



Head-lines

So here we are, at the final stretch of what has been another incredibly tough year. For all of us, there have been highs and lows, good times and bad, joy and sadness, things that went well, and things that if we could do over.... however, throughout all of the changes, all of the unknowns, the one constant has been how proud of all the children we are. From the return in September, through another period of lockdown, bubble closures and events not able to run, the children have taken it all - and taken it with resilience, optimism and positivity. They brighten my day and are the reason we all do what we do. So as this academic year draws to a close, and we once again say goodbye to a cohort of our children (and parents) I thank you all for everything you have done, for being with us, and I wish you all a lovely, bright Summer break. Mr Turner

How lucky we are to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard....

These wise words of Winnie-the-Pooh fit beautifully with how we feel each year saying goodbye to our wonderful Year 6 children. Whether they started in Nursery, Reception or later in the school, it is a privilege to see the children grow and develop, and become the resilient, confident, ambitious young people they leave as.

Over the years, our Year 6 have given us so much - their laughter, their tears, their hopes, their dreams. This year, more than ever with all of the disruptions of life due to Covid, we have been so impressed with how they have adapted, how they have stayed positive and how they have brought light to dark times.

We couldn't be prouder of them and I know they will continue to shine as they start the next stage of their educational journey. It is only really 'bye for now' as they will always be a part of the family of St Joseph's.



James, Joseph, Charlie, Jack, Sophie, Erin, Abigail, Alfred, Katie, Rachael, Rubie, Daniel, Nevin, Amelia, Shay, Joel, Ashley, Francis, Thomas, Rhys, Lily, Isobel, Jack, Niall, Emily, Hannah, Eugene, Liam, Tina, Joseph, Lucas, Mitchell, Sebastian, Liam, James, Harrison, Henley, Eowyn, Nancy, Kai, Charlotte, Jay, Kryspin, Dylan, Alex, Brooke, Isabella, Adonia, Aiden, Aeden, Godwin, Nicole, Alisha, Charlie, Erin, Lucy, Sam, Steven, Oscar, Lilly, Oliver and Phoebe, we are all so, so proud of you and wish you every success for High School. Do come back and visit us - you will always be part of the St Joseph's family, and will always be welcome here. Good bye and good luck xx

The same message of goodbye and thank you goes to the parents leaving us. For some of you, this marks the end of your journey with us while others continue with other siblings. Thank you for entrusting your most precious offering to us - we hope we have served you well over the years. Goodbye and all the best to you.

More goodbyes....



We have a few more goodbyes to say this year. Firstly, we say good bye to Mrs Ward. Mrs Ward has been part of the St Joseph's team for over 20 years, and by my rough calculation has taken over 1,000 children through their journey in faith as part of First Holy Communion. On behalf of all the children, a massive thank you to Mrs Ward and I hope you enjoy your time to yourself, but do come back to visit.

Next we say goodbye to Mrs Williams. Mrs Williams has been at St Joseph's since 1994! Throughout her time she has supported and cared for so many children, of all ages, and the current Year 6 will have had her in class when they were in Reception! So now as they leave Year 6, a special thank you to Mrs Williams for all your work over the years.

We also sadly say goodbye to Mrs LeFeuvre. Mrs LeFeuvre joined us two years ago in her role as Deputy Headteacher, and as much as we are sad to say goodbye, we are thrilled for her as she takes on a new challenge as Head of St Bernard's. As you will be aware, we are part of a five school Academy Trust and St Bernard's in Ellesmere Port is one of our partner schools. As we strengthen links and work more collaboratively across the Trust, Mrs LeFeuvre will be moving to St Bernard's to lead the school. As all staff employed in an Academy Trust work for the same organisation, Mrs LeFeuvre will still be spending some time at St Joseph's next year to support as we appoint a replacement, so it's not a 'full' goodbye quite yet!

On a similar note, Maxine will be undertaking more work for the finance team in the MAT. She will remain based at St Joseph's but will be spending more time 'behind the scenes' undertaking work as part of a central finance team.

We say goodbye to Father Chris as he is leaving the Parish of St Philip Neri and St Joseph's, but we offer him a huge congratulations as he is moving to Shrewsbury, where the Bishop has appointed him Dean of Shrewsbury Cathedral and a Chapter Canon. Thank you Fr Chris for your time, guidance and prayers and we will all keep you in ours.

And finally after serving several years as Chair Of Governors, Georgie Cragg-James has stepped down from the role. Thank you to Georgie for all her support and dedication over the years. We have a temporary Chair, Bernadette Letissier, who can still be reached using the Chair of Governors email. Thank

A massive thank you to Mrs Bochenek and Olivia for a really kind donation of books for the Year 4 library.



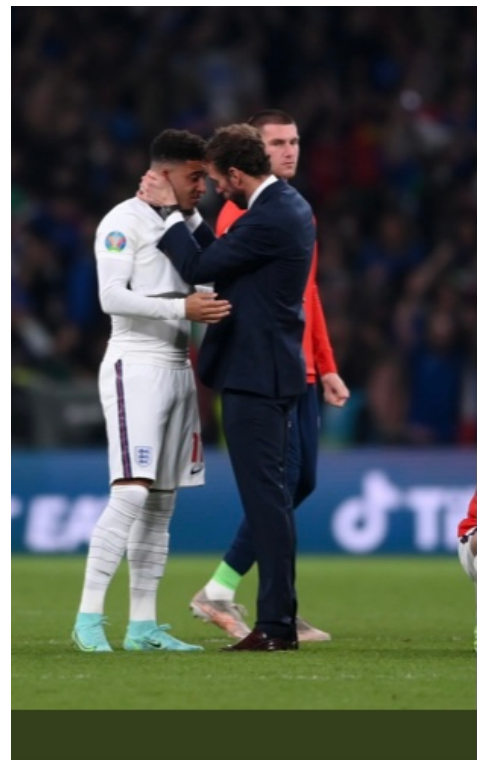
Thank you staff!

I would also like to just say a massive thank you to all my amazing staff at St Joseph's. All year you have worked again in difficult circumstances, juggling face to face, online learning, bubbles and more, all at the same time as your own worries and concerns. I absolutely realise that parents are in a similar situation and I do understand. But I just wanted to give a mention of thanks for all your work this year

Despite the eventual outcome, I do hope you and the children enjoyed the Euro's. I must admit, I'm not a football fan myself, and don't know the first thing about the game, but I even I was gripped by that Sunday final! What a rollercoaster! What struck me was the pressure sitting on the shoulders of those young players who Stepped Up to take the penalties. Whether or not your definition of *courage* extends to a football match, what is in no doubt is that they Stepped Up, they tried their best and served their country with pride. I am sure that like me, you were then absolutely appalled to see the abhorrent racist abuse they have been subjected to. The future of our world is in the hands of the children we now teach. At St Joseph's we teach that there is no place for racism, sexism, or any type of abuse whatsoever.

Our children understand that, I just wish that some 'grown ups' did.

I have faith for the future of our country and our world though, knowing that the children of St Joseph's will shape it, and that they understand that human equality is not even a question - it is just a given that we are all human beings and are united as the human race. Together.



Arrangements for next year

The Government have recently published their latest Schools Operational Guidance. This is the Guidance which will be in force in September. As it stands, this would see the removal of many of the mandated measures we have had to follow this year, including the wearing of masks, maintaining bubbles, and isolating contacts of positive cases from class. This is a welcome move as it will allow a 'return to normal'. However, a lot can change between now and then, and as the scientists keep on reminding us, this virus has not gone away, we just need to find ways to live with it. Caution and learning will always be key.

Therefore, the plan as it stands, is for September to revert to our 'normal' operating procedures -

- The doors for all classes open at 8.50am and will shut at 9.00am. After this time, children must go to the office and may be signed in as late
- Children enter from the EYFS entrance, Year 1 door or the door on the KS2 playground
- The school day finishes at 3.30pm for Y1-6 and 3.20pm for Early Years
- Lunch time will be as normal, and as detailed on our website <http://www.stjosephscatholicprimarybirkenhead.co.uk/lunch>
- Full school uniform is to be worn please - we will send out our uniform booklet separately, and ask that especially parents with children moving up to KS2 (Year 3) are aware of the changes between KS1 and KS2 uniform. One thing we will keep from this last period is wearing PE kit for the PE day as this has worked well. Once class timetables are produced, we can let you know which day PE will be on.

However, all of the above may change, if Government or the Local Authority give notice of national or regional measures. If that is the case, we will switch back to our operations from this year - and will publish the details of any changes such as staggered arrivals/departures on our website.

Attendance and Punctuality

This year has been difficult, with periods of isolation, contact tracking etc. However, we absolutely must improve our whole school attendance figures, as well as the levels of Persistent Absence. As a broad headline, whole school needs to be at least 96% - our total for this year is 95%
However, our Persistent Absence is going up beyond an acceptable level. Persistent Absence is any child with less than 90% attendance. We have far too much of this.
Next year, attendance and punctuality will be part of our school development priorities and we will be working with the Local Authority Attendance Officer. The legal powers with this Officer do include issuing fines and prosecution if levels of absence are too high. Please, pledge that next year you will ensure your child has good attendance and arrives on time every day. Thank you

Thought for the term...

THE LOVE OF GOD NEVER LEAVES US

God is love. And we move toward the light to find the love of God. But is God's love within us, even in the dark moments? Is the love of God there, hidden away? Yes, always! The love of God never leaves us. It is always with us. Do we trust in this love?

Pope Francis

Address to children

May 31st 2014

