



Welcome to our first 'Stronger Together' information letter. We will be using this format to share with you information that will help secure better links between home and school and share with you some of the ways that we can support each other to get the best for our young people. Our traditional newsletter items are being celebrated through Facebook as they happen so this format will be an opportunity to keep you informed of significant developments.

The Big Adventure continues...



We began our school year with the inspiration from John 10:10 *"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full"* We hope that you have enjoyed reading all the amazing adventure stories about students and staff at our school on social media. Following us on Facebook is a great opportunity to keep up with the activities going on in school and can be a good 'real time' point of reference for you as you talk to your child about school. Now we are in Advent we are focusing on John 1:9 *'The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world'* and our hope and prayer is that as Christmas approaches, we will be filled with the light of Christ and take His hope to those around us.

Praise for Epraise....

Thanks to all parents who have been logging on to Epraise and monitoring the home learning their child has been doing. Recent research from Save the Children suggests that a child's success in life is 80% dependant on what happens outside of school and 20% dependant on what happens inside school. This will have a direct impact on the success of your child at GCSE level and will open up many doors of opportunity for them.



Blackpool bonanza...

It was great to be able to celebrate the amazing behaviour of the vast majority of our pupils through the Blackpool reward trip and in-school rewards in October. We were delighted to hear positive comments from Blackpool pleasure beach and Tyrers bus drivers. Well done to all.

Working together to solve problems...

Research from ASCL (the headteacher union) suggests that Social Media is one of the biggest barriers to working effectively with parents to resolve issues in school. We are lucky to have such supportive parents at St Joseph's and once again we urge you to contact your child's form tutor, their Head of Year or a student support officer so that we can work together if there are any problems rather than share it with the world on social media.

St Joseph's RC High School

"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil." Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Snapchat – The big delete...



One of the biggest challenges in young people's lives is the need to live up to expectations on social media. The site that causes our student support team the most issues is Snapchat. This allows young people to send an image to another person and so long as it is not 'screen shot' the evidence will be deleted. Clearly, this encourages young people to send inappropriate images with the hope that they will not have to face the consequences. The minimum age requirement for Snapchat is 13. Those between the ages of 13 and 17 are required to have parental consent. We thank those parents who have acted responsibly and taken our advice to remove their child's

Snapchat account. It is an offence to make, send or possess an inappropriate image of a minor. If your child receives an image they are at risk. Therefore, if you do not remove this app from your child's phone, you are putting your child at risk of engaging in criminal activity. The Police are involved in numerous cases in Bolton schools, including St Joseph's.

Serious about sleep...

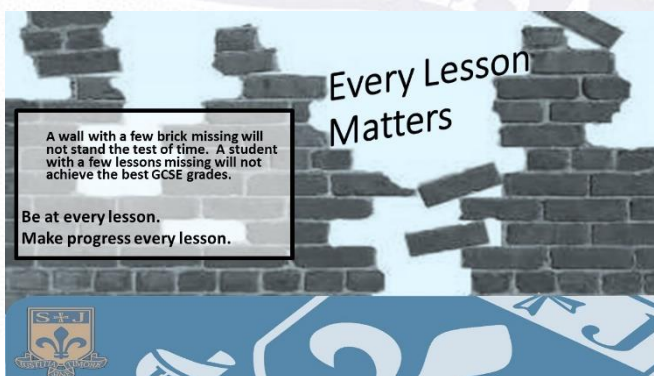
Thanks to parents for taking our 'sleep and no electric' campaign seriously. Children who get 8-9 hours uninterrupted sleep per night have better resilience and are more able to succeed with challenge. Inversely, students who use mobile technology/social media/xbox games late at night or during the night, sleep less well and are more likely to display behaviour that will not lead to GCSE success. They will be less likely to focus on their work and more likely to go into 'fight or flight' mode rather than using reason to solve problems effectively. We urge parents to remove all electrics including mobile phones from bedrooms at night. This simple act will have a massive impact on your child's future.

How Much Sleep Do You Really Need?

Age	Sleep Needs
Newborns (0-2 months)	12-18 hours
Infants (3 to 11 months)	14 to 15 hours
Toddlers (1-3 years)	12 to 14 hours
Preschoolers (3-5 years)	11 to 13 hours
School-age children (5-10 years)	10 to 11 hours
Teens (10-17)	8.5-9.25 hours
Adults	7-9 hours

Source: National Sleep Foundation

Every Lesson Matters...



Please note our "Every Lesson Matters campaign". This is an urgent plea for students to be at every lesson on time and give their best. We are quality assuring lessons to ensure that all learning is paving the way for GCSE success. Unless your child is very poorly, please don't keep them off school. Often, students take time off when they feel a little under the weather and this can sometimes set them on a downward spire of poor resilience, encouraging them to give up when they face challenges.

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A curriculum for the future...

Many thanks to all those parents who have responded to our curriculum survey and a special thanks to all those who gave up their time to attend our consultation evening. Parents suggested some pioneering ideas concerning the times of the school day and made some suggestions to improve our setting and banding systems within our curriculum offer. We are currently making plans to introduce a three year Key Stage 4.




Year 11 aiming for 9 to 5 (Grades not hours!)

Year 11 are currently working hard after their formal assessments and preparing for their pre-public exams after Christmas. It is wonderful to see so many students staying behind most nights to attend extra revision sessions. Our form time boosters will continue in the New Year so that we have given all our students the best chance of success. You will all remain in our prayers.

LEARNING episodes... We will be further developing our learning and teaching to create more consistency as we move into the New Year with the introduction of a new lesson format. Lessons will be considered as 'LEARNING

LEARNING episodes

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- **Link** back to prior learning and do one thing to move learning on – Read feedback, do a next step, mixed skill starter, give me something I feel confident enough to do and know I can do well at.
- **Excite** me, make me curious, capture my imagination. Make me ask the question – where is this going? Help me guess the learning objectives but make me forget myself in my curiosity to know more. (Entry task, learning objective, success criteria, the big picture)
- **Activate**: Broaden my horizons, let me discover something that I don't already know. Help me to make sense of the world. Help me to make links and fill gaps in my knowledge. Let me activate my learning (new knowledge)
- **Resilience and application** - Let me demonstrate what I know. Help build my resilience and develop my independence. Let me bank good progress on a GCSE style assessment question. Apply learning (demonstrate understanding)
- **Next time....**Let me reflect on how well I have learned. Let me feel safe to admit where I failed and where I succeeded. Self assess/peer assess. Give me something to celebrate and give me a reason to want to come back for another learning episode. Review of learning (main review with mini reviews throughout the lesson)



Episodes' and follow a 'LEARN' model.

We are looking forward to inviting the Diocese and Bolton Local Authority in to have a look at our LEARNING episodes in action.

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Perfect punctuality...

We have been having a big push on arriving to lessons on time with senior leader 'corridor sweeps' throughout the day. We know that good punctuality is one of the keys to a successful lesson and good GCSEs. Please talk with your child about the need to be at class on time.

Mr Sylvester joins student support...

In January, we will see further expansion to our student support services with the addition of Mr Sylvester. If there is a problem, form tutors should still be your first point of contact as the people who know your child best, but we have a team of 4 student support officers who are available to speak to you throughout the day and deal with issues to keep your child on track. Heads of Year will continue to take a strategic view of your child's progress and look at what needs to take place to enable them to achieve their best.



Kitted out for PE...

Following comments from pupils, the PE department have started a review of the PE kit with students. The idea is that the kit will be more comfortable and practical, especially for those who are self-conscious wearing our current kit. If a new kit is designed, this will be phased in with affordability in mind to avoid big expense to parents who have just purchased our current kit.

Look smart, be smart...

Many thanks to parents for supporting your child to wear our uniform correctly. Over the next 12 months, we will be reviewing our school uniform with the following principles in mind; appropriateness in preserving personal dignity, affordable, smart and comfortable. Any big changes would only take place for September 2019, so your views will be sought in the near future. Out of respect for the personal dignity of our girls, from January 2018 we have asked uniform suppliers to stop selling skirts with a slit up the back and we ask that all parents either arrange for the slit to be sewn up or purchase a new skirt. Please support us at home by checking the length of your daughter's skirt and ensure that it is worn to the knee and ensuring that Yr 7&8 students remember their tie every day.

Challenge accepted...

The new curriculum requires our learners to be resilient and tough enough to solve the most complex of problems. To prepare our learners for this, we have been introducing Weekly challenges. We hope that you have enjoyed reading about these and celebrating young people's success on our facebook page.



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As 50% of our learners are high ability, we will be increasing the stretch and challenge in lessons with the full expectation that nearly half of our learners should be able to reach the highest of grades throughout the course. This is only possible with the right attitude to learning and a lot of hard work at home.

Welcome to our new recruits...

Our new staff have made a brilliant start. Mrs Walsh is acting head of ICT whilst Mrs Hazlehurst is on maternity leave and Mrs Porter has joined us in Food Technology. We also welcome Miss Matthews and Mrs Asal who joined as Teaching Assistants. In January, we are delighted to be welcoming Mr Ali to our Maths department and Mr Turner as second in Science, Mrs Boardman as Head of English and of course Mr Sylvester as mentioned earlier.

Happy Christmas!



May we take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy, holy and peaceful Christmas. We pray that as we reflect on the events of the first Christmas, we will be reminded of the reality of the gift of God's son as a new born baby in our world. We pray that this will give us hope and peace in our own lives today. Whatever you plan to do this Christmas, we pray that you will enjoy the company of your loved ones and celebrate with joy together. Happy Christmas.