



Interim Headteacher: Mrs L Barton

16th January 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

May I take this opportunity on behalf of all the governors, staff and pupils to wish you a very Happy New Year. I trust you all had a pleasant Christmas and managed to have a well-deserved rest.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you. I have been a headteacher for a considerable number of years now and have undertaken the role of Interim Headteacher in five previous schools. I am firmly committed to providing direction to ensure that we achieve a high quality of teaching and high standards of learning for our pupils. I will wish to maintain and develop further the current strengths and positive elements of St Joseph's School whilst also continuing our journey to be an outstanding school. Entrusted with this privilege and responsibility, I will be working with governors and staff to promote the gospel values and ensure the happiness and well-being of the children in our care.

As the Interim Headteacher at St Joseph's School, I believe it is my duty to:

- create and maintain an ethos which will provide a warm welcome and security for all those in my care
- lead by example
- to provide inspiration and motivation
- to embody for staff, governors, parents and pupils, the vision, educational direction and leadership of a Catholic School in all its facets.

My philosophy could be summarised in the word "ACHIEVE":

- A – Achievement of everyone
- C – Commitment
- H – Home/School Collaboration
- I – Implementation
- E - Efficiency and Effective
- V – Value for Money
- E – Everyone

Communication is very important and consequently, I will be issuing a half-termly newsletter so you are fully informed about school events and can contribute to them. The first newsletter will be circulated on Friday which will have key dates for the remainder of this Easter term until the end of March 2017.

My first week at St Joseph's has been a very positive experience as I have received a warm welcome from all of the school community including that of the children. They are a credit to you and are great ambassadors for the school! Consequently, I will want to involve them more fully in the running of the school and work closely with the School Council giving them a voice in school decision-making.

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Accompanying the school newsletter this week, will be a new school policy regarding the "Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy" being adopted by all Diocesan schools. A group of governors have worked together to prepare this draft document to share with you before its full ratification by the full board. We will then present the draft incorporating any required changes to the full board week commencing 23 January 2017.

In keeping with the school's mission statement, we are invited by Pope Francis in his sermon on the Feast of the Epiphany "to get to know Jesus, to recognise him in our lives and in so many circumstances of life". Hence, he said, we must ask ourselves the question: "Is Jesus Christ at the centre of my life? And what is my relationship with Jesus Christ? ". Thus, the Pope continued, we have three tasks because "to be able to put Jesus at the center we must make sure that we know Him and that we are able to recognise Him.

Pope Francis invited the faithful to pray the 'Glory Be': "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit". As members of the school community of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, let us make this a part of our new year's resolution to say this prayer each day. Pointing out that too often we recite it like parrots, Pope Francis said: "this prayer is adoration!" It is a way of worshiping the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. A little prayer, in silence, before the greatness of God is a way to worship Jesus and say: 'You are the only one, you are the beginning and the end, and I want to stay with you throughout my life, throughout eternity. It is a way to chase away the things that prevent me from worshiping Jesus."

Christians, Pope Francis concluded, do not need to do strange, difficult or superfluous things, so let us ask the Lord for the grace to know Jesus, to worship Jesus and to follow Him.

By way of concluding, here is a little reflection; I would like to share with you:

***It is not the place where you are
that is the important thing.
It is the intensity of your presence there.
It is not the situation that counts.
What counts is that you are fully alive in any situation.
It is this that puts down roots and then flowers in your life.***

Yours sincerely



**L. Barton (Mrs)
Interim Headteacher**