



**St. Joseph's  
Catholic Infant  
& Junior Schools**  
Birtley



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**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

**Dear Parents and Carers,**

Holy Jesus,  
by being born one of us,  
and lying humbly in a manger,  
you show how much God loves the world.  
Let the light of your love always shine in our hearts,  
until we reach our home in heaven,  
and see you on your throne of glory.  
Amen.

**Firstly, a huge thank you to all for all your good wishes to the staff throughout the forthcoming Christmastime. We have been blessed to witness the reverence and respect that your children have shown in their Nativity performances and Carol services and we thank you for the part you have played in helping us to provide this for our community.**



**Our pupils have had a fantastic array of opportunities this Christmastime! We would like to thank the cast and volunteers of the Little Theatre, who made our trip to see Beauty and the Beast, possible. So many of our families commented about how the children loved their trip to the Little Theatre and we can say firsthand, it was brilliant. The cast had even personalised the pantomime to our context referencing our school throughout. The children laughed, howled, sang and danced throughout - and it was an excellent way to end a very busy term.**

**From panto, to Santa and his treats - and ongoing support from Fr. Martin Wheaton, Deacon Peter Lavery and the Saint Vincent de Paul Society from St. Joseph's Parish to enable us to conduct our Key Stage 1 and 2 performances in church, our visit to the Lindisfarne Care Home, the Nourish Food School workshops, extra-curricular activities and visits - the children have had a terrific time.**

**Please remember to complete our survey which was sent to you via Arbor last week – the survey closes on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December at 18:00. <https://forms.office.com/e/tjskGaMpvL> This is the way we capture all of your comments and feedback.**

**We therefore wish you a very happy and holy Christmas and we look forward to continuing to work with you all during 2024.**

**With every blessing,**

**Mrs K. Swaddle.  
Executive Headteacher**

**PE Timetable:**

From January, our PE timetable will be changing, as our classes rotate around NUFC and swimming. Our swimming provision will now switch to Year 3 attending the swimming baths on a Friday morning.

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>Reception</b>				<b>NUFC</b>	
<b>Year 1</b>			<b>PE</b>	<b>NUFC</b>	
<b>Year 2</b>		<b>PE</b>		<b>NUFC</b>	
<b>Year 3</b>				<b>NUFC</b>	<b>Swimming</b>
<b>Year 4</b>			<b>NUFC Dance</b>	<b>NUFC</b>	
<b>Year 5</b>			<b>NUFC Dance</b>		<b>PE</b>
<b>Year 6</b>				<b>NUFC</b>	<b>PE</b>

### **The Road Centre Counselling Support:**

From January 2024, St. Joseph's Catholic Junior School will be working alongside The Road Centre. Our link counsellor will be a lady called Laura. Please make her feel welcome should you encounter her!

### **In-App Messages:**

Please note that as of January, we will be asking parents to communicate to us using email (either [info@sjib.bwcet.com](mailto:info@sjib.bwcet.com) or [info@sjib.bwcet.com](mailto:info@sjib.bwcet.com) ) rather than the In-App message on the Arbor app. The primary reason for the change is that it is easier for us to manage our communications and follow threads and queries via the email inbox as opposed to the app. This will not cause you any inconvenience but will ensure that we can respond quickly and efficiently to any queries. We will also still utilise the [teachers@sjib.bwcet.com](mailto:teachers@sjib.bwcet.com) or [teachers@sjib.bwcet.com](mailto:teachers@sjib.bwcet.com) email addresses.

### **Update Contacts:**

Now that all of your contact details are on the Arbor app, could you please ensure that you check your data to ensure it is up-to-date and accurate, as when we have urgently called some numbers recently, they have been out-of-service. Parents and carers can update their details via the App which then automatically updates our records. Thank you for your continued support.

### **Late-Comers and Pick-Ups:**

As of January, we will be issuing a new Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust attendance policy accompanied by a letter. We hope that this will help to further explain why strong attendance is important and why there is a need for our children to receive access to their full curriculum entitlement.

We note that several children are being collected early from school – please note that we are monitoring this and may consider issuing unauthorised absences should this continue.

### **Boost for e-Books:**

We are now set-up with e-Books for St. Joseph's Catholic Infant School, meaning that all of our pupils are able to participate in continuing to read their phonics books, should they wish to, or progress to other books within their level. We will still continue to send home physical books, but appreciate that e-Books may be useful should a child finish their phonics book. After Christmas, you will receive your child's logins in their reading diary and we will send further explanation to you, on how to access the books.

### **Sad Farewell:**

Today, we say goodbye to: Mrs Peacock who has been with us on secondment as Assistant Head Teacher – we thank her for her contributions and look forward to hearing about her family of three; Mrs McLardy for her service to the schools over the last five years and to Mrs Maddock who is going onto a permanent Deputy Headship. We wish you all every blessing for the future.

### **Nourish Food School:**

**Our Year 5 Nourish Food School day takes place on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Please complete the Microsoft Form to select your preferred time.**

<https://forms.office.com/e/TpzerBMCrd>

### **INSET:**

Reminder – staff have INSET on 22<sup>nd</sup> December.

*Designated Safeguarding Leads for the school:*

*Mrs K. Swaddle*

*Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads for the school:*

*Mrs E. McConnell, Mrs A Snaith and Miss Maggiore.*

### **Dates for the Diary**

***(Please note that these dates are subject to change –***

***Masses will be arranged once our new Parish Priests have arrived):***

- Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January – Year 3 Celebration of the Word – 9am  
Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January – School admission deadline for Reception and Year 2 to Year 3 admissions  
Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January – Year 5 Nourish Food School Day  
Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January – Year 1 Celebration of the Word – 9am  
Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January – School Census Day  
Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January – Mr Taylor Bible Story at SJB  
Friday 19<sup>th</sup> January – Mr Taylor Bible Story at SJB  
Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January – Early Years Numbersense Workshop for children and parents – 9am  
Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January – Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January – Careers Week  
Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January – Year 4 Celebration of the Word – 9am  
Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> January – Reception Celebration of the Word – 9am  
Monday 29<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January – Year 6 Residential to Robinwood  
Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February – No swimming for Year 3 – All pupils to attend Mass for Presentation of the Lord – 10am  
Monday 5<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February – Year 4/5 Residential to Youth Ministry Team  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup> – Friday 16<sup>th</sup> February – Half-term  
Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February – Year 1 Numbersense Workshop for children and parents – 9am  
Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February – Year 5 Celebration of the Word – 9am  
Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February – Year 2 Celebration of the Word – 9am  
Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February – Year 5 Singing Day at Cardinal Hume Catholic Secondary Schools  
Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> February – Creative Arts Workshop  
Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March – Parents' Evening both schools  
Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March – Year 6 Celebration of the Word – 9am  
Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March - Parents' Evening both schools  
Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March – Whole-Schol Mass at 2pm in Church  
Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March - Year 1 Celebration of the Word – 9am  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March – Possible dance festival for two year groups (not yet confirmed)  
Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March – Year 3 Celebration of the Word – 9am  
Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March – Palm Sunday Celebration of the Word in Church – 10am (Reception class to lead)  
Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March – Stations of the Cross – 10am

### **INSET days:**

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2023, Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024, Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2024, Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024

**Visit:** [St Joseph's Birtley Bulletins \(stjosephsbirtley.co.uk\)](http://stjosephsbirtley.co.uk) for more information