

Newsletter 3rd October 2025

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School



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

Dear parents, grandparents and parishioners,

Welcome to this week's newsletter!

It's been a wonderful week as we've been enjoying the crisp Autumn weather. We began the week by introducing our weekly British Value of Individual Liberty, alongside thoughtful discussions in class about our Catholic Social Teaching principles.

October has arrived, a month dedicated to Mary. This month, our wonderful Ethos Ambassadors are hosting a Rosary Club in our beautiful prayer garden. We continue to look to Mary as a shining example of faith, hope, and love.

Year 5 and 6 had an exciting experience on Monday with their Lego Day — a fun and inspiring time that was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone!

A big thank you to our wonderful Year 5s who led a beautiful Celebration of the Word this week. We also appreciate our parents for joining us and supporting the event.

Our Mini Vinnies held their very first meeting today! They received their certificates, learned more about St. Vincent de Paul, and discussed ways we can support our local community. Watch this space for exciting initiatives!

Key Reminders for Next Week:

- **Thursday 9th:** Year 4 Celebration of the Word at 2:45 PM
- **Friday 10th:** World Mental Health Day

Mass continues Sunday at 11 AM.

Have a wonderful weekend.

Best wishes,

Mrs Urwin

Reminders

Reception class intake 2026/27

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



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 95.96%. Our target is 97%

Nursery: 99.53%

Reception: 91.67%

Year 1: 98.67%

Year 2: 93%

Year 3: 97.14%

Year 4: 96.8%

Year 5: 98.21%

Year 6: 94.29%

Well done to Nursery who won this week's attendance award!

Head Teachers Award

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

Nursery: Tillie for being a superstar in Nursery

Reception: Marco for always coming into school with a smile on his face

Year 1: Sadie for always coming to school with a smile and being so polite

Year 2: Noah for outstanding behaviour around school

Year 3: Ruby for being an outstanding role-model for others

Star of the Week

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

Nursery: Roman for happily engaging in new activities

Reception: Jack for walking sensibly around school

Year 1: Tobi for creating an excellent digital drawing in computing

Year 2: Joey for working very hard on his number bonds

Year 3: AJ for excellent reading

Year 4: Karan for consistently working hard in all areas

Year 5: Molly for excellent work with addition in maths

Year 6: Emmanuel for excellent analysis of metaphor used throughout our class reader

Awards of the week

Captain's Table: Isabella, Sienna, Aurora, Lewis, Lenny, Aria, Lucas, Grace

Mission Statement: Effie, Taylor, Romee, Finn, Eadie, Noah, Aria, Eeve

British Values: Lily, Alfie D, Teddy, Noah, Tejiri, Izzy R, Rose, Teeannah

Writer of the week: Archie, Arabella, Mya, Ruby, Elena, Maisie, Martha

House Points

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

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

In **Early Years**, the children have been learning about Fair Trade, which means making sure that the people who grow and make our food and products are treated fairly and paid properly for their hard work. As part of this, the children took part in a special Celebration of the Word linked to Fair Trade, where they talked about how we can make sure we do things fairly in school by being kind and sharing. Some of the children even visited the shop to buy Fair Trade products, which we then used to do some baking together, helping everyone understand the importance of fairness in the things we enjoy.





It has been a lovely week in **Year 1**. We have continued reading 'Beegu' by Alexis Deacon in class and have been finding the subject of sentences. We have been enjoying multiskills in PE and this week we were focussing on our rolling and throwing skills. We worked so well with our partners and as a team. We have been reading so well in phonics and impressing with our sound knowledge. In maths, we have started addition within 10 and we have been writing number sentences and identifying fact families. In history, we did some excellent drawing of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation on the television, and we loved seeing clips from when it was broadcast. What a busy week! Have a lovely weekend Year 1.





It has been another busy week in **Year 2!** In science, we explored how seeds grow under different conditions and made a surprising discovery—seeds don't always need light to start growing! We also investigated bulbs, examining their structure and learning that they often grow faster than seeds because they contain lots of stored food. In English, we began our new text 'Dougal's Deep Sea Diary'. We sequenced the story and discussed how Dougal felt when he made an amazing discovery. PE saw us continuing to develop our ball skills, with a focus on rolling the ball accurately to a partner. In history, we stepped back in time to 1666 and imagined what it was like during the Great Fire of London. We wrote diary entries as if we were Samuel Pepys, thinking about what we could see, hear and smell. Well done for another fantastic week, Year 2 - keep up the great work!





In English, **Year 3** have been exploring drama and enjoyed using freeze frames to show the different emotions Peter felt in Chapter 2 of their class reader, *The Railway Children*. They also had fun taking part in hot seating, stepping into Peter's shoes to better understand his thoughts and feelings. In maths, the class has been working on adding 1s, 10s and 100s to three-digit numbers, using base ten equipment to help with their understanding. In history, the children have been learning about what happened when someone died in Ancient Egypt. The process of embalming sparked a lot of interest and a few horrified faces too!



In **Year 4** this week we have been working hard in Maths, rounding numbers to the nearest 10, 100 and 1000. In English we have been extending sentences by changing noun phrases to extended noun phrases and adding fronted adverbials. In RE we looked at some more ancestors of Jesus and we learned about wise King Soloman. We acted in role and discussed how King Soloman might solve modern day problems such as plastic pollution.









Year 5 had a busy week and led their families in a wonderful celebration of the word. They developed the theme of friendship and shared all they do as a class family. They also reflected on what they will achieve throughout the year. In IT, they had the chance to programme the moon buggy they developed with the support of a visitor from RAF STEM. They really enjoyed the creativity and logic of the session. They developed their written calculations in Maths, focusing on column addition and subtraction. More of this next week. In English, they explored how to develop writing through action, dialogue and description and used these skills to write about Stanley's life in camp. A great week!



Year 6 started this week with a brilliant robotics session with Steve from RAF STEM. They built their own robots and programmed them to move and react to a light sensor via an iPad app. In maths, they have been using their times tables knowledge to tackle long multiplication problems. They have been looking at metaphors within our class reader in English. They have been discussing how the elephant, Ananda, is a metaphor for hope, strength and justice throughout the book. In art this week, the children have explored the artwork of Lorien Stern- an artist who creates ceramics. They have designed some of their own pieces based on her shark creations.





