

# Welcome Back!

Newsletter: September 2015

Dear Parents,

Welcome Back! We hope you all enjoyed the summer – it was fabulous seeing Usain Bolt, Jessica Ennis-Hill, Greg Rutherford and Mo Farah achieving their goals in the World Championships! We were also impressed at the children's knowledge of this in our whole school assembly too! It has been a busy start to the year, but a very successful one – the new reception and nursery children are settling well and have already made many friends among the older children in the school! Thank you to our whole parent community for assisting with our settling-in procedures.

## Dates for Your Diary

Please find attached a copy of the term dates for this academic year – 2015/16. Also, we have set dates for all our meetings and events for this year. You will find these attached. Please keep them in a safe place for future reference and make a note of any dates relevant for you. We are pleased to inform you that the school photograph dates have now been confirmed as has the Y6 Aylesford visit, although this is a week later than previously detailed.

As in the past two years, we have two performances for our YR + KS1 Nativity Performance: the first performance is on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December and this will be ticketed for our reception parents. The second performance is on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December and will be ticketed for our KS1 parents (parents of children in years 1+2). This is to ensure all parents can watch the performance in comfort. More details will follow.

## Uniform

All children should be wearing the full winter school uniform including black shoes and a navy coat as required. Please note that black coats are no longer accepted as part of school uniform. Our girls in years 1-6 are allowed to wear culottes provide they are of a 'skirt' style. Please remember jewellery, including stud earrings, are not permitted. Shaved hair patterns, coloured or unusual hairstyles, including the use of gel, are not permitted and children should tie back long hair during the school day. A number of children have returned to school with subtle contrasting hairstyles – please ensure hair length is a consistent length over your child's head. Please note that children are required to wear shoes, not trainers or black trainers. Children in the nursery are required to wear a school tracksuit and suitable footwear (summer dresses can be worn if we have warm weather in September).



Children in Reception and Years 1+2 should have a rectangular book bag for their reading books, homework and school letters. The rucksack is their PE bag. Children in Years 3-6 use the school ruck sack as their main school bag for books, letters, homework, etc. They should use the small, school holdall as their PE bag. Children in the nursery only require a rectangular book bag.

## Breakfast Club

We would like to remind our parents that we run a Breakfast Club on the school premises from 8.00am onwards. Prices are £2 per day and we are open Monday to Friday. There is a wide variety of food available including, cereals, fruit and fruit juice, toast with a variety of spreads and hot choices such as beans or scrambled eggs on toast. If you would like your child to join the Breakfast Club, please ask at the school office for a Breakfast Club form. Once the form is completed, your child can hand it in directly to the Breakfast Club Manager (Mrs Reeve) on the first day your child joins.



## Administration Notices

### Absences

Please remember to contact the school on the first day of your child's absence and then subsequently for each day they are absent. On their return to school, please ensure you have sent in a note explaining the reason for absence. The note needs to be addressed to the class teacher. Nursery fees are still applicable even if your child is absent, which is the policy for our After School Club also.



### Pupil Collections

Please inform the school office or your child's class teacher if somebody different will be collecting your child from school. We are unable to allow a child to leave the school premises if an adult is unknown to our staff.

### Packed Lunches/School Dinners

Nursery and Reception children are required to have a school dinner during this academic year.

Children in year groups 1-6, inclusive, have the option of school dinners or packed lunches. However, this must be a choice for a half-term period. Therefore, if your child is to have a school dinner, s/he must remain having school dinners for the duration of the half-term. If your child chooses to have a packed lunch, s/he will remain having a packed lunch for the duration of the half-term. This ensures our admin. team can effectively organise routines and systems with our catering company.



The government and local authority are continuing to fund school meals for children in Years Reception to Year 6. However, if you are eligible for free school meals, independent of funded meals, please ensure you still complete the relevant forms from the school office to ensure you receive all benefits applicable. Parents of nursery children are still required to pay for school dinners - please remember to send your child's dinner money into school in a money pocket on the Monday of each week, stating your child's name, the date and class. Please also ensure the amount enclosed is recorded on the money pocket. School money pockets are available from the school office at £1 for a pack of 10. The cost of school dinners for this September is £1.75 per day and £8.75 per week. However, our school meals suppliers will be increasing the cost of school dinners to £1.90 per day and £9.50 per week from 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2015.

### School Website

We are working hard to ensure our school website is current and useful. We regularly upload school letters and photographs of the children completing different activities, workshops and school trips. The website is available to you on tablets and smart phones, as well as your PCs. We suggest that you save the site as a favourite, so that it is quickly and easily available to you. The new website address is: [www.stjosephsgeorgerow.org](http://www.stjosephsgeorgerow.org)

We extend our thanks to Ms Hardiman who has continued to lead the development of our school website.



### Staffing Notices

#### Goodbye...



We are sad to say goodbye to Miss O'Sullivan, a valued and experienced teaching assistant who has been with us for 9 years! Miss O'Sullivan does not want to leave us, but is very much needed by her family at this time. We send her our love and best wishes for the future.

We will also be saying goodbye, temporarily, to Miss Tran in December as she begins maternity leave! That's right, Miss Tran is expecting a new addition to her family! Congratulations!



## Welcome...

We are very pleased to welcome Miss Allen, Miss Walsh and Mr Jones to our teaching staff and they are all already well-established already within the staff team! Also, it is Mr Dixon's first week with us too! Mr Dixon is our new music specialist who will be teaching music lessons in the school. He is delighted to be joining us and we hope to develop our musicality as a school with his input!



We would also like to welcome Mrs Wu, Mrs Brown, Mrs Sommergyll, Mr Okakwu, Mrs Wilson and Mrs Edmond to our staff teaching assistant team. They have been busy getting to know the school geography, the staff and children's names and our daily routines! And last, but not least, we would like to welcome our new lunchtime supervisors: Miss Wheeler, Mrs Webb and Mrs Sweeney! They have already been introduced to our lunchtime routines for both fine weather and wet weather!

## Community Notices

### Fr Graham Preston



We were sad to hear of Fr Graham Preston's news last weekend. He has been diagnosed with a form of dementia and is obviously concerned about the years ahead. Please send him wishes and prayers every day and take the time to remember all who are battling serious illnesses and conditions at this time.

## WWI Commemoration



Next year, as part of our ongoing World War 1 commemoration we are focusing on 'People' using texts, written sources and family history. We would like to make the period and people 'real' and relevant for our pupils through telling their stories. We would very much like your child to share any family history you have, from men or women, who were involved with the First World War.

Additionally, we have a little information about a former pupil, Harry Hinkins, who served in World War 1. We would very much like to know if any of his family still live in the local area, or indeed whether any of our pupils are descendants of the Hinkins family, in order to commemorate him next year.

If you have any information to share please send it into the office with your name/child's name and class – we will photocopy and return all items.

## Christmas Cards

Following the success of last year, we are continuing the scheme where our children can design their very own Christmas cards, which parents can then order! The children will design their cards in class and then an order form will be sent home. The minimum order amount is only £4.00, however there is no obligation for you to place orders. More details will follow.



## St. Joseph's Parents & Toddlers!

Yes – the rumours are correct! We are planning to open our very own Parents & Toddlers Centre by early November 2015! Mrs O'Mahony and Mrs O'Connell will be managing our new venture and are eagerly preparing our school space! We aim to use the area below the Felton Hall House Development – these new rooms are known to us in school as 'Tower' and 'Thames' rooms. We are also aiming to make our outdoor area available for use during Parents & Toddler time and are currently looking into building a pram shelter. More details will follow regarding dates, times, provision and child ages.

We did mention this new initiative to members of our parent community who attended our Nursery and Reception Welcome Meetings – thank you to those who have already made offers regarding volunteering and donations! Both are very much appreciated!

## Wet Wednesday Appeal

Thank you to everyone for supporting our 'Wet Wednesday Appeal' last academic year in July. We planned a fun day of activities such as wearing blue, appreciating the availability of clean water in the UK and taking part in water quizzes! And we even beat our target by raising £620! Many thanks to all – the water tanks for the Ivor Leigh School in Sierra Leone are being purchased and installed as you read this. We know the people in the Sierra Leone community will very much appreciate clean water to drink and wash with – thank you for making a difference 😊



If you have any questions regarding the items in this newsletter then please do not hesitate to speak to Miss Alford or Mr Macauley.

Please contact the school office for appointments, which can be made throughout the year.

*St. Joseph's School Staff*

