



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



NEWSLETTER: 10TH May 2024

Dear Families,

Fr Shaun led us in a lovely mass to celebrate the Ascension and we have received wonderful feedback from our parishioners.

"Dear Mrs Burgess and Staff, I would like to thank all the children on their wonderful singing in church this morning. It was so uplifting and beautiful and so fitting for a lovely Ascension Day Mass".

It was also great to see Mrs Claire Brown, from BWCET join us. She was also extremely complimentary about our school highlighting pupils' exceptional behaviour and that children, "sang and read beautifully".

Our Year One pupils stayed behind after Mass to talk with Father Shaun and take some photos of St Joseph's Church. Thank you, to all the parishioners who kindly agreed to have their picture taken for a school display.

Food bank donations

A reminder that our Community Club led by Mrs Ashby, has decided to collect food items (packets, tins, pasta etc) which will be shared between Stanley Food bank and PACT House. There is a box in the main entrance to school for your donations. Whatever you are able to give, would be greatly appreciated. Thank you, in advance, for your generosity.

Year 6 SATS assessments

A reminder, also, that our Y6 pupils are all encouraged to attend our breakfast club for a free breakfast – Monday to Thursday next week. This is to ensure a calm and relaxed start to the day. If your child would like to enjoy breakfast with us, please ensure they arrive in school by 8.15am.

Young Minds SATS Week Tips

As it's coming up to SATS week, Young Minds have some great tips to share with children to support their emotional wellbeing and reduce worries. For more information visit the website www.youngminds.org.uk

Bishop Visitation

This week we welcome Bishop Stephen Wright who is visiting our parishes as he gets to know the Diocese. Following all our Masses this weekend there will be refreshments served. Donations of cakes/baked goods will be greatly appreciated. Please do make the effort to come and meet Bishop Stephen.

May Procession

We will be holding a May procession followed by a Liturgy in School on the afternoon of Monday 20th May. More information to follow.

Prayer Garden

We are hoping to develop a prayer garden in a section of our big yard. We are the very early stages of this and we want to put out an appeal. If you are able to donate any time or expertise, large plant pots, plants or compost, we would be most grateful. Please contact the school office.

World Children's Day

Following the information about our art competition for World Children's Day, our Ethos Ambassadors have met this week to decide how we will celebrate this important day. They have decided that on Thursday 23rd May everyone can come to school dressed as what they would like to be when they grow up. We do not wish for this to come at an expense for our families but think this is a lovely way to celebrate this day. A voluntary donation of 50p will be collected on the day and all donations will be given to Fr Dermott's charity SIGNIFICANCE.

Scholastic Book Fair

We will be holding a Scholastic Book Fair in school from Thursday 6th June to Tuesday 11th June. More information to follow.

Family Hubs

There is a new CAMHS drop ins at Family hubs. For more information visit their website.

www.durham.gov.uk/helpforfamilies

Mental Health Awareness Week 13th – 19th May

Mental Health awareness week begins on Monday 13th May with the focus on encouraging movement for our mental health. Try incorporating small amounts of movement every day this month to help improve your mental well-being!.

If you need any support you can contact:

- Mind Infoline - 0300 123 3393
- Side by Side is an online peer support community
- Beat - 0808 801 0677 (England)
- British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) - bacp.co.uk
- Hearing Voices Network - hearing-voices.org
- Samaritans 116 123 (freephone) - jo@samaritans.org
- YoungMinds 0808 802 5544 (Parents Helpline) 85258 (text the word 'shout')
- youngminds.org.uk

Being active is so important for our mental health and this Mental Health Awareness Week we want to help people to find moments for movement in their daily routines. Going for a walk in your neighbourhood, putting on your favourite music and dancing around the living room, chair exercises when you're watching television – it all counts!

This movement calendar is an amazing way to keep track of all your daily movements and plan out your movements for each week!

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 Do some yoga, pilates or core exercises	2 Walk, run, swim or cycle	3 Meditation / Breathwork	4 Rest day or movement of your choice
5 Rest day or movement of your choice	6 Walk, run, swim or cycle	7 Clean the house!	8 Walk, run, swim or cycle	9 Meditation / Breathwork	10 Do some yoga, pilates or core exercises	11 Rest day or movement of your choice
12 Rest day or movement of your choice	13* Walk, run, swim or cycle	14* Bake a tasty cake!	15* Meditation / Breathwork	16* Do some yoga, pilates or core exercises	17* Walk, run, swim or cycle	18* Rest day or movement of your choice
19* Rest day or movement of your choice	20 Dance around the house to your favourite music	21 Walk, run, swim or cycle	22 Do some yoga, pilates or core exercises	23 Meditation / Breathwork	24 Walk, run, swim or cycle	25 Rest day or movement of your choice
26 Rest day or movement of your choice	27 Walk, run, swim or cycle	28 Do some yoga, pilates or core exercises	29 Do an activity around the house	30 Walk, run, swim or cycle	31 Meditation / Breathwork	

*13-19 of May is Mental Health Awareness Week

Star of the Week

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



Nursery	Jak	For showing great confidence when sharing his wonderful ideas during carpet time sessions.
Reception	Savannah	For showing great enthusiasm when sharing her ideas during carpet time.
Year 1	Finlay	For working hard to improve his handwriting.
Year 2	Isabella	For writing an excellent letter home, showing her amazing determination and effort.
Year 3	Esme	For excellent work on inverted commas this week.
Year 4	Sophie	For working extra hard on times tables, both in school and at home.
Year 5	Annabel	For an excellent letter of complaint using formal language.
Year 6	Thomas Mc	For some excellent work on fractions this week.

Attendance

This week's attendance is %.

Our target is 97%.

Nursery	Reception	Year1	Year2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
89.7%	88.2%	93.3%	89.8%	96.5%	99.5%	93.9%	96.7%

House Points

Children can earn house points from all staff during the week. Congratulations to St Cuthbert's who have earned the most house points this week.

Times Table Rock Star

This week's 'Rockstars of the Week' is **Nico**! Well done for your amazing multiplication and fantastic studio speed! Children can see all our TTRS winners on our 'Times Table Rockstars' display board in school.

Year 3 are still ahead by over 1000 points in the KS2 tournament. Well done! Year 4, 5 and 6 have a lot of hard work to do to catch them up!

St Joseph's are still 12th on the leaderboard for schools in our area with an average studio speed of 3.84 seconds per question. Let's make a big effort this week to get back into the top 10!

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about HELLDIVERS 2



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Within weeks of release, *Helldivers 2* had become one of 2024's biggest gaming success stories. The sequel to a top-down shooter from 2015 has smashed sales expectations, owing to its frantic gameplay and tongue-in-cheek humour. However, the game comes with several risks to younger players, as indicated by its 18+ rating.

PEGI 18 RATING



Due to its intense violence and the presence of in-game purchases, *Helldivers 2* carries a PEGI 18 rating. While players are generally fighting fantastical enemies like giant bugs and robots, their characters can be killed in various gruesome ways, up to and including dismemberment. It's certainly worth considering whether such a game is appropriate for younger players.

IN-GAME PURCHASES

In *Helldivers 2*, players can use real money to buy in-game currency, with which they can unlock cosmetics and new weapons. At the time of writing, all the in-game items can be acquired without spending so much as a penny – but excited young players wanting to keep up with their friends may still feel the temptation to purchase new weapons more quickly, rather than laboriously earning the in-game currency through play.

VOICE CHAT AND MESSAGING

Helldivers 2 is always played online with others, who often use voice chat or in-game texts to coordinate, strategise or just joke around. This does mean that children who play without their friends will be put in contact with strangers. Unfortunately, this represents a roll of the dice, as the game can't control how people treat each other online. However, you can easily report other players for abusive behaviour via the game's 'social' tab.

FRUSTRATION TRIGGER

The thrill of barely scraping through a dangerous mission in one piece is integral to *Helldivers 2*'s appeal. To accentuate this feeling of achievement, the game includes some very difficult levels that could prove to be too hard for some players – even those who are legitimately old enough to play. Losing streaks can be incredibly annoying, so repeatedly failing in missions could easily provoke frustration or anger in younger players.

LACK OF ACCESS

The game is available on PC and PS5, but not (as yet) on other consoles. Some people will naturally be disappointed they can't get involved and might look for similar alternatives to play on their own console – alternatives which may contain similar levels of violence and gore but lack the same balanced approach to user misconduct and in-game purchases as *Helldivers 2*.

Advice for Parents & Educators

GIVE IT A GO FIRST

Helldivers 2 is a third-person shooter with intentionally humorous elements, but much of its comedy is rooted in satire which may go over the heads of some players. Consider playing the game first yourself – while shooting bugs and robots feels too unrealistic to be upsetting, seeing your character get torn to pieces may be too much for young players.

SET EXPECTATIONS

At the time of writing, *Helldivers 2* costs £34.99. It could turn out to be an expensive and wasteful purchase if a player gets irritated and gives up shortly after receiving the game. If a young person tends to become frustrated easily, it's worth considering whether *Helldivers 2* is really the game for them.

CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES

If playing on Xbox – where *Helldivers 2* isn't available – consider something like *Halo: The Master Chief Collection* as an alternative. One of its game modes – *Firefight* – replicates *Helldivers*' mechanics to some degree. Alternatively, younger players may be better suited to the more light-hearted *Deep Rock Galactic*, which sees them play as fantasy dwarves in space, involving far less gruesome violence.

KEEP AN EYE ON PAYMENTS

Many titles offer in-game purchases, but *Helldivers 2*'s are comparatively cheap. You'll still need to monitor your payment information (or use a prepaid card on the account) in case your child buys the in-game currency in bulk; on the whole, however, the game's selling methods are far less egregious than most similar titles on the market.

MONITOR COMMUNICATION & ADJUST SETTINGS

Thanks to an in-game "Ping" system (allowing players to highlight important details without speaking), communication isn't as integral to *Helldivers 2* as it is in other games. You can turn off the chat options in-game on PC, or on the PS5's own settings, and feel more secure in the knowledge that your child won't be speaking to people they don't know.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is the Editor in Chief of GGRecon, and has been working in the games media industry for five years. As well as being an avid long-time gamer, he is also a parent and therefore understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his work has been published on sites including IGN, TechRadar and many more.



X @wake_up_weds

f /wuw.thenationalcollege

ig @wake.up.wednesday

yt @wake.up.weds

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