



St Matthew's RC Primary



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1st September 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

Can it really be the 1st of September!!! My goodness the weeks are already flying by.

Thank you to all of the parents who joined us for our Meet the Teacher evening. You will have a further opportunity, later in the term, to meet on a one to one basis to discuss your child's progress and next steps but I hope that you found the sessions informative. If you didn't make it along on the day, we have attached the presentations for your information. If you have any further queries please contact the class teacher, via the school office, to arrange a phone call or meeting.

We have also had some parents get in touch about setting up a parent council and a possible fundraising committee for the school. It would be great to get you, as parents, involved in more of school life, helping to make decisions and bringing forward your ideas. If you feel this is something that would interest you, please do get in touch with the school office by emailing stmatthews.ps@midlothian.gov.uk.

I am passionate about building as strong a partnership as possible with parents, and believe the setting up of a parent council would be a really great step towards this. You could get involved as little or as much as you would; any involvement would be hugely valued!

I look forward to hearing from some of you!

Mrs Cran

School Updates

Virtual Coffee & Chat with Mrs Cran

I look forward to meeting with virtually on Friday 8th September at 9.30 am a team's link will be sent out a couple of days prior to the meeting. I hope to meet you all then.

Drumming for Excellence

P3-5 & 5-7 are starting some exciting drumming sessions on the 12th September, each session will teach them about a new type of drum including Cajon Afro, Peruvian, Canadian Pow Wow & Brazilian Samba.

Speech & Language Workshops

The next family information workshop will be on Tuesday 2nd May 11am-12 noon. They have also added an online workshop (with the same focus) at 12pm for anyone preferring a virtual session. A leaflet is attached.

Debutots

We have attached a leaflet from Debutots Early Years Drama, it gives information of their new class starting in Bonnyrigg Guide Hall, Dobbies Road, Bonnyrigg EH18 1BJ, Wednesdays 4.00pm – 4.45pm

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 final payments and permission forms be returned by no later than **Monday 4th September 2023**. If you have any concerns – please contact Mrs Golder in the office. Please could all payment be made through Parent Pay



P3-5 Swimming

Please remember swimming every Friday morning. 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 next payment is due 29th September 2023. 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

This week in P1-3 we have spent lots of time learning about rhyming. We know that rhyme is important for learning how to spell and read lots of words. Miss Mac is

impressed with how quickly we have been able to identify rhyming words and come up with our own. We've been reading Oi Frog and other stories with rhyming patterns. In maths, Miss Edmond taught us about patterns and we spent time playing games to practice continuing and making up our own patterns. In RE, we have been learning about the bible and the Creation Story. We teamed

up in groups to create our own versions of each day and they're now displayed in our classroom. In PE, we practised our throwing and catching skills. Miss Mac also taught us a new game called Dragon Tails which we will develop into a version of tag rugby. We've continued to talk lots about our feelings and emotions this week and check-in daily to discuss how we're feeling and giving each other advice and encouragement. We also each chose our school champion - our trusted adult

who we can talk to if we feel we need to talk about something. We continue to develop our fine motor skills and the P1s have spent lots of time practising writing their names. The P3s had a fabulous time at swimming last week and are looking forward to going again this week. We also took the P1s to visit St Matthew's church and had a look around - we can't wait to meet the new priest!



P3-5

This week in Literacy we have been learning a warning story called "The Canal" in Talk for Writing. We have collaboratively come up with actions for the words to help us to remember it. We have also begun to create story maps for The Canal, which we will finish next week. The children will get an opportunity to recite the story to their table group, or to the whole class, next week. After that, we will work together to adapt the story. We have also been working hard on spelling assessments, which will continue into next week.

In Numeracy we have been learning about addition and its link to place value. We have revised adding 10 and multiples of 10 to numbers, as well as adding 2 and 3-digit numbers together. We have been focussing on the partitioning strategy, which helps us to add by splitting these numbers into their hundreds, tens and ones columns.

Last Friday was the class' first swimming lesson of the term. The children did very well, and enjoyed their time in the pool.

P5-7

In literacy we have continued our talk for writing block. This week we have created the story map for our new warning story "Keep off the Tracks". Creating a story map helps the learner to memorise the story and recognise the flow and structure of the story. We have been learning about the use of different punctuation, including speech marks, question marks, exclamation marks and when to use a capital letter. We have been learning about verbs, adjectives, nouns and adverbs through a mix of written tasks and games. We have also all been working really hard on spelling assessments - these help Miss Mackenzie when creating spelling lists for the week.



In maths and numeracy we have been learning about place value and adding. We have been focussing on different methods for adding including bar models, chimney sums, partitioning and number lines. We have been applying these strategies in various numeracy problems. We have been working on rounding too and will use this to estimate answers to addition questions.

We all had a great time in PE this week playing different invasion and tactical games including capture the flag.

We have been creating Health and Wellbeing posters to advertise for our Champions, these are adults in the school that the children choose that they trust and can speak to about anything. We have also spent time thinking about the qualities of a vice and house captain to help when writing speeches. We will have an assembly next week to present and then the school will vote via Google Forms or with their class teacher.



The Snug

This week we have all been working very hard with our reading. Some of us have been enjoying reading our new RWI books and have been working hard within the different word cards as well as our reading activities. Some of us have been working on our sounds and revising some of the ones from before the holidays, as well as practising our blending. We have had the foam letters out to practise through play too. We are also still continuing our learning using the story of 'The Cautious Caterpillar' are enjoying reading and using our imaginations.

In numeracy this week some of us have been working on recognising our numbers from 1 - 10 and practising our number sequences going forward up to 20. Some of us have been working on our backwards number sequences below 100 and forward number sequences above 100. We all did some work with patterns and continued colour patterns.

We have enjoyed lots of different sensory and memory games this week. We have enjoyed looking for 'ice cream' in paper and loved playing in the sand. We also have some fun new egg shapes that have been a huge hit for matching shapes and colours. We also did fun art activities and had fun making butterflies.



Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Siobhra Cran".

Siobhra Cran
Acting Headteacher