St Joseph's
Catholic Primary School Otley
a Voluntary Academy

As a family with God in our hearts, we love, laugh and learn.

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Friday 9th October 2026

A MESSAGE FROM MR GILHOOLY

Dear Parents, Carers and Friends of St Joseph's,

We warmly invite our families to join us for our Open Day and enjoy a look around school. This is a lovely opportunity to see our learning spaces and experience the caring community we share at St Joseph's.

Please also help us spread the word by sharing our Open Day promotions on social media with prospective parents. Your recommendations can make a real difference in helping new families discover our school. Details of the event can be found in our Open Day promotions.

As a family, with God in our hearts, we love, laugh and learn.

Next Friday, 16th October, is our annual Times Tables Rock Star Day! All children are invited to come into school dressed as a rock star, ready for a day filled with fun maths activities. We look forward to celebrating maths together and helping the children build their confidence and enthusiasm for learning.

Thank you for your continued support with attendance. This week, our attendance has reached a fantastic 99%! We understand that illness and life's circumstances can sometimes affect attendance, and we appreciate everything you do to support your children in attending school regularly.

Thank you, too, for helping your children arrive at 8.40am, ready to learn and make the most of their day. Being here from the start helps them feel settled, take part fully and flourish as members of our school family.

Together, we continue to live out our mission:

"As a family with God in our hearts we love, laugh and learn."

Thank you for your ongoing kindness, encouragement and support.

Mr Gilhooly
Headteacher

SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD

On Monday 19th October, we are asking children and staff to wear red to raise awareness about racism within society - this could be as simple as red socks/headband, or you can dress in all red clothes.

The important message is about acceptance and celebrating diversity. Everyone deserves respect and the chance to thrive without fear or prejudice. Let's keep the red card raised high until racism is kicked out.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

October 2026	November 2026
10th - Open Day for YR 27-28	9th - Parents Evening
14th - Flu Immunisations	11th - Parents Evening
16th - TTRS Rockstar Day	11th - Remembrance Day Mass
19th - Show Racism the Red Card	16th - Anti-Bullying Week
22nd - Harvest Mass	23rd - Otley Light Switch On
23rd - Training Day	
31st - Deadline for Y7 applications	

IMPORTANT: EYFS TRAINING DAY

YR staff training day on Friday 4th December. Please note, School Closed to Reception on this day – please make alternative childcare arrangements.

WEEKLY ATTENDANCE

w/c 28.09.26

97.71%

CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Dear God,
As we welcome new families on Saturday, help everyone to feel happy, comfortable and welcome.
May our school be a place where children feel safe, make friends, discover their talents and grow in faith.
Bless everyone who visits us and guide them as they think about their children's future.
Help us to show the kindness, joy and love that make our school such a special place.
May we remember Jesus' words: **"Let the little children come to me."**
Amen

OUR LADY & ALL SAINTS CHURCH



MASS TIMES



Saturday Morning: 10am
Saturday Evening Vigil: 6:30pm
Sunday Morning: 9:30am & 11:15am

For updates, please check the weekly bulletin for up-to-date Mass times.

http://www.olasotley.org/bulletin.html

Matthew 21:33–43 – The Parable of the Vineyard

This week, we listened to Jesus' Parable of the Vineyard. Jesus tells of a landowner who carefully prepares a vineyard and entrusts it to others to care for. The story reminds us that God gives us gifts and responsibilities, trusting us to use them well. The vineyard can help us think about God's world, our school community and the people around us. We are called to be good 'gardeners' of these gifts, caring for others, looking after creation and making choices that bring goodness into the world. Jesus reminds us that God's love is generous and calls us to respond with kindness, faith and responsibility.



Our Theme – 'Practise'

Our theme this week is 'Practise', reminding us that we do not become good at something immediately. Whether learning a new skill, developing our talents, learning prayers or becoming more patient and kind, we need to practise. Mistakes are a natural part of learning and growing, so we have been encouraged to keep trying when things feel difficult and remember that God is with us. Just as a vineyard needs care, patience and time to grow, we too need to nurture our faith, relationships and gifts.



Pope Leo XIV's Prayer Intention – Caring for Mental Health

For October, Pope Leo XIV asks us to pray for people struggling with their mental health, as well as those who care for and support them. He encourages the Church to be a place where everyone feels welcomed, listened to and valued without judgement. For our children, this reminds us to be kind and caring towards others. We may not always know how someone is feeling, so a smile, kind word, listening ear or simply reminding someone they are not alone can make a difference. We pray that everyone who is struggling receives the love, help and support they need, and that our school family continues to be a place where everyone knows they belong.



Confirmation Classes

We are delighted that our Confirmation classes are beginning, as our Year 6 children start an important part of their journey in faith. Confirmation is a special Sacrament in which young people are strengthened by the Holy Spirit and grow in their relationship with God. Over the coming weeks, our Year 6 children will learn more about their faith, reflect on their commitments and prepare for this important celebration. Please keep them in your prayers as they begin this journey. We pray that the Holy Spirit will guide them, give them courage and help them recognise the gifts God has given them.



Harvest Music Festival

We are very excited for our Harvest Music Festival on Friday, led by our wonderful Mini Vinnies and Mr Rickson. This special event brings our school community together to celebrate and give thanks for the harvest, while remembering those who may not have enough food or resources. Our Mini Vinnies have worked hard to prepare for the festival and will help us understand why sharing our blessings is such an important part of our Catholic faith. Through music, celebration and prayer, we will be reminded to look beyond ourselves and care for those most in need. We are incredibly proud of our Mini Vinnies for showing wonderful examples of service, citizenship and Christian love. We look forward to coming together on Friday to celebrate, give thanks and prepare for our Harvest service.



MULTISPORTS CAMP

TW COMMUNITY SPORTS LTD

AT ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, OTLEY

BE ACTIVE | MAKE FRIENDS | HAVE FUN | BUILD CONFIDENCE



MONDAY 26TH OCTOBER

09:00 – 15:00

£20

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- Football
- Dodgeball
- Individual competitions and team games

BOOK NOW!

AGES 5-13

Marcus@twcommunitysports.co.uk
TO BOOK OR FOR MORE INFO

QUALITY COACHING | FUN ENVIRONMENT | BUILD SKILLS | MAKE MEMORIES

OCTOBER HALF-TERM

TW COMMUNITY SPORTS LTD

EXCURSION TO NELL BANK

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE DAY

BE ACTIVE | MAKE FRIENDS | HAVE FUN | BUILD CONFIDENCE

TUESDAY 27TH OCTOBER

09:45 – 14:45

£30

AGES 5-13

LIMITED SPACES AVAILABLE



ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- Outdoor exploration
- Team building
- Problem solving
- Den-building
- Adventure playground

Marcus@twcommunitysports.co.uk
TO BOOK OR FOR MORE INFO

QUALITY COACHING | FUN ENVIRONMENT | BUILD SKILLS | MAKE MEMORIES



ST. JOSEPH'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, OTLEY

'We Love, Laugh and Learn'

01943 463840

office@stjosephsotley.org

OPEN DAY

Saturday 10th October 2026 9am - 12pm

All are welcome!

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL OTLEY

Scan me!



CLASS PAGES

YEAR R NEWS

In English, the children have been developing their early writing skills by creating simple labels for their dot artwork. They used their phonics knowledge to listen carefully for the sounds in words, particularly identifying the initial sound, and had a go at sounding out words phonetically. We are so proud of the children for becoming increasingly confident and independent writers!

In Maths, we have been focusing on the number 5. The children have been practising recognising the numeral and matching it to the correct quantity. They enjoyed selecting the correct number of objects to represent five and are becoming increasingly confident when counting carefully and checking their amounts.

In PSHE, we have been thinking about how we can be good citizens by caring for animals. We explored birds and fish and discussed how we can look after them and their habitats. The children shared thoughtful ideas about being kind to animals, protecting nature and taking responsibility for the world around us.

YEAR 1 NEWS

In English this week, we have been learning about fact files. We have looked at how fact files are organised and explored different layout features, such as headings, subheadings, pictures, labels and interesting facts. We have started thinking about how these features help the reader to find information easily.

In Maths, we have been learning about number lines. We have practised finding numbers on a number line and using them to help us work out one more and one less. We have also been ordering numbers from smallest to largest and largest to smallest

In PSHE, we explored all the ways we are different and unique and how these differences are what makes us special. We talked about ways we should show kindness to everyone, no matter what they look like or believe in. We then thought about how we could make people feel welcome in our school by showing acts of kindness.

In RE, we found out about a special message sent by Pope Francis the Laudato Si' which is all about looking after our common home- our world. We thought about ways we can help look after our world like: recycling, turning off the lights and walking instead of driving. We then explored lots of activities all about recycling and looking after God's special creation.

YEAR 2 NEWS

In Maths, we have been learning how to use number lines to represent numbers to 100. We have been looking carefully at the start point, end point and intervals to help us work out where numbers belong. We have practised counting in tens and ones and placing numbers accurately on different number lines.

In English, we have continued our work linked to 'This Is Our World'. We have been learning how to use conjunctions such as *and, but* and *because* to join our ideas and give reasons. We have also been adding extra information about ourselves, helping us to make our writing more interesting and informative for our readers.

In RE, we have been learning about stewardship and what it means to care for God's world. We thought about how Noah was a good steward by following God's instructions and caring for the animals. We also explored the different ways we can be good stewards ourselves by looking after the environment, caring for animals and making thoughtful choices.

In Science, we have been exploring woodland habitats and discussing why different animals choose to live in particular places. We learnt that habitats provide living things with the things they need to survive. We also enjoyed going on a minibeast hunt, investigating different microhabitats and discovering some of the tiny creatures that live in them!



YEAR 3 NEWS

Another wonderful week of learning! The children have impressed us with how well they have worked together, demonstrating our key themes of encouragement, friendship and patience. In English, we retold 'Lights on Cotton Rock', using descriptive language and stepping into Heather's shoes to explore her thoughts and feelings about meeting the alien.

In Science, we have been learning about animal diets, developing our own questions to research. Their fantastic 'What if…?' and 'Why…?' questions encouraged curiosity and thoughtful discussion.

In RE, we explored the Creation story and how God rested on the seventh day. We thought about how we can respect God's creation by taking time to rest, reflect, be thankful and appreciate the wonderful world around us.

We are incredibly proud of the children's enthusiasm and thoughtful contributions this week. We are also delighted with their reading, with some already reaching 20 reads! Please keep listening to your child read at home, as regular reading has such a positive impact on fluency, confidence and spelling. Keep up the fantastic reading, everyone!

YEAR 4 NEWS

In English, we have been studying 'The Promise' by Nicola Davies and considering the Eco-message of stewardship for the Earth. We have been learning grammar skills on Fronted Adverbials (with commas) and Direct / Reported speech.

In Maths, we have completed our Place Value unit and are moving on to Addition and Subtraction. Lots of good effort has been seen on Times Table Rock Stars - we are trying to set good year-long routines in practice.

In RE, we have explored what the Covenant of Abraham teaches us about the Foundation of Faith. We have also been celebrating Mary and have had some brilliant Class Celebrations of the Word.

This week, we have also been focusing on the right expectations: behaviour for learning, behaviour for challenging ourselves, behaviour for Celebrations of the Word. We have seen real improvement across class and lots of great effort. Well done!

YEAR 5 NEWS

In English, we published and decorated our dragon non-chronological reports. We also began 'Beowulf the Monster Slayer' by Brian Patten, making predictions using the illustrations, title and opening extract.

In Maths, we began our unit on addition and subtraction by adding and subtracting whole numbers with more than 4 digits. On Friday we then practiced using rounding to support us checking our answers.

In PSHE, we took some time to learn about the British values. We learned about the nine protected characteristics and thought about how we can make our school inclusive for everyone, where everyone feels welcome and like they belong.

In History this week, we researched what oracle bones were and what they were used for in the Shang Dynasty. We worked in pairs to look at a range of historical sources to find out lots of interesting facts and draw conclusions (for example, priests, or diviners, were very powerful as they were the only ones who could use the oracle bones). Did you know that when they were first found, they thought they were dragon bones?

YEAR 6 NEWS

In English, the class planned their own guides to residential inspired by their time at Herd Farm. They looked at a model text and cut it up to analyse and sort different features, then used this to help structure their writing. They then drafted their guides using imperative verbs, causal conjunctions and cohesive devices to link paragraphs.

In Maths, we have begun to focus on multiplication and division. We looked at rules of divisibility and how knowing times table facts can support you with checking an answer without completing the whole calculation. We also worked on multiplying 4-digit by 2-digit numbers using two different methods, short column multiplication and the grid method, before ending with the bus stop method for division.

In RE, we learned about the Nicene Creed and how it is a statement of faith for Catholics. The children read through the Creed and reflected on what Catholics believe, before illustrating it to represent the different parts focusing on the Trinity and the Church.

REMINDER - WELLBEING AND SAFEGUARDING

A reminder that safeguarding information, including resources, signposting and details of who to talk to if you have any concerns, can always be found at the bottom of this newsletter.

WELLBEING / SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION

Contact Telephone Number for Parents - The school office will be open during normal school hours: 01943 463840. Please ask to speak to **Mr Gilhooly, Mrs Wainwright, Miss Wilkinson or Mrs Monkman.**

If you are outside of school hours or it is a holiday and you have a concern you can ring the local authority social worker team directly.

- Leeds Children's Social Work Services on 0113 222 4403 Further information can be found here.
- Bradford Children's Social Work Services 01274 433999 further information from Bradford local authority can be found here.

NSPCC Helpline

The Department for Education has commissioned the NSPCC to establish a dedicated independent helpline for people who have experienced sexual abuse in educational setting.

The Helpline went live on 1 April, and will provide both children and adults who have experienced sexual abuse in schools with support and advice, including onward action such as contacting the Police if they wish to. The Helpline will also provide support to parents and professionals. Anyone who gets in touch through this dedicated helpline will also be signposted to other relevant support services available, including Childline, which provides ongoing support and counselling to children and young people. The dedicated and confidential NSPCC helpline – Report Abuse in Education can be reached on 0800 136 663 or by email at help@nspcc.org.uk.

NHS ChatHealth (chathealth.nhs.uk)

ChatHealth enables young people to access support and advice regarding various emotional health and wellbeing concerns. To find out more information about ChatHealth and how to access the support please use the above link. ChatHealth also offer a Text Service 07520 619750 (8.30am – 4.30pm Monday to Friday) 11-19 year olds. Mental Health/General Health enquiries.

MindMate: Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health.

Online (https://www.mindmate.org.uk/) and via telephone 0300 555 0324.

Safeguarding Resources/Information

The following resources, highlighted by the Leeds Safeguarding Team, are also available for parents:

NSPCC Keeping Children Safe Online provides a useful guide to social networks, apps and guide.

National Online Safety have produced a series of top tips guides to support remote learning for Parents, Children and Teachers

Thinkuknow is the education programme from NCA-CEOP, a UK organisation which protects children both online and offline for different age groups and parents.

Childnet has produced a Parent and Carer Toolkit which is a collection of three resources designed to help you talk to your child about their online life, manage boundaries around family internet use and point you in the direction of where to get further help and support.

Safer Leeds - Domestic violence and abuse (leeds.gov.uk)

