



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



Newsletter – Tuesday 20th December 2022

Advent is a time of waiting for our Lord, who will visit us all in our own hearts. The Lord is coming! Let us wait for him!" Pope Francis

Dear Parents/Carers,

It hardly seems possible that this is the last newsletter of 2022. When I look back to last year's Christmas newsletter, we were just emerging from the first of our Covid outbreaks where at one point we had almost half the school at home either unwell or isolating, and our outdoor nativity had just taken place.

Thankfully, all of this seems like a world away and serves as a reminder that even in the midst of struggles and troubles there is hope for better times ahead. I am delighted that we are now in those 'better times' and that the last two terms have seen a return to the day to day school life that we have all longed for.

Reflecting on our school year so far, I am delighted that we have been able to offer many opportunities for parents to come share in the day to day life of our school. These include 'Welcome' meetings at the start of the year, an open afternoon in November as well as all classes having the opportunity to lead at least one event for parents to attend - whether this has been an assembly, the Reception and Year 1 Nativity, the Year 5 and 6 Thame Festival of Christmas music or the Year 2, 3 and 4 Advent Carol service. In January we look forward to holding our first in-person parent consultation meetings in over three years.

It really has been a delight to welcome families into school for these events and we look forward to many more opportunities to do this in the terms ahead.



Advent – a time of waiting and preparation

As we enter the final days of Advent, we reflect on how we can prepare our hearts to receive Jesus in a special and personal way this Christmas.

*God of love,
Your son, Jesus, is your greatest gift to us.
He is a sign of your love.
Help us walk in that love in the remaining days of
Advent,
As we wait and prepare for his coming.
Amen*





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In the last few weeks our Christmas preparations have included children from Years 5 and 6 taking part in the spectacular Thame Festival of Christmas music, Reception and Year 1 performing their wonderful 'Wriggly Nativity' and Years 2, 3 and

4 leading a beautiful Advent Carol service in our parish church. The children have all been a credit to our school – their singing, reading, acting and in some cases dancing (!) have been truly uplifting and it has been lovely to see so many parents at these different events.

Staffing News

As parents of children in Year 3 will already be aware, Mr. de Vletter is stepping down from his role as Year 3 class teacher at the end of this term. Mr. de Vletter's personal circumstances are such that he needs greater flexibility around his working commitments. However, I am pleased to inform you that Mr. de Vletter will not be leaving us; he will instead continue to work with us on a supply basis next term.

I am also pleased to inform you that Mrs. Delnevo will take on the role of class teacher for Year 3 from January 2023.

School Leadership

We are very much looking forward to Mrs. Sienkiewicz joining us as Assistant Head in January. In addition to this, we have created a second Assistant Head role in order to further increase leadership capacity in our school. This will be a part time role in addition to the full time role and I am delighted to inform you that Mrs. Dale will be taking up the position of Assistant Head from January.

SENCo

Unfortunately, due to a sudden change in personal circumstances, Mrs. Fell will not be joining us as SENCo in January. We will of course be recruiting to this role and in the meantime the management of SEND in our school will be as follows:

- Class teacher as first point of contact
- Mrs Dale will have oversight of SEND in Reception and Key Stage 1, with Mrs Sienkiewicz having oversight in Key Stage 2.
- We will continue to have an enhanced support package from the Local Authority in the form of the Oxfordshire Inclusion Team and as Headteacher, I will have overall oversight of SEND





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Thank you to 'The Friends'!

I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge 'thank you' to 'The Friends' for their hard work in raising funds for our school this term. Over £4,500 has been raised with the firework night raising £2,774 and the Christmas Fayre raising £1,778. In addition to this, we have had our Christmas disco and a small but dedicated band of 'Friends' took part in a Santa sleigh ride around Thame! Figures for these events are still to come in, but in the meantime



I would like to thank all those who have helped out in any way with our PTA fundraising activities this term.

New PE shirts

We are expecting delivery of our smart new PE shirts in January / February. Information about how you can order these will follow after Christmas.

Key Stage 2 Cross Country

We are pleased to announce that we will be holding a cross country running event for Key Stage 2 on the afternoon of Thursday 12th January. This will take place at Lord Williams school and parents are welcome to attend. More information to follow in January.

and finally ...

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and to wish you and your family the peace of Christ in your hearts and your homes this Christmas. We look forward to seeing you on Wednesday 4th January for the start of the new term.

With my very best wishes Christmas and the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. R. Gowers
Headteacher

