



Free School Meals

Since the introduction of Free School Meals for all children in Year 2 and below we have experienced a fall in the number of families registering their entitlement to Free School Meals. The actual meals are not the only benefit for families who meet the Free School Meal criteria. Once a child is registered for Free School Meals they automatically become entitled to Pupil Premium Funding which lasts for at least six years. At the moment each child attracts an extra £1320 each year. One of the ways we use the Pupil Premium grant is to pay for all school trips (including the PGL residential trip). We also pay for extra teaching hours which are directed particularly towards closing gaps in, or extending, the learning of children who are entitled to pupil premium funding. The amount of money the school will receive under the new national funding formula being proposed by the government is also likely to increase if we have more children registered as being entitled to free school meals. If you meet ANY of the criteria below you can attract this extra funding for your child and the school.

- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (most recent award notice – with no Working Tax Credit AND annual income not exceeding £16,190)
- Guarantee element of pension credit
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act

If you do receive any of the above support please ask the office for a Free School Meals form.

Indoor Athletics

Last Thursday twelve children from years 4, 5 & 6 took part in the Catholic Schools Indoor Athletics Championships at Notre Dame School. In the past two years the children have come away with silver medals and they were determined to change that to gold this year. The hard work the children put in during most lunchtimes over the previous two weeks paid off. We were involved in twelve different relay races winning nine of them and coming second in the other three. All of the children also competed individually in throwing, jumping or agility events scoring points for the overall total. At the end of the afternoon we achieved our goal and the children went home very proud of the gold medals around their necks. Winning the event meant that we have qualified to compete against the other eight schools across the city who won their localised events.

Those city finals will take place in January. Photos of the successful team are on the website.

Family Liaison Officer

Most of you will know Lorna, who used to be known as our Parent Support Adviser. Lorna is now entitled Family Liaison Officer. There is a section on the school website where she promotes clubs and events for the children. Please have a look at the site for ideas for your child. If you know of a club which is not listed there please let Lorna know by popping into the office or emailing her at taylorl@st-josephs.plymouth.sch.uk.

Governors

We are lucky to be supported (and challenged) by our very committed Local Governing Body. This week you will receive nomination forms for two vacancies for Parent Governors. Please consider if you think this is a role where you can use your skills to benefit all of the children in our community. Being a parent governor is not the only way of supporting the school in this way. The majority of governors on the board are known as Foundation Governors. Foundation Governors are appointed by the Bishop after a recommendation from a Parish Priest. At present we have four Foundation governors but have space for two more. If you are a Catholic and you feel this is a role you could carry out, or know of another Catholic who may wish to do so, please speak with Miss Couzins or Mr Gill.

Children in Need

Thank you for your 'mufti donations to Children in Need, they totalled £136.45. I am sorry if anybody left the school disappointed at not being able to buy a biscuit on Friday. We were selling these on behalf of our caterers and unfortunately they did not have the time, or ingredients, to make enough biscuits to supply the whole school. We were able to hand over £53.43 to our kitchen manager which will be added to biscuit sales at most other schools in Plymouth to enable CATERed to make a sizeable donation to this good cause. If anybody has suggestions as to how we could reorganise how we sell the biscuits in future years please share them with us.

Closing Down Sale – Poundland

On Friday after school we will be selling off all of the old stock from the school shop that we used to run. This will include stationery, Argyle souvenirs and boxes of greeting cards. Everything will be priced at £1. All takings will now be directed to financing enterprise projects devised by year 6 pupils.