

FOREWORD

Welcome to St Joseph's Middle School

If your child is to join us for the first time, we welcome you as parents and look forward to a happy and successful association over the coming four years. If you already have a child here we are pleased to renew the links between us.

Confidence in a school comes from understanding what happens within it. We hope you will come to know us through contact and discussion with myself and members of staff and take advantage of all the formal and informal occasions for meeting us. It is of the utmost importance that mutual understanding and trust should be the basis of our joint responsibility in educating your child.

In Education both parents and teachers have the same objective: that every child should work and develop to their full potential.

A successful school is one that realises the importance of this partnership between the Home and the School.

This prospectus provides information on our curriculum and activities. It is designed so you as parents can be better informed as to how the school functions.

We hope this proves useful.

Dr T Ocaña
Head Teacher

St. Joseph's Middle School

Ethos

St. Joseph's Middle School is organised so children and staff are happy, confident and at ease. We believe a healthy balance between rewards and deterrents exists.

Aims

- To value and appreciate one another irrespective of age, creed or race, and to acknowledge that everyone has a part to play within our school community.
- To develop self-discipline, the ability to learn independently and to work co-operatively.
- To listen with respect to one another and be conscious to never damage another's self esteem.
- To foster a caring attitude for the school environment, including the building, inside and outside area, equipment and personal effects.
- That all those who work in or visit our school will exhibit behaviour in keeping with these aims and our ethos.

School Values

- Telling the truth
- Keeping promises
- Respecting the rights and property of others
- Acting considerately towards others
- Helping those less fortunate and weaker than ourselves
- Taking personal responsibility for one's actions
- Self-discipline

School Values Reject

**Bullying • Cruelty • Cheating
Irresponsibility • Deceit • Dishonesty**

St Joseph's Middle School

South Barracks



ST JOSEPH'S MIDDLE SCHOOL - A BRIEF HISTORY

Records show that St Joseph's Junior Girls School (as it then was), opened under St Joseph's Parish Church on the 18th June 1945. Part of its pupils attended classes at nearby Plata Villa. The first Headmaster was Mr John Dunne and there were 73 girls on the school's register.

At some stage the school moved to Grand Parade and in September 1969 it became co-ed. Later, it moved once more to Plata Villa in the autumn of 1971 and then became known as St Joseph's Middle School prior to the onset of the Comprehensive System of Education in 1972. The Headteacher at that time (Miss Vallejo) already complained to the authorities of the state of disrepair of this building.

Plata Villa had been built in 1890 by Mr J Bentata as his home. In 1932 he sold the property to the Institute of St John of God and it became an orphanage. Subsequently, during the war years, it was appropriated by the War office as officer accommodation when the population was evacuated in 1940. After the war it became a Grammar School and a Secondary Mod School for girls till 1971 when the Middle School moved in.

St Joseph's remained there for the next twenty-one years. When the last resident battalion left South Barracks and the condition of the building at Plata Villa became unsuitable to meet the needs of the National Curriculum, the Government of the day contracted "Mivan" to refurbish the barracks, and turn them into two school buildings.

The barracks had been built between 1730-1733 to accommodate 1,200 officers and men. The clock was erected in 1787 and in 1831 the veranda was added. By 1990 it became the oldest British Army Barracks in mainland Europe.

The construction company engaged to refurbish the building finished the job in just under a year, and on the 19th May 1992, the then Minister for Education, the Hon J L Moss, inaugurated the renovated building which now houses St Joseph's First and Middle Schools.



SCHOOL ORGANISATION

The school bands children into ability groups for Mathematics and English throughout the four years. All other subjects, with the exception of Spanish in Year 6 and Year 7 are tackled on a mixed ability basis.

Children in Year 4 will work in mixed ability groups to begin with. At the end of a designated period they will undergo a series of assessments, which together with their previous reports, test results, etc., will determine their grouping.

DISCIPLINE

The school policy places great emphasis on the need for good discipline and we set high standards in the interests of both the individual and the school community as a whole. The aim is that every child should feel secure at a personal level and comfortable in his/her environment.

In order to achieve these aims the school operates a 'Discipline for Learning' system that uses a combination of rewards and behaviour checks to encourage pupils to behave appropriately in all situations. Each child is made aware of the school and classroom rules that exist and why they are necessary. They are also made aware that their behaviour has consequences. Where they choose to behave appropriately this is recognised by stamps and stickers in a Personal Behaviour Booklet. The accumulation of these lead to the awarding of various certificates and to the gaining of extra privileges. Alternatively, where students choose to misbehave they know beforehand that behaviour checks will follow. Instances of serious or persistent misbehaviour will also be recorded in the child's Behaviour Booklet as a Sanction so a personal profile is compiled.

The system has been found to work very well since pupils choose a standard of behaviour in the certain knowledge of the consequences that will follow. For this reason, the children clearly recognise the fairness of the 'Discipline for Learning' approach. Additionally, the school is encouraging self-discipline which is essential for the creation of an atmosphere conducive to learning.

The school is confident it can count on parental support when we implement our discipline policy which is designed to be for the benefit of all the children. To this end it is of utmost importance that parents check their child's Personal Behaviour Booklet at least once a week and should ensure that the pertinent/relevant sections are counter-signed where necessary.

PLAYGROUND

The school boasts a large playground which we divide into a lower and upper school area. This means that children in Year 4 and Year 5 play together, while Year 6 and Year 7 do likewise on the other side.

There are always two teachers on duty in the playground and they ensure that the children play in a safe and sensible manner. Children who misbehave during playtime may be asked to sit out for a few minutes, or longer if it is more serious.

Children who have a problem must approach the teachers on duty and report the matter immediately. If the teacher is busy tell your child to wait until they are free, but please DON'T tell them to take the law into their own hands!

RETALIATION

All conflicts need to be resolved without the need for "hitting back". First of all the teacher needs to be informed that there is a problem. It is important that this problem is presented in a clear manner when the teacher is not busy with something else.

Once this has been done the teacher will take it from there. On no account tell children to hit back or retaliate in any way as the problem not only gets out of hand, but both children will have to be dealt with: one for hitting and one for retaliating. Please remember that children of this age might not always realise the difference between what constitutes an aggression as opposed to say a push or someone bumping into them as they play in the playground. If they know that parents condone this kind of action their level of tolerance will be totally reduced and they will invariably get into trouble.

PUNCTUALITY

It is important for children to be punctual. Children who are late do not start the day on a good footing and that can have adverse effects if it happens on a regular basis.

From a parental point of view it is worrying if you send your child early to school, but they are arriving late! As a parent I am sure you would want to know where your child has been! If it is the case that the child is being brought to school from further away, then an earlier starting time would be appreciated.

When a child arrives late, this is recorded in the class register. If this happens regularly a letter will be sent home informing parents of this fact. Attendance registers are available for inspection by the Department of Education.

SCHOOL HOURS

School gates open at 8:45 am with the Assembly bell ringing at 8:55 am. Please be advised that responsibility for children passes on to the school only when a child enters the building.

It is not uncommon to see children waiting at the gates long before they are due to open and it is usually at this time that problems may occur.

School finishes at 3:30 pm.

SCHOOL LUNCHES

Lunchtime is from 12:30 to 13:30 and those children who wish to may eat in the school Dining Hall. We have two sittings and rules and regulations dealing specifically with school lunches are clearly explained to the children.

It is school policy to ensure discipline is maintained at all times and lunchtime is no exception. The Lunchtime Supervisors have been briefed on the school rules and what is expected of them.

Please support the School by ensuring that your child abides by the Lunchtime rules and procedures established.



SCHOOL UNIFORM

The school takes great pride in its colours and expects children to be appropriately dressed at all times.

WINTER UNIFORM (Worn after mid-term in November through to April)

BOYS: White shirt, navy blue trousers, school tie, and navy blue V-neck pullover with black or similar “walking” shoes. (No trainers)

GIRLS: White blouse/shirt, school tie, navy blue jumper/cardigan, navy blue skirt with black or similar “walking” shoes. (No trainers)

Trainers are designed to be used in different sports. They are not meant to be worn on a daily basis. For this purpose they are to be worn only on PE or Games day.

Please note that because of safety reasons sandals and high heels are not to be worn.

SUMMER UNIFORM

Shirts and ties are replaced by a white polo shirt.

LABELS

Please ensure that all your child's belongings have his/her name written on them so that we can trace them if they are misplaced. This saves a lot of time and any unnecessary dispute over ownership. You will not believe the amount of "stuff" that is unclaimed over the course of a year.

CHILDREN'S ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL

One cannot stress enough the importance of notes for absences, both for teachers and parents. The former because they know that the child has a genuine excuse and the latter because they have peace of mind that someone is making sure that their child is in school.

FAMILY HOLIDAYS

It is advisable for family holidays to be taken during school holidays as a break from the routine in the middle of the term breaks continuity and could affect learning. In the event that a family holiday is arranged during the school term, kindly inform the school in writing.

Please note that it is a matter of school policy not to issue homework when absences are holiday related.

CHILDREN WHO ARE ILL AT HOME

The school will only give homework to children who will be away from school for medical reasons on a long-term basis. Also be aware that if a child is sick they might not be in a position to do much quality work. In situations where the absences are of a few days duration reading is the best option. There are also numerous educational websites that children can access and pupils have their own personal logins and passwords for home access to certain websites that the school subscribes to.

ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

If your child is ill in school we will monitor the situation for a while and if your child does not improve we will call you to come and pick them up.

Sending them home on their own is not acceptable for obvious reasons.

It goes without saying that if a child is not well to start off with it is probably a good idea to keep them at home rather than to expect them to get better at school.

If a child needs to leave the school building for any other reason we need to have your express written permission to do so, otherwise they will have to be collected from reception.

HOMEWORK

Written homework is set on at least two occasions every week. Other homework will consist of further written work, researching for information, project work, tables, spellings and reading preparation.

Your child may also have class work to finish off or perhaps to repeat. On these occasions you may be asked to ensure that the work is done properly by signing their book.

At the beginning of each year a homework schedule will be sent home so that parents can monitor their child's homework.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Throughout your child's education at St. Joseph's Middle they will participate in various sporting, cultural and educational activities not necessarily within the confines of the school premises.

Field work and educational visits locally or abroad may be organised.

Extra-curricular activities or clubs are run by teachers in order to enhance your child's learning and to create a motivating atmosphere and good school spirit.

As far as possible children will be given the club of their choice, but unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated and will result in exclusion from this privilege.

OPEN DAYS

June/July: General address to parents of new Year 4 pupils by Head teacher and Year 4 team.

Oct/Nov: Parents meet their child's new teacher (optional for Year 5, 6 & 7).

Jan: Teachers report to parents on children's academic progress in English & Mathematics.

June: Optional Open Day to discuss progress in English & Mathematics and any other issues arising from the end of year report.

ASSESSMENT

Subject teachers hold frequent meetings in order to monitor individual progress against set targets. This on-going assessment is matched with specific testing at the end of modules and general school tests in November and May.

CONCERNS PROCEDURE

If you have a concern about your child, the best solution is to come into school to find out what has happened. Once we have all the different sides to the story and all necessary information we can proceed to solve your child's particular problem.

It is advisable to ring for an appointment, as the teachers concerned may not be available. You can do this through the school secretary on 20075615.

MOBILE PHONES

Children should **not** bring mobile phones to school. They are always welcome to use the school phone if they need to contact their parents/guardians. However, if it is absolutely essential for children to have their mobile phones on them for after-school use, they must leave these in the Head teacher's Office first thing in the morning (making sure that they are switched off!) and collect them at the end of the school day before they leave. Please note that the school will not accept any responsibility or liability for the loss or damage of children's mobile phones.

MESSAGES

To contact a child during lessons is a time consuming exercise usually requiring either the Head teacher or some other member of staff having to check registers, timetables, the child's class base and the consequent interruption of lessons.

Please keep messages to real emergencies and make sure your child has everything they need before they leave home i.e. satchel, kits, packed lunch etc.

HEAD LICE

This is a problem that occurs periodically, but it is one, which we can do something about if your child's hair is checked and combed regularly.

The way lice feed causes itching and irritation. So scratching the scalp is usually the first sign that a child has head lice. By this time, though the lice have probably been in the hair for several weeks! So please don't wait for the scratching to start. Look carefully for the eggs, or nits, particularly behind the ears, at the back of the head, on the neck, crown and under fringes.

It is important to get treatment as soon as you find them. So the moment you realise that you child is infected, get it treated straight away and inform the school so we can issue a general alert to the child's year group.

February 1st and October 1st are the community "Bug-Busting" days. Usually information leaflets are distributed before these dates.

Head Lice is a community issue, but it can be controlled if we all work together.



ENGLISH

The aim of the English Department is to develop pupil's language skills so that he or she may learn to communicate freely and effectively. Since communication relies equally on expression and comprehension, the English Curriculum in the school is tailored to reflect this.

At St Joseph's Middle School we follow the National Curriculum to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word and to develop a love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

Children have many opportunities to articulate their thinking, express viewpoints, act out stories and recite poetry and rhymes from memory. High quality texts are selected to share with the children and stimulate discussion and critical thinking and are used to inspire the children's own writing development.

The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in, and for, a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

The Teaching of English

In order to meet the learning objectives teachers will draw on a wide variety of resources to ensure a focus on enjoyment and interest value in lessons. Teachers make use of a range of interesting and appropriate text books, novels and reference books to deliver the curriculum to each year.

English teachers also use the Internet, Interactive whiteboards and P.C presentations to address the objectives in a manner that is dynamic and stimulating. I.T. resources are also used by the pupils themselves when conducting research and when they complement the learning tasks.

Reading

Despite the increasing use of I.T. there is still a very big emphasis on the reading of books. Pupils are encouraged to read for enjoyment as well as to expand their language and vocabulary. As parents you can help by encouraging your child to read at home, and to sample different genres. It is strongly recommended that each pupil should read on a daily basis as part of their routine.

The school will also provide your child with a reading book from our chosen reading scheme. It is important to ensure they practice the reading set by their teacher as part of their homework. The level of support required depends on each individual but in all cases support should be enthusiastic and sufficient to keep the reader motivated.

St Joseph's also supports 'World Book Day'. World Book Day is a celebration of books, authors, illustrators and most importantly reading! It is therefore the perfect opportunity to promote reading in our school. Throughout the day children work on a variety of activities such as writing book reviews, character hot seating, making book marks, storytelling and many more. World Book Day is a very enjoyable day for all.

The Library

The library has always had a significant role in supporting reading and literacy, as well as helping to develop pupils' independent learning. It is also essential to encourage children to love reading. At St. Joseph's we are very lucky to have a brand new library which is an excellent addition to the school. It is an attractive and stimulating area which children are keen to visit.

The library contains a wide variety of books from a wide range of genres. It is continuously restocked to ensure there is a supply of fresh titles from a variety of modern and classical authors. Librarians also help in keeping the library neat and tidy.

We hope your child will make the library a focal point during their stay at St Joseph's.



Celebrating Achievement in English

At St. Joseph's we feel it is important for achievement in Literacy to be rewarded. Rewards motivate children and encourage them to do better. Specific awards are presented by English teachers to their class periodically. These include for example a Poetry Award, Readers Award, Spelling Award etc.

A merit system is also in place, and this works alongside the school's grading system. Pupil's work is graded depending on the pupil's ability and effort. Certain grades are then transferred onto the merit chart, and merits are then rewarded with prizes.

We also promote opportunities for children to use their literacy skills for a range of purposes and audiences other than the teacher e.g. Involvement in competitions, writing for the school magazine, etc.

Homework

Pupils will receive one piece of written English homework per week. Written homework is designed to supplement the tasks undertaken in school. The tasks given will mostly focus on consolidation of skills and knowledge, though teachers may also choose this as an opportunity for extension if this is appropriate.

The weekly spellings target common letter strings, spelling conventions and 'difficult' words. These are best studied using the 'Look, Cover and Check' method.

Assessment

Pupils are assessed on a continuous basis by their teachers and they are given feedback on their performance verbally and via written comments and grades on their books. In addition to this ongoing assessment, the school tests pupils formally on their reading, writing and spelling performance using specially designed tests. These tests are given in December and May, and are used in conjunction with teacher assessment to inform grouping decisions, and the writing of summative end-of-year reports.



MATHEMATICS

Mathematics contributes to the school curriculum by developing pupils' abilities to calculate, solve problems and handle data. Its applications in subjects such as Science and Technology are also important if students are to understand and appreciate the relationships and patterns of both number and space in their daily life and be able to express them clearly and concisely.

Understanding Mathematics is an important part of understanding our world as it has wide applications in our daily life, in many forms of employment and in public decision making. It will also help students to develop their capacity of reasoning so that they will think more logically and independently in making rational decisions. It is a powerful universal language used to explain, predict and tackle problems in everyday life.

The school's main aims in Mathematics are to encourage and enable students to:

- develop the practical skills and understanding of concepts, facts and operations as outlined in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for Mathematics
- recognise that Mathematics permeates the world around us
- develop mathematical curiosity, patience and persistence when solving problems

- become confident in using Mathematics to analyse and solve problems both in school and in real-life situations
- understand and be able to use the language, symbols and notation of Mathematics
- develop mental arithmetic skills and strategies to solve problems quickly and effectively
- work independently and collaboratively and be able to select appropriate materials and strategies for a set task
- enjoy Mathematics and experience success and enjoyment in order to develop a confident and positive attitude towards the subject

Organisation

Soon after entry into Year 4 pupils will be grouped according to ability. Grouping is based on assessment data received from the feeder schools and our own internal assessments. This data includes both the children's scores in standardised assessments and teachers' evaluations.

Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 work predominantly from the Ginn Abacus Scheme. This is a Mathematics scheme designed to support teachers implementing the National Numeracy Strategy and encourages interactive, contextualised learning.

In Year 7 all pupils start the SMP Interact Mathematics Scheme. This is a book-based course designed to support a teacher led, discussion based, interactive style of teaching as that endorsed by the Key Stage 3 Framework.

Special Needs

The National Numeracy Strategy emphasises the need to keep the children together. Children who have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will usually be included in the whole class part of the lesson, such as the mental/oral starter, the plenary and the introduction to the topic in the main teaching activity. The teacher will then ensure that the work is differentiated to cater for specific children which will fit with their development plan.

Mental Maths

The ability to calculate mentally is an important part of Mathematics and an important part of coping with society's demands and managing everyday events.

The National Numeracy Strategy states that certain mental strategies must be addressed in a particular year.

Mental Maths is taught as an integral part of the Abacus and SMP Interact schemes. Both provide a structured progression throughout Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. Children will also be required to learn banks of mathematical facts such as multiplication tables, related division, number bonds, halves, doubles, etc.

Investigations

This allows students to experience the excitement and satisfaction of mathematical discovery. The children are required to use the skills and knowledge learnt to solve problems. Through the use of mathematical investigations, students are given the opportunity to apply mathematical knowledge and problem-solving techniques to investigate a problem, generate and/or analyse information, find relationships and patterns, describe these mathematically as general rules, and justify or prove them. Mathematical inquiry encourages students to become risk-takers, inquirers and critical thinkers. The ability to inquire is invaluable and contributes to lifelong learning.

Homework

There is one 'official' Maths homework night a week. However, some teachers might ask the children to finish work at home to ensure they do not fall behind their peers. Every child should study the Times Tables often as they will be tested on this weekly.

Parents have a valuable role to play in assisting their children's learning. As parents we should ensure that the homework is done neatly and completed on time and that all study work is done conscientiously at home. The school welcomes any queries parents may have as it is only through mutual understanding that we can achieve the best for each child.

ICT

With the advent of new developments in the National Curriculum for Mathematics and the provision of more advanced ICT equipment within the school, we aim to raise greater enthusiasm and achieve a greater level of motivation in the teaching and learning of the subject.

The school maintains an annual subscription to Mymaths and Education City where children are given a personal passcode and are able to play interactive games as revision and consolidation of concepts or purely for fun. The school also takes part in the annual World Maths Day event where children compete with other children their age all over the world. The incorporation and use of multimedia resources in lessons fosters more dynamic teaching and optimises learning within the subject.

Assessment

Summative assessments are held biannually in December and May. Regular 'Check-Up' tests are also given to the children after every topic to ensure concepts have

been adequately taught/ learnt. Formative and continuous teacher assessment/ targets setting are also used alongside this formal assessment to:

- help and improve teaching
- help pupils in areas where they are having difficulty
- report to parents and feeder schools
- keep a record of pupils' achievements in line with the National Curriculum

To this end a Tracking System is in place to monitor the pupils' progress throughout their years in school. This ensures correct placement in ability groups in order to maximise their potential.

Mathematics is Fun

Probably the most important thing we can do to help children learn Mathematics is to make sure that they enjoy the subject, as it is through fun and enjoyment that children learn best. Children should come to an understanding of the mathematical nature of our world in much the same way that they learn to speak. They must be encouraged to experiment without the fear of failure. It is this attitude where a child is not defaulted into a lack of confidence by the realisation that a mistake has been made, but rather that they try to find out where they have gone wrong. The feeling should be that it is as much challenging fun to be wrong as it is satisfying to be right.

Children need to develop confidence, make sense and see the purpose and the uses of what they are learning. They should see the relevance of Mathematics in the real world where they are able to use it to communicate and solve problems in everyday life.

SCIENCE

At St. Joseph's Middle School we believe that teaching and learning in Science should stimulate and excite children's curiosity about the world around them. It provides first hand experiences and support for children to develop enquiring minds, learning how to question and discuss Science through collaboration.

The philosophy of Science at St. Joseph's Middle is that the subject should be enjoyable, stimulating and practical based.

Science at St. Joseph's Middle School is taught in mixed ability classes. Children have three, one hour Science sessions a week. One of these sessions is taught in our very well resourced and highly regarded laboratory. Children's curiosity is stimulated by practical activities and the investigative nature of the subject. A planned range of practical experiences set in meaningful contexts help to develop a range of investigative skills and allows children to take risks and learn from their mistakes, developing them into independent learners. They are also given the opportunity to learn theoretical concepts in the other two weekly sessions.



Children cover approximately six modules a year. Each module lasts between 4-6 weeks and there is an assessment at the end of each module to assess what the children have retained. The modules are as follows:

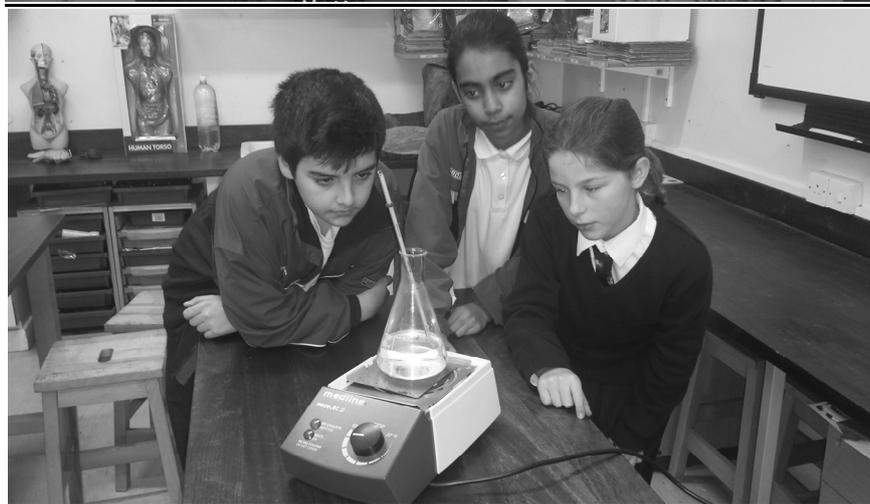
Grid of modules over a 4-year Science course

YEAR 4	KEY STAGE 2 YEAR 5	YEAR 6	KEY STAGE 3 YEAR 7
Moving & Growing (Sc 2) Habitats (Sc 2)	Keeping Healthy (Sc 2) Life Cycles (Sc 2)	Micro-Organisms (Sc 2) Plants & Animals In Their Habitats (Sc 2)	Cells, Tissues & Organs (Sc 2) Classification & Food Webs (Sc 2)
Solids & Liquids (Sc 3) Keeping Warm (Sc 3) Circuits & Conductors (Sc 4)	Changing State (Sc 3) Gases Around Us (Sc 3) Changing Sounds (Sc 4)	Reversible & Irreversible Changes (Sc 3) More About Dissolving (Sc 3) How We See Things (Sc 4)	Particles & Reactions (Sc 3) Weathering & Fossils (Sc 3) Working In A Lab (Sc 3)
Friction (Sc 4)	Earth, Sun & Moon (Sc 4)	Changing Circuits (Sc 4) Forces In Action (Sc 4)	Forces & Speed (Sc 4) Energy Transfers (Sc 4)
<u>Main Texts for Years 4-6:</u> CGP, GINN New star Science			<u>Main Texts:</u> Collins Book 1

(Working Scientifically (Sc 1) is not taught as a separate strand, it is embedded with the other Programmes of Study.)

During the course of the academic year the school offers the opportunity to take part in a Science club (availability to different Year groups may vary from year to

year). Our Science club is an out-of-school-hours club that offers children the chance to do Science related activities that extend and enhance the Science they experience in the classroom.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

PE is essential to the holistic development of children. It provides the foundation for a healthy life-style and promotes character building, cooperation, sportsmanship and self-esteem.

The aims of Physical Education:

- To promote physical activity, physical development and a healthy life-style.
- To develop social cooperation and positive attitudes and to compete with a sense of fair play.
- To promote and develop safe practise in physical activities.
- To provide equal opportunities for all children regardless of race, gender, background or ability and to provide a PE programme for children with special needs.
- To provide opportunities for all children to achieve their full potential.



We aim to deliver a balanced programme which provides children with opportunities to promote physical development and competence and to develop artistic, aesthetic and linguistic understanding through movement.

We aim to give all children the opportunity to extend their range of physical skills and develop their proficiency as well as appreciating the benefits of participation.

Allocation of time for PE per week

Our school caters for two hours of Physical Education per week. One hour is dedicated to gymnastics and athletics and the second hour is dedicated to team games and dance.

Health and Safety

- Children should wear suitable clothing and footwear (see below).
- All jewellery must be removed.
- Long hair should be tied back.

Children are entitled to a safe and secure environment when taking part in PE lessons.

Competitions

The school holds several Inter-House competitions in Football, Basketball, Netball, Hockey and Road-Racing. Inter-House competitions culminate in our Annual Sports Day (early June) during which the Athletics Shield is competed for and the Championship Shield is awarded to the most successful house. In addition, the school also takes part in several Inter-School competitions held throughout the year.

Clubs

Pupils also have an opportunity to take part in sports-related clubs which are run at lunchtimes and after school by teachers on a totally voluntary basis.

PE kit

- As from September 2015, a red (Mercury), blue (Jupiter) or green (Neptune) t-shirt for both girls and boys. Black shorts for boys and black shorts/cycling shorts for girls. These should be purchased from Sports & Leisure in Casemates Barracks.
- Year 4 pupils starting in September will be placed into House teams so that they will know what colour t-shirt they need for the start of Full Days.
- The school tracksuit is available locally at Cosmopolitan (Irish Town). If for any reason you are unable to purchase it, please find a suitable alternative that adheres to the school colours of Royal Blue and Navy Blue, with Navy Blue being the predominant colour.
- The wearing of jewellery is strictly prohibited and we strongly recommend that pupils do not wear any on PE/Games days.



Assessment

The main method of gathering evidence and assessing achievement in PE is through continuous teacher observation. This is informed assessment based on knowledge of the pupil and the context of the task. Appropriate activities/skills have been identified for assessment following agreed criteria and judgements are made on the ability of pupils to plan, perform and evaluate their routines.



SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS (SEN)

The SEN Department at St Joseph's Middle School exists in furtherance of the School's commitment to the principle of attempting to develop each pupil to his/her full potential. The School accepts that inclusion in the SEN register can be permanent or temporary and that children may experience special educational needs at any point.

The School adopts "a whole school response" to the meeting of Special Educational Needs and consequently pupils on the SEN register receive their education in the mainstream and follow normal timetables.

The process of intervention on behalf of pupils with Special Education Needs follows UK practice and takes the form of a staged response. Referral to outside agencies, such as the Education Psychologist, may be part of this process.

HISTORY

The teaching of History in school has many important benefits. Children are by nature curious and the past can provide a feast for that curiosity. In studying History, children consider how the past influences the present, what past societies were like, and how beliefs and cultures influenced peoples' actions. History satisfies a need for identity and improves judgment. It makes children better thinkers as it provides them not only with factual information, but also the habit of critically analyzing evidence.

The History units studied in school follow a chronological framework so as to help develop the ability to sequence and place in order events, objects and developments. Our aim is to bring History to life with the use of interactive resources and various practical opportunities that will allow a 'hands on' approach to the teaching and learning of the subject. During the course of the four years pupils will experience 'first hand' how people have lived in the past, as they will be participating in History Days specific to units being taught in their year group. They will also be offered the opportunity to visit places of historical interest.

During Key Stage 2 (Years 4, 5, and 6) pupils learn about significant people, events and places from both recent and more distant past. They study their local area mainly through the historical unit 'The Great Siege'. They learn about change and continuity in Britain during Tudor and Victorian times. Two past civilizations from other parts of the world are also studied i.e. Ancient Egypt and Ancient Greece. During Key Stage 3 (Year 7) pupils learn about Britain in the Middle Ages and about key aspects of world history i.e. The Roman Empire.

HISTORY UNITS

Yr.4	Ancient Egypt	Ancient Greece
Yr.5	Invaders and Settlers	The Tudors
Yr.6	Great Siege	The Victorians
Yr.7	Roman Empire	Medieval Times

GEOGRAPHY

Geography is the study of the Earth's landscapes, peoples, places and environments. It involves the understanding of social and physical processes within the context of places and regions. Geography is quite simply the study of the world in which we live.

- The study of place seeks to describe and understand not only the location of the physical and human features on the Earth, but also the processes, systems and inter-relationships that create and influence those features e.g. study of rivers in Year 6 or coasts in Year 7.
- The study of space seeks to explore the relationship between places and patterns of activities arising from the use people make of the physical settings where they live and work e.g. study of Brazil in Year 7, or the study of India in Year 4.
- The study of the environment addresses the availability and use of the Earth's resources and the impact they have on human activities e.g. improving the environment in Year 4 or the study of Traffic in Year 5.

This subject encourages the pupils to ask where things are located on the surface of the Earth, why they are located where they are, how places differ from one another and how people interact with the environment. The curriculum is taught and delivered through a variety of media, including core texts, electronic resources, geographical equipment, guest speakers and field trips. This approach enhances the pupils' interest and knowledge of the subject.

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Year 4	Map work and mapping skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans and mapping the local area Improving the environment	Village settlers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choosing a site Case study of a contrasting locality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life in India 	How do we spend our leisure time? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The geography of leisure What's in the news? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Earthquakes and volcanoes.
Year 5	The study of 'Water'	Map work and mapping skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map varieties and directions Traffic problems	Investigating coasts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What's in the news? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hurricanes and tornadoes.
Year 6	Investigating rivers The mountain environment	Investigating coasts	Map work and mapping skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scale and reduction
Year 7	In-depth study of a developing country – Brazil	Weather and climate	Coastal landforms and processes

COMPUTING (ICT)

In order to prepare children for what is an IT-dependent society, the Computing programme focuses primarily on those skills and software used outside of the school with an emphasis on Office skills, photo-editing and internet use. Programming is also being introduced at different levels to reflect the changes made to the curriculum in the UK.

The schemes of work ensure progression in these areas throughout the four years and address the requirements of the comprehensive schools. A fully equipped and networked IT suite caters for this aspect of the curriculum which is integrated into the syllabus via a one hour timetabled ICT lesson and incorporated into other lessons whenever possible. The subject is also supported by the Music department which has access to a Mac network so children are exposed to different operating systems.

Provision is also made for access to multi-media educational sites such as Education City and MyMaths. These provide valuable learning and revision resources and enrich pupils' learning experience. With the new individual logins, parents can monitor pupils' progress from home and, in the case of Education City, even have access to personalised revision programmes.

All classrooms in the school are also networked and fitted with Interactive Smartboards so as to foster more dynamic teaching and optimise learning.



MUSIC

“The teaching of music contributes to the whole school aim to develop all pupils to the best of their ability.”

	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	Year 6	Year 7
Term 1	Instruments of the Orchestra <i>Exploring Timbre through composing and performing ostinatos and rounds.</i>	Ladders <i>Exploring Patterns, sequences and the pentatonic scale using the keyboard</i>	The Blues <i>Exploring lyrics and composing a Blues song using the 12 bar blues.</i>	Popular Music <i>Exploring the use of chord sequences to write a pop song using music technology.</i>
Term 2	Ancient Egypt <i>Exploring Dynamics, Texture & Scales</i>	Leitmotifs <i>Exploring Music for film and screen.</i>	Samba <i>Exploring polyrhythms and improvisation</i>	History of Music / Notation <i>Exploring genre and reading writing notation including the graphic score.</i>
Term 3	Classroom Orchestra <i>Exploring performing as part of an ensemble.</i>	Classroom Orchestra / Ukulele <i>Exploring performing as part of an ensemble.</i>	Classroom Orchestra <i>Exploring performing as part of an ensemble.</i>	Music for Theatre <i>Exploring Musicals and Opera.</i>

People of every culture have found a need to express and share feelings, thoughts and ideas by ordering sounds into forms which symbolise and interpret their experience. The creation of music stems from our need to communicate through patterns of sound which have significance, and which may be re-created on subsequent occasions.

Music is so much a part of the background of everyday life that it tends to get taken for granted. Yet, for many people it is a powerful focus for creative energy, and one which both stimulates and guides the imagination. Music at St. Joseph's Middle School aims to develop aesthetic sensitivity and creative ability in all pupils.

The study of music as a foundation subject provides for the progressive development of:

- ❖ skills in movement, vocal skills, and in aural imagery, acquired through exploring and organising sounds
- ❖ awareness and appreciation of organised sound patterns
- ❖ sensitive, analytical and critical responses to music
- ❖ the capacity to express ideas, thoughts and feelings through music
- ❖ awareness and understanding of traditions, idioms and musical styles from a variety of different cultures, times and places
- ❖ the experience of fulfilment which derives from striving for the highest possible artistic and technical standards.

Enjoyable

- To develop a sensitive response to sound in general and a life long enjoyment of music of all kinds, both as a listener and a participant
- To think about musical ideas
- To use music as a creative stimulus

Creative

- To develop pupils' self-expression
- To develop the capacity to understand and express ideas and feelings through the medium of sound

Social /Moral

- Because performing together creates bonds
- To develop the ability to work constructively as a member of a group using skills of leadership, discussion, negotiation and the blending of different peoples' ideas

Cultural

- To develop an awareness of musical heritage, traditions and developments in a variety of cultures and societies

Cross-Curricular

- To help language development and literacy
- To develop a feel for patterns and numeracy
- To provide a vehicle for learning certain subjects or to enhance other subjects e.g. language, History, Art, Drama, etc
- Because music contributes to acts of worship

Aesthetic

- Because music helps pupils to understand the way their feelings work and to develop an insight into areas of experience, some of which cannot be verbalised easily

Summary

We aim to:-

- ❖ Develop an understanding and enjoyment of music
- ❖ Provide opportunities for singing, performing, composing and listening
- ❖ Offer a variety of musical experiences reflecting different times, places and cultures
- ❖ Explore music through cross-curricular themes
- ❖ Meet the requirements of the National Curriculum

Extra curricular musical activities

There are a number of extra curricular clubs that offer opportunities for children to experience performing as part of a group. These include: Choir, Brazilian Samba band, African drumming circles, Ukulele playing and a rock band.







ART AND DESIGN

The importance of Art and Design

In Art and Design, pupils explore visual, tactile and other sensory experiences to communicate ideas and meanings. They work with traditional and new media, developing confidence, competence, imagination and creativity. They learn to appreciate and value images and artefacts across times and cultures, and to understand the contexts in which they were made. In Art and Design, pupils reflect critically on their own and other people's work, judging quality, value and meaning. They learn to think and act as artists, craftspeople and designers, working creatively and intelligently. They develop an appreciation of Art and Design, and its role in the creative and cultural industries that enrich their lives.



Activities

The Visual Elements of Art will be covered in every year. These are: colour, texture, line, shape, form, space and value.

Pupils who can identify the elements and evaluate their role in the composition of a work of art will be better able to understand an artist's choices. They will be equipped to address whether a work of art is successful, and why.

History of Art also forms part of the curriculum. All year groups will learn about a particular artistic movement and shall be exposed to the lives and works associated with that genre. This topic will be studied throughout the terms. (The artist(s) chosen will depend on the element(s) of art being studied).

ICT will be used throughout the term, depending on the objective(s) being covered.

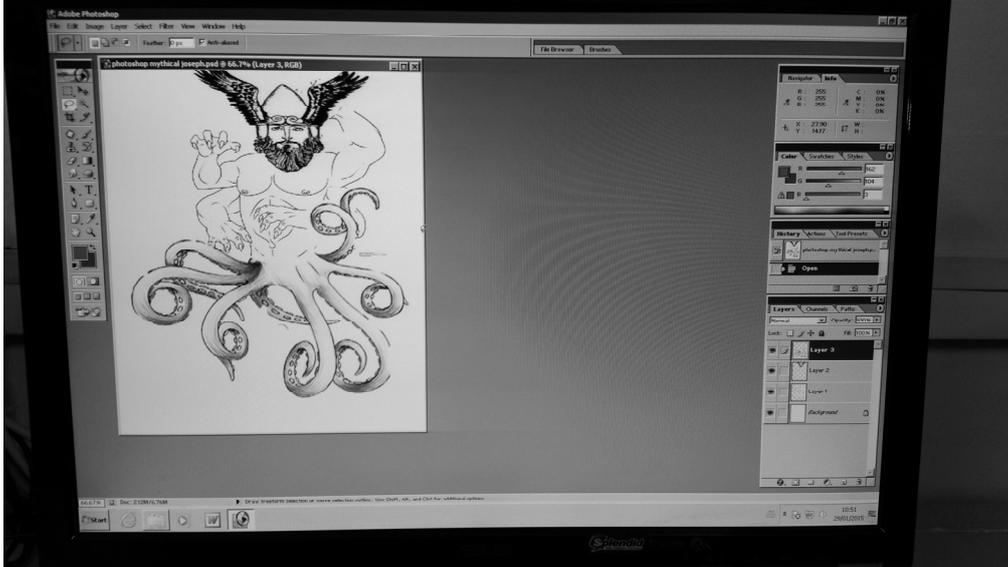
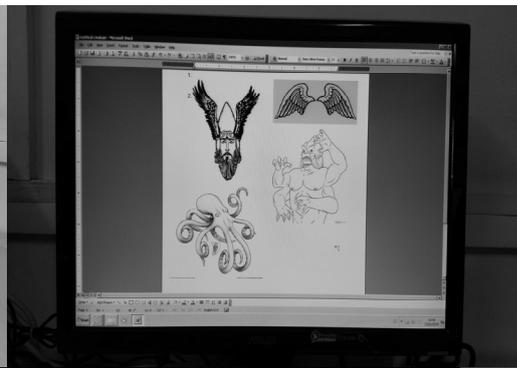
ICT in Art and Design

ICT forms an integral part of the curriculum. Pupils are provided with opportunities to apply and develop their ICT capability in all subjects. For each subject, these translate into specific, statutory requirements to use ICT in subject teaching.

Pupils are given the opportunity to apply and develop their ICT capability through the use of ICT tools to support their learning.



Using ICT to edit photos and create a sense of movement. (Year 6 pupils working on the topic 'People in Action').



Cutting, pasting and editing images of various creatures to create an original mythical creature. (Year 5 'Talking textiles')

How does ICT help pupils in Art and Design?

ICT helps pupils learn in Art and Design by enabling them to develop their creativity and imagination through more sustained activities within the programmes of study. ICT makes it possible to include all pupils in visual research and give them greater autonomy over the creative process. It also provides more tools to help pupils learn about visual concepts and visual communication.

Art room

We have a new Art room, facilitating the access of Art resources, as well as the teaching and learning of the subject. It includes display boards, where we promote and encourage children's artistic abilities and a Smart Board, as lessons may include the use of tutorials and interactive activities.



Cross curricular links

Art and Design activities include cross curricular links, e.g. in Year 5 children learn about and investigate the Bayeux Tapestry under the topic 'Talking Textiles'. This is then studied more in-depth during History under the topic 'Medieval Britain' in Year 7. This allows children to further enhance their knowledge and understanding of the particular topic being studied.



DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Design and Technology is a 'hands on' subject in which pupils have the experience of evaluating, designing and making products. It encourages children to examine their environment, question the world and to think about how and why things work the way they do.

The aims of Design and Technology are:

- To develop imaginative thinking in children and to enable them to talk about what they like and dislike when designing and making.
- To enable children to talk about how things work, and to draw and model their ideas.
- To encourage children to select appropriate tools and techniques for making a product, whilst following safe procedures.
- To explore attitudes towards the made world and how we live and work within it.
- To develop an understanding of technological process, products and their manufacture, and their contribution to our society.
- To foster enjoyment, satisfaction and purpose in designing and making.

Scheme of work

In our school Design and Technology is not a timetabled subject as such and is taught within a specific set of lessons during Art and Design. Each year group will cover at least two Design and Technology projects throughout the year. The topics are all linked to either the QCA or Nuffield Schemes of Work for Design and Technology KS2 and KS3, which have been adapted to ensure suitability for each year group. The children will be involved in three distinct types of activities:

- Investigating, disassembling and evaluating familiar products and applications (IDEAs)
- Focused practical tasks which can be used to practise (FPTs)
- Design and make assignments that involve the making of quality products (DMAs).

The projects will also cover each material area:

- Food
- Textiles
- Movement and Mechanisms
- Electrical Control
- Stiff and flexible material
- Mouldable material.

We also aim to encourage the use of ICT as much as possible to research, strengthen and improve children's assignments through the use of the internet and Art and Design packages.



Assessment

Teachers assess children's work in Design and Technology by making assessments as they observe them working during lessons. They record the progress that children make by assessing the children's work against the learning objectives for their lessons using National Curriculum Level Descriptors. The above is then used to make an annual assessment of progress for each child, as part of the annual report to parents.

Health and Safety

The general teaching requirement for health and safety applies in this subject. Children are encouraged to use tool safely and they are taught that their actions can affect others. They also learn how to follow proper procedures for food safety and hygiene.



SPANISH

“The ability to understand and communicate in another language is a lifelong skill for education, employment and leisure in this country and throughout the world.”

The National Curriculum

At St Joseph’s we aim to provide children with a good opportunity to accomplish this lifelong skill in accordance with the National Curriculum requirements for languages.

The Spanish course begins in Year 4 and continues throughout the next three years for one hour a week. During these lessons the aims are to develop in pupils the ability to communicate confidently and effectively both in the spoken and written forms of the language.

In Year 4 the main emphasis is on understanding and communicating skills. The children are taught in mixed ability groups and are assessed at the end of the year in order to monitor their progress. In Year 5 the same skills continue to be developed but there is more emphasis on writing. The children are taught in groups according to their knowledge of the language with the exception of the non-speakers who are taught as a separate group at a foundation level.

A programme for non-speakers has been developed to progress from one year to the next so that by the end of Year 7 they will hopefully have learned the basics of the language and will be satisfactorily able to communicate in the language.

It is expected that when pupils leave us they will be more than adequately prepared and confident to continue to study the subject at Secondary School.

PSHE

PSHE stands for Personal, Social and Health Education. It takes place once a week and each lesson is of one hour's duration. Through PSHE we aim to develop the qualities and attributes needed for pupils to thrive as individuals and with the rest of society. It offers a variety of teaching and learning styles, with an emphasis on interactive learning and the teacher adopting the role of a facilitator. Through PSHE, pupils acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to manage their lives now and in the future through a variety of topics such as Bullying, Friendships, Citizenship and Keeping Healthy.

RELIGION

Religious Education is taught during a weekly one-hour lesson. The curriculum content of these lessons is principally Christian, with associated social, moral and personal themes.

In Year 7, children of the Roman Catholic faith are prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation. This preparation takes place during the Spring Term with the actual Confirmations being held at the start of the Summer Term.

Towards the end of each school term and on the feast of St Joseph, the school attends mass at St Joseph's Parish Church. As parents, you have the option of excluding your child from attending these services. Children who opt to do this are supervised in school.

