

ST MATTHEW'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Alwick Grove, Jarrow, Tyne & Wear NE32 5YT
Tel: (0191) 489 8355 Fax: (0191) 422 6395
Email: office@stmatthewsjarrow.co.uk
Website: www.stmatthewsrc.org

Headteacher Mrs E Alderson



06/09/21

Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, may I take this opportunity to extend my very best wishes to you all. I am delighted to have been appointed as Headteacher of St Matthew's and feel privileged to be part of such a vibrant school community. I look forward to meeting you all in the coming weeks and months-thank you for the warm welcome I have already received!

Myself and all of the staff hope you have had a lovely summer and the children are refreshed, excited and eager to learn. A very warm welcome also to our new children and families joining us this year - we are certain that this will be the start of a very happy and successful journey.

We send all of our leavers the best of luck as they move on to their new schools. May we also wish Mr and Mrs Humble a very long and happy retirement and thank Mr Humble for all he has done for St Matthew's. He will be greatly missed but we look forward to seeing some of the wonderful photographs he will be able to capture now he is retired!

Key Information

As staff prepare to welcome the children back tomorrow (Tuesday, 7 September), we thought it would be useful to highlight some key information about the reopening of school. Further information will follow over the coming weeks but please do not hesitate to contact the office via e-mail or telephone if you have any queries.

COVID-19

As the COVID-19 restrictions ease, school will hopefully be returning to a sense of much needed normality for the children. Please be reassured, however, that the safety of everyone in our school community remains a priority and we continue to monitor the situation very closely. We have updated our risk assessment with some supplementary information and this is available on the website from today. We have also uploaded a government leaflet providing more information. The key points to note are as follows:

- Bubbles are no longer advised and children can have lunchtimes and breaktimes together. They can also take part in practical lessons and sports with other classes and year groups. We are intending to take a gradual approach to this when indoors over the next few weeks; for example, Collective Worships and Assemblies will be held separately for Infants and Juniors at first and the School Hall will continue to be used at lunchtimes for a little while longer.
- The government has removed the requirement to wear face coverings in law but recommends that they are worn in enclosed and crowded spaces where you may come into contact with people you don't normally meet. We no longer require adults to wear masks when bringing their child to school or when picking their children up from the school grounds. However, we would encourage any visitors coming into school to continue to wear a face covering at present, for a little while longer.



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- If your child is identified as a close contact, they do not need to isolate, unless they have symptoms of COVID-19. Instead, they will need to book a PCR test but can continue coming to school until they get the test result, as long as they have no symptoms.
- If your child tests positive for COVID-19, they will need to self-isolate for 10 days. The rest of the household does not need to self-isolate if they are under 18 or fully vaccinated, but they should book a PCR test.
- Government guidance indicates that primary-aged children should not be tested using an LFD test. If your child is symptomatic, or has been advised to get a test through NHS Test & Trace, you should arrange for them to have a PCR test. If a child develops symptoms in school, they will be isolated, sent home and you will be asked to book them a PCR test. We would request that any positive cases or suspected cases, are reported to us as a matter of urgency, using the school email.
- All schools will have plans in place on what to do if anyone at school tests positive for COVID-19, or if additional measures are needed to be reintroduced for a limited period. Please see our 'Outbreak Contingency Plan,' which has been uploaded on to our website today.
- We will be continuing with regular handwashing, cleaning regimes and keeping spaces well ventilated.

Diary Dates

We are currently compiling a list of important diary dates and these will be with you within the next week. We are intending to get the children settled and used to the changes in school first and are hoping to then be able to invite parents in to school for upcoming events as the term progresses, all being well. Thank you for your patience with this.

Year 6 Thurston

Year 6 will be going to Thurston on Monday 20th September. There will be a short meeting for parents and carers in the school hall on Wednesday 8th September at 3:30. Please collect your child from the yard and then enter the school hall by the side door.

PE Days

One of the measures which staff have reported worked very well last year was children wearing PE kits on the days that they have PE and this will continue this year. It enables children to have more PE lesson time and also helps to avoid items going missing as often. Please could you ensure your child comes to school in their PE kits on the following days:

Reception- Thursday

Year 1- Tuesday

Year 2- Friday

Year 3- Wednesday

Year 4- Wednesday

Year 5- Monday and Thursday

Year 6- Monday and Thursday



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School Meals

Please note that the price of school Meals is £2.20 per day (£11.00 per week). These need to be paid, using ParentPay, by the Monday of each week. Dinners are free for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 or for those eligible for Free School Meals. If you feel this may apply to you, please contact the school office who will be able to assist you. Separate letter will follow shortly regarding school milk.

Bags and Equipment

Children will be provided with all the equipment they need in order to complete their work in class. Please do not send any pencil cases etc. into school. Any equipment you may have bought will be a big help in terms of homework. Please remember that cloakroom space is at a premium in school with limited space. Therefore, children should only bring a sensibly sized bag to school please and not anything oversized – school bags are available to purchase from the office at a cost of £3.00 for KS1, £3.00 for PE bags and £ for KS2. Children are permitted to bring a water bottle, which should be clearly named and filled with water (not juice). This will be taken home each day so it can be washed. Teachers will remind your children about this.

Drop Offs and Pick Ups

These will continue as they were before the summer holidays for the time being and will be reviewed at a later date. Timings are as follows:

Reception and KS1 gate opens at 8:40. Children are dropped off at the gate between 8:40 – 9:00, where a member of staff is waiting, and go straight into school.

KS2 gate opens at 8:40. Children go up the path and into the junior yard.

Pick-ups:

Reception – 3 00 pm via Reception Class Doors

KS1 – Parents to still come into school yard and wait in class zone. Children will be brought out of school at 3 15 pm

KS2 – Parents to still come into school yard and wait in class zone. Children will be brought out of school at 3 20 pm.

Wrap Around Care

'The Grove' Breakfast Club will continue as previously to provide before school provision and 'Oscars' will pick up from school at 3 20 pm for after school provision.



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We hope this information has been useful. We understand that children (and parents!) will be feeling a mixture of emotions upon returning to school. You may wish to say the following prayer together this evening to experience a moment of calm in God's presence:

Lord,
Use my eyes to see new friends,
Open my ears to hear my teacher,
Open my mind to learn new things,
Let my heart remember you are near when I am afraid,
Help me to love others like you do,
For I want to shine your light so brightly in my school.
Amen.

We look forward to seeing Years 1 to 6 children tomorrow and Reception children on Friday.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'E Alderson'.

Mrs E Alderson

