



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



NEWSLETTER: 10th November 2023

Dear Families

On Friday 3rd November an Induction mass for Fr Shaun Purdy took place followed by a celebration in school. It was lovely to welcome Fr Shaun and parishioners from St Josephs, St Patricks & Sacred Heart as well as parishioners from Fr Shaun's previous parish.



Remembrance Liturgy

Year 6 pupils led us in a very moving and reverent Remembrance Liturgy on Friday 10th November. **"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, We will remember them."**



Phonics Demonstration

Thank you to our Year 1 pupils who stayed behind after school on Monday so our staff could see Miss King deliver a phonics lesson to her pupils. All staff found this session really helpful and we hope to run different subject sessions throughout the year.

Book Fair

We are holding a Scholastic Book Fair in school until Tuesday 14th November. Children can purchase books during break time and parent/carers/grandparents etc can come into school at the end of the school day to purchase books. The book fair will also be open during the parent/teacher meetings on Monday. Every book sold helps to earn free books for school.

Children in Need

Children can come to school in non-uniform on Friday 17th November. Donations to Children in Need can be made via ARBOR. There will be a Pudsey Bear Picnic Lunch which will include pizza, sausage roll, sandwich/wrap, popcorn, biscuits and Juice. If your child would like to have a school lunch on Friday please complete the attached form by Tuesday 14th November.

<https://forms.office.com/e/YH9i5zGaJF>

Anti-Bullying Week

Anti-Bullying Week 2023 will take place from Monday 13th - Friday 17th November. The theme is Make A Noise About Bullying. On Monday 13th November its "Odd Socks Day". Children can wear odd socks to school to celebrate what makes us all unique.



School Meals

A reminder that if your child wishes to change from packed lunch to school meals or vice versa then we require 2 weeks' notice. We are unable to accommodate children having split meals/packed lunches across the week. The only exception to this is if children want a school meal on a Friday or we have a special event and the office staff know in advance then this can be arranged. Thank you for your support.

Breakfast Club/Wrap Around Care

A reminder that if your child attends Breakfast Club and/or Wraparound Care, the place must be booked, via ARBOR in advance, and paid for before your child attends. The number of children attending these clubs is increasing and we must ensure, for staffing ratios, ordering of provisions, and to comply with health and safety guidelines (including insurance purposes), that we do not exceed our numbers. We do not want to find ourselves in a position where we have to refuse entry to a child as a booking has not been made and we are at full capacity.

Christmas Lunch

Christmas lunch this year will be on Wednesday 13th December. Can you please complete the form via the attached link to let us know if your child would like a Christmas lunch or not.

<https://forms.office.com/e/8Z2SWh35HT>

Pantomime

The whole school is going to see Cinderella at the Gala Theatre in Durham on Thursday 30th November 2023. Children will have their lunch in school (children who have a school meal will be provided with a school packed lunch) before leaving at 12:15 pm and we will return to school at approximately 4.45 pm (traffic depending).

A voluntary contribution of £16.00 towards the cost of the trip would be very much appreciated and can be paid via ARBOR. Donations can be paid in instalments (e.g. £2.00 a week) if you wish. Your donations do make a difference to what we can offer the children.

Foundation Governors

We welcomed Mrs Katie Barnes, as a co-opted governor, to our governing body this week. If you are a practising Catholic, and are interested in being part of our local governing committee as a foundation governor, please contact school. I would be very happy to talk you through what this role entails and whether you feel you are able to share your skills set with us.

House Points

Children can earn house points from all staff during the week. The house points for this week are:

St Aidan – 679

St Oswald – 671

St Cuthbert – 751

St Bede – 648

Congratulations to St Cuthbert and well done to everyone who has earned points this week.

Wake up Wednesday

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit nationalcollege.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about MICROTRANSACTIONS

Microtransactions (often abbreviated as "MTX") are digital purchases made within an app or game to unlock extra features or additional content such as new levels. A popular sub-set of these are loot boxes, which contain a selection (usually random) of virtual items: from character skins to game-changing equipment like better weapons. Microtransactions (and loot boxes in particular) are now widespread in apps and games, but concerns persist that they normalise gambling and can foster addictive behaviours – especially among younger players.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

GATEWAY TO GAMBLING?

Microtransactions have been criticised for promoting gambling-adjacent behaviour in children. Research has also suggested that exposure to the loot box system could affect the likelihood of a young person suffering gambling harms later in life: children who purchased or used loot boxes in the last 12 months were found to be more likely to have gambled during the same period, as well.

ADDICTIVE NATURE

Microtransactions (and loot boxes especially) could lead to young people displaying compulsive behaviours. Loot boxes are designed to be addictive, and the sought-after prizes they contain are dispensed at random. This means that young gamers might not get what they want straight away, causing them to spend more money as well as additional time gaming.

PAYING TO WIN

In many popular games (the FIFA series being a notable example), microtransactions make it far easier to succeed – which is a concern because children can often find it difficult to keep track of their spending. Once a child starts making in-game purchases, they may continue buying to keep up with their friends and other players – sometimes without recognising the mounting real-world cost.

EXCLUSIVE CONTENT

DATA COLLECTION

To allow a young person to complete microtransactions, many app and game developers collect personal data such as their name, address, email, geolocation information, photos, payment details and so on. Even if this data remains secure (which is by no means guaranteed), there's always the chance that it will be used – and possibly sold on to third parties – for marketing purposes.

AFFECTING DAILY ROUTINE

Online games tend to revolve around repeated loops of activity that can affect purchasing decisions and potentially influence children's spending patterns. This could lead to your child not only handing over more money but also adjusting their daily routine to match the game's schedule – potentially impacting more important elements of their day, such as homework and family time.

SATELLITE SPENDING

If you've linked a payment method like a debit card or a PayPal account to your child's game or app, it's wise to keep a close eye on their microtransactions to ensure they aren't racking up a large bill. Letting a child have access to your card (if they're still too young to have their own) or other means of payment could also lead to them spending beyond the apps and games they normally use.

Advice for Parents & Carers

DO YOUR RESEARCH

It's important to have a serviceable idea of whether the games your child plays use the loot box system (even if it goes by a different name) or include the option of buying items, equipment and so forth. If so, it's crucial to help your child understand that this costs actual money, and that they shouldn't feel pressured into making any purchases.

CHAT ABOUT 'CHANCE'

It may help to explain to your child that many microtransactions involve an element of chance: they could pay money and still not get what they want in return. Emphasise that – while not usually costing much individually – these in-app and in-game purchases can soon add up. Talk to your child about how spending their money in a game or app means they have less to use in the real world.

(GIFT) CARDS ON THE TABLE

Investing in an in-game currency gift card can be a useful way of helping your child get to grips with budgeting. If you buy, say, a £10 V-bucks Fortnite gift card, monitor how long it takes them to spend it. When they come to you asking for more, you could make it the starting point for a conversation about how quickly that money went and how they could earn their next gift card.

STOP SPENDING AT SOURCE

You might decide that the wisest strategy is to remove the potential for spending money on microtransactions. If so, most games, apps and devices have options in their settings to help you manage what your child can spend – or to disable that function altogether, preventing them from buying additional items for their games or boosted functionality for certain apps.

WATCH FOR THE SIGNS

If you're worried that your child's passion for a particular game or app may tempt them into habitual spending on microtransactions, it's important to remember the indicators of addictive behaviour. Irritability, a lack of concentration and prioritising recreational screen time ahead of homework or mealtimes could all be signs that you need to have a conversation about a more balanced routine.

Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced technology journalist with a track record of more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of TechTalked The Inquirer, Carly is now freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.



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Star of the Week

The following children have received a Star of the Week certificate this Week:



Nursery	Arabella	For growing confidence when sharing her ideas during group time.
Reception	Grace P	For showing such enthusiasm and using lovely language when exploring the magnets.
Year 1	Cleo	For using a number line so well to help her with subtractions
Year 2	Ella	For her brilliant participation in all lessons. Keep this up!
Year 3	Emily L	For always having a fantastic attitude to learning and for excellent addition and subtraction work this week.
Year 4	Lachlan	For a fantastic attitude to his learning this week.
Year 5	Ollie	For his excellent answer in maths this week
Year 6	Joel	For some excellent work on equivalent fractions.

Times Table Rockstar of the week is:

This week's 'Rockstar of the Week' is Thomas! Well done for your amazing multiplication and fantastic studio speed!

Well done to **Year 4** who won this week's KS2 times tables battle! Your class will take pride of place at the top of our leader board in school. For the next 6 weeks, we will continue to have KS2 times tables battles between Year 3, Year 4 Year 5 and Year 6. The class with the most wins at the end of this term will receive a prize!

St Joseph's are currently 17th on the TTRS leader board for schools in our area! Let's make a big effort this week to climb up the table!

Attendance & Punctuality

Our key priority in school is to promote good attendance and punctuality. This is because we want our pupils, in school, learning alongside classmates.

A figure of 90% means a child has missed an equivalent of 1 morning session of school every week.

A figure closer to 80% means a child has missed an equivalent to a day of school every week.

We understand, of course, there may be unavoidable and genuine reasons for absence. We do, however, want to work closely with families to ensure children are in school every day.

As a general reminder:

- Please make medical appointments outside of the school day or aim to minimise the amount of time your child will miss to attend the appointment;
- Only allow your child to stay at home in response to genuine illness;
- Do not take holidays during term time;
- Ensure your child arrives on time as lateness is recorded and will impact attendance figures.

If you have had an issue on a morning getting your child to school, we would always encourage you to contact us. We will help and it is always better to arrive later than not at all.

If your child seems unwell in the morning but appears much better by the afternoon, we encourage you to bring them in for the afternoon session.

We continue to stress, however, that pupils need to remain home for 48 hours after any incidents of vomiting or diarrhoea.

If there are any issues or concerns that are impacting school attendance, or punctuality, please contact the school office and an appointment will be made with one of the senior lead members of staff as advice and support can be given.

Our intention will always be to work with you, and support you, to ensure your child is able to attend.

This week's attendance is 92.14 %

Our target is 97%

Nursery	Reception	Year1	Year2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
82.05%	92.07%	98.33%	93.46%	93.21%	93.93%	93.79%	90.32%

A reminder that any message sent to parents are now sent via the ARBOR in app messaging service. To ensure you receive an alert to say a message has been sent please download the ARBOR app. We have 99% of parents/carers signed up to the app, if you are having difficulty please contact Miss Greenwell in the school office.

If you have any queries, please contact us at

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