

# St Matthias Newsletter



**St Matthias Church of England Primary School**

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**Friday 9th September 2022**



It is with great sadness that we express our deepest sympathies for the passing of Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth II and our thoughts and condolences go to her family at this very difficult time. Her dedication to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and to her other realms and territories is unparalleled and we thank her for her service.

St Matthias will observe the mourning period of ten days, but continue to support our pupils, families and staff. Unless otherwise stated, please assume scheduled activities and events we have planned will continue, along with remembering Her Majesty the Queen and exploring her work and life in our classes in an age appropriate way. We will observe the national holiday for Her Majesty's funeral when the date is released, which means school will be closed that day, but outside of this, school hours will continue as normal.

## ***Remembering Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II***

Yesterday we all received the news from Buckingham Palace of the death of Her Majesty The Queen. Today, in school we shared a special Collective Worship remembering her life and taking the opportunity to thank God for all she did to serve this country, our schools, the education system, our wider Church and community. Queen Elizabeth II was the UK's longest-serving monarch, she came to the throne in 1952 and has served her country for 70 years, celebrating her Platinum Jubilee this year, 2022. She was also the 54 nations of the Commonwealth monarch and sovereign during the 70 years. She has worked tirelessly for our country declaring on her Coronation '*I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to service... God help me to make good my vow and God bless all of you who are willing to share in it.*'

From Luke 2:29 'Now let your servant depart in **peace.**'

When we think about our school vision it deeply reflects the life she led following God's example and being the very best Queen and Sovereign she could be. She made a difference to many people across the world and used the gifts God gave her to make a truly positive contribution.

## ***ASPIRE, BELIEVE, ACHIEVE***

'Our school family values us all as unique individuals and children of God.

We **aspire** to be the best version of ourselves; **believing** that through the gifts God has given us, we can make a positive contribution, flourish and **achieve** together to make a difference in our ever-changing world.'

**Dear Parents and Carers,**

It has been lovely to welcome everyone back after the summer holidays and I have thoroughly enjoyed walking through school again listening to the buzz of happy, hard working children.

**First week at school**

The children have been amazing as usual at settling back into their new classes with their class teachers and re-establishing good routines. I would really like to welcome our new children as we have many who have joined us throughout the school not just in our Early Years! We hope you have been warmly welcomed and that you have made some new friends to help you feel at home!

We also welcome five new members of staff this September, Mrs Cale who has been welcomed into the Early Years Team - she has lots of experience and loves the outdoors! Miss Houlston is our Year 3 teacher and Mr Goodger is our Teaching Assistant for Year 3, they both have a passion for sport. Miss Bannister has also joined the Year 3 team and Miss Bannister enjoys being creative.

We welcomed Miss Hughes to Year 4 who has extensive musical talents. We warmly welcome them to our St Matthias Family as they get to know and love being part of our team.

**Teacher Education Days**

I welcomed the staff back this week during our two Teacher Education Days (TED). The first part of our TED day was joining together with our Trust as a whole. This has been planned since we joined the Spire Learning Trust in March 2020, however has been postponed due to the pandemic. It was lovely to put faces to names and meet people in the flesh, at last. Virtual meetings have been essential in building networks and collaboration across the Trust, and a few members of staff have met face to face, but the joint TED was a special event! The focus was the Trust Core Values and the Vision for the Future for the benefit of the pupils and staff within the Trust. The Trust prides itself on providing an extensive continued professional development using evidence based research enabling both pupils and staff to flourish in all they do. We also joined in teams to share best practice and arrange further collaboration across the year. Our Teaching Assistants continued their professional development focusing on sharing best practice when supporting children's learning in the classrooms and building relationships to support behaviour.

The second training day was focused on updating our whole school Safeguarding knowledge in line with the statutory DfE document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022', followed by our School Development Plan and the priorities for this academic year. We have 4 key areas of development, which involve maintaining high expectations to ensure children continue to make progress across the curriculum. We will continue to provide engaging and well sequenced curriculum catering for all pupil needs, to build a love of learning and retain lots of new knowledge and skills. We are particularly focusing on writing, developing a rich vocabulary and deepening children's knowledge building on prior learning. A focus in Maths, developing the children's understanding and resilience where children can apply their knowledge of arithmetic to reasoning and problem solving. We are also developing your children's pride in their work by having a focus on handwriting and presentation. Alongside this we will continue to work on reducing Persistent Absence and increasing parental engagement, especially as all restrictions have been lifted.

**Parental Support**

Parents, you can help us achieve our priorities by supporting your child at home to read every day, complete homework set, talk about words and their meanings and by enabling your child to have an excellent school attendance (above 96%). Holidays should NOT be booked in term time and medical appointments should be booked outside school hours unless absolutely necessary. Every day, every half day and every lesson counts towards giving your child the best chance of success and making as much progress as they can. Please support us to work together to educate your children.

**Physical Education Lessons**

We are not having the usual Sports Coaches from West Bromwich Albion this term, therefore our staff will be delivering the PE curriculum. Some classes will have two shorter sessions for their entitlement and other classes will have one longer session for their entitlement. This is due to timetabling. If your child has two sessions they can wear their PE kit twice a week. Please don't worry about the washing, I am sure washing it once a week will be sufficient!

**Reception**– Monday

**Year 1**– Tuesday and Friday

**Year 2**– Tuesday and Thursday

**Year 3**– Thursday

**Year 4**– Friday

**Year 5**– Wednesday

**Year 6**– Wednesday (swimming starts on 21st September for ALL Year 6 for the first 5 weeks. After half term you will be notified if your child is carrying on or staying at school to do PE.) A letter will be emailed to ALL year 6 today.

## **IMPORTANT– APPLYING FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS**

### **Are you Eligible?**

**If you have a child in RECEPTION, you must re-apply for FSM if you are already eligible so they receive the benefits in school.**

**If you are unsure if you are eligible, then please click on the link below and complete the form on the Citizen Portal.**

You may be eligible for free school meals if your child attends a state school and you must be receiving one or more of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999
- Child Tax Credit, and your annual income is less than £16,190
- Guaranteed Pension Credit
- Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
- Working Tax Credit run-on
- Universal Credit, and your annual household income is £7,400 per annum (£616 per month) or less after tax, and not including any benefits.

If your child is currently receiving free school meals and the above criteria no longer applies, your child's eligibility is protected, and they will continue to receive free school meals until the end of the Universal Credit Roll Out. The Government has currently scheduled no earlier than July 2023 for the protection period to end. This could be longer and will depend on your child's current year group.

Please submit an online application via this Citizen's Portal to register your details with us so that we can keep in touch with any updates. We are unable to add any further siblings when you are no longer eligible under the benefit related criteria, however all children in Key Stage 1 (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) will receive a universal infant free school meal regardless of your circumstances.

### **How to Apply:**

**<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20062/schools/684/applying-for-free-school-meals> scroll to the bottom of the page and click on apply for FSM.**

You must apply online on the 'Citizen Portal' (this is the same portal which you selected when booking your child's school place. )

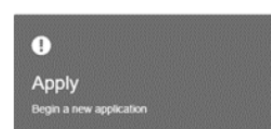
### **Welcome to the Citizen Portal**

This portal is used for the below:

- Applying for a school place
- Applying for Free School Meals

Once you are into your portal area by using your log in details then select 'Free School Meals', then click on 'apply.'

***If you would like help with this please ask in the office and we would be happy to support you in your application and also provide the technology to use.***



**ClassDojo:**

ClassDojo is an app for parents and teachers and is a very effective way to communicate. We are able to send you individual messages, sharing information with just you as a parent and you are able to respond in an individual way. If you have a worry or information that you would like one of us to know you are able to send a message to your child's class teacher, Mrs Beale or Mr Thompson. We will respond to that message, but please be patient as sometimes we are unable to respond immediately especially if the message comes during teaching hours or after 6pm. If you have an urgent message during the day please ring the school office– 01684574984, if you have an urgent message after 6pm please email Mrs Beale– head@stmatthias.worcs.sch.uk



We share whole school stories and news and you will find this on the 'Whole School Story' page. We also share stories and photographs on the 'Class Story Page.'

This is a really effective and important way to share information so please make sure you are able to access this app. If you are NOT connected to ClassDojo please contact the school office with a working email address and we will send a link for you to join your child's story!

**Morrison's**

St Matthias has been incredibly privileged to work closely with the Morrison's Champion, Antony. They nominated our school during the summer to receive a huge amount of food, stationery and uniform to support our families. This was shared on Wednesday 24th August and many families visited to share in the gifts. We are very grateful to the Morrison's staff and shoppers for their generous donations.

Also, on Facebook there was a feed where two toy Supermarket sets were available and the public nominated schools to receive one of them. We were again incredibly lucky to have been selected to receive one of the supermarket sets and our Early Years will benefit from being able to role play 'shops' during their learning. We are thankful to the public and parents for nominating our school.

We will be making strong links with Antony through the year and have other events planned going forward including the possibilities of visiting the store!

**Price Increases from September 2022**

We would like to re-inform you of the small price increases for any extra Nursery hours (extra to the 15hr/30hr funding) and our Whizz Kids Wrap around care. Booking is essential so we can ensure correct numbers of staff are in place for safe supervision as numbers are increasing.

**Nursery**

Morning session 9am-12 noon £15.00  
Lunch session 12 noon– 1pm £5.00  
Afternoon session 12 noon-3pm £15.00  
All Day 9am-3pm £30.00

**Whizz Kids (Wraparound care)**

Breakfast club 1 hour £4.50  
Breakfast club 30 mins £2.25  
After school club  
1 hour £4.50/ 2 hours £9.00

As a church school, each half term we choose a special Value which we think about very carefully in our worship, our classrooms, in our playground and everywhere in school. We focus on what they mean in our lives and in our relationships with each other.

***Our Value this half term is Thankfulness***

**Colossians 2:7** Let your roots grow down into him and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught and you will overflow with thankfulness."

**Psalms 118:2** "This is the day that the Lord has made: let us rejoice and be glad in it."

**Dalai Lama** "When you practise gratefulness, there is a sense of respect towards others"

Charles Shwab "The way to develop the best that is in a person is by appreciation and thanks. Be **thankful** for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough. He is a wise man who does not grieve for the things which he has not, but rejoices for those which he has."

Adults in school will be on the look out this half term for children who are really trying hard to be thankful and grateful for the good things in their lives.

**As we remember Her Majesty the Queen, we are thankful for her dedication and commitment to serving her country.**