



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

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Headteacher: Miss Helen Tyler

21st September 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to the Reception class. Our aim is to provide your child with an education that is rewarding and enjoyable. Our motto in the Early Years (EYFS) is 'learn to play and play to learn', so all the skills your child will develop are experienced through carefully planned play opportunities.

The Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning within the Early Years Curriculum. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and are a particular focus in Nursery. These areas are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Following this there are four specific areas for which we will provide support. These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

These areas of learning are covered within topic areas and children's interests rather than as discrete subjects. In Autumn term topics in our class are: 'Myself', 'People who help us', 'Dinosaurs', 'Christmas'. During the first half of the Autumn Term the key focus will be on Personal, Social and Emotional Development. Children's learning will be also based around the whole school topic 'The WWF' (World Wide Fund for Nature) in which children learn about their class animal. In Reception we are in Panda Class, so the children will spend time learning about Pandas. As part of our Religious Education we will be covering Judaism and learning about Hanukkah.

WWF Sponsored Walk

As part of the above-mentioned project we will be raising money to support the work of the WWF. The money that we raise will help towards helping to designate and set up protected areas to keep more panda habitats intact, patrolling against poaching, illegal logging and encroachment. We will be organising a sponsored EYFS walk To Lincoln's Inn Fields in October/ November and will be asking the children to dress up in their favourite animal's costume. A letter with more details will be sent nearer the time.

Parental Support and Partnership

Parents and carers play a key role in their children's learning and at St Joseph's we recognise how important this is. We run several parent/ carer workshops with a focus on Literacy, Maths and learning through play. The workshops are designed to support learning at home by giving parents/ carers an insight in to how children learn in the EYFS, and giving parents/ carers practical ideas and resources to support at home. We will be sending letters with information and hope to see you all at the workshops. The first workshop will be 'Phonics and Early Reading' which is scheduled for October before the half term. A letter with more details will be sent in a few weeks' time.

Class Dojo

In the school we have been using a ClassDojo system to update you on your child's progress, to receive messages and important updates. You have already received a Class Dojo invitation letter with a code and instructions on how to create your child's account for Panda class.

Class Trips

Class trips are an essential part of children's learning as they provide real life experiences, which the children can build on in class. Letters will be sent home at least 2 weeks before the visit informing you of where your child will be going, any special requirements and asking for your support during the trip if you are available.

Once we feel the children are ready we will begin weekly park trips to Drury Lane Swing Gardens. A survey will be sent out during the first half of the autumn term to find out when is the best time to go on the park trips to ensure most of you are able to attend.

Notice board

To the right of the Reception class door is a notice board where the sounds and songs of the week and any additional information such as Term timetable, information for upcoming events and deadlines are presented. Please check the board daily to ensure you are up to date.



Homework and Reading Books

Children in the Reception class will be receiving weekly homework in their Homework books every Friday afternoon. We do expect the completed homework to be returned on the following Wednesday. In addition, your child will be given a reading book together with a reading record. Please read to your child and encourage them read to you. As we learn sounds of the letters of the alphabet, your child would be able to blend sounds and read words with greater confidence. **Please make sure you teach your child letter sounds first! It is very important in order to be able to start to read and to write words.**

Please update your child's reading record by writing the date and the title of the book/s they have been given. Please write comments/encourage your child to write a comment in their reading record.

Tapestry Online Learning Journal

In Early Years at St Joseph's we use an online learning journal called Tapestry. It is a secure online journal to record photos, observations and comments in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum, to build a record of your child's experiences during their time in EYFS. This system allows us to work with parents and carers to share information and record the children's play and learning in and outside of the classroom. The new parents have been or will be sent a link via email to connect to the system.

Jewellery

Children are not allowed to wear jewellery at school. Jewellery will be kept in the school office for safe keeping until the end of the week.

Clothes

We advise that you keep a spare set of clothes in school in case we need to change your child. Please ensure that your child's name is on all items of clothing and leave a bag with these spare clothes on your child's peg outside the classroom.

PE session and PE kits

PE session will be taught every Wednesday morning in Autumn 1 and then every Thursday in the second half of the term. Please ensure that your child brings a labelled PE kit which should contain shorts or black track-suit bottoms/leggings, socks, plimsoles and a plain white T-shirt. PE kits need to be kept on your child's peg. Please ensure that all items are clearly named as we often experience children going home with the wrong items or losing them.

Please make sure that your child's kit is complete and present in school at all the times except holidays!

Attendance and Punctuality

Your child needs to be at school at 8.45 for our handwriting practise. The register will be taken at 9am and if children arrive later than 9.00am they will be marked as late. We would appreciate if the parents leave the classroom by 9.00am to prevent any disruption to your child and other children's school day. Please remember that the school day ends at 3.25pm and the children must be collected on time. It is important that staff are able to prepare lessons and attend staff meetings directly after school.

Structured Conversations

In our school during the academic year we have 2 Structured Conversations with parents to talk about your child needs, progress and to set targets and next steps. Please check the Friday weekly newsletter for the dates. A sign-up sheet with times will be displayed outside the classroom nearer the time.

Pupil of the Week/ Writer of the Week

Each week two children, who have behaved particularly well or completed an exceptional piece of work, are chosen from each class. These children are awarded 'Pupil of the week' and 'Writer of the Week' certificates. You can find these on the weekly newsletters.

Panda Traffic Light System

We use a traffic light system to encourage consistent good behaviour choices in the class. Children who are who are making the right choices and following the classroom rules will remain on the green panda. Children who are not making the right choices will be given two verbal warnings and moved onto the yellow panda. If they choose to continue to ignore the classroom rules and another two verbal warnings given, children will then be put on the red panda and will be given a time out. Parents will be informed.

Birthday Celebrations

We would love to celebrate your child's birthday as it's a very special day. However, following our Healthy Eating Policy we only allow to bring fruits, dried fruits or party bags without containing any foods. We celebrate birthdays by making birthday hats, singing party songs and playing party games (e.g. Musical statues, Musical chairs, Pass a parcel).

We look forward to working with you and your child. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to come and talk to us.

Yours Sincerely,

Miss Olga Susko and Ms McQueen
Reception Class Teachers