

NEWSLETTER

St. Joseph's is a joyful community which follows the example of Jesus, helping, accepting and respecting everyone, as we learn and grow together, safe in His love.

Welcome to January's Newsletter!

We've hit the ground running in 2025 with an exciting and busy half-term. This year marks a significant milestone for our school as we open our Jubilee Year with a memorable launch day, which you'll read more about in this newsletter. Alongside details of our Jubilee celebrations, this newsletter is packed with lots of information about what the children have been learning and experiencing in school so far this term. From classroom activities to special events, we're delighted to share the incredible efforts and achievements of our pupils. Thank you for your support this month as we embrace all that 2025 has to offer!



General Reminders

- ◆ **Supervise Younger Children** – Please keep a close eye on younger siblings after school. They should not play on the equipment or ride scooters until they are outside the school gates.
- ◆ **Scooter Safety** – If children are not old enough to push their own scooter safely, we kindly ask that adults carry them instead.
- ◆ **No Dogs in the Playground** – For the safety and comfort of all children, dogs are not allowed inside the playground, even if they are being carried.

Thank you for helping us keep our school a safe and welcoming place for everyone!

FEBRUARY'S KEY EVENTS

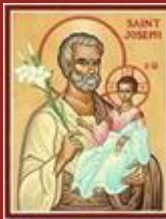
- Wb 3rd Children's Mental Health Week
- Tuesday 4th–Year 5 Stay and Pray
- Thursday 6th 2:30pm– 3R Class Assembly
- Friday 7th NSPCC National Number Day
- Monday 10th– 2Johns Internet safety day
- Tuesday 11th– Year 4 Stay and Pray
- Tuesday 11th –Year 1 Exotic Explorer Morning
- Tues 11th –Parents Evening 3.30pm –6.00pm
- Thurs 13th Parents Evening 3.30pm –6.00pm
- Thurs 13th 1C Class Assembly
- Friday 14th INSET DAY
- 17th– 23rd– Half Term
- Tuesday 25th- Year 3 Stay and Pray
- Thursday 27th– Year 3 Roman Day

Attendance

Class	Attendance
4A	96%
2P	95.8%
1C	95.5%
1B	95.1%
5C	95%
3T	94.8%
4B	94.8%
6B	94.4%
5M	94.3%
3R	94.1%
RD	93.5%
3F	93.4%
6H	92.7%
RW	90.4%

Good attendance is vital for academic success and a positive learning environment. We aim for all classes to maintain at least **97%** attendance to ensure students stay engaged and on track. Let's work together to achieve this goal for the benefit of all.





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Catholic Social Teaching

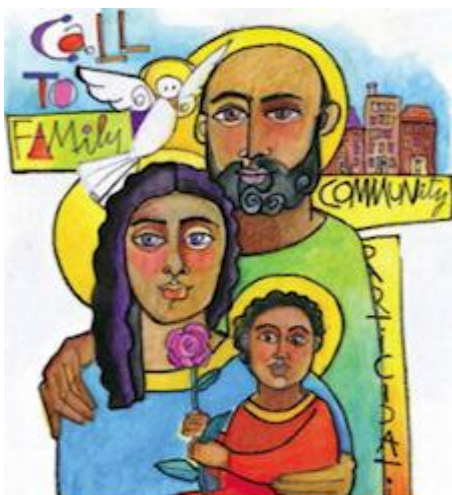
At St. Joseph's, we follow the teachings of our faith to help guide us in living good lives. One of these teachings is the importance of family and community. The Bible reminds us of this through the commandment:

“Honour your father and mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord has given you” (Exodus 20:12).

This means we should love and respect our parents and families, as they help us grow and learn to care for others.

This half term, we have been focusing on the Catholic Social Teaching principle of Family and Community. We started thinking about this theme with staff sharing in assembly pictures of their own families.

By honouring our parents and embracing our roles within our families, we learn the values of care, responsibility, and mutual support. As a school, we extend this spirit beyond our homes, fostering an environment of love and connection where everyone can flourish in God's grace. Let us continue to work together to build a strong, faith-filled community rooted in respect, kindness, and unity.



Gospel Values

Congratulations to the following children who were nominated for modelling the Gospel Value of **SIMPLICITY**:



KS1	KS2
	Harriet (3R)
	Bear (3T)
	Georgia (3T)
	Malachy (4A)
	Felicity (4A)
	Michael (4B)
	Emily (4B)
	James (5C)
	Sadie (5C)
	Harry (5M)
	Amy (5M)
	Annabelle (6B)
	Millie L (6B)
	George L (6H)
	Penny (6H)
Dominic (RD)	
Harry (RD)	
Florence (RW)	
Caolan (RW)	
Sophia (1B)	
Theodore (1B)	
Jack (1C)	
Eva (1C)	
George (2F)	
Elsie (2F)	
Joseph (2P)	
Nifemi (2P)	

Next month, we will be nominating pupils who show **INTEGRITY** and **HOPE**.



ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Jubilee 2025 Pilgrims of Hope Launch Day



It was wonderful to see our school bursting with colour as pupils arrived in their brightest clothes to celebrate the launch of the Jubilee 2025: *Pilgrims of Hope*. Each class embraced the theme by decorating their classroom doors to symbolise the Holy Door that Pope Francis opened to mark this special year in the Catholic Church. Pupils engaged in Jubilee-themed activities throughout the day, reflecting on hope and unity, and every child contributed to our "Rainbow of Hope." This stunning display in the school hall is filled with the hopes, wishes, and intentions of our students for the year ahead. We hope this joyful launch has set the tone for a year of growth and community in both our school and the wider Church family.





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Marking the Jubilee Year: 'Pilgrims of Hope' at Home

As we celebrate the Jubilee Year: Pilgrims of Hope, here are some meaningful and fun ways your family can join in the spirit of this special time. We encourage you to try some of these ideas together at home or in your community:

Take a Family Pilgrimage

Visit a local cathedral, shrine, or place of prayer. Spend time together reflecting, praying, and sharing your faith journey.



Do Acts of Service Together

Celebrate hope by helping others! Ideas include creating care packages, volunteering, or organising a neighbourhood clean-up day.

Family Prayer Time

Set aside time daily or weekly for a special Jubilee prayer. You can use the official Jubilee prayer or create one as a family.

Share Stories of Hope

Parents, share a moment when hope and faith helped you through a challenge. Ask your children what hope means to them.

Get Creative with Crafts

Make a "Hope Banner," decorate stones as pilgrimage tokens, or craft lanterns to symbolise being a light of hope.



Start a Hope Journal

Record your blessings, prayers, and acts of kindness in a shared family journal throughout the Jubilee Year.

Plant Hope

Spend time in nature by planting flowers or a small garden as a symbol of hope, or enjoy a reflective hike or picnic.



Create a Family "Hope Capsule"

Write prayers or draw pictures about your hopes for the future, seal them in a time capsule, and plan to open it later as a family.

Links to Information and Resources

Jubilee 2025 Official Website- <https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en.html>

Ten: Ten Resources January Newsletter <https://www.tentenresources.co.uk/prayers-for-home/parent-newsletter/>

Caritas Social Action Network- <https://www.csan.org.uk/jubilee-2025/>

Brentwood Diocese Jubilee Page- <https://www.dioceseofbrentwood.net/faith/year-of-jubilee-pilgrims-of-hope/>



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Year 5 and 6 Road Safety Workshop

On Wednesday 15th January, Years 5 and 6 took part in a Road Safety workshop from Drama Group, The Riot Act. The children had to look at the evidence following a Road Traffic Accident and decide who was most to blame. It was very interesting questioning key characters to complete an incident report, and the children enjoyed being detectives while learning valuable road safety skills.



Year 4's Questions for Fr. Matthew

As part of their RE topic on Community, Year 4 met with Fr Matthew in the church to ask him lots of questions about his role as a priest. They found out about many different things including his favourite hymn and the names of his pets! Thank you Fr Matthew for giving up your time for us.



Year 4's Baking Bread Adventure!

Year 4 had a fantastic time learning how to make bread as part of their Design and Technology curriculum. The classroom was filled with excitement as pupils measured, mixed, kneaded, and shaped their dough, discovering the science behind breadmaking. They explored the importance of ingredients like yeast and the role of patience as they waited for their dough to rise. The results were impressive, with each student proudly taking home their delicious, freshly baked bread. This hands-on activity not only developed their practical skills but also tied in beautifully with lessons on healthy eating and teamwork.



House Points- Running Total

The house with the largest total at the end of term will win a prize!

St. Anne's	St. Edward's	St. Helen's	St. Paul's
10	5	4	11



NEWSLETTER

Year 4's Vibrant Viking Voyage!

Year 4 had an incredible time during their **Viking Day**, fully immersing themselves in the world of the Norsemen. They explored **genuine Viking artefacts**, tried their hands at **weaving and archery**, and crafted **Viking longboats out of clay**. The afternoon was just as exciting, with the children learning about **Viking courts** and enjoying **captivating storytelling sessions**. A big thank you to everyone who helped make the day so special—and to our **mini-Vikings** for looking absolutely fantastic in their costumes!



Year 6 Triumph in Annual Rotary Quiz!

On Monday, 27th January, four of our Year 6 pupils—Somto and Maria (both in 6B) and Elizabeth and Robert from 6H—represented the school at Engayne Primary School, competing against other schools in the annual Rotary Quiz. Facing a series of challenging questions, they showcased their knowledge, teamwork, and quick thinking—emerging victorious! With such a close contest, their win was even more impressive. We are incredibly proud of their achievement and can't wait to cheer them on in the next round, where they will face even tougher competition. Well done, team! 🎉👏

	Branfil	Engayne	Hacton	St Joseph's
1	8	6	5½	7
2	8/16	8/14	7/12½	7/14½
3	6/22	7/21	8/20½	8/22
4	8/30	8/29	8/28½	8/30
5	5/35	5/34	6/34½	6/36
6	3/38	7/41	5½/40	6/42
7	4½/42½	7/48	6½/46½	6½/48½
8	8/50½	8/56	7/53½	8/56½



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Year 5's Journey to Ancient Egypt: A Day of Discovery and Fun!

On 21st January, our Year 5 pupils stepped back in time for an immersive Ancient Egyptian workshop, bringing their history topic to life! The morning was filled with hands-on activities, including crafting canopic jars, designing scarab beetle necklaces, and writing on authentic-style papyrus scrolls. In the afternoon, the excitement continued as the children performed traditional dance routines, retold captivating Ancient Egyptian legends, and indulged in a feast fit for Tutankhamun himself. It was a truly enriching and memorable experience, deepening their understanding of this fascinating civilization. We hope all of Year 5 had a fantastic time exploring the world of the pharaohs!



Reception Celebrates Chinese New Year with a Dance Workshop

Reception had a wonderful time celebrating Chinese New Year with an exciting Chinese Dance workshop! The children explored traditional Chinese culture through a graceful Fan Dance and were thrilled to take part in the vibrant Dragon and Lion dances. They loved learning the movements and experiencing the joy and energy of these traditional celebrations. It was a fantastic way to immerse ourselves in the spirit of the Chinese New Year, and the children thoroughly enjoyed every moment!





ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



YOUNG VOICES

Year 5 and 6 Choir Shine at Young Voices Concert

On Monday, 20th January, our Year 5 and 6 choir took part in the unforgettable Young Voices concert at the O2 Arena, joining over 8,000 children in a spectacular performance to a packed audience. The event featured special guests, including a Britain's Got Talent finalist who had herself been a part of the Young Voices choir just a few years ago, and a lead singer from Strictly Come Dancing. The children sang and danced to an incredible repertoire, including songs from Bob Marley, Hairspray, Emeli Sandé, and original music created especially for the event. Our pupils were fantastic representatives of the school, and their enthusiasm and talent made us all immensely proud. It was truly an evening to remember!



Many thanks to Ms. Ramsay for preparing the children and organising the event and for all of the adults who gave up their time to attend the event with the children.



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ActivKids Event Inspires and Raises Over £7,000!

Our recent ActivKids event was a tremendous success! Pupils participated in a series of exciting activities, guided by none other than Paralympian **Kylie Grimes**. Kylie, a multi-time Paralympic athlete who competed in Tokyo 2020, made history as the **first woman to ever win a Paralympic Gold medal in Wheelchair Rugby**. She brought incredible energy to the day, sharing her story of perseverance and achievement that inspired us all.

As part of the event, pupils enjoyed a **motivational assembly**, where Kylie reminded us that **hard work, dedication, and a positive attitude can make anything possible**.

Thanks to everyone's amazing support and generosity, we're thrilled to announce that we raised an **incredible £7,000!** These funds will be split between supporting **ActivKids** and enhancing our school resources.

A huge thank you to everyone who sponsored, supported, and cheered on the event, and to all the children for their **enthusiasm and effort**. You've made a real difference!

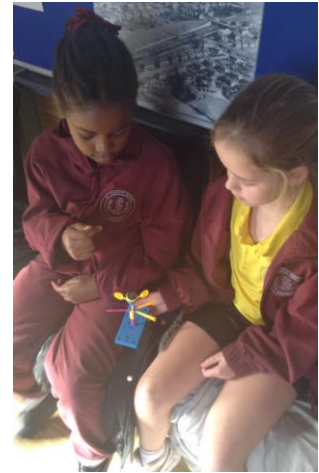




NEWSLETTER

Exploring Wind Power: Year 3's Visit to Upminster Windmill

Our Year 3 students had an amazing time visiting **Upminster Windmill** as part of their science topic on forces and wind. They explored what wind is and how it can be harnessed as a source of power. Inside the windmill, the children were fascinated by its incredible mechanisms—from the towering sails to the working millstones—and learned how different forces work together to grind grain. This hands-on experience brought their learning to life, deepening their understanding of renewable energy and sparking their curiosity about the power of nature!



Well Done 2F!

2F treated us to a wonderful class assembly, showcasing some of the amazing things they have been learning. The children shared their understanding of **Gospel Values** and **Catholic Social Teaching**, retold the story of Noah, and reflected on what makes them special. Their confident speaking, enthusiastic singing, joyful dancing, and expressive acting made it a truly memorable performance. Well done, 2F, for your hard work and for sharing such an inspiring message with us all!



Prayer for the End of January

Loving God,

As we come to the end of January, we thank You for all the blessings of this new year so far. Thank You for our friends, and families who guide and support us each day.

Help us to continue to grow in kindness, patience, and wisdom as we move forward. May we always share Your love with others and shine as lights in our school and community.

We place the rest of this school term in Your hands, trusting that You will guide us with Your love and peace.

Amen.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

TIKTOK

AGE RESTRICTION
13+
(Certain features are restricted to over-18s only)

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Adults tend to associate online videos with YouTube – but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a stream of short clips tailored to users' interests, based on what they've already watched. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while much of the content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where youngsters "were most likely to encounter a potential harm".

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

While TikTok's Following feed only displays videos from familiar creators, For You is a collection based on a user's previously watched clips. Most of these videos will probably be inoffensive, but the app could potentially show something unsuitable. If children then engage with this content, more like it will follow. TikTok's guidelines prohibit the sharing of illegal or inappropriate content, but the huge number of uploads means that a small amount inevitably slips through.

BODY IMAGE AND DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

According to Ofcom, most online harms for teens are body image related for girls (promoting unhealthy eating, body shaming and so on) and dangerous stunts for boys. Both are prevalent on TikTok. One extreme example of the latter was the 'blackout' trend, which encouraged users to hold their breath until they passed out from a lack of oxygen. This led to two families filing lawsuits against TikTok over the tragic deaths of their children.

IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but users have the option to buy TikTok coins, which can be used to purchase gifts for content creators. Coin bundles range from £9.99 to an eye-watering £99; while that may not sound appealing, the app still generated £7.9 billion in user spending in 2023. TikTok's policy is that under-18s can't make in-app purchases, but it's possible to bypass this with a fake birth date.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With more than 1.5 billion users globally, the potential for contact with strangers on TikTok is high – especially as accounts created by over-16s (or young people using a fake date of birth) are set to public by default. This means that not only is someone's profile visible to everyone else on the app, it also suggests their videos to others and enables anyone to download or comment on them.

MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION

Although the short videos on TikTok tend to be more frivolous than the longer ones on YouTube, clips can still influence impressionable minds in a negative way. Not only is there plenty of dangerous misinformation on TikTok, but Ofcom reports that nearly a third of 12 to 15-year-olds use TikTok as a news source – so you should be wary of misogynistic, racist or conspiracy-themed material shaping how they see the world.

ADDICTIVE DESIGN

With its constant stream of eye-catching videos, TikTok can be addictive to young brains. In 2024, UK children spent an average of 127 minutes per day on the app; that's twice as much as in 2020. Excessive use can interfere with young people's sleep patterns – often leading to irritability – and distract them from other, healthier activities. The instantly skippable nature of bite-size videos may also impact children's ability to maintain focus.

Advice for Parents & Educators

ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account to their child's, and control settings remotely. Parents can then turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content), set screen-time limits, make accounts private and manage whether their child can send messages – and if they can, to whom. Children can't alter these settings without parental approval.

DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If a child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's good practice to discuss the potential risks. Ensure that they don't share any identifying personal information, and that they know to talk to a trusted adult if they're worried by interactions on the app. With more teens using TikTok for news, it's also worth talking about misinformation and propaganda, and how to identify it.

BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING

If a child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can alter their settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend enabling this feature, as it can be quite easy for a young person to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins to unlock more features of the app – sometimes without even realising.

READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that a child is spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the signs. Increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as is failing to complete homework or skipping meals. Remember, the parental controls are there for a reason, and it's never too late to introduce limits.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Essex Fire Museum Open Days



Tuesday 18 and
Sunday 23 February
2025

10:30AM
To
4:00PM

Fire Station, Hogg Lane, Grays
RM17 5QS

Book Now



Museum@essex-fire.gov.uk