

# Newsletter 10th October 2025

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School



Work hard, love tenderly, walk humbly: trusting in God

Dear parents, grandparents and parishioners,

We started our week with a whole school Celebration of The Word. This week's Gospel reminds us that the size of our faith doesn't matter—what matters is that we have it. Even faith as small as a mustard seed can lead to extraordinary things, because the results depend not on us, but on God.

*"If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."*— Luke 17:5–6

Thank you to Year 4 for leading us so beautifully in this week's Class Celebration of the Word. Thank you to all our parents for attending.

As we near the end of term, it's been wonderful to see that children's behaviour continues to be outstanding, and their attitudes to learning are a joy to see. Across school, we've been working hard on our spellings and writing, and it was wonderful to see so many children proudly receiving gold stars for their efforts. Well done, everyone!

On Friday, we marked Mental Health Day with activities and reflections that encouraged children to think about wellbeing, kindness, and self-care. It was amazing to see their enthusiasm and thoughtful contributions throughout the day. I recently shared an email about our exciting new initiative: the **STAR Project**—Strategies for Targeting Anxiety and building Resilience. This programme is designed to support our children's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs in a proactive and nurturing way. I'm really looking forward to working with you all to ensure every child continues to feel safe, supported, and empowered to thrive both emotionally and academically.

### **Key Reminders for Next Week**

- **Tuesday 14th October** – *Year 5 Residential Meeting* - Parents are invited to join us for important information about the upcoming trip.
- **Thursday 16th October** – *Year 3 Celebration of the Word* - Families are warmly invited to attend and share in this special moment.
- **Sunday Mass at 11am** - Some of our children will be reading during Mass this week. We thank them for putting their faith into action and representing our school so beautifully.

Have a wonderful weekend.

Best wishes,

Mrs Urwin

## Reminders

### **Reception class intake 2026/27**

A reminder If your child is due to start Reception class in September 2026 you need to apply for a school place via Durham County Council School Admissions, even if your child currently attends our nursery unit. The closing date to apply for a primary school place is midnight on Thursday 15 January 2026.. <https://www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions>

### **Swimming**

As part of the primary PE curriculum, children will take part in swimming lessons while they are in Years 4, 5 and 6. These swimming lessons take place on Mondays at 1:55pm at the Louisa Centre, Stanley. On children's allocated swimming day, they are required to bring in their swimming kit in a bag/backpack. This includes swimming trunks/shorts/costume (no bikinis or long board shorts) and a towel. Goggles are optional. There may be times where children are asked to take goggles off during lessons for the survival skills elements of the

curriculum. They should wear their PE kit on their allocated swimming day to make getting changed easier. Below is the allocated year groups for swimming each half term:

- Autumn 2- Y4 starting 3rd November 2025
- Spring 1- Y5 starting 12th January 2026
- Spring 2- Y4 starting 2nd March 2026
- Summer 1- Y5 starting 20th April 2026
- Summer 2- Y6 starting 8th June 2026

### Outstanding Payments

Any outstanding payments on ARBOR (school meals/ breakfast club/ wrap around care) **must be cleared and kept in credit.** If anyone has any problems with making payments, please contact the school office to discuss further. The Trust are looking very closely at all outstanding payments and non-payment of outstanding debt may result in your child having to bring a packed lunch to school and being unable to access breakfast club/wraparound care.



As you know, attendance is hugely important, and we report attendance on a weekly/ monthly/ termly basis. We monitor attendance/lateness very closely in school and will raise any concerns with parents/carers on an individual basis. If you have any concerns with regards to your child's attendance/lateness, please contact us as soon as possible so we can work together to resolve any issues.

**This week's attendance is 95.53%. Our target is 97%**

**Nursery:** 100%

**Reception:** 87.5%

**Year 1:** 95.33%

**Year 2:** 100%

**Year 3:** 95.71%

**Year 4:** 98%

**Year 5:** 98.93%

**Year 6:** 90%

**Well done to Nursery and Year 2 who won this week's attendance award!**

## Head Teachers Award

**The following children have received a Head Teachers Award this week:**

**Nursery:** Lewi for settling in so well to Nursery

**Reception:** Immy for being so kind to her friends

**Year 1:** Tobi for being a superstar and always making Mrs Urwin smile

**Year 3:** Nathan for outstanding Times Tables

**Year 5:** Lase for being a wonderful part of our St Joseph's family

## Star of the Week

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

**Nursery:** Rudy for sharing super ideas during group times

**Reception:** Ewan for always being ready to learn and keen to share ideas in class

**Year 1:** Ada for excellent work in science when looking at different plants

**Year 2:** Freya for her confidence when answering questions in class

**Year 3:** Francesca for excellent work when adding and subtracting multiples of 10 and 100

**Year 4:** India for an excellent effort in music this week

**Year 5:** Lase for being a lovely pupil at St Joseph's. Good luck in your new school!

**Year 6:** Shyla-Mae for some excellent descriptive writing

## Awards of the week

**Captain's Table:** Tillie, Oslo, Teddy, Grace W, Harriet, Freddie S, Will, Ivy

**Mission Statement:** Charlie, Tiaraoluwa, Freddie, Freddie Ch, Finlay, Daniel, Kamran, Alfie

**British Values:** Isaac, Alfie S, George, Alice, Noah, Isabella, Thea, Ethan

**Writer of the week:** Marco, Ivanna, Jack, Mila, Harvey, Aria, Sophie

## House Points

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

Please see below what our children have been getting up to this week in school

The children in **EYFS** have had a very special visit today from Rock Pool School! Nicola helped us learn all about the creatures we might find in a rockpool, and we learnt some interesting facts about them! The children were fascinated as they watched the crabs and snails moved around and were even brave enough to hold them! As well as this, we have been celebrating World Mental Health day by doing some activities that may make us feel calm and happy such as colouring, crafting and yoga!







What a week in **Year 1**! We have been working so hard on our handwriting and writing sentences about Gustavo The Shy Ghost. We have been working on systematically identifying our number bonds within 10 and our number bonds to 10. We enjoyed learning about Judaism in RE and listening to the stories of Moses and Abraham. However, the highlight of the week was Rockpool School! We loved seeing the rockpool creatures and making our own rockpools. We were so gentle and caring towards the little creatures. Well done, Year 1!





This week, **Year 2** have been diving into the world of 'Dougal's Deep Sea Diary', using expanded noun phrases to bring their writing to life. In maths, we completed our place value unit by counting in steps of 2, 5 and 10. Our RE lessons took us on a journey into Judaism, where we explored the special day of Shabbat and learned about the traditional challah bread. In history, we compared London in 1666 to modern day London, discussing how the city is much safer now. In geography, we compared the tallest mountain in the world, Mount Everest to a mountain in the Lake District, Mount Skiddaw. Finally in music, we experimented with glockenspiels, playing notes together as a class. Well done Year 2 for another busy and brilliant week of learning!

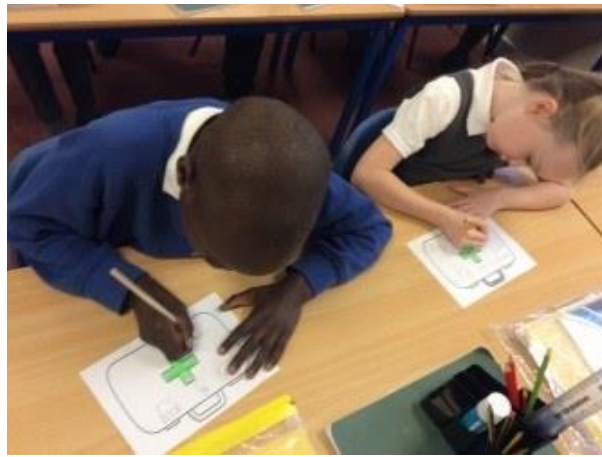




In PE this week, **Year 3** took part in a variety of agility games including practising the speed bounce and tackling obstacle courses with great enthusiasm. They also led and participated in a reflective Celebration of the Word, where they read from St Paul's letter to the Romans and thoughtfully considered how they could live out his message to love and serve others. In English, the children thoroughly enjoyed finishing their class reader, *The Railway Children*, and were delighted with its happy ending. To end the week, Year 3 took part in a whole-school mental health carousel, exploring a range of activities designed to help them understand and care for their mental wellbeing.







In **Year 4** this week, the children enjoyed another ukulele lesson, they learned a new chord and were able to use this and the other chords they have learned, to play some well-known songs. They are making really good progress. In Maths, children began to look at addition of 4-digit numbers using column method. In English, we continued to read 'The Wind in the Willows' and we wrote a setting description using expanded noun phrases and adverbial phrases. In RE we looked at Judaism and focused on the Jewish holy book, the Torah scrolls. We ended the week by celebrating world mental health day, we moved around to each class in the school, carrying out some fun activities in each room.





**Year 5** really enjoyed reading their class reader, *Holes* this week. There was an unexpected plot twist that was quite a shock! They then created some brilliant writing based on the main character. In maths, we have worked on column subtraction with the added bonus of using the Smyths catalogue to calculate toy lists and work out change! In science, we planned an investigation based on different materials. We also looked at staying safe online and how to create sensible and safe profiles when gaming.

This week, **Year 6** have continued to work brilliantly across the curriculum. They've finished their first class text of the year- *The Girl Who Stole an Elephant*. They really enjoyed the ending. If any of them wish to read similar books, the author, Nizrana Farook, has published some other excellent books. They have moved onto '*The Arrival*' which is a wordless book. They have already produced some excellent descriptions based on this. In maths, they have been exploring long division. They have grasped the concept really well and have been enjoying the challenge! They have enjoyed learning about numbers to 30 in Spanish along with learning the months of the year. They ended the week with some excellent activities for mental health day- exploring ways to relax and how to keep themselves safe in school.





