

Newsletter 21st November 2025

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School



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

Dear parents, grandparents and parishioners,

What a week it's been here at St Joseph's! We had a big change in the weather with some snow—the children were thrilled and loved spending time playing in it.

Our student councillors continued their peer mentoring training this week. They're doing brilliantly and are nearly ready to step into their mentoring roles.

Thank you to everyone who came along to Parents' Evening and to our SEN Review Meetings this week. I appreciate your patience, especially when some meetings ran over. It was great to connect with you about your children's amazing progress.

On Thursday evening, we held an outstanding careers fair in partnership with Karbon Homes. It was fantastic to meet so many people from different professions—electricians, surveyors, housing officers, and even the CEO. A massive thanks to Michelle Bulmer for organising it. Events like this really highlight to our children the wealth of opportunities available locally.

Thank you so much to all our families for your incredibly generous Children in Need donations last week. Your kindness and support mean a great deal to us — it will make a real difference and help us continue to support those in need. We raised a wonderful £81

As we look ahead, the four-week countdown begins! Please keep an eye on Arbor and Facebook for all the upcoming details. It's the most wonderful time of the year!

Mass continues Sunday at 11am.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Best wishes,

Mrs Urwin

Reminders

Year 1 Trip to Beamish

A reminder our year 1 children have their trip to Beamish on Monday 24th November, if your child would like a school packed lunch please complete the forms using the link by Monday 12 noon [Year 1- Beamish Museum – Fill in form](#) - *voluntary contributions can be made on Arbor. We are extremely grateful for any contribution!*

Christmas Fair- FRIDAY 28th NOVEMBER

It's that time of year again!! - We're excited to announce our Christmas Fair is back and bigger than ever! **Friday 28th November 3:30pm- 5pm.**

Nativity Performances

A reminder, entry will be by ticket only (there is no cost for tickets).To ensure everyone has the opportunity to attend, we kindly ask that you only attend one performance. If several family members would like to come, you are welcome to attend different performances.

Please complete the attached forms (by Monday 1st December) to indicate how many free tickets you require and for which performance. Tickets will be distributed from the school office by Friday 5th December

- EYFS Tuesday 9th December [EYFS Nativity- Tuesday 9th December – Fill in form](#)
- KS1 Thursday 11th December [KS1 Nativity- Thursday 11th December – Fill in form](#)
- KS2 Friday 12th December [KS2 Nativity- Friday 12th December – Fill in form](#)

Christmas Lunch

A reminder Christmas Lunch is on Wednesday 10th December, if you haven't already can you please complete the attached form using the link to state whether or not your child would like a Christmas Lunch. [Christmas Dinner- Wednesday 10th December – Fill in form](#)

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 95.91%. Our target is 97%

Nursery: 97%

Reception: 98.33%

Year 1: 97.93%

Year 2: 97.24%

Year 3: 96.21%

Year 4: 95%

Year 5: 89.63%

Year 6: 96.07%

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

Head Teachers Award

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

Nursery: Amara for being a little superstar every day!

Reception: Archie for always being so sensible in Breakfast Club

Year 1: Alice for always being so polite to Mrs Urwin

Year 4: Izzy A for impressing Mrs Urwin with her Spanish knowledge

Year 6: Teeannah for being a good role model in Breakfast Club

Star of the Week

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

Nursery: Charlie for being so enthusiastic during our space themed activities this week

Reception: Imogen for excellent effort in all that we do!

Year 1: Aurora for working so hard to improve her reading and phonics

Year 2: Aria-Rose for singing with such enthusiasm when practising for the Nativity

Year 3: Ollie for excellent work on the 3 times table this week

Year 4: Eliza for excellent problem solving in Maths.

Year 5: Masie for excellent writing about Flavia and her father.

Year 6: Arthur for some excellent work multiplying fractions this week.

Awards of the week

Captain's Table: Maeve, Faith, Ollie, Cobey, Francesca, Noah, Esme, Emmanuel

Mission Statement: Isaac, Ethan, Rita, Edith, Ruby, Izzy, Lucas, Teeannah

British Values: Effie, Oslo, Harvey, ruby, AJ, Olivia-Kate, Harriet, Matthew

Writer of the week: Freddy, Jak, Freddie Ca, Emily, Isabella, Aidan, Cade

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

This week in **Early Years** we have loved exploring the snow. From ice painting to building snow men and exploring freezing and melting, it has been wonderful. We even found some footprints and researched which animals we thought had made them! What a lovely week.







We've had an exciting and busy week in **Year 1**! Here's what we've been learning: This week, we explored what schools were like many years ago. The children compared classrooms from the past with those today, looking at differences in furniture, playgrounds and lessons. They loved seeing old photographs and imagining what it would be like to write on a chalkboard! n Science, we investigated our sense of smell. The children enjoyed a fun activity where they guessed different scents such as toothpaste, coffee, and garlic. We talked about why smell is important and how it helps us in everyday life. Our Geography lessons focused on the countryside. We discussed what features we might see, such as fields, hedges, animals, and farms. Oh yes, and Nativity practice is well under way! Such a busy week. Well done Year 1!







This week in **year 2**, the children explored conjunctions and how they are used to join ideas together. During music, they worked as a team to tap and sing along to the beat. In PE, they practised creating different shapes in gymnastics, showing great balance and control. In maths, the focus was on adding and subtracting in tens, using practical equipment to support their understanding. History lessons introduced the Wright brothers and their incredible invention, sparking discussions about how flight has changed the world. They also had fun in their science lesson testing a range of materials to see if they were waterproof. The children have also been excited to start preparing for our upcoming Nativity. Well done Year 2!









In English, **Year 3** have continued to read our class reader, Charlotte's web, and have been introduced to some new characters. We have also looked at subordinate clauses and have practised using these to add more information to our sentences. In maths, children have looked at the difference between sharing and grouping. They have practised multiplying and dividing by 3 and have impressed us with their problem-solving skills. Children have completed their Promises topic in RE. Within the topic, they have explored the sacrament of Baptism and have been able to describe and give reasons for the symbols used during the celebration of the sacrament. We finished with a thoughtful and meaningful discussion about how, like Jesus, we could let our light shine to help others.

This week in **Year 4**, we have continued reading our class text 'Matilda' we have looked at the characters Miss Trunchbull and Miss Honey and compared them to each other. In Maths we started our new topic of multiplication and division and in Science we looked at different animals and how we can group them by what they eat. We enjoyed another swimming lesson in PE where we worked extremely hard to build our confidence in the water and we

developed our skills in front crawl. We planned and delivered a very thoughtful class celebration of the word where we focused on the theme of forgiveness.









Year 5 have had a busy week as we lead up to Advent. We have explored our Christmas production songs and started playing tunes in our ukelele sessions. Our class text is an exciting mystery set in Ancient Rome...and this links to our History topic: who invaded and settled after Roman Britain? In Science, we are exploring life cycles and created our own with key stages of the human life cycle. In DT we are preparing to sew a Christmas decoration - so watch this space!

Another busy week in **Year 6**. The children to work hard in all curriculum areas and are making great progress. They continue to enjoy reading their class book 'The Nowhere Emporium', discovering new characters and using their imaginations to design their own 'wonders'. In maths, they continue to work on fractions. This week, focussing on multiplying

and dividing fractions and finding fractions of amounts. In RE, they have started their Advent topic. They have been exploring the expectations that are placed upon them and the expectations they have of others. They have explored scripture from Corinthians which encourages us to be brave in all we do. The children had the brilliant opportunity to attend the Karbon Homes career fair on Thursday. They chatted to people from lots of different areas of expertise, listening to what they do in their roles and what qualifications are needed for their jobs. On Friday, some of our Year 6 children led KS2 in a celebration of the word to mark the end of our Jubilee year of hope.



