



Return to School on Monday 8th March

We are all delighted to hear that the pupils will be returning to school on March 8th. We cannot wait to share the new building with all of the pupils and we are excited to get back to normal teaching and learning! As with September, this date will signify compulsory attendance for all pupils following this period of lockdown.

The recent Government message and the success of the rollout of the vaccination programme do give us all so much hope. We still need to keep up the health and safety measures on the school site, as was the case prior to the Christmas holiday.

Currently we have over 130 pupils in the school building and they and their parents are used to the drop off and pick up arrangements. We are evaluating how we can safely stagger entry and exit on the site with an additional 260 pupils and parents whilst keeping COVID 19 safety measures in place and will write to you next week with updated arrangements.

School Admin Office Times

Unfortunately, we will still have members of staff who are not allowed to return to work. As a result, the school admin office will be closed between 12.15-13.15 on Mondays and Fridays until those shielding are able to return to work.

Access to the School after Drop Off and Pick Up

Access to the new building during the school day is completely different from the old school building and site. The design of the entry and exit system is very different to the old building. Unlike the old building, you will not be able to gain access to the School Office without a member of staff remotely opening the new pedestrian gate. Unfortunately, our access to this system is only via the School Office. Please be patient if you are waiting for someone to let you in, as this is reliant on someone being in the School Office!

Remote Learning Survey feedback

As I mentioned prior to the half term, the feedback from the remote learning survey was very positive:

96% of parents felt their child had regular contact with their teacher or teacher from the same phase

81% felt the amount of work given was about right; 9% too much and 10% too little

90% agreed that the children had a variety of learning in addition to the core subjects

87% agreed that their child received feedback from their teacher

92% thought the links sent for meetings and lessons were clear

97% felt that the learning sessions were easy to access using google meet

97% felt that the daily work and tasks were easy to access

93% felt that they or their child could access and use the Tapestry or Seesaw apps

87% felt that they or their child could access the spelling shed website.

Regrettably, remote learning will not suit every child and for every parent who prefers daily links, there will be another who prefers weekly links. Having large groups attending remote lessons is not the easiest to manage or teach effectively and as a result, prior to half term, we adapted our approach for EYFS pupils to meet with them in smaller groups. The downside is that individual children have less contact as we are doing more meetings.

One parent wanted to know why we have not used google classroom yet. Unfortunately, our training for this was just prior to the announcement of this lockdown in January. Not wanting to give parents the job of learning how to use google classroom at home on their own and showing their children how to use it, as well as learning more usernames and passwords(!), I felt it better to rely on the technology used last year and introduce google meet as our live online teaching platform. Once the pupils return to school, we will teach them how to access and use google classroom so they will be able to access this platform at home without too much parental input!

If any parent in Yr2-6 needs help logging into the Spelling Shed, or need their child's details, please email the school office team for assistance.

Considering the challenges that remote learning gives, I am very pleased with the progress we have made since last March, which this confirms. The following quote was similar to so many comments:

"Thank you very much to all the staff at St Joseph's who are working so hard to provide engaging lessons for the children. Having daily contact with a St Joseph's teacher is definitely motivating my child to do her school work and I think it's also very beneficial to her emotional and mental health. In comparison to the provision provided by my nieces and nephews schools in other parts of the UK, we're very lucky that St Joseph's are providing so much 'live' teaching and contact with teachers. Thank you"

Thank you to everyone who completed the survey- we had 128 responses in total - and for all of the comments, the overwhelming majority being so positive.

Nursery Admissions 2021-2022

A reminder to parents that our nursery admission for September 2021 is now open. Following on from the success of this year's system, we are offering 15 hours, 30 hours or 34 hours nursery provision, depending on your funding arrangements and entitlement. The application form to apply for your child is available to download on the school website and should be returned to the school office by Friday 12th March.

Catholic Academy Trust Conversion

Many thanks to the parents who did attend the remote consultation prior to half term and the thoughtful questions asked. A Q&A document is available on the school website, which has been taken from all of the school consultation evenings. The link to the page can be found here:

<https://tinyurl.com/re7t748w>

The consultation period does end today, Friday 26th February, so if you would like to share your thoughts, please do use the response form attached to the newsletter and email it back to

consultation@stjosephs207.herts.sch.uk

World Book Day – Thursday 4th March

Just a quick reminder that this coming Thursday 4th March is World Book Day. We will be focussing on reading throughout the day whether you are home learning or in school. It would be fantastic if your child could dress as their favourite book character for the day, if they would like to.

As the majority of children are currently online learning and to reduce sending paper home, please click on this link https://www.worldbookday.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/booktoken_PrimaryUK.pdf to receive a £1 World Book Day voucher for your child to use.

We are all very much looking forward to seeing and hearing about your favourite book character.
Mrs Browne and Mr Dove (English subject team)

Dinner Money for Juniors

Please note: Dinner money must be paid in advance. School meal prices are £2.70 per day, £13.50 per week. You may pay any amount of your choice to keep your balance in credit. Please pay online using the School Gateway system. All you need to do to activate an account is download the school gateway from your app store or visit the website www.schoolgateway.com and click new user. You will receive a message with a PIN number and you can use this to log in. Please be sure the school office has your up to date email and mobile phone number.

Two weeks' notice in writing to Nicky Thompson, our Catering Manager, is required for any changes in dietary pattern.

Lent prayer

Loving God, let a desire for change rise up within us.

May we overflow with compassion and love.

May we reshape our world together to reflect your kingdom of hope for all.

Amen.