



### **Our Mission, our promise...**

Jesus Christ is our family role model.

Opening our hearts and minds to dream the impossible and achieve beyond our wildest imagination.

Everybody is valued, nurtured and respected.

Young and old will journey together to build God's Kingdom.

Striving for academic excellence and celebrating success in all we do.

**Welcome back!** It has been a true pleasure to welcome our young people back this week. Thanks to all parents and carers for your support in equipping students well and ensuring that they look smart and are ready to learn. We value your assistance. It has been lovely to see the appreciation from students as they saw our new bright corridors, the shade and rain canopy over our alfresco dining area and the refurbished toilets in the Yates building. Our site team have done an amazing job and the hard work was worth it.

This year we are delighted to welcome new staff to our team. Some of these staff are additional roles to add extra capacity as part of our expansion plan and others replace members of staff who moved on in the Summer. We welcome Mr Riley to the RE Department, Mrs Howe and Miss Willis to the English Department, Miss Ward to the Maths Department, Miss Derbyshire, Miss Rogan and Miss White to the Science Department, Miss Hoyle to our Music Department, Miss Williams to the Technology Department, Mr Lloyd to our PE Department, Mrs Southern to our Cleaning Team and Mrs Chen to the School Office.

**'We are in it together' evenings.** Working in partnership with our young people and their families is really important to us at St Joseph's. We attribute much of the success of last year's Yr 11 to this fruitful partnership. To this end, we have organised a series of 'We are in it together' evenings. These are an opportunity for us to share with parents and families how to support their child through their studies with revision tips and what to do when your child doesn't know where to start. Please make a note of these important dates:

Year 11	Tuesday 11 September 6pm
Year 10	Tuesday 18 September 6pm
Year 9	Wednesday 19 September 6pm
Years 7&8	Tuesday 2 October 6pm

**Improving behaviour, improving standards...** To improve behaviour across school and to ensure that standards are high so that no learner 'gets left behind', we have made our behaviour procedures clearer. Epraise will continue to show how students pick up rewards each day for showing a good attitude to learning but we are trialling using Epraise to also alert parents to any consequences that have been picked up by your child. There won't be any detail to the incident, so the idea is that this is a prompt to have a conversation with your child to encourage the best behaviour for learning.

Miss Dougan, Miss Unsworth and Mrs McDonnell have taken on whole school leadership roles to help us tighten up on behaviour with sanctions ranging from break and lunch time detentions to afterschool detentions. We realise that this inconveniences families, but we stress that this is to deter and correct unwanted behaviour for the good of others. Miss Dougan and Miss Unsworth will be sending home a simplified flow chart to show how a child can avoid 'stepping over the line' and we ask families to support us with this.

**Attendance and Punctuality** continue to be of high importance at St Joseph's. Attendance and exam success are directly linked. You will be aware also that lower attendance can affect a child's daily progress, their relationships with their peers, and at times their confidence and personal sense of success. We will do all we can to support students to attend school every day. We are bound also, to follow up any poor attendance following procedures as laid out by Bolton Local Authority as well as National Guidelines. Holidays cannot be authorised and the trigger for Fixed Penalty Notices (fines) has been reduced to 10 unauthorised sessions. (5 full days in any 2 1/2-terms). Should you have any concerns about your child's attendance, please contact their Head of Year.

**Look smart, be smart...**Our focus is on Teaching and Learning. Your child's success is our goal. We know that in order to achieve success at secondary school, students and teachers need to work together. Uniform is an issue that affects standards and high standards in one area affect high standards in another area; a school with high standards has high success rates. Occasionally, teenagers may 'test the authority' of the adults, either at home or in school. We value your support in this area enormously. Please ensure your child wears the correct uniform. We are carrying out uniform checks as students enter school, and are proud to say that a good 90%+ do attend school in full school uniform. The areas that slip occasionally are skirts (school policy is knee-length and skirts must not be 'rolled up' at the top), shoes (all black 'polishable', no canvas, and hoodies or 'tracksuit tops' are not allowed), please re-enforce this message at home. Your child might have mentioned that despite our best efforts to make footwear reasonable, we do have a small minority of students that have chosen to buy trainers that are clearly fabric. We will be working with these families to ensure that they comply with our policy.

**Plan to succeed...**You will notice that we have a smaller slim line planner this year. The idea is that students do not need to record their homework as this can be found on Epraise. The significant financial savings with the new planner have been invested into improving other systems in school. Please could I ask that you sign all the relevant parts of the student planner, including the permissions section and the Home/School agreement. You will notice that the Home/School agreement now asks you to commit to communicating 'with school any concerns and never post negative experiences on social media (either closed or open forums). I understand that I have a duty to support the positive ethos of the school.' We would never dream of posting anything negative about our young people or their families and we ask that parents and carers agree to the same. There are 8 signatures that are required from you to enable smooth operations in any eventuality.

**Join our PSA team....**We are indebted to our amazing Parent and Staff Association who have raised funds, generated great ideas for school improvement and funding many initiatives to improve our young people's experience. Please look out for a text/email message inviting you to our first meeting of the year to find out how you could help out. Your help is really appreciated no matter how much time you can commit.

**Bucket list.** You will be receiving a letter from Mr Graham outlining our initial bucket list offer. This will develop each half term as we work with students to create opportunities that match their interests. We will include lunchtime opportunities so that those that find it hard to travel from school later in the day don't need to miss out.

**#be a history maker...**Our opening theme for this year was "#be a history maker." We take our inspiration from Romans 12:2 "Do not be conformed by the patterns of this world, but by the renewing of your minds" Our prayer is that no matter what has gone before, from now on, we will work together to live out our mission and strive to 'make history' by being the best versions of ourselves. This in turn will enable our young people to achieve life changing outcomes and become game changers in our world.

**Let's make this our mission prayer...**

Jesus Christ,

Come and be our family role model.

Open our hearts and minds to dream the impossible and achieve beyond our wildest imagination.

Help us to value, nurture and respect each other.

As we journey together help us to build your Kingdom, striving for academic excellence and celebrating success in all we do.

Amen.

