



Our mission: Inspired by St Joseph, together with Christ, we learn, we grow, we love

Our values: Aspiration, Respect, Resilience, Community, Creativity

Dear Parents,

In my letter to you back in July, I made reference to the fact that the last year (certainly since Christmas 2016) has been extremely busy and turbulent for the school. This autumn term has been far less turbulent, but it has been no less busy. Hopefully I speak for all the staff when I say that it has also been a highly productive term - we have inducted new staff, we have evaluated the existing systems and introduced new approaches to make sure the school provides the best education possible for our children.

Our development plan outlines the key priorities for the school...

Priority 1

- **Develop leaders at every level** in the school to bring about excellence in outcomes for all pupils

Priority 2

- **Ensure lesson delivery throughout the school is outstanding** and utilises evidence based teaching techniques that engage every pupil

Priority 3

- Consolidate the good pupil conduct and high quality attitudes to learning through **better involvement of parents**

Priority 4

- Refine **challenge and consistency across the curriculum**, - but especially for reading, writing and maths - so pupils are engaged and motivated

Priority 5

- Embed assessment systems to ensure that teaching accelerates pupil progress to **better than the national average for all pupil groups**

You will also be aware that we were recently inspected by Ofsted. The outcome of this inspection is confidential until the final report is produced and that will not be until early in the New Year. However, I am giving nothing away by saying that the inspectors agreed with our areas for development. Consequently, nothing will change in our priorities as a result of the inspection. Governors and school leaders know what the school needs to do to improve and we are working assiduously to make sure the school recovers quickly from its recent, turbulent past.

With every best wish for a peaceful Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Dr J Lane
Executive Headteacher

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

Notification of Absence

If it is your intention to take your child out of school during term time, it is important that you notify us by completing a Notification of Absence form available from the school offices.

Please note that **the school does not authorise absence or holidays during term time**. Any additional absence will be marked in the register as **'unauthorised absence'**; any holiday requests will be marked in the register as **'Holiday Not Agreed.'**

All children are expected to have an attendance rate of better than 95% - this is equivalent to 7 to 8 absences over the academic year. Levels of absence greater than this are reported to the educational welfare office and could result in parents incurring a fine. **If you take your child on holiday without informing the school, he/she may be removed from roll.**

Appointments during school time

Medical, dental and optician appointments should, whenever possible, be arranged outside school hours. If this is not possible, please ensure that your child is present for BOTH registration periods during the day (8.40-9.15 am and 1.30-1.45 pm) and that appointments are arranged outside these times. Failure to be present at registration affects both your child's individual attendance level and whole school attendance levels. If your child is not at school for registration they will be recorded as absent in the register.

ClassDojo

ClassDojo is up and running and the majority of parents now have a link with their child's class teacher. We hope this is proving a useful facility for parents. Please remember that this is a communication app for the classroom. It is there to connect teachers and parents and to share photos, videos, and messages. Please do not use it to report an absence from school. Absences should be reported via the school office as normal.

Attendance matters – every minute counts!

Lateness = Lost Learning* (Figures below are calculated over a school year)

5 minutes late each day	3 days lost!
10 minutes late each day	6.5 days lost!
15 minutes late each day	10 days lost!
20 minutes late each day	13 days lost!
30 minutes late each day	19 days lost!

Attendance during one school year	Equivalent Days	Equivalent Sessions	Equivalent Weeks	Equivalent Lessons Missed
95%	9 Days	18 Sessions	2 Weeks	50 Lessons
90%	19 Days	38 Sessions	4 Weeks	100 Lessons
85%	29 Days	58 Sessions	6 Weeks	150 Lessons
80%	38 Days	72 Sessions	8 Weeks	200 Lessons
75%	48 Days	96 Sessions	10 Weeks	250 Lessons
70%	57 Days	114 Sessions	11.5 Weeks	290 Lessons
65%	67 Days	134 Sessions	13.5 Weeks	340 Lessons

BEHAVIOUR OF PARENTS AND VISITORS IN SCHOOL

We have high expectations of all behaviour; including that of parents and visitors. I must remind all that parents/carers/visitors must also show respect and conduct themselves as outlined in the behaviour policy at all times. Sadly, if parents/carers display unacceptable behaviour towards staff or each other then they may face the possibility of being banned from the school premises.

WEARING CORRECT UNIFORM

Please ensure that your child wears the correct winter uniform including a tie and black shoes (if your child comes to school in boots, please make sure that they have school shoes to change into). Children must now wear shirts or blouses (not polo shirts). Please only wear trainers (white or black) on PE days. Coats, scarves, gloves and hats must be navy blue or black. Please see the website at www.stjps.org/school-uniform for information on correct winter uniform.

LABELLING PUPILS CLOTHING

Please make sure that ALL items of clothing are clearly labelled, ideally with the child's full name. Labelling will make it much easier for everyone when searching for lost items. Reminder: staff are not accountable for any pupils' lost items e.g. bags, uniform etc – pupils will be supported in organising and taking responsibility for their own belongings – obviously with more support in the earlier years.

CUTTING NAILS

The classroom and the playground can be hectic places at times where excited children can be involved in innocent rough and tumble games. In general such high-jinks are fine – but it has come to my attention that some children have been scratched by the long nails of others. Please make sure you keep finger nails well-trimmed to avoid such minor injuries.

START OF THE DAY ROUTINE

As you are aware the playground doors and gates open from 8.30am every morning for the convenience of the parents and pupils. The parents are responsible for their children during this time until 8.40am until the bell rings. Children **must not** be left alone in the playground during this time.

SPARK!

S.P.A.R.K may be something you have heard your children talking about since the start of the year. We have introduced this concept to encourage high quality learning behavior in class. It stands for;

Stand / sit up straight

Place hands in front (no fiddling)

Ask and answer questions

Respect at all times – for all people

Kee track of the person speaking

NOTIFICATIONS

Please contact the school if your child is sick, is unable to come to school due to an appointment, if you need to collect your child earlier, if they come to school later because of an appointment etc. Please **do not** leave messages with staff in the playground or via ClassDojo.

INTRODUCTION OF 20MPH ZONE

Those of you who are local to this area will know that the council has recently consulted on traffic calming measures along the main road and in St Joseph's Grove. While the consultation period has now ended, I just wanted to make you aware that the works are planned for this academic year and may cause some disruption to the traffic in the coming months.

CAFOD COLLECTION

A very BIG thank you to all of you for supporting the CAFOD Harvest 2017 Appeal. We raised an amazing £1452.77! As always, your support has been incredible. Hopefully through this appeal our children have had the opportunity to think of those less fortunate than ourselves and those who struggle on a day to day basis in communities around the world to feed themselves.

POPPY APPEAL

The Royal British Legion has thanked us for our support in this year's Poppy Appeal; we raised £147.00. Thank you.

CHRISTMAS AT ST JOSEPH'S

The children have been very busy rehearsing for their nativity performances and concerts. It was lovely to have seen so many of you at the various performances. I'm sure you agree that all children did an amazing job! Santa came to visit Early Years and KS1 with presents for the children, he even left presents for all children in KS2.

RECEPTION TRIP TO HENDON BAGEL BAKERY

In October Reception enjoyed a trip to the local bakery to accompany their reading of 'The Little Red Hen'. Each class walked the short distance from the school to the bakery. When they arrived they were able to look around the store, meet the bakers and each buy a bagel to take home. Everyone really enjoyed the visit to the bakery and learned a lot. We want to thank all the parents who were able to support us on the trip.

Y1 – MUSEUM OF CHILDHOOD

Year 1 took a trip down memory lane at the V&A Museum of Childhood that is located in London's Bethnal Green. This was all part of the autumn term history topic '*All About Me*'. As part of this expedition the students from Year 1 were required to inquire, explore and identify various toys from past up to the present. Students were exposed to toys from the Victorian era and got to have hands on interactions with toys both old and new. Students had a wonderful time and all Year 1 teaching staff would love to thank the Year 1 parents who volunteered their own time to help with supervision of all 88 students who attended.

Y1 – SCIENCE MUSEUM

On Thursday 14th December the Year 1 travelled to the Science museum by coach. We had been studying materials and their properties in our science lessons and our main aim was to identify different materials and their properties. A lot of fun was had by all in the hands on experimentation and engineering works that were done. One comment amongst many was made when looking at a model of an early aeroplane. 'Why is the man hanging from the ceiling?' As can be seen in the photographs it is a very real model. We also watched a show about different materials and their properties such as flexible and sturdy; waterproof and absorbent using the 'three little pigs' as the basis. A lot of practical work was done and it was good experience seeing materials in different situations. A huge thank you to the parent volunteers who accompanied us and we hope they had as much fun as we did.

Y2 – LONDON ZOO – LIVING NATIVITY

We are looking forward to our Year 2 school trip to see The Living Nativity at The London Zoo. This will involve meeting all of the important people linked to the Nativity as well as seeing the animals and places we have heard so much about. We will hear first-hand accounts of the story which will consolidate our understanding and give us a real life experience of what happened during that special time.

Y3 – NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Year 3 are looking forward to becoming Fossil Hunters! Next week, we will be going to the Natural History museum to undertake a fossil dig and draw conclusions about how dinosaurs looked in a hands-on workshop. After, we will discover other dinosaurs around the museum and have a look at Mary Anning and her work as a paleontologist.

Y4 – ANCIENT EGYPTIAN WORKSHOP

In Year Four, we had our Ancient Egyptian day where the children took part in a range of engaging and stimulating activities. The children embraced the day and were beautifully dressed in a wide array of costumes from poor slaves to great and powerful Pharaohs. Well done parents!

The day started off with a bang, with the children celebrating the flooding of the Nile by creating and performing synchronised Egyptian dancing. The dances were spectacular and were great fun for all involved. We then travelled back to our classrooms and transformed ourselves into Ancient Egyptian craftsmen and proceeded to make an eclectic mix of Egyptian bracelets. Unfortunately, not all of the beads stuck as well as planned, however, life was not easy for Ancient Egyptians either.

After lunch, the children were able to take up the role of priests and prepared their friends for the mummification ritual. This involved acting out each step of the process which further embedded the knowledge into the children's memory and culminated in members of the class being wrapped up in toilet paper to simulate real mummies. Finally, our busy day ended with the children using nets to create 3-D pyramids, an activity which helped the children to understand the link between 2-D and 3-D shapes whilst at the same time being great fun. Overall the children and staff had a great day and we all learnt a lot. Thank you to everyone who was involved in making this such a special day!

Y5 – ANCIENT GREEK WORKSHOP

Year 5 were transported back in time to the year 490 BC during Ancient Greek Day.

There they found themselves in Athens during uncertain times with rumours of a Persian invasion of Greece circulating. In the meantime, the children (residents of Athens) were kept busy taking on typical roles found in the Athenian agora (marketplace) at the time. They served as wax tablet makers, pottery painters, fresco painters and jewellers amongst others industrious occupations. Some meanwhile tried to ascertain the fate of Athens by asking the all-knowing Oracle. The workshop climaxed with Greek theatre in the afternoon in which the children starred in some popular myths. Then when news of a great Greek victory arrived, celebrations broke out with a feast of bread, fruit and wine! Thank you to the parents who volunteered on the day and to all the parents for helping the children get into the spirit of the day with some excellent costumes. Thank you also to @HistoryOffThePage' for running the engaging, entertaining and informative workshop.

Y6 – WW2 WORKSHOP

On Tuesday 7th November, Year 6 children bustled into St Joseph's adorned in brilliant World War Two outfits. The day was a huge success. Year 6 children had the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of WW2, as well as show off all their wonderful learning this term. The day included: trying on period outfits, learning dances, singing songs and being apart of the army. Year 6 have thoroughly enjoyed this topic and this day was a great opportunity for them to deepen their understanding through active experiences.

KS2 PANTOMIME – JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

It was panto time at St Josephs last Friday with Key Stage 2 enjoying an exhilarating and madcap performance of 'Jack and the Beanstalk!' From the start the children were thoroughly entertained as hero Jack went in pursuit of golden hens to thwart the villainous squire, whilst keeping mum happy and Jill wooed! There were plenty of thrill s and spills along the way with energetic singing, enthusiastic dancing, and zany acting - keeping the children laughing, booing and cheering until the end.

From all the staff at St Joseph's

Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year