

Mount St. Joseph

"A community of Learners, Believers and Friends"

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Headteacher: Mrs A Devany



1st September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you and your families are well and that you enjoyed the summer break.

Congratulations to Year 11 - Class of 2025

We are incredibly proud of our Year 11 students, the Class of 2025, who have achieved a fantastic set of GCSE results. Their determination and resilience over the past two years, combined with the ongoing support from our staff, parents, and carers, have been truly commendable. We wish all of our Year 11 leavers the very best in their next steps—whether in further education, employment, or training.

Start of Term - Wednesday 3rd September 2025

We are excited to welcome all students and staff back to school. A special welcome goes out to our new Year 7 students and their families—we hope you soon feel part of the Mount St Joseph community. Should you have any questions or concerns, your child's Personal Development Tutor should be your first point of contact, followed by the pastoral team.

New Staff

We are pleased to welcome our new staff members across a range of departments. We look forward to the valuable contributions they will make to our school and wish them every success in their new roles. Our new SENDco is Mr Hulton- mhulton@msj.stoccat.org.uk

Attendance and Punctuality

We are committed to raising standards and need your continued support to ensure your child arrives on time and is fully prepared for school each day. You will receive regular updates on your child's attendance, which aim to support their ongoing improvement.

Why Attendance Matters

As part of our drive to continue to raise standards, we would like to request your full support to continue in ensuring that your child attends school punctually every day, and that they are fully equipped and prepared for school. Each term you will continue to receive a regular update about your child's attendance which is intended to support improvements throughout the year. It is essential that students attend school fully and engage in all the opportunities school life brings. Students that miss just 10 minutes each day, miss an incredible 30 hours of teaching and learning across the year!

Students who have 90% attendance miss nearly 4 weeks learning over a year. Over 5 years this means they lose nearly half a year of learning.

We also know that students fall behind their friends and classmates when they miss school. At Mount St Joseph we want the amount of missed education to be reduced as much as possible. We believe that our community is stronger together, with all of our students in school, on time, every day. We are building life skills, life-long friendships and preparing your child for future success.

Term-Time Holidays



In line with government guidance, we are unable to authorise holidays during term time. Parents taking children out of school for holidays will receive a penalty notice from Bolton MBC. These penalties have increased, and repeated fines may lead to legal action.

Reporting Absences

If your child is unwell, please inform us as soon as possible by emailing: attendance@msj.stoccat.org.uk so we can update our records and notify staff.

Punctuality

Please ensure your child arrives by 8.30am each morning. Students begin their day with Personal Development Time (PDT)—a key part of our curriculum. PDT includes literacy and numeracy intervention, reading, careers guidance, mentoring, and individual progress checks. These sessions help us develop well-rounded students and make a meaningful impact.

Pastoral team

There are also some changes to our pastoral team. Please see below the staff who oversee the pastoral structure and your child/(ren)'s year group/s:

Mr. Draper	Deputy Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	PDraper@msj.stoccat.org.uk
Mrs Smith	Assistant Headteacher and deputy DDSL	MSmith@msj.stoccat.org.uk
Mrs Morris	Assistant Headteacher and deputy DDSL	GMorris@msj.stoccat.org.uk
Mrs Burns	Head of pastoral and deputy DDSL	DBurns@msj.stoccat.org.uk

Year group teams 2025 - 2026

Year	Head of Year	Pastoral Care Officer
7	Mrs Forsythe RForsythe@msj.stoccat.org.uk Mrs Mc Keown KMckeown@msj.stoccat.org.uk	Key stage three team (Year 7,8 and 9) Mrs Wolstencroft swolstencroft@ms.stoccat.org.uk
8	Miss Snape CSnape@msj.stoccat.org.uk	Mrs Archer SArcher@msj.stoccat.org.uk
	Miss Stedman ESTeadman@msj.stoccat.org.uk	
10	Mr. Drummond PDrummond@msj.stoccat.org.uk	Key stage four team (Year 10 and 11)
11	Miss Dale FDale@msj.stoccat.org.uk	Miss Nolan DNolan@msj.stoccat.org.uk Mrs. Clarke KClarke@msj.stoccat.org.uk

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact your child's personal development teacher in the first instance and then the head of year or pastoral care officer (see above for emails). We have further information on our website about the pastoral team and how we support your child and how you can help to support your child [Safeguarding - Mount St Joseph Catholic School](#)

Reminders about standards:

To maintain our excellent reputation in the community, we ask for your continued support in ensuring that our uniform standards remain high. Prior to the summer break, we sent a reminder outlining our expectations, and we encourage all parents and carers to refer to the full uniform list available on the school website before purchasing any items. Please note that the school uniform policy is in line with the government's policy that states from September 2026 onwards, schools in England will only be permitted to require parents to purchase three branded uniform items, plus an optional branded tie for secondary schools.

Lanyards

All students must wear their year group-coloured lanyards at all times. These are now considered part of the school uniform. Students require their lanyards to purchase food at break and lunchtime, so it's essential that they bring them daily.

Year 7 and new starters will receive their lanyards on the first day of term. If your child has lost their lanyard, please log onto the school shop on the Arbor App to order a replacement. Please note, lanyards take at least 48 hours to arrive. If you require support with this please email reception@msj.stoccat.org.uk

We appreciate your support in ensuring all students uphold our uniform standards. If you are uncertain about any aspect of the uniform, please contact the school before making purchases or check the website: [School Uniform - Mount St Joseph Catholic School](#)

Student Planners

Each student will be issued with a planner on their first day. This will be used to record their timetable and homework, track passes issued by staff and support organisation across the school day

Planners must be brought into school every day and used in all lessons. Students who forget their planner regularly will face appropriate consequences. Lost planners must be replaced at the student's own cost. Additionally, please ensure your child brings a school bag each day to carry their equipment, planner and school books.

Please note that a separate letter regarding homework expectations will be sent to parents and carers via email in the coming days.

Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices

To support student learning and minimise distractions, Mount St Joseph operates a strict mobile phone policy:

“Out of sight, on site.”

This means that phones and all electronic devices must be switched off and kept out of sight throughout the school day—including during break and lunchtime.

Students found using mobile phones or similar devices during the school day will have them confiscated until the end of the day.

We ask for your continued support in reinforcing this policy at home, which helps us maintain a focused and respectful learning environment.

Term dates and holidays

The term dates for 2025-2026 and 2026/2027 are on the school website and can be found by clicking the following link [Term Dates - Mount St Joseph Catholic School](#)

Please could I ask you to check the term dates before booking any holidays or events as holidays cannot be authorised during term time.

Communication with parents and carers

We will endeavour to keep you informed of all the information that you will need to be aware of throughout the year. All letters and correspondence will be sent directly to the email address registered with school; with this in mind please ensure you notify school if your email address changes. We will also continue with a school biweekly newsletter to keep everyone updated with what is happening and to celebrate and reward the achievements in the MSJ community.

We believe that keeping the lines of communication open is essential to the progress your child makes and we encourage parents and carers to check the website regularly for key dates, bulletins, and newsletters to ensure you are aware of events and updated information: [Home - Mount St Joseph Catholic School](#) or follow us on Twitter / X @MSJBolton. Should you wish to arrange a meeting with a member of staff please contact them via email or through Main Reception, unfortunately due to teaching commitments we cannot meet with parents who arrive in school without appointments.

If you have any enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact the school on 01204 391800 or email reception@msj.stoccat.org.uk

School lunch payments - Arbor App

The Arbor App should now be used by parents to top-up their child's school lunch account. Please ensure you have logged into this system to top-up your child's lunch account prior to the start of term. If you have any problems accessing this system, please call Main Reception on 01204 391800 or email reception@msj.bolton.sch.uk and we will support you with this.

Year 11 - class of 2026

Before summer we sent our parents and carers of our new year 11s a letter outlining the expectations along with some information that they need to be aware of for the final year at MSJ. Please ensure that you have read through this letter with your child before the start of the term a link to this can be found on the school website at: [2025.07.15-Year-11-Preparation-Letter.pdf](#)

There will be a parental information evening for Year 11 and their parents and carers on **Thursday 11th September from 4.30-6.00pm.**

Important dates for your diaries this term:

The key dates for this term are listed below.

The dates of parents' evenings are available on the school website -[Parents' Evenings - Mount St Joseph Catholic School](#) these evenings provide an opportunity to meet all your child's teachers and discuss their academic progress throughout the year.

Date	Event
Thursday 11 th September 2024	Year 11 Introduction evening - 4.30.-6.30pm
Wednesday 24 th September 2025	Year 7 photographs
Thursday 25 th September 2025	Open Evening - early closure -1.45pm
Thursday 23rd October 2024	Year 7 Welcome Mass and meet PDT teacher - 3.30pm

We greatly value the support of our parents and carers and I look forward to working with you in the weeks and months ahead. In the meantime, may I take this opportunity to wish you and your children the very best for a successful year ahead.

Yours sincerely

Mrs A Devany

Headteacher