



St Joseph's Catholic Academy

Member of the Newman Catholic Collegiate

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Acting Executive Principal- Mrs D Farmer

Acting Head of School – Mrs R Wilson

Thursday 17th December 2020.

Dear parents and carers,

As we reach the end of a challenging and unprecedented year, I would like to thank all members of our school community for working together in such difficult times. The support that we have received from you as parents throughout 2020 is very much appreciated by me and all of the staff. Despite your own fears and concerns during this pandemic, I have been overwhelmed by the trust that you have placed in us, the messages of support offered and how you have continued to send your children into school. I would also like to thank you for continuing to adhere to all of the restrictions and rules in place for the safety of us all, which I suspect will remain in place for some time after our return in the new year.

I would also like to thank all of the staff of St Joseph's, who have worked tirelessly to ensure the safety and well being of your children has remained at the forefront of our thoughts and actions. The roles of all staff members have had to change significantly this year and each member of our fantastic team has adapted willingly to anything that has been asked of them. I would especially like to thank Mrs Philips and Mrs Williams in the school office, whose roles have changed beyond recognition and without whom we would not have been operational.

Most importantly, I would like to pay tribute to the fantastic children of St Joseph's. In all my years of teaching, I still remain astounded by the resilience and positivity of young children. They have adapted brilliantly to the 'new normal' in school, and in spite of missing out on so many opportunities that we usually offer- visits, trips, tournaments, parent workshops and all of the lovely Christmas activities we usually participate in- the children have not once complained, their behaviour has been fantastic and their work ethic incredible. We are very proud of each and every one of them.

Today, we say a fond farewell to Mrs Farmer, who took on the temporary role of Acting Executive Principal for the year in Mrs Hamilton's absence. I would like to thank her on behalf of the whole school community for her support and dedication to St Joseph's throughout 2020. The school has continued to move forward positively in so many ways, regardless of the pandemic, which is a real testimony to her excellent leadership, and the staff, the children and I will greatly miss her next year. We do, however, very much look forward to the return of Mrs Hamilton as Principal after her maternity leave and I am sure you will be very welcoming as she resumes her role in January.

Public Masses have once again resumed and it would be lovely if you were able to celebrate the season of Christmas by attending church with your children, who gain a great deal spiritually from experiencing the Mass. Inevitably, this Christmas will be somewhat different, with the regulations and social distancing that have to be observed. There will be extra Masses offered at Christmas Eve. The Bishops have asked us to remind you that, there being no obligation, you can come and celebrate



Christmas on any day in the Christmas Octave, such as the following Sunday, St. Joseph's Church will not be issuing tickets or taking bookings; places at Mass are on a first come, first served basis. Once the church is full to capacity with distancing, you will be asked to return for a different Mass. Mass times over the Christmas period are as follows:

Christmas Eve 24th December

- 3pm St Joseph's
- 4.30pm St Josephs (Please do not arrive before 4.10pm for the Mass to allow people to leave and for cleaning)
- 6.30pm English Martyrs'
- 8.00pm English Martyrs' (Please do not arrive before 7.40pm for this Mass to allow people to leave and for cleaning)
- 10.00pm St Joseph's

Christmas Day 25th December

- 9.00 am English Martyrs'
- 10.30am St Joseph's

St Stephen's Day 26th December

- 11.30am English Martyrs'
- 6.30pm St Joseph's (Mass of St John the Evangelist)

Holy Family Sunday 27th December

- 9.00 am English Martyrs'
- 10.00am English Martyrs'
- 11.00am St Joseph's

Please do remember that if any child receives a positive test result for Covid-19 up until Wednesday 23rd December, you must notify the school so that we can trace close contacts. I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of members of our school community a very happy, holy and peaceful Christmas. We are all looking forward to some treasured time with our loved ones during the holidays, but please do continue to stay safe and follow the government's rules in order to continue to protect our whole school community.

Thank you once again for your continued support. I look forward to seeing you all again when we return to school on Monday 4th January 2021.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs R Wilson,
Acting Head of School.