



## Our Lady & St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School Newsletter - Issue 24- 27th March 2026

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Dear Parents, carers and parishioners,

As we approach Holy Week next week, we enter one of the most special and reflective times in the church calendar. It is an opportunity for us as a school community to pause, remember, and journey together through the events leading up to Easter.

Throughout the week, our children will take part in age-appropriate reflections, activities, and collective worship that help deepen their understanding of the story and its themes of hope, compassion, and renewal.

Have a lovely weekend,

David, Joanne and Sam

### Lenten Celebrations of the Word—Week beginning 30th March

You may have noticed Lenten Celebrations of the Word on our upcoming dates page. Parents/Carers and parishioners are more than welcome to join us in Church where the children will lead us through the Easter story.

**Monday 30th March—2:30pm**—Reception and Year 1/2

**Tuesday 31st March— 2:30pm**—Year 3 and Year 4

**Wednesday 1st April— 2:30pm**—Year 5 and Year 6



**Reminder—School closes for the Easter Holidays at the usual time on Thursday 2nd April. We will return to school on Monday 20th April.**

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# Easter RAFFLE

Prizes include Easter eggs of all sorts!

You could win!

50p a strip / 1 ticket is 10p



EGGS You can win:

- ☘ Dairy free egg (gluten and soya)
- ☘ Smarties egg
- ☘ m and m minis egg
- ☘ m and m egg
- ☘ kinder bunny egg
- ☘ Dairy milk cadburys egg
- ☘ Cream egg egg
- ☘ Maltasers



# 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	96.25%
Year 1/2	99.21%
Year 3	88.89%
Year 4	93.75%
Year 5	97.47%
Year 6	96.89%
Lighthouse	87.5%
<b>Weekly Overall Attendance: 95.65%</b>	

## 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.



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## Stars of the week

Halle	<b>Year R</b>	For fantastic progress in handwriting and number formation.
Izzy	<b>Year 1/2</b>	For fantastic independent work in Maths with her 2 times tables!
Gabo		For working hard to improve his handwriting this week!
David	<b>Year 3</b>	For showing outstanding effort in all of your work this week.
Stella		For showing kindness and always having a positive attitude in class.
Lucas	<b>Year 4</b>	Excellent effort and progress with your writing this week.
Bella-Rose		Super effort with your handwriting this week
Kasper	<b>Year 5</b>	For wonderful understanding in Geography on stereotypes of favelas.
Penny		For wonderful concentration in lessons all week.
Esme	<b>Year 6</b>	For excellent effort and resilience in her maths.
Henry		For super motivation work based on Robert's desire to help the mechanimals in Cogheart.
Lucy	<b>Lighthouse</b>	For making excellent progress in phonics.
Kendal	<b>PE</b>	For always giving 100% in every PE topic.
Stephen		For accurate shots in tennis.

HOUSE POINTS				
Captains	St. Bede	St. Cuthbert	St. Hilda	St. Aidan
Eva				
Kingsley				
Daisy				
Esme				
<b>Weekly total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>178</b>
<b>Running total</b>	<b>3776</b>	<b>3225</b>	<b>3202</b>	<b>3766</b>

<u>Rainbow Rewards</u>		
<b>Red</b>	Is for the blood he gave (Be Kind)	<b>Aiden</b> - For always being helpful and kind to others. <b>Annie:</b> For being kind and a super friend when one of her friends was unhappy.
<b>Green</b>	Is for the world he made (Be a steward)	<b>Grayson P-</b> For looking after a friend who was feeling sad.
<b>Yellow</b>	Is for the light so bright (Be humble)	
<b>Orange</b>	Is strong and full of might (Be courageous)	<b>Lyla:</b> For being courageous and resilient when facing difficult moments
<b>Purple</b>	Is for his hour of sorrow (Be compassionate and say sorry)	
<b>Pink</b>	Is for a new tomorrow (Be just and fair)	
<b>Blue</b>	Is for the sky he made so we can aim high (Never give up or take the easy option)	

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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

<b>Reception</b>	How can we be more like Jesus during Lent?
<b>Year 1/2</b>	What adjectives could be used to describe Plop? (English) What other jobs did children have in the Victorian Era?
<b>Year 3</b>	Why were Greek soldiers inside the wooden horse?
<b>Year 4</b>	What is tourism?
<b>Year 5</b>	How could Beowulf be considered a Norse saga? Do you always need to have two parents to reproduce?
<b>Year 6</b>	What motivates Robert in Cogheart to help Lily?
<b>Lighthouse</b>	What are the families called in the Borrowers?

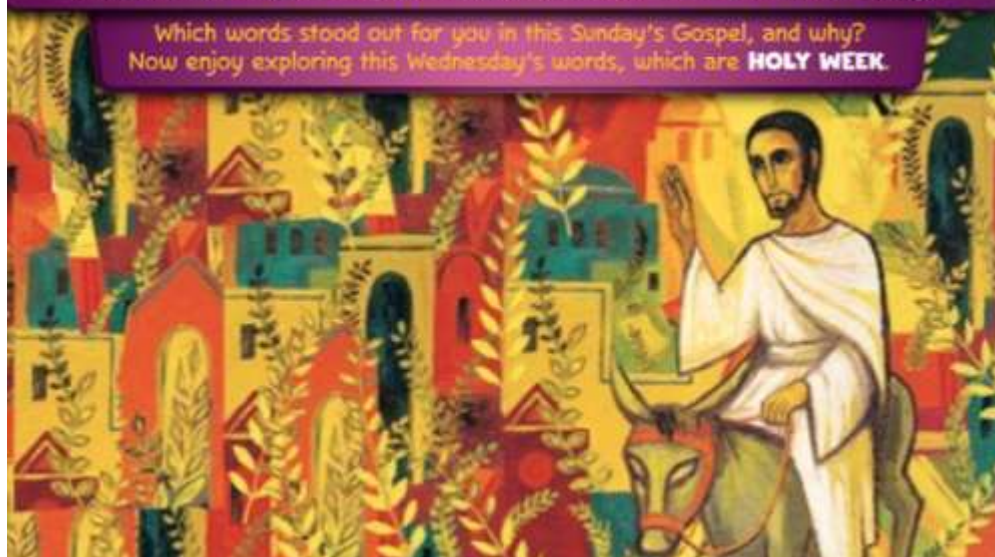
### Article 14: The right of freedom of thought, belief and religion

When they were near Jerusalem, Jesus sent two disciples into a nearby village to collect a donkey. He said to them, "If anyone stops you, tell them that it is for the Lord, and that the donkey will be returned." So the disciples went out and did as Jesus had told them. They brought the donkey and Jesus sat on it. As he set off, great crowds of people spread their cloaks on the road, while others were spreading palm branches on the path in front of him. The crowds were all shouting, "Hosanna! Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heavens!" When Jesus entered Jerusalem, everyone was excited and some asked, "Who is this?" "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee," was the reply.



Taken from the Gospel of Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2026. Matthew 21:1-11 (Passion/Palm Sunday)

Which words stood out for you in this Sunday's Gospel, and why?  
Now enjoy exploring this Wednesday's words, which are **HOLY WEEK**.



Dear Lord Jesus, as Holy Week approaches, we thank you for giving your life for us, so that one day we too may know the joys of heaven. Amen.

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## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# ROBLOX

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Roblox is an online platform where users can play and create games known as 'experiences' made by other users. Roblox has a large UK audience. ITV News has reported that millions of people in Britain use the platform regularly, with children forming a significant proportion of its users. The sheer scale of it makes it extremely difficult to moderate effectively, creating risks for unsupervised children.

### A PLATFORM RATHER THAN A GAME

Roblox differs from traditional video games in that it hosts millions of user-created experiences rather than a fixed set of developer-produced content. Each experience is self-rated by its creator rather than independently age-rated in advance, as is the case with PEGI-rated games. With millions of user-created experiences, moderation is largely automated which means that inappropriate content may reach younger players and have a harmful effect.

### MATURE CONTENT

With much of Roblox's moderation automated through AI and creators self-certifying suitability, inappropriate content frequently appears on the platform. Some experiences may include content intended for older players. While Roblox has tools to restrict access based on age settings, these systems are not always perfect. Younger players are likely to encounter content you may deem unsuitable.

### IN-GAME SPENDING

Roblox is free to play, but many experiences and cosmetics include optional purchases using Robux, the platform's virtual currency, to get advantages in games. This business model is common across online games, but reporting has highlighted cases where children have spent large amounts of money unintentionally or without understanding the real-world cost.

### RISK OF ADDICTION

Roblox encourages repeated and extended play. Many experiences are made of short tasks, rewards, and progression systems that can prompt users to keep playing for longer periods of time. Some games also use reminders, daily rewards, or timed events to encourage frequent logins. These designs can make it difficult to stop playing. Spending long periods online may affect sleep, schoolwork, or other activities if boundaries are not in place.

### COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER USERS

Roblox includes text and voice features that allow players to chat in shared game spaces. While the platform uses automated filters and moderation tools, media investigations have found that inappropriate and potentially harmful messages can still get through. There are risks that children could be targeted by groomers. In response, Roblox has announced changes to how chat works. The platform plans to use facial age-estimation technology to restrict chat access between adults and children they do not know.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Roblox's parental controls provide an important starting point. Linking a child's account to an adult account allows parents to apply spending controls, limit communication features, and review recent activity. Regular supervision, use of parental controls, and conversations with children about what they see online can help reduce the risk of exposure to inappropriate content.

### CONSIDER LIMITING OR DISABLING CHAT

Although Roblox is introducing tighter age-based chat restrictions, some parents and educators may prefer to disable chat entirely for younger children. Children can still play games while communicating with friends they know through other supervised platforms.

### PLAY TOGETHER WHERE POSSIBLE

Playing Roblox with a child can help adults understand the types of experiences available, how monetisation works, and how children interact online. This shared engagement can also make it easier for children to raise concerns if something feels wrong. Parents and educators should monitor all games played on Roblox due to its self-rating nature.

### ENCOURAGE OPEN CONVERSATIONS

Many Roblox experiences are creative and age appropriate, and for many children, the platform is an important way to socialise with friends. Rather than banning it outright, parents and educators should talk openly with children about online safety, spending, and how to respond to inappropriate behaviour.

### Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is a technology journalist who has written for publications including Wired, TechRadar, The Telegraph, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.



See full reference list on our website

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# Easter Holidays

## at Ushaw

### Springtime Stories & Crafts

Tue 7 & Mon 13 April, 11am - 12pm & 1:30pm - 2:30pm

Join us for a magical Tales and Craft Session where imagination comes to life!  
(Drop-in, included with admission)

### Create & Crafts - Beads and Keyrings

Weds 8 & Thurs 16 April, 10:30am - 12:30pm & 1:30pm - 3pm

A hands-on, crafty workshop where children can design and make their own friendship bracelèts and beaded keyrings. (Drop-in, included with admission)

### Young Stickers

Saturday 18 April, 1pm - 3pm

All young stitchers are invited to come and make felt hanging bird decorations.  
(£2 - £10, pre-booking required)

## Daily during Easter...

### Digital Interactive Trail

Uncover fascinating facts about Ushaw's past and meet some of its historical figures!

### Spring Things Garden Trail

Around the garden, you will find all sorts of spring things, how many can you find?

### St. Cuthbert's Cross Indoor Trail

Explore Ushaw's magnificent house and chapels to locate the crosses of St. Cuthbert.

### Toy Takeover (excluding Fri 3 & Sat 4 April)

We'll have with heaps of track and trains for your young engineers to construct.



For more information visit [ushaw.org](http://ushaw.org)

Registered Charity Number 527408





Activities 2026

All places must be booked only by texting Lesley 0784 6542035

Activity	Age range	Date	Time	Cost
Forest School	Over 3	Sat 21 <sup>st</sup> March	10am-11.30pm	£5
Fun and food Crafts/circus skills (parents stay for under 13)	Over 5- secondary age	Wednesday April 8th	11 am-3.30pm	Free for income-based FSM. £8.50 for others.
Big Science	Over 5	Sun April 12th	11am-12.30pm	£5
Fun and food Cool sports	Primary and secondary	Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> April	10am-2pm	Free for income-based FSM. £8.50 for others
Forest School	Over 3	Sun 26th April	10am-11.30pm	£5
Fools Gold – acoustic band	Over 14	Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup> May	5pm -7pm	£7.50
Lottery Forest School to Hamsterly Forest	Over 3	Sat 23 <sup>rd</sup> May	9.30am-3pm	£5/child
Forest School	Over 3	Sat 20 <sup>th</sup> June	10am-11.30pm	£5
Big Science	Over 5	Sun 21st June	11am-12.30pm	£5
Forest School	Over 3	Sat 18 <sup>th</sup> July	10am-11.30pm	£5
Lottery trip to Seaham	Any	August 2nd	tbc	£5/child
Forest School	Over 3	Sat August 15 <sup>th</sup>	10 am-11.30am	£5
Lottery trip to beamish	Any	Sat Sep 5 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am-4pm	£5 for over 5's with no annual pass, free for others

Forest School	Over 3	Sat Sep 19 <sup>th</sup>	10am-11.30am	£5
Big Science	Over 5	Sun 25 <sup>th</sup> October	11am-12.30pm	£5
Pumpkin carving (bring own) tools provided. Pumpkin soup.	All	Wednesday October 28th	4pm	donation
Noo Noo Halloween Party	Over 3	Sat Oct 31 <sup>st</sup>	2pm-3.30pm	£5.00
Lamp of Peace	Any	Nov 11 <sup>th</sup>	10.45 am	free
Glow Party	Year 6 and above	Sat Nov 14th	5pm-6.30pm	£5.00
Noo Noo Christmas Party	Over 3	Sat 19 <sup>th</sup> Dec	1pm-2.30pm	£5.00

Please see events advertised by St. John's Hall, Meadowfield. The events are not affiliated with school but we have been asked to share.

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Date	Event	Time	Parents Invited
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

**Please note—the Year 1/2 Learn with Me event will now take place in the Summer Term. The final date will be communicated soon.**



# 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 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025, Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026, Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2026, Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2026, Final Training Day TBC

School Holidays
Training Days
Bank Holidays
Year 6 SATs