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# St. Joseph's Newsletter

*We are growing together on our journey of achievement with Jesus in our hearts, heads and hands.*

**Family Fun Day:** We were blessed with the wonderful weather on Saturday for our Family Day. The day was a great success due to the efforts of Mrs. Philpott and all her parent helpers. Many thanks to everyone who helped and all who came to support this event



The funds from the Family Fun Day will go towards the request made by our pupils. The School Council and Eco Group have requested to purchase some recycled plastic wood benches for the school playground so that the children can sit outside when eating their packed lunches.

**Berkshire Credit Union** were delighted to be part of the school 'Family Day'. The Credit Union is a member run cooperative, social enterprise, run by members and volunteers, offering ethical savings and



affordable loans to members. They can be described as a local alternative to high street banks, doorstep and payday lenders and loan sharks.

On Saturday their free prize draw saw 4 pupils winning a £5 deposit into their Credit Union Accounts (when they open them). Well done to: Beatrice (Yr. 2), Jessica (Yr. 3), Anna (Yr. 4) & Michal (Yr. 4).

The Berkshire Credit Union will launch a weekly "Star Saver club" in the school in December, where pupils can save money in their credit union account, encouraging young people to get into the habit of saving regularly. In December, the Credit Union will also have an assembly where parents and family members will be invited to find out more about how this scheme works.



**Congratulations:** We are delighted to share the good news that Mrs. & Mr. Pearce have welcomed a new member to their family - Delilah Eve. Their daughter Primrose was delighted with the arrival of her new baby sister.



This year we are focusing on further developing English across the school. We will be focusing on -Reading

- Vocabulary
- Speaking (Oracy)
- Handwriting
- 

**Reading:** We are actively encouraging all children to read daily. Every child will have a reading (scheme) book, a library book and have access to an online library – Oxford Reading Buddies. We will also have a themed focus in our Library to encourage the children to use and enjoy this learning space.



September/ October: Books from around the world



**Vocabulary:** An Oxford University Press (OUP) report, Why the Word Gap Matters: Oxford Language Report, published this week reveals that teachers are finding that

an increasing number of children have a limited vocabulary – a word gap. Without enough words a child will not only find it difficult to understand instructions at school, but also to play and to communicate with others around them.

OUP surveyed over 1,300 teachers who reported that the word gap is not only affecting children's achievement at school but also that it can have a damaging impact on self-esteem and children's ability to make friends.

Here are a few suggestions of practical things you can do to build vocabulary and spark interest to learn new words.

1. Not just reading but also being read to

93% of primary school teachers said that a root cause of the word gap is that children aren't spending enough time reading for pleasure. As well as reading on their own or to you, read aloud to your child – even when they are able read fluently on their own. By hearing others read aloud, children can come across books they might not be able to read on their own yet. This way they will continue to hear new words that they probably wouldn't find in their own reading. For a bit of variety, you could listen to audiobooks together. Talk about books together – ask your child what they liked or didn't like about a story. What was their favourite bit? How do they think a character felt at a certain point in the story? Try asking them to retell the story using their own words.

2. Talk, talk, talk!

We talk to our children all the time. But research with very young children shows that if we use richer language, children's vocabulary increases dramatically\* (e.g. instead of 'Pick that up and bring it over here', 'Walk slowly to kitchen and pick up the fork carefully and return it to me'). Try using alternative words for the same thing – instead of saying 'It's hot' say 'It's scorching' or 'It's blistering' or 'It's sizzling'.

3. Have fun with words

Have fun finding out new words together. Create an excitement about discovering new words. Tell your child that it's fine not to know what a word means – we are all learning new words all the time. Encourage them to tell you when they don't know what something means. Talk about it together.

4. Pick up the dictionary

It's really helpful if your child has access to a dictionary and a thesaurus at the right level for them, written in language they can understand.

### 5. Explore word meanings together

When your child comes across a new word in their reading or when you are reading to them, talk together about what the word might mean. Encourage them to use the other words and sentences around it to try to work out the meaning.

### 6. Check for understanding

In the OUP report, educational psychologist Jean Gross CBE explains that she assessed children of all ages and abilities using a test that asked them to say what "on purpose" meant. Very few could do this, despite often hearing "You did that on purpose" at home and in school. Jean suggests that we should never assume that children know the meaning of even simple words.

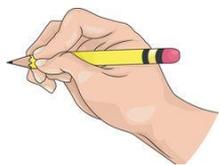
<https://blog.oxfordowl.co.uk/why-the-word-gap-matters-and-what-can-you-do-at-home-to-close-it/>

**Oracy** also supports learning. Through debating, discussing and deliberating over ideas pupils are cognitively stretched and challenged to formulate their own opinions and come to shared decisions. Furthermore, it is also

fundamental to supporting the development of reading and writing skills. Our aim through focus on oracy is to give children the opportunity to develop their speaking skills and to give them the confidence to speak in a variety of situations.



ORACY



**Handwriting:** Handwriting is still an important skill in today's life. The brain engages differently when we write something by hand as opposed to typing it on a

keyboard or by touching a screen. Studies show that writing improves memory; students retain learning better when working with new ideas through handwriting instead of typing. The school follows the Nelson handwriting scheme. We ask that all parents are familiar with how all letters are written - <http://www.stjosephsbracknell.co.uk/learning/english-schemes-and-curriculum/>

Tip: All letters start from the top apart from d and e.



### **Curriculum Workshops for**

**Parents:** This term we will be holding the following workshops so that parents are more

familiar with our teaching strategies and can help their children with their learning. We need at least 5 parents for the workshop to go ahead.

**Maths Workshop:** Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2019 @ 9am

**Phonics and Reading for YR and Y1:** Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019 @ 2.45pm

If you think another workshop would be helpful, please discuss with Mrs. Dunlop/Mrs. Philpott.

**Coffee Morning:** Last week our Reception Year and



Year 1 parents enjoyed a coffee morning in Sean's Shelter. Many thanks to all the parents who attended - the feedback was very

positive. If parents feel that other years groups would benefit from these coffee mornings, please discuss via your class rep.

**Admission for Reception Year 2020:** The Guide to



Primary Education 2020/21 is now available online here: [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/applyforprimary](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/applyforprimary)

This is the Guide parents **must** read before making their application for a Reception school place for September 2020.

The application process does not open until **5th November 2019**. The Guide has been published so that parents can take this time to read the information provided. (Pdf version: <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/guide-to-primary-education-2020-to-2021.pdf> )



**St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Governing Body are presently advertising for 3 places on our Governing Body.**

As a governor you have an opportunity to work with the school to ensure that we maintain our excellence and continuously improve the school for the benefit of all our children. If you can spare approximately eight hours or more a month then please consider nominating yourself for these positions. The three adverts are attached. If you would like to find out more and a copy of the application form, please contact Clerk to Governors, Adele Valentin – [a.valentin@stjosephsbracknell.co.uk](mailto:a.valentin@stjosephsbracknell.co.uk)

**School Play Equipment** Could I please just remind Parents that children are not allowed to use the play equipment in the morning before school. Thank you.

**Uniform Reminders:** Thank you for sending the children back to school looking so smart. It really helps them to recognise they are here to work smart, play smart and



do their best. Whilst we enjoy this period of sunshine the children can wear their summer uniform, but they need to be wearing their winter uniform by the beginning of October.

- Hair accessories need to be small and appropriate for school activities.
- Hair that is shoulder length or longer must be tied back—it helps reduce the transference of nits and looks tidier.
- Hair should not be cut too short. This includes the current Peaky Binders style of very short sides and much longer on top. We also want to see children’s lovely faces—please ensure hair is out of their eyes.
- We strongly discourage coloured hair
- Some of the rucksacks children are bringing into school are enough for a week’s holiday! We have very limited space in the lockers, and we cannot accommodate large rucksacks. For children in Years 2 – 6 who wish to bring in a rucksack, they must fit in their locker with their coat, lunch box and book bag.
- Names in clothing . . . . All staff have picked up many coats, sweatshirts and other clothing from the playground after break



times. Sometimes they have names in so are very easy to return! It would help our staff, your children and you if all clothing is **clearly** named.

- No jewellery is worn in school. This includes friendship brackets. The exception is stud earrings and a watch. Children are expected to remove their earrings for PE/Games. As a last resort we will provide tape to cover them.

**Second-Hand Uniform Sale:** As we are coming into the Winter uniform there will be a Second-hand uniform sale on Tue 24<sup>th</sup> - Fri 27<sup>th</sup> on KS1 playground next to PTA shed (weather permitting). Jumpers and large items will be a £1, shirts and trousers will be 50p. If you have any uniform to donate, please can you leave it in the school office. Thank You!



**Any child walking home** on their own or with older siblings can leave a mobile at the School Office. Please put in writing permission for your child to walk home by themselves. We wouldn’t encourage this, especially in the dark winter months but recognize Yr6 parents encourage this independence in preparation for Secondary school



### **Healthy Packed Lunchboxes and Playtime Snacks:**

We always aim to educate our children to enable them to make informed healthy lifestyle

choices. The following guidelines for lunchbox contents is based on the statutory guidelines for school provided meals.

The recommended contents of a healthy lunch box:

- A good portion of starchy food e.g. bread, crackers, pasta or rice salad.
- Fruit and/or vegetables e.g. an apple, orange, banana, carrot sticks, small
- box of raisins or any other fruit or vegetables
- A portion of milk or dairy food e.g. yoghurt.
- A drink e.g. a small carton of milk, juice or squash. Water is always available.
- One small biscuit/bar e.g. kit-kat, penguin, club, Twix, cake bar etc.

Packed lunches at St Joseph’s should **not** include:

- Chocolate bars or packet of sweets
- Fizzy drinks.

**Snacks** – All children in Years R, 1 & 2 receive a free piece of fruit or vegetable every day as part of the Government’s School Fruit & Vegetable Scheme. As children move up into Years 3 - 6, should they wish to have a snack at breaktime, they are required to bring something from home.

A healthy snack should be:

- ✓ Fruit or vegetables
- ✓ Dried fruit
- ✓ Cereal bars (be careful with the sugar content)
- ✓ Crackers

Crisps, chocolate and sweets are not a healthy snack and these are not allowed.

We also request that children have a named water bottle in school.

Milk is provided for:

- All under 5’s
- All children receiving benefit based free school meals
- Children whose parents pay CoolMilk direct

Please note, no nuts are permitted on school premises due to severe food allergies.

**INSET Days:** Please note that the dates on the Bracknell Forest website DO NOT fully reflect our term dates. Please see the school website or the previous website. On the last day of this term, Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December, we have some very special visitors – Santa has lent his reindeers for the day! Each



class will have a workshop with the reindeers. At 2.30pm, the reindeers will be here for younger siblings and parents to view.

**Parent readers** for all year groups. Each year at St. Joseph's we have a group of fantastic helpers who come in and hear some of our children read. This is invaluable in encouraging children's confidence and reading ability.



This year we welcome any parents or family members i.e. grandparents were able to come into school and hear some children read. If you think you would be able to give your time on a regular basis to hear some children read then please speak to a member of the office team with your availability as soon as possible, they will then pass on your details. Training will be provided. If you are not already Safeguarded by the school, then you will need to provide an email address so we can send the necessary links for you to apply. Thank you all so much in advance.

**Black History Month:** During the week of the 25<sup>th</sup> October, we are dedicating this week to looking at key figures and events of 'Black History'.



To start this week, each class will have a workshop with a drama company 'Perform Workshops' to explore Africa and reflect on key icons.

We would be delighted if our parents would share their own experiences during this week with the children. You may have some family stories to share, traditional cooking, games, costumes, etc. If any families would like to contribute during this week, please contact Mrs. Dunlop or Mrs. Philpott.

**The Autism Group (TAG)** are holding evening support sessions monthly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of every month. They are at the Bracknell open leaning centre 7pm – 9pm. There is no need to book just



turn up on the evening for cake and a chat. The calendar with all dates for support group and training can be found on their website:

<https://www.theautismgroup.org.uk/calendar/2019-10/>

**Aldi's Kit for Schools.** During September we have set ourselves the challenge of taking part in Aldi's kit for Schools promotion which is giving 20 primary schools the chance to win £20,000 to kick-start a healthy legacy. We

simply need to collect the Team GB stickers each time we shop at Aldi and spend £30. If you do shop in Aldi please send the stickers into school.



**Heavenly Father,**

We give you our school.  
We give you all the teachers and staff who work here

We give you all the children who learn here,  
We pray our school will be a place of great discovery, adventure and creativity,  
May it be a place where we love to learn and where we learn to love.

A place where everyone is respected and all are deeply valued.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Best Wishes

*Juanita Dunlop*

Headteacher

Harvest Assembly

# GOT ★ TALENT



Henry, Y2 recreated an oil painting in the style of Bob Ross (an American landscape painter). Thank you for sharing this talent with us, Henry.



Ryan, Y3, walked up Ben Nevis in very testing weather covering arduous terrain. Robert was supported by his father. Both raised £2,848.54 for Veterans Lifeline, a charity that supports struggling veterans and their families. Remarkable!

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Well done Hannah on passing your first national Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD) dance exams with the exceptional scores:

- 94/100 pts in Primary Imperial Classical Ballet
- 89/100 pts in Grade 1 Modern Theatre

We are all very proud of you!

