

# Newsletter 28th November 2025

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School



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

Dear parents, grandparents and parishioners,

What a brilliant week it has been. We gathered as a school family on Monday morning. This Celebration of the Word assembly, the last of the Liturgical Year, honoured the feast of Christ the King. Jesus is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords; the good thief knew this, and his faith saved him. Through the gift of faith, one day we too can be with Jesus in paradise. *“Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.” And He said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.”* (Luke 23:43)

Our Year 1 children had an amazing time in Beamish, learning about the old and the new, the past and the present. Their behaviour was outstanding and we are so proud of them.

On Wednesday we held our final parents’ evening of the term. Thank you for coming—I hope you found the meetings useful. Next term, there will be another opportunity for you to come into school to look at your children’s books with them.

Our student councillors are now fully trained as Peer Mentors. They will begin their new roles in January with a focus on mental health and wellbeing. Congratulations to them all.

On Friday we held our annual Christmas Fair, and there was such a wonderful buzz in the hall—an amazing time was had by all. Thank you to our fantastic PTA for their hard work and support, and to everyone who attended. Family and community are what make our school such a special place.

As part of our ongoing **STAR Project**, Key Stage 2 children will be taking part in an **Autism Awareness Workshop** next week (Tuesday 2nd December), led by a team of experienced specialists. This is an exciting opportunity for our pupils to learn more about autism in a supportive and age-appropriate way. Understanding autism helps children appreciate that everyone is unique, with different strengths and challenges. By learning about neurodiversity, we aim to promote **empathy, respect, and inclusion**—values that are at the heart of our school community. These sessions will encourage pupils to celebrate differences and develop the social awareness needed to create a kinder, more tolerant world. Following the main workshop, **Year 5 pupils will take part in a class-based session** to explore the topic further through interactive activities and discussion. We believe this will be a **positive and valuable learning experience** for all children. However, if you do not wish your child to participate or you have any concerns, please let us know. Thank you for supporting us in helping every child understand and embrace diversity.

With only three weeks left of this term, please keep an eye on **Arbor** and our **Facebook page** for key reminders and updates.

- **Tuesday 2nd December:** Autism Awareness Workshop
- **Wednesday 3rd December:** Drive-In Christmas Movie Night
- **Thursday 4th December:** Advent Mass at 10:00am
- **Thursday 4th December at 2:00pm:** Coffee Afternoon focusing on anxiety and resilience – all parents are welcome.

Thank you for your continued support as we head into this busy and exciting time of year!

Mass continues Sunday at 11am.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Best wishes,

Mrs Urwin

## Reminders

### Important Reminder: Reporting Absences

To report your child's absence, please **telephone the school office** or **leave an absence message on the phone system**.

For safeguarding reasons, we **cannot accept absence notifications via Arbor or email**.

Thank you for helping us keep our children safe.

### **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 94.26%. Our target is 97%**

**Nursery:** 97.9%

**Reception:** 97.08%

**Year 1:** 91.38%

**Year 2:** 97.93%

**Year 3:** 92.76%

**Year 4:** 97.27%

**Year 5:** 91.85%

**Year 6:** 91.43%

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

## Head Teachers Award

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

**Nursery:** Lily for always being so polite and kind to her friends

**Reception:** Archie for always having a smile on his face

**Year 3:** Harriet for completing excellent English work

**Year 4:** Freddie S for impressing Mrs Urwin with his English

**Year 6:** Alfie for excellent singing this week

## Star of the Week

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

**Nursery:** Jensen for always being so sensible and trying his best in everything he does

**Reception:** Keela for her happy, enthusiastic nature- she always puts a smile on our face!

**Year 1:** Phoebe for always being so helpful to everyone

**Year 2:** Chester for always working hard and being a caring friend

**Year 3:** eadie for being a kind and caring friend

**Year 4:** David for excellent recall of times table facts

**Year 5:** Thea for excellent descriptive writing

**Year 6:** Jacob for some excellent persuasive writing

## Awards of the week

**Captain's Table:** Isabella, Efetobore, Jak, Jack, Mila, Elena, Emily R, Sophie

**Mission Statement:** Ellis, Archie, Sadie, Maddison, Aria-May, Freddie S, Aidan, Shyla-Mae

**British Values:** Rudy, Tiaraoluwa, Desmond, Seb, Lenny, India, Rio, Coby

**Writer of the week:** Francesca, Lakelon, Alice, Isla, Aria, Thomas, Layla

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

This week in **EYFS** we have enjoyed talking about celebrating, particularly birthdays, as we approach Christmas Day, Jesus' birthday. The children were excited to find out that it is Freddy Teddy's birthday! We looked at the things that Freddy Teddy had ready to celebrate and loved sharing how they have celebrated their birthdays "We could bake the cake to celebrate their birthday.", "It's a candle to put on the cake and blow them out!" As our topic goes on, we look forward to learning all about Advent, during this very special time of year.









This week, **Year 1** enjoyed a fantastic trip to Beamish Museum. The children explored what life was like in the past, visiting old-fashioned houses, shops, and even a school! They loved seeing how people lived without modern technology and comparing it to life today. In maths, we have been learning about 2D and 3D shapes. The children have been naming shapes, describing their properties, and sorting them into groups. We've also been spotting shapes in the classroom and around school. Our geography lessons have focused on how to stay safe in the countryside. We've talked about following footpaths, closing gates, respecting animals, and leaving no litter behind. The children have shared great ideas about how to enjoy nature responsibly. We have started reading *Mog's Christmas Calamity* by Judith Kerr. The children are loving Mog's adventures, and it has got us right in the Christmas mood! Well done Year 1 for a brilliant week.







**Year 2** have had a fantastic week of learning! In English, the children continued to explore 'The Bear and the Piano', and practised using conjunctions to extend sentences. In maths, they worked hard on column addition, adding two 2-digit numbers with increasing confidence. In RE, the children completed thoughtful work about the Advent wreath, while in DT they showed amazing creativity by making their own finger puppets. In history, we learned about Rosa Parks and the incredible change she inspired in America. Finally, our Nativity rehearsals are going brilliantly—we can't wait to share the performance with you soon! Well done, Year 2!



This week, in maths, children have been working on multiplication and division facts for the 3-, 4- and 8-times tables. They have applied their knowledge of these facts when reasoning and problem solving. In English, children have completed detailed character analyses of Wilbur and Templeton and have begun working on punctuating direct speech. In RE, we have begun our Advent topic, Visitors. Children have enjoyed talking about their own personal experiences of welcoming visitors to their homes and have explored the joys and demands that visitors bring. In PE, the children have been experimenting with different ways to travel in gymnastics and have impressed us with their creativity and enthusiasm.





This week, **Year 4** have continued reading Matilda and looking at the main characters. We have started to look at the writing style of Roald Dahl and the different ways he has used descriptive devices to picture the characters in our heads. In Maths we have looked at Multiplication and continued learning our 6 times tables. In Geography we have looked at population and parts of the world that are densely populated compared to other parts that are sparsely populated. We continued to make great progress in this week's swimming lesson and in RE we continued to look at advent and why gifts are special.

What a busy week in **Year 5!** The children have been rehearsing for our KS2 nativity and are quite the performers! They have been sewing this week to make Christmas decorations. In computing, they have explored recording and editing- exploring how to take images and videos accurately. In Geography they are exploring oceans- looking at natural disasters that occur at sea. In History we have looked at the Anglo- Saxon invasion.

Another hard working week in **Year 6!** They've finished their fractions topic in maths and have produced some excellent work to a really high standard. In English, they have been looking at persuasive writing- focussing on letters. They have analysed the techniques used in persuasive writing and have planned their own persuasive letter based on our class novel. In History, they've looked at how Britain became a Christian nation with the help of Constantine and King Aethelbert. In science, they continued their light topic- seeing how they could increase reflection. They investigated this by making their own periscopes







