

Mount St. Joseph

"A community of Learners, Believers and Friends"

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Supplementary information - School routines 2026-27

As we approach the end of the school year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support of our school community.

We would be grateful if you could take the time to read through the contents of this letter with your child to ensure they fully understand our expectations. Your support is invaluable as we continue to raise our expectations and standards, helping to create the best possible environment for learning and improving outcomes for all of our young people.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and support.

Attendance and punctuality

As part of our continued drive to raise standards, we ask for your full support in ensuring that your child attends school every day, arrives punctually, and comes fully equipped and ready to learn.

Each term, you will continue to receive an update on your child's attendance to help you monitor their progress and support improvements throughout the year. Regular attendance is essential if students are to benefit fully from the opportunities that school life provides.

Missing just 10 minutes of school each day adds up to approximately 30 hours of lost teaching and learning over the course of a school year. Students with 90% attendance miss the equivalent of almost four weeks of learning in one year. Over the course of five years at secondary school, this amounts to nearly half a year of missed learning.

We also know that when students miss school, they can quickly fall behind their peers, both academically and socially. At Mount St Joseph, we are committed to reducing lost learning as much as possible. We believe our community is strongest when every student is in school, on time, every day. Together, we are helping young people develop the knowledge, skills, resilience and friendships that will prepare them for future success.

Please also be aware that holidays taken during term time cannot be authorised except in the most exceptional circumstances, in line with government guidance. Parents who choose to take their child on holiday during term time may receive a Penalty Notice issued by Bolton Council.

Punctuality is equally important in creating a successful school community. Arriving on time ensures that students are settled, ready to learn, and do not miss valuable teaching, instructions or key learning opportunities at the start of lessons. Good punctuality promotes positive routines, self-discipline, responsibility and respect for others, while reducing disruption for both staff and classmates. Developing the habit of being on time also prepares young people for further education, apprenticeships and employment, where reliability and punctuality are highly valued.

To further support high standards of punctuality, from September, any student who arrives more than two minutes late to school or to any lesson without a valid reason will receive a 30-minute same-day after-school detention. We ask for your support in reinforcing the importance of punctuality with your child and ensuring they arrive at school each day with sufficient time to be ready for learning.

Uniform

At Mount St Joseph, we are committed to maintaining the high standards that reflect our values and identity as a school. We ask for your support in ensuring that all students wear the correct school uniform with pride.

Please refer to the school website for our full uniform policy and requirements: [School Uniform - Mount St Joseph Catholic School](#)

I would particularly like to draw your attention to our expectations regarding hair and jewellery. Students are not permitted to wear any jewellery or piercings, including facial or body piercings, and extreme hairstyles or unnatural hair colours are not permitted. Please ensure that all jewellery, including any new piercings, is removed before students return to school in September.

When purchasing uniform for the new academic year, please also note the following:

- School trousers must be tailored trousers. Slim-fit, flared, cargo, canvas-style trousers and jeans are not permitted.
- School shoes must be black leather or leather-look shoes with no coloured logos. Trainers or trainer-style footwear are not acceptable.
- School skirts must be knee length, and students wearing skirts should wear plain black tights.

We greatly appreciate your support in ensuring that these high standards are maintained. If you are unsure about any aspect of the school uniform before making a purchase, please do not hesitate to contact the school for advice. We are always happy to help.

Equipment for school

To ensure that your child is fully prepared for learning each day, we ask that they bring the following items to school:

- A school bag.
- Pens, pencils and a ruler.
- Their school lanyard (please see the information below).
- Their student planner (this will be issued to all students on their first day in September).
- Their knowledge organiser (this will also be issued to all students on their first day in September).
- Their PE kit on timetabled PE days. Please refer to the school website for the full PE kit requirements. Please note that flared leggings are not permitted and, for health and safety reasons, students who wear a hijab for PE must wear a sports hijab.

Please refer to the school's Behaviour Policy, particularly Appendix 10, for further information regarding the procedures that apply when students do not meet our uniform expectations.

Year group-coloured lanyards form part of the school uniform and must be worn at all times while on the school site. Please ensure your child keeps their lanyard safe over the summer and remembers to bring it with them when they return to school in September. Lanyards are necessary to purchase lunch and breaktime snacks. If your child has lost their lanyard, please contact reception@msj.stoccat.org.uk and we will arrange for an order to be placed on your behalf. Please note that the new Year 7s will be given a lanyard on the first day.

Mobile phones and electronic devices

To continue building on students' progress and attainment, we must maintain a focused learning environment by minimising unnecessary distractions. In line with government guidance, mobile phones must not be used on school premises during the school day (unless there is an agreed medical need).

We ask for your support in reminding your child that mobile phones and other electronic devices, including AirPods, headphones, cameras and similar devices, must be switched off and kept out of sight throughout the school day, including at break and lunchtime.

The school is currently exploring the introduction of mobile phone pouches from the next academic year to further support our commitment to creating a distraction-free learning environment. Further information will be shared with parents and carers in due course.

Any student found using an electronic device during the school day will have it confiscated until the end of the school day. Students may wear a traditional wristwatch; however, smartwatches are not permitted.

For further information, please refer to the school's Behaviour Policy, particularly **Appendix 10**.

Drinks in school

Please be reminded that energy drinks and fizzy drinks are not permitted in school. These types of drinks can have a negative impact on students' concentration, behaviour, and overall health. Any energy or fizzy drinks brought onto school premises will be confiscated.

Social media

Many of our students use technology and social media responsibly; however, some young people need additional guidance and support. At school, online safety is regularly reinforced through lessons, assemblies and the work of our pastoral team and subject leaders, who are committed to helping students make safe and responsible choices online.

We would be grateful for your support in reinforcing these messages at home by encouraging your child to use mobile phones, social media and other online platforms responsibly and safely.

When students behave inappropriately online and their actions have an impact on members of our school community, they may be subject to the school's Behaviour Policy in the same way as if the incident had occurred in person. However, much of the inappropriate use of social media and the internet takes place outside school hours, using personal devices at home or during evenings, weekends and holidays. This can make it difficult for schools to investigate and intervene directly.

All young people have the right to feel safe online. While the school will continue to educate students about online safety, parents and carers play a vital role in monitoring their child's use of social media and the internet. Regular, open conversations about online activity are one of the most effective ways of helping young people stay safe. We also encourage parents and carers to be aware of the minimum age requirements for social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat and TikTok.

Please also remind your child to think carefully before sharing photos, videos or personal information online. Images or posts that reveal identifying details, such as school uniform, house names or other personal information, can place young people at increased risk of online grooming, exploitation or other forms of harm. Encouraging responsible digital behaviour is an important part of keeping every child safe.

All the above information and further information can be found on the school website:
www.msj.stoccat.org.uk

Lessons

At Mount St Joseph, every lesson follows a consistent seven-part structure to help pupils learn, remember and succeed. Lessons begin with Do Now Retrieval to revisit prior learning, followed by the Big Picture to show how new learning connects to the wider curriculum. Teachers introduce Essential Knowledge before delivering New Learning, using regular Checks for Understanding to address misconceptions and support progress. Pupils then complete Guided and Independent Learning to practise and apply their knowledge before finishing with a Reflection to consolidate learning and prepare for future lessons. This consistent approach helps all pupils build confidence, retain knowledge and achieve their full potential.

Homework

Our Knowledge Expert homework strategy is designed to help pupils remember more and build long-term knowledge. Each half term, pupils receive a Knowledge Expert sheet containing the essential knowledge and key vocabulary for every subject. They use these to complete weekly revision at home, supported by our Carousel retrieval platform, while teachers reinforce this knowledge through regular retrieval activities in lessons. At the end of each half term, pupils complete a short quiz to check their understanding, helping to strengthen memory, build confidence and ensure they are well prepared for future learning and assessments.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us maintain the high expectations that enable every student to thrive.