



Head-lines

As both the Autumn term and indeed the calendar year draws to a close, I write in our half termly newsletter with updates and reflections on the last few weeks. This half term in a primary school is always a particularly special one as we have the countdown to the magic of Christmas. In amongst all the busyness and rushing around, I hope you find time for stillness and peace as we prepare to welcome the birth of Jesus. From all of us, I wish you a very blessed and happy Christmas. Mr Turner



As we finish for Christmas, I want to let you know that we say goodbye to Mrs Murray as she takes a well earned retirement. Mrs Murray has worked at St Joseph's for more than 20 years! During those years she has helped and supported countless children, as well as being a wonderful colleague to work alongside. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Murray for her years of service, dedication and support on

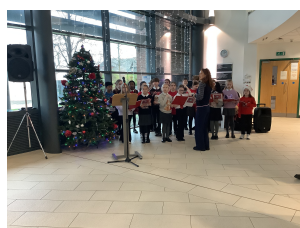
behalf of all of the children she has worked with, and from all of us to wish her a lovely, restful retirement. Not working will give Mrs Murray time to enjoy her connections with Spain and bask in the glorious sunshine, so I'm sure she'll be thinking of us when we return to the cold January weather! Thank you Mrs Murray and from all of us at St Joseph's we wish you a well earned rest.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to share some news with you which was shared with Y5/6H last week - Mrs Hancock is expecting her first baby. Once again, a big congratulations to Mrs Hancock and her husband and we look forward to meeting her baby after her due date in April.



Finally, for staffing updates, I'd like to say goodbye and thank you to Miss McCormack who is leaving us to take up a position within the Civil Service. Miss McCormack has been working this term mainly in Y1 and F2 providing release cover for the class teachers. I wish her every success in her future career and will let you know about arrangements for those cover days in Y1 and F2 after Christmas.

It has been an action packed, but highly enjoyable half term with so much going on. Our KS1 children put on a fantastic show with their Christmas production of Baa-rmy Bethlehem. Our choir have been in high demand as always, with performances at the Oxtou Village lights switch on, our own Carols by Candlelight, St Catherine's hospital and many more. We have also 'finished off' the Jubilee year with our own 'pilgrimages', with each year group walking to a location to spread Christmas cheer - dropping off decorations, donations and singing for residents in care homes. A huge thank you to our amazing PTA who have also really created a magical time for the children (and adults!) with bingo, grotto, Elfridges and donations of Christmas trees. We really enjoyed our feast on Christmas dinner day. And in between all of those things, we made sure we found time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas by reflecting on the themes of the four weeks of Advent, as well as a KS2 Penitential service.



As you will be aware, this year we are having a staff training focus on Adaptive Teaching and Inclusive Pedagogy. This approach places a big emphasis on how teaching is planned and delivered to be inclusive and meet the needs of learners, and adapted 'in the moment' based on feedback. As part of our development plan, we will conduct regular parent surveys of a few questions at a time in order to get some stakeholder voice. Thank you to those who have provided responses to the two surveys sent out so far. Your responses are helping us shape next steps, as well as building up a clear picture of views in these key areas. Further surveys will be sent in the new year, as well as a round up of some of the responses.

In the build up to Christmas we have had an absolutely fantastic run of events arranged and organised by our amazing PTA. Elfridges, Grotto's, Bingo and much more! A huge thank you to Janine and all our PTA helpers who give so much of their own time to put these things together to make Christmas as magical as possible for the children. Thank you so much and enjoy a well earned rest!

A reminder that we close for the end of the term on Thursday 18th December. School opens on Monday 5th January.

Congratulations to our Christmas decoration competition winners! It was a tough selection this year with over 150 outstanding entries. But the eventual winners were Liliana and Rebecca, with their prizes being art materials to continue developing their clear artistic talents! Well done!



Attendance

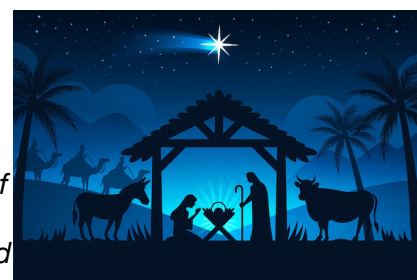
Overall attendance for the Autumn term is 95.7%
Thank you for working with us and ensuring your child has good attendance. Please do keep this up during the Spring term as it is really important that children are in school regularly .

Lunch debt

Please may we politely ask that if you have any outstanding debt from this term with lunches etc that you pay in total or call Angie to set up a payment plan. We currently have a substantial amount owing so do need to settle balances ahead of the new term. Thank you

Prayer for the term....

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.



Today, in the town of David, a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.' Luke 2

Christmas is such a special time when we welcome the arrival of the Saviour of the World, Wonder Counsellor, The Prince of Peace.

Blessings on your children, you and all your family this Christmas.