



Welcome to our 2018 Christmas Edition of 'Stronger Together' information letter

Light to a darkened world. In the dark days of December, it is easy to imagine the hope lived out by the early church as they anticipated living the memories of the birth of Jesus, the arrival of the Saviour of the world. 2000 years ago the Jews were under Roman occupation. Taxes were high and life was hard. 2000 years later in the UK with an unknown Brexit quantity lurking, we too live in hard uncertain times. Our assemblies and tutor time reflections during Advent have been focusing on how we can share the hope of the early Church as we anticipate the coming of Christ into our darkened uncertain world afresh.



End of term activities. We have a busy end of term. You are all invited to join us on Thursday 13 December 2018 for our 'Survivors' Christmas Concert at 6.00pm. All funds raised will go towards the Survivors Charity supporting male victims of sex abuse. This is a charity that we have been asked to support by the Bishop. Many thanks to Mr Riley and Miss Hoyle for working with our young people on this event.

On Friday 14 December 2018 our First Curriculum Enrichment day will take place. This day features many experiences not covered in our normal curriculum to help our students become informed citizens in the world. Many thanks to Miss Rushton for her hard work in organising this event.

On Monday 17 December 2018 representatives from St Joseph will accompany Mr Graham and Miss Collier to the BOSCEP Carol Service at Thornleigh. We will be taking along a cheque for £100 raised by students to support the local charity Urban Outreach. This charity support the financially deprived in our community and will be working to bring happiness to the needy in Bolton this Christmas.

After school on Tuesday 18 December 2018 we welcome Jason Bangbala who will be working with staff to train them on securing the most effective relationships with young people. Following this event our Year 7 and 8 Disco will take place in the school Hall from 6.30 - 8.30pm. Tickets for this event are available via the Pastoral team.

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On Wednesday 19 December 2018 we will be celebrating our End of Term Advent Services. Students will participate in one of two assemblies where they will reflect on our Advent theme. The assemblies will be followed by our School Christmas Dinner.

We are delighted to announce our Elite Learners Reward trip to the Trafford Centre on Thursday 20 December. This is a new initiative for Year 11 and we intend to roll it out to other year groups. To be an Elite learner, students must be on target in at least 6 of their subject areas. We use student voice to plan how to reward these students and incentivise achievement.

We welcome members of our community to our SVP Senior Citizens' Party on Thursday 20 December at 2.00pm, where our SVP volunteers will enjoy serving others and spreading the Christmas spirit.

Friday 21 December will bring the term to a close. On this day, we ask that students bring £1 in return for coming in their own clothes. This money will be split between Revive (Victims of sex abuse), Urban Outreach (the deprived in the Bolton community) and the Jimmy Mizen appeal (A charity set up by the parents of a murdered teenager to show the painful consequences of violence) Margaret and Barry Mizen have worked with our young people.



Following the successful reward assemblies for Years 10 and 11, Years 7, 8 and 9 will have their reward assemblies on the last day of term. Students will then be dismissed at 12:30pm. Buses are all available at this time, except the 617 Blackrod. Please contact Mr Graham for further information.

Uniform matters... Many thanks to parents and carers who have supported us as we instil high standards of conduct and uniform. After Christmas we often see the emergence of new hoodies, phones, piercings and non-regulation footwear. Please check that your child has a plain warm coat and black 'polishable' shoes. Remember that we have a new uniform in place in September 2019. Therefore, if you have items of uniform that your child has grown out of, please bring it into school so that we can organise a 'swap shop' and avoid parents and carers having to buy new uniform for the remainder of the year. Many thanks to the parents who have volunteered to help out with this.



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.

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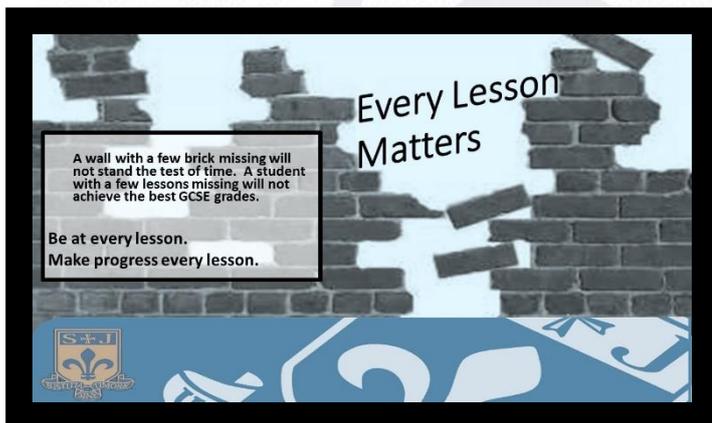
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Many thanks to the parents and carers who have recently met with Mr Graham to share ideas and help us with our school improvement agenda. Advance warning that in addition to the Year 11 Rewards Prom, we will be holding a rewards day for other year groups on Tuesday 16 July 2019. Following student voice, this will include trips to Blackpool, Alton Towers and some free reward options closer to home. Only students who have earned this opportunity will be eligible. Further information will follow from Mr Higham. Based on suggestions from students, parents and carers, we have introduced additional Epraise points available for the top four performers in every lesson. The default Epraise points will continue unless a student forfeits the chance to earn them through absence or by invoking warnings for behaviour for learning.

Fond Farewells. After 12 years of service to the young people and their families at St Joseph's, we say 'Goodbye' to one of our Deputy Headteachers, Mr Graham as he takes up his retirement. Mr Graham is a man of immense gifts and has turned his hand to most leadership tasks throughout his time. In particular, Mr Graham has managed to staff our timetable in times of great austerity and more recently been pivotal in reviewing and overhauling our curriculum including a new school day, a three year KS4 and the addition of bucket list activities. We thank Mr Graham for his commitment to our school over the years and wish him well as he retires to spend more time with his loved ones. Mr Graham's DHT responsibilities will be filled with an interim leadership solution before a substantive leadership appointment is made for September 2019.

We also say 'Au revoir' to Miss Kozera and thank her for her wonderful work in Art as she covered for Mrs Tillotson during her maternity leave. Welcome back Mrs Tillotson!



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 do not 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.

Thanks. A huge thanks is also extended to Mrs Horridge for her leadership of Science. We welcome back Miss Miller who returns from maternity leave. Mrs Horridge will be taking on some whole school leadership duties as well as continuing to offer support in developing the Science Department.

Many thanks to our amazing PSA team and all those who supported the Christmas fair. The fair raised £2800. We are so proud of the support and commitment from our community. We look forward to our next event, the Bollywood Evening on Friday 1 February 2019.



You may have seen the recent press coverage of the use of inclusion rooms across the UK. At St Joseph's, we feel strongly that every learner has the right to the best quality teaching and the right to learn without interruptions. We also recognise that some students struggle to behave appropriately and need support to get it right. To this

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end, we have renovated our Inclusion Room and included new ICT resources. Time spent in our Inclusion Room will be time to catch up on learning and time to be 'restored.' Many thanks to our site team and Mr Sharrock for implementing the vision.

You may also have read in the local press that we have secured 2.7 million pounds to put towards a new wing featuring a number of new classrooms, library, and drama theatre. Investigatory work began last weekend with construction work starting soon. We are delighted that this area can be zoned off, so that it will not affect the school during session time.

Well done to staff and students for achieving so many experiences through the Bucket list activities. More information about our New Year bucket list offers will be coming out soon.

You may have seen the letter shared on social media about the headteacher who wrote home to parents and carers to tell them that the things that are important to young people are the things they talk about in school. My experience rings true with this. If you are worried about where the finances will come from for the Commercialised Christmas, remember this. Iphones, lap tops, Xbox games may bring instant pleasure and excitement as they are unwrapped on Christmas day but in time the batteries fail, screens break and apps become outdated. Many troubled students I come across daily have the material things in life, but more often than not, what they crave most is family, friends or special people to make and share memories with. Whether it is a walk on a frosty day, the making of a snowman, watching the same old Christmas film again with a bag of popcorn. As we ponder the fact that the first Christmas saw Jesus being born into poverty, let us focus more this Christmas, not on spending more but on making memories with the people who mean most to us. May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy, holy and peaceful Christmas. 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.



Have a very happy, holy and peaceful Christmas.

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