



St Matthew's RC Primary



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Dear Parents/Carers



It's no wonder the weeks fly by here at St Matthew's with everything that happens. We were privileged to attend a special mass celebrated by our new parish priest, Fr Olufemi, where he introduced himself to our learners and started, what I am confident will be, a very special journey with our school. We are really excited to get to know him a bit more and look forward to his visits. Our P1-3 have already started to learn how to say 'hello' in Yoruba, to make him feel extra welcome when he comes!

'Election Fever' hit later in the week, as the P6s and P7s battled it out to become House Captains and Vice Captains as they delivered speeches to the whole school. It was great to see the confidence our learners have and the commitment and dedication they show to wanting to make our school an even better place to learn and play!

All classes learned a little bit about how democracy works and were able to cast their votes for their preferred candidate following the speeches.

I am delighted to announce that our House captains and Vice Captains for 2023/2024 are:

Whitehill



Kaiden – Captain
Alexander – Vice Captain

Carnethie



JJ - Captain
Lorenzo – Vice Captain

Thank you to all of you who came along to support the St Matthew's parish Summer fete on Sunday too, and particularly to our learners who helped out with our school stall! It was a brilliant day, made even better by the sun shining down on us, and I hope those of you that made it along had a great time.

And the good news is that it looks like the sun is going to continue shining for us this weekend – I hope you manage to get out and enjoy it and make some happy family memories!

Mrs Cran

School Updates

September Weekend

Please be reminded of the September Weekend, which falls next weekend. The children will be off school on Friday 15th and Monday 18th of September. They will return on Tuesday 19th of September.

MacMillan Coffee Morning

We would like to invite parents and family into St Matthew's for our annual MacMillan Coffee Morning fundraising morning. This will be on **Friday 29th September** from 11am. We would greatly appreciate bought cake donations being handed into the school on Thursday 28th September or the morning of the 29th. As usual we will be offering a cake and a tea/coffee for a donation towards the MacMillan Cancer Support charity.



Midlothian Advertiser 'New P1' Edition

Schools have been given the task of taking a picture of the P1 children, as a group, to send into the Advertiser – Miss MacDonald will put her photographer skills to good use! We will be taking this photo on **Tuesday 12th September** so therefore ask for all P1's to come to school in full school uniform including ties on that day. Permission forms have been issued and please could we have these returned by no later than Thursday 14th September.

Book Fair

Please be aware that the Scholastic Book Fair will be in from the 25th of September until the 29th of September. Children will look at the books during school time and then you will be able to come in to the building **at the end of the school day** to purchase any books you would like for your children. The fair will also be out during the MacMillan Coffee morning during which books could also be purchased.

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.

Pantomime

We have a few outstanding permission forms and payments for our trip to see the 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 we have these in asap. 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 been working hard all week with our learning. We enjoyed a sound hunt on Monday which led us around the school and the playground to find letters hidden by Miss Mac. We worked well in groups to write words for each letter to gain extra points. The P1s have been really busy learning their sounds 'm' and 'a' and enjoying lots of activities like crafts and apple printing to help them remember the sound. We've played lots of rounds of bingo to help our number recognition and the P2s and P3s are getting really good at saying the numbers in French!

The P3s enjoyed another week of swimming and were split into groups to work on their skills. We do miss them on a Friday! The P1s really enjoyed their first visit to the library too.

Our caterpillars are growing nicely and are ready to start spinning their cocoons. We've really enjoyed watching them change every day in our classroom and can't wait to see what they will look like on Monday.



P3-5

This week in Literacy we have been learning our Talk For Writing story, The Canal. As a class, we came up with actions, and created a story map to help us to remember the words. We have now started to adapt the story to make it our own.

In Numeracy we have been working on addition and place value. We have been focusing on placing numbers on a number line and rounding to the nearest 10 or 100.

The children now all have their allocated personal devices. Over the next few weeks they will be developing their ICT skills as they learn to use the different functions.

This Friday was our third week of swimming lessons. The children are doing really well and enjoying it a lot!



P5-7

In literacy we have continued our talk for writing block. This week we have created the toolkit for the story. This is when we examine the different tools the writer has used to make the text exciting. We used this to highlight the text in pairs with examples of each tool. We used this same toolkit to assess our own writing and this helped us create next steps for our piece of writing which we will write next week. We have started our first week of spelling groups, this includes a range of activities from look say cover write check, pictures of the words, using them in sentences and identifying whether the word is a verbs, adjectives, nouns or adverbs. We used dictionaries for any words we weren't sure of.

In maths and numeracy we have continued learning about place value and adding. We had been working on rounding and we have been using these skills to estimate the answers to questions. We have then been

looking at doubling and using the diamond doubling strategy to help us double bigger numbers. This allows us to partition the number first then double each part of the number before adding it all back together to get the answer. Some groups have also been looking at number bonds, negative numbers, decimals and BODMAS.

We all had a great time in PE and we have been learning Basketball. We have been focussing on dribbling and the different types of passes: chest pass, overhead pass and bounce pass. We played some 2v1 games this week too, starting to practice defending skills.

For artist of the week this week we have been looking at the Foo Fighters, we listen to 4 different songs and give each one a star rating. At the end of the week we give an overall rating for the artist and then I make an average score, the Foo Fighters got 4 stars!

For the house and vice captains everyone did such a fantastic job in their speeches, we were all so proud of how confident everyone was. Congratulations for the new house and vice captains and a huge well done to everyone else. There will be more opportunities for leadership roles throughout the year as well.



The Snug

This week we have been practising our sounds and practising our blending. We liked using the playdoh and CVC jigsaws to help us. Some of us were practising our RWI stories. We practised our speed sounds, and story words then read the story. We worked through our reading activity book too. We have practised our m, a and s letters this week during our handwriting time too.

This week some of us were practising our numbers 0 - 10 and 20. We practised recognising the number and then making the number. We even sequenced them too. Others were practising number sequencing above 100 and recognising numbers too.

We have loved our new sensory circles this week. We have had lots of fun taking off our shoes and feeling the different textures of each circle. We had our ice letter cubes out this week too and made a big puddle when they melted. We also had some foam sensory trays this week too.



Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Siobhra Cran".

Siobhra Cran
Acting Headteacher