

Newsletter 24th October 2025

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School



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

Dear parents, grandparents and parishioners,

It has been another fantastic half-term, full of wonderful achievements both inside and outside of school. I'm delighted to share that our school roof project is now complete—thank you so much for your patience and understanding throughout. We're looking forward to a return to normality after the break!

I'd like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our Trust's Estates Team and to Hodgson Sayers for their incredible support and professionalism. Their dedication ensured that school life continued smoothly and that learning was not disrupted.

We've also been thrilled with the feedback from our Early Years survey, which closed on Monday. It's been wonderful to hear how well our youngest children have settled into their routines and life at St Joseph's. Have a look at some of the wonderful feedback:

- *"The interaction via Class Dojo is invaluable."*

- *“The school has been so supportive in teaching and have been so lovely.”*
- *“Very helpful with any queries, questions—always there to discuss any needs if we need them met.”*
- *“There’s been great communication from teachers and teaching staff.”*
- *“Encouraging teaching and engaging activities make him want to keep coming back.”*

Well done to the Yellow Team – St Cuthbert!

They’ve earned this term’s house prize through fantastic teamwork, effort, and behaviour. It’s been amazing to see all the children working so hard and showing such positive attitudes across school. We’re incredibly proud of everyone — keep up the brilliant work!

STAR Project Spotlight

On Wednesday, we welcomed Bethany from Investing in Children to St Joseph’s as part of our STAR project. Bethany led a thoughtful session on anxiety, resilience, and the importance of sharing our worries with someone we trust. Her message really resonated with our children and supported the work we’re doing around emotional wellbeing. Later, Bethany met with our Student Counsellors to hear about life at St Joseph’s. She was so impressed by how confidently they spoke about their experiences — especially how happy and safe they feel in school.

Year 2 Celebration of the Word

This week, Year 2 led a beautiful **Celebration of the Word** with their families, focusing on **Mary**, as October is the month dedicated to her. The children spoke and sang with such reverence and joy. A big thank you to all the parents and carers who joined us.

Mini Vinnies Make a Difference

This week, our Mini Vinnies visited **PACT House** to deliver the tins we’ve been collecting as part of our community support initiative. It was a wonderful opportunity for them to see first-hand how their efforts are helping people in our local area. They were delighted to learn more about the work being done and proud to know they’re making a real difference. A huge thank you to everyone who donated — your kindness is truly appreciated!

Boys’ Football Team – A Proud Performance

Hard luck to our boys’ football team last night. They played their hearts out, delivering three strong performances that showcased their incredible teamwork, bravery, and resilience. Every player gave their all, and we couldn’t be prouder of the way they represented our school. Their determination and spirit were truly inspiring – well done, boys!

Autumn Disco Fun

We ended the term in style with our fantastic Autumn Disco! The children enjoyed every second — dancing, laughing, and celebrating together. It was wonderful to see so many smiles and so much energy in the room. A huge thank you to everyone who helped make it such a fun and memorable event!

As we come to the end of another busy and successful half term, I'd like to say a heartfelt thank you to all our wonderful staff for their continued hard work and commitment. Your dedication makes such a difference every day. A huge thank you also to our families and governors for your constant support. By working together, great things truly happen.

Wishing you all a restful and enjoyable break — we look forward to welcoming everyone back on Monday 3rd November!

Mass continues Sunday at 11am.

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>

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 96.03%. Our target is 97%

Nursery: 94.71%

Reception: 90.87%

Year 1: 99.31%

Year 2: 95.33%

Year 3: 97.5%

Year 4: 97.92%

Year 5: 96.67%

Year 6: 96.07%

Well done to Year 1 who won this week's attendance award!

Head Teachers Award

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

Nursery: Isaac for always being kind to his friends

Reception: Emmie for always being so polite

Year 1: Romee for always following the St Joseph's Way

Year 4: Daniel for outstanding behaviour

Year 6: Natalia for always showing great resilience

Star of the Week

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

Nursery: Ella for being such a kind and helpful member of our nursery class and for always trying her best in everything she does

Reception: Zeke for lots of lovely listening during carpet time

Year 1: George for working hard to remember finger spaces in his writing

Year 2: Mya for going above and beyond when completing her homework

Year 3: Nori for excellent ideas during poetry lessons this week

Year 4: Wealth for being an amazing friend to everyone and always working hard in lessons

Year 5: Aria for excellent answers working with prime numbers in Maths

Year 6: Eevee for some fantastic artwork based on The Arrival

Awards of the week

Captain's Table: Charlie, Harper, Livi, Daisy, Eadie, Imogen, Alice, Kacie-Leigh

Mission Statement: Tillie, Keela, Kaliah, Freddie Ca, Ollie, Thea-Pearl, Jude, Arthur

British Values: Isabella, Emmie, Ivie, Theo, Freddie, Thomas, Harriet, Layla

Writer of the week: Oliver, Beau, Lewis, Aria-May, Aria, Emily L, Ellen

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

This week we have been exploring Autumn in **Early Years**. The children loved bringing their Autumn treasure bags back into school and sharing the items with their class and telling us all about the lovely places they visited to find the treasures. We have been exploring pumpkins and loved describing how they felt especially when we were scooping the seeds out! We've also been busy doing lots of Autumn crafts and creating artwork using our Autumn treasures. We finished the week with a wonderful Autumn disco. We are so proud of all of Early Years for having such a wonderful first half term in school! Well done Early Years!









What a half term for **Year 1**! You have all settled in so well and taken the challenges of Year 1 head on. You should all be very proud. This week we continued learning about Baptism in RE and we did so well role playing a Baptism in class. We also explored some texts to celebrate Black History Month, we enjoyed reading about some very influential figures from throughout history. We have been exploring the differences between villages and towns and did some excellent work in this. We have impressed so much with our writing and using the conjunction 'and' to join ideas together in one sentence. Well done Year 1 and have a lovely half term.





Year 2 have had an exciting and busy week! In RE, the children re-enacted a baptism and explored the signs and symbols that make this sacrament so special. In English, they worked hard to complete a character description of the giant from 'Jim and the Beanstalk'. In maths, they have been practising adding ones to numbers with growing confidence. In history, the class learned all about Louis Pasteur and the incredible changes his discoveries brought to our world. They also took part in a very special Celebration of the Word linked to Mary, reflecting thoughtfully on its meaning. After all their hard work, Year 2 have truly earned a wonderful, relaxing holiday. Well done, Year 2!



This week, **Year 3** have started an exciting new topic in RE, where they have been exploring the different groups they belong to and how it feels to be part of them. These discussions are to help them prepare to learn about the sacrament of Baptism. In Art, the children have produced some excellent drawings showing relationships between people. They used charcoal to create impressive shading and effects. They have also continued to make great progress in their handwriting this half term and we are very proud of their hard work and determination. The week ended on a high note with a fantastic autumn disco, where everyone enjoyed dancing, singing and having lots of fun together. We wish you all a wonderful and restful half term break!





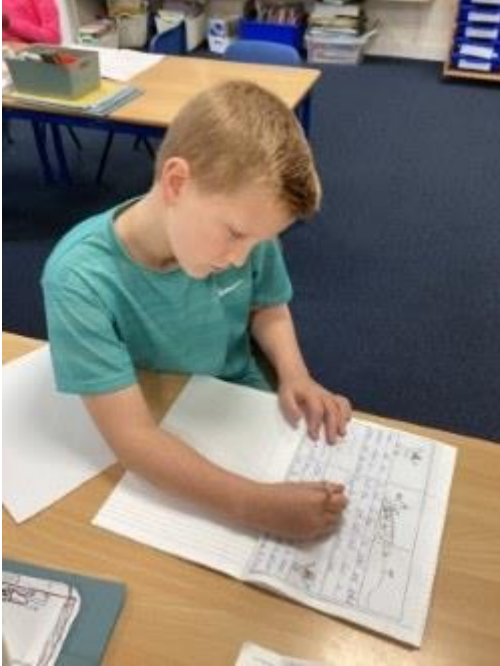


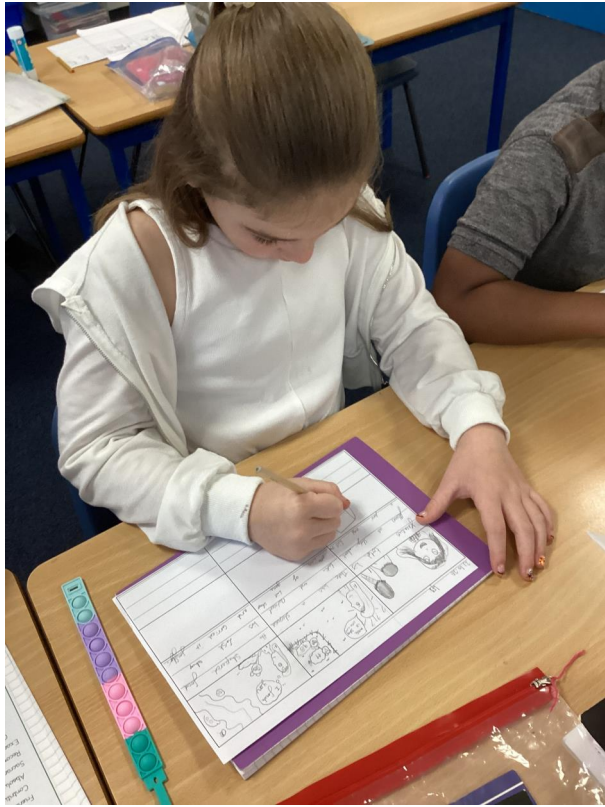




Our final week for this term has been a busy one! We enjoyed our Ukelele session earlier this week, where we learned to play some new songs using quick chord changes. In Science we carried out experiments that looked at evaporation and condensation. We continued our topic of reconciliation in RE, we looked at the parable of the lost sheep and how this links to God and how he feels about us. In English we continued to practise writing direct speech using correct punctuation and we used this to write conversations between the characters in *Wind in the Willows*. In Maths we continued to practise addition and subtraction with and without exchange. Enjoy a well-earned rest next week **Year 4!**

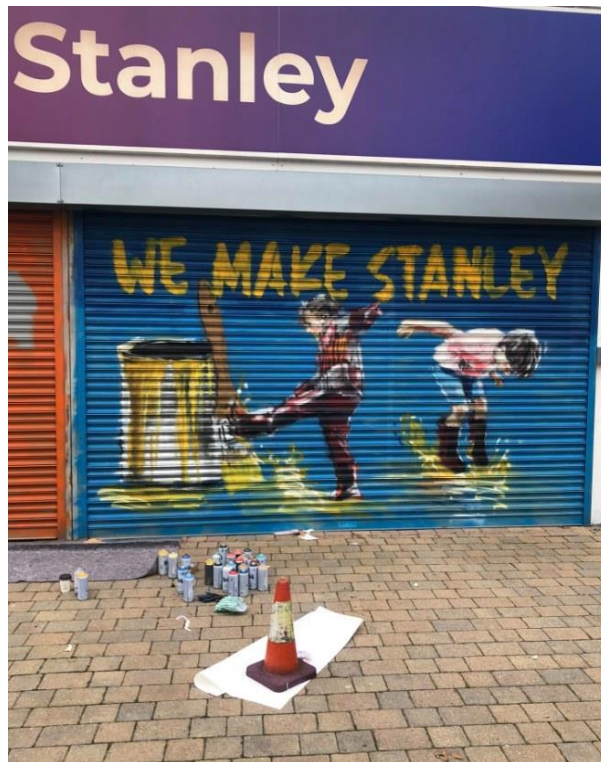








What a great half term we have had. This week, we loved seeing the new artwork that has appeared on Stanley Front Street shop shutters - seeing our artwork makes us very proud. We ended the week with a magic glove Science investigation. We explored if the would inflate due to carbon dioxide being produced. It did inflate - it looked rather creepy which matches a Halloween theme! We have thoroughly enjoyed our fitness sessions in PE - and our final lesson was great fun. **Year 5** - have a great half term break - relax but remember to read!





Year 6 have finished the half term the way they started it- working extremely hard! This week they have been completing some assessments in maths and English. They have done extremely well and have shown great progress since the start of the year. In art, they have been exploring how colour can change mood within artwork and have experimented with using graphite pencils and oil pastels within the same piece of artwork. They ended the week with a great Halloween disco!

