

St Joseph & St Theresa Catholic Primary School



St Gabriel
the Archangel

Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

Forming Christ-centred pilgrims of hope
with kind hearts, questioning minds, a thirst for knowledge
and a hunger for justice.

Parent Handbook 2026 – 27

A Warm Welcome

We are delighted that you have chosen St Joseph & St Theresa's Catholic School for the care and education of your child. Choosing a primary school setting for your child is one of the most important decisions that you will ever make. Not only is it essential that your child feels safe, confident and happy in their new environment, but you must also feel comfortable that their developmental, educational and emotional needs are being met. At St Joseph & St Theresa's Catholic School we firmly believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support & guidance to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in their formative primary years has a major impact on their future life and provides the foundation for children to make the most of their talents as they grow. We hope that this handbook will be a useful guide to help you support your child during their educational journey at our school and to act as a reference document for the future.

Our School Mission Statement

"Growing together with Jesus"



*Growing in the gifts, that God has given us
On our journey together
Developing as Jesus holds our hand.*

Our School Mission Prayer

Dear Lord,
Today we are:
Growing in the gifts, that God has given us
On our journey together
Developing as Jesus holds our hand
Aware that we have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us.

Amen

Our School Aims and Values

As a Catholic community, St Joseph & St Theresa Catholic Primary School is a place where God and our children are at the heart of all we do, where the Gospel values permeate all aspects of school life:

1. **Every child in our care** will be supported to grow in Faith, to grow in Hope and to grow in Love. Growing in the Love of God, our children will become confident learners who have a desire to realise their aspirations. Our children will develop a passion for learning and its infinite possibilities in a nurturing, safe and loving environment.
2. **Everyone is a learner.** We provide challenging learning opportunities that promote intellectual curiosity, creativity and physical development along with moral and personal skills. By providing a rich, stimulating curriculum we: enable pupils to reach far and beyond their God given potential; we ensure that our pupils are happy, confident and independent learners.
3. **Everyone promotes self-esteem and self-worth** by showing mutual respect for others and developing an understanding of self in an atmosphere of trust. We create self-discipline through an awareness of the consequences of our actions, so as to nurture positive behaviour, secure in the knowledge of forgiveness.
4. **Every person is a valued member of our wider community** who can act independently and make a positive contribution for the good of all; this is supported through the building of a caring partnership between home, school, parish and community.

Working in Partnership



The distinct Catholic ethos of our school creates an environment in which all pupils are able to thrive educationally, emotionally and spiritually. Our faith underpins every aspect of school life, helping children to grow in confidence, compassion and understanding as they develop their God-given gifts.

Our school is proud to be part of the St Gabriel the Archangel Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, a family of 64 Catholic schools serving communities across the Diocese of Birmingham. Together, we share a collective mission:

Forming Christ-centred messengers of hope with kind hearts, questioning minds, a thirst for knowledge and a hunger for justice.

As part of this wider trust community, we work collaboratively to ensure high-quality Catholic education rooted in Gospel values, while respecting the individuality and identity of each school.

Our shared vision is expressed through the Catholic Schools Pupil Profile, which places Christ at the centre of all we do. The pairs of virtues guide our children as they grow to become thoughtful, resilient, compassionate young people who strive to live out their faith in daily life. Through this approach, children are encouraged to be grateful for their own gifts, appreciative of the gifts of others, and mindful of the blessings and grace given to them by God.

As they continue to grow together with Jesus, our pupils are supported to recognise their vocation within their local, national and global communities. They are encouraged to consider the needs of others and to act with justice, love and hope, living out our shared mission to make a positive difference in the world.

Catholic Schools Pupil Profile

Each half term we focus on one of the paired values within our prayer and liturgy, and everyday life. When staff see children living out these virtues this is celebrated to make them aware of how they are growing to be more like Jesus.



Also, at St Joseph & St Theresa's Catholic School, all our classes are named after a Catholic value, this allows the children each year to explore in more depth a different virtue and how they can become closer to God through this.

Our pupils are growing to be...	How school helps our pupils to grow...
Grateful for their own gifts, for the gift of other people, and for the blessings of each day; and generous with their gifts, now and in the future	By encouraging our pupils to know and be grateful for all their gifts, developing them to the full so that they can be generous in the service of others.
Attentive to their experience and to their vocation; and discerning about the choices they make and the effects of those choices.	By promoting the practice of attentive reflection and discerning decision making in teaching, in the exams, prayer and retreats; and through the practice and example of school leaders and staff.
Compassionate towards others, near and far, especially the less fortunate; and loving by their just actions and forgiving words.	By being compassionate and loving in the way pupils are treated, especially when a pupil is in trouble; and by opening pupils' eyes to those who suffer poverty, injustice or violence.
Faith-filled in their beliefs and hopeful for the future.	By passing on the living and faith-filled tradition of Jesus Christ; by having persevering faith in the pupils, and by encouraging them in turn, to have faith and hope in themselves and others.
Eloquent and truthful in what they say of themselves, the relations between people, and the world.	By developing an eloquent language which pupils can use to understand and articulate their emotions, beliefs, and questions, encouraged by the example of their teachers to be truthful in the way they represent themselves and speak about the world.
Learned , finding God in all things; and wise in the ways they use their learning for the common good.	By the breadth and depth of the curriculum; by excellence of teaching, and the creation of opportunities to become more learned and wise .
Curious about everything; and active in their engagement with the world, changing what they can for the better.	By leading pupils to be curious about the universe and all human activity, and to take increasing responsibility for their own learning, and by providing opportunities for them to be active in the life of the school, the Church, and the wider community.
Intentional in the way they live and use the resources of the earth, guided by conscience; and prophetic in the example they set to others.	By being a school community which is intentional in its way of proceeding to build-up quality of life; and which is prophetic in the way it offers an alternative vision of education and the human person rooted in the gospel.

Our School Staff Team



Mrs Schneider
Headteacher
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)



Mrs Townsend
Deputy Headteacher
RE Lead and Deputy DSL

Class	Teaching Staff
Precious People: Nursery	Mrs Shepherd, Mrs Hammond and Mrs Scott
Faithful Friends: Reception	Mrs Bennett
Peaceful Players: Year 1	Miss Finch
Kindness Keepers: Year 2	Mrs Roden
United Understanders: Year 3	Mrs McCabe
Eco Explorers: Year 4	Mr Perkins
Hopeful Helpers: Year 5	Mr Pickering
Justice Journeymen: Year 6	Mrs Townsend & Mrs Garner

Other important members of our school team:

Teaching Assistants	Miss Pearce, Mrs Pickering, Mrs Eaton, Mrs Clinton, Mrs Hamill, Mrs Matthews, Mrs Cartwright, Miss Sneyd, Mrs Lowry
Office Staff	Miss Palmer: School Bursar, Health & Safety Lead & DDSL Mrs Vickers: Clerical Assistant
Site Staff	Mr Somerfield: Site Supervisor & Forest School Teacher
Lunchtime Staff	Mrs Roe Miss Chapman
Specialist Teachers:	Mrs O'Hara: Spanish & Computing Teacher Mr Drury: Music Teacher Mr Taylor: PE Teacher

Our Local Governing Body

Steph Hewitt
Chair of Governors
(foundation governor)

Emily Shearon
Vice Chair of Governors
(foundation governor)

Foundation Governors

Chris Silk
Elaine Ilsley
Kayleigh Peace
Jonathan Khoo

Parent Governors

Stephen Handy
Paul Sharp

Staff Governor

Miss R Palmer

Headteacher

Mrs S Schneider



Our Partnership with Parents

The most important person in your child's life is you! Parents have a fundamental role to play in their child's education and together, as partners, we can make their St Joseph & St Theresa's experience a huge success. We pride ourselves on our parental partnerships and involve you fully in your child's learning and development. We aim to achieve this by:

- ❖ **Gaining in-depth information about your child**
- ❖ **Involving you in your child's learning**
- ❖ **Welcoming you into our school environment**
- ❖ **Keeping you informed and updated**

We strongly believe that effective communication and partnership with parents is key to establishing a safe, welcoming, and purposeful environment in which the children feel confident and secure and able to reach their full potential.

Arbor

The office staff use Arbor as the school's main means of communication. This app has many facilities including:

- Emails and In-App messages: used to communicate information and reminders with parents
- Parents Evening Bookings: used to book parent/teacher appointments to meet with class teachers about attainment, progress and wellbeing at set times in the school calendar
- Meal ordering: parents can pre-book meals and break time snacks and drinks
- Payments: parents can 'top up' meal and break accounts to ensure enough funds are available for orders to be placed successfully.
- Clubs: here parents can book and pay for after school clubs
- School Shop: in this section parents can book and pay for items that are available for purchase throughout the school year.
- Trips: here parents can book and pay for upcoming school trips and off-site visits
- Attendance: parents must report their child's absence before 9am on the first day, this is one way in which you can do this.
- Positive behaviour comments are regularly reported by school staff through Arbor.

It is important to keep meal and break time accounts topped up regularly on the Arbor parent app, to prevent families from building up excess debt. If an account is in arrears, parents will receive a reminder to top up, and this should be done at the earliest opportunity to ensure any future orders are placed successfully.

Google Classroom

The teaching staff from Nursery to Year 6, use Google Classroom as their learning platform for blended learning between home and school, allowing parents to become fully involved in their child's learning and development.

Early Years use this to share and receive snippets of learning and important 'WOW moments' for your child. This app allows parents to view their child's in-school achievements; and allows parents to share new experiences and successes that your child accomplishes at home.

Through their Google account classroom teachers can make announcements about events that are happening in school and in the classwork tab children and parents will find the following to support blended learning between home and school:

- Home Learning
- Useful Weblinks
- Wellbeing Support
- Parents: Supporting your child's learning
- Out of School achievements
- Bring your Parent to School Day Workshop Information
- Meet the Teacher ppt and information.

How can you get involved in school life?

We warmly encourage all families to take an active role in our school community. There are many opportunities throughout the year for parents to engage in and celebrate school life with their children:

- **Class Mass.** Held weekly either in school or at St Joseph's Church, providing regular opportunities for shared worship.
- **School-led Family Mass.** A special school-led weekend Mass takes place once per half term at St Joseph's Church, inviting families to come together in faith.
- **Bring Your Parent to School Days.** Join your child in the classroom for interactive workshops, followed by the opportunity to enjoy lunch together.
- **Music Recitals.** Celebrate students' musical talents through a range of performances held throughout the year.
- **Singing Playground Events.** Informal and joyful gatherings where children showcase singing and build a sense of community.
- **School Exhibitions.** Explore your child's learning through exhibitions in subjects such as Geography, History, Art, and Technology.
- **Book Look & Open Classroom Events.** Visit the classroom to review your child's work, see their progress, and gain insight into their learning experiences.

We look forward to welcoming you to these events and building strong partnerships between home and school.

Supporting Our School Community

Our parents are a valuable part of our extended teaching community, and we recognise the important role you play in enriching your child's education.

Do you have a skill, experience, or passion you could share?
Could you help bring learning to life for our pupils?

We would love to hear from you and explore ways you can contribute to enhancing our curriculum and school experiences.

Essential Foundations for Learning

A Healthy & Balanced Diet

Encouraging children to eat well and learn about food in their primary years not only protects their health when they are young but also sets the foundations for their future health and wellbeing. Please ensure that your morning routine includes giving your child enough time to sit and eat a healthy and substantial breakfast.

Children should not be arriving at school eating snacks or chewing gum.

Children in Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 receive a school meal under the Universal Infant Free School Meal Scheme (UIFSM) funded by the government and it is school policy that all children eat within this scheme so that we can provide a balanced and health meal to all children within these classes. Lunchboxes from home are not permitted within these year groups. This also ensures we are able to monitor food allergies and intolerances effectively for the safety of our children.

Children in Key Stage 2 (years 3-6) may bring in a packed lunch from home, if you are sending your child to school with a lunchbox, please ensure it contains a healthy balance of foods to ensure healthy habits are developed for life. The Eatwell Guide, recommends a lunchbox should contain:

- a starchy food, e.g. potatoes, bread, rice, pasta.
- plenty of fruit and vegetables, e.g. carrot sticks, an apple, sliced cucumber.
- a source of protein, e.g. beans, pulses, egg, fish, meat.
- a healthy drink, e.g. water, semi-skimmed milk.

Exercise & Physical Activity

Regular physical activity during the primary years provides immediate and long-term benefits for physical and psychological wellbeing. We should minimise the amount of time our children spend being sedentary. Physical activity includes all forms of activity, such as walking, active play and active games. It is recommended to maintain a healthy weight:

- Pre-school children (under 5s) should be physical active for at least 180 minutes (three hours) each day, the 180 minutes should include at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity. At our school this is achieved by the vast outdoor provision on offer to the children as well more structured PE lessons for Reception class.
- Children and young people aged 5 to 18 need to do 2 types of physical activity each week: aerobic and exercises to develop and strengthen their movement skills, muscles and bones. They should aim for an average of at least 60 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity a day. In addition, they should reduce the time spent sitting or lying down and break up long periods of not moving with some activity. All activities should make you breathe faster and feel warmer. At our school this achieved through PE lessons and active lunchtimes.

Oral Health

It is recommended that children should go to the dentist with their parents as soon as possible. You should then take them regularly, as often as your dental team recommend. **If your child has not attended a dentist appointment within the last 6 months, you recommend you book an appointment as soon as possible.** Cleaning your child's teeth should be part of their daily hygiene routine. **It is important to supervise your child's brushing until they are at least seven.** Make brushing a routine - just before your child goes to bed and at least one other time during the day.

Establishing a Bedtime Routine

The NHS recommend:

- Children aged **3 to 5 years old**, should get between **10 to 13 hours** (including naps) of sleep every night
- Children aged **6 to 12 years old**, should get between **9 to 12 hours** of sleep every night

Below is an example of a good bedtime routine that will aid your child's sleep:

- Eating dinner as a family
- Quiet time in the evening – no TV, phones, tablets or other electronic devices for at least an hour before bed, as this reduces production of melatonin, the hormone that helps us fall asleep.
- Bath or wash time
- Story time or reading time in the bedroom, with low lights and curtains closed
- Snuggled into bed with a favourite toy
- Calming/Classical music can help relax and calm before bedtime
- A cuddle and kiss goodnight, then say prayers
- Lights out

Discussing time, clocks and numbers offers an ideal opportunity to talk about bedtimes and wake-up times in your home. Bedtime should be the same each night – it is also important to get up at the same time each day, to anchor and reset the body clock.

Home School Agreement

Parents will...	The St Joseph & St Theresa's team will ...	Support & advice can be found ...
Ensure that my child has a substantial breakfast before arriving at school or nursery.	Encourage your child to try different fruits at snack time. Discuss & promote a healthy diet.	www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/the-eatwell-guide/
Limit 'screen time' and provide opportunities within the day for my child to partake in physical activity.	Provide daily opportunities for outdoor learning and physical activity.	www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/a-parents-guide-to-screen-time
Listen to and read regularly to their child to develop a love for reading and the English language.	Develop a reading culture across the school so that the children are immersed in a range of exciting, engaging texts that develop their vocabulary and love for reading.	www.dentalhealth.org
Support & supervise my child when brushing their teeth each morning & evening. Book an appointment at the dentist for my child.	Promote good oral health and discuss ways to maintain good health. Provide reward charts for parents to use at home.	Brush your teeth song for younger children – see Early Years handbook Reward charts
Establish a consistent bedtime routine which includes sharing a bedtime story together.	Discuss any concerns with parents and support/ refer where needed.	Class pages on website GP & Health Visitor
Ensure that children are not accessing social media, gaming or online platforms that are not suitable for their ages	We will work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that children understand how to stay safe online.	

Reading

**At St Joseph & St Theresa's reading is given our highest priority.
Children are provided with daily opportunities to read and to enjoy being read to.**

Reading is the window to the world for children, and as adults, we have to open the window.

Reading is an essential life skill; every person reads every day of their life. It is like providing the mind with nourishment. Knowledge is the food for the mind and soul. It encourages us to think. It increases our hunger for knowledge and our thirst to learn.

"Reading is important, because if you can read, you can learn anything about everything and everything about anything."

~ Tomie dePaola

We use the 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised' which has been developed with the Little Sutton English Hub to teach our children phonics; phonics are the building blocks for developing confident, independent readers. It is essential that children are presented with a clear, systematic approach to master this key skill for reading. Alongside this we use the Big Cat Collins reading scheme which is fully aligned with the phonics programme. The books are used alongside phonics teaching in our reading sessions to ensure the children are fully immersed in phonics and the common sight words (tricky words – you can't sound them out e.g. the, go) as we teach them to read.

In Reception and Year 1, each week your child will receive a library loan pack which they will keep for a whole week before they are changed.

Collins Big Cat Phonics

This book will be well-matched to the child's phonic & reading ability (they should be able to read 90% of the words independently). You should listen to your child read this book; the purpose of this book is to develop your child's fluency (the ease, confidence and smoothness with which they can read) so they should be very confident at reading it by the end of the week.

Reading for Pleasure

Carefully selected high-quality, engaging texts to inspire your child's love of reading and to nurture a lifelong reading habit.

Research shows that reading for pleasure has many benefits and it has been proven that: *'reading for pleasure has social benefits and can make people feel more connected to the wider community. Reading increases a person's understanding of their own identity, improves empathy and gives them an insight into the world view of others'* (The Reading Agency 2015).

Sharing Books Together

The aim of these books is for you and your child to enjoy special time together each day, sharing stories and building a love of reading. Your child may not be able to read all the words independently, as these books are not always fully phonetically decodable. Instead, you can enjoy the book together by:

- Reading the story aloud to your child or taking it in turns to read a page
- Talking about the pictures and discussing what is happening
- Asking questions about the story, characters, and themes
- Encouraging your child to predict what might happen next
- Re-reading favourite stories to build confidence and enjoyment

These shared reading experiences are incredibly valuable and play an important role in developing your child's language, imagination, and enjoyment of books.

When reading this book if your child doesn't know a word then just tell your child the word. The purpose of this book is:

- For you to enjoy story time together
- For you to model read to your child
- For your child to become very familiar with a story and be able to retell it in their own words
- For your child to learn common story telling phrases

Of course, you can also use books you have at home in this way too!

REMEMBER to record all reading you do with your child at home in your child's Reading Record which they will receive at the beginning of the school year or on Boom Reader– this will highlight to your child the importance you place on reading, and they will be proud to share this with their teacher and classmates at school.

In Reception and Year 1 we will be teaching the children to read by focusing on the Collins Big Cat Phonics texts. They will have three 30-minute reading sessions a week, where they will read in a small group using their book for the week. The lessons will take the following structure:

- Day 1: Decoding – pre-teaching phonic sounds; GVC (grapheme – phoneme correspondence) - what the sounds looks like and what it sounds like; and tricky words (words that don't sound as they look, e.g. to, what); reading practice.
- Day 2: Prosody – a focus on fluency, pre-teach of GVC & tricky words, model reading with expression; reading practice
- Day 3: Comprehension: 5 questions about the story. Children will be asked to – Answer it! Prove it! Explain It!

In all lessons the common thread throughout will be the development of fluency. This is where the daily practice with parents at home is crucial.

By the time the children reach Year 2, we want to ensure ALL children have:

*The WILL to want to read
and
The SKILL to be able to read*

Whole Class and Small Group Reading

In Year 2 and Key Stage 2 children have 20–30-minute daily reading sessions to continue to build on the firm foundations laid in Reception and Year 1. They continue to develop reading skills using the following reading domains:

- Explaining the meaning of words in context
- Retrieving and recording information
- Summarising the main ideas from more than one paragraph
- Making and explaining inferences from the text, using evidence from the text to justify
- Predicting what might happen next from details stated and implied
- Identifying and explaining how information is related and contributes to the overall meaning
- Identify and explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases
- Make comparisons within the text.

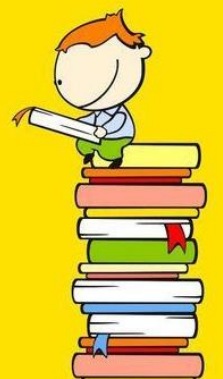
Individual reading

Once children are fully competent with their phonics, they will move on to individual reading books self-chosen from the Accelerated Reader library. Each term the children complete the star reading assessments these determine the level AR book they will read; this allows all children to be working on reading levels matched closely to their individual ability. As they complete their book, they then complete an electronic quiz which assesses their understanding of what they have read – the children thoroughly enjoy the reward these quizzes bring.

IT ADDS UP!

If you read just
15 minutes a day,
in one year you
will have read
over 1,000,000
words!

Source: Statisticbrain.com



All children in Year 2 and KS2 will be given the opportunity to read their book independently during the school day. It is also essential that they read regularly at home. This can be done:

- Independently
- Reading aloud to an adult
- An adult reading to them, then discussion about the story – what has happened so far, what will happen next, new and adventurous vocabulary that is introduced
- Even our oldest, most capable readers benefit hugely from an adult model reading to them; and to help improve fluency we recommend an adult reads a page, then the child reads a page.

Reading for Pleasure

The power of reading is immense. There is plenty of evidence that reading for pleasure is a much bigger factor in determining whether a child does well at school (and in later life) than their social or economic background. That's because reading develops vocabulary though exposing the reader to a wide range of words and challenges the reader to work out the meaning of new words through their context in a sentence.

For younger children, hearing books read aloud is vital to the development of their language and understanding how stories work. They learn to try new sounds and words, building up their vocabulary through copying the adult who is reading to them. Picture books are also great, as children can ask questions and use their imagination to interpret what they mean.

As children get older, reading builds up the skills and vocabulary to enable them to read more challenging books, which extends their reading capability and allows them to use reading as a tool for learning in all subjects.

In recognition of this, children at our school are read to daily by the staff in their classroom in a 'Reading for Pleasure' session; this develops a love and passion for reading that will be immeasurable as they grow and develop.

*Reading is the key to opening every possibility, opportunity and experience for children.
In partnership with parents, we can ensure that every child is a reader, meaning every
child is a learner.*

Reading Ambassadors

In 2022 we introduced Reading Ambassadors to our school. This group is made up of children from our Year 5 & Year 6 class who have a real passion for reading. Their job is to help all children, parents and other members of the school and wider community to understand the importance and benefits of reading. Here are some of the things they have done so far:

- Reading daily to Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 pupils
- Running reading competitions
- Writing book reviews for recommended reads for different year groups
- Keeping the school library organised and tidy

Mathematics

At our school we believe **all** pupils can achieve success in maths. We encourage pupils to have a 'growth mindset' – a belief that effort leads to success and that challenges and mistakes are opportunities to learn.

Mathematics Mastery

The 'mastery approach' to teaching mathematics is the underlying principle of Mathematics Mastery. Instead of learning mathematical procedures by rote, we want your child to build a deep understanding of concepts which will enable them to apply their learning in different situations.

Developing children's language and vocabulary is essential. In every lesson key vocabulary (star words) are taught and children are expected to use them in full sentences throughout the lesson.

Mathematics Mastery lessons can feel livelier with more conversation going on than usual, because we actively encourage pupils to articulate, justify and explain their thinking, both as individuals and in groups.

We also have daily 10-minute Maths Meetings. These are used to consolidate key areas of mathematics in each class. Maths Meetings provide an opportunity to teach and revise 'general knowledge maths' which may not explicitly be covered during the maths lesson and also allows the daily integration of maths into the surrounding environment. This means that pupils are practicing concepts and skills on a regular basis, meaning they are continually building on their mastery of these concepts.

Here are a few tips to encourage your children at home with maths:

- ✓ Positively talk to your children about everyday maths and maths in their environment
- ✓ Play games with them
- ✓ Value mistakes as learning opportunities
- ✓ Recognise that there is more than one way to work things out.
- ✓ Praise children for effort over outcome.
- ✓ Avoid saying things like "I'm useless at maths".

CLIC

Each day classes will have a 20 minute 'CLIC' session. CLIC focusses on basic skills as this is the foundation for all mathematical concepts. CLIC stands for:

'Counting' - children will count forwards and backwards in steps depending on their ability e.g. in 1s, 2s, 3s, 6s, 25s or even in decimals and fractions for older children!

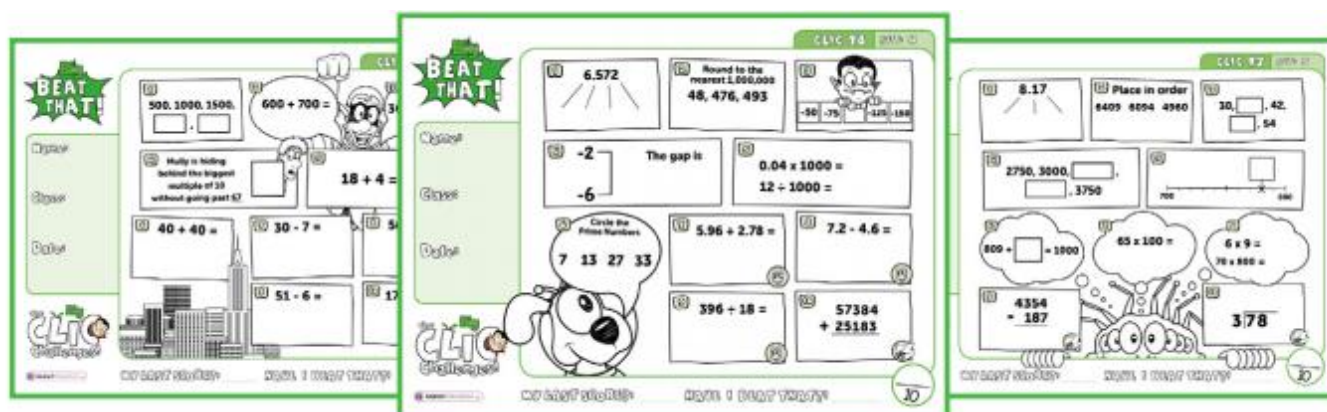
'Learn Its' are addition facts and times tables facts.

'It's Nothing New' is where children apply what they have learnt to any object, amount or unit of measure.

'Calculation' - here we develop the children's understanding of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

BEAT THAT

- The Big Maths Beat That challenges are completed by children every week.
- These are done in a fun, engaging and non-competitive way with the children encouraged to focus on beating their best ever score.
- These challenges will inform teachers of the next steps in learning so that we can ensure your child is still progressing.



LEARN ITS

There are only a few number facts we expect children to learn, and so although it is correct to refer to them as facts, it is more helpful to call the ones we wish children to learn 'Learn Its'.

This provides an instructional message as well as an accurate label for the subset of facts that need memorising.

A 'Learn It' is a number fact that is learnt so well that it can be recalled instantly. They are number facts that we need repeatedly, that is why it is highly efficient to learn them as facts. There are just 72 'Learn Its', 36 addition facts and 36 multiplication facts.

Rec	1+1 2+1	2+2 2+3	3+3 counting in 10s	4+4	5+5					
Year 1	6+6 2+8 6+3	7+7 3+7 counting in 5s and 2s	8+8 4+6	9+9 4+3	5+2	6+2	7+2	9+2	4+3	5+3
Year 2	3+8 5+9	3+9 6+9	4+7 7+9	4+8 5+7	4+9	4+5	5+6	6+7	7+8	8+9
	2x, 5x and 10x table facts									
Year 3	3x, 4x and 8x table facts									
Year 4	All times table facts in preparation for the Statutory Multiplication Check at the end of Year 4									
Year 5/6	All Learn Its above									

Our Curriculum

Our aim at St Joseph and St Theresa's is to provide a broad, balanced and rich curriculum, which ensures full coverage of all subject areas with Jesus at the centre of all teaching. Through our 'Curriculum Journey', we provide a curriculum to challenge, enthuse and support children in becoming confident, curious and active learners. Our curriculum is designed so that links are made between History, Geography, Art & Design and Reading; it is led by the Catholic Pupil Profile virtues alongside the standards outlined in 2014 National Curriculum. These have been used to create clear progression grids for all foundation subjects where knowledge is built upon each academic year.

The curriculum design provides opportunities for all children to be included and achieve their potential. Learners can make positive decisions to achieve in all aspects of life. They are attentive to their experience and to their vocation; and discerning about the choices they make and the effects of those choices.

Learners are empathetic and compassionate to the needs of others and support their peers. They have high self-esteem and believe that they can contribute to the world. High expectations are set for the vocabulary children should use and these are maintained throughout the lesson enabling children to eloquently discuss learning and understanding. Appropriate challenge and opportunities for children to deepen their thinking and understanding are provided in each lesson to all pupils. The use of imagination and curiosity questions are used to spark children's' interests and elicit higher order thinking skills as well as allowing children to apply their knowledge and learning to other situations.

Common Vocabulary

Resilience Learners know that finding things difficult results in growth and will not be put off by failure; instead, they show a resilience and yearning to continue

Challenge Learners approach challenge positively and know that the challenge will support them in reaching their potential. Learners are happy, confident and have a desire to learn and improve

Ambition Learners are aspirational and are able to demonstrate how they can reach their goals. They are intentional in the way they live and use the resources of the earth, guided by conscience; and prophetic in the example they set to others.

Curiosity Learners show a curiosity in the world around them and ask questions to drive their own learning. They are curious about everything; and active in their engagement with the world, changing what they can for the better.

Our curriculum design identifies the different topics which are taught through each year group and the breadth of opportunities which we provide. Each topic is used as a vehicle to teach a range of subjects in interesting and imaginative contexts. Knowledge organisers for each topic in each year group can be found on class pages on the school website. To provide children with a range of experiences, we are committed to organising visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum topics with these making use of the local area where possible.

Topic Homework

To support your child's learning at home, topic homework is set half termly; this further develops children's knowledge and understanding of their new topic. The homework will be sent out as a paper copy and uploaded onto Google classrooms prior to topic commencing which will normally fall before a half term break. Children should complete AT LEAST one activity from each curriculum area and work alongside siblings and other family members to

continue to foster and build a love of learning and thirst for knowledge. Children are encouraged to bring their topic homework into school or upload it onto Google Classrooms so the learning can be shared with the whole class.

RE Homework

RE homework is set each half term for all children to complete ranging from a project on Pentecost to completing research on the class Saint. Each year group will receive the same homework as this enables siblings/families to work together on this. Children are encouraged to either share their completed homework on Google Classrooms or bring into school.

SEND

St Joseph and St Theresa is an inclusive school that is fully committed to providing the best possible education to all children regardless of their gender, ethnicity, social background, physical ability or educational needs. We aim for all children to become curious and active learners and hope to inspire and motivate for future learning. This information is aimed at providing you with a clear outline of how children, including those with SEND, are supported in achieving their full potential in all curriculum areas in a supportive, caring and committed environment.

It is important to note that it may not include every skill, resource and technique that we employ as these are continually being developed and modified to meet the changing requirements of individual children.

All children with a special educational need will be placed on the school SEND register and will have an individual education plan which consists of three targets based on the child's needs and next steps. These plans will provide a focus for one to one or small group work which will be closely monitored.

The staff and governors of St. Joseph and St Theresa's will endeavour to meet the Special Educational Needs of all pupils at the school by:

- Enabling all pupils to be offered access to a broad, balanced, exciting and relevant curriculum with the maximum degree of social and educational inclusion.
- Identifying SEND on our School Improvement Plan and for all staff to evaluate its implementation and how this can be developed.
- Enabling teachers to make appropriate provision for all their pupils by providing appropriate support, information and advice.
- Developing a partnership between parents, pupils, and the school, in which each has an active role to play in the education of all our children.
- Develop strong and successful partnerships with outside agencies who can offer specialist advice and support to certain areas of need.

Below is a document outlining the support which we provide within school. For all children we aim to provide quality first teaching but recognise that some children require more support than this, which is where Wave 2 support would be accessed.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Local Offer

Staffordshire's local offer provides information and services for children and young people aged 0-25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their families. The Local Offer website aims to help families by gathering the information that they need to know to make informed choices about the support they receive. Please follow link to find out more:

<https://www.staffordshireconnects.info/kb5/staffordshire/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=0>

St Joseph and St Theresa Catholic Primary School
Graduated Response for Support



	Wave 1 (Quality first teaching)	Wave 2 (Small group - <i>possible IEP targets to in place</i>)	Wave 3 (Individual - <i>IEP/EHCP</i>)
<i>Cognition and Learning</i>	- Differentiated Curriculum and activities - Daily modelling of guided reading and writing. - Use of coloured paper/overlays. - Word banks - Differentiated questioning. - Differentiated phonics groups. - Visual prompts - Visual Timetables - Scaffolding - Use of writing frames - Concrete resources - Differentiated homework - Differentiated weekly spellings. - TA support - Regular reading with an adult. - Same day interventions	- Pre-teaching - Small group support in curriculum areas - Dyslexia outreach resources - Regular small group support with an adult using explicit modelling. - Planned, focused and targeted interventions - Now and next board - Small group CLIC (basic mathematics skills) groups. - Memory game activities. - Beat That Dyslexia activities	- Nessy subscription 5 minute box - Individual and personalised work - Educational Psychologist - EY SENCO support - Precision teaching - Toe by Toe - Word Wasp 1:1 support on IEP targets
<i>Communication and Interaction</i>	- Structured School and Class Resources • Differentiated Curriculum Delivery - Visual Timetables - Simplified language - Chunking instructions - Partner Talk - PHSE talking time - NELI assessment EYFS - Communication & Interaction INSPIRE session for parents.	- Lunchtime nurture groups led by teaching assistants. - BPVS testing - Language Steps interaction (EYFS/Year1) - Talk about intervention (Year2-Year 6) - Regular 'checking in' and 'prompting' during the lesson. - Outdoor gym equipment - Lunchtime structured physical activities.	- Speech and Language therapy 1:1 support focusing on Speech and Language targets. - Cool Kids Programme (EYFS) 1:1 support on IEP targets
<i>Sensory and physical</i>	- Language rich environments with a focus on language - Flexible teaching approaches - Flexible environments. - Classroom arrangements - Brain breaks - Music (relaxation and concentration techniques) - Teacher/whole school awareness of visual/hearing needs. - Fiddle toys - Pencil grips - Weekly 'Sign time' sessions for all year groups - Daily handwriting and letter formation lesson - Go Noodle - Cosmic Kids Yoga	'Top up' phonic interventions - Play therapy - Sensory breaks - Now and next board - Small group daily handwriting and letter formation. - Adult support during PE sessions. - Outdoor gym equipment - Go Noodle - Cosmic Kids Yoga	- Individualised seating arrangements - Home- school diary - Meet and Greet system - Support from Autism Outreach - Occupational Therapy - BEAM programme (EYFS) - Cool Kids (EYFS) 1:1 support on individual targets. - Writing slant - Pedals.
<i>Social, Emotional and Mental Health.</i>	- Whole School and Class Reward System (ClassDojo, stickers, Praise Pads) - Whole School and Class Expectations - Whole School Policy for Behaviour regulation - Circle Time - Worry and praise boxes - Emotion Coaching - Mind fit session. - Emotional thermometers - Affirmation diaries. - Mindfulness / meditation strategies - Whole school awareness and focus on Children's Mental Health Week.	- Lego therapy - Play & art therapy. - Lego therapy. - Lunchtime nurture groups - Talking through pictures. - Individual visual resources.	- Malachi 1:1 self esteem programme (EP) - Action for children 1-1 support with specialist teachers - Meet and Greet system. - CAHMS support - Outreach support Sherbrook Specialist Provision - Outreach support Little Bridge - Behaviour Support (ENTRUST)

Child Protection & Safeguarding



At St Joseph & St Theresa's Catholic Primary School, all members of staff and governors recognise and understand our individual & organisational responsibilities and duties with regards to keeping children safe. We work with other agencies and families to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with statutory guidance.



Mrs Schneider
Designated
Safeguarding Lead



Mrs Townsend
Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead



Miss Palmer
Deputy Designated
Safeguarding Lead

St Joseph & St Theresa's adopt the Staffordshire County Council Policy for Child Protection and follow the guidelines outlined in the Keeping Children Safe in Education document. Parents wishing to read any of our policies should visit the school website:

<https://www.st-joseph-st-theresa.staffs.sch.uk/about/school-policies/>

Alternatively contact the school office on office@st-joseph-st-theresa.staffs.sch.uk or 01543 227220

All families experience difficult times – family break downs, loss of employment, bereavement etc. If your family needs help and support please speak to Mrs Schneider, Mrs Townsend or Miss Palmer and we will do all we can to support you and your child, including finding external agencies who may be able to help you. You can also access help and support through the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's website:

<https://www.staffsscb.org.uk/>

<https://www.staffsscb.org.uk/children-and-families/>

If we have a concern about a child in our school, we will firstly contact those adults with parental responsibility to discuss these concerns. However, if we feel a child or another adult would be put at risk, then we may contact Staffordshire Children's Advice and Support (formally known as First Response) without parental permission.

If you have a safeguarding concern about a child at our school, please speak to one of our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs), any concerns you share with us will be recorded on the school safeguarding system 'My Concern'. Alternatively, you can contact Staffordshire Children's Advice and Support (SCAS) yourself on 0300 111 8007

Attendance

All children are entitled to a full-time education, and it is a parent's duty to ensure this happens!

Your child should be at school every day unless they are poorly. Children cannot learn if they are not attending school. Poor attendance leads to huge gaps in learning and affects children's attainment and progress; it can also impact on children's emotional well-being and social interaction with peers.

At St Joseph & St Theresa's Catholic Primary School we strive for excellent attendance figures. The government sets guidelines for pupils' attendance. For children to be considered to have good attendance, their attendance should be 95% or above. Here at St Joseph's & St Theresa's we aim for 96%.

If your child's attendance falls below 95%, we will issue an initial advisory letter to make you aware of this. If their attendance continues to fall and it goes below 90% the Education Welfare Officer will be informed and may decide to take further action.

At least, biannually, you will receive an attendance overview, so you are able to keep a close eye on your child's attendance; if you have any concerns regarding their attendance, please speak to Mrs Schneider or Miss Palmer.

100%:	Excellent Attendance - Well Done!
95% or above:	Good attendance (less than 10 days absence in a year)
91 - 94%:	A cause for concern, you could be missing up to 2 weeks of learning in the school year. The EWO would be aware of individual attendance at this level, and you may be invited to an attendance meeting at school.
Persistent absence is defined as an attendance rate of 90% or below.	
85 - 89%:	Persistent Absence - A Serious Cause for Concern, you could have missed up to 4 weeks of learning in the school year - improvement is needed. The EWO would be become involved and help to improve attendance levels.
Less than 85%:	Persistent Absence - A Serious Cause for Concern, your child is missing more than 6 weeks of learning. The EWO could at this stage issue warnings and ultimately fines for persistently missing school.

Everyday Counts!

It is vital that pupils attend school, on time, every day to gain the greatest benefit from their education.

Please familiarise yourself with our [Attendance and Absence](#) page and our [Attendance Policy](#) on the school website.

Your Child's Day

Start of the School Day

Children may enter the school building at 8:35am, learning starts in all classrooms straight away with morning activities. All children need to be in class and settled by 8:45am, which is when formal lessons will commence. At 8:45am the main door will close, any children arriving after this time need to enter school through the school office.



Morning Break Time: Each class has a 15minute morning break. Children get the opportunity to play with their friends, have a healthy snack and the opportunity to go to the toilet. Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children receive a choice of fruit through the government's fruit scheme and In KS2, children can bring a piece of fruit from home for their break time snack or snack can be purchased from the school kitchen – there are a variety of food and drink options available. Year 1 and Year 2 children can also purchase drinks from the school kitchen. All snack should be pre-ordered through the Arbor app.

Lunch Break: Each class has a 45-minute lunch break. 25minutes will be spent in the dinner hall, where the children will be encouraged to have a relaxed dining experience. Good table manners and healthy lunch boxes are expected. We provide 'Universal Free School Meals' for all Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children and serve delicious, nutritious and healthy options that can be ordered in advance by parents through our Arbor app; there are hot and cold options daily together with a salad bar for children to enjoy. Parents of children with specific dietary requirements should inform the school office; it is essential we are aware of any allergies before children start at our school.

Reception class spend their outdoor lunchtime on the Early Years playground using the age-appropriate equipment. All the other class have 25minutes outdoor play and can access a range of exciting, structured activities or imaginative free play!

End of the School Day

School finishes at 3:15pm. The children will be accompanied by a member of staff who will release the children one at a time to ensure all children are safely returned to their parents. Please inform the school office if someone different is collecting your child; if we are not informed of this your child will not be released into their care until we have been able to confirm these arrangements with you.

School Uniform

All classes throughout the school have a single active uniform which consists of:

- Royal blue v-neck jumper or cardigan with embroidered school logo
- White collared polo shirt – this can be with the school logo if parents wish but not compulsory
- Plain black joggers, leggings, shorts or skirt
- Plain BLACK socks
- BLACK shoes or trainers that are appropriate for all active sessions including PE.

*Children who cannot tie their own laces must have **VELCRO fastening** for reasons of Health & Safety.*

All children should have the following items in school every day, these can remain in lockers throughout each term:

- A change of bottoms (joggers/leggings etc.)
- An old pair of trainers that can be worn on the school field and will get dirty
- A pair of wellingtons, without these children will be unable to join in with Forest School

ALL CHILDREN will be expected to wear the correct uniform, so they feel part of the school community. Any child not attending in the correct uniform will be given items from the uniform bank to change into. School uniform containing our logo can be purchased from Uniforms Plus, Burntwood Town Shopping Centre, WS7 1JR or A&J Designs, Unit 1, Apex Business Park, Walsall Road, Norton Canes, WS11 9PU

ALL clothing should be clearly labelled with your child's name

We would be very grateful for donations of good-quality school uniform to support our school community. Items can be handed in at the school office or given to a member of staff at the school entrance during drop-off or collection times. If your family may need support with school uniform, please know that help is available in a respectful and supportive way. You can contact the school office by phone or email, or speak to Mrs Schneider or Miss Palmer, and we will make the necessary arrangements for you. Please also look out for updates in the school newsletter about times throughout the year when a uniform bank will be available on the school playground at the start and end of the day, where families are welcome to access items freely.

Children with long hair should wear their hair tied back for school and ensure appropriate hair accessories are worn.

The wearing of jewellery, fashion items and smart watches is not permitted for health & safety reasons. Only one stud earring in each ear may be worn, however these **must** be removed for PE and swimming lessons. If you are planning to have your child's ears pierced, we politely request you do this in the six weeks holidays when it won't disrupt their learning in PE.

Children should have the appropriate weather dependent items with them throughout the year:

- In the warm weather children should bring a sun hat, have sun cream applied in the morning before arriving at school and bring a named bottle with them to reapply during the school day if required. Classroom staff will assume that all children have had sun cream applied before the school day and this will not be reapplied until lunchtime. We are aware that some children will have 12 or 24 hour sun cream applied and therefore if you do not send a named bottle of cream into school we will assume that your child/ren do not need a re-application.
- In the cooler/wetter weather children should ensure they have an outdoor coat so they can access the outdoor provision together with gloves, hat and scarves in the winter if required.

Academic year 2026-27

Start of the Day

The school door from Reception to Year 6 will open at 8:35am and close at 8:45am

Nursery:	8:30am door opens; 8:45am registration
Reception, Year 1 & 2:	8:35am door opens; 8:45am registration
Years 3, 4, 5, & 6:	8:35am door opens; 8:45am registration

Children may enter the school building once the doors are open and learning starts in all classrooms straight away with morning activities. All children need to be in class and settled by 8:45am for registration and so formal lessons can commence.

Entrance

All children will enter through the pedestrian gate on the High Street and come across the senior playground. Mrs Schneider will be waiting to greet children in Years 1 - 6 at the double doors.

Nursery and Reception class will continue around the side of the school building, go through the large wooden gates and across the main playground with their parents where you will be greeted by the Nursery and Reception staff at the Early Years outdoor area.

After October Half Term when we return to school for the second part of the Autumn term our Reception class may enter school through the main double doors at the end of the senior playground and walk through the school building to their classroom, from January 2026 this will become the children's normal entrance. Nursery will continue to enter setting from the Early Years outdoor area.

If your child is late arriving at school then parents must accompany them to the school office where you will be asked the reason for late arrival, this which will be recorded against the register. If children arrive after 9:15am (when the registration period ends) they will be recorded as 'late after register closes' and this will affect their attendance. By this time children will have already missed 30minutes of learning and when this happens regularly it can have a huge impact on their emotional wellbeing and academic achievement.

The pedestrian gate on the High Street does have two steps, so if you use a wheelchair or have a pushchair you will need to come through the car park entrance and in front of the school building. The car park will not be in use during school drop off and collection times.

End of the Day

The school day for Reception to Year 6 will finish at 3:15pm

Nursery:	11:30am morning session; 3:15pm afternoon session
Reception, Year 1 & 2:	3:15pm
Years 3, 4, 5, & 6:	3:15pm

Exit

Parents/guardians can enter and exit the school premises through the pedestrian gate on High Street or Hill Street, whichever is most convenient for your journey home.

Each class will be accompanied to their point of exit by a member of staff who will release the children one at a time, **please be patient whilst waiting for your child we want to ensure all children are safely returned to their parents.**

If someone different or unexpected is collecting your child please inform the school office either by telephone or in-app message via your Arbor app; if we are not informed of arrangements your child will not be released until we have been able to speak with you.

Each class will be dismissed from an individual collection point on school site, as follows:

Nursery & Reception	Through the wooden gates across the playground and meet staff and children at EYFS area.
Year 1	Through the wooden gates, collect from the main playground doors.
Year 2	Collect from the double doors where you drop off in the morning.
Year 3	Through the wooden gates, collect from the main playground doors.
Year 4	Through the wooden gates and collect from the Year 4 classroom door.
Year 5	Collect from the double door where you drop off in the morning.
Year 6	Collect from the door on the right-hand side as you come across the senior playground.

Once children have collected children from school staff, they are then the responsibility of the parent/guardian, please hold their hand or get them to walk by your side, this ensures everyone remains safe as children leave the school site. Please do not let them climb on outdoor classrooms or play on/with the equipment on school site – staff cannot monitor this whilst releasing other children to their parents.

Uniform & PE kits

The expectations for school uniform and PE kit are outlined on page 23. It is vital that all children wear the correct uniform so that they are identified as part of the whole school community, this gives the children a sense of belonging. Please ensure all items of clothing and footwear are labelled with your child's name as items inevitably get misplaced. We also ask that parents buy non-branded sportswear to prevent upset when expensive items get lost.

As we continue to promote healthy bodies and healthy minds all children will have PE lessons twice weekly; for Year 4 one of these will be a weekly swimming lesson, children should bring their kits in a **drawstring pump bag**.

We would be very grateful for donations of good-quality school uniform to support our school community. Items can be handed in at the school office or given to a member of staff at the school entrance during drop-off or collection times. If your family may need support with school uniform, please know that help is available in a respectful and supportive way. You can contact the school office by phone or email, or speak to Mrs Schneider or Miss Palmer, and we will make the necessary arrangements for you. Please also look out for updates in the school newsletter about times throughout the year when a uniform bank will be available on the school playground at the start and end of the day, where families are welcome to access items freely.

Lockers & Bookbags

Each class has their own area in which to access their lockers; and each child will be allocated a locker at the start of the year. The lockers are not very big and there is only room for a coat, book-bag and a small bag containing their spare clothes and shoes, so please ensure your child **brings their belongings to school in their blue, school book bags**. They should not need to bring any other bags or equipment unless they have a swimming lesson.

Please **do not send your child to school with a rucksack**; they are too big to fit properly in the lockers this causes the children to force their locker closed, resulting in the locking mechanisms breaking. These are costly to repair and with extremely tight school budgets we cannot afford to keep replacing them.

Equipment

School provides all the necessary classroom equipment that the children need. The children have trays under their individual tables, allowing them safe storage and easy access to the equipment we provide.

When children are awarded their **pen license**, we ask that parents provided **2 black gel pens**, which should remain in school. Please **label the pens with your child's name** so we can easily identify who pens belongs to. If required, gel pens can be purchased from school via the shop on your Arbor app.

Children should bring their book-bag to school with them every day. In their book bag they should have their reading book, an essential every day so children are able to access the daily reading opportunities we provide for them. They will also have homework tasks, such as spellings, Learn Its & Beat That Challenges for them to practise at home. Please look out for these and encourage your children to complete them.

Children do not need to bring pencil cases into school, keep their personal equipment at home for them to use when they are completing home learning.

Water Bottles

For children to learn they need to be hydrated so their brains can work effectively. It is vital that your child has a water bottle in school every day, **filled with still water or still clear flavoured water. The bottle MUST have a sports top or fold down straw/spout** – on too many occasions open top bottles get split and cause irreversible damage to children's work, as you can imagine this causes great upset when a child's achievements are spoiled.

Items from home

Children should not bring items in from home without prior agreement with either their class teacher or the head teacher – toys, teddies, fidget toys etc. If personal items are brought into school and get lost, broken or shared this can cause great distress especially for younger children. Please ensure your child realises toys are not allowed in school, encourage them to see that whilst at school they can enjoy playing with the toys and equipment we provide and save their special toys for home.

Mobile Phones

Only children in Year 6, who are developing their independence by walking home alone are allowed to bring mobile phones into school. Before they do this, children and parents must sign the school mobile device agreement, so they are aware of the protocols we have in place to keep all our children safe. **All phones must be switched off before entering the school premises and should not be switched back on until they have left the school premises.**

Phones must be handed in to Year 6 staff on arrival into class. Any child found using their mobile phone on school premises will have it confiscated and parents will need to collect it from the school office at the end of the school day; if this happens on more than two occasions the child will no longer be able to bring their mobile phone to school.

School accepts no responsibility for mobile phones; children bring them to school at their own risk.

Boom Reader – Digital Reading Records

Reception to Year 2 children will be provided with reading records in September which they can use to record reading completed at home. From Year 3 to Year 5, children will have access to Boom Reader, and electronic reading record. If you are having problems accessing the app, please speak to the school office so we can assist with this.

Google Classroom

We use the Google Classroom Platform across school for homework purposes, to communicate between class and home and to share photos and recordings of events and activities in school for Parents/Guardians to view at home.

Upon joining our school a google classroom account will be created for your child and log in details shared with you via Arbor communication.

If you have any problems or queries in relation to Google Classroom or gaining access to this please contact the school office.

Parking

It is important to keep our families safe on the pavements and roads surrounding our school, particularly during drop-off and pick-up times. We kindly ask all members of our school community to support us by parking safely and considerately around the school site.

Blocking driveways, pavements and the school entrance or parking on double yellow lines and beyond marked bays creates hazards for pedestrians, restricts emergency vehicle access, and reduces visibility and safety for our children and families.

We work closely with PCSO Rachael Orwin and our local Police Force, who aim to have a presence around school at the end of the day to help keep our families safe.

For the safety of our children and consideration for local residents please park your car at the leisure centre, where there is ample free parking, and is just a short walk to the school gates at both the start and end of the day. **By parking here, you will help to keep us all safe!**

Pupil Premium

Following the introduction of Universal Free School Meals some parents who would be eligible for other entitlements for their children have stopped applying for this funding. This is a terrible shame as with this funding children are entitled to enrichment activities and resources to further their education. If you find yourself in financial difficulties or out of work (even for a short period of time) you can apply for pupil premium: Pupil premium funding has helped to pay for things such as:

- School visits, trips and residential excursions
- ICT resources within the classroom
- School starter book bags

From September 2026, the Government is expanding eligibility for free school meals. This means that **all children whose households receive Universal Credit will be entitled to free school meals**, regardless of income level.

What does this mean for families?

- Many more families will now be eligible for free school meals
- You could save around £475 per child per year on school lunches
- Your child will have access to a healthy meal each school day, supporting learning and wellbeing

Changes to existing protections

Currently, some children keep their FSM entitlement even if family circumstances change (known as transitional protection). From September 2026, these protections will end, and eligibility will be based on your current circumstances.

Understanding the different types of Free School Meals

From September 2026, there will effectively be two types of Free School Meals:

1. Targeted Free School Meals (with Pupil Premium funding attached)

- For families on Universal Credit with household earnings below £7,400 per year
- These pupils will continue to attract additional government funding for the school (Pupil Premium)

- This funding helps us provide extra support such as academic interventions, pastoral support, and contributions towards enrichment opportunities

2. Expanded Free School Meals (meal only)

- For families on Universal Credit above the £7,400 threshold
- These pupils will receive a free meal, but will not attract Pupil Premium funding

Why applying is still very important

Even if your child already receives a free meal, it is important that you register/apply if you are eligible. This is because:

- It ensures your child continues to receive their entitlement
- It helps us identify pupils who qualify for additional funding and support
- The school receives extra funding (Pupil Premium) for eligible pupils, which benefits teaching, resources, staff costs and wider support for children

What you need to do

If your household receives Universal Credit, you should apply. If you are unsure if you will qualify applying is quick and confidential so, please complete the form via the link below and your result will be communicated to you.

- Apply here: [Free School Meals Application Form – Fill in form](#)

If you receive Universal Credit please complete a free school meals application – it is your child's right and it may allow the school to unlock additional funding to support your child (pupil premium).



Frequently Asked Questions

What should I do if my child is unwell?

No child should be sent to school unless fit and well enough to participate in all normal activities. If your child has sickness or diarrhoea caused by a stomach bug they should not return to school for 48 hours.

As part of our safeguarding duties, the school operates a first day contact policy. Please contact the school office via the Arbor app or on 01543 227220 before 9:00am on the first day of absence and each subsequent day of absence thereafter.

If your child is taken ill at school or has an accident, the school will notify you or another nominated emergency contact as soon as possible.

What if my child has a dental/medical appointment in the school day and will be arriving late or needs to be collected early?

All routine medical or dental appointments should be made outside of school hours, so your child's education is not affected. However, if they have an emergency appointment or a consultant hospital appointment then the school office should be informed in advance (if possible) or before 9:00am on the day, via Arbor. If the absence is due to a medical or dental appointment, then a copy of the appointment letter/card/screen shot of text will be needed to upload to your child's attendance record or emailed to office@st-joseph-st-theresa.staffs.sch.uk

What if my child is to be absent for any reason other than illness?

If a child is absent for any reason other than illness, permission must be sought from the head teacher and the Governing Body of the school. All holidays taken during term time will be recorded as unauthorised absence and will be fined.

What if my child is late?

Punctuality at school is imperative. **The school doors and gates are locked at 8:45am** for security reasons. **If children are late, they should be accompanied to the school office where their parent/guardian will be expected to report their reason for lateness.** If your child is late after registers close (9:10am) they will be recorded as such and this will go against their attendance. As with absence, late marks are monitored by the local authority Education Welfare Officer on a regular basis.

What if the weather is bad?

During times of inclement weather children are supervised in their classrooms during break times. If there is snow and the school needs to close there will be notification sent via Arbor.

What if my child soils themselves?

Staff will respond sensitively to your child's needs by helping your child to clean and change themselves. We do ask that all children within school keep a spare change of clothing at school in case such an incident occurs.

What if my child forgets lunch, equipment etc...?

If your child forgets their lunch, book bag, water bottle etc. it can be brought to the school office and it will be passed to your child or the class teacher as soon as possible. If this is not possible, then arrangements will be made to ensure they have a cup to drink water from and a lunch will be organised for them for that day and the payment will be added to their Arbor account.

What if my child is taking medication?

Only prescribed medicine that is needed 4 times a day may be administered by school staff. Medication should be handed to the school office and the electronic form completed, which will be passed to the staff in your child's class. Classroom staff will be responsible for overseeing the administration of any medication. If a medication form is not completed staff will not be able to administer medicine. [Parental Permission to Administer Medication](#)

What if I need to see the Headteacher or class teacher? If you need to see either the Headteacher or class teacher please contact the school office on 01543 227220 or via office@st-joseph-st-theresa.staffs.sch.uk and an appointment will be made at the earliest possible convenience

What's Next...

Before your child starts at our school or returns to school for the new academic year please:

- Ensure your contact details, details of emergency contacts and medical needs are up to date. If you haven't already done so or wish to update us with any changes, complete the [pupil information form](#).
- If you haven't already done so or wish to update your preferences around photograph consents, complete the [photograph/permissions form](#).
- Talk to Miss Palmer in the school office or Mrs Schneider if you think you may be eligible for pupil premium entitlements.
- Look at the school website, class pages and the handbook appendix at home with your child and discuss with them all the exciting things to expect when they start at our school or when they return in the new academic year and the expectations for their new year group.
- Remember to start and end the day by sharing the school prayers and set prayers with your child.
- Attend parent information sessions, bring your parent to school day events and curriculum exhibitions in school so your child can see we are working in partnership: child, parent and school.
- Take note of important dates and events happening in school so your child comes prepared and ready for these, these are published on the '[Diary Dates](#)' page on the school website and sent weekly via our school newsletter.
- Ensure **ALL** items of uniform are labelled with your child's name before the start of the school year.
- Contact the school office, Mrs Schneider or your child's class teacher if you have any questions or concerns:
 - Miss Palmer or Mrs Vickers: office@st-joseph-st-theresa.staffs.sch.uk
 - Mrs Schneider: headteacher@st-joseph-st-theresa.staffs.sch.uk
 - School phone number: 01543 227220
 - Class teacher: via the school office, at the end of the day on dismissal or via email to office@st-joseph-st-theresa.staffs.sch.uk