



St Matthew's RC Primary



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Dear Parents and Carers,

As the weeks pass, it is remarkable to see how motivated our learners are to learn and achieve across the curriculum. More classes have been making use of our outdoor space now that the weather has started to improve, and others are planning on bringing more lessons outside over the coming weeks, which is thoroughly enjoyed by all and certainly has a positive impact on motivation and engagement. Some more of our partner agencies have started back at school too, bringing us one step closer to a sense of normality. Our Play Therapist has been completing sessions with some of our learners and our HomeLink teacher, Mrs Bowman, has been working to support some of our learners too. Unfortunately, we are still not in a position to welcome parent volunteers into our classes, but we look forward to the day when this can happen once more.

School Office

We are delighted to share that Mrs Golder's operation was a success and we wish her a speedy recovery. We have recruited some cover for Mrs Golder while she is away, Mrs Hogg will cover the office Mon-Thurs from 9.15m-1.30pm. For the rest of the time the office will remain unmanned. In order to contact us, we strongly encourage you to continue to email in the first instance. School emails will be checked regularly throughout the school day. We will also check the voice messages left on the school phone periodically throughout the day and endeavour to get back to you as soon as possible. Due to the office cover we no longer require an emergency number, please continue to use the office number. We have also placed a new doorbell at the front door to the school, please use this for access.

PE:

Next Week, P.E. will be delivered by class teachers as follows:



Tuesday – P1-3, P4-5 and P5-7

We are unable to provide changing facilities so your child must come dressed for P.E. You may wish to provide an extra snack and a water bottle on these days and if it is forecast to rain a change of socks and shoes to keep feet dry.

Sports Day

Please note that our sports day will take place on Tuesday 25th May, weather permitting.

During this day, classes will be allocated a slot to attend sports day, which will be facilitated by Mrs Tait and the staff team. Pupils will be split into house groups within their classes and will work together to get as many house points as possible.

Pupils are encouraged to wear house colours to school on this day. A labelled water bottle is also advised.

Walk to School Week

Thank you to those of you who have been taking more care at pick-up and drop-off times with regards to where you park and how fast you drive. Please continue to take care when driving near the school. We are grateful to our local community police for supporting us with our campaign. Our JRSO's will be in touch with the results in due course.

Next week is 'Walk to School' week – please encourage your children to walk to school each day (or use a scooter/bike etc). We understand that this may not be possible for some families, but where possible, please consider

walking as your first choice. The class with the most children who walk to school over the course of the week will be presented with a trophy to celebrate their efforts.

Breakfast

Please ensure your child eats a good, healthy breakfast before they come to school each day. Fruit can be available for those that do not have breakfast, however, we have noticed an impact on focus and behaviour when children come to school with an empty stomach. A good, healthy breakfast each morning will help to prepare them for the busy day ahead. Please also ensure that your child comes to school with a healthy snack that will fuel them through their learning until lunch time. As suggested in the link below, healthy break time snacks could include fresh fruit or vegetables or other carbohydrate based foods such as a sandwich or crackers.

<http://www.child-smile.org.uk/parents-and-carers/healthy-snack-ideas.aspx>

National Book Trust Competition

We would hugely appreciate if you could take some time to nominate our school to win £5000 of vouchers to buy more books for our library and our classrooms. It's quick and simple to do – please follow the link below and fill in the form. Thank you!

https://www.nationalbooktokens.com/schools?utm_source=nbt&utm_medium=email&utm_content=schools-prize-teachers&utm_campaign=20210506_schools

P7 Leavers Activity – Parents

Traditionally, our Primary 7 learners participate in a number of end of term activities to celebrate the end of their time at Primary School. Unfortunately, due to current guidance, which has been shared by Midlothian with all Parent Council Chairs and our school representatives we are unable to host any of these activities this session. We will continue to prepare for a virtual leavers assembly. We understand, however, that the parents of our P7 learners are keen to get together to plan an event for their children outside of school in order to mark the end of Primary 7 in some way.

We are more than happy to share details of this meeting with all Primary 7 parents, however, we require a parent to volunteer to host a virtual meeting (set up a link) in order to make this possible. If this is something you are happy to do, please email the school office to arrange the forwarding of the meeting link.

Contact with School

In line with our risk assessment, please note that no adults other than school staff or other essential staff are permitted into the school building. If you need to contact the school office, please do so via email to stmatthews_ps@midlothian.gov.uk. Please see above re emergency phone calls to the school. To report a pupil absence, please continue to use the messaging service provided via the school phone.

Class Updates

Instead of a monthly newsletter, classes will now share what they plan on teaching each week to help to support conversations at home and better inform parents of what their children are learning.

P1-3:

This week, we have been learning about the Hail Mary prayer and using rosary beads with Mrs McCready. We wrote some super descriptions of caterpillars using our real-life classroom caterpillars as inspiration! We are really focusing on extending our sentences using and, but or because and making sure they always include a full stop, capital letter and finger spaces. We also had a very exciting topic lesson where we transferred our caterpillars (who have turned into chrysalises) into their new home. In numeracy we have been focusing on ordering numbers and multiplication. Some of our P3's have been practising their 3 and 4 timestable and using these facts to support their division skills too. Our P2's have been ordering numbers to 100 and P1's ordering numbers to 20 and above using terminology such as biggest, largest, smallest as well as less than and more than.

Next week, we will be on butterfly watch to see if our chrysalis's turn into butterflies! In Topic we will be learning about butterflies and what they like to eat and where they like to live in preparation for our classroom butterflies. We will be continuing to learn about Mary for the month of May in our RE lessons with Mrs McCready and practising our Hail Mary prayer. In literacy we will be continuing our writing using descriptive language and using our knowledge from our topic lessons to write about butterflies. In Numeracy we will continue to practise our multiplication and division skills focusing on worded questions. We will also continue to practise our mental strategies within addition and subtraction contexts.

P4-5:

This week has been the final push with our Folktales in literacy! We've thoroughly enjoyed reading and creating our own adaptations of "The Enchantress of the Endless Marshes". Next week we will begin to examine biographies - starting with an author biography of Jamila Gavin. We will also continue our daily spelling and reading activities and use our Tuesday afternoon as a grammar focus.

We've also been working on equivalent fractions over the week, and following a check-point assessment on Wednesday, have identified some gaps in our mixed number knowledge - so next week we will spend time working on this!

Within our John Muir topic, we've continued to focus on the local area, and are currently examining the effects on the earth that deforestation is having.

P6-7:

This week in Literacy we have been focussing on playscripts. We have read and acted out a playscript and have also written our own one. Next week we will be focussing on persuasive texts.

In Numeracy we have been working on fractions. From next week our focus will move to data handling and analysis, with fractions, decimals and percentages playing an important part.

In Health & Wellbeing we will continue to learn about nutrition and healthy choices, as well as learning about how to use the internet safely and appropriately.

We would like to thank you once again for your continued support. We will keep you updated with any further information via our usual channels of communication.

Yours sincerely



Anna Chidgey
Headteacher

