



## St Alban's Catholic Primary School, Walker

### Address:

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**Headteacher:** Mrs C Yeoman

### Dear Parents and Carers,

It's Friday! The end of a school week and the beginning of a new weekend. The weather is most definitely becoming more unpredictable: sun, wind and rain. It's hard to know what is coming next. Please continue to make sure that your child arrives at school with their school coat. Can I remind families that we do not promote designer clothing or accessories for children. Last term, we had a couple of incidents where expensive coats were damaged. If you are about to renew any outdoor coats for your child, please keep away from designer brands.

We appreciate that there has been some significant change in staffing at St Albans and we want you to know that we do understand that this brings challenges. A parent recently shared with us that they felt that they do not know staff in the way that they used to. So with that in mind, we thought that we would do a short staff profile for you, sharing information about a different staff member every week.

### Latecomers

As requested, here is a reminder of a change to our approach for latecomers. This message went out approximately two weeks ago and we have seen a significant improvement to lateness.

*Dear Parents and Carers,*

*We have introduced a new procedure for pupils arriving late to school. If you arrive after the school gates have closed, please bring your child to the school office and sign them in using the office iPad.*

*Once your child has been signed in, you will need to remain with them until 9:00am. At 9:00am, Mrs. Marley or a member of the office team will take all late-arriving children into school together and ensure that they have made their lunch order.*

*This new procedure will help us to manage staffing within the school office and minimise disruption to the school morning by allowing late-arriving pupils to be taken into school together.*

*Thank you for your understanding, patience, and support in following this new procedure.*

*St Alban's Catholic Primary School*

### Parents' Evening

It was so lovely to welcome so many of you into school for Parents' Evening. Our next and final meeting, for the autumn term is Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October. A huge thank you to our 'Parents' Evening Welcoming Committee'. Mia, Ted, Ella and Elliot were amazing school ambassadors. It was a total privilege to watch them welcoming families into school. Thank you for the lovely feedback that you have already given, regarding this role. We were so proud of their professionalism!

### Halloween Disco

For our Purple Treat this half term, we thought it would be lovely to have a Halloween-themed fun day, finishing with a disco in the afternoon! Children have a choice to come into school in their own clothes or

wearing a costume. There is no need to wear school uniform that day. Halloween will be the theme that runs through the day for example Halloween-themed maths games and other fun activities.

**EYFS** have decided to enjoy their Halloween celebrations in their own classrooms with their friends, allowing them to take part in the fun in a familiar environment.

Halloween Disco: Years 1 & 2: 1:00–2:00pm, Years 3 & 4: 1:00–2:00pm and Years 5 & 6: 2:00–3:00pm

There will also be biscuits and orange juice available for the children to enjoy during the celebrations.

### **Who's who at St Albans: The Newbies!**

Deputy Headteacher: Lisa Dempsey

I started my teaching career in Manchester where I worked for a couple of years at St. Michaels in Whitefield. I have so many fond memories of the children and of my time running the school netball team. Realising that I missed home, I took up a new job at St. Bede's in Washington where I taught for most of my career. I worked in Year 6, Year 5, Year 4 and Year 1. However, I have to say that Year 1 and Year 6 became my favourite age groups to teach. I have endless great memories from my time at this school: taking children to perform at the theatre; picking strawberries with my Year 1 class, outdoor festivals, residentials and art gallery visits. Years later, many a child who I've met as an adult, has told me that strawberry picking was their favourite trip ever! Mine too. Nothing has ever surpassed it. Mind you, in those days there were many less restrictions and the farmers would openly encourage children to eat from their fields; the offer of a tractor ride was also completely free. I loved being at St Bede's and as Saint Bede was from Jarrow, my home town, I felt a real sense of belonging there and I was given many opportunities to develop as a teacher and as a person at this school. I look back with such love and fondness for the families of St Bede's and the staff.

Then in 2016 I took up the Assistant Headteacher's role at St Bernadette's in Wallsend. This was another exciting time. I arrived soon after a new Headteacher had taken up a new post and this turned out to be another amazing chapter in my professional life. Once again, I was privileged to get to know another fantastic group of children, families and staff. We set up a vibrant PTA, established the legendary Summer Fayre – so many good times.

In January 2026, a new opportunity came. I was asked to work as a Deputy Head at St Bede's in Bedlington. In many ways this school was in a similar position to St Albans. There had been several staff changes and part of my role at the school was to work with staff and parents to ensure that the school felt stable until new staffing appointments were made. Originally, I was asked to work for the Summer term but the Trust asked if I would continue not as an Assistant Headteacher but as an Acting Deputy Headteacher. I took no time to make up my mind I said yes. I spent two and a half years at St Bede's and I absolutely loved it. Travelling to Northumberland every day was a long journey but it was so worth it when I arrived. St Bede's remains a very special school to me and I still pop over to visit from time to time. I remained there until I was asked to work here at St Albans.

So, here I am at St Albans. I am very pleased and privileged to be trusted to work with your children and yourselves. We have made some great new staffing appointments: Mr Strachen, Miss Morrison and Mr Moore who have all have made an impressive start to their career at St Albans.

I very much look forward to getting to know you – I have THE most terrible memory for faces but I feel sure that you will be kind and patient with me until I get to know all of you.

So that's me. Next week, we will do a profile on our appointments: Alex Strachan – EYFS, Fay Morrison Year 1 and Craig Moore Year 6 teacher. Following that it will be our newly established Middle Leadership Team. This consists of Joanne Gosling – Shadow SENDCO, Lindsey Taggart (previously Miss Green) EYFS lead, Sam Smith Key Stage 1 lead and Natasha Cross Key Stage 2 lead.

Have a lovely weekend, Miss Dempsey