

St John Fisher Catholic Primary School

Kale Road, Erith, Kent DA18 4BA

Telephone: 020 8310 7311

Email: office@sjf.bexley.sch.uk

Website: www.sjf.bexley.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs K Garrett BA (Hons) NPQH

When you love to learn, you learn to love



Tuesday, 8th September, 2026

RE: Welcome Back to St John Fisher Catholic Primary School

Dear Parents, Carers and Children,

I hope that you and your families have had a wonderful summer and have enjoyed some time together, whether you have been away or simply enjoyed a slower pace at home. As we begin a new school year, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all our families. It is particularly lovely to welcome those families who are joining the St John Fisher family for the first time.

The beginning of a new school year is always an exciting time. Classrooms are ready, friendships are renewed, new relationships are formed and there is a wonderful sense of possibility that comes with a fresh start. It is also an opportunity for us to reflect on what we want for our children and the kind of school community we want St John Fisher to be.

Our mission is:

"We stand united in faith with the courage to build a loving world of truth, justice, peace and wisdom."

Our vision is:

"Growing together in faith and learning, guided by light and courage, to shape a loving and just world."

These words are at the heart of our work. We want every child who comes through the doors of St John Fisher to know that they are loved, valued and believed in. We want them to develop a deep love of learning, to discover what they are capable of, to have the courage to persevere when things are difficult and to understand that they have an important part to play in the lives of others.

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Our five school values, **LIGHT**, help us to make this vision a reality:

LOVE - We care for one another.

INTEGRITY - We do the right thing.

GROWTH - We learn, persevere and improve.

HOPE - We believe in what is possible.

TOGETHERNESS - We support and celebrate one another.

These values are not simply words displayed around our school. They are the values we want our children to live by, and they guide the way that we work with one another as a whole school community.

Our priorities for 2026–27

We have ambitious plans for St John Fisher this year, and our School Development Plan sets out the areas where we believe we can make the greatest difference to our children. These priorities are closely connected and are all rooted in our commitment to ensuring that every child flourishes academically, personally and spiritually.

1. Reading

We want every child to become a confident, fluent and enthusiastic reader. Reading will continue to be a major focus across the school, with particular attention to fluency, prosody and comprehension. We want children not simply to decode words, but to read with expression, understand what they are reading, discuss ideas and develop a genuine love of books. We will continue to provide children with a rich range of texts and regular opportunities to read aloud, practise their fluency and deepen their understanding. Families have an incredibly important role to play in this too. Reading regularly at home, listening to your child read, sharing stories and talking about books are some of the most valuable things you can do to support your child's education.

2. Writing

We want our children to become confident writers who can communicate their ideas clearly, accurately and effectively. Across the school, we will continue to strengthen the foundations of writing, including transcription, spelling and grammar, while giving children meaningful opportunities to develop their composition and write for different purposes and audiences. We want children to take pride in their writing and to see themselves as writers. We also want them to understand that becoming a successful writer takes time, practice and perseverance, and that editing and improving our work is an important part of the writing process.

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3. Mathematics

We want our children to develop secure mathematical knowledge and confidence in using it. Our mathematics teaching will continue to develop fluency alongside reasoning and problem-solving, ensuring that children have the knowledge and understanding they need to tackle increasingly challenging mathematical situations. We want children to become confident mathematicians who are willing to have a go, explain their thinking, learn from mistakes and persevere when a problem does not immediately make sense. Just as importantly, we want children to recognise that mathematics is something they can succeed in through effort, practice and a willingness to keep trying.

4. Learning Behaviours

We know that successful learning is about more than simply what children know. It is also about how they approach learning. We will therefore continue to develop the learning behaviours that enable children to become increasingly independent, resilient and motivated learners. We want children to have the confidence to have a go, the resilience to keep going when something is difficult and the ability to reflect on their learning and recognise how they can improve. We will explicitly teach and reinforce the routines and behaviours that help everyone to learn, while ensuring that our expectations are rooted in our **LIGHT** values. We want our children to understand that mistakes are not something to fear; they are an important part of growth.

5. Catholic Life and Personal Development

As a Catholic school, we have a responsibility to educate the whole child. Our Catholic life and personal development work will help children to grow in faith, character, confidence and their understanding of their place within our community and the wider world. We want our children to know their own dignity and worth, while recognising and respecting the dignity and worth of others. Through prayer, worship, our curriculum, Catholic Social Teaching, our **LIGHT** values and our relationships with our parish and wider community, we will encourage children to live with love, integrity, growth, hope and togetherness. We want our children to leave St John Fisher not only as successful learners, but as kind, thoughtful and courageous young people who understand that they have the ability and responsibility to make a positive difference to the world around them.

These priorities are not separate strands of school life. They work together. Strong reading and writing enable children to access and communicate their learning; secure mathematical knowledge gives them confidence to reason and solve problems;

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positive learning behaviours help them to persevere and become independent; and our Catholic life provides the values and sense of purpose that underpin everything we do. Together, they form an important part of our ambition for every child at St John Fisher.

A school built on relationships

At St John Fisher, we know that children learn best when they feel safe, known and valued. We therefore place great importance on the relationships between children and adults, between children themselves and between school and home.

We have high expectations of our children, both academically and personally, but these expectations are rooted in love. We challenge children because we believe in them and because we know they are capable of more. We celebrate their successes, support them when things are difficult and help them to learn from their mistakes.

This year we are continuing to strengthen our approach to behaviour and learning behaviours. Our expectations will be clear and consistent, and we will explicitly teach children the routines and behaviours that enable everyone to learn, feel safe and enjoy school. Our **LIGHT** values will provide the foundation for this work.

We ask that parents and carers support us by reinforcing these messages at home and by modelling the same values in your interactions with children and with members of our school community. Children learn so much from the example of the adults around them, and the partnership between home and school is therefore incredibly important.

Faith at the heart of St John Fisher

Our Catholic faith is at the heart of who we are.

We want our children to understand that education is about much more than academic success. It is about becoming the person God calls us to be: someone who knows their own worth, recognises the dignity of others and has the courage to act with love, justice and compassion.

Prayer and worship are an important part of our daily life, and we will continue to celebrate the Church's seasons and feast days together. We are blessed to have a strong relationship with our parish community at St Benet's in Abbey Wood, and we look forward to continuing to strengthen the partnership between school, parish and families.

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Our children will have opportunities to develop their understanding of Catholic Social Teaching and to consider how their faith calls them to care for others, stand up for what is right and contribute positively to the world around them.

We will also look forward to celebrating the feast of our patron, St John Fisher, later in the school year.

Safeguarding

The safety and wellbeing of every child is our highest priority. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all members of staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection training.

We want every child to feel safe, listened to and cared for at St John Fisher. If you have a concern about the safety or wellbeing of a child, please contact the school and speak to a member of our safeguarding team (Mrs. Garrett, Mrs Bennett and Mrs Baulch). We will always take concerns seriously and act in accordance with our safeguarding procedures.

Attendance and punctuality

Regular attendance is one of the most important ways that families can support their child's education. Every day in school matters. Children need to be present regularly to build knowledge, develop friendships, establish routines and fully participate in all that school has to offer.

We therefore ask all families to make attendance and punctuality a priority. We will continue to monitor attendance carefully and work with families where there are concerns, always seeking to understand and support where barriers exist.

Working together

We want St John Fisher to be a school where families feel welcomed and where communication between home and school is open, respectful and positive.

If you have a question or concern about your child's learning, wellbeing or experience at school, please speak to your child's class teacher in the first instance. They know your child best and will usually be best placed to help. If a matter requires further support, the wider leadership team will of course be happy to assist.

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Throughout the year, we will also provide opportunities for parents and carers to come into school, learn more about what their children are learning and celebrate their achievements with us. Your involvement makes a real difference, and we look forward to welcoming you into school throughout the year.

Looking ahead

There is so much to look forward to this year.

We want St John Fisher to be a school where children love coming to school, love learning and love being part of our community. We want them to be challenged academically, supported when things are difficult and encouraged to discover what they are capable of. We want them to develop confidence without losing humility, resilience without losing kindness and ambition without losing compassion.

Above all, we want every child to know that they belong here.

The verse we have chosen to begin our year captures this beautifully:

"Let all that you do be done in love."

If we allow love, integrity, growth, hope and togetherness to guide the way we live and learn together, I am confident that we can make St John Fisher an even stronger, happier and more successful school community.

Thank you for the trust that you place in us and for the support you give your children and our school. I am incredibly excited about the year ahead and look forward to getting to know our families even better, celebrating our children's successes and working together to help every child flourish.

Here is to a happy, successful and blessed school year at St John Fisher.

With very best wishes,

Mrs. Garrett
Headteacher