

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



1st September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope that you and your families have had an enjoyable and restful summer break. We are very much looking forward to welcoming all of our students back to school and to the start of another successful academic year at Mount St Joseph.

As we prepare for the new term, we wanted to take this opportunity to share some important information and reminders. For our returning families, this letter provides a helpful reminder of some of our key expectations and routines. For parents and carers who are new to Mount St Joseph, we hope it provides useful information about the school day and some of the standards and expectations that help our school community run successfully.

Our aim is to ensure that every student has the best possible start to the new academic year. Your support in reinforcing these expectations at home is greatly appreciated and helps us to maintain a positive, purposeful and supportive learning environment for all.

Congratulations to Year 11 - Class of 2026

We are incredibly proud of our Year 11 students, the Class of 2026, on achieving a fantastic set of GCSE results. Their determination, resilience, and hard work over the past two years have been exceptional, and these achievements reflect their commitment and perseverance. We would also like to thank our dedicated staff, parents, and carers for their unwavering support throughout this journey.

We wish all of our Year 11 leavers every success as they embark on the next stage of their journey, whether that be further education, employment, or training. We are confident they will continue to achieve great things, and we look forward to hearing about their future successes.

Start of Term

We are delighted to welcome all students and staff back for the new academic year.

Year 7 and Year 11 students should return to school on **Wednesday 2nd September at 8.20am**, with **all other year groups** returning on **Thursday 3rd September at 8.20am**.

A very warm welcome to our new Year 7 students and their families. We hope you quickly feel part of the Mount St Joseph community and enjoy a happy and successful start to your journey with us. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your child's Personal Development Tutor in the first instance, who will be happy to help. If needed, they will direct you to the appropriate member of the pastoral team.

New Staff

We are pleased to welcome some new staff members across the departments. We look forward to the valuable contributions they will make to our school and wish them every success in their new roles.

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 Council, 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 at school by 8:20am each morning, ready to begin the school day promptly. Students begin their day with Personal Development Time (PDT), which is a key part of our curriculum. PDT includes literacy and numeracy intervention, reading, careers guidance, mentoring, and individual progress checks. These sessions play an important role in supporting students' academic and personal development and help us to develop confident, well-rounded young people.

Please note that students who arrive after 8:32am will receive a same-day detention.

We also ask parents and carers to reinforce the importance of arriving on time for every lesson throughout the school day. When students are late to lessons, valuable learning time is missed, and this can affect both their own progress and the learning of others.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us maintain high standards of punctuality and ensuring that every student makes the most of their learning time.

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
Miss Phoenix	Assistant Headteacher	KPhoenix@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 2026 - 2027

Year	Head of Year	Pastoral Care Officer
7	Miss Gill CGill@msj.stoccat.org.uk Mrs Mc Keown KMckeown@msj.stoccat.org.uk	Ms Lord JLord@msj.stoccat.org.uk
8	Mr Montford LMonford@msj.stoccat.org.uk	Miss Nugent Turner GNugent@msj.stoccat.org.uk
9	Mr Haydock JHaydock@msj.stoccat.org.uk	Miss Nolan / Mrs Clarke DNolan@msj.stoccat.org.uk KClarke@msj.stoccat.org.uk
10	Miss Snape CSnape@msj.stoccat.org.uk	Mrs Clarke KClarke@msj.stoccat.org.uk
11	Mr. Drummond PDrummond@msj.stoccat.org.uk	Miss Nolan DNolan@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:

Please note that a separate letter providing further information about our **curriculum, teaching and learning, setting arrangements, and homework expectations** will be sent to parents and carers via email in the coming days.

We are proud of the high standards our students demonstrate, and we ask for your continued support in ensuring that our uniform expectations are maintained consistently. Wearing the

correct uniform helps create a strong sense of belonging, equality and pride in our school community.

Prior to the summer break, we sent a reminder outlining our expectations. We encourage all parents and carers to refer to the full uniform list available on the school website before purchasing any new items to ensure that they meet the school's requirements.

Our uniform policy reflects the Government's requirements around branded school uniform items, helping to ensure that school uniform remains as affordable and accessible as possible for families.

We also recognise the importance of reducing the cost of uniform wherever possible. Pre-loved uniform is available to support families, and we encourage parents and carers to make use of this provision. We also welcome donations of good-quality uniform that students have outgrown or no longer require so that these items can be reused by other families.

If you are experiencing any difficulties with obtaining the correct uniform, please let the school know. We would always encourage families to contact us so that we can discuss what support may be available.

We appreciate your support in ensuring that all students arrive at school wearing the correct uniform and are ready to represent our school community with pride.

Lanyards

All students must wear their year group-coloured lanyard at all times. Lanyards are now considered part of the school uniform. Students also require their lanyard to purchase food at break and lunchtime, so it is essential that they bring it to school every day.

Year 7 students and other new starters will receive their lanyards on the first day of term. If your child has lost their lanyard, please log in to the school shop via the Arbor App to order a replacement. Please note that replacement lanyards take at least 48 hours to arrive.

If you require support with ordering a replacement, please email reception@msj.stoccat.org.uk.

We appreciate your support in ensuring that all students uphold our high uniform standards. If you are uncertain about any aspect of the uniform, please contact the school before making any purchases or refer to the School Uniform section of the school website.

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 throughout the school day.

Planners must be brought to school every day and used in all lessons. Students who regularly forget their planner will receive appropriate consequences. Lost planners must be replaced at the student's own cost.

Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices

To support student learning and minimise distractions, Mount St Joseph operates a strict mobile phone and electronic device policy: **"Out of sight, on site."**

This means that mobile phones and all other electronic devices must be switched off and kept out of sight from entering the school gates in the morning, throughout the school day, including during break and lunchtime until they leave the school gates at the end of the day.

This approach reflects Department for Education guidance on mobile phones in schools, which encourages schools to prohibit the use of mobile phones throughout the school day, including during lessons, breaktimes and lunchtimes. The guidance recognises that reducing access to mobile phones can help minimise disruption and distractions, support positive behaviour and create an environment where students can focus fully on their learning.

Any student found using a mobile phone or other electronic device during the school day will have the device confiscated until the end of the day.

As part of our continued commitment to maintaining a focused and disruption-free learning environment, the school is also exploring the introduction of secure phone pouches. These would enable students to keep possession of their phones while ensuring that devices cannot be accessed during the school day. Further correspondence will be sent to parents and carers as we consider this approach. This will provide more information about how the phone pouches would operate, the expectations for students and the arrangements for their implementation.

We ask for your continued support in reinforcing our expectations around mobile phones and electronic devices at home. By working together, we can minimise distractions and maintain a focused, respectful learning environment in which all students can thrive.

Term dates and holidays

The term dates for 2026/2027 and 2027/2028 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 [Facebook](#). 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 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 2027

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 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: [Letters Home - Mount St Joseph Catholic School](#). A reminder that there will be a parental information evening for Year 11 and their parents and carers on **Tuesday 6th October 2026 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 24 th September 2026	Open Evening - early closure -1.45pm
Friday 25 th September 2026	Year 7 photographs (individual and PDT)
Tuesday 6 th October 2026	Year 11 Introduction evening - 4.30.-6.30pm
Thursday 22 nd October 2026	Year 7 Welcome Mass

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