



St Joseph's Catholic Middle School

The family of St. Joseph's loves, learns and grows together as followers of Jesus

Monthly Newsletter – Friday 8th December 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has become increasingly festive at St Joseph's over the last couple of weeks with our Advent assemblies led by the children, Christmas jumper day, film night and our Christmas Fair today. There is lots more to look forward to in the next 2 weeks and everyone is excited.

Our final Ofsted report has now been published on their [website](#). If you haven't read it yet I would encourage you to do so as it is extremely positive about the school, our students and our staff.

In November we came together as a community to raise money for Children in Need and Odd Socks Day (Anti Bullying). A total of £316.00 was raised for these very worthy causes.

Today we held our Christmas Jumper Day and raised £123.00 for Save the Children.

Thank you for your continued support and may God's peace, joy, and goodwill be with you and your family this Christmas.

Mr. N. A. Wood

Please see the following Catholic Life News:

As we are now in the season of Advent, our prayer spaces in school have been updated with purple cloths, Advent artefacts and Advent promises that our pupils have written. Our prayer time during this special liturgical season is based around the themes of hope, peace, joy and love. The pastoral and liturgy leaders, along with support from Fr Paul Kilduff, have planned and prepared a series of celebrations reflecting on the key themes of Advent. These have been successfully led by pupils from each year group over the last few weeks during our Friday morning Celebration of the Word.



This half term, our Year 5 classes both celebrated Mass in our school chapel. We were delighted that some of the parents and carers from each class were able to join us in school on these days. The first class mass in the Spring term will be 6O on Monday 22nd January. More dates and details to follow.

Well done to 5C who have been collecting food for the West Northumberland Foodbank. This pastoral class campaign is one way that we follow our school mission statement at St Joseph's, to live as 'followers of Jesus'. Thank you again for your support with donations.

Our end of term mass will be held in St Mary's Church on Thursday 21st December at 10:30am. We welcome all parents and carers to join the whole school for this joyous celebration as we reach the end of a busy term.

Sports:

Due to the cold conditions outside, some of our P.E lessons have been brought inside where pupils took part in badminton lessons.



24 of our Y7, and 24 of our Y8 pupils took part in the sports hall athletics competition at QEHS. All 48 pupils were a credit to the school.



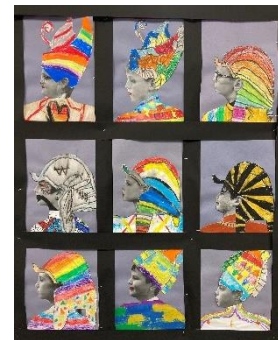
Art:

Three Kings Christmas Competition:

All pupils are invited to create a piece of 2d or 3d art on the theme of the three kings. 5 House Points for entering, plus chocolate prizes for winners in each year group. We had some amazing entries for the Remembrance competition, and we are hoping for some equally wonderful entries for this too.

The closing date for entries is Thursday 14th December.

Year 5 Egyptian Masks and Portraits



Year 6 Rainforest Dioramas



Year 7 Kandinsky inspired abstract artwork



Year 8 Pencil drawings as part of the self-identity project



Upcoming Choir Events

The school choir have a very hectic festive period ahead! They will be performing at the following events:

- St. Mary's Catholic Church, Hexham, Carol Service: Sunday 17th December 6pm
- Elm Bank and Carntyne Care Homes: Monday 10:30am/1:30pm
- St. Joseph's Middle School Winter Concert: Wednesday 20th December 6:30pm
- Carol singing on Fore Street with the Rotary Club: Thursday 21st December 1pm

St Joseph's Inter-House Bake Off Competition:

Last week, we held our Inter- House Bake Off competition. Ms Montgomery was very impressed with all the entries, as were the staff who helped to taste and judge the entries.

The winners were:

Y5 – 1 st place Teddy & Eva	2 nd place Harry M & Henry R
Y6 – 1 st place Emma	2 nd place Martha
Y7 – 1 st place Will	2 nd place Beth
Y8 – 1 st place Lola	2 nd place James

Thank you to everyone who entered and well done to all our winners.

The overall winner went to 🍌🍌🍌 Lola in Y8 – congratulations Lola, a future star baker!



P.T.A. News

Disco Dates:

15/12/2023
09/02/2024
12/07/2024

If you are available to help on the night, please contact the school office and leave a message for Mrs Stoves

Christmas Fair:

Today was the annual St Joseph’s Christmas Fair. Thank you to everyone who supported us in any way, without your help these events would not be possible. A list of raffle winners will be posted on the school Facebook page along with the winner of the Guess the Weight of the cakes and the overall total raised on Monday morning.

A huge thank you to everyone for your support.



Summer Fair: 14/06/2024

Upcoming Events at a Glance:

Date	Activity
Wednesday 13 th December	Christmas Dinner Day
Friday 15 th December	Christmas Disco – 7-8.30pm
Wednesday 20 th December	Whole School Trip to Forum Cinema St Joseph’s Winter Concert – 18:30 Main Hall
Thursday 21 st December	End of term mass at St Mary’s Church 10.30am – all welcome
Friday 22 nd December	School closes at 1.30pm
Monday 8 th January	School reopens for Spring Term

STAYING SAFE ONLINE - HOW OLD IS YOUR CHILD ONLINE?

Has your child (or you on their behalf) signed up to access social media/or a game online but have said that they are older than they are so they can have an account? For example, did your 9-year-old join TikTok and put their age as 13, or did you create their account and put your own age? If so, please read some of the implications outlined below that you should think about.

If TikTok thinks your child is 13 when they join but they are in fact 8, then by the time your child reaches 13, the app will think they are 18. This puts your child at risk of viewing content that is not age appropriate and may mean your child will view adverts aimed at adults. In addition, now the app thinks your child is an adult, they will have access to all functionalities (whereas some apps place restrictions on access to under 18s for example to direct messaging).

The following article from OfCOM explains in further detail how to keep your child safe online:

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/news-centre/2022/risks-of-children-using-false-ages-on-social-media>

The ParentZone website provides more details on age rating for various app and websites:

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/age-ratings>

STAYING SAFE ONLINE – RESPONDING TO ONLINE CHALLENGES:

Nationally, there are more and more reports of online challenges popping up on social media platforms. While not all pose potential risk, it is important as a parent/carer and guardian to know how to handle an online challenge you may be concerned about.

What are Online Challenges? Online challenges are social media trends where people take part in or mimic games, activities or dares. They typically originate on social media platforms like TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram before spreading to other platforms. Some challenges or online trends are reported by the press first. They tend to use the term 'viral', which can give the impression that the challenge or trend is more popular than it actually is.

Advice for parents. Talking to your child about online challenges can seem daunting, especially if they don't come to you on their own. Having an honest conversation with your child about their online habits is the best way to clear up confusions.

See link below for more detail.

https://ineqe.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/OnlineChallengesAdvice_INEQE_2022-1.pdf

Our Prayer

Advent God,
we journey with you,
to Bethlehem's stable
and a new-born King,
ears attuned
to the song of angels,
eyes alert
for Bethlehem's star.
Keep our hearts aflame
with the hope
of Christmas,
and the promise
of a Saviour.

Amen

God bless,

N. A. Wood

Mr N Wood

