



Head-lines

As with National newspapers, there is no escaping that Coronavirus continues to dominate the headlines. In this first edition of the 2020-21 St Joseph's news, Coronavirus will certainly be having a significant amount of column space. However, it is important to remember that with everything going on, our reason to be here in school is stronger than ever - it has been so wonderful to have the children back this half term and welcome our new intake for 2020-21. There has been lots of 'normal' going on, lots of things to celebrate and plenty to update you on. I hope you enjoy this first half term St Joseph's News, and I wish you a lovely, peaceful half term break.

Mr Turner

Coronavirus

I wanted to start with a brief lead article about the current situation. We began the year fully prepared for the challenges ahead. Over the Summer, Risk Assessments were written and implemented, staff were trained and additional resources and equipment purchased. As part of our system of controls and in order to reduce contact with others, we implemented a 'bubble' system with staggered drop off, collection and lunch times. As the situation locally has progressed, additional measures have been implemented, such as requesting masks be worn by staff and parents at the busy times of drop off and collection. I am sure we are all also well aware that sadly, owing to increased rates of infection, the Wirral and Liverpool areas have had even further tougher restrictions imposed. I have also had to communicate to you that we have had positive test results within our community, which have resulted in some children having to go into a period of self isolation. I just want to reassure you that everything remains in place to minimise risks as far as possible. The bubble system are designed to

minimise disruption, but it was inevitable that at some point, they would have to come into play.

The most important headline is that the children have adapted incredibly well and are happy to be back with friends. The teacher's have spent time going through the measures with the children and how important it is that we all do our part. The new systems of distancing, regular hand washing, and staying alert have been well understood, and enabled us to keep school as normal as possible, with these controls built in. It has been absolutely wonderful to be back working with the children and doing what we love to do - supporting them as they learn, grow and develop.

As the advice from local and national government continues to change, we will respond accordingly. But for now, I just wanted to give you the reassurance that the children are well, the measures are in place, and if and when there is a suspected or confirmed case, all steps are taken to keep everyone safe.

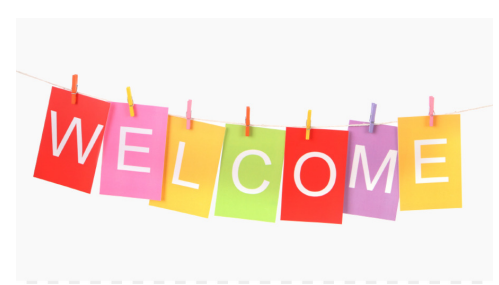
I would also like to thank you for your ongoing support. I am aware that over this last half

term, a lot of information has been thrown at you. I, and all the staff and children, thank you for reading and acting on any requests to help keep our school as Covid secure as possible. I would just like to finish this article by giving a couple of reminders of the key measures.

- Masks - as directed by Public Health, all adults are requested to wear masks or face coverings when dropping off/collecting.
- Distancing - we request that all adults maintain distancing on the playground, and as soon as you have dropped off or collected, please leave.
- Information sharing - it is really important you keep us informed of any developments within your household as they could have implications for action we need to take. This is particularly relevant if your child is already off school as you may not think to inform us.
- Google classroom - please do ensure your child has logged on to Google Classroom and contact us if you have any issues

Welcome!

A very warm welcome to our new starters this half term - Heidi, Andrea, Maximillian, Libby, Isabelle, Daisy, Patrick, Benjamin, Rex, Benjamin, Theo, Liliana, George, Imogen, Joe, Lucas, Sophia, Jack, Joseph, Jasxon, Bobby, Thomas, Riche, Ada, George, Lucy, Mark, Eve, Tiger, Joseph, Freddie, Daisy-Rose, Eire, Sofia, Elsie, Hayden, Samuel, Judah, Alfie, Jessica, Liam, Jacey-Mae, Elsie, Isabella, Oscar, Jake, Esme, Lara, Max, Parker, Krishvin, Austin, Anthony, Lilith, Skarlette, Violet, Harley, Harriet, Raluca, Jasmine. I hope you have all settled in well and are all enjoying being part of the St Joseph's family. It is lovely getting to know you and I am sure you will enjoy it here.



Parents Evening

Owing to the Coronavirus situation, we will be unable to hold face to face parents evening appointments. We are in the process of designing the system so that you can have the opportunity to talk to your child's teacher early in November. We will be in touch next half term with the arrangements.

Year 6 Prefects and Play Leaders

Earlier this term we opened the annual application window for our Year 6 Prefects and Play Leaders. Stage one of the application process was for the interested candidates to arrange a nomination and then complete an application form detailing how they meet the requirements of the position. I will be reading the applications over the half term and then invite some children to stage two - the interview! I look forward to telling you who our Prefects and Play Leaders for 2020-21 are in the next half term's newsletter

Curriculum Development

As part of our return to school, we have ensured plenty of time has been given to allow the children to reconnect with each other and to process what has occurred over the last few months. Running alongside this focused PSHE has been our usual curriculum - the teacher's have been extremely vigilant with their Assessment for Learning as we know a lot of parents had been anxious about 'gaps'. The staff plan based on where the children are at, so please be reassured that any 'gaps' are identified and covered. However, so far, all staff have been extremely proud of how much the children have retained and are finding on the whole that the children are accessing the correct programmes of study.

We continue to make improvements to our curriculum offer and each teacher is allocated a specific subject to lead and develop across the school. We continue using **Pathways to Write** as a key scheme to deliver writing, and **Maths No Problem** for mathematics in Y1-6. This year we are all very excited as we have a few new approaches to also implement. Firstly, we are running **Pathways to Read** to deliver our reading curriculum including spelling and comprehension. We are in the process of completely overhauling our approach to Early Reading and Phonics and will be implementing a scheme called **Read, Write, Inc** (more to follow on this next half term). Lastly, the Government have made it statutory for Primary Schools to deliver **Relationships Education** from the Summer term 2021 so we will be writing to you with more information on the scheme we will be using.

F1 30 hours

From September we have been offering 30 hours (all day provision) for F1 Nursery children. These are available either for parents who meet the Government's funded criteria, or can be 'bought' as top up sessions. If you or someone you know would be interested, please take a look at our website - 'Joining us' for more information.

Parent App

Our intention is to become paperless for all news and letters. Our aim is to be completely paperless by the Summer term. We will be using our Parent App for all alerts, news, letters and communication. If you haven't installed the app already, please do speak to a member of the office team who will help get you set up. Please can you also ensure that where there is more than one person who needs the app (for example where parents are separated) that multiple users are registered and use it.

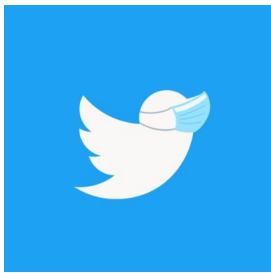
Foundation Governors

We have vacancies for Foundation Governors for Saint Joseph's Catholic Primary School. Foundation Governors represent the Bishop and so must be practising Catholics and genuinely believe in the value and importance of Catholic Schools. Is this you? Are you able to offer your services? If so please contact Mr Turner or Georgie Cragg-James (Chair of Governors) by emailing schooloffice@stjosephs-birkenhead.wirral.sch.uk More information about Foundation Governors can also be found at <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/education/governors/governor-vacancies>

Clubs

Our first priority these last few weeks has been to settle the children back in and ensure that all of our new systems worked and make any adjustments to timings etc. We therefore have not operated any additional clubs or activities, other than Firbobs operating for those who do require it. We are now at a stage where we want to start gradually reintroducing some of our 'extras' as we believe these are a really important way of going that extra mile in what we offer. Mr Nayland has started a Year 6 football club, and Mrs Page will shortly be sending out details of a Christmas club for Year 1. Miss Ward is also offering a Y4 card making club - information to follow shortly. Keep a look out over the next half term as more start up.

Twitter



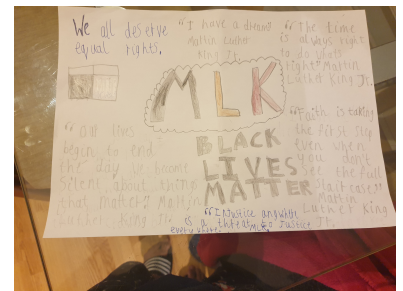
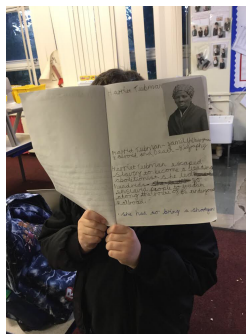
Owing to Covid, sadly we can't invite you into school in the same way we used to. But there is so much going on and so much we are proud of.

Please do follow us on Twitter

@stjosephsbh as we tweet lots of pictures of what the children are up to

Black History Month

The children have had some really powerful lessons, learning about some key people and events in the history and development of black culture. There has been lots of really great learning, and the children even went on to produce their own biographies and fact files.



Tier Three information poster

Now that the Government have introduced a tiered approach to measures across the country, and as Wirral fall under the highest level, we have attached the information poster to the reverse of this newsletter to give you all of the information on one page.

Thought for the term

"Like the Disciples in the Gospel we were caught off guard by an unexpected, turbulent storm. We have realised that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together, each of us in need of comforting the other" Pope Francis



LOCAL COVID ALERT LEVEL

VERY HIGH

Social Contact



1 household / bubble in most locations, indoors and outdoors. Rule of six applies in some outdoors settings like parks, public gardens and sports courts.

Weddings and Funerals



Up to 15 guests for weddings and up to 30 guests for funerals. 15 for wakes and related ceremonies. Wedding receptions not permitted.

Overnight Stays



Those in area advised against overnight stays in other parts of UK. People outside area advised against overnight stays in area.

Working from home guidance



Work from home where possible.

Shopping and Retail



Open.

Leisure and gyms



Any closures or additional restrictions subject to consultation.

Hospitality



Pubs and bars must close except where they operate as a restaurant, meaning they can only serve alcohol with a substantial meal. Further closures subject to consultation.

Entertainment and tourist attractions



Any closures / additional restrictions subject to consultation. Nightclubs and adult entertainment remain closed.

Education



Schools, FE colleges open. Universities must reflect wider restrictions with option to move to greater online provision.

Healthcare Services



Open.

Residential Care



Closed to external visitors other than in exceptional circumstances.

Travel and Transport



May continue to travel to open venues, but reduce number of journeys where possible. Avoid travel where possible in or out of the affected area with exceptions including work and school.

Sporting Activity



Organised sport / licensed physical activity allowed in outdoor settings. Indoor organised sport must follow social contact rules (other than youth or disabled sport).

Worship



Open, subject to social contact rules.

Childcare



Registered and wraparound childcare. Supervised activities permitted in private homes. Children's groups permitted. Childcare bubbles for under 14s.

Youth Clubs and Activities



Permitted.

There are three simple actions we must all do to keep on protecting each other:



Wash hands
keep washing your hands regularly



Cover face
wear a face covering in enclosed spaces



Make space
stay at least 2 metres apart - or 1 metre with a face covering or other precautions

For more information and detailed guidance visit:
[gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)