

SS OSMUND & ANDREW'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL, BOLTON

EXTRA NEWSLETTER: Monday 8th September 2025

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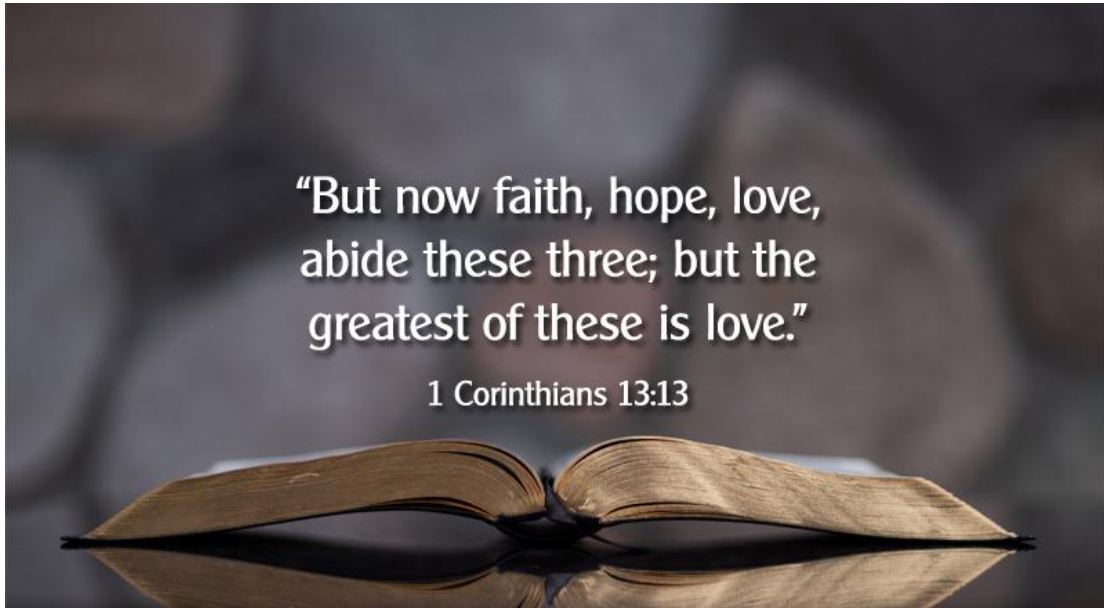
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“But now faith, hope, love,
abide these three; but the
greatest of these is love.”

1 Corinthians 13:13



The New School Year!

Once again, welcome back to the new school year! Newsletters are published every Wednesday – please read them to see if you have been invited to see your child be awarded a certificate in the following Monday's assembly in school. We will also publish an extra newsletter 6 times per year (once per half term) with lots of information that answers frequently asked questions. This is the first of this year's extra newsletters.

Every day is a learning day

Please do not think that on the last few days of the term the children are learning nothing – every day is a learning day at SSOA. Each day missed is 5 lessons missed. Each week is 25 lessons missed. Please ensure your child attends every day of school – even the last day! Please note that if your child has 91% attendance for the whole year, he/she will have missed over 85 lessons, and this will obviously hold up their progress. Thank you.

Thank you

Thank you to our school community that recognise the job our staff do for our children. We are a partnership with yourselves as parents who are the first educators of the children. Furthermore, we greatly value what you do to support us as a school. We know there are other schools in the area so we are honoured that you have chosen SS Osmund & Andrew's as the school for your children.

Unfortunately, we have had several incidents in the last half term where a very, very small number of parents have been rude or aggressive towards members of our staff. This behaviour is completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

The following document from the Department for Education should be noted: “Controlling Access To School Premises.” Within this document, it states:

“Schools can bar someone from the premises if they feel that their aggressive, abusive or insulting behaviour or language is a risk to staff or pupils. It's enough for a member of staff or a pupil to feel threatened.”

The full document can be read by clicking <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/controlling-access-to-school-premises/controlling-access-to-school-premises>

Year 2 Children

If your child is in Year 2 is a baptised Catholic and you wish them to make their First Holy Communion in Year 3, details of all the dates you need to attend will come out in September. If your child is not baptised and you wish your child to make their First Holy Communion, please contact Fr Heakin on **01204 522770** as soon as possible to arrange a baptism that will also allow them to go on the First Holy Communion Programme. Thank you.

Vaping

Please can I remind our parents that smoking and vaping are banned on our school premises to support our message to children to not partake in vaping and smoking. Thank you for your co-operation and support.

Arrival in school after 9.30am

If a child is late after 9.30am (When the electronic registers have closed and sent to Bolton Council), although they are in school (and are signed in so they are accounted for in the event of an emergency), the session actually counts as absent.

The DfE's Document: "Working together to improve attendance (August 2024)" can be found here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf states the following:

*"Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session: Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. All schools are expected to set out in their attendance policy the length of time the register will be open, **after which a pupil will be recorded as absent.** This should be the same for every session and not longer than 30 minutes."*

Our registers close at 9.30am. Please note that your child will be marked absent if they arrive after this time (and the registers have been submitted). The absence will be unauthorised, unless the circumstances fall under the circumstances which can be authorised which are set out from page 80 of the DfE's regulations.

Our school's Attendance Policy has to follow this guidance and can be found here: <https://www.ssoarc.co.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=454&type=pdf>

Cycling to School (Y5/6)

Children will only be allowed to cycle to school if:

- Children dismount at the school gate and walk their bikes on school grounds
- The child wears a helmet.
- The bicycle is in good working order making it safe (eg: the brakes work, the handlebars are on straight, etc)
- Children cycle outside the school grounds with care and attention, obeying traffic laws and not engaging in dangerous behaviour (there will be cycle patrols by staff).
- Children in Year 4 or below should be accompanied by an adult.

If a child fails to comply with these rules, permission to cycle to school will be withdrawn.

This action is to reduce the number of incidents where our children have put themselves at risk.

Attendance and Holidays in Term Time

Please note that our school does not have the power in law to authorise absences for family holidays. Please do not put school in the awkward position of a request, as the request will be declined. Furthermore, please note the new guidance from the government that requires us to issue a fine for 10 unauthorised sessions (5 days).

Under the procedures from the DfE, in Bolton, schools have regular meetings with the Council where our attendance figures and individual cases, are discussed. We are expected to follow this procedure:

- 1) If an absence is longer than 2 days, please expect to receive a house visit. If you cannot answer the door, a note will be posted saying we have been – upon receiving the note it is important that you contact school. The importance of us adopting this attendance/safeguarding procedure has been stressed to us by Bolton Council, and your understanding is thus much appreciated.
- 2) Please note that we will be meeting several times per year with the attendance team and we will be expected to be able to justify our decision to authorise an absence with something to back up our decision. Therefore, if your child is off poorly and has been given a prescription, we will be required to have a photograph of the prescription (or medicine label) in order for us to authorise the absence. In cases where we do not receive such information, we are unable to authorise the absence.

Please be patient with us as we implement these procedures, and thank you in anticipation of your understanding that we are obliged to ask you about absences and ask for photos, appointment cards and other items in advance, and for visits.

Lip balm

Children can be allergic to lip balm, and the worry is that if a child who is allergic uses their friend's lip balm. Therefore, lip balm can only be used in school if a parent is able to come in and administer the lip balm (and take the lip balm off site with them when they leave). This can be arranged with the office. Many thanks for your co-operation.

Fidget Toys

Only fidget toys (and [popping mats) supplied by school are the only ones that can be used in school. This is because they are assigned to certain children who our team feel their use will help them concentrate. If your child has not been

identified, then their use will usually mean that they distract both themselves and those around them. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

Reminder on Bags and Pencil Cases

Unfortunately, we do not have the room in our cloakrooms for rucksacks. Please ask your children to use bookbags or small bags. Due to problems caused when children bring in their own pencil cases, our rule is that children do not bring them into school. Thank you.

Jewellery

Jewellery, including earrings, should not be brought into school or be worn by the children on the grounds that it can be dangerous to self and others in many school activities, in particular playtimes and PE. Earrings should not be worn and children will be asked to remove them. The school cannot accept any responsibility for loss or damage to personal property. If your child is thinking of having their ears pierced, please can this happen in the first week of the summer holidays. This way, you will have plenty of time to allow earrings to be worn over the summer so that the holes do not heal up. This will avoid your child and school placed in the awkward position of an individual being asked to remove their earrings which are stopping their newly pierced ears from healing up! Thank you for your support with this issue.

The Association for Physical Education state:

“Schools have a duty of care to ensure students are able to participate actively without unnecessarily endangering themselves or those working around them. A clear and consistently applied policy for the removal of personal effects should be in place. The Association for Physical Education (afPE) strongly recommends the practice of removing all personal effects at the commencement of every lesson to establish a safe working environment. This applies to all ear and body piercings, including retainer and expander earrings.”

Mobile Phones

Please note that only Year 6 children are allowed mobile phones in school without a letter and this is under the strict conditions of the phones not being switched on when in school, and that they must be handed in when children arrive and collected at home time. This includes all events such as discos, etc. Any child breaking this rule will not be allowed to bring their mobile phone into school.

Valuables and Money

Please remember that school does not take any responsibility for loss or damage to valuable items including money, and thus we ask children not to bring them into school.

Sickness in school

Please note guidance of the Health Protection Agency that we follow which states that after a child vomits or has diarrhoea, the recommended period to be kept away from school is 48 hours. More information can be found at: https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Guidance_on_infection_control_in%20schools_poster.pdf

PE Kit

Please ensure that your child is wearing the correct PE kit. Football shirts, hoodies and tracksuit tops are NOT school PE uniform and are not to be worn.

The PE kit is:

- White t-shirt (*The school polo shirt can be worn or a 'round neck' white t-shirt*)
- Blue shorts
- Black slip on pumps for indoor lessons
- Black pumps or trainers for outdoor lessons
- Black tracksuit bottoms for (winter) outdoor lessons
- School jumper for outdoor lessons (over the top of the t-shirt)

Sometimes children turn up in a kit for PE that includes branded (eg Nike, Adidas, Puma, etc) t-shirts and tops, hoodies, football shirts, and so on, often without their parents' knowledge.

When it is your child's PE day, please ensure that they come to school in the correct PE kit. If your child is unable to wear the correct kit, please send them with a letter so that we know that you are aware they are wearing something different.

We do not allow make up in school as the principle of other children not being able to afford make up / not being allowed to wear make up applies, as it does to trainers and branded PE kits.

We have said to the children that if they come in trainers, make up and branded tops, this may look bad if seen by the public, for example parents who visit Little Ozzie's who will have a good view of the playground when they enter their premises. Therefore, there is the possibility that we will not allow children onto the playground who are not wearing the correct uniform so that our reputation remains strong in the community.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Inclusion

As a Catholic school, it is only natural that we are committed to welcoming everyone at SSOA, regardless of race, colour, gender, circumstances, and it is our job to help everyone develop, no matter who they are. Our school community is fantastic at instilling these messages of tolerance into our children, and our community is wonderful at working with school when our children make mistakes, enabling our children to take responsibility which leads to their growth. **Instances of racism are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.** On behalf of all at our school, we say THANK YOU to all our parents for their support in these matters! ☺

Parking

As a school, we would like to say a huge THANK YOU to all parents who have parked a little further away from school and walked to drop off their child(ren), or to pick them up. We would ask all parents to park a little further away from school. **Please do not park on Falkirk Drive or any side of Brodick Drive where you are parallel to our green fence as this congests the road where families have to cross.**

This plea is made in the interests of the children, as we have near misses on a regular basis. The safety of our children is paramount, and by parking further away from school and walking we are all reducing the risk of one of our children being injured in a road accident.

We also thank our parents for parking with great consideration towards our neighbours. We would respectfully request all our school community to continue to park with consideration towards the residents who live around school. Thank you.

Scissors in Nursery & Reception

When your child is at home, please reinforce our Scissors rules which are:

- Only use scissors when you are sat on a chair.
- Only use scissors on card (not your hair)

The Early Years Curriculum that we are obliged to follow insists on children developing their fine motor skills and their independence. One way all Early Years settings do this (including our own at SSOA) is to have scissors available for children to choose as a resource. The scissors we use are safe, but strong enough to cut paper.

The children are shown how to use scissors and we would ask you to reinforce this at home, including using them on paper.

Many of the activities are not to be 'adult-led' in accordance with the curriculum, therefore children may not always be supervised with the scissors. Whilst we have enough adults in our classrooms to fulfil the legal ratios, we cannot guarantee that a child will not use scissors on their own hair.

The curriculum (called "Development Matters") states:

Use one-handed tools and equipment, for example, making snips in paper with scissors.

You can begin by showing children how to use onehanded tools (scissors and hammers, for example) and then guide them with hand-over-hand help. Gradually reduce the help you are giving and allow the child to use the tool independently.

Develop their small motor skills so that they can use a range of tools competently, safely and confidently.

Suggested tools: pencils for drawing and writing, paintbrushes, scissors, knives, forks and spoons.

Help children to learn to form their letters accurately. First, they need a wide-ranging programme of physical skills development, inside and outdoors. Include large-muscle co-ordination: whole body, leg, arm and foot.

This can be through climbing, swinging, messy play and parachute games, etc. Plan for small muscle co-ordination: hands and fingers. This can be through using scissors, learning to sew, eating with cutlery, using small brushes for painting and pencils for drawing. Children also need to know the language of direction ('up', 'down', 'round', 'back', etc).

Please understand to remove scissors from our school or to make all scissor activities adult-led or supervised when the scissors we use are safe will put limits on what our children can learn. I believe that this stance is in line with other Early Years settings. It is certainly necessary to meet the expectations of the sample of the curriculum stated above.

Packed Lunches

Eating behaviours and habits are formed in early life and good nutrition in childhood can help to prevent a variety of health problems, both in the short term and later in life. There is increasing concern that many children are consuming too much fat, sugar and salt and too little fibre, fruit and vegetables.

School meals which are provided by the school must adhere to the Government School Food Standards which have been in place since 2015. These standards ensure that children are offered healthy, nutritious meals. They state, for example, that:

- One or more portions of vegetables are to be on the menu every day
- There is an emphasis on wholegrain foods in place of refined carbohydrates (e.g. brown bread instead of white)
- No more than 2 portions of pastry products are to be served each week
- One or more portions of fruit are to be on the menu every day
- Drinking water is made available

Unfortunately, there are no such standards for packed lunches brought in from home. Packed lunches can contribute to almost a third of a child's weekly food intake, therefore we want to encourage healthy packed lunches for those children who bring them into school.

We would like to provide a reasonable suggestion for a healthy packed lunch which is:

- 1) A portion of bread (or similar), rice, potatoes or pasta
- 2) Plenty of fruit and vegetables
- 3) A portion of dairy or a calcium rich alternative such as cheese or yoghurt
- 4) Some protein eg boiled egg, chicken, Quorn, tuna, etc
- 5) A healthy drink such as milk or water. Advice is to try to avoid fruit juices and fizzy drinks – if necessary, switch to no-added sugar cordial instead.

Own Risk

Please note that all equipment required by the children is already in school and there is no need for children to bring in equipment unless we have specifically requested this. All equipment is brought in at the child's own risk and we can accept no responsibility for any items that are lost. We would recommend that items are NOT brought in from home. Thank you for your support in this matter.

Morning Hand Over

Please note that we have staff on the door for you to hand your children over to. We appreciate that Year 6 children will increasingly walk to school as the year goes on. However, the younger children will need to be walked to the entrance by the adult that brings them to school. Please avoid staying in your car or asking the children to run from the school gate. At any point between the car/gate and the school door, we will not know the whereabouts of your child and cannot be held responsible for their safety. Therefore, we politely ask that you bring your child onto the school grounds and ensure that they safely make it through the school entrance doors before you set off for work, etc. Many thanks for your co-operation in this matter.

Internet Safety at Home

Please monitor your child's online use by not letting them use their phone/tablet in a room where they are not with an adult. Set up rules whereby you are allowed to check the phone/tablet at any time. If they see anything that they are not comfortable with, please set up a system where your child will report this to you straight away. If you are reporting something that is of a concern to school, please try to get a screenshot / photo of the screen to help us investigate. Most broadband providers operate a 'firewall' that you can switch on for your home broadband, that tries to stop all inappropriate material being displayed on any laptop, tablet, phone or device that connects to your home's wifi. For more details, contact your provider, Eg: BT: 0800 100 400 Sky: 0800 151 2747 Plus Net: 0800 432 0080 Talk Talk: 0345 454 1111 EE: 0800 079 5119 Tesco: 0345 30 400 30

United Front

Anyone who works in a school will tell you that when children can see a difference of opinion between home and school, things can break down. I am pleased to say that at SSOA, our parents will always present a united front to the children – and we discuss any differences of opinions behind closed doors. The golden rule is that on the rare occasions that Home and School disagree, the children must never know! Thank you so much for your co-operation in this matter.

Pencil Cases

Please note that pencil cases are not allowed in class as they take up room on tables and easily get lost.

Nuts

Please remember that we have a number of children who are allergic to nuts. Therefore, please ensure that your child does not bring any products containing nuts into school.

School Uniform - Shoes

Shoes are part of the school uniform. **If you are unable to send your child into school with shoes, please send a letter to your class teacher explaining this.** This is because we have experienced a small number of instances where children have been wearing trainers and their parents knew nothing about this! Please also ensure that long hair is tied back. Thank you for your support.

Morning Break Time Snacks

Please note that we ask that children do not bring in processed snacks such as crisps, biscuits, chocolate, sweets, etc. Please note that we are being vigilant as some children are attempting to eat these snacks at breaktime – if caught, children are being asked to put the snack away, so that they are not going hungry in the afternoon because they've eaten some of their packed lunch at 10.30am!

At breaktime children are permitted fresh fruit, veg, crackers, bread stick (but not with dippers for obvious reasons) and some children have toast which can either be provided by school or home.

Social Media: Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, etc

In line with other schools, we would like to strongly recommend that children do not have access to social media (even under parent supervision) until they are old enough to have an email account, which we believe is 13.

Inhalers

If your child has an inhaler, please ensure that the inhaler is kept in school, and that it is not out of date. Thank you.

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is where all schools receive timely information about incidents of domestic violence that the police have attended. Schools can then support all children who have witnessed domestic abuse. For more information, please click on: www.operationencompass.org

Unavoidable Closure

If it is felt necessary to close the school due to weather or building problems, this information will be sent out by text as soon as we possibly can. Please ensure you have the correct number. If you haven't received a text for a significant amount of time (say, a week or more), please check that we have the correct number. Thank you.

Phone Numbers

It is very important that school has an up to date phone number so that we can contact you in the case of an emergency. Please ensure that if you have changed your mobile number, that the office has been informed. Thank you.

Safeguarding Lead team at SSOA

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr Graves, and Mrs Doyle is the Deputy Safeguarding Lead. In addition to this, Mrs Kenyon-Kellett is also fully trained to be safeguarding lead. Please note that the obligation to inform social care regarding child protection is part of the role of all members of the Safeguarding Lead Team.

Water

Please note that only plain water (not flavoured water) is allowed in lessons.

Drinking water and brain function are integrally linked. Lack of water to the brain can cause numerous symptoms including problems with focus, memory, brain fatigue and brain fog, as well as headaches, sleep issues, anger, depression, and many more. The brain is one of the most important organs in the body to keep fuelled. It is approximately 85 percent water and brain function depends on having abundant access to water.

Flavoured water and soft drinks are limited in school to packed lunches (and not lessons) because of the potential health problems associated with high intake of sweetened drinks which are 1) overweight or obesity attributable to additional calories in the diet; 2) displacement of milk consumption, resulting in calcium deficiency with an attendant risk of osteoporosis and fractures; and 3) dental caries and potential enamel erosion.

Water bottles should come into school with your child's name on, and taken home each evening. We cannot accept any responsibility for water bottles left in school overnight.

Valuable Items

We ask that children do not bring in valuable items, including branded clothing. School cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage.

Parents Code of Conduct

Thank you for:

Respecting the school's caring ethos.

Working with teachers for the benefit of children.

Always remaining calm and respectful.

Always resolving issues through school.

Always correcting your child's behaviour when you need to.

A more detailed version of the Code is on our school website.

Mobile Phones

Please note that only Year 6 children are allowed mobile phones in school without prior agreement and this is under the strict conditions of the phones not being switched on when in school, and that they must be handed in when children arrive and collected at hometime. This includes all events such as discos, etc. Any child breaking this rule will not be allowed to bring their mobile phone into school.

Please note specifically:

- That the phone is switched off AT ALL TIMES on the school premises (in the building or in the outdoor areas). It cannot be switched on again until the child has left through the gate.
- The phone is stored in school – it goes in a box in Y6 that is sent to the office.
- No-one is to touch, or be allowed to touch a phone that belongs to someone else.
- That the phone is brought into school at the child's own risk – school cannot be held responsible for any damage or loss which may occur as a result of the child bringing the phone into school.

If a child breaches these rules, restrictions will be put in place. These include, the phone being confiscated, a parent will be asked to arrange the collection of the phone from school and the child will not be allowed to bring a phone to school.

Facebook

I would like to think that we have demonstrated that as a school that we respond effectively to issues that parents bring to our attention. However, from time to time there are a small number of comments that have been posted by members of our school community on social media, including Facebook. This is unfair as social media is not a forum that the school can respond on. It is also not very productive as it is not a forum where the problem can be solved. Furthermore, negative comments on social media about our school that come to our attention will be checked to see if they are breaches of the Parents and Visitors Code of Conduct, and if they are, action will be taken by the school. Thank you to all our parents who use choose to address our school directly to solve problems that have arisen.

Leverhulme Park

We regularly receive reports of incidents from Leverhulme Park which include bicycles being stolen, hats being taken, mobiles phones being taken, threats being made, fights, intimidation, children being forced to try cigarettes or vapes, children being assaulted by other children – and some of the other children involved are older. Our strong advice, and also that of our local police, is that children should not go to Leverhulme Park without an adult to accompany them to ensure that they are safe.

Sun Cream – in the warm weather...

In hot weather, children may bring sun cream and sun hats (with your child's name in) into school. Sun cream must be in a bottle with your child's name on and must be stored in the area designated by the classteacher. Staff are not responsible for administering sun cream. During the day, the child can self-administer the sun cream. Alternatively, an "all day" sun cream is available that can applied before the school day starts (please check the various products before you decide which "all day" sun cream is the most suitable for your child).

Coats

Please ensure that your child is coming into school wearing a coat when the weather is wet. Thank you.

Headlice

Every so often, there is an outbreak of these determined little creatures in every school. Please could you assist us by checking your child's hair regularly and treating accordingly if you come across the little beasts before your child returns to school. Thank you for your co-operation. Apologies if you have read this and it has made you scratch your scalp!!!!

SS Osmund & Andrew's Nursery

If you would like to apply for a place in our Nursery Class for September 2025, (we are now full for September 2024 and have a waiting list), please contact our school office either by phone (01204 333070) or by email (office@ss-osands.bolton.sch.uk) and our staff will be able to assist you. When applying for places, please do not confuse our Nursery with the one run by Little Ozzie's as they are a separate organisation to our school. We can only assist you with SS Osmund & Andrew's Nursery.

British Values

We talk about these assembly. British values are Christian values and underpin our school. They are the same as Love, Faith and Hope. If your children ask, they are:

Democracy – When everyone has a say.

The Law – Keeps us all safe.

Liberty – Having the freedom to choose.

Tolerance & Mutual Respect – Treat all people equally and fairly.

Relationship & Sex Education

At SS Osmund & Andrew's, we appreciate that a great level of care and sensitivity has to be taken towards the teaching of Relationship & Sex Education (RSE). We use a Catholic scheme (called Journey in Love) to deliver this, and another Catholic scheme (called Ten Ten) which completes the full legal requirements of the Department for Education. We also have a visit from the School Nurse to discuss puberty, changes and how they are linked to growing up into adulthood. This of course leads into a discussion about the functions of the reproductive organs, so your child may have questions about this when they have been studying in the lessons.

All lessons in the scheme are taught in an age appropriate way that is approved by Salford Diocese. Please be assured that we have worked hard in sourcing the right materials so that they are ones for the children in our school. If you have any worries or questions about these materials, please do not hesitate to contact school where we can show the Catholic context in which they fit.

Staff Car Park

Please can I ask that parents do not use the staff car park to drop off children for everyone's safety. We have had incidents of parents being blocked in, of children running across the car park when cars and lorries are reversing – even when a bin truck was reversing! In addition to this, some parents get stuck in the car park when deliveries arrive. Please use the pedestrian gates and paths provided for safe passage to the school entrance.

“igo” Cards

ATTENTION TO ALL CHILDREN IN YEAR 6 CATCHING THE BUS TO HIGH SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER!

If you are aged 11 to 16, you must have an “igo” card to travel using any child ticket on buses in Greater Manchester. You can also use your igo card as proof of age for travelling by tram with a child ticket. You will need proof of age ID from age 11 on Metrolink.

Do you qualify?

To qualify for an igo card you must be:

- aged between 5 and 16
- be a permanent resident of, or go to school in, Greater Manchester

For more information, please go to: <https://tfgm.com/tickets-and-passes/igo-pass>

Smart Watches

Please note that watches are allowed to be worn in school as they hold educational value in maths. However, any smart watches that have the capability to take photos or read notifications must not be brought into school for obvious reasons. Thank you for your support in this matter.

