

St Joseph's Journal

**Faith
Learning
Respect**



Message from the Head

Snow has graced our fields, the rain has quenched the grounds and the wind is currently whipping across the school yards - the final half term of 2024 has certainly lived up to weather expectations! However, this has certainly not put a dampener on the resilience of our staff and children nor on the opportunities and experiences enjoyed by all. Key stage 4 and 5 engineers have been to Hitachi; the key stage 3 cross-Trust spelling bee was of course won by the St Joseph's team and we have had countless sporting successes across the whole school too. As I write this message the Christmas activities are strongly underway with carol services, a Christmas shop and a St Joseph's got Talent afternoon. I for one can certainly not wait for the latter. This will be my final message to you all as Head Teacher of St Joseph's. My stewardship has come to an end and I am extremely proud of our school, its students, its staff and community. I leave you at the end of this week with a heart full of pride and with full confidence that the school shall continue on its upward journey, going from strength to strength. Mrs Lewis-Dale will be your new Acting Head Teacher. I will enjoy taking things a little easier, a Monday morning lie in particular will be lovely! For all I will be on the golf course more often and spending more time with my family, you will still see me from time to time as I will continue to support St Joseph's. Mr McWiggan and Mrs Rump will also be leaving us at Christmas and we warmly welcome Mrs Salkeld into the MFL department.

And so, I wish you all a restful and holy Christmas. Please take this opportunity to slow down and enjoy time with loved ones.

Mr Peter Mitchell.

As we approach the end of this term, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible journey we've undertaken together over the past few months. It has been a term filled with challenges, triumphs, and, most importantly, growth for each and every one of us.

As we prepare to bid farewell to 2023, I am filled with gratitude for the faith, determination, positive attitude and mutual respect that our students have shown not to mention the incredible amount of enrichment activities that have taken place.

This holiday season is not just a time for celebration but also a well-deserved opportunity for everyone to recharge and rejuvenate. I encourage each of you to take this break to spend quality time with loved ones, indulge in activities that bring you joy, and reflect on the achievements we've accomplished together.

Mr McConway



Meet the staff

My First Term at St Joe's!

Wow! What a term! I want to express my sincere gratitude for the warm welcome and delightful experience I have had since joining St Joseph's Catholic Academy as 'Teacher of English' in September 2023. The past three months have been an enriching journey, and I am absolutely delighted to be part of such a fantastic school!

If you don't know me, here's three facts about myself:

- 1) I am a huge Newcastle United fan and have been a season ticket holder since I was eight!
- 2) My favourite movie of all time is Back to the Future.
- 3) My favourite holiday destination is Olu Deniz, Turkey.



From the moment I stepped into St Joseph's, I was greeted with kindness and support from both my department and the students. The sense of community and the commitment to academic excellence have made my transition seamless and enjoyable. The collaborative spirit among colleagues has been truly inspiring! It has been a pleasure to take on a tutor group – 7B2 and be part of their secondary journeys 🌟



I have been particularly pleased with the enthusiasm and engagement of my English students. Their passion for literature and language has been infectious, making every class a rewarding experience. You have truly let your light shine! I have met and talked to many students in the corridors, on the yard, on trips such as the Panto, and everybody has been so welcoming. Thank you!

As I reflect on the past three months, I am excited about the prospect of a long and fulfilling career at St Joseph's Catholic Academy. What I admire most is the culture in our classrooms is that we don't always have to be right, what matters most is the effort we put into each and every lesson. Leave each lesson proud, with the ability to say you gave your absolute personal best. In the words of Mrs Berry, 'be FLAMEazing!'.

Thank you once again for the warm welcome and the incredible opportunity to be a part of the St Joseph's community. I am confident that my time at this fantastic academy will be marked by both personal and professional fulfilment.

Merry Christmas!
Mr Hall
Teacher of English

Meet the staff

My Name - Miss Baker

My Subject - English

My House/Form Group - 7C1

A whole term has been completed already and I can hardly believe it! Starting here at St Joseph's in September felt only minutes ago, but what an amazing first half term it has been. The welcome here has been nothing short of fantastic from everyone and I can't wait to see what fun lies ahead after the well deserved Christmas break.

Some Facts about me:

My degree is in English Literature and I absolutely love books and reading. My favourite things to read are The Harry Potter series (I am a proud Ravenclaw) and murder mysteries or detective novels. I'm also obsessed with Greek Mythology and love modern retellings of those classic tales.

Originally, I am from Teesside, a small town about 45 minutes south of Sunderland. Although I love the Geordi dialect and culture, there's often nothing I miss more than going to a Boro match or getting a lemon top from sunny Redcar.

Finally, I love to be crafty when I'm at home and often knit and crochet all sorts of things: scarfs for my family, hats for my friends and even the occasional cover for my plant pots as I'm really not an animal person. I also love cooking and trying new recipes even though I am ironically actually a terrible baker.

In School:

Alongside Mr Hall and Mrs Sanderson, I proudly help to run the newly launched Poetry by Heart Club. Poetry by Heart is a nationwide competition programme that we are entering for the first time ever at St Joseph's this year. We look at all different types of poetry and loads of different and interesting poets and aim to learn their poems by heart and perform them in entertaining ways to an audience. Finalists of the competition can even be selected to perform poetry in front of hundreds of other schools at Shakespeare's Globe down in London later in the year. It's on every Tuesday lunch for years 9 and 10 so you should definitely pop along if you're interested.

Highlights from the first term:

So many great things have happened in this first term, but my highlights have to be time spent with my amazing tutor group in PSHE and starting out St Joseph's journey together. Another great moment was the mock trial for Animal Farms 'Napoleon' With year 8 who really put their all into their persuasive presentations.

Catholic Life and Mission: Social Action at St. Joseph's



This November we sent off a fantastic 62 shoeboxes to Operation Christmas Child to bring love and joy to young people across the world living in warzones, as refugees or in extreme poverty.

We are really grateful for the support of our students, parents, parishioners, clergy and staff for working phenomenally hard to donate items for their tutor groups' shoeboxes and for making such a profound difference to young people across the world. We are also immensely proud of the exceptional efforts of students in Year 8 who are working with their tutor groups to make £5 grow through the parable of the talents social action project.



Students have been using their £5s to run a range of exciting charity events such as cake sales, sports afternoons and competitions across the school. Students in year 8 are living out Catholic Social Teaching by choosing ways to support various charities of their choice ranging from dog shelters, cancer connections, cancer care, the people's kitchen in Newcastle, the Alan Shearer Foundation, CAFOD, the Salvation Army and Hebburn Helps.



We are immensely proud of everyone's hard work. Students in Year 8 have raised approximately £450 for causes chosen by them.

Tutors groups across the school have also been creating food parcels this Advent for Hebburn Helps which will be delivered in our final week of term and Care Parcels for the elderly, again, which will be delivered by students undertaking the Pope John Paul II award and the Faith in Action award in the last week of term.



None of this would be possible without the amazing support of our entire community of parents, parishioners, clergy, students and staff so thank you for everything you are doing.

God bless and have an amazing Advent.

Sports Corner



Year 7/8 Sportshall athletics

Lots of success at the Year 7 and 8 Sports Hall Athletics competition at Temple park this term. Our Year 7 boys, Year 7 girls and Year 8 boys all became South Tyneside Champions by winning their competitions. Our Year 8 girls found themselves in a really tight and exciting competition and finished with a Silver medal (still qualifying for the county finals) by a single point (205vs204). Well done to everyone involved.

Year 8 boys football

A great start to the academic year for our Year 8 boys football team. The boys have had a positive start to the league campaign and find themselves in the quarter finals of both county cups. They have also become South Tyneside futsal champions this term and will play in the county finals in 2024. The highlight and most exciting match of the season so far coming came against neighbours Hebburn Comprehensive school where the boys found themselves 3-0 down with 20 minutes to play, only to come back and win 5-3!



Sports Corner

Year 10 Boys Football

Last year's Year 9 league winners and league cup finalists are unbeaten in the South Tyneside schools league this year after recording wins over Harton & Hebburn schools. They are quarter finalists in the Durham schools Londonderry County cup competition and will play Easington Academy next after 1st/2nd rounds wins against Kings James 1st & Carmel schools thus far. They bowed out of the U15 County cup competition after losing on penalties to Cardinal Hume. They are due to take part in the annual South Tyneside Futsal competition **Thursday January 11th**.

Player of the Year - George Barclay

Most Improved - Khalid Oladiti



Under 16 Boys Basketball

Our team is unbeaten over their initial group games and qualified for the South of Tyne finals by comfortably winning their group. The South of Tyne finals night will take place on **January 15th 2024** @Gateshead International Stadium.

MVPs - Perry Boston & Oliver Ord

Most Improved - Oscar Saul Torode

Under 14 Boys Basketball

Team 'A' comfortably qualified for the South of Tyne finals night by comfortably winning their group over 2-nights. The South of Tyne finals take place on **January 22nd 15th 2024** @ Gateshead International Stadium. Any KS3 (Yrs 7,8 & 9) student is eligible to be part of these opportunities and can show their willingness to get involved by attending Thursday night practice (3-4pm)



NBA Jnr Competition

Our 2nd year of taking part in this national competition. We travelled to Blyth Academy on **Wednesday 29th November 2023**. Where we recorded a win against John Spence & a draw with Blyth Academy. This year we were allocated the Minnesota Timberwolves franchise to represent. However, due to delays with deliveries our new kit has yet to be worn. Next opportunity will come in early January with return matches due to take place at St Joseph's. Any Year 7 student is eligible to be part of these opportunities and can show their willingness to get involved by attending Thursday night practice (3-4pm)

MVP - Ben Geen & Jacob Innins

Most Improved - Layla Bailey

Sports Corner

Under 14 Girls Competition

Despite limited experience our Under 14 girls remained committed through the combined Gateshead/ South Tyneside tournament. They finished 6th and recorded a single win against Whickham School.

MVP - Gracie Murray & Lauren Appleby

Most Improved - Esther Adekanye



South Tyneside Schools Cross Country 2023

A fab afternoon spent at the South Tyneside Schools Cross Country in the afternoon of **Friday 17th November** where our school finished overall winners! There was individual success with medals for Year 7 students Jayden Hynes, Sophia Appleby (Silver) & Autumn-Rose Stoker (Bronze) and Charlie Archibald (Bronze) Years 9s -Lauren Appleby (Bronze) and Year 10 Leo Haddrick (Gold). Lots of SJCA students also finished in the top 10*/16** which will see them qualify to represent South Tyneside at the Durham school's event **Saturday January 13th 2024** @ Farrington School.

Well done to all that took part!!

Urban Factory Taster Day

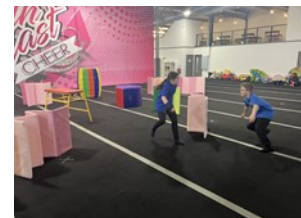
Urban Factory -Session 1 -Parkour

Our year 7/8 boys had a fantastic trip to the Urban Factory this morning. The boys took part in a rotation of activities building their fundamental parkour skills #FLAME



Urban Factory- Session 2- Cheerleading

A group of Year 7 girls had a great time doing a cheer-leading taster day at the Urban Factory.



Literary Success

St Joseph's Spelling Bee

Congratulations to our amazing Spelling Bee team who won the first BCCET Spelling Bee competition of the year! We took first place after a breath-taking final knock-out round. The individual talent and teamwork on display was impressive. We were warmly welcomed by our fabulous hosts at St. Aidan's Catholic Academy and it was a delight to meet students from other schools within the Trust. It was lovely to meet such a dedicated group of students enjoying the wonder of words. We are so impressed with the teamwork and commitment that each and every member showed, not only during today, but in the preparation for the event too -well done everybody!



Balance the books

Our wonderful volunteer reviewers from KS3 and KS4 have been to choose their books from our library's new Balance the Books collection. The students have selected a book from the collection that they will read and review. Some of the best books act as a mirror and a window; reflecting our own lives on the page or allowing a view of lives that are different from our own, increasing our empathy and compassion. This is one of the reasons why our new Balance the Books collection is so great. Not only that, but our students will be able to find amazing books by authors from a wide range of underrepresented backgrounds. Our students will be

sharing their reviews on the books in the new year and all students will be able to explore the collection in the library!

Neil Gaiman

On Monday 20th November all our Year 7 students took part in a live-streamed event organised through the British Library with Neil Gaiman, award-winning author and creator of books, graphic novels, short stories, films and television for all ages. Our students were asked to submit questions for the event and we were very excited to hear some of our questions read out to Neil Gaiman. It was a great opportunity to expand our knowledge of the Gothic and fantasy genre and be inspired by one of Britain's most exciting and engaging writers!



A poem for St Joe's

Twass The Week Before Christmas

'Twas the week before Christmas and all through the school Pupils were struggling to
follow the rules

Years 7 & 8, danced down the street, Year 9 played Festive tunes on repeat

Year 10 were TikToking under the stairs, Year 11 watched "The Grinch" while slouched
in their chairs They're not misbehaving, the Heads of House said, they're just over
excited for the big day ahead.

When from down in the juice bar came the sweetest of sounds

The teachers came to their doors and looked all around

The choir sang out with passion and pride, while snow fell gently and silent, outside
The tree shone with a magical warmth and the Spirit of Christmas reached out its arms
It gave everyone a feeling of hope, love and joy, a reminder to all of the birth of a boy
Upstairs and down, from Levels 0 to 2, shouts could be heard "Merry Christmas to
you"

And students and staff were all of one mind, to spread their good wishes and peace to
mankind

Looking to the Future

All female trip to Hitachi

Mrs Cobain and Mr Gray took our all female group of engineer's to Hitachi, we were shown around an
expanding factory, which is on the schools doorstep in Hebburn Industrial Estate.

We viewed the various areas in the factory and saw what the factory produces, we were introduced to
female engineer Kelsie who took us through her journey to how she ended up at Hitachi, she'd repaired
cars and done training in aerospace.

The factory gave our students information on apprenticeships and types of rolls around the factory, we
were all lucky enough to get a goodie bag!

F.L.A.M.E



Journeying together through Advent:

The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle have produced a series of reflections to help us spiritually journey through Advent. Each reflection takes about two minutes to read and reflects upon the Gospel reading for each day. As a school we are passionate about supporting you spiritually and it would be great if you could read as a family each day's diocesan reflection as we prepare for the coming of the greatest gift that the world has ever seen, Jesus Christ.

St Joseph's Got Talent

Does your child have a talent? Can they dance, sing, juggle, play an instrument...the list of talents are endless!

Auditions were held today and our students were brilliant .

We are looking forward to the Talent Show on Wednesday 20th December.
School House Captains

Gardening Club Says Thank You!

THANK YOU to Thomas Wallace who donated much needed topsoil to our school gardening club

Thomas only left St Joseph's a few years ago and already has a successful football coaching company in South Tyneside which was set up in 2021. What an inspiration to our students. Thomas first started his coaching journey at age 14, assisting with a local grassroots club. Since this Thomas has attended SAFC Coaches Academy programme on a 2-year scholarship, he also has worked alongside some very talented and highly qualified coaches from which a lot was learnt. He is also currently undergoing his UEFA Coaching License.



TJ Coaching Ltd was formed from a passion to develop and grow the game as well as a love for football. The company has grown larger than expected resulting in staff being recruited and further areas being covered.

Thomas@TJCoaching.co.uk

Cinderella's of Gateshead Prom Dress event

The hair and beauty department held a lovely prom dress event last night. It gave some of our students lots of good ideas. One idea was to not buy too early until you have had a really good look around and tried on lots of colours.

Numeracy News

Numeracy News from Mr Pattison

- Overall, our year 7s have 1,423,696 XP points on Sparx Maths which equates to about 1695 hours of homework so far this year.
- Year 8 have 1,067,763 XP points which is approximately 1271 hours of independent learning, Year 9 have 776,194 XP points (924 hours), Year 10 have 741,316 XP points (882 hours) and Year 11 have 870,825 XP points (1037 hours).
- Each year group has been completing weekly Numeracy tasks during their tutor time to embed their mental maths, times tables and key Numeracy skills, with KS4 focusing on the key exam topics that are expected to be on their GCSEs.
- Revision for Year 11 has also been provided from the Mock results, with key topics being highlighted and then Sparx codes being given so students can revise at home. Useful websites also include Corbett Maths, GCSE bitesize, OnMaths and SaveMyExams, with a range of past papers, videos, model answers and revision notes on the websites to use alongside Sparx.
- Students from KS3 complete a mix of Numeracy and retrieval starters in lessons to help with confidence in Maths, and also complete problem solving lessons where teamwork and resilience is tested to solve real life problems.
- KS4 students complete retrieval and "mark maximiser" work, which is a mix of topics previously covered in lessons, and common GCSE questions that will aid their revision.
- A range of mathematical clubs are currently on offer including support with homework at Sparx homework club on a Wednesday 3-4, KS3 can go to Puzzle club on a Tuesday lunchtime, and some of Year 10 are taking part in the National Cipher Challenge run by Southampton University on Thursday 3-4.
- STEP is continuing for Year 11 in various forms throughout the year, and staff are doing a fantastic job giving up their time before and after school to provide extra support for students.
- Our wonderful support team continues to offer opportunities to develop key Numeracy interventions both during lessons and before and after school with selected students.
- Numeracy interventions are offered every Tuesday and Thursday morning during tutor time to some Year 11 students with Mr Patterson, and the amazing Mrs Hollamby and Mr McGarey run Numeracy interventions with other year groups throughout the week.
- House challenges are being completed in the build up to Christmas with points counting towards the House Cup for each class.

We would like to **thank you for all the support provided with Sparx and Numeracy at home**, as it really does make a huge difference to both the confidence a pupil shows, and their understanding in lessons. The additional work at home provides the students a much better opportunity to reach their maximum

Quiz Corner



CHRISTMAS QUIZ



1. In what town was Jesus born? _____
2. What was Joseph's job? _____
3. What colour are the berries of the mistletoe plant? _____
4. Santa has nine reindeer, can you name them all?

5. What gifts did the three kings take to baby Jesus? _____
6. What are Santa's helpers called? _____
7. Which meat do we traditionally eat with Christmas dinner? _____
8. What date is Boxing Day celebrated? _____
9. What form of transport does Santa use to deliver all the presents? _____
10. Where does Santa live? _____
11. What date is New Year's Eve? _____
12. What was Scrooge's first name? _____
13. What was the first name of Jesus's mother? _____
14. What is the missing word from this Christmas song - Ding Dong ... On High:
a) Happily b) Joyfully c) Merrily
15. How many wise men visited the baby Jesus? _____

