

# ST. JOSEPH'S NEWSLETTER

## December 2024

### *Christmas Greetings*

*On behalf of the Principal, Staff and Board of Governors*

As the Christmas holiday approaches, We want to extend our warmest wishes to you and your loved ones. May your Christmas be filled with joy, laughter, and cherished moments. May the spirit of the season bring you peace and happiness, and may the new year be bright with hope and prosperity. Here's to a wonderful holiday season and a fantastic year ahead. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

### **St Joseph's Primary School Tableau and Carol Service - You are Invited!**

The children at St Joseph's Primary School are proud to present our beautiful Tableau and Carol Service, which will tell the Christmas Story of the Nativity through music, song and drama. Every class will participate in this traditional re-enactment reminding us all of the true meaning of Christmas.

**Date:** Thursday, 19th December

**Time:** 1:00 PM

**Location:** St Joseph's Church



Everyone is welcome to join us for this special event. We look forward to celebrating the true spirit of Christmas with you!

### **SVP Collection**

We are incredibly grateful to our school community for the generous donations amounting to £906 and the numerous food items contributed to our annual SVP charity collection. Your kindness and support make a significant difference in the lives of those in need within our community.

Thanks to your generosity, SVP can continue to provide essential assistance and bring hope to many families during this festive season. We deeply appreciate your commitment to helping others and making our charity drive a success. Thank you for your unwavering support and compassion.



Society of St. Vincent de Paul

### **A Big Little Nativity**

The festive spirit was in full swing today as our talented Primary 1 children took to the stage to perform their much-anticipated 'Big Little Nativity'. The event, held in front of a large and enthusiastic audience, showcased our youngest pupils' remarkable talents and brought joy to all who attended.

It was a delightful performance, which featured classic nativity scenes, charming costumes, and beautiful singing. The children's enthusiasm and dedication were evident in every scene, as they brought the story of the first Christmas to life with innocence and joy.

Each child had a special role to play, and their collective effort created a magical atmosphere that resonated with the true spirit of Christmas.

Ms Russell, Miss Allison and Miss Claire worked tirelessly to prepare the pupils for this special day, and their hard work paid off as the performance went off without a hitch. The audience was moved by the children's sincerity and the warmth of the occasion, with many expressing their admiration and pride in the young performers.

One parent commented, "It was such a heartwarming experience to see our little ones perform with so much confidence and joy. This is what Christmas is all about – coming together and celebrating with love and happiness."

The 'Big Little Nativity' was not just a performance but a celebration of community, creativity, and the magic of the holiday season. It was a memorable event that will be cherished by all who attended, and a testament to the wonderful talents of our Primary 1 children.



## Advent

Advent marks the start of the Christian year. It is the four weeks before Christmas, beginning this year on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December. The word Advent comes from the Latin 'adventus' which means 'arrival' or 'coming'. This is the time for Christians to prepare for the celebration of the birth of Jesus and look forward to the time that Jesus will come again.

### PRAYER FOR ADVENT

*Jesus, we are waiting with joyful hearts to remember and celebrate the wonder of your birth. You came into the world as a helpless baby, but already you were holding within your tiny, beating heart a beautiful hope for mankind: a sacred dream in which we live together in peace, love, and truth. Throughout this time of waiting, may we do our very best to turn your sacred dream for us into reality, so that at Christmas, we can offer you a present for your birthday, fashioned out of peace and perfect love, Amen*



### Guess Who's Coming to Visit



We are reliably informed from our fairy friends in our Fairy Garden who are related to the elves in the North Pole who work alongside a very 'special person' that all the boys and girls from St. Joseph's P.S., will get to meet this VIP guest when he visits our wonderful school on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December to deliver a present to everyone. The fairies have also told us to have plenty of hot chocolate and marshmallows on offer and to arrange some Christmas movies and art and craft activities for the whole school to enjoy. On top of all these requests, the school cooks have also received a separate **Elf-Mail** to prepare a special takeaway box style meal of sausage & chips & muffins for dessert.

So, if all pupils could wear their Christmas/festive jumpers, hats etc once again this would add so much colour to this S??ta Fun Day.

### Firemen Visit Primary 5

Primary 5 recently had a visit from the local Fire Service. The Firemen gave an educational talk about Fire Safety and they



#### IN CASE OF FIRE



received a wonderful pack from the Fire Service. They even had an opportunity to explore the fire engine and learned all about the safety equipment onboard. Some children even got to try on some of the safety equipment. Remember to unplug all plugs at nighttime.

### Punctuality

Please be reminded that all pupils must be in school and seated at their desks before 9.05am. While we understand that there may be the odd occasion when folks can run late, this should not be the norm. Let's make a conscious effort in the New Year to have every child in school on time. Thank you!



### Safer Schools App

We recently wrote to parents urging you to download the free Safer School NI app. Uptake has not been anywhere near satisfactory so we will try again.



**Safer Schools NI app**, is a valuable resource designed to enhance the safety and well-being of our school community. This app provides essential online safety advice, school information sharing tools, and safeguarding guidance tailored for parents, pupils, and staff.

### Why Download the Safer Schools NI App?



- **Stay Informed:** Receive important updates and notifications directly from the school.
- **Online Safety Tips:** Access expert advice on how to keep your children safe online.
- **Resources:** Find helpful guides and information on various safeguarding topics.

Details on how to download can be found on the school website (Parent Area-E-Safety) <https://www.stjosephspsmeigh.org/parent-area/e-safety/>

We highly encourage all parents and guardians to download the app to stay connected and informed. Your participation is crucial in ensuring a safe and supportive environment for our pupils.

## Starting Primary School in September 2025

Do you have or do you know anyone who has a little child who wants to join our family in St Joseph's PS? Let them know we at St Joseph's will be having an Open Afternoon on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December @ 1.30pm. All prospective P1 entrants welcome to come and tour the school.



### Timeline for new P1 and P7 to Post Primary Admissions

#### Applications for Admission to Primary One

Friday 10th January 2025 at 12noon:

Applications open via online portal:

<https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/pupil-applications-and-grants/admissions>

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at noon Applications close.

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025 – Deadline for submitting verification/supporting documents via EA Connect. Final date for late paper applications. Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2025  
Parents receive notification of the outcome of their application via email or letter.

### Applications for Admission to Post-Primary School

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025:

Post-primary applications open at 12 noon via <https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/pupil-applications-and-grants/admissions>

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2025 Post-Primary applications close at 12 noon.

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Parents receive notification of the outcome of their application via online portal.

### Being Well Doing Well

St. Joseph's has signed up to the 'Being Well, Doing Well' initiative organised by the Education Authority. This spans five years and is a whole school approach to emotional health and wellbeing. It is part of the Children and Young Peoples' Emotional Health and Wellbeing in Education Framework. Mrs Brennan has been selected as 'St Joseph's Wellbeing Champion' to lead this initiative. Teachers will also select a pupil from their class to be mini well-being champions. These pupils will work closely with Mrs Brennan to be





the class spokesperson for physical and mental well-being meeting regularly as a team to discuss how best to promote and champion well-being in Saint Joseph's.

### School Singing Programme Advent Mass

Our Primary 6 class have been involved in a ten week singing programme which culminated in them attending Newry Cathedral on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December to participate in the most beautiful and uplifting mass celebrated by Arch Bishop Eamon Martin. It was a privilege to be there and it was great to see so many family members there to show their support.



Next up for another ten week singing programme will be our Primary 5 class who will participate in a special mass at Easter.

### Educational Visits Nov/Dec

As part of their 'People Who Help Us' topic **Primary 2** had the most amazing morning at **Tiddly Town**. They all dressed up in costume and had fun, fun fun.



**Primary 3** class recently visited the **Palace Stables** Armagh to participate in a **Winter Ecology Workshop**. The children enjoyed listening to tree tales read by Alan and learning



about the seasonal changes of deciduous trees. We went outside to hunt for various tree types and were on animal watch too! A great day was had by all.

Our Primary 6's made the journey to Navan Fort to consolidate their topic of The Vikings. They got to experience Viking weaponry such as long bows, swords, axes & shields and the more delicate of writing like a monk using quills.



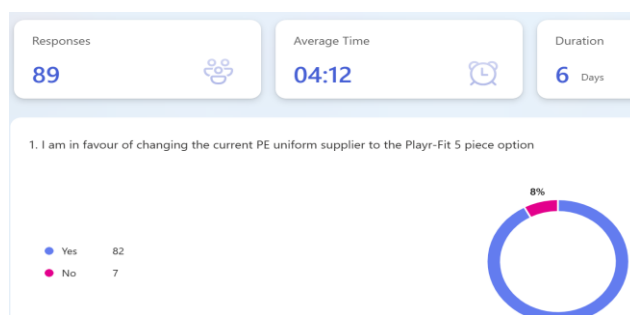
### Newry Chamber Music 'Snowman Recital

We had a fantastic performance for the whole school from Newry Chamber Music company. They performed a fabulous recital of the story of 'The Snowman'.



### PE Uniform Update

Back in September we consulted with you, our school community on changing our school PE uniform styling and provider. As you can see from the screen shot below, there was a resounding majority in favour of change. This will be discussed at the next Board of Governor Meeting with the resolution outcome being shared with you forthwith. Thank you to everyone who took the time to participate in the consultation.



### Dates for Your Diary

**Fri. 13<sup>th</sup> Dec** - Santa Fun Day - Non Uniform Christmas clothes

**Wed. 18<sup>th</sup> Dec** - Last day for Breakfast Club and After School Care

**Thur. 19<sup>th</sup> Dec** - Whole School Nativity Tableau and Carol Service 1pm (St. Joseph's Church)

**Fri. 20<sup>th</sup> Dec** - Early Closing @11:00am Christmas Holidays (no dinners)

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> Jan** - Term 2 begins (Breakfast club & Afterschool Care re-opens)