

St. Joseph's Specialist School & College Newsletter



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Volume 2
Wednesday 21st
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Letter from the Executive Principal



Dear Families and Friends of St. Joseph's

Its finally here! The last newsletter of 2016, drawing the Education & Therapies Autumn Term to a close. Looking back over this term's newsletters it's really incredible to see all the exciting and fantastic things that have been going on at St. Joseph's. I'm sure you would agree with me that the staff who make every day an adventure and a safe journey of discovery, should be acknowledged for their tireless dedication and commitment to our very special young people.

Although most staff and students will take a break from the grounds of St. Joseph's over the Christmas holiday, as St. Joseph's is now a Children's Home it never truly shuts down completely anymore. Several of our houses will still be ticking along through the holidays with staff ensuring that those who live in those homes situated within the grounds experience all the treats and delights that this time of year traditionally brings.

As with any school and college there has been a good amount of Festive Activities to add into the mix these last couple of weeks. Looking through the contents of this newsletter I've been lucky enough to have been able to attend most of the events.

The Christmas Fair was very well attended as usual and the quality of products on sale made by the various enterprise groups was extremely good.

At long last our second supported living house at Long Barn had its official opening ceremony with Damon Hill, one of our patrons, cutting the ribbon.

The residential Christmas Party was the first occasion of the year where Santa popped by to give presents to the young people and staff alike, and was also the first Christmas Dinner of the season. Our Chaplain, Angela Prince, has been running Christmas themed sessions in the chapel during the evenings and a large group of residential staff and young people went along to see the Wintershall Nativity. The residential team also went off to the Horsham Pantomime ("Oh no they didn't.....Oh yes they did")

The Coffee morning this month was the "FestiviTea" and was one of the few Christmassy events that I had to miss, but I did manage to remember to wear my Christmas Jumper last Friday for the Save the Children appeal.

As I write this letter to you the last few preparations are underway for the Nativity Services bringing our year of 2016 to a beautiful close. I love the Nativity and Carol Service at St. Joseph's, its inclusivity and tenderness always epitomises the true sentiment of this time of year.

On behalf of everyone at St. Joseph's I would like to wish you all a peaceful and happy break. I hope that you will be fortunate enough to be able to spend quality time with people you love, and that you are able to share your best wishes with those that you miss.

Keep safe, warm and well and I look forward to welcoming you back into the New Year in January.

Best Wishes to you all, our love and prayers,



SSAT Measure. Improve. Impact.
ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL



STAFF NEWS

FAREWELL & GOODLUCK

Jamie Huttly
Gwyn Russell
Nicola Forbes
Rebecca Brewer
Wendy Lee

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FUNDRAISING

Tree Planting - Pavilion

Each year The Tree Council promotes National Tree Planting Week - in 2016 this took place between 26th November – 4th December. The week is designed to encourage a range of organisations to undertake well-planned tree planting projects.

Thanks to corporate sponsorship there is a Trees for School Fund available for purchasing the tree materials, with the understanding that young people get involved in the project. Shirley, Carol and the grounds team were very keen to plant new trees around the recently rebuilt Pavilion. Following planning on where the trees were to go, and a successful application, Shirley was able to secure funding for some apple trees.



Last week our gardeners Mick, Gareth and Marcus helped dig the holes and make all the preparations for the new trees; they were then joined for the final planting task by some of our students and ably assisted by both Alan Day and Annie Sutton.

Mick has assured Alison that the trees are an eating apple variety so it's now up to the leaners to ensure they are well tended, enjoy watching them grow and learn more about their care to ensure they get to eat the fruits of their labours, and when the crop allows, share them with Alison and the kitchen team!



FestiviTea - Wednesday 14th December

Liz Yeo, Family Link Worker and Shirley Illsey, Fundraiser warmly welcomed families and friends to the Annual Christmas FestiviTea. This is a special fundraising coffee morning which we support on behalf of the Surrey Branch of the National Autistic Society.

Parents and families gathered together with staff for mince pies and a wonderful sponge cake prepared by Alison and her team. It was most enjoyable to be able to spend some time together to wish each other well for the festive season and lend support to our local branch of NAS, who undertake a wide range of activities to help all those affected by Autism. NAS Surrey publish a monthly (free) newsletter packed with advice and articles, as well as information about their own forthcoming events, which can be downloaded from their website www.nassurreybranch.org.



Twelve things about: Marian Jimenez - Teaching Assistant



WHAT TYPE OF PERSON ARE YOU?

Describe yourself in five words:	Tidy, Professional, Patient, Honest & a little maniac of order (ups!)
What's top of your to-do list?	Eat and don't get fat!
What's your favourite biscuit?	Dinosaur biscuit, Nam Nam
What's your top holiday destination?	Patagonia, Argentina
What wouldn't you do for £1 million?	Dance "The Macarena"
Who would play you in a film of your life?	Sarah Jessica Parker!

COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES

The celebrity I'd most like to have as a teacher at my school is:	Johnny Depp, teaching Drama!
As a child I wanted to grow up to be:	Special Needs Teacher, and I am!
My most embarrassing moment in school:	In high school I lost a bet and had to take the part of a Star in the nativity alongside the other children who were all 7 years old (I was 15!!)
If I've learned one thing, it's:	If you really want to do something, you will find the way.
I shouldn't be telling you this, but:	My real name is: Maria de los Angeles Jimenez Sanchez-Manzanares But please just call me Marian! (If you don't believe it just ask me for my passport!!)
Tell us your best joke:	Teacher: If "can't" is short for "cannot" what is "don't" short for? Pupil: Donut !!!! (Doughnut)

CURRICULUM NEWS

Christmas Tree Festival 2016 in St Nicolas Church, Cranleigh



The Cranleigh Christmas Tree Festival is becoming a popular annual community event with schools, groups and individuals from across the parish district decorating their trees in a variety of different ways.

Last week several learners from St. Martha's were involved in decorating our St Joseph's Christmas tree. It had been collected by staff and Terry, from Santa Fir Christmas Tree Farm, and placed in position in St Nicolas' Church.



The decoration took some planning and the view from each angle was considered before the colour scheme was finalised. Over the course of the week other learners from School and College went down to add their decorations. The exhibition opened on Friday 9th December and lasted for 4 days; with staff and learners popping in to check that our tree was looking its very best.

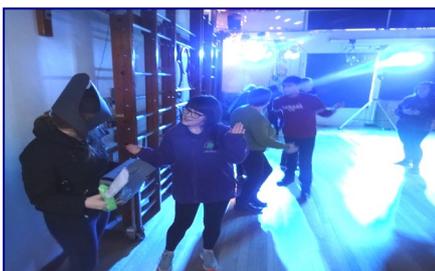


The learners really enjoyed looking at all the different Christmas displays on offer, the themes were wide and varied, "Toilet", "Brighton & Hove Albion FC", "Traditional" even a "French *Can-Can* Tree!"

Our tree was based around the theme, 'In the bleak mid-winter' and featured houses, stars, people and most importantly snowballs all made by the learners at St Joseph's using recycled materials and plenty of festive sparkle. It was highly commended by all who came for its imaginative interpretation of the well known carol. Admirers also commented that it was lovely to see a tree with decorations that had been handmade so carefully. Each snowball had a face and the expressions that the learners created really brought a smile to the visitors' faces.

Christmas Disco

In between all the preparations and singing practice for our Christmas Nativity performance we have been careful to make sure there was time to share the joy and laughter of the season. On Tuesday, Alison and her team in the kitchen prepared and served a fabulous Christmas Lunch in the Dining Room, to which all staff, Governors and learners were invited. Everyone then gathered in the School Hall to dance the afternoon away at the Christmas Disco. Luckily with holding separate disco sessions for learners for the School and College respectively there was enough space for everyone to enter enthusiastically into their dancing groove and work off those delicious lunch time calories. Hannah Wallace proved very adept as photographer!



CURRICULUM NEWS

Christmas Fair - Friday 2nd December



You will have known from the appeals in the newsletter and invitations to the event itself, that we held our Annual Christmas Fair on 2nd December.

Donations had been arriving steadily during the weeks beforehand and just immediately before the date we received gifts of cakes and flapjacks. We are fortunate that families, friends and staff are so generous with their time and energy.

The day itself arrived and the maintenance and catering joined together with the stall holders to prepare the hall. Guests were escorted over to the hall by the admin team who also hosted the refreshment stall and in no time the Hall was thronging with customers. Families, learners and staff could be seen enjoying a browse and a shop.

When the takings were all added up, Helen Van Mol who coordinates the Fair was delighted to find that we had had a record year with the following totals.

Horticulture	137.00
Cards	96.00
Pottery	156.00
Cakes	68.50
Bric-a-Brac	23.46
Toys	43.32
Enterprise	52.90
Tombola	21.80
Woodwork	65.00
Raffle	149.00
Total	812.98



CURRICULUM NEWS

Christmas Fair - Enterprise Project



Lucy Skinner led the class enterprise this term. She looked at some ideas on Pinterest and suggested them to the class. They finalised on the bright idea of recycling spoilt jigsaw puzzles, making them into beautiful heart decorations.

First of all they made a prototype and asked staff and learners in the college whether they thought they would buy them and whether they were of good enough quality to sell.

As the feedback was so favourable they went ahead with full production.

They sourced their puzzles from charity shops and painted them different colours. Market research told them that white was the most popular colour, so the majority of them were made white. They then glued them together in three different sized heart shapes.

Charlotte really enjoyed working on the stall and seeing the profits rolling in. In fact they sold out completely even before the Christmas Fair ended.

The class now plan to use some of the profits for their next enterprise but also to have a well-earned celebratory outing together.

Long Barn Official Opening - 2nd December 2016



Friday 2nd December was an exceptionally busy day for St Joseph's, since in addition to attending our annual Christmas Fair, Annie and Alan were invited to join the tenants, their families and special guests at Long Barn Supported Living House, on the official opening by Damon Hill OBE.

Alan drove Damon and his wife Georgie to Long barn in Beare Green, an interesting meeting of different driving styles although I'm sure Alan was happy to share his expertise!

Damon is a patron of St Joseph's and their son Ollie attended St Joseph's as a learner, some years ago.

Long Barn is our second Supported Living House and the first tenants moved in whilst still final year students at St. Joseph's; they have now been joined by other young people who access further care, education and work experience as they choose.

Staff and tenants of Long Barn had worked hard to ensure the opening went very smoothly. Alison and her team had made the most delicious buffet of sandwiches and cakes, and it looked magnificent laid out on the beautiful breakfast bar. Damon cut the ribbon and declared Long Barn officially open. Rob (another ex learner of St. Joseph's) gave Georgie and Damon a guided tour, and there was even an impromptu guitar solo. Damon and his wife are such lovely people, it was lovely that they were able to join us.



CURRICULUM NEWS

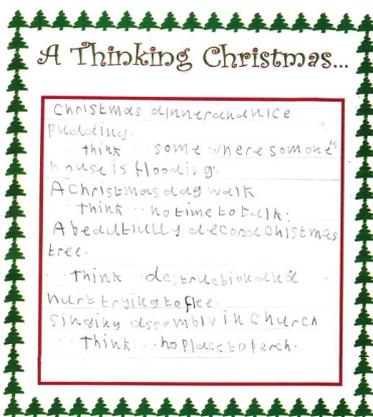
Christmas Poetry

This half term and the last 2 weeks in particular have included time when staff and learners have paused to reflect on the Christmas Story and how we celebrate the season.

Elizabeth invited St Martha's to compose a poem titled "A Thinking Christmas..." and the class thought of

- i) the Christmas Story of Joseph and Mary's journey and search for a place to sleep in Bethlehem, and
- ii) the experiences of other children and families around the world who are struggling with difficult living conditions in particular the children in Aleppo.

There were many insightful contributions but Hannah's stood out and as you can see, she was very mindful that others are not so fortunate.



"Christmas dinner and nice pudding ...

think ... somewhere someone's house is flooding

A Christmas dog walk ... think ... no time to talk

A beautifully decorated Christmas tree ...

think ... destruction and hurt trying to flee

Singing assembly in church ... think ... no place to perch.

By Hannah Wallace

Eddy chose an acrostic style poem to represent his thoughts on Christmas, reflecting his enthusiasm and delight in being with family and friends, together at home for Christmas.

Chicken on the table smelling delightful,
House decorated with shimmering lights,
Running down the stairs joyfully,
Inside my house there was a gleaming fire,
Snowmen in the house will be drenched at the heat of the radiators,
Time is running wild,
Mass gathering remembering yesterday's events,
All my friends and family will be enthusiastic,
Santa will be here at the break of dawn.

By Eddy Kinyua

Chicken on the table smelling delightful
House decorated with shimmering lights
Running down the stairs joyfully
Inside my house there was a gleaming fire
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Frank's Journey with his Ewok

Frank from St Cecilia's class has been hand sewing this amazing Ewok for several months in 1:1 lessons with Kath. He has learnt so many different skills: researching, planning, cutting, pinning, stitching and threading a needle to name just a few.



However, perhaps the biggest lesson is patience and perseverance in seeing it through to completion. This is the third soft toy he has made on a Star Wars theme and they are all on display in the glass cabinet by the main entrance. Frank is now an inspiration and role model for other learners who are also requesting lessons in sewing.

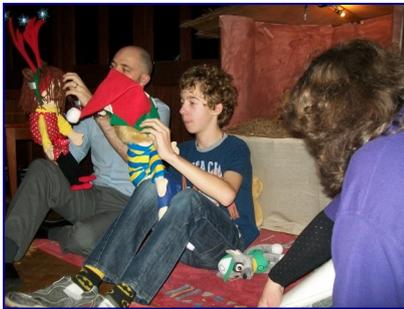


RESIDENTIAL CARE NEWS + ACTIVITIES

Residential care staff and young people have had a very Christmas orientated few weeks. The whirlwind fortnight has included amongst other events a trip to the Horsham Panto, small gatherings in the Chapel for Nativity activities, an amazing Christmas Party with a surprise appearance by Santa and a trip to the Wintershall Evening Performance of the Nativity.

Chapel Activities

The beautiful Nativity crib display in the Chapel lent itself to being the central focus for an evening Christmas/Nativity celebration for the Residential Learners. A selection of Christmas and Nativity themed books, rugs, and toys were placed around the crib, allowing learners to choose. Additional tea-lights, snowflake lights, and Christmas themed music softened the area to create a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. The evening celebration was an optional activity for the Residential Learners, several young people did attend and enjoyed listening to the story... "T'was the Night before Christmas", looking at the lights through "rainbow glasses", blowing bubbles, and wearing Christmas antlers...and then trying their luck with the "Christmas Lucky Dip" which was popular with Luke and Callum. Angela, our Chaplain, who had been busy organising the event joined Holy Family for their evening meal, and brought along some of the activities from the Chapel. The "pass-the-parcel" was a firm favourite, and although only one Learner had played the game before, the others were very quick to pick up the nature of the game, winning small sweet prizes as they tore open excitedly each layer of wrapping and newspaper. There are plans to host more Chapel Activity Evenings in the Spring Term.



Residential Christmas Party



CURRICULUM NEWS

Save the Children - Christmas Jumper Day



On Friday 16th December staff and learners were invited to wear their Christmas Jumper, no matter how outlandish it might be. The turn out was wonderful, with every department joining in. There were some lovely elves and even a Star Wars Jedi Santa from SLT. Their admirable efforts were rivalled by some amazing outfits sported by the learners. The dressing up also went beyond just a jumper and antlers, fancy glasses and even the most Christmassy Shoes in history were on show.

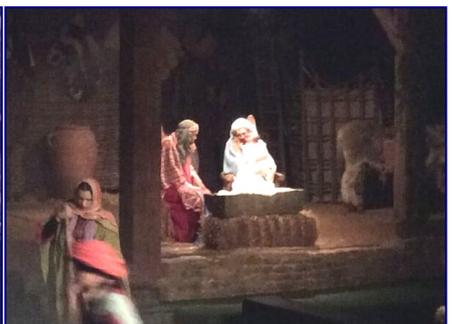


Since it was a Charity event, Jamie, Hannah, Tim and Terry toured all the classrooms and support areas collecting donations for Save the Children. Jamie was difficult to keep up with at times; Helen was happy to report that by Monday we had raised over £100 and hopefully there will be a little more when the last few collection boxes are counted up.



Wintershall Nativity

The 15th December was a cold wintery evening and a hardy group of staff and young people from St Joseph's set off to the Wintershall Estate in the evening to attend the Nativity Play. This is a wonderful annual event that takes part in the grounds starting with Mary and Joseph riding down the hillside travelling with a real donkey and finding shelter at the stable. Shepherds in the field hear the Good News from the angel high up in the tree tops before leading the audience into the barn theatre to watch a wonderful visual representation of the Christmas Story complete with sheep and horses. St Joseph's has strong links with the Wintershall group as Chester their donkey and some of their actors join us every year to help us to celebrate our Easter Story.



CURRICULUM NEWS



**St. Joseph's
2016
Christmas Carols
&
Nativity**



“Wise Men Three”
This years production involved a huge cast, some more visible than others. The actors included Wise Men, Dancers, Market Stall Holders, Stars, Angels, Camel (2 distinctly different looks!), Herod and his Bouncers (particularly intimidating ones at the evening show!) Shepherds, Sheep (afternoon show only!) more Angels, and of course Mary and Joseph. Less visible but immensely valuable was the work of the narrators, choir and musicians. Anthony is really a fully fledged member of the band now. Well Done to all.



WORK EXPERIENCE AND RELATED LEARNING

New Opportunities



Wednesday 14th December was a great day for Frank. He met Mariana, the manager of Café on the Park, for an interview as he wanted to work in the café and behind the scenes in their kitchen.

Frank answered the interview questions well and after a short while the manager told him he had the job and put him to work straight away.

Behind the scenes Frank washed his hands because he was asked to make a pizza. He carefully spread the pizza base with tomato puree and selected a variety of toppings.

He was then handed a huge pizza paddle to place his pizza in the oven. He was then shown how to assemble a pizza box used for carry-out pizzas. After four minutes the pizza was cooked. He then cut it and placed it carefully in the box. His first task was expertly completed.



Mariana said she was very pleased with the way Frank followed instructions and that she was looking forward to working with him next year. She then showed him around the venue to explain all the different jobs he would be doing. As he was about to leave, Mariana handed him the pizza to take with him which was a great surprise. Frank took it back to college to share with his class mates.

Progress at every step

Max has been doing so well in his role as a trainee Financial Assistant, that this week he did the whole job on his own! That's quite a bit of responsibility, handing out pocket money for the whole of school and college, all on your own.

His line manager, Philippa Gallacher, said he arrived in a buoyant mood and was very excited at the prospect of taking on the independent challenge. He set off enthusiastically to deliver the money.

When he returned Philippa told us he was as proud as punch, had a grin from ear to ear and asked how long he had been. She told him how efficient he had been as he completed it in 35 minutes.

Max told her that not only had he delivered the money, he had also managed to collect many of her missing money bags, ready for next week. Staff reported that Max had also practiced being assertive and speaking louder, so that he was heard when he walked into each classroom.

In fact the financial team are so impressed with Max that they have offered him a second job. In the Spring term he will prepare the weekly housekeeping money, pocket money and the daily living Skills money ready for the Monday of the following week. He will also help bag up any coin, be working from lists and will learn how to use the coin scales in the office.

We are all very proud of Max's achievements and we know he is really looking forward to his new role in January.



New Opportunities and Cross Training



We have a new TA training on Fridays with help from a friend!

Jamie Bevan has personally requested to undertake a new style work experience where he has become a 1:1 TA to support George in his daily living skills. George is to then help Jamie notice any mistakes he makes along the way so the lesson can be improved. Both learner's took to this role play work experience with enthusiasm. Jamie had to prepare a lesson where he decided the learning intention was for "George to make his lunch independently."

Jamie has prepared resources with Caroline, to support his lesson with George. They designed a micro transition board so that he could guide George in preparing, cooking his meal and cleaning up afterwards. They have a dedicated slot in the food tech room to do this every Friday. As you can see here, George listened very attentively to check Jamie was instructing appropriately.

George chose his meal of Chicken Nuggets (the good ones!) and chips, so the micro transition board was adapted for this.

Jamie, dressed appropriately in purple, picked George up at 11:00am for the lesson and explained what they were going to do and where they were going to do it. Jamie showed George the micro transition strip and immediately George took off the first instruction and washed his hands. They worked very harmoniously together, with occasional prompting from staff but they made an impressive start together. George sometimes took the lead using the transition board when Jamie had lost attention. Also if there were no instructions, verbal or visual, George would wait until Jamie recognised he needed to take the lead.

Jamie had also helped to make a game of snap based on all the utensils and ingredients they needed to achieve the task both in pictures and in word form. This was to be used as a break activity whilst the food cooked. It took a few attempts but in the end Jamie had explained the game well enough that George happily played.

Jamie has realised that some instructions were in the wrong order and he forgot to tell George to turn the timer off. So this week he will amend this ready for this Friday's session.

After the washing and drying up had been achieved, Jamie completed an assessment of George's work

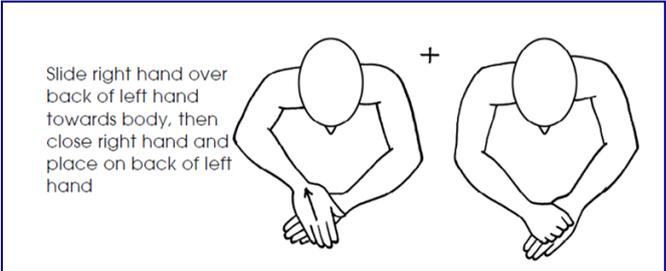
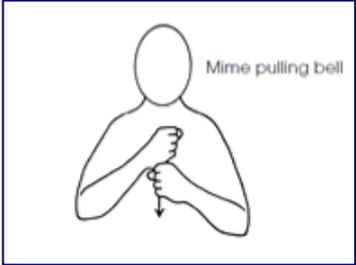
linked to his learning intention and gave George a self-assessment sheet to complete.

Jamie said George had done really well and only needed a little verbal prompting whereas George self-assessed himself as "Perfect!" Monika feels it went really well as George asked to do it again the following week.



THERAPY NEWS

Makaton Signs of the Week



PUZZLE CORNER



WINNERS

Autumn Term Boggle



Boggle is a brilliant word game where you connect the letters to form words.
 The are only a few rules; one is that you can't use the same letter twice and another is that you can't suggest naughty words!!



This term we were pleased to have contributions from across the school and college and even from our Community Gardeners.
 Congratulations to the Autumn Term winners; Sophia and Chris Ashworth.

January 2017 will see the launch of the Spring Term Boggle, Playing Boggle can be done as a group game or as an individual activity. All entries are welcome, please take some time to complete and send your replies in to Lauren during the Spring Term and before the closing date.

THERAPY NEWS

Speech & Language - What is Makaton?

The complete Makaton language is a language programme using signs and symbols to help people communicate. It is designed to support spoken language and the signs and symbols are used **with** speech in a normal spoken word order.

People with learning disabilities or communication difficulties may struggle to make themselves understood - and to understand others. This can provoke intense frustration sometimes leading to challenging behaviour and a sense of isolation.

Poor communication can also act as a barrier to achievement affecting self esteem, confidence and ultimately influence the range of opportunities available to an individual.

Parents and carers can experience similar feelings of frustration and isolation, wondering how they will ever 'get through' and feeling that they are letting their young person down in some way.

Using Makaton with children, people with learning disabilities or communication difficulties takes away some of that frustration and enables individuals to connect with other people and the world around them. As with many communication systems, it will begin with using a few essential communication signs and symbols before building to a fuller more extensive level.



The Makaton Signing for Babies Mobile App costs £8.99



Makaton Signing for Babies is easy to use and helps you to learn a set of simple signs in the Makaton language. It is available for Apple iOS and Android devices and is ideal as an aid to communication with your children using Makaton signs and symbols.

Long before children start to speak they begin to use gestures, such as pointing, facial expressions and body language to express themselves. Using the signs in this app helps to develop these skills.

The vocabulary has been selected following consultation with a range of Makaton Tutors as well as parents and those working with babies and young children. This app also provides approximately 30 additional concepts in symbol and sign that parents of young children often request.

Dates for your diary

Spring Term

JANUARY

Wednesday 4th	First Day of Term - Learners arrive 10.15-10.30am
Thursday 5th	2.45-3.15pm - Epiphany Liturgy (All Key Stages)
Wednesday 11th	Pantomime Visit (All Key Stages)
Monday 16th	Whitley Manor Farm Visit (Key Stages 1/2/3)
Wednesday 18th	10.30-12pm - Family Coffee Morning - Achievement for All
Wednesday 25th	Holocaust Memorial Day

FEBRUARY

Friday 10th	Last day of term - Learners finish 1pm
Monday 20th /Tuesday 21st	Staff CPL Days
Wednesday 22nd	First Day of Term - Learners arrive 10.15-10.30am

MARCH

Wednesday 1st	2.45-3.15pm Ash Wednesday Liturgy (All Key Stages)
Thursday 2nd	World Book Day (All Key Stages)
Wednesday 15th	Family Coffee Morning
Wednesday 22nd	St. Joseph's Day - Feast Day Mass and Celebration – time tba
Friday 24th	Comic Relief Day
Monday 27th	2.15pm Palm Sunday Liturgy (All Key Stages)
Wednesday 29th	2.30-3.15pm Last Supper Liturgy (All Key Stages)
Wednesday 29th	7pm Work Related Learning/ Experience Evening
Thursday 30th March	Last day of term - Learners finish 1pm

The next newsletter will be published on Friday 20th January 2017.