



St Matthew's RC Primary



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25th August 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

It has been really wonderful to get back to school and get our new session started off so positively. I have thoroughly enjoyed spending time with the learners this week; a real highlight has been leading our assemblies and building up our sense of community again after 6 weeks apart. Each Tuesday, we will have a whole school assembly, part of which will be about sharing achievements. If your child has an achievement from outside of school that they would like to share, please send us pictures if you can so we can show them to the rest of the school. I always love to hear about all the fantastic things our learners get up to! This week, we heard about progress in swimming classes, joining new football teams, climbing Ben Nevis and creating art sculptures; St Matthew's pupils are such amazing young people! I look forward to meeting some of you at our Meet the Teacher event next week – please feel free to come and introduce yourselves – it's always nice to put faces to names.

Have a great weekend, everyone!

Mrs Cran

School Updates

Meet the Teacher

We look forward to welcoming you school on **Tuesday 29th August** from 3.30 for our annual 'Meet the Teacher' event. This will be an opportunity for you to meet your child(ren)'s teachers, see the classrooms, and ask any questions you may have about the year ahead. Please note, this will not be an opportunity to discuss your own child's progress in order to make the class teacher available to all. Parent consultations will take place on the 16th November, which will allow you the opportunity to have these conversations. I am also aware that a number of parents and carers have more than one child in the school. To accommodate this as best as we can, each teacher will present twice, once at 3.30 and again at 4pm. If, due to prior commitments, you are unable to attend, we will send out all presentations that are shared so that you do not miss any significant information.

Active Schools Volunteer Training Opportunities – Please find attached two posters from active schools regarding some training opportunities being held across Midlothian, one of which is First Aid.

Broomlee Camp – Letters were issued with details of our exciting residential activity camp at Broomlee, West Linton in May 2024. Please could we have all £30 deposits (non-refundable) and slips back by no later than 1st September to book a space for your child. Please make all payments on Parent Pay.

Dear Lord
As our children begin a new school year, we pray that you will keep them in your care.
Help them to see the gifts and talents you have given them and to use them well.
Help them to grow in knowledge and wisdom.
Help them to be kind to others and lead others to be kind to them.
Send your angels to guide and guard our children and to keep them from all harm.
Hold them in the palm of your hand and bring them home safely at day's end.
Amen.

Pantomime

Letters were issued with details of our whole school visit to the Festival Theatre Pantomime production of “Peter Pan” on Wednesday 6th December. The cost per pupil for this excursion is **£18.00** which covers the price of tickets and the coach. Please could all permission forms returned and made by **Friday 1st September 2023**. If you have any concerns – please contact Mrs Golder in the office. Please could all payment be made through ParentPay



St Matthew's Garden Fete

We are still looking for raffle style donations (especially items for children) for our Summer Fete stall on Sunday 3rd September.

We have also sent out a letter this week asking for volunteers to help run the stall, and any further return slips would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you to everyone who has handed in donation or volunteer slip so far!

P3-5 Swimming

P3-5 are very excited about the opportunity to start swimming again at Loanhead Leisure Centre. Their lessons will be on a Friday morning, for a 12 week block. Children should come to school in their uniforms (except on dress down days), and bring their swimming kit and towel with them in a separate bag.

PE Kit

PE this year will be taught on a **Monday** and **Wednesday**. Children should come to school wearing their PE kits as it ensures that children do not need to use their PE time to get changed twice.

Please be reminded that no clothing associated with football clubs should be worn to school, during PE or when representing the school in the locality. Pupils should wear white T shirts / shorts/ trainers/tracksuit bottoms for PE, a St Matthew's Hoodie or Jumper may be required all year round.

Uniform

Uniform is a highly significant part of our school ethos and it was great to see so many learners taking part in the 'Cran Catwalk' last week, showing off their super smart school uniforms.

Please ensure all pupils wear school uniform each day except PE days or Dress Down Days (Last Friday of month).

The uniform for St Matthew's is:-

White shirt

School Tie

Green jumper/cardigan

Dark/black trousers/shorts/skirts/pinafores

Dark/black school shoes

Free School Meals and Clothing Grants



An important source of income for the school is through funding from Midlothian based upon the number of children who have applied for 'free school meals' (FSM). Unfortunately, as all pupils from P1 – P5 are now entitled to a school lunch, the numbers of families who apply for FSM status has dropped dramatically and so, therefore, has the **vital funding** to the school.

It would be fantastic if all families, who believe that they would be entitled to FSM (P1 – P7), would **apply through the link below**, so we can increase the numbers who are registered and increase the funding to school which can be used to support our children in so many ways. There are so many additional benefits to you, and your child, if you do apply for FSM such as:

- **Free milk**
- **Access to clothing grants**
- **Free breakfast club**
- **Access to financial support for trips / events**



You may not be aware that you are eligible for FSM so please check see if any of the following criteria applies to your family. Do you receive:

- Universal Credit (where your monthly earned income is not more than £726)
- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Your child is also entitled to free school lunches if you get:

- Child Tax Credit, but not Working Tax Credit, and your income is less than £18,725
- Both Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit and have an income of up to £8,717

https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/855/school_meals/117/free_school_meals_and_clothing_grants

The school will be more than happy to support you in completing the necessary paperwork so please do not let that put you off applying. Remember, the more families who register, the more funding the school gets and ultimately this benefits the children.

P7 Camp at Manor Adventure

For any of the P7s that have booked a space on the St David's ASG camp at Lockerbie Manor, please note that the next payment for this are due 25th August. Payments can be made on parent pay.

Breakfast Club & Morning Arrival

We offer a breakfast club to all pupils at a cost of 50p per day – payments via parent pay (free to pupils entitled to free school meals). Pupils are invited to join in various games & art activities and given a healthy breakfast. The club runs between 8.30 am and 8.50 am - due to staffing we cannot allow children into the school prior to **8.30 am**. No booking necessary.

Please could we remind parents that the playground is unsupervised in the mornings and the doors do not open until 8.50am. Due to safety reasons we ask that pupils are not left unattended in the playground early in the mornings.

Nut-Free Snacks

Due to severe nut allergies at our school, please do not send your child to school with snacks or lunch items containing nuts. This includes, but is not limited to, Kinder Buenos, Nutella, Daim bars and peanut butter. Please note that any snacks with nuts in them will be sent home with the child. We very much encourage healthy snacks such as fruit.



Parking

If you absolutely need to drop your child to school or collect them using your car, please ensure you park inside the Whitehill grounds and avoid parking on the roadside, particularly either side of the entrance/exit of the football grounds. When parking on the roadside outside the grounds, visibility can be affected for cars entering and exiting the stadium grounds, which could lead to an accident.

Our JRSOs continuing to put cones out every day to encourage and guide safe parking and as always we are grateful and appreciative of these cones being adhered to. Thank you for your continued support on this matter.

Medication

If your child requires any medication (including inhalers, which we require 2 held in school) while at school, please ensure that you have completed the relevant medication form. These are available from Mrs Golder at the school office.

As per our administration of medication policy, we **cannot** administer this medication without parental consent and permission forms need to be completed by parents prior to us administering any medication.

Please also ensure all medication sent to school is in date and includes the dispensing label from the pharmacy if a prescribed medication.

Class Updates

P1-3

In P1-3 we have been super busy getting organised for term 1. We have practised tidying up our classroom properly, made our class charter, and spent lots of time talking about our emotions. The new P1s have been learning all the routines and rules of the school while the P2s and P3s have been settling back in too. We have been busy completing assessments for Miss Mac to show her what we know already and she's very impressed. In PE, we practised teamwork and learning rules of new games. Next week the P1s will be starting to learn new sounds while the P2s and 3s continue with their writing skills.

P4-5

This week in Literacy we started our new Talk for Writing block. This will continue for four weeks, and we will be learning how to write 'Warning Stories'. This week the class attempted to write their own story about a canal. In Numeracy we have been completing our start-of-year assessments. We have also started to learn about place value and addition; we will continue to focus on these two areas for a couple of weeks.

P6-7

In literacy we have started our talk for writing block and have started writing our cold piece. In maths and numeracy we have been learning about place value and adding. We had a great time in PE this week playing all our favourite games.

The Snug

We have had a fun first full week back at school! We have been revising our sounds from last term and have read a fun story about the cautious caterpillar and completed a story sequencing task. We enjoyed using the numicon to make numbers and used the foam numicon to make patterns. We have enjoyed reading different stories and completing fun art activities too!

Kind regards,



Siobhra Cran
Acting Headteacher