



St. Joseph's  
Catholic Infant  
& Junior Schools  
Birtley



*All are welcome in this place*

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**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

**Dear Parents & Carers,**

### **School Masses**

As we continue our journey through Eastertide and look ahead to the remainder of the school year, we warmly invite parents and families to join us in celebrating Mass together at St Joseph's Church. These special occasions are an important part of our shared faith and community life. Our upcoming Masses will be celebrated by Fr Martin and the first will take place on **Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May at 2:00pm**, giving opportunity to reflect on the Feast of the Ascension. This will be led by Year 3. We will also gather on **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June at 10:00am** to celebrate the *Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus*, led by Year 4. Finally, we will come together on **Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July at 10:45am** for Year 6 to lead us in our Leavers' Mass.

We would be delighted to welcome you as we come together in prayer, reflection, and thanksgiving as a whole school community.

*Catholic Social Teaching Link: In joining together to celebrate Mass, we live out the Catholic Social Teaching principle of **community and participation**, recognising that we are called to belong, support one another, and grow together in faith.*

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### **Statutory Assessments – Key Dates**

**Year 4 Multiplication Check Window** – Monday 1<sup>st</sup> to Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2026

**Year 1 Phonics Screening Check Window** – Monday 8<sup>th</sup> to Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2026

Upcoming statutory assessments take place on the dates listed above. Strong attendance helps children feel settled, confident and ready to do their best. Keeping routines as normal as possible means assessments can be completed calmly and often, within the classroom environment. For our Year 4 and Year 1 pupils, the tests may take place at any point during the outlined period, so it is vitally important that pupils are present and in school each day. Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

*Catholic Social Teaching link: This reflects the Catholic Social Teaching principle of the dignity of the human person, as each child is supported to achieve their full potential.*

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## Centre Advanced Training – Dance Workshop

We are delighted to announce we have CAT Dance City attending our junior school to host a workshop for our Year 5 and Year 6 children on **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June**.



*Catholic Social Teaching link: This opportunity reflects the Catholic Social Teaching principle of participation, as it enables pupils to engage in enriching experiences that support their development and contribute to the wider common good of the school community.*

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## FUN-draising – Summer Fayre

Once again, this summer, we are eager to raise funds to improve our resources and experiences for the children within our schools, by holding our summer fayre on **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June**, at St Joseph's Catholic Infant School, from 2:15 - 4:15pm.

Governors have given permission for our pupils to be collected from school, at 2:00pm - junior school and 2:15pm - infant school, on the day. For those children who are unable to be collected at this earlier time, please do not worry, as we will ensure that an adult is able to look after them and support them throughout the last hour of the afternoon.

### Fundraising dates for the diary:

- b) Friday 5<sup>th</sup> June – Non-uniform day in return for a bottle of any kind, for the 'bottle tombola'
- c) Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June – Non-uniform day in return for 'sweetie tombola' donations

*Catholic Social Teaching link: This fundraising event reflects the Catholic Social Teaching principle of the common good, as the whole school community works together to support and enhance opportunities and experiences for all children.*

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## Year 2 to Year 3 transition

We have organised for Year 2 pupils to visit the junior school to find out what life is like there, on the morning session of **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June** and the afternoon of **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June**. On these days, we will walk pupils to and from the junior school, so that they can be dropped off and collected from the infant school; this will avoid any potential complications with after-school clubs. These visits are in addition to the whole school transition morning on 29<sup>th</sup> June.



**Our Year 5 pupils will go to St. Joseph's Catholic Infant School on the afternoon of Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2026 to meet their incoming buddies. Both year groups will undertake a PE lesson focussed on team games and team building. Year 2 will participate in PE on Monday, instead of Tuesday – so please ensure Year 2 pupils wear their PE kits on Monday.**

*Catholic Social Teaching link: This supported approach to transition provision reflects the Catholic Social Teaching principles of participation and solidarity, as it supports pupils in building relationships and confidence, enabling them to feel included and prepared for the next stage of their school journey.*

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## First Aid Refresher

We are delighted that some of our parents and carers have volunteered to support us in a First Aid Refresher to our pupils on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June.

We hope that this 'hands-on' session will act as a great annual refresher to our pupils. The recovery position, CPR, how to call 999, how to support those may have a seizure, allergies and asthma will all be covered during the session. Thank you to our parents who have kindly volunteered to share their vast experience with us. Our pupils are looking forward to using the mannequins to make this as 'real' as possible.

**Catholic Social Teaching:** *This experience reflects the Catholic Social Teaching principle of the common good, as parents and school work together to equip pupils with life-saving skills that enable them to care for and support others in their community.*

## Live Simply Award



Tomorrow, our Mini-Vinnies are presenting the findings of the Cafod Live Simply Award, to the Cafod Live Simply Assessor. This is a very prestigious award, focussed on our efforts and commitment to sustainability and the environment. The pupils have to conduct an online presentation and explain the impact of God's Creation Garden, charitable giving and building links with our wider community.

For more information: [LiveSimply award](#)

**Catholic Social Teaching:** *Our school's actions will impact on our school, local communities and our global communities, as you bring to life the principles of Catholic Social Teaching and Laudato Si' through action, faith and learning.*

## Start times:

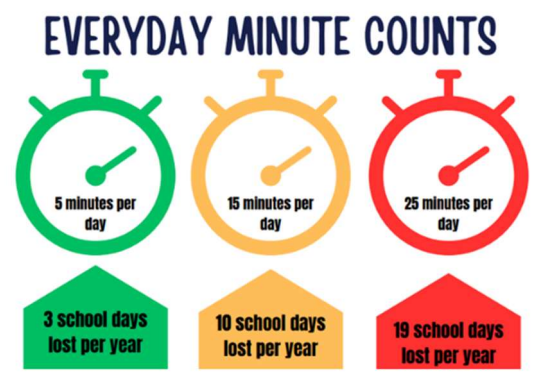


Our current start times offer families superb flexibility and our DfE provided 30-minute free breakfast club is also an important part of our daily offer.

However, we have a number of pupils at our junior school, who are walking to school by themselves, but are arriving close to 8:05am and remaining unsupervised on the pavement outside of school. We are concerned that parents may not appreciate how early their children are walking to, and arriving at, school. If you know that your child is one of this

group, then why not consider booking your pupils into breakfast club? Most of these pupils carry mobile phones with them – so please use a tracking device to find out their arrival time at school.

**Catholic Social Teaching link:** *This guidance reflects the Catholic Social Teaching principle of the **common good and responsibility**, as it promotes pupils' safety and wellbeing by working together to ensure children are protected and supported on their journey to school.*



## Free School Meal Applications

We are now able to offer you the facility to check your eligibility to receive **Free School Meals (FSM)** directly via the school website. We would like to encourage all families to take a moment to check whether they may be eligible. Even if your child currently receives Universal Infant Free School Meals (from Reception to Year 2), it is still important

to complete this check. If eligible, our school will receive additional funding through the **Pupil Premium grant**, which directly supports teaching, resources, and wider opportunities for pupils. And even if your child prefers to bring a packed lunch into school each day we would be grateful if you would complete an application – the additional funding will be paid, whether or not your child takes a meal.

Checking eligibility is quick and confidential. Please use the link below:

[Free School Meals – Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust](#)

**Catholic Social Teaching link:** *This reflects the Catholic Social Teaching principle of the preferential option for the poor, as it helps ensure that additional support and resources are directed towards pupils and families who may need it most, promoting fairness and opportunity for all.*

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## DfE Funded Breakfast Club

We are delighted that the DfE funded 30-minute free breakfast club at the junior school, commenced on **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April**. It has been wonderful to see so many of our children attend. We look forward to welcoming more pupils in the coming weeks.



- For the full breakfast club session, starting at 7:45am, there will be a small charge of £1.50
- Even though breakfast club at St. Joseph's Catholic Junior School will be free, as it is already at the infant school, we need to operate a strict booking policy to ensure we have sufficient pupil to staff ratios.
- The free breakfast club will operate from 8:00 – 8:30am at the junior school and continues from 8:05 – 8:35 at the infant school.

On Arbor, there are two options to choose from within the 'Early Adopter Breakfast Club', so please take care to select the correct time slot and you will need to top up your wraparound care account, before being able to book.

**A polite reminder that the doors for Breakfast Club at both schools open at 7:45am. Children will not be permitted to enter the school before this time as we must ensure safe staffing numbers.**  
**Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.**

**Catholic Social Teaching link:** *This provision reflects the Catholic Social Teaching principle of the common good, as it ensures all pupils have access to a safe, supportive start to the school day, promoting wellbeing, inclusion, and readiness to learn.*

### **Dates for the Diary**

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

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May – Whole School Mass in Church – 14:00

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May – Year 5 to visit Year 2 at SJIB – PM session

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May - Happy Europe Day Celebration Lunch – SJIB/SJJB

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May – Year 4 & Year 6 - Fun Run at Saltwell Park

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May – Last Day of Term**

**Monday 01<sup>st</sup> June – Children return to school**

Tuesday 02<sup>nd</sup> June – Thursday 04<sup>th</sup> June – Year 6 Bikeability – Consent forms will follow

Tuesday 02<sup>nd</sup> June – Year 6 Celebration of the Word – 9:00am

Friday 05<sup>th</sup> June – Non-Uniform day in exchange for a bottle – SJIB/SJJB

Friday 05<sup>th</sup> June - National Fish & Chip Day Celebration Lunch – SJIB/SJJB

Tuesday 09<sup>th</sup> June – Year 2 Celebration of the Word – 9:00am

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June- Year 5 to attend The Catalyst, Newcastle Helix

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June – Non-Uniform day in exchange for chocolates – SJIB/SJJB  
 Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June – Whole School Mass in Church – 10:00am  
 Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June – Year 6 Nexus Bus Induction in school  
 Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June – Year 2 to SJJB – AM session – pupils walk to and from school (come to infants as normal)  
 Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June – Year 5 Celebration of the Word – 9:00am  
 Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June- Year 6 Transition Day at Cardinal Hume Catholic School  
 Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June – SJIB to attend Washington Wetland Centre  
 Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June – CAT workshop – Year 5 & Year 6  
 Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June – Father's Day Shop  
 Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June – Sports Day – SJIB/SJJB  
 Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June – Year 1 Celebration of the Word – 9:00am  
 Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June – Year 6 – YMT Primary Festival  
 Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June – Year 2 to visit SJJB – PM session (children will be collected from infants as normal)  
 Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June – Summer Fayre  
**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June – Inset Day**  
 Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June – Year 2 transition day to Year 3 (*whole-school transition morning and new Reception intake*)-  
*Year 2 will need to be dropped off at junior school on this day and we will return them to the infant school)*  
 Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June & Wednesday 01<sup>st</sup> July – Year 6 to attend Cardinal Hume Catholic School  
 Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July – SJIB Big Sing for Mini Singers at The Glasshouse  
 Thursday 02<sup>nd</sup> July – Celebration of Sport – Year 5 to Gateshead Stadium  
 Monday 06<sup>th</sup> July – St. Joseph's Musical Show Case at Church – 10:00am  
 Tuesday 07<sup>th</sup> July – Year 4 Celebration of the Word- 9:00am  
 Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> – Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July – Year 5 & Year 6 PGL Ford Castle Residential  
 Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July – Year 3 & Year 4 Big Sing at The Glasshouse  
 Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July – Reception Celebration of the Word – 9:00am  
 Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July – Year 6 Leavers' assembly  
 Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July – Leavers' Mass in Church – 10:45am  
**Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July – Last Day of Term**

Designated Safeguarding Lead for the school: *Mrs K Swaddle*

Deputy Leads: *Mrs R Nutton, Mrs E McConnell, Mrs A Snaith & Mrs J Smith*

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