



Week Commencing 15th September 2025 - Edition 2

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you to all the children and staff for their very positive attitudes as we return to our community over the past few weeks. The start of a new school year always brings a sense of hope and anticipation, though it can also be a little tiring for our younger ones as we settle back into routines after the summer break.

I'm delighted to say that our community has had a very strong start, with high expectations around attendance and punctuality. Thank you for supporting this and ensuring that our children are in school no later than 9:00am. Please remember that our school doors open at 8:45am, and a free breakfast is available for any child from 8:30am in the school hall.

Catering Excellence

One of the things that has struck me since joining our community is the outstanding quality of our school catering. We are blessed with an excellent team led by our chef, Peter Balchin. You can view our weekly menu via our [Trust's catering page](#). In time, we hope to offer parents the opportunity to sample a school lunch too.

Free School Meals

The overwhelming majority of children take up the option of a school lunch. To help promote this further, on 2nd October, the kitchen will hold a special event—American Day—featuring a variety of burgers, goujons and bites; skinny fries; sweetcorn and “banging beans.” For dessert, children can choose between American pancakes or cookies.

Please support the day, and feel free to send your child for a one-off taster experience. I've attached the poster and a free school meal application form.

Signing up for free school meals not only provides your child with a healthy, balanced lunch each day—it also unlocks vital funding (known as Pupil Premium) that directly benefits their education and wellbeing. In Sunderland, all children in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 automatically receive free meals under the Universal Free School Meal scheme. For older children, families may be eligible if they receive benefits such as:

- Universal Credit (with a household income under £7,400)
- Income Support
- Child Tax Credit (without Working Tax Credit and income under £16,190)

Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance

Sunderland City Council now automatically enrolls families receiving Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support. However, if you think you've been missed, it's important to apply via the Together for Children Family Portal.

📞 For help or to apply, contact:
Together for Children

✉ FreeSchool.Meals@togetherforchildren.org.uk

☎ 0191 561 1417

🌐 Apply online via the Family Portal

By registering, you're not only supporting your child—you're helping our whole school community flourish. If you'd like any support, please reach out.

School Uniform

Thank you for supporting our high expectations around uniform. A few reminders:

- Jewellery (including earrings, bracelets, and necklaces) is not permitted.
- Children may wear a watch, but not a smart watch.
- Make-up and nail varnish must not be worn to school.
- Children are permitted to wear their PE kits on PE days.

All children are expected to wear plimsoles inside the building.

I've been impressed by the cleanliness and overall appearance of St Joseph's, which is thanks to the dedication of our cleaning and caretaking teams, led by Mr John Farrer

Communication

Please keep an eye on our Facebook page and school website, which will be updated regularly over the coming weeks. Parents of children in Nursery, Reception, and Year 1 will soon receive an invitation to join our EYFS communication platform, Tapestry.

Calendar Dates

Please see below for some key calendar dates for the first term. These will also be updated on our website—please check regularly for updates.

Reading Plus

Parents are reminded that any child in Key Stage 2 with a Reading Plus login is welcome to join us from 8:20am each morning. Our staff tell me that Reading Plus is an excellent tool for helping children make exceptional progress in their reading.

Whole School Mass

If you are available, you are most welcome to join us for our first Mass of the year on Wednesday 17th September at 9:30am. Any parent who wishes to attend is warmly invited.

Breakfast Club

We have been running a breakfast club in school for a number of months. It's popular after 8:00am but less so before this time. I'll monitor uptake over the coming weeks and then decide whether it's sustainable to continue starting at 7:45am. As a reminder:

- 7:45–8:30am: Paid session (£3)
- 8:30–9:00am: Free for all pupils

And finally...

Thank you to our entire community for your continued support. It is an essential and valued part of ensuring that all members of St Joseph's continuing to excel. Please reach out if we can support in any way.

I look forward to continuing to meet you around the yards of St Joseph's.

Mr Nick Conway
Head Teacher



ALL AMERICAN DAY

2ND OCTOBER 2025

MENU

**BEEF/CHEESEBURGER
FINGER LICKIN' CHICKEN GOUJONS
VEGGIE BITES**

.....
**SKINNY FRIES
SWEETCORN
BANGING BEANS**

.....
**AMERICAN PANCAKE
WITH SYRUP OR TOFFEE SAUCE
ICE CREAM WITH COOKIE BITES**



**CHADWICK'S
KITCHEN**

Date	Time	Year Group	Event
17 th September	9.30am	ALL	Whole school Mass - Church
1 st October	9.30am	Y1/Y6	Y1/Y6 Mass- Church
2 nd October	12.00pm		American Themed Lunch Day – please support it
3 rd October	2.45pm	Y3	Y3 Celebration of the Word
13 th October	9.30am	Y6	Leave for Derwent Hill
17 th October	9.30am	Y5	Y5 Celebration of the Word
17 th October	TBC	Y6	Return from Derwent Hill
24 th October	9.00am	Y6/ Rec	Y6/ Rec Celebration of the Word
Friday 24th October, 3.30pm, BREAK UP FOR HOLIDAY			
3 rd November	9.00am	ALL	Return to school
Week beginning 10 th November		Y1-Y6	Teacher / Parental Consultations – arrangements to be confirmed soon
21 st November	2.45pm	Year 1	Celebration of the Word
26 th November	9.30am	Y2/Y5	Y2/Y5 Mass – Church
16 th December	9.30am 2.45pm	Nursery	Nursery Nativity – School Hall
17 th December	9.30am	R-Y2	Reception-Y2 Nativity – School Hall
18 th December	9.30am	Y3-Y6	KS2 Carol Service
	12.00pm	ALL	Christmas Dinner
19 th December	12 .00pm	ALL	Christmas Party Day
	1.15pm	ALL	End of Christmas term, break up
Tuesday, 6th January 2026, Return to school			
NOTE: TEACHER TRAINING DAY, Monday, 5th January			