



Newsletter: January 2017

Dear Parents / Carers,

We hope you have all had a great start to the New Year and that you are keeping to your new year's resolutions! Can you believe it has been a whole year since we opened our Parents & Toddlers Club and since we took over responsibility for our school kitchen? Well our Parents & Toddlers Club continues to be very popular and the children are definitely enjoying the variety of dishes offered on our school menus - and they are getting better at trying new vegetables! This week is 'Asian Week' – check out the menu on our school website. We are looking forward to the Indian, Chinese and Thai dishes that cleverly coincide with Chinese New Year, which is at the end of this week on Saturday 28th January!

Please read on, for some important information in our first newsletter of the year.....

Advent Project

Thank you for all your support during our Advent project. We were inundated with generous gifts for our senior citizens and Age Concern could not thank you enough. Every year, we are overwhelmed by your support – thank you.



The Wednesday Word...

We are continuing to purchase and send home the 'Wednesday Word' every week in 2017. This is a Gospel resource that contains the adapted Gospel reading from the coming Sunday's Mass, with a brief explanation of the key messages. There is a prayer that we encourage our children to say at home and some fun activities, such as a word search and colouring pictures, linked to the Gospel message. The back of the sheet has a further simplified version of the reading for younger children. We hope that you will share this with your children and family and enjoy the activities together.



Nativity DVD orders

The Reception and KS1 Nativity DVD can be ordered from the school at main reception. If you wish to place an order, then this can be done via a member of our admin. team. The DVD will be available during mid-February. Remember, when you collect it you will be required to sign an agreement that the DVD is for personal viewing use only, and that it will not be copied or shared publicly. Payment may be made in advance or upon collection. The cost of the DVD is £7.00.



School Calendars

Our school calendars are still on sale for the calendar year 2017! They include artwork from each class, the school term dates and our annual school events! They are a bargain at only £6.00 per copy! Orders can be made through the school office ☺

Parents Suggestions and Comments

We have had a suggestion that the children in our nursery who transfer to Reception in Sep. 2017 only have a three day settling-in period rather than a five day period. This suggestion echoes what we are hearing more and more often: that there is an increasing pressure on working parents. We have never been so in demand for After School Club places too and this again is for the same reason. Whilst we understand these pressures and recognise the need to try and accommodate requests we don't want to compromise the children's experiences. If we were to simply increase the numbers attending our ASC, we would not be able to offer the children the same attention, experiences and quality care and provision. With

regards to settling-in our YR children – the principles are the same. It is about the children who attended our nursery, becoming gradually familiar with new routines and expectations, along with other children from different settings, in a way that is positive and manageable. It is very tiring getting up early (after a summer break) and it requires a lot of energy and concentration taking on board all the new information they are given as well as getting to know new friends. The children need the shorter days to adjust positively rather than become too overwhelmed, tired and unable to cope with the demands of the day. When young children tire, as I am sure you are aware, there is no reasoning with them after this point! When it is time to set the settling-in timetable, we will do what is best for the children first and foremost – this philosophy has always been our school's success. Parental networking may help with work pressures during the settling-in period – this is something we will promote at our welcome meeting for our new intake in Sep. 2017.

Reminders...

Term Dates

The spring half-term is from **Monday 13th Feb. – Friday 17th Feb. 2017**

School will finish at the usual time of 3:15pm on **Friday 10th Feb. 2017**

The children return, still in their winter uniform, on **Monday 20th Feb. 2017**

Pupil Attendance

We had our annual register inspection this term and we are pleased to tell our parents that the level of attendance within the school remains high (97.4% overall). Please continue to ensure you support the school by calling the office if your child is going to be absent on the morning of the absence and ensuring that any absence is followed up by a letter addressed to the class teacher. Please remember to check term dates before booking any family holidays.

Children who are brought to school by an adult should be accompanied all the way to the pupil entrance – please do not send children running down George Row on their own for obvious health, safety and welfare reasons. Further, we will be reminding all our children to **walk** along George Row before entering school in the mornings, running is dangerous for the individuals and other members of our community present on the pavements at this time. In the event your child is late for school, please **do not encourage him/her to run** as this does not help the situation – best practice is to always arrive at school 5-10 minutes before the official start time of 8:55am. There is supervision in the school playground from 8:40am.



Medication

We are unable to administer medication to children unless it is prescribed by your GP. Please ensure you complete a medication permission form, which can be obtained from school reception, prior to the medication being sent to school.

Uniform

During adverse weather conditions, (heavy rain, frost or snow) please remember the children **can** wear boots to school. However, they should carry their school shoes with them in a carrier bag so that they can change into them once they arrive at school. Please ensure that children are wearing black shoes in school, not trainers or ankle boots, thank you.



Please ensure your children wrap up warm with the necessary accessories during cold periods – hats, gloves and scarves! Novelty and brightly coloured accessories are discouraged while navy blue and school items are encouraged. Please also remember laces on school shoes must be black – coloured laces are not permitted. Lastly, please label your child's school coat; there is a name label that can be written on, in the inside of the pocket and around the neck of school coats purchased through the office.

Please ensure items of uniform taken in error are returned promptly to the school – many thanks.



Please remember if you have any concerns or queries at any time, do not hesitate in making an appointment through the school office to see your child's class teacher or a member of management – we are always happy to listen and help where we can.

St. Joseph's School Staff