



Newsletter

5th September 2025

A Heartwarming Start to the School Year

Dear Parents and Carers,

We've had the most wonderful beginning to the new academic year here at St Joseph's. On Wednesday, we welcomed our newest Reception children, who have already begun to settle beautifully into the rhythm of school life. It's been a joy to see their confidence grow each day, nurtured by the kindness and care of Miss McEvoy, Mx Lane and Mrs Wilmer. Their gentle guidance has helped our youngest pupils feel right at home, and the whole school community is delighted to have them with us.

I am equally delighted to join St Joseph's as your new Headteacher. With over 15 years of dedicated service in Catholic education, I bring not only a breadth of experience but also a deep commitment to nurturing every child's academic, emotional, and spiritual growth. My time as a Deputy Headteacher at Sacred Heart RC Primary School in Westhoughton, Bolton has strengthened my belief in the importance of striving for excellence while remaining rooted in faith. I now bring that same passion and vision to St Joseph's, with Catholic social teaching, inclusivity, and love at its heart.

I believe every child should feel cherished, supported, and inspired to grow in faith, following the example of Jesus. I am eager to meet all of our families and begin building strong, meaningful connections within this wonderful school community. I will be hosting a Macmillan Coffee Morning on Friday, 26th September at 9am. This will be a lovely opportunity to come together, enjoy some cake and a brew, chat about all things St Joseph's, and raise money for a very worthy cause. I appreciate that not everyone may be able to attend this event, so there will also be a parent survey in the following newsletter as we wish to capture as much feedback as possible from our families. I look forward to a joyful and enriching year ahead with you all. Please keep an eye out for upcoming events, opportunities to connect, and exciting developments as we embark on this new journey together.

Thank you for the warm welcome I have received from so many of you this week. I look forward to working in partnership with you all as we begin this exciting new chapter at St Joseph's.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Sophie Bridge
Headteacher



This Week's Celebration of the Word

We began the school year as we will do every Monday morning, by gathering together in the hall to take part in our weekly Celebration of the Word. This week we listened to Greg and Sister Chiara from Mark 10 Mission. They talked to us about Saints Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati, who are the newest saints of the Catholic Church. Both Carlo and Pier Giorgio lived amazing lives for Jesus. Powered by the Holy Eucharist they loved the people around them, putting Jesus before anyone else. Sr Thérèse lead us in a beautiful reflection and helped us to pray with Saints Carlo and Pier Giorgio. The children were sent away with a mission to research and decide upon their own Class Saint who will become the name of their class this year. You can watch this again at home here: [The-Mark-10-Mission](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

Upcoming Events

Macmillan Coffee Morning in school on Friday, 26th September starting at 9am.

Whole school mass at church on Wednesday, 17th September at 10.30am. All welcome.

Whole School Celebration Assembly - Everyone is invited to attend on Friday 19th September at 2.50pm

Further dates will be announced next week...
Stay tuned.

We will also be requesting consent for images and videos to be used on social media pages next week as we would like to begin to grow our social media platform use going forward. We believe it is important to share more about what exciting things happen at school so you can talk about learning at home.

This Term's After School Activities

- *Ella Holt Drama - all year groups*
- *Jam Coding - Cl 2/3/4 & Cl 5/6*

*St Joseph, most loving and
watchful father.
Pray for Us...*



This Week in Pictures



Uniform Reminders

Earrings: For reasons of safety, our school uniform policy is that children should not be wearing earrings. However, if your child has had their ears pierced recently, and is unable to remove them, they must be covered at all times with plasters. By the beginning of October, we would expect all pupils to be wearing see-through plastic retainers.

PE Kit: If your child forgets to bring their PE kit, they will be given a spare set of clothes from school to wear for the lesson.

MISSION FILE

GOSPEL

At that time: Great crowds accompanied Jesus, and he turned and said to them, 'If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, "This man began to build and was not able to finish." Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.'

WORD OF THE WEEK

ENCOUNTER

PRAYER

COLOUR

COLOUR

MISSION

Snacks

Just a reminder, as we have a child in school with a nut allergy, please do not send in any food items that contain any sort of nuts. If pupils do bring anything into school that could be a risk, it will be removed by staff and can be collected at the end of the school day. Thank you for your understanding.

From Monday, all pupils in Reception, Year One and Year Two will be given a free fruit snack at playtime. Therefore, they do not need to bring anything in from home. Children in Year Three, Four, Five and Six should only bring fresh fruit or vegetables for their morning snack. These should be separate from their packed lunch



Parish News: Children's Liturgy Team

Welcome back after the Summer break. We all hope you had a good time.

Sunday is the 22nd Sunday of the year. Jesus tells the crowds that if they want to follow him and be his disciples then they need to give up everything. He tells them two stories to help them understand.

The first story is about a man who wants to build a tower. He must work out the cost to make sure he enough money and resources to finish the job. The second story is about a king who is going to war. He must first count his soldiers and resources to make sure he can win the battle. Both stories tell us about how important it is not to rush straight into something without thinking about it first. We need to prepare so that we can see our project through to the finish. It needs to be done properly.

Perhaps you can think of something big that you were asked to do. Maybe you thought it was too hard and that you'd never manage it, but it turned out you could do it! And is there anything that you've ever rushed into without thinking about it and then you weren't able to finish or it went wrong?

Jesus is telling us that following him and being a disciple is something that we have to see through to the finish. We need to follow Jesus always and this isn't always easy. Often we can be distracted by other people or by thinking about what we want rather than about what Jesus wants for us.

Throughout our lives as followers of Jesus we might have to choose to do what Jesus wants even if it means not always being popular. It is hard but God is with us all the way to help and guide us.

How will you follow Jesus this week at home or in school? See if you can try to do one thing to show that you follow him, and finish it, even if it is difficult.

We would love to see you on Sunday at 9:30am Mass - Children's Liturgy Room



Online Safety Newsletter

Sept 2025

Coverstar

Coverstar say they are "the safe TikTok alternative." They state, "there is no specific age limitation... however, if you are under the age of 13, you must obtain parental consent." Users can post, comment and livestream.

Whilst Coverstar does not include private messaging, users can still interact via public comments. Coverstar does use moderation tools to scan all user-generated content. It is also important to be aware that Coverstar does allow in-app purchases ranging from £0.99 - £59.99.

If your child is using this app, ensure they know how to use the reporting tools. Bark provide a full review of Coverstar here, but they rate it as suitable for 10+:

<https://www.bark.us/app-reviews/apps/coverstar-app-review>.

Online Safety Act

What is the Online Safety Act?

The Online Safety Act 2023 is a set of laws introduced to protect children and adults online. Ofcom is the regulator for online safety in the UK, responsible for ensuring companies follow the new rules. As part of this role, Ofcom have designed the Children Codes of practice, which came into force in July

2025. The codes outline what all online services likely to be accessed by children must do to protect children online, for example:

- Enforce age limits.
- Protect children from accessing harmful or age-inappropriate content. This includes content relating to self-harm and eating disorders.
- Ensure users can easily report harmful content.

Ofcom has the power to enforce the rules as well as issue fines if companies fail to comply. You can find out more here:

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/protecting-children/new-rules-for-a-safer-generation-of-children-online>



How will it help to protect my child?

One of the main purposes of the Act is to protect children online. Ofcom has published information on how they are helping children to be safer online. The first link is a guide for parents, which also includes a section on what you can do as a parent. You can access this information here:

• <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/protecting-children/how-ofcom-is-helping-children-to-be-safer-online-a-guide-for-parents>

• <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/protecting-children/how-the-online-safety-act-will-help-to-protect-children>

Further information

Online Safety Act: explainer:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/online-safety-act-explainer/online-safety-act-explainer>

Test your knowledge: Online Scams

Childnet have created a quiz for 9-13 year-olds that includes a range of potential online scams, as well as tips to help your child protect themselves online. Find out more here:

<https://www.childnet.com/blog/test-your-knowledge-about-online-scams-with-our-quiz-for-9-13-year-olds/>

Would you like to read this newsletter in a different language? You can use the translate tool on our web version: <https://www.knowsleylcs.org.uk/sept-2025/>

St Joseph's Houghton

STOP MOTION ANIMATION Afterschool Club_

At Jam Coding, our goal is to help improve children's digital skills. In this workshop, children will work in teams to create a storyline and bring it to life through stop motion animation. In the final week, the children will showcase their animations in front of their peers. This club encourages teamwork, creativity, confidence and of course, laughter! At the end of the course, all children will receive a certificate and one team will receive a trophy.

DATES :

11th Sept, 18th Sept, 25th Sept, 2nd Oct, 9th Oct,
16th Oct

TIME :

Running on Thursdays from 3:20 - 4:20

PRICE :

6 weeks of fun for just 42!



BOOK HERE

<https://portal.jamcoding.franscape.io/class-overview/5017>

Click the link above to view course details OR visit our website and head to the booking tab. Enter your postcode in the locations field and click search to view courses. Then select the school or venue you require. N.B. You can only attend courses held at the school that your child attends. You can also search by the school postcode.

For more information, please email
support@jamcoding.co.uk

“ Animation
can explain
whatever the
mind of a child
can conceive! ”

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THIS TERM: THE WIZARD OF OZ

**Drama club:
10 weeks
£50**

**JUST £5 A SESSION. YOUR CHILD CAN UNLOCK
THEIR HIDDEN TALENTS. TOUCHING ON ALL
THINGS; SINGING, DANCING AND DRAMA! MINI
SHOWCASE AT THE END OF THE 10 WEEKS! WITH
OVER 9 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE PERFORMING
PROFESSIONALLY AND WORKING WITH CHILDREN.
LIMITED SLOTS AVAILABLE, FOR ALL AGE RANGES,**

**CLUB DATES: 16TH SEPTEMBER- 25TH NOVEMBER
TIME: 15.20-16.20**

**To book your childs slot, Email:
ellaroseholtlamda@gmail.com**

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

RECOGNISING & MANAGING STRESS

According to recent studies, over 60% of young people report feeling regularly overwhelmed – with stress impacting their learning, emotional wellbeing and social connections. If left unaddressed, stress can lead to more serious concerns such as anxiety, depression or disengagement. This guide offers ten practical, evidence-based strategies to help children and young people recognise, manage and recover from stress in healthy ways.

1 SPOT THE SUBTLE SIGNS

Look out for changes in mood, behaviour, or energy levels, such as irritability, withdrawal, clinginess, or frequent headaches. These may indicate that a child is feeling overwhelmed. By tuning into these cues early and offering a calm, non-judgemental space to talk, adults can help children feel heard and supported before issues escalate.

2 KEEP CONVERSATIONS FLOWING

Make time for open, informal check-ins – whether it's during car journeys, over dinner, or in quiet classroom moments. Let children know it's okay to talk about what's bothering them. Regular, low-pressure conversations create a safe space where emotions are validated, not dismissed.

3 MAKE MOVEMENT PART OF THE DAY

Physical activity can dramatically reduce stress hormones while improving mood and focus. Encourage movement through activities children genuinely enjoy – from team sports to dancing around the kitchen. Even light activity like stretching or walking the dog can help us all unwind.

4 SUPPORT HEALTHY SLEEP PATTERNS

Poor sleep makes stress harder to manage. Establish a calming evening routine that avoids screens before bedtime and promotes winding down, such as reading, listening to music, or chatting quietly. Good hygiene helps reset mood, enhances concentration, and boosts emotional resilience.

5 PRACTISE MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness doesn't have to mean long periods of meditation. A few slow breaths before lessons or short family meditation sessions before bed can make a real difference. These simple habits help children ground themselves, reduce emotional reactivity, and build inner calm over time.

6 SET DIGITAL BOUNDARIES

Excessive screen time, especially before bed or on social media, is linked with higher stress levels. Set clear expectations for when and where devices can be used and suggest screen-free alternatives like crafts, nature walks, or board games to promote digital balance and reduce overstimulation.

7 NURTURE SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Strong relationships act as a buffer against stress. Whether it's a trusted adult, a sibling, or a good friend, ensure children have people around them they can talk to and spend quality time with. Help them build these bonds through shared activities and meaningful interaction.

8 PROGRESS OVER PERFECTION

Set realistic goals and praise effort, not just outcomes. When children feel pressured to be perfect, stress naturally follows. Celebrate small wins and help them reframe setbacks as learning opportunities. This helps build confidence and reduces the fear of failure.

9 TEACH EVERYDAY PROBLEM-SOLVING

Use real-life scenarios to build resilience. Encourage children to identify problems, consider possible solutions, and choose a plan of action. Practising these steps builds a sense of control and reduces the helplessness that often accompanies stress.

10 BE THE MODEL THEY NEED

Children notice how adults respond to challenges. Model healthy coping strategies such as taking breaks, asking for help, or calmly expressing frustration. By showing how you manage stress constructively, you help normalise these behaviours and encourage children to do the same.

Meet Our Expert

Anna Bateman is Director of Halcyon Education Ltd, Director for Wellbeing and Family Services at Leigh Trust, and lead expert for mental health at The National College. Anna specialises in strategic mental health solutions for schools, supporting educators and families to improve resilience, emotional literacy, and overall wellbeing for children across the UK.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College