

# St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Oxford

*"Let us protect with love all that God has given us"  
(Pope Francis 19.03.2013)*



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2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024



*'God, we ask for a flourishing community, where neighbours learn to love each other and come to know you. We pray that we can be good stewards of your love to each one of our neighbours. We ask that You help us to learn from our community, and it may be a place where all are welcomed.'*

Dear Families,

The phrase *'it takes a village to raise a child'* originates from an African proverb. It recognises that parenting is a shared responsibility - *'a village'* working together to provide a safe, healthy, secure environment for children and allowing them to thrive, have a voice and reach their full potential. Our school is a part of that *village* in the lives of our children.

Our social teaching focus for this half term is on *family and community*. We have so many examples of *'our village'* working for the children in our school. Our governing body is a wonderful example of volunteers supporting and advising the school in all areas. Our PTA volunteers organising our school discos and our staff staying on after school to support. Our staff work to support pupils socially and academically to thrive. And our wonderful pupils who take action and share their ideas enthusiastically to build and develop different aspects of our school – from developing school eco credentials, supporting our prayer and liturgy, to keeping our library and grounds tidy and raising money for *'Sobell House'* amongst other things.

We are a community and we continue to work to ensure all our pupils thrive, have a voice and reach their full potential.

Warm wishes

Jess Tweedie  
**Headteacher**

## Zoolab

On Thursday and Friday this week, Zoolab visited our school. This whole school reward was earned by the children over the winter terms, filling our Mighty River display with examples of excellent learning behaviours. Zoolab aims to inspire people of all ages through ethical animal encounters. Whilst learning about evolution, habitats, biodiversity and food chains, our pupils had close encounters with Giant African land snails, centipedes, snakes, gerbils, scorpions and more!



## Introduction to St Joseph's - Talk at parent evening

I will be hosting a talk on the parent evenings 20<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> February. The focus of the talks is an introduction to St Joseph's – I will discuss our Mission, our broad curriculum and changes (including assessments), restorative practice, parental involvement, our PTA and our Governing Body. All welcome and further details will be sent out by email.



## Spell Bound with the Story Museum

The school is extremely lucky to be taking part in the Spell Bound project and partnership with the Story Museum, Oxford. We were successful in our bid to take part, and have been working with professional storytellers to develop oral storytelling in the classroom. Year 3 are currently having great fun in their weekly workshops and more activities are planned both in school and with visits to the story museum itself. Other aspects of the project include staff training, some staff attending a children's literature book club at the Story Museum, a book club for Year 5 children, and some of our older children attending the Story Museum weekly to take part in a special project. We are very grateful for this wonderful opportunity. If you are interested, the Story Museum is well worth a visit and it does have something for all aged children. For more details visit: <https://www.storymuseum.org.uk>

Mrs Chadbourne

### Reception pupils have been learning about Baptism

Reception pupils have been learning about the Sacrament of Baptism, taking part in role play where they have shown great understanding of the key components of this special celebration.



### Pupil Leadership in School

We know that listening to the voices of our pupils is an important way in which pupils can have a say in decision making in our school. We have a number of different pupil groups in school which provide opportunities for this to take place. For example, this week our Liturgy Leaders conducted an audit of the school site, looking at prayer focus areas and other Catholic signs and symbols in our school building; our Social Justice group are driving our Oxtrail collection for Sobell House (for more details see below) and the newly formed 'Tidy Up Team' help ensure that we are all taking care of 'our common home'. Pupils from all our various groups received their badges in assemblies over the last fortnight and it is lovely to see them wearing them with pride.

### Oxtrail - Sobell House Hospice

OxTrail is an exciting event coming to Oxford this summer, a herd of life-sized and miniature oxen will be grazing across the county, each ox sculpture will be individually designed by artists and by local schools, including St Joseph's, making the herd truly unique. We are raising money to support Sobell House Hospice, who provide expert and compassionate care to people at the end of life, and support to their family and friends. In return we will receive a mini-ox to decorate and display in a local mini herd. We collected money at the Year 1 and Year 2 nativities, and at the end of the discos. Thank you for your generosity so far, we will be holding more fundraising events for this cause during the remainder of the academic year.



### Maths Local Authority visit

On the 18<sup>th</sup> January we had a visit from a Local Authority Maths specialist, she praised the progression and consistency of maths teaching across the school. We are so fortunate to have specialist Maths teachers working with children to support learning and to provide stretch and challenge, this is very unusual in state primary schools in the city. We also received positive feedback on the Maths working walls in the classrooms. Thank you to Mrs Smith who leads the subject area and coordinated the visit.

### **Chess squad – strength to strength!**

On Wednesday this week, girls from our school competed in the ‘She Plays to Win’ online tournament, finishing with an excellent result for St Joseph’s! Despite having only 3 girls playing in the team for much of the tournament, our school finished 3<sup>rd</sup> (out of 27 schools participating). This was ahead of most of the school teams who had a minimum of 5 players in their teams! Very well done to Cecilia, Chiara, Rosanna and Hailey.

Our Chess Club/Squad continues to go from strength to strength. We are always on the lookout for more enthusiastic players to join the club, with pupils able to progress into the competitive squad as they develop their game play and strategy skills. Please contact the school office if your child is interested, ideally Dr Varney likes children to have a basic understanding of the game, the pieces and the moves before they join the club; but a positive attitude and eagerness to grasp the game is also helpful!

### **PTA School Disco**

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL PTA  
**SCHOOL DISCOS**  
DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY!  
HOT DOGS, DRINKS, SWEETS AND MORE...  
FRIDAY 26 JANUARY 2024  
RECEPTION AND Y1 5-6 PM  
Y2 AND Y3 6:15-7:15 PM  
FRIDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2024  
Y4, Y5 AND Y6 5:30-7PM  
£3 per child, £5 for two children.  
Older/younger siblings of volunteer helpers only  
PTA events raise vital funds for our school, this term we are contributing to the costs of transport for school trips so that these are more affordable for families.

### **Health and Safety at St Joseph's**

It was suggested by Governors at the Health & Safety committee that we share a bit about the work they monitor.

### **Tree Survey**

We are fortunate to have a large number of mature trees on our school site. These are surveyed annually, with additional spot checks and remedial works taking place as necessary. Following the high winds and named storms in mid-January, a tree inspector from Oxford Direct Services came to site to check the trees in our Forest School area.

### **SchoolComms School Gateway App**

As you will know, to streamline the systems we use in school, we will be moving all payments and communications from ParentPay to SchoolComms from 31 March 2024. SchoolComms runs an app called School Gateway which many of you will already be used to using for booking wrap-around care. Access to this app is already available for all parents/carers. Getting started with School Gateway is very straightforward, click on the link below for step-by-step instructions. If you are unable to download the app, you can register on the website instead.

<https://schoolgateway.co.uk/get-started/>

Please ensure you can access the School Gateway (either website or app) by 31 January 2024 in preparation for the switch-over. If you have any difficulty, please contact the school office.

### **Cycle Parking**

The cycle racks outside the Key Stage 2/Reception Gate are for parents to use during drop-off and pick-up. The site team are finding an increasing number of bikes left on a long-term basis, and this encourages members of the public to leave broken and unwanted bikes here too. Please can you remove any bikes that are stored here.

### **Year 5 Synagogue Trip**

On Thursday last week, Year 5 walked to and from the Oxford Synagogue in Jericho. Although we had spent our week finding similarities and differences between faiths, it was the first close contact with Judaism for nearly all of us.

The children had various items to check out, wear, see or hear and all enjoyed the WOW! moment when the special scrolls were unveiled.

We listened to an hour's talk very respectfully, with some good questions and answers coming from different children. It was a successfully active and illuminating morning all round. Many thanks to the parents who volunteered to accompany us.

J Ingram



### **OXPCF Parent Carer Survey: SEND Experiences in Oxfordshire School**

The Oxfordshire Parent Carers Forum (OxPCF) is running its first comprehensive survey of schools to gather the experiences of families of children and young people in the county with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). OxPCF know that it is important that all families (including those whose children may have additional needs, but are not yet currently in receipt of more formal levels of SEND support) are provided with the opportunity to share their views.

The survey letter can be found as a separate attachment to this newsletter.

### **Practical Help and Signposting**

Sadly, things at the moment are difficult for many of our families. Bills all seem to be rising, and everything is getting more expensive. We want to make sure that all our families have support in place if it is needed. Even if your child is not eligible for Free School Meals, we may be able to help with uniform from our vast stock of good-quality second-hand items, we are able to refer to local Food Banks and signpost families to other sources of help, advice and support.

If you are struggling, please contact our home/school link worker, Mrs Kate Stratford. Her contact details are below. Mrs Stratford will be happy to talk to you in confidence to see what support we can offer.

If you need help towards paying for school trips, please contact the office to arrange a confidential conversation with Ms Tweedie.

Mrs Kate Stratford

Home/School Link Worker and Deputy DSL

Tel: 01865 763357

Mobile: 07500 802732

Email: [kstr3838@st-josephs-pri.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:kstr3838@st-josephs-pri.oxon.sch.uk)

### **Dairy Dates**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Year Group/Class</b>	<b>Event</b>
Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> February	Y4 – Y6	PTA School Discos Y4, Y5 and Y6 5:30-7pm
w/c Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> February	1M	Parent/carer consultation meetings
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> February	Reception	Natural History Museum trip
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> February	Reception	Natural History Museum trip
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 1	Science Oxford trip
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> – Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> February	All year groups	February half term break – school closed to pupils
Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> February	YR, 1CJ, Y2, Y3, 4R, Y5, Y6	Parent/carer consultation meetings
Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> February	4HR	Parent/carer consultation meetings
Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> February	YR, 1CJ, Y2, Y3, Y4, Y5, Y6	Parent/carer consultation meetings
Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 4	Ashmolean Museum trip
Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 3	Corinum Museum, Cirencester
Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 4	Play performance
Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 4	Play performance
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 3	Poetry performance
Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	All year groups	School finishes for Easter break at 3:10pm (ASC running as usual)
Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> March	All year groups	INSET day – school closed to pupils
Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> March – Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> April	All year groups	Easter Holidays – school closed to pupils
Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> – Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> April	Year 5	Woodlands residential
Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> -Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> June	Year 3	Camping residential
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> April	Year 3	Story Museum visit
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> May	All year groups	May Bank Holiday – school closed to pupils
Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> May – Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> May	All year groups	May half term break – school closed to pupils
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June	All year groups	INSET day – school closed to pupils
Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> June	Year 6	Story Museum visit
Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> July	All year groups	Last day of summer term

**Flyers and Information**



The **Library**  
Old Marston

**Children's book club**

Love books, love to have fun? If you're 8-12 years old, join other young book fans to read stories and make friends.

Come and join in:

**First Mon of month 4.15-5.15pm**  
Old Marston Library, Oxford Road, OX3 0PH

[oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries](http://oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries)



**FEBRUARY HALF TERM  
MULTI-ACTIVITY AND  
IBRICK CAMPS**

house  
of fun

Join us this February Half Term for our action packed Multi-Activity camps

- cookery
- arts & crafts
- sports

**St Mary & St John Primary School, Oxford**

**5-13 year olds**

Monday 12th February -  
Friday 16th February 2024

8.30am-6.00pm



BOOK NOW AT  
[HOUSE-OF-FUN.CO.UK](http://HOUSE-OF-FUN.CO.UK)



**ibrick**

Fun-filled stem days using ibrick kits with LEGO® bricks

**Cumnor Primary School, Oxford**  
**6-13 year olds**

Monday 12th February -

Thursday 15th February 2024  
8.45am-4.00pm



**February Holiday Clubs**  
**St Nicholas' Primary School, Oxford**  
These clubs are open to children aged 3-11

**Monday 12th February to Friday 16th February**

Activities include dodgeball, dance, drama, yoga, multi skills, ball games, art and crafts, team and confidence building activities and much more.



**Cost:** £35 per day  
All childcare vouchers accepted

**Timings:** 8am-5pm

To find out more or to book visit  
[www.rattleandrollperformance.com](http://www.rattleandrollperformance.com)  
or call 07722 014301



**FOOTBALL**

If you are looking for non-stop football fun then join us in half term!

Choose from mixed and girls only camps

- Ball mastery
- Skills challenges
- 1v1, 2v2s, 2v1s
- Small sided games
- Mini tournaments

We welcome players of all playing ability

**MULTISPORT**

Join us for a selection of winter sports!

Including hockey, tag rugby, football, yoga, curling, netball, basketball and much more!

Includes a daily craft activity and fun quiz!

**FOOTBALL**

**IGNITE SPORT**

**FEBRUARY HALF TERM  
HOLIDAY CAMPS  
OXFORD**

**GAME TECH**

**Ages 12-16**

Sessions to develop player technique and take your football to the next level!

This 2-day course is designed to provide players with high-level coaching content and develop game understanding. Players are challenged to improve their individual skills and techniques through practical sessions/games and workshops as well as guest speaker master-classes and sessions linking to different systems of the game.

**The Community Arena | Oxford City FC | OX3 0NQ**  
**BOOK ONLINE - [WWW.IGNITESPORTUK.COM](http://WWW.IGNITESPORTUK.COM)**  
**Ages 4 to 16 | We accept childcare vouchers | OFSTED Registered ✓**