

St Joseph's Newsletter



September 2022

Dear Parents / Carers,

Welcome back to a new school year. I hope that you have all had a wonderful summer making memories with your children. We are so blessed to live in such a beautiful part of the country with both countryside and beaches on our doorstep and the sunny weather made such a difference this year. However, summer seems to have stopped rather abruptly on return to school and autumn has appeared overnight – we've had all the elements this week already but so far the rain has fortunately avoided break and lunchtimes.

St Joseph's Summer Makeover



Over the summer, the school has undergone extensive improvements to the building. All of our classrooms have been freshly painted, with St Vincent de Paul and St Oscar Romero having new carpets too. You may have noticed that some of the external walls have been painted, giving a much-needed lift to the main entrance of the school. We have also had new internal doors and windows fitted in many parts of the school too and the kitchen has been fitted with new 'super' ovens. At the far end of the school, the library, staffroom and Breakfast and After School Club (BASC) room have been stripped, refurbished and redecorated. Now we have the fun of refurnishing the library to make it an enticing hub of the school as we enter a year focusing on reading for pleasure and improving outcomes for children.

'New School Year' Parent Meetings

We are delighted to invite you into school over the next couple of weeks to meet collectively with your child's class teacher and find out about what's in store for this year in their new year group. At the meeting, you will hear about what your child will be learning over the coming year, class routines, timetables, year group expectations, rewards and sanctions and other relevant information. It is also a great opportunity for you to ask any questions you may have. The meetings have been arranged on different nights so that parents can attend for all of their children. The meetings will take place straight after school and should take no longer than 30 minutes. Please do try to attend so we can start the year as partners in your child's education, ensuring a consistency of approach.



Wednesday 14th: St Vincent de Paul (Mrs Soby)
Thursday 15th: St Oscar Romero (Miss Hannaford)
Friday 16th: St Teresa (Mr Caddy)

Tuesday 20th: St Francis (Miss Suarez) This will be for Y1 parents only as Reception parents met with Miss Suarez 1:1 in July.

I will be present at all four meetings if you would like to discuss any issues with me. This can be as a group or privately at the end.

School Hours

As the world begins to return to life before covid, we are changing back to more and more of our pre-covid ways. Although there were no lockdowns over the last academic year, schools continued to be affected by attendance issues – both pupil and staff. Although we do not know what lies ahead, it is the first September for a long time where covid is not at the centre of everything we do. This along with the government's future plans for harmonising school hours is to give you a little background into why the decision has been made to have a finish time of 3:30pm across the classes. The gate will open earlier than this to allow parents space to wait but the children will be dismissed at 3:30pm. St Francis will come out a little earlier before the playground gets too full and to allow for a safer dismissal to parents and because everything takes that little bit longer with our youngest children.

The school day begins at 9am. This is the time the registers are taken. We will open the gate at 8:45am to allow for a staggered start to the day and avoid congestion outside the gate. There is no need to arrive earlier than 8:45am as your child does not need to be in class until 9am. If your child walks to school independently, please note that they will be unsupervised on Coombeshead Road if they arrive too early. They will not have access to the school site. Please note that for the benefit of working parents, we have full wrap around care provision from 8-8:45am in the morning and 3:30-5:30 after school.

Cost per session:

Breakfast Club from 8am: £4

After School Club: £6.75 until 5pm / £10:00 until 5:30pm

Attendance and Punctuality

As discussed above, the register is taken at 9am. At 9am, Francis, our lovely crossing patrol officer, finishes his early shift and the gate is locked. The only way into school then is via the school office. Any child arriving after 9am will be marked as 'late'. Any child arriving after 9:15 will be marked as an unauthorised absence. If you are finding it difficult to get your child/ren to school on time, Matt Jackson (Attendance Officer) is available to support you.

Family Support Worker

We are delighted to have appointed Andrea Gjikolaj as a Family Support Worker at St Joseph's for one day a week. I have worked with Andrea for a few years at Sacred Heart and the parents there speak very highly of the support she has given to them. She will be based at St Joseph's on Tuesdays but has some flexibility for Monday meetings if needed. She is also happy to be contacted outside of these days. She is very approachable and friendly and can be a great listening ear if you want a cup of tea and a chat at any time. We will also utilise Andrea's therapeutic skills with the children. Again, I have seen first-hand the impact she has had on children suffering from trauma, anxiety, loss and grief.

Contact Andrea direct on 07917 204826



Hello, I am Andrea, your family support worker.

I offer support and guidance around a range of family challenges and can signpost to an assortment of local and national services.

I provide one to one support to families and children in school, virtually or at home.

I am also a skilled parenting therapist and can share a variety of strategies to help with any parenting challenges.

I am a happy, approachable, pro-active person and I believe that working together can help support families to move forward towards positive change as well as improve family health and wellbeing.

Contact: Andrea Gjikolaj. mob: 07917204826
email: andreag@southwestfamilyvalues.org.uk

PE Changes

Another covid adaptation was arriving at school already dressed for PE.. We are returning to pre-covid arrangements of children arriving daily in full uniform and changing for PE in school. This means that they will need their PE kits in school with them. As per the uniform list, the kit comprises of a white t-shirt, navy shorts and plimsoles/suitable trainers. Children may do some areas of the indoor curriculum in bare feet if this is appropriate for the lesson. Your child's PE must be in a labelled drawstring PE bag which will be kept on their peg. ALL items, including footwear MUST have your child's name clearly labelled.

It is best if PE kits are kept in school for the half term so that they are not forgotten on PE day. The bags will only be sent home at the end of each term unless you request otherwise.

We will be continuing with external coaches from Saints Southwest this term however there has been a change in the logistics as we move to four classes this year. Rather than two separate short PE sessions, the curriculum element of PE will now take place across one double lesson on Thursdays (St Teresa and St Francis) and Fridays (St Oscar Romero and St Vincent de Paul). The children will benefit from the government recommended two hours plus swimming, active lunchtimes, forest school and other physical activity initiatives planned or this year. More on this to come later.



I will end this lengthy newsletter saying that I am looking forward to working alongside you over the coming year as we all work together, pupils, staff, parents, governors and parish, to raise standards and improve outcomes for our children. St Joseph's truly is a special community to be a part of.

Best wishes,

Nichola Day

Headteacher

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