



Head-lines

As we finish off another half term, we are well into the season of Spring, and can see the growth it brings. As we also move through the reflective season of Lent toward the celebration of Easter, I have been struck by the growth in our children—not only in their learning but in their kindness toward one another, their charity work and their wider skills. As we break for the Easter holidays, I want to thank you for your continued support and partnership. I hope you all have a restful and blessed break with your loved ones. Mr Turner

More Than Just a Day: The Magic of Reading at St Joseph's

While World Book Day is a wonderful annual highlight, at St Joseph's, we believe that fostering a love of reading is a journey that lasts all year round. Reading is the gateway to all other learning; it sparks the imagination, transports children to different worlds, and is the single most effective way to develop a rich and varied vocabulary. When a child picks up a book, they aren't just looking at words on a page—they are building empathy, improving their focus, and unlocking their own creative potential.



To celebrate this, we didn't just have a day of reading; we held a full "**Book Week**" packed with activities designed to show that reading can happen anywhere and at any time.

Toast and Tales One of the highlights of the week was our "Toast and Tales" sessions. There is something truly special about sharing a story over a snack, and it was heartening to see the children so engaged and relaxed, proving that reading is a comfort and a joy, not just a classroom task.

Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) Throughout the week, the "DEAR" bell could ring at any moment! Whether they were in the middle of maths or heading to break, when the bell rang, everyone—staff included—dropped what they were doing to dive into their books for ten minutes of quiet immersion.



Teacher Read Swap The children had a fantastic surprise when their usual teachers swapped classrooms to read their own favourite stories to a different year group. This allowed the children to experience different storytelling styles and see that every adult in our school community is an enthusiastic reader.

The Masked Reader Inspired by the popular TV show, our "Masked Reader" competition caused a great deal of mystery and excitement! The children loved trying to identify the distorted voices and disguised faces of staff members reading excerpts from famous books. It was a brilliant way to get the whole school talking about literature and character voices.

A Lifelong Habit We encourage all our families to keep this momentum going at home. Just fifteen minutes of reading together each night can have a profound impact on a child's academic progress and emotional well-being. Thank you for supporting our Book Week and for helping us turn our pupils into lifelong readers.

Staffing News

As we reach the end of this term, we say a (temporary!) goodbye and good luck to Mrs Hancock. Mrs Hancock will be leaving us to begin her maternity leave. We wish her every happiness and look forward to hearing news of her new arrival soon!

We are delighted to welcome Mr Brooks, who will be joining the team to cover Mrs Hancock's maternity leave. Mr Brooks has already spent time in school getting to know the children, and we know you will join us in making him feel very welcome.



Attendance Matters

Our current attendance for the year to date stands at **95.7%**. This is just below our whole-school target of at least 96%. Nationally, primary school attendance averages around 94-95%, so while we are performing well compared to the national picture, we must remain ambitious for every child to be in school every day.

Our Persistent Absence (PA) rate is currently **12%**. This refers to children whose attendance falls below 90%. Nationally, PA rates often sit between 15-18%, so while our 12% is better than the national average, it still represents a significant number of children missing out on vital learning. Every day counts, and we thank you for your help in ensuring your children are in school and on time.

As we enter the Summer term, please can we again remind you that we cannot authorise holidays in term time for any reason, and holidays in term time will be marked as 'unauthorised'.

School Uniform & Lost Property:

Please ensure all items of school uniform, especially jumpers and cardigans, are clearly labelled with your child's name. Our lost property bin is currently very full; please check it for any missing items before the end of term.

School Dinner Debts: As we reach the end of the term, we ask that all outstanding school meal accounts be settled. If you are experiencing difficulties, please contact the school office so we can make arrangements.

Dates to Note

- **Monday 13th April:** School re-opens for the Summer Term.
- **W/C 11th May:** Key Stage 2 SATS week. It is vital that all Year 6 children are in school and on time this week.
- **Mrs Lester's London Marathon:** Mrs Lester is running the London Marathon in aid of **Claire House**, a charity very close to our hearts. We are so proud of her training efforts and wish her the very best of luck! You can donate by visiting her fundraising page <https://tinyurl.com/3eb9juay>

Prayer for the term

"We proclaim the resurrection of Christ when His light illuminates the dark moments of our existence." – Pope Francis

*Lord, As we enter this Easter season, We thank you for the gift of new life.
May the light of the Risen Christ Shine in our hearts and in our homes.
Bless our families with peace and joy, And keep us safe until we meet again.
Amen.*

