



We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn, love and grow together

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Dear parents and carers

Welcome back!

It has been wonderful to meet so many of you during my first full week at St Vincent de Paul School. The very warm welcome of the whole school community has made me feel very much at home already. Over the course of this week, I have learnt so much about this fantastic community and I know that I am going to enjoy working with you all to ensure that we all continue to feel the calling 'to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn, love and grow together.' This is a very special place and I feel very connected already!



It has been wonderful to welcome new children to our Nursery and reception classes this week. The children have been amazing and have enjoyed getting to know their new environment and routines. It is always lovely to welcome new families to the school – you are all very welcome. As you begin your journey with us, we pray that the partnership between home and school will be strong and that we soon get to know each other. Please do ask if you are unsure of anything!

A prayer for the start of the new school year

Loving Father,

Your spirit of wisdom fills the earth

And teaches us all in your ways.

Help our community to be always open to your spirit

As we strive to show our children what it means to be

The hands and face of Jesus as we learn, love and grow together this year.

Amen

Parish Links

The teachers began one of their training days with Mass, celebrated by Father Brian. During this occasion we prayed for the needs of everyone in our community. It has been wonderful to welcome Father Brian to his priestly ministry at St Joseph's; I can tell already that he will be a great friend of the school. It was pleasing to hear Father mention that some parents using the church car park in the mornings have been spending a quiet moment with their children praying in church before coming into school – what a great start to the day! Followers of the school on Twitter (@svdp_school), will be aware that having seen this, Father Brian is offering to be available to celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation each Friday morning (term time only) between 8.15 and



8.45am. Please do make use of this opportunity if you are able to. Next week children from the KS2 classes will restart their year group rota of visiting St Joseph's for morning Mass on a Friday. You are very welcome to join with us on such occasions. It is wonderful to have such strong links with our Parish. If you have any ideas of how to further develop this please do let me know when you see me.

School Environment

You may have noticed some changes to the school environment over the holiday period: nursery have a new floor; Year 1 Stein and the dining room have a new suspended ceiling with fantastic energy efficient LED lighting; improvements have been made to the boundary fencing; and major works are underway on the roof in the EYFS / KS1 building. As a Catholic school we are required to pay at least 10% towards all grant funded capital projects through our own funding source. Future projects we hope to fund include establishing new automated security gates and creating extra teaching space. Such plans are only possible with your generous contributions to the School Building Fund for which we are very grateful – thank you!

Some gentle reminders at the start of the new school year

- Please discourage children from bringing mobile phones into school. Older children who might require access to a phone when travelling independently to school, should ensure that it is kept in their bag and turned off whilst on the school premises. Full details of the policy are attached for your information.
- For safety reasons, children are not permitted to wear any jewellery in school.
- Please do park responsibly when driving to school. Only authorised users should make use of the school car park; please drive slowly when manoeuvring in it.
- Absences from school can only be granted in exceptional circumstances. A form must be completed at least three weeks prior to the proposed absence. Details of the exceptional reasons must be included too.
- Please do update the office / class teachers with any medical issues for children as and when they change.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding your children's safety and wellbeing is our number one priority. Please do let us know if there is anything that you are worried about. The Designated Safeguarding Lead in school is Mr White and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mrs Sherry.

Talk to us!

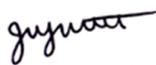
Please remember that no concern is ever too big or too small for us to talk about. If you are concerned about anything to do with your children, please talk to your child's teacher in the first instance. If the problem remains a worry, you may wish to make an appointment to speak to a member of the School Leadership Team. This can be arranged by contacting the school office either in person or on the phone. Please do not allow issues to 'rumble on'; often something nipped in the bud can prevent much distress.

School Development Plan

We are, of course, committed to ensuring that the school continues to make improvements so that it can be the very best place for our children to 'learn, love and grow together'. We are currently pulling together ideas for our strategic development plan for the year ahead. If you have any ideas about ways that we could make our school even better, please do let us know.

Finally, may I wish you well as we start the new school year together. I get the feeling that it is going to be a fantastic year!

God bless you and those most dear to you.



Jon White
Headteacher

