



5<sup>th</sup> September 2025

Dear Parents, Carers, Families, and the Wider Community,

Welcome back to a brand-new school year at St Joseph's! I hope you had a joyful and restful summer break. It is a privilege to be joining your community as the new Head Teacher. In just a few days, I've been deeply touched by the warmth of the welcome I've received. Our school is filled with energy, laughter, and curiosity—a special welcome to all our new families. We are delighted to have you with us.

### **Who I am?**

I've been a Head Teacher for over twenty years and consider it the greatest vocation. I've previously led St Cuthbert's (Kenton), St Aloysius (Hebburn), and St Michael's (Elswick), and I've also served in a senior role within Catholic Education Trusts.

I believe education has the power to transform lives, and we must all commit to helping every child excel. I'm proud to join St Joseph's, where the staff are deeply committed to the highest standards for all. I've already seen a curriculum that reflects the diversity of our society, happy corridors, and hard-working classrooms.

My pledge to you is that we will strive for excellence in all that we do, inspired by Gospel values. On a personal note, I've been married to Clare for 25 years, and we have two daughters—Rachel (19) and Alison (16). I live in North Shields and enjoy reading, running, and walking. I'm a season ticket holder at Middlesbrough Football Club and a lover of cricket. Please do introduce yourself—I'd love to meet you all. It's a joy and a privilege to lead this community.

### **Compassion and Hope**

As a Catholic school within the parish of St Joseph's and part of the Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust, we begin this year with hearts full of hope and gratitude. Our mission is to nurture each person spiritually, academically, and emotionally, guided by the teachings of Christ. This term, our Gospel value focus is Compassion. We'll be exploring what it means to show kindness and understanding to others, both in school and beyond.

### **First Communion**

I am looking forward to building upon our links with St Joseph's Catholic Parish and working together to support one another. Any Year 4 child who wishes to make their First Holy Communion will need to attend Mass on Sunday mornings at 9:30am and give their name to either Fr Ligori, Fr Louis, or Julie Harrison. Please do this by the end of September. Your child should have already brought a letter home regarding this.

## **Positivity**

I've been struck by how quickly the children have settled back into positive learning routines. Our wonderful pupils are focused, purposeful, and engaged. Lessons are pacey and rigorous, and most importantly, the children are working hard, achieving well, and enjoying their school day. It's clear that both children and staff truly enjoy their time at St Joseph's.

## **Attendance and Punctuality**

At St Joseph's, we believe every school day counts—each one is a precious opportunity for children to grow, learn, and flourish. Strong attendance and punctuality are vital for building friendships, developing confidence, and making consistent academic progress. We have robust procedures to support children and families where attendance and punctuality are a challenge. Please reach out if we can help. We kindly remind families that term-time holidays will not be authorised, even short absences can disrupt a child's learning journey

## **Breakfast Club** (no booking required—just come along and start the day well!)

Breakfast Club is Back! We're delighted to welcome children to our Breakfast Club, running every school day from 7:45am to 9.00am. It's the perfect way to start the morning—with a healthy breakfast, a warm welcome, and time to relax or play before lessons begin.

7:45am – 8:30 am: Paid session (£3 per child)

8:30am – 9.00 am: Free for all pupils

We will need to review our breakfast club in the coming weeks due to falling numbers but we will keep you updated.

## **Thank You, Mrs Paula McKenzie**

After 17 years, we say farewell and a heartfelt thank you to Mrs McKenzie. I've spoken to many members of our community and know how highly she is regarded. Paula has been the welcoming face of our school for many years—she knows each person by name and brings joy to all who know her. She will be greatly missed. Thank you for your years of dedication. You have an exciting future ahead.

## **Future Dates**

I'll send out key dates for school events next week so you can get them in your diary. Going forward, I'll be writing to you on a fortnightly basis.

## **Annual Aim**

We are all role models; we will give **HOPE** and show **COMPASSION**.

I look forward to meeting you over the coming weeks. I know I'm going to be incredibly happy here.

Warm regards,

Mr. N Conway  
Head Teacher