



Dear Parents/Carers

It is an extremely interesting and challenging time for education and more specifically schools at the moment. Firstly, there was the publication of the White Paper 'the importance of teaching' in November 2010. This will have a significant impact on a number of areas including the curriculum over the next few years. A summary of the White Paper can be found on the front page of the College website.

Secondly, as you will be aware, the Government is encouraging schools to become part of the Academy programme. St. Joseph's qualifies automatically as an 'Outstanding' College. However, we are still awaiting confirmation from the Clifton Diocese about whether we can start the consultation process and move towards becoming an Academy.

It will be no surprise I am sure, to learn that spending on education has been significantly reduced. This impacts directly on the College, as of September 2011 many of the services provided by the Local Authority will no longer be provided to us. The College will have to buy back services currently used such as the School Nurse, Parent Support

Advisor, Educational Psychology and Speech Therapy; amongst a number of others.

I would encourage parents to write this week to their MP Robert Buckland robert.buckland.mp@parliament.uk (Swindon South) or Justin Tomlinson justin.tomlinson.mp@parliament.uk (Swindon North) to express their concerns.

I will be sending out a letter in the next few weeks expanding on all the above once I have more information to convey to you. I would like to finish by reassuring you that the Governors and I are doing all in our power to ensure that we continue to provide an excellent education for our students.

Finally, it looks increasingly likely that the local Authority will remove denominational transport as of September 2012. This is despite representations by the Governors and parents of the College and partner primaries. The removal of denominational transport would have an impact on the Catholic community in Swindon for decades.

**Maureen Harries**  
*Headteacher*

## Anti-Bullying Event

On the 19th November 2010 a group of St. Joseph's students, represented the College at the annual Anti-Bullying Celebration Event at New College, Swindon.

St. Joseph's presentation consisted of showing the DVD called 'Reaching Out For Change'. This was made last year by a group of Year 9 students. It was very well received. Teresa Farthing, a Year 7 student, was runner-up in the Poetry competition and received a certificate from the Mayor of Swindon.

The event was launched to raise the awareness of the work that schools do about anti-bullying across Swindon.

The junior and secondary schools that attended were Uplands, Holy Rood, Southfield, Gorsehill, Peatmoor, Dorcan and Churchfields. Their presentations included songs, rapping, drama and art work.

Congratulations came from Mr P Bradley, Director of Schools and Learning, who summed up the event, saying that the students "behaved wonderfully and performed magnificently. They showed tremendous engagement with the issue of bullying and demonstrated great creativity."

## Prayer

Do not look forward to what may happen tomorrow; the same everlasting Father who cares for you today will take care of you tomorrow and everyday. Either, he will shield you from suffering or he will give you unflinching strength to bear it.

Be at peace, then put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations, and say continually: "The Lord is my strength and my shield. My heart has trusted in Him and I am helped. He is not only with me but in me, and I in Him."

St. Francis de Sales

## Change of details or telephone number?

It is important that we always hold up to date address and telephone number information for you and your child/children. This means we can contact you immediately in an emergency.

If you move house or update your telephone number, please ensure that you notify the College in writing as soon as possible.

Many thanks for your co-operation.

## Sixth Form Football

The 6th Form football team recently swept aside Cirencester College 6-1 in an impressive display of both personal and collective class. Goals from Babu and Popowicz and a brace from both Ody and captain Willoughby ensured that they head into the final game of the season on a high. This gives them momentum for the all important Cup Competition.

On a heavy pitch with small dimensions St. Joseph's were reminiscent of Arsenal during their Highbury days, playing tight and neat football that unlocked the Cirencester defence again and again. Other performances of note were a versatile display from Ougan and O'Daly as well as great directional skills from Jones who ensured that we arrived safely at the fixture.

## Dates for your diary

2011

26-28/01	Year 10 Villiers Park Residential
03/02	Year 9 to 10 Transition Evening
09/02	Year 10 Parents' Evening Population P
15/02	Year 10 Parents' Evening Population Q
16/02	Performing Arts Festival
18/02	TD Day
21-25/02	Half Term
28/02	TD Day
01/03	College reopens to students

### ParentPay

We would like to thank everyone for their co-operation regarding the implementation of ParentPay this term.

It is has proven very successful and many parents have commented on how pleased they are that they are able to enjoy similar benefits to most other schools in Swindon and pay by card.

Please rest assured that, whilst we are aiming to go cashless, we will of course always continue to take cash and Parentpay will never become a compulsory option.

If you have any further questions regarding ParentPay, please do not hesitate to contact the College Reception.

### Arval Road Safety

This month Year 11's went on a trip to Arval where we took part in a road safety quiz which was also attended by other Swindon schools. Although we did not win the quiz we had a fantastic time. The firemen from Arval and Wiltshire fire brigade service were friendly and inviting and made sure we all had a good time. We learnt some new things about road safety despite the cola and chocolate provided in the free lunch. I would recommend the experience to anyone who is offered the opportunity.

### Year 11 Student

## Subject News

### Food Technology

It has been a busy start to food Technology extra curriculum activity.

After school club began with 15 Year 7 students making dishes with mince. All of them entered the 'Make it with mince Challenge', showing some excellent kitchen skills.

Sophie Hanrahan represented St. Joseph's in The national Future Chef competition with a home made fresh pasta dish followed by tiramisu. She was up against Year 11 students and came second.

Heats have been held in College for the Swindon Cooking Challenge which asks students to work in pairs to produce a 2 course meal. This opportunity allows them to show their kitchen skills and to be creative. The college heat Final was

### Music

Sam Milea (Year 11)  
Violin Grade 5 – PASS

Donal Holliday (Year 10)  
Violin Grade 5 - PASS

Joanna Vickers (Year 9)  
Voice Grade 2 - DISTINCTION

Grainne Kavanagh (Year 11)  
Voice Grade 3 – MERIT

### Swindon Young Musician of the Year

Joanna Vickers, Joseph Young and Jessica long will hopefully all be representing St. Joseph's at the annual Swindon Young Musician of the Year held at Blunsdon House in February.

### Examination Information

External Examinations are now taking place until Wednesday 2nd February Inclusive.

Please ensure...

You arrive at least 10 minutes early for your exam.

All electronic recording devices - Mobiles, MP3s, etc. are left in your lockers.

You bring with you, all the necessary equipment to complete your exam... black pens, pencils, a ruler, a rubber. Some exams may also allow/require a calculator and/or geometric instruments to be used.

on 11th January 2011. The winner will go on to represent the College in April at Swindon College.

Bright Sparks have produced a variety of very interesting canapés for evening events.

Year 12 and 13 meet once a fortnight to practise their kitchen skills, the dishes range from main courses to decorative desserts.

Coming soon will be the chance for students to compete in the Sainsbury's Active Kids Cooking Challenge. Students must create a dish and accompaniments inspired by a 'family favourite' with a new twist, to serve to family or friends.

Thank you to everyone who supports Food Technology extra curriculum activities.

### Mrs Curran

### St Joseph's Primary Chess Challenge

Over 40 pupils from St. Joseph's, Holy Rood, Holy Family, Lawn and Southfields took part in the inaugural Primary Chess Challenge, playing four games during the course of a few hours. It was a great experience for the students to play against other schools. It was also fun for the primary pupils to come to St. Joseph's for the day. Other similar events will hopefully follow, and if you would like to play chess at St Joseph's come to S15 every Wednesday lunchtime.

### Year 10 Buddies

There are currently 33 Buddies in Year 10 who are available to help out with younger students if needed. Each Tuesday the Buddies attend a Year 7 registration to get to know a class.

The Buddies have devised a rota in order that there is always at least two of them patrolling the Year 7 social area at lunchtime.

We are hoping that soon we will be able to also offer a drop in service for younger students who feel they would find it easier to talk to an older student rather than a member of staff if they have a problem.

If you feel your child will benefit from meeting one-one with a Year 10 buddy, please contact Mrs Kittridge - Year 10 Student Manager on 714275 so this can be arranged.

## Kintbury

### Year 12 Weekend Retreat

It was already dark when we rolled into the front drive of St. Cassian's retreat Centre, Kintbury. We unloaded from the minivan, not knowing what to expect. We were met by 'The Team' – 6 young adults, most of them taking gap years before or during university. Half an hour later, we were eating cornish pasties for dinner, and saying hello to the people with whom we would be spending the weekend. As well as the nine of us from St. Joseph's, there were eight others from three different schools. That evening, we were introduced to each other through several silly games; the sort you play in drama to get over the awkwardness of meeting new people.

Over the next few days, I became good friends with almost everyone on the Retreat. I was surprised because I normally take ages to get to know new people. The atmosphere was really relaxed, as was our daily routine. There were hours of free time, which we spent playing football or chilling in the 'De La Salle' room. (The De La Salle room was a great place to hang out-there was twister, hundreds of cushions and even a unicycle). We also spent a lot of time in small groups of four or five. We discussed lots of things in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. It was an unmissable chance to talk about our feelings without being judged. We shared our inner most feelings and turned enemies into friends from the understanding that was shared. It was great fun and a chance to relax from all the stresses at school that made Kintbury an unmissable experience.

*Jacob Holliday 12B and Lewis Carney 12L*



### Year 7 Day Retreats

"On our day at Kintbury we played fun games, went on a walk to get to know someone we didn't know well before, watched two power point presentations whilst sitting on beanbags and went in the quiet room to pray. It was a great day that we spent with our friends."

"My favourite part of Kintbury was the slide show. It was my favourite part because it showed me that I don't have to change for people to like me. I like the way I am right now."

"7M and 7L left St. Joseph's at 9am to go to St. Cassian's Retreat Centre in Kintbury. After 40 minutes had gone by we finally arrived. After leaving the coach we were shown into a huge hall and the Kintbury team introduced themselves.

After our walk we enjoyed playing some energetic and funny games. After that we went into the quiet room to say prayers, it was a lovely atmosphere. We passed a candle between each one of us and each person had the choice to say a prayer to ourselves or say it out loud. After our relaxing time in the quiet room we had lunch and mingled with each other (some boys went outside to play football)."

*Kate Molloy 7L, Francesca Bell, 7M and Kacie Codling 7M*



### Religious Education

From Wednesday 26th of January the RE department are offering both year 10 and year 11 students the opportunity to attend a skills based club at lunchtime in GO3. This club will run for 4 weeks and will enable students to improve their technique in answering exam questions. Please feel free to bring your lunch and speak to Miss Pileggi for further information.

### Year 10 GCSE Modern Languages Controlled Assessments

Year 10 students studying GCSE French, Italian and Spanish will be completing controlled speaking and written assessments in February and April. In order to prepare for these assessments students should revise topic vocabulary and structures in their exercise books or by accessing:

[www.linguascope.com](http://www.linguascope.com)

[www.languagesonline.org.uk](http://www.languagesonline.org.uk)

The AQA GCSE Specification vocabulary lists can also be accessed on Moodle.

### Villiers Park

Villiers Park Educational Trust is a charity that helps very able young people to get into leading universities. They are passionate about enabling students whose parents do not have a family history of attending university compete on equal terms. Four Swindon schools, including St. Joseph's, have been lucky enough to have been invited to participate in this scheme. St. Joseph's have a total of 45 students involved, spanning across years 10 to 13. The students are entitled to 1:1 mentoring with a trained learning mentor, residential visits to the Villier's Park Centre in Cambridge and local events and university master classes.

The students and the families that are involved in this programme are aware of this and unfortunately there will be no opportunity to invite any further scholars at this time.

Future Events

Year 10 Residential – 26th -29th January  
Year 12 Residential – 2nd – 4th February  
Year 11 Stepping Stone event – 16th February

### Duke of Edinburgh

Would all students who took part in Silver and Bronze last year, current Year 10 and Year 11 please ensure you finish your different award sections and register them on Edofe. The deadline for this is Monday 1st March.

Many Thanks,  
Mr Mc Court

## Cultural Activity Group

A big thank you to the Cultural Activity Group who gave up several lunchtimes towards the end of the term making beautiful Christmas cards in different languages and icing Dutch Christmas biscuits, which they then sold at the Christmas Celebration. This term we are going to focus on Ireland and Irish culture – if you have any ideas of how we can celebrate this as a College or would like to get involved speak to your Tutor Group Culture representative or Miss Davies in S12.

## Art and RE Cross Curricular Work

Work is underway in the Art and RE departments to create some original work for Swindon Churches Together 'Easter 2011 Creative Project'. There is also an exhibition planned for the week beginning 14th March in Bristol. Keep your eye on future newsletters to find out how you can view the art work produced by the College.

## Mothers' Prayers

'There is Hope for your Children'

You are invited to a talk on  
Saturday February 12th 2011  
11.00am – 3.30pm.

Please bring sandwiches for lunch,  
drinks provided

St. Mary R.C. Primary School, Bessemer  
Road East, Swindon. SN2 1PE

Bus Number 15 Rodbourne Cheney,  
Bessemer Road Northbound

Husbands are welcome to come and join us and hear about the way that the Holy Spirit has inspired Mothers from different Christian denominations in over 93 countries to meet together in small groups to pray for their children.

For more information please contact:-  
Patricia Connolly – 01793 873489

## Sports News

### Girls Cricket County Finals qualifiers

Following on from our successes last year the U13 and U15 indoor cricket teams have been selected to represent Swindon in the county finals to be held in Chippenham on Monday 14th February. Both squads will be practicing on Monday lunchtimes in preparation for the big day.

### U15 Girls Cricket V Ridgeway

The U15 cricket team were victorious in a closely fought match against Ridgeway. Amber Vanhorne and Nicole Anyango were our opening batters and stayed there the whole match. An excellent four in the final over meant that St. Joseph's took the match winning by just four runs. Congratulations to the squad of Amber Vanhorne, Nicole Anyango, Ashleigh Loftus-Thorne, Joanna Fernandez, Cristina Mulligan, Olivia Cowley, Marie Philippe, Charlotte Hynes and Megan Avery who will be representing the College at the county finals.

### New Clubs This Term

Girls Cricket: Monday lunchtime open to all year groups

Girls Basketball: Wednesday after College 3-4pm open to all year groups.

Boys Football: College teams will be playing in the Swindon League ( Years 8-11 )

### Cross Country

Shauna Hanrahan, Grace Richardson and Hugh Gallagher have been selected to compete for Swindon in the Wiltshire Schools' Cross-Country Championships at Grittleton House School on Saturday 22nd January. This was due to their excellent performances in the Swindon Schools' Championships. Well done!!

### Girls Active Event

On Fri 26th November around fourteen Year 10 female students took part in the Girls Active Event. The idea was to try out some new and different activities such as boxercise, streetdance and water polo, to name but a few. This with a view to taking them up on a regular basis. The College will now be receiving a small amount of funding, students will have input into how this money is spent. Well done for the hard work on the day girls!

### Swindon Primary Schools Yr 5 and 6 Girls Football Tournament.

The above event was held here on Fri 14th January. Twelve schools in total took part and the weather was really kind to us until the final was played! All students were a real credit to themselves and their schools in terms of behaviour, effort and skill. Lainesmead beat Ruskin in the final, with our own Holy Rood Juniors finishing in 3rd position overall.

### Swindon Primary Schools Yr 5 and 6 Mixed Netball Tournament.

This event happened at Dorcan Technology College on Weds 19th January. Fifteen schools in total took part in the competition which was played both inside and outside! Well done to Holy Family who finished in 3rd place and managed a draw with the eventual winners.

### Year 7 Swindon Schools Boys Rugby

Good luck to our Year 7 Team who will be competing on the 26th January at Supermarine Rugby Football Club.

### St. Joseph's Fencing Club

Hopefully by the time this newsletter is published the funding will have arrived. Please speak with Mr Kerr or Mr Cross if you have any questions about the club.

### Basketball

We have secured a very experienced basketball coach who will be coming in to deliver sessions open to all students. Please see notice boards and student briefing for further details.

## Art Department Exam Period

A reminder to all parents that all Art GCSE and A-Level Coursework is due in on the 31st January. All Exams will start on the 1st February with Exam dates and hand in dates for exam set units as below. Good luck to all Art and Photography students.

GCSE Exam 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> April  
AS 11<sup>th</sup> March (Exam unit hand in 13<sup>th</sup> May)  
AS Photography 9<sup>th</sup> March (Exam unit Hand in – 13<sup>th</sup> April)  
A2 Art Exam 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> May  
A2 Photography 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> April.

