

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School & Nursery

Headteacher: Dr. N Fernandes-Viana, Deputy Headteacher: Mr Kevin Bowles
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Email: office@stjosephsschool.org.uk Website www.stjosephsschool.org.uk



Friday 19th December 2025

Dear Children, Parents, Staff and Governors,

Speaking at the 6th Concert for the Poor at the Vatican a few weeks ago, Pope Leo XIV emphasised the spiritual significance of music:

“Music is like a bridge that leads us to God. It is capable of transmitting feelings, emotions, even the deepest stirrings of the soul, lifting them up and transforming them into an imaginary stairway connecting earth and heaven.”

In this, our final newsletter of the calendar year, I would like to highlight Pope Leo's words and celebrate our fantastic children from Nursery to Y6 who have lifted us and brought us closer to heaven with their wonderful Nativity performances and Carol Services. Your voices, joining together to celebrate the birth of Jesus, your carefully remembered words retelling the first Christmas, guided us along that bridge that leads us to God. Thank you, children for singing and speaking with such reverence and joy. You have been a credit to yourselves, your parents and indeed to all members of our school community. **My special thanks to Mrs Pini for her musical expertise in preparing our KS2 carol service. Huge thanks also to Mr Foster and Miss Murphy for their wonderful piano accompaniment throughout this festive time and especially enabling our younger children to shine! Thank you.**

Canon Kevin also visited us this week to discuss and share Advent with our Early Years and KS1 children enabling them to understand more fully that this journey towards the birth of Jesus is one filled with light and love. Thank you also to Mrs Moulinet who inspired and enlightened our KS2 children in her exploration of Advent through beautiful paintings. The children were delighted and enthralled.

On Tuesday 16th December, our Y6 children sang carols at the beautiful Chapel to the Hospital of St John & St Elizabeth, demonstrating Love in Action by giving their voices in support of this fund-raising evening for St. John's Hospice. Indeed, throughout our many Nativity performances and Carol Service, our Y5 and Y6 pupils cheerfully urged family and friends to donate. Please do follow the link below, should you wish to continue to support this worthy cause: <https://www.sjhospice.org.uk/donate/>
Indeed, throughout this term, our children worked diligently to highlight and fundraise on behalf of a series of notable charities including £150 for the Royal British Legion (<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/>), £500 for Winston's Wish (<https://winstonswish.org/>) £150 for St. John's Hospice and £500 for Young Minds (<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>).

Please see above for links to all these charities, should you wish to find out more information or should you wish to donate to any of these very worthy causes.

In today's special Friday Assembly dedicated to Catholic Social Teaching, Mr Bowles encouraged our children to live out our School Mission Statement to care for others, especially those who may be homeless at Christmas. Indeed, Mr Bowles highlighted a

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charity dedicated to feeding the homeless this Christmas and we have donated 5 meals to this charity: <https://www.crisis.org.uk/>

Continuing our mission to demonstrate God's Love to others, Miss S Ward will be raising money for Great Ormond Street Hospital, taking part in the 10k Winter Walk on Saturday 24th January. I know you will join me in wishing Miss Ward every success and please do support this hospital dedicated to caring for children who are facing severe health needs: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/sophie-ward-4>

After-school clubs will resume in the New Year, on our second week back, week beginning Monday, 12th January. For externally provided clubs, please see their respective websites for booking details or follow the links in the attached timetable.

It would be remiss of me if I did not thank all our parents for your dedication, support and commitment to our school. The Winter Fair and Winter Gala were an amazing success, thanks to you. You have raised a phenomenal £15,000. Heartfelt thanks to all of you.

I would like to say a special thank you to our fabulous kitchen chefs: Mariana, Halfida and Julie. You have been so dedicated in providing all our children a balanced and tasty menu, presented beautifully and with love. Indeed, our whole school Christmas lunch this week was outstanding, so much so, that many of our children commented: "That was so tasty! I wish we could have Christmas dinner every day!"

A huge thank you to **Mrs. Moulinet and Sr. Brigid** for their help with our Pupil Chaplaincy Group. Your patience and nurturing spirit are truly commendable. It is wonderful to see our children being given encouragement to share their faith with the rest of the school, taking ownership in leading prayer time, representing the School at Westminster Cathedral or participating in our Gospel Assemblies.

I would like to say a special thank you to all our staff. Your commitment, dedication and adaptability to ever changing circumstances ensures that our children are given the most enriching and nurturing curriculum experience possible. I am sure you will join me in thanking our wonderful team here at St. Joseph's Catholic school.

There are so many of you to thank and, to include all of you, would warrant a newsletter of epic proportions. Therefore, please do accept our sincere thanks to you all and we look forward to future fundraising projects in the New Year. We are incredibly blessed to have such a dedicated parent community.

From all the staff here, we all wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year. **Children return to school on Tuesday 6th January.** We look forward to welcoming you all back then. All that remains is to share a special Christmas Blessing from Mrs Moulinet, the Lay Chaplain for the Trust and much valued parent here at St. Joseph's:

*Part of the Saint John Southworth Catholic Academy Trust
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Pilgrims of Hope: It is now almost a year that we have been walking together, rediscovering the marvellous Hope of Heaven, rejoicing in our Father's goodness, seeking his Son – the Way, the Truth and the Life – and calling upon the Spirit to set our hearts aflame.

Do you remember Christmas night last year, when Pope Francis opened the Holy Doors of Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome, marking the beginning of the Jubilee Year, a year of rest, of blessings, of Hope?

On the feast of the Epiphany, 6 January, Pope Leo XIV will close those doors. His words will surely be a source of inspiration for each of you, encouraging you to continue your journey towards God. Listen to him.

Until then, those who will be travelling will hear the words "final call for boarding" for your train or your plane. Now it is my turn to call you all: Final call to walk towards a jubilee church – Westminster Cathedral in London, but many others as well. Final call to pass through these Holy Doors, asking the Lord to come and dwell in your heart. Final call to go and receive His forgiveness in the sacrament of Confession. Final call to pray and to turn resolutely towards God. It is not too late!

May this Christmas holiday give you fresh breath in the bleak midwinter. He is coming, the One who comes in the Name of the Lord. He calls you: "Come to me (...) become my disciples, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." (Matt 11:28–29)

I wish you a joyful and holy Christmas; may the Lord guide your steps throughout 2026, equipped with all the graces received during this Jubilee Year!

With best wishes for a happy and tranquil Christmas and a wonderful start to the New Year.

May God bless you and keep you safe,

Dr. N. Fernandes-Viana
Mr K Bowles

YEAR GROUP	Percentage Attendance (target >97%)	Late %
RECEPTION 1	97.1%	1.9%
RECEPTION 2	100.0%	0.0%
Y1 PINK 1	99.6%	0.4%
Y1/2 PINK 2	97.7%	0.4%
Y2 PINK 3	91.1%	0.0%

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Y3 BLUE 1	98.3%	1.4%
Y4 BLUE 3	96.1%	0.8%
Y5 VIOLET 1	95.7%	0.7%
Y6 VIOLET 3	92.0%	1.6%
Totals	96.4%	0.8%

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