



Head-lines

When we started back just after Christmas we discussed during assembly how we refer to this term as 'Spring', even though it still very much feels like winter! However, as the weeks have progressed, the nights are starting to feel a little lighter, the weather is a little warmer and the first daffodils are in the shops. We finish Spring 1 next week, and then find that during the Half Term break we celebrate Ash Wednesday - and the Lenten countdown to Easter commences! There will be lots going on in school so we look forward to all of the exciting things. For now, I wish you a lovely Half Term and look forward to seeing you after the break. Mr Turner

Catering

In our Autumn 2 Newsletter I mentioned that in the New Year we would be starting with a new catering provider - Innovate, part of IFG. Our new team started in January and you may have heard the children talk about the new chef, Sunni, and his amazing food! Sadly, Sunni, was only here for a period to get the new team started, so he has now moved on, but the great team and delicious food remain! The feedback we have had from the children has been great and they are really enjoying the new menu, trying out lots of new flavours and ingredients and making the most of the enhanced salad bar. As with any new system, there have been a few teething problems, especially with linking the new menu to the Parent Pay system. This is still a work in progress and we are aware that there is still some functionality not quite right, but this is being worked on with Parent Pay. We are also just waiting for the final menu options so these can be added to our website and posters around school.



One thing we could really do with your support with - please do use Parent Pay to pre order the meals (all children including KS1, KS2 and FSM). The kitchen need the numbers each day to make sure that they prepare enough food. If parents don't pre order, it means class teachers need to do this as part of morning routines. This then eats into curriculum time - first thing is often when children have their reading, Times Tables, spelling, handwriting etc. If we could get a 100% parent engagement, it would mean this time could be used for the above activities, rather than having to log in for each child and order the food choices. If you have not downloaded or used Parent Pay, please contact the office and Angie and Nat will be happy to help. Many thanks for your support with this.



As mentioned, there have been a few teething issues with moving provider, but the most important thing is that the children are receiving a healthy, nutritious and delicious balanced diet. Feedback has been really positive and we are seeing an increase in meal uptake. Can we also remind you that your child can start school meals whenever they want, or hop on and off each day - as long as you order on the app. We want to be as flexible as possible and make sure that lunch time is a lovely and positive time with good friends, good food and good service. If you have any further feedback about the school meals, please do let us know and we can work with Innovate to make any further enhancements.

Website and Twitter

Please can we take this opportunity to remind you of our school website - www.stjosephscatholicprimarybirkenhead.co.uk and school Twitter account - @stjosephsbh

Our Website has a wealth of information, including our full curriculum overview so that you can see the topics your child learns about each half term, some key policies and documentation, as well as lots of links and resources for you as parents to use - these include resources on our SEND page, such as supporting with reading and spelling, resources on our Covid page, which include supporting with mental health, and E Safety newsletters on our News page, which include lots of information about staying safe on line, the latest apps and how to control them, user guides etc.

We then use our Twitter account to share all of the exciting things going on, from sports events to class work and theme assemblies. So if you're not already, please do follow us to access all the latest from inside school.

Attendance

As you are aware, we continue to have a big focus on improving our figure for overall attendance, and for reducing our amount of Persistent Absence (any pupil with attendance below 90%).

We share our attendance figure with you each half term so you can see how we are performing. For the year to date, our overall attendance stands at 94% and our Persist Absence is 17%

Unfortunately both of these figures are below our targets. We appreciate and understand that these last few weeks and months have seen lots of illness, with bugs, including Covid, still continuing to circulate. If your child is poorly, then keeping them off might be the correct thing to do.

However, if they are "ok", so for example just a bit of a sore throat etc, please do send them in - we can always call if they become ill. Likewise, we see some children kept off with things like 'sore feet.' We are also aware that holiday season is fast approaching. Please understand that we cannot authorise holidays. This is an instruction from the Local Authority. Thank you for your continued support to encourage good attendance, getting the children in good habits for High School and later life.



A big hello and welcome to new children who have started with us this half term. Amber, Finn, Neve, Estella and Alexia, it has been lovely meeting you and welcoming you to St Joseph's. I hope you have settled in and made lots of new friends.

Term Dates

Term Dates for 2023 - 2024 will be published on our website before we break up for half term, and then hard copies sent out when we return.

Please note we close to pupils on Thursday 16th February and re open Monday 27th February.

Tuesday 28th February has been identified as a further potential day of Strike Action. We will share further details when we have the latest information.

Prayer for the term

Have you ever thought of Lent as a yearly second chance? Each year the Church gives us six weeks to take a long, loving look at our lives to see if our values and priorities are in line with God's desires for us. Since most of us find that we've wandered from God's path, Lent becomes that second chance, or do-over, to "return to God with our whole heart."

