

Mount St. Joseph

"A community of Learners, Believers and Friends"

Greenland Road • Farnworth
Bolton • BL4 0HT
Tel: 01204 391800
Fax: 01204 389575

Website: www.msj.stoccat.org.uk
e-mail: reception@msj.stoccat.org.uk

Headteacher: Mrs A Devany



9th December 2025

Dear parents and carers,

As we approach the end of what has been a very busy and productive term, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you sincerely for all your continued support and patience. Your partnership with the school is greatly valued and plays a vital role in the success of our students.

Over the last few months, it has been wonderful to see so much fantastic learning taking place across the school. Our students returned in September with an excellent attitude to learning, and they have embraced the many opportunities available to them. Students have thoroughly enjoyed participating in extra-curricular activities, school visits, educational trips and inspirational talks from guest speakers. I hope that you have been kept well informed through our bi weekly MSJ newsletter. I would like to extend my thanks to all our students for their enthusiasm and to all our staff for their hard work, commitment and dedication this term.

I would also like to extend a special thank you following the tremendous success of last week's school production of 'Beauty and the Beast'. It truly was a spectacular show, showcasing the incredible talent, confidence and hard work of our students. My sincere thanks go to the staff involved for their dedication and to everyone who came along to support the performances - your encouragement made the event even more special for the students.

Towards the end of next week, all parents and carers will receive a newsletter from your child's Head of Year. This will celebrate the successes of the term and outline key dates and upcoming events that each year group will be involved in next term.

This Thursday, 11th December, we will be holding our Year 11 Parents' Evening. This is an important opportunity for you to meet with individual members of staff, receive your child's recent mock examination data, and discuss next steps following the Christmas break. It is essential that parents and carers attend wherever possible, as your support at this crucial stage of your child's education is greatly valued. If you are unable to attend, please contact the school to arrange an alternative appointment with your child's teachers.

End of term report

End-of-term progress reports for Years 7-10 will be sent via the Arbor app on Friday, 12th December. We encourage you to take some time to review this data with your child/children and discuss their progress together.



End of term arrangements

We would like to advise all parents that the school will close on Friday 19th December. As in previous years, students will finish school early on the last day of term - around lunch time. In order to ensure that all students leave school in a safe and controlled manner, we will be staggering the times each year group leaves:

- Year 10 and 11 at 12.15pm
- Years 7, 8 and 9 at 12.30pm

Please ensure that you plan for your child to make a safe journey home as there will be no school buses at the close of day. Please see the section below for information on school uniform for the last day of term.

Christmas events and charities

As part of BOSCEP (Bolton and Wigan Schools Catholic Education Partnership), we have been proud to work alongside the two other Bolton Catholic secondary schools and eighteen Catholic primary schools to raise money for Urban Outreach in Bolton and The Brick in Wigan. These shared efforts reflect our commitment to living out our faith through service to others.

In the lead up to Christmas, our school will continue to support a number of important local charities. Our first focus will be on the Farnworth and Kearsley Foodbank and the Destitution Project, both of which provide vital support within our local community. We will be collecting tins of food and non-perishable items, with the ambitious aim of surpassing last year's incredible total of over 2,000 tins collected. If you are able to support this appeal, we kindly ask that your child brings a donation into school by Friday 19th December. Items will be collected during PDT each morning.

We will also be supporting the Toy Appeal, which provides Christmas presents each year for families in need within our MSJ community. On Friday 19th December, students are invited to wear a Christmas jumper or hoodie with their school uniform-trousers/skirt and school shoes as normal (they do not need to wear blazers on this day) in exchange for either a donation of a food item or a small cash donation, all of which will go directly to this worthy cause.

In addition, our Caritas Ambassadors have organised a range of activities as part of our upcoming Mission Week. This week will focus on raising awareness of Catholic Social Teaching, supporting the Destitution Project, and fundraising for the Caritas Walk for Water campaign. Our target is to raise £750 over the course of the year to help fund a clean water supply for an entire community through Caritas.

In the two weeks leading up to the end of term, we will also be running a themed toiletries and essentials collection linked to Catholic values as part of the Caritas Advent programme:

Week 1 -: Toothbrushes and toothpaste and shower gel

Week 2 - Deodorant and sanitary products

For every item donated, students will receive two raffle tickets as a thank you for their generosity.

We are incredibly grateful for your continued generosity and support of these important charitable initiatives, which truly reflect the spirit and values of our school community.

Arrangements for adverse weather

As we look to the New Year, it is best to think about our arrangements for adverse weather. We have only closed on two days in the last thirteen years or so for adverse weather, so any alteration to normal business would be very rare. However, it is best to be clear about how we will communicate so that everyone is as well informed as possible on what are often stressful mornings. When we need to close, a 'weather warning - school closed' will appear on the school website and twitter account from 7.30am. You can also expect an Arbor notification and email around 7.30am to confirm the situation. Parents, carers and students will also receive an email to access work to complete at home in the event of a school closure.

In any event, do please make safe choices about travel - in most cases of bad weather school gradually fills up during the first part of the morning as students complete their journeys.

During the cold winter season students are encouraged to bring a warm coat to school. Please note that hooded tops are not permitted in the school building. In the event of snow, the pavements are slippery, and we would advise students to wear appropriate footwear to and from school, however, please note black school shoes must be worn in the building. There is a supplementary letter regarding uniform, standards and attendance (please below).

School communications - Arbor

All parents and carers have been invited to access their child's information via the St Teresa of Calcutta Trust-wide communication system, Arbor, which has now replaced the SIMS App. Through Arbor, parents and carers can:

- Access their child's attendance records
- Monitor attainment, progress and behaviour
- Make payments securely
- Book appointments for Parents' Evening

Should you require any support accessing Arbor or have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us at reception@msj.stoccat.org.uk and a member of our team will be happy to help.

Standards at Mount St Joseph

Alongside this letter is a supplementary letter regarding standards at Mount St Joseph, this includes attendance, punctuality, uniform, equipment, mobile phones and electronic devices and social media. Please take time to read this information and share this with your child/dren before returning to school in January.

For news and updates on the school, events and activities please visit the school website at: www.msj.stoccat.org.uk

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school or email reception@msj.stoccat.org.uk or contact attendance@msj.stoccat.org.uk

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and to wish you and your family a holy, peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

I look forward to seeing our MSJ community back in school on **Monday 5th January 2026**.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Devany
Headteacher