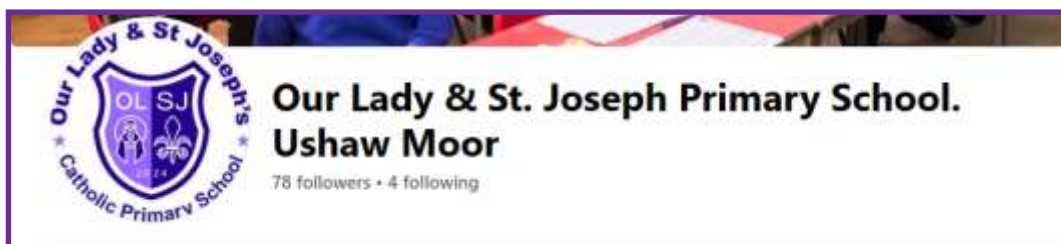
Anxious about School Coffee Morning— Monday 12th January—9:00am

We would like to invite you to a coffee morning to share information regarding emotional well-being and managing anxious thoughts and feelings. The morning is for those families who have concerns regarding school attendance, anxiety, worry and other mental health concerns. Come to the main office to be signed in and you will be taken through to the coffee morning.



Facebook Page

Our school Facebook page launched just before Christmas. Over the coming weeks you will see this used to share pictures and descriptions of things going on in school. If you use social media, please follow us to stay up to date.



facebook

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PE at Our Lady & St Joseph's – This Half Term

This half term in PE, our pupils are focusing on Netball and Gymnastics.

In Netball, children will be learning the key skills of passing, catching, shooting and footwork, as well as developing their understanding of teamwork and tactics. As the weeks progress, they'll have the chance to put these skills into practice through small-sided games, building confidence and cooperation on the court.

In Gymnastics, pupils will explore balance, flexibility, and control. They'll work on creating sequences that combine rolls, jumps, shapes, and counterbalances while learning how to move safely and creatively. This unit encourages not only physical strength but also imagination and problem-solving.

We're excited to see the children challenge themselves and celebrate their progress in both activities. Thank you for supporting them in staying active and enthusiastic about PE!

Alongside our PE lessons, we will also be learning about the muscles of the body. Children will explore some of the main muscles and learn how they help us move, stay active, and keep our bodies strong.



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attendance **MATTERS**

Procedures for appointments during school hours

If you have to take your child out of school for any reason, including a medical, dental, school visit appointment, please could you inform the school office prior to the appointment along with any supporting evidence of the appointment. This is so that we can authorise the absence where we can and your child is not marked as unauthorised in our register.

Please see below guidance from the government regarding school attendance. <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>

Children should aim to arrive in school by 8:55 am at the latest. **Persistent lateness causes disruption to your child's education.**

Year	Attendance this week:
Reception	92%
Year 1/2	99%
Year 3	95%
Year 4	97%
Year 5	98%
Year 6	93%
Lighthouse	81%
Weekly Overall Attendance: 95.2%	

Late arrivals

We understand that mornings can be hectic and that, on occasion events beyond parents' control can cause delays on the journey to school.

Class registers are taken at **9:00am** prompt as we don't want to miss any learning opportunities. **All children should be in class and sat down by 9:00am.**


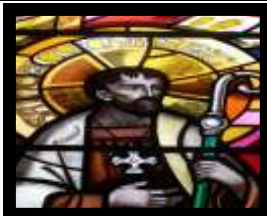


Standards at Our Lady & St. Joseph's

Our expectations on attendance must remain strong and, as the parent community know, we take this part of our job very seriously indeed. We will be contacting parents/carers of those children who are persistently absent, this means any child with an attendance percentage of 90% or less. Please understand that this is a supportive measure and that we are working hard to leave no stone unturned to help your child achieve the very best possible outcomes.



Stars of the week

Sadie	Year R	For brilliant writing about our story—One Snowy Night.
Gracie	Year 1/2	For having a fantastic attitude and always being ready to learn!
Gabo		For sharing some brilliant ideas about our new story in English!
Isla	Year 3	For fantastic effort with handwriting.
Rohan		For amazing effort, focus and a positive attitude in class.
Kenzi	Year 4	For excellent effort and attitude to learning in maths this week.
Lexi		For fantastic focus and attitude to learning all week.
Michael	Year 5	For excellent effort and improved concentration.
Maisie		For excellent understanding of our new text Skellig in English.
Megan	Year 6	For excellent answers during metric conversion maths.
Kingsley		For a super character description of Budi, in our new book, 'Kick.'
Ashton	Lighthouse	For excellent effort in maths.
Isa	PE	For amazing effort and willingness to improve her skills.
Michael		For great listening and excellent passing in Netball.

HOUSE POINTS				
Captains	St. Bede	St. Cuthbert	St. Hilda	St. Aidan
Eva Kingsley Daisy Esme				
Weekly total	157	84	65	64
Running total	2219	1569	1630	1787

<u>Rainbow Rewards</u>		
Red	Is for the blood he gave (Be Kind)	Charlie Y1/2: For always smiling and making us feel happy. Charlie Y6: For being kind to his friends and helping them when they were feeling unwell. Grayson Y1/2: For being kind to a friend.
Green	Is for the world he made (Be a steward)	
Yellow	Is for the light so bright (Be humble)	
Orange	Is strong and full of might (Be courageous)	Jac: For encouraging children to join in new games at lunch time.
Purple	Is for his hour of sorrow (Be compassionate and say sorry)	
Pink	Is for a new tomorrow (Be just and fair)	
Blue	Is for the sky he made so we can aim high (Never give up or take the easy option)	Grayson Y1/2: For not giving up with trying to get the ball in the basketball hoop. Keisha-Rose: For never giving up and trying hard with her handwriting.

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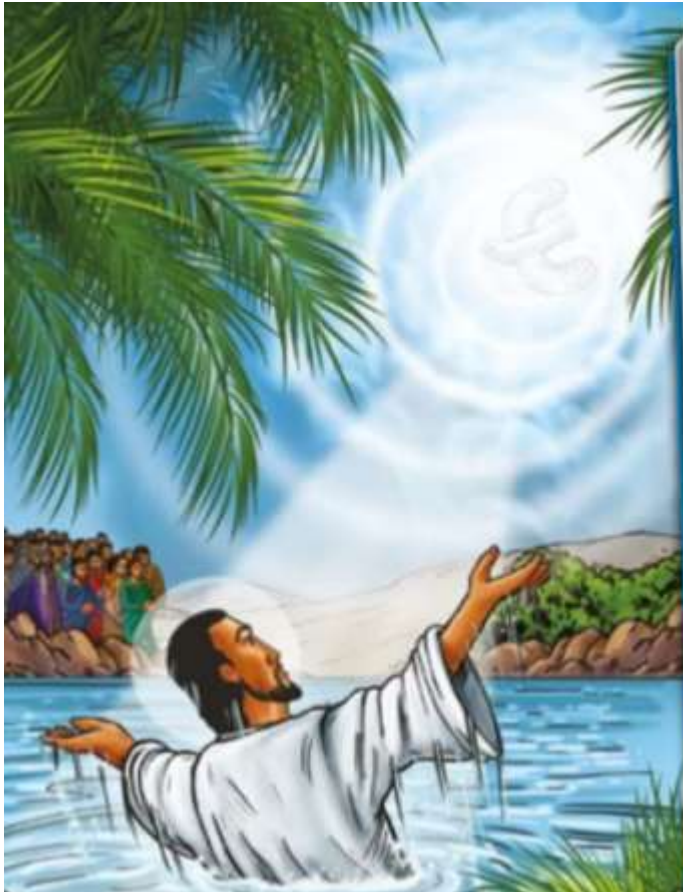
Ask your child




We're sure you all ask your children what they have learned at school every day. We're also sure that the depth of answers that you receive will also vary, with some children saying, 'nothing'. To help aid your discussions, each week in the newsletter we will include a starter question that will help your child to talk about what they what they have been learning that week in school. Try it tonight

Reception	What is a difference between old and new toys?
Year 1/2	What different books do we use at home and at school? What living things did we find on our nature walk? What great adventure did Tom have in the North Pole?
Year 3	What is a settlement?
Year 4	Who added Britannia to the Roman Empire?
Year 5	What was Saint John Henry Newman's question for us?
Year 6	How do you stay in the green zone? What does it mean to love God?
Lighthouse	How would you describe Templeton?

Article 14: The right of freedom of thought, belief and religion



THE GOSPEL IN CHURCH
Sunday 11th January 2026



Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John. John tried to dissuade him. "It is I who need baptism from you," he said, "and yet you come to me!" But Jesus replied, "Leave it like this for the time being; it is fitting that we should, in this way, do all that righteousness demands.*" At this, John gave in to him. As soon as Jesus was baptised he came up from the water, and suddenly the heavens opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. And a voice spoke from heaven, "This is my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on him."

Adapted from Matthew 3:13-17
The Baptism of the Lord, Year A

Getting to know Jesus makes life joyful.
Learn more about this Sunday's Gospel in your local Parish Church: all are very warmly invited.

Dear Lord Jesus, please help me to be always ready to make a **new start** with you and with each other as we start this New Year. Amen.

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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI TOYS

This festive season, the newest toys on the shelves do not just blink or make noise; they listen. Many now come with artificial intelligence (AI), allowing them to talk, learn, and even respond to a child's emotions. These toys can be educational and engaging, but they also collect, store, and process information. This guide explains what that means for families and why it matters.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

TOYS THAT LISTEN AND LEARN

When a toy uses AI, it collects data such as voice recordings, interactions, and background sounds. This information is sent to remote servers, where it is analysed to improve responses. Your child's voice becomes training data, which may be stored indefinitely or shared with third parties.

WEAK SECURITY PROTECTIONS

Some AI toys have poor password protection or open network connections. Others may have microphones or cameras that stay on, even when the toy appears to be off. This can lead to recordings being made without your knowledge, including conversations unrelated to play.

ARTIFICIAL VOICES, REAL INFLUENCE

For very young children, an AI companion may become one of the first voices they interact with regularly. How that voice shows humour, empathy, or authority can shape how a child learns to communicate. If the model is artificial, then part of what is learned is artificial as well.

PRESSURE TO KEEP ENGAGING

Some toys reward repeated use or track engagement, encouraging children to interact more. When children compare how their toys perform, it creates pressure to play more often. This increases the amount of data collected and can make learning feel like competition.

MARKETING THROUGH PLAY

Toys that learn a child's preferences may feed that data into future advertising. A toy that knows a child's favourite colour or hobby could help a company design more targeted marketing to that child and their family.

PLAYTIME AS DATA TRAINING

The information collected from children helps train AI systems. Their voice, emotional responses, and behaviour shape how machines 'understand' people. Play becomes part of a much larger system that influences how future technologies behave.

Advice for Parents & Educators

START WITH A CONVERSATION

Talk to young people. Explain that some toys learn from what they say and do. Help them understand that even friendly technology should have boundaries, and to ask questions about it. Curiosity is healthy, blind trust is not.

SET LIMITS ON USE

Turn off Wi-Fi or Bluetooth when the toy is not in use. Check for updates regularly, as they can change privacy or safety settings. Treat connected toys like any smart device: they should be monitored, updated, and switched off when not in use.

MODEL DIGITAL AWARENESS

Children learn from adults. If they see you checking privacy settings, reading terms, and talking openly about online safety, they are more likely to do the same. Show them how to question technology in a healthy way.

RESEARCH BEFORE YOU BUY

Look for toys that work offline or store data locally. Check for a free or demo version so you can test how it behaves. Read privacy policies to understand what data is collected, where it goes, and whether it's shared with others.

REVIEW PRIVACY SETTINGS

Find out where the data is stored and who has access to it. Some companies sell or share data with advertisers. If the toy connects through an app, check what it requests access to and limit those permissions whenever possible.

BALANCE AI WITH REAL PLAY

AI toys can be fun and creative, but they are not a replacement for real human interaction. Encourage time away from technology with activities that foster emotional and social development. Use AI toys to support learning, not define it.

Meet Our Expert

Clara Hawking is Executive Director of Kompass Education. She advises governments, school trusts, and global organisations on AI governance and safeguarding, helping schools and families understand how technology shapes learning, wellbeing, and the digital future of children.



Date	Event	Time	Parents Invited
Tuesday 6th January	Return to school for Spring 1st Half Term	8:45am	-
Monday 12th January	Anxious about school—coffee morning	9:00am	Yes
Thursday 29th January	<u>Year 4</u> —Learn with me (Parent and Pupil sessions)	2:30pm—3:30pm	Yes
Thursday 29th January	Year 4 Parent Tables Check Meeting	3:40pm—4:00pm	Yes
Monday 9th February	Children’s Mental Health Week	All Week	No
Tuesday 10th February	Safer Internet Day	All Day	No
Wednesday 11th February	<u>Year 6</u> —Learn with me (Parent and Pupil sessions)	2:30pm—3:30pm	Yes
Wednesday 11th February	Year 6 Parent SATS Meeting	4pm	Yes
Wednesday 11th February	Year 1 Parent Phonics Meeting	3:40pm	Yes
Monday 16th February	<u>Year 5</u> Learn with me (Parent and Pupil sessions)	2:30pm	Yes
Friday 20th February	Break up for half-term holiday	3:30pm	-
Monday 2nd March	Return to school for Spring 2nd Half Term	8:45am	-
Thursday 5th March	World Book Day: - Non-Uniform and ‘Breakfast with a book’	All Day	Yes (8:30—8:55)
Monday 9th March	Science Week	All Week	-
Monday 9th March	<u>Reception</u> —Stay and Discover (Parent and Pupil sessions)	9:00am—10:00am	Yes
Tuesday 10th March	<u>Year 1/2</u> —Learn with me (Parent and Pupil sessions)	2:30pm—3:30pm	Yes
Tuesday 10th March	<u>Year 3</u> —Learn with me (Parent and Pupil sessions)	2:30pm-3:30pm	Yes
Friday 13th March	Someone Special Celebration (Mother’s Day)	2:30pm	Yes
Friday 20th March	Interim Reports go out	3:30pm	-
Friday 20th March	Comic Relief: non-uniform day	All Day	No
w/c Monday 23rd March	Parents Evenings	3:40pm - 6:00pm	Yes
Monday 30th March	<u>Reception and KS1</u> Lent Celebration of the Word	2:30pm	Yes
Tuesday 31st March	<u>Year 3 and Year 4</u> Lent Celebration of the Word	2:30pm	Yes
Wednesday 1st April	<u>Year 5 and Year 6</u> Lent Celebration of the Word	2:30pm	Yes
Thursday 2nd April	Break up for Easter holiday	3:30pm	Yes
Monday 20th April	Return to school for Summer Term	8:45am	Yes



Our Lady & St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Holiday and Term Dates: 2025—2026



	August 2025	September 2025	October 2025	November 2025	December 2025	January 2026
Monday	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26
Tuesday	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27
Wednesday	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28
Thursday	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29
Friday	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30
Saturday	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24 31
Sunday	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25

	February 2026	March 2026	April 2026	May 2026	June 2026	July 2026
Monday	2 9 16 23	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27
Tuesday	3 10 17 24	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28
Wednesday	4 11 18 25	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29
Thursday	5 12 19 26	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30
Friday	6 13 20 27	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31
Saturday	7 14 21 28	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25
Sunday	1 8 15 22	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26

AUTUMN TERM: 74 days

SPRING TERM: 58 days

SUMMER TERM: 59 days

TOTAL: 190 days (5 days for in-service training of teachers). Additional training to be taken as twilight sessions.

The school will be open to pupils for 190 days

TRAINING DAYS: Monday 1st September 2025, Monday 5th January 2026, Monday 20th July 2026, Tuesday 21st July 2026, Final Training Day TBC

School Holidays
Training Days
Bank Holidays
Year 6 SATs