



We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn, love and grow together

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Dear parents and carers

Well done and thank you!

We have made it to the end of another academic year. One that has been full of joys as well as the odd challenge thrown in! It has been great this term to get so much more back to normal post covid. Children in both the infants and juniors enjoyed the return of the discos. Thank you to our wonderful PSA team for coordinating this and other events this term. Our new team have managed to raise much needed funds for the school and have helped to build community at the same time. It is very much appreciated, as is your support of their events. This week has been particularly tricky with the heat but I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone for your cooperation when school arrangements had to change at short notice on Tuesday. The staff team were very grateful of your cooperation with temperatures in the building peaking at 38 degrees at time. We all welcomed the cooler temperatures today which allowed us to gather outside for our farewell assembly.

Thank you to the staff team



The entire staff team, including our Governing Body, have done an amazing job over this past year and have gone above and beyond in their approach to absolutely everything. I am so grateful for their dedication, commitment, and adaptability. Each person brings something unique to the team that in turn ensures that our children get the very best deal that they can. The resilience and professional determination needed to get through these past years has been immense yet smiles and laughter have been very much at the forefront. On Tuesday the staff team were due to meet for a vintage afternoon tea as a thank you. Unfortunately, the excessive temperatures prevented us from doing so but staff still enjoyed a cream tea in the staffroom at break time! On behalf of the whole community I offer my sincere thanks to the staff team for all that they do, each day, everyday!

Next Year

Already the staff team are looking forward to plans for next year. We hope to have our calendar of school events ready for you before the end of the holidays so that everyone can begin to plan their year. We have a number of exciting plans for the year ahead which include a 'Great Representation' diversity project that we have been invited to be a part of; a choral music project being led by the Diocese (a choral director has been appointed for our school); a re-invigoration of our maths curriculum; a refreshing of our Early years Foundation Stage Provision; some exciting new sports clubs; and much, much more! It will be a busy year! During the summer period two classrooms are being decorated and recarpeted and a major fencing project (90% funded £50K) is taking place which will enhance our internal security. We continue to engage with the Diocese in a project to replace the roof in both buildings (90% funded - £600K) – this has now been delayed and will probably not start until we return to school. Both funded projects mean that the school needs to find 10% towards them (£65K). Thank you for your generous donations to the School Building Fund which enable us to commit to such projects.



First Holy Communion Celebrations

Children from Year 3 made their First Holy Communion across the parishes in Stevenage and Knebworth this term. It was lovely to be able to see all of the children together for a celebration Mass at St Joseph's last week. Parents joined us for Mass and afterwards for a presentation the Hall. When the children returned to school in their beautiful outfits, the whole school came out to greet and clap them. It was an emotional occasion!



Farewell and Good luck to our Year 6 leavers

It has been a week of excitement for our Year 6 leavers. We began their Leavers' Rites of Passage with a very special Mass in St Joseph's. Due to the heat, we had to limit our guests, but Year 5 joined their friends in Year 6 and it was lovely to have parents with us. Today we had our traditional Leavers' Assembly and awards presentation on the top field joined by the whole school community and Y6 families. At the end of the day, the whole school gathered to wave and make some noise for our dear friends as they left the school for their final time at the end of the day.



We wish everyone in Year 6 very best wishes, good luck and every blessing as they begin a new and exciting chapter of life at their respective secondary schools. Year 6, you have enriched daily life at our school over many years. You are ready to leave now, having outgrown us, and although saying goodbye can seem sad, we are all excited for you and look forward to hearing of the many successes and opportunities that are ahead for you. Keep in touch and shine brightly!

Farewell and good luck to our adult leavers too

This year we say farewell and good luck to **Mr Prendergast** who, after 12 years of service to the school community, is moving on to pastures new. We wish Mr Prendergast all the very best on the path ahead and thank him for all that he has gifted our community over the years. It was lovely that Mr Prendergast was able to come into school on Tuesday to say farewell to the children and to the staff team.

Our Crossing Patrol Officer, **Terry Tyler**, is also sadly moving on to a new location closer to his home. Terry has been a great friend of the school over this past year and I know that you will all join me in wishing him well in his new post. Terry sends you all his best wishes and thanks you for making him feel so welcome. I will communicate news of his replacement as soon as I know more.

We also say farewell and thank you to **Mrs Bishop** and **Mr McAdam** who have spent the year with us on long term supply. We have been very grateful for the consistency, commitment and care that both have offered our children over the year and wish them both well with their new placements.

Changes to next year's INSET day plans

Please note that we have needed to change one of our INSET days next year in order to accommodate plans to use the Church and school facilities for the visit of the relics of St Bernadette of Lourdes next year. As such the INSET day designated for 20th July 2023 will now be a school day (final day of the school year for pupils) and the **INSET day will move to Monday 17th October 2022**.

It is likely that, due to the movement of the relics from St Joseph's on the morning of Tuesday 18th October 2022 that school will start at the later time of 10am.

As well as using our facilities for this exciting visit, much traffic is expected as coaches will be visiting St Joseph's for a full programme of events. This would make access to the school tricky. We will of course have a focus on St Bernadette as we return in the Autumn Term so that the children understand about the importance of this visit. A small group of children will be selected to be present at the arrival of the relics on the first day and we do hope that families will be able to engage with part of this exciting programme of events. More details will follow in September.

Changes to the school day

As schools are required to plan towards a minimum amount of hours we have needed to review our procedures at the end of the day. Our current 'soft end' to the day has resulted in most parents picking up at 3.00pm and this has reduced available teaching time. In order to increase our teaching time by 1 ¼ hours per week we need to revert to an end-of-day time of 3.15pm, from Year 1 to Year 6. We will be reviewing the end time for Early Years Foundation Stage during the Autumn term. We may also need to alter our start time at some point next year in order to meet the forthcoming statutory requirements. I will keep you informed of any potential changes.

And finally ...

I wish you all a great Summer Holiday, with space to relax, rejuvenate and refresh and the enjoyment of family and friends. We look forward to welcoming everyone back on Monday 5th September 2022.





May God bless you and those most dear to you.

Jon White

Jon White
Headteacher

Important dates for your diary:

Thurs 21st – Fri 22nd July: INSET Days (teachers only)

Summer Holidays

Thurs 1 st – Fri 2 nd Sep 22:	INSET Day (teachers only)
Mon 5 th Sep:	School starts for children
Mon 17 th Oct	INSET (teachers only)
Tues 18 th Oct	Late start – 10am
Mon 24 th – Fri 28 th Oct:	HALF TERM HOLIDAYS
Wed 21 st Dec 2pm:	Break for Christmas
Thurs 22 nd Dec – Wed 4 th Jan 23:	Christmas Holidays
Thurs 5 th Jan:	Occasional Day (no school)
Fri 6 th Jan:	INSET Day (teachers only)

Spring Term 2023:

Mon 9th Jan: School starts for children

