



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! In fact in the first few weeks, we even had snow! As we finish the half term this week, we enter the season of Lent and our preparation for Easter - where we celebrate new life and beginnings. Hopefully this also brings with it lighter nights, warmer weather and a 'Spring' in the air.

For now, I wish you a lovely Half Term and look forward to seeing you after the break. Mr Turner

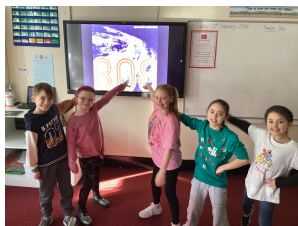
What's been happening...

For a relatively short half term, there has been lots happening in school, so we just wanted to share a few highlights. This week has been Children's Mental Health week, so the children have spent time each day thinking about how we can look after our own mental health in the same way we take care of our physical health. Our theme this year has been 'My Voice Matters' and we have been encouraging children to share their views on various subjects. Mrs Corr and Mrs Weate are also working on our extended School Council - now re-branded as School Parliament, with representation from all our different pupil voice sectors - Head Boy and Head Girl, Reading Ambassadors, Mini-Vinnies, Green Team etc. This is a fantastic opportunity for our children to feel heard and that we really do value their voices.



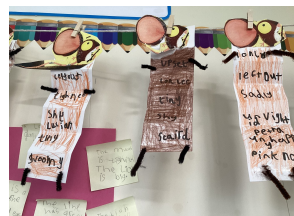
We were also honoured to have a visit from Mark, Bishop of Shrewsbury as he visited our Parish. Bishop Mark led an assembly, talking to the children about his role and the symbols of a Bishop. The children were then invited to ask Bishop Mark some questions and they came up with some fantastic and insightful ones.

We made the most of the unexpected change in the weather and had a great time playing out in the snow - snow angels, snow men and even the occasional snow ball fight!



On Friday 2nd February, we celebrated all things Number on Number Day! Children (and staff!) wore some really creative number related clothing and we spent the day working out mathematical problems, learning songs to help with our multiplication facts and playing lots of maths games. It was a really fun way to take our knowledge and understanding of numbers to the next level.

We have also enjoyed so many opportunities to bring our learning to life through practical experiments, art, sports and trips.





A big hello and welcome to the new children who have started with us this half term. Daniel, Jordan, Gabriella, Indigo and Maisie, 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

School opens Monday 26th February. The WC 4th March is 'Reading Week' where each day we will celebrate the joy and power of reading. This coincides with World Book Day on Thursday 7th March - a separate letter has gone out with details about WBD. This year, we are in school for Holy Week, and close for Easter on Thursday 28th March

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 94.4% and our Persistent Absence is 15%. We do appreciate and understand that these last few weeks and months have seen lots of illness and bugs 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. 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.

Communication

During the last week of term, we held our Spring Term Parent Evening meetings. We hope you found them useful and heard lots of good things about your child, as well as any other areas they need to work on. End of Year reports are due to go out 5th July. If at any time during the year, you have any questions or any concerns about how your child is doing in school, either academically or socially, please do speak to your child's teacher as it is much better to discuss matters 'in the moment' rather than let them build. Even if teachers can't talk there and then as they might have other engagements, contact the school office and then a phone call/meeting can be arranged.

E Safety

During the same week that we thought about Mental Health, we also took part in 'Safer Internet Day'. Staying Safe online is so important in our 21st Century world, where we are all more connected than ever. In school, each half term Computing unit always starts with an E-Safety lesson, and on Safer Internet Day, we thought even further about the benefits as well as potential dangers in the online world. We also subscribe to Knowsley Council Parent Newsletters and send these out to parents every month, as well as putting them on our website on the 'Letters' page

<http://www.stjosephscatholicprimarybirkenhead.co.uk/newsletters>

These regular updates support you with the latest apps and alerts, as well as top tips for supporting your child on various devices and platforms.

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."

