



HFCMAT NEWS

Christmas Edition

Thank you

It is hard to believe that we are at the end of the autumn term and 2020 is nearly behind us.

Staff across all our schools have been working hard to keep the term as normal as possible but we all know how challenging the year has been. I do hope that as we come into the Christmas break, you are all able to take some time to relax and recharge with your loved ones.

I would like to thank all the staff at our schools.

The cleaning teams have been working tirelessly to keep school safe and ensure everywhere is cleaned and safe. Without their work, we would have been unable to open to the 3643 children who are in our care.

The support staff have ensured offices run smoothly and children are supported in their learning. Site teams have looked after the logistics across our schools and kitchen staff have worked flexibly to ensure everyone is catered for.

Teaching staff have worked throughout the year since the first lockdown began and are helping our young people catch up with any learning that may have been lost through the year. I know they will work relentlessly to help all our young people achieve in 2021 and beyond.

Our leaders have been directing the work of all other colleagues ensuring at all times that our schools remain safe places to be in these very uncertain times. Throughout the lockdown and up to this week, they have ensured schools remained open for key workers as they supported the national efforts to overcome this virus. Huge thanks also goes to all those key workers in our community who have given so much over the year.

I would also like to thank parents across our schools for bearing with us as we have navigated these waters. I know some difficult decisions have had to be made and understand the inconvenience this will have caused. This will of course extend into January as we respond to guidance from the government around testing in secondary schools. I hope that beyond this and as a new vaccine comes, we will have more stability in 2021 to build on what we have created this year.

For those new parents and pupils to our schools, we welcome you and look forward to getting to know you better over the coming months and years. We hope as we move on from COVID we will be able to meet in person and involve you in the wider life of our Trust.

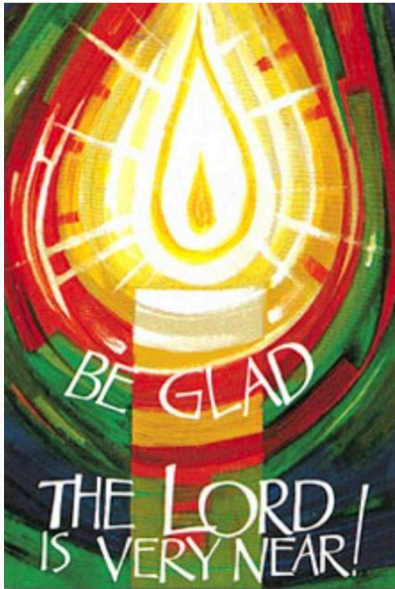
To everyone - thank you. It has been a privilege to work alongside you and I look forward to all that we will achieve moving forward together.

Andy Moor
CEO





Making the journey with the Holy Family



This time of advent is a time for us to prepare for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Over the year we have discussed how the 'reset' button has been pressed, giving time to reflect on what really matters.

The thing that we have missed dearly through the year has been spending time with our families and loved ones. Something that seems so simple has been taken away from us as we have battled COVID.

As we come to Christmas, let us focus on the Holy Family. Mary and Joseph, parents who sought shelter for the birth of Jesus.

Take some time to think of their journey to Bethlehem, the time taken to find a place to stay and the visitors they had to welcome a baby into the world. A baby who would change everything for us and provide hope in a broken world.

As the busy pace of life has given way this year, what will we hold onto moving forward?

- Let us celebrate this Christmas, the original hope that came into our world.
- Let us live to become more like Jesus - giving hope and love through all we do to those around us.
- Let us reflect on what we have learnt this year and how it will shape the world we live in to come.

This week, we share a liturgy that has been prepared and presented by children, staff and clergy across our Trust. We hope that you will watch with the family and join us in preparing for the birth of Jesus. The talents of our children are shared along with the story of Christmas. You can find this on our new YouTube channel [here](#).

Across our churches there will be services that you can attend over the Christmas season. Places are limited and some are already full, so you will need to book at your parish offices.

For those unable to come to church, the Christmas Eve Mass at 10pm and Christmas Day Mass at 11am will be live streamed from St Michael and All Angels Church via [Church Services](#). St Alban's and St Joseph's in Wallasey will be streaming online masses at 6pm on Christmas Eve and 9.30am and 11am on Christmas Day. Please join the St Joseph and St Alban Parishioners group on Facebook and share in this special time together.

From all at Holy Family Catholic Trust, we hope you have a restful, prayerful and safe Christmas.



**Holy
Family
Catholic**
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From across our schools...

Our Lady of Pity Primary School

Christmas is underway at Our Lady of Pity School... Outdoor Nativity plays, poems and reflections have been produced in every class, beautifully capturing the essence of Christmas and enabling us to preserve precious links with everyone in our school community. Exquisite artwork abounds and the school has been filled with angels and Advent wreaths made by our creative children. Our Y2 nativity can be seen [here](#) - on the Diocese of Shrewsbury website.



Our children work very hard, actively living out our mission statement, Joy through Respect. This year they have gone 'above and beyond,' reaching out to serve others. All children run a daily mile and this December every child will once again take part in our Elf Run to raise money for St John's Hospice.

As the weeks of lockdown turn into months of restrictions, we take our learning outside at every opportunity and teach our pupils how to nurture their mental health. We look forward to a new year when our youngest pupils will be looking for signs of spring in our Secret Garden and hoping that the hedgehog houses finally have some new inhabitants.



St Bernard's

Despite the challenges of Covid-19, St Bernard's has enjoyed a really successful autumn term. We're delighted with gains in learning, particularly in reading and it has been wonderful to see the children together again and demonstrating their love of learning. All children have been working exceptionally hard to catch up on lost learning time and as always, the staff are going above and beyond to support all families.



The progress journey from September to now for all children has been really pleasing. For many years we have focussed on our Learning Powered Approach and we're really pleased with the resilience and absorption the children are demonstrating. This term we have been focussing on rekindling curiosity for learning and there is a wonderful buzz as you move around the school, resulting in some fantastic examples of writing and learning across the curriculum. With excellent attendance across the school, the children have a firm foundation to build on in the spring term.



The special season of Advent has enabled us to stop and reflect. The children have enjoyed many prayerful, collective worship sessions in class and although we haven't yet been able to come together face to face as a full school community, we have still enjoyed virtual sessions together. There have been so many thoughtful reflections from the children, thinking about the positive changes they can make in preparation for the coming of Jesus. As the term comes to a close, the school community should feel proud of their achievements and we look forward to the new year with hope and excitement.



St Joseph's

There is no doubt that the last term has been challenging for all of us, but here at St Joseph's, we continue to follow the example of our patron saint and Step up to Excellence - particularly at this time of year where St Joseph gets his starring role!

Christmas has been a little different, but we have managed to keep the magic of Christmas in a primary school alive, with tree decorating, art projects,



jumper days and a special Christmas film from all of the children. You can watch some of the magic of Christmas at St Joseph's by clicking [here](#).

In amongst the parties, pantos and pies, we have remembered the true meaning of Christmas with a daily Advent reflection - this has enabled us to get ready for Jesus' coming and ensure our hearts and minds are prepared for this very special time.



Our curriculum continues to go from strength to strength, with the introduction of Read, Write, Inc to go alongside our reading scheme of Pathways to Read, introduced in September. The children of St Joseph's

LOVE reading, and it has been great to see how these two new approaches are supporting children and staff to develop their reading behaviours, skills and understanding. I'm sure lots of our children's lists for Father Christmas will feature some of our favourite authors!

We are all so very proud of the children and how they have returned to us this year. We look forward to the New Year and lots of exciting projects, events and learning.

From me, and all the staff and children of St Joseph's, we wish everyone in our Multi Academy Family a very merry Christmas.

St Mary's Catholic College



The St Mary's community has adapted admirably to the challenges of the constraints of the current year bubbles. We have been particularly impressed by our Year 7s who have not had the same induction as their predecessors but, nevertheless, appear to have taken it all in their stride and settled in incredibly well.

Our new Inspire Curriculum in Key Stage 3 is proving to be a great success. The focus on the two areas of Conservation and Social Justice has engaged our pupils in these issues and is equipping them not only with the knowledge and understanding of these crucial areas but also the skills to articulate and present their views.

Inspired by Ms Morris, one of our DT teachers, pupils have made plant pots containing a hyacinth which, accompanied by a Christmas card, will be distributed to parishioners of Holy Apostles and Martyrs. Pupils have also wanted to thank staff and have written postcards including a personal message to a member of staff, as well as making a Christmas tree decoration for all staff. Christmas cards have been written by our pupils and will be sent to care homes in our local community. We are very proud of all their thoughtful efforts.

The Advent season always engenders a spirit of generosity in our pupils and staff. Although we haven't been able to host our Pensioners' Party this year, we have found new ways to reach out to the local community with acts of kindness and heart warming messages to local nursing homes. We've collected a raft of toys for a Children's charity and adopted the Charles Thompson Mission, a homelessness charity in Birkenhead, as our main charity for this year and have been overwhelmed by our community's generosity.





St John Plessington Catholic College

We have had a very productive Autumn term at SJP. We welcomed our new year 7 pupils who have settled in exceptionally well and are making a positive contribution to our community.

All of our pupils have returned to learning and they have impressed us with their enthusiasm and dedication to their studies.

Pupils from Y7 to Y13 have been taking part in several events throughout the term; Black History Month, Remembrance Day, Mental Health Awareness Week and Anti-Bullying week. At the end of term, we have come together to create a Nativity production with our family of schools.



Staff in school have also been involved in creating a reflective advent calendar. This has been shared with our staff and students to allow them to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas.

Staff and students have also taken part in the reverse advent calendar. Students and staff will be dropping this food off next week.

Pupils from year 10 and 12 have been involved in training with the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families. We look forward to these mentors working with our pupils to establish a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing, making sure that all members of the school community can play a part in promoting positive mental health.

We have continued to establish our revised behaviour policy with a focus on 3 simple rules - 'ready, respectful, safe'. We have been delighted to work with Paul Dix. It has been pleasing to recognise the many pupils who go over and above through our classroom recognition boards, positive phone calls home, praise postcards and our weekly hot chocolate Friday gatherings.

