



St Matthew's

Church of England Primary Academy

A member of **CDARI**



NEWSLETTER 1 – 6th September 2024

Hello everyone and a very warm welcome to you all to this first newsletter of the academic year 2024-2025! For all those who have returned, it is great to see you again and for all those who are new members of the St Matthew's family it is wonderful that you have joined us!

St Matthew's has been serving the local parish and community for 150 years this year which is an incredible milestone for us to reach. In a few weeks' time the children will be undertaking some activities to commemorate this and more details will be coming very soon.

Newsletters will not necessarily be sent every week but we will try to keep them regular in order to celebrate the various weekly achievements of the children and to keep you up to date with all that is happening in this wonderful school family.

All school newsletters will be either on Class Dojo or on the School Website and we will text you to let you know when they are available.

We are looking forward to this year and all that it will bring and hope that you are too!

Mr Mackley
Headteacher

Nut allergies!

Please make sure no nuts or nut based products are brought into school for packed lunches. We have several children in school with severe nut allergies and this will cause them to become unwell and may cause an anaphylaxis shock. This includes chocolate spread in sandwiches.

Thank you for your understanding in helping to keep our children safe.

“Be blessed by God, be happy and aspire to be...”

Class Dojo

This is the platform we use to keep in touch with you to share information about your child and their class / year group. All you need to do is download it from your app store and connect to our school. **Please do not pay** for any app features, we only use the free version!



ClassDojo

If you are unsure how to connect to school, please speak with your child's class teacher.

Stars of the Week & Values Award

Each week class staff select a child to be star of the week, this could be for a variety of reasons including doing well in a piece of work, excelling at something they have struggled with or demonstrating behaviour which is that of a good role model.

The school values award is given each week to a child from a class whose behaviour demonstrates that they are living by our school values; usually one particular value is highlighted to celebrate in that child. Our school values are:

Hope, Love/Compassion, Trust, Community, Thankfulness and Respect/Reverence. Please visit our website (<https://www.st-matthewscofe.lancs.sch.uk/christian-distinctiveness/school-values/christian-values>) for further details.

Year	Star of the Week	Values Award
Rec	None yet, settling in at the moment!	None yet, settling in at the moment!
Y1	Ameera & Hannah	Patrick & Musa
Y2	Thea & Muhammad Bin	Brianne & Zakariya
Y3	Harrison & Harper	Theo & Hanifat
Y4	Ilyas & Lindon	Amelia & Muskan
Y5	Zainab & Whole Class!	Lucas & Abdul-Haadi
Y6	Hasnain & Ryan	Rares & Alezandra

KS2 Maths Challenge (Mrs Bryden)	Starts next week
KS1 maths Challenge (Mrs Gretton)	Starts next week
Times Table Rock Stars (TTRS) (Mrs Gretton)	Next week's challenge - 6W v 6R. Who will win...?
Numbots (Mrs Gretton)	Starts next week
Geography Challenge (Mrs Copeland)	Starts next week

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School Attendance

It is very, very important that children come to school whenever possible. Research shows that even a few missed days can have an impact on learning; we want all our children to have the best possible opportunity in life and what they learn here is a big part in that.

So, if your child is not feeling great but isn't really that bad, please still send them to school. If they are not coping, we will contact you. Some illnesses though, like upset stomachs, Covid and the such mean that children should stay away from school in order to prevent others becoming ill.

Leave of absence in term time. Please note that there is not a 'right' for time off in term time to go on holiday. If you are thinking that you need to take your child(ren) out of school for a period of time, you **must** make an appointment at the earliest opportunity, via the school office, to come and speak with Mr Mackley to discuss your request.

Each week we share the attendance figures for the previous week so that you can see how you child's year group is doing. Government targets are that children should be in school **at least** 96% of the year; if you go below 90% you do become a cause for concern and will be monitored. We do monitor attendance levels and school staff will come to visit if we have concerns. As with all things, please just keep in touch with us so that we can work together.

Over the summer there have been some **significant changes** to the Education-related Penalty Notices related to absence from school. Please see the information sheet at the end of this newsletter for more details (this is the same as the one sent home today).

Uniform

A reminder that we do have a uniform policy (<https://www.st-matthewscofe.lancs.sch.uk/parents/uniform>)and we do expect all children to dress in line with it. We are aware of the cost of uniforms and the only item we require to have the logo on is the school jumper, all other items please do source where you can.

Please note, trainers are only to be worn on days when children have PE, on all other days they should be wearing plain black shoes. If in doubt, please get in touch.

Coats - even if it looks like a nice day or you come to school in a car, it is very important that all children bring a coat to school with them. Even if it is raining, we always try to get the children outside at break times for much needed fresh air; if they do not have a coat they are likely to get wet!

Attendance Matters



Ear rings & Jewellery

A reminder that children **must** remove earrings for PE, they cannot place plasters over them; this is in line with national advice for the teaching of PE. Also, other than ear rings (stud type only) and wrist watches (not smart watches) no other jewellery should be worn at school. This is for safety reasons.



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School Dinners

All Infant children are entitled to receive a school meal, free of charge. For those who pay for meals, they now cost £2.70 per meal.

If you would like to know more about applying for Free School Meals, please contact the school office staff who will be more than happy to help you.

For every child (Infants included) who are declared eligible for Free School Meals by the Local Authority, we receive an additional £1300 in our school budget so please do consider applying, even for Infant Children!

Keeping safe!

One of the duties of all school staff is to keep the children safe and this includes talking with them about things which might concern them or any new injuries they may have.

If your child has hurt themselves outside of school (bumps or bruises), please let their class teacher know (Dojo is a great way of doing this!) so we do not have to investigate how these happened.

School Gates

In response to some concerns, here is a reminder of the reasons for why we arrange collection at the end of the day the way we do and why it is important that you follow the system please.

We have devised the one-way system to ensure children are carefully handed to an appropriate adult and that we do not have issues with people trying to walk in both directions through narrow gateways/pathways.

The system has been designed so that if you have children in each yard, you are able to walk from the Infant Yard first onto the Junior Yard second without having to negotiate a blocked pavement of people walking towards you. (Please see the diagram below - also note that Y4 will be collected from the shelter, not as per the diagram)

Those children in Years 5 & 6 for whom we have written consent to walk home by themselves, will be dismissed from the playgrounds at the same time as others. Please can we ask that if they are to meet a parent outside of the gates, that you agree a location with your child and to inform them to return immediately to school if you are not there.

Please be patient, there may be a queue of people in front of you, your child will be kept with their teacher until you arrive to collect them; last week we did have some people pushing past to get through which will only cause problems. We open the gates as soon after 3:15 pm as we can, but will not open them until the children are safely on the yard, ready to be collected.

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Reflection & Prayer

Each day in school there is an act of Collective Worship, this is in line with the School's foundation as a Church of England School. Sometimes this worship is a pre-recorded video, it can also be just within the class room or in the hall as a whole school. It is always invitational, meaning the children are invited to participate and respond in line with their own faith / beliefs.

On each newsletter I will share what we have been considering in the worships which are led by me and will also share the prayer from that week's worship.

This week we considered the importance of 'doing the right thing' by following school rules and behaving in such a way moving around school that we show respect to each other and also keep each other safe.

We were also reminded that no matter what has happened, we believe that the best is yet to come and that it doesn't matter if we make mistakes; what is important is how we deal with those mistakes and learn from them.

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*Loving God, let us be strong today as we meet new people in new places and face new challenges.
Make us brave when we are worried, show us how to learn from everyone around us, and help us to do our very best.
Help us always to remember that the best is yet to come.*

Amen

Google Translate

If you need to translate this newsletter into your own language, please feel free to use <https://translate.google.com/>. It's not perfect but better than nothing! Class Dojo only translates into a limited number of languages and we are aware of at least 28 languages other than English which are spoken here at St Matt's!



Please see the next page for some **very** important information about changes to penalty notices for unauthorised absences.

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Important Update – Changes to Education-related Penalty Notices - Information for Parents

You may be aware that the Department for Education has recently announced national changes to penalty notices issued for unauthorised absence in term time. These changes will come into effect on **19 August 2024**. This applies to extended holidays and persistent absences.

The threshold at which a penalty notice **must** be considered is set at 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school week period¹. This may include absences as a result of arriving late after the register closes. The 10 school weeks may span different terms or school years.

Penalty notices issued for offences that take place after 19 August 2024 will be charged at a new rate of £160 per parent per child. This can be paid at £80 if paid within 21 days.

Any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period will be issued at the rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days with no option for a discounted rate.

A maximum of 2 penalty notices may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another course of action will need to be considered (such as prosecution or one of the other attendance legal interventions).

Absences can have lasting effects on learning
Missing a week of school means your child will miss around 25 hours of learning
This creates gaps in their knowledge and could mean they will not meet their full potential

¹ A school week is any week in which a school meets at least once.