

STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE-



THIS HALF TERM WE ARE FOCUSING ON THE CHRISTIAN VALUE OF THANKFULNESS

AUTUMN 2025 HEADTEACHER'S NEWSLETTER

Introduction

It has been a lovely start to the autumn term today. We are thankful for the safe return of all our children and staff. The children are all happy to be back and enthusiastic about their new classes. They have quickly settled back in to school routines and are already working hard. For parents/carers new to St Andrew's, I would like to take this opportunity of welcoming you and your children to our school family. I am sure your child will be very happy here.

Communication

We try to keep parents/carers as informed and involved as possible and are continually updating our school website www.standrewsmethodistschool.co.uk and Twitter account. This can be found at **Twitter@StMethodist**. Your child's class will add any exciting learning to these sites, so you can log on to see what they have been up to- you may be surprised!

Seesaw

The Seesaw app is our main method of communication between home and school. It is used to set children's homework and share information. Please remember that if you have an issue you would like to discuss with a member of staff, this should not be raised on Seesaw but via a phone call or in person at a pre-arranged appointment.

Meet the teacher meetings

You will shortly receive a Home/School knowledge planner from your child's teacher, introducing themselves and outlining work to be covered this half term. I hope you find these to be interesting and useful, when supporting your child with homework. These can also be found on the school website.

You are invited to a short 'meet the teacher' meeting with your children at 3.30pm on the dates below. Please take the opportunity to attend or send a representative if you are unable to do so.

Year 1: 9th September

Year 2: 11th September

Year 3: 10th September
Year 4: 15th September
Year 5: 18th September
Year 6: 8th September

Staffing

We are delighted to welcome our two new teachers, Mrs Allen and Miss Richardson. I know you will welcome them warmly to our St Andrew's family. Mrs McCarthy is recuperating from an operation but is hoping to be back with us very soon. In the meantime, Yugo Ekebuike, who worked in the office in the summer term, will continue to cover for her.

Uniform

Our children are looking very smart in their uniforms, which have hopefully been labelled. In summer, we allowed girls to wear **cycling shorts** under their skirts/dresses as they played on the fields, doing handstands etc. Please note that this are not a usual part of school uniform and do not need to be worn in the autumn and spring terms. Tights should be grey, white or navy and not 'jazzy' colours or patterns. Of course, any girls who prefer to are welcome to wear school trousers.

Please note that trainers and boots are **NOT** allowed in school, the correct footwear is black shoes. Children wearing incorrect footwear will be **required to wear PE pumps** in school. The only bags needed in school are reading folders and PE bags.

All children with long hair are required to have it tied up neatly in a bobble. Long, flowing hair is not practical at school, as it gets in the way when children are working, falling into their eyes. It also makes it easier for any outbreaks of head lice to spread. Children with long hair that is loose will be given a hair bobble and asked to tie their hair up.

Shaved or extreme hairstyles are not acceptable in school. Some children may have returned from holiday with coloured braids. Once these have grown out please do NOT replace them or send children in with coloured, wool hair extensions.

The only jewellery permitted is stud earrings. **Children wearing hoop earrings, or any other jewellery, will be asked to remove them and keep them in their tray until home time.** School will not be held responsible for any accidents resulting from wearing inappropriate earrings or other jewellery.



Punctuality and Attendance

It is vitally important that your child arrives for school at the specified time and attends regularly. Teaching staff work hard to ensure your children progress and achieve their best so excellent attendance is imperative.

Our attendance level last year remained at 94%. This is a positive step but we can do even better! Our minimum target for individual pupils is 96%. This is

hampered by parents who take holidays during term time. The law is clear surrounding this issue. Parents have NO entitlement to take their child on holiday in term time. As you are aware, school does NOT authorise any holidays. The local authority (LA) can issue a holiday penalty notice (HPN) to parents who take children on holiday without consent from the school. The LA can give each parent a fine of £80, which rises to £160 each if you do not pay within 21 days. If you do not pay the fine after 28 days, you may be prosecuted for your child's absence from school. The school governors at St Andrew's agree that any parent who keeps their child off school to go on holiday WILL receive a fine. The attendance of all pupils will continue to be rigorously monitored and any persistent absence addressed by the Education Welfare Officer.

Leaving school early

Please note that school finishes at 3.20pm and children should be collected from the appointed exit on the playground. In the summer term, a rising number of children were collected early from the office. This not only results in lost learning for the children, but it is very disruptive to the office staff, as they have to leave their work to fetch children. Please respect this by only collecting early in exceptional circumstances or for appointments, when an appointment card should be shown.

Medical Appointments

Please request medical appointments after 3.30pm, wherever possible.

Should there be any matters of concern regarding your child you should first discuss these (over the telephone) with the class teacher or teaching assistant. They are the people who know your child best and who are aware of incidents that happen during the school day. Should you feel that your concerns have not been resolved, or if there is an urgent matter you need to discuss with me, I am happy to speak with you at a convenient time that can be arranged via the office. Our family support worker, Mrs Utzeri, can be contacted via the office.



School Meals

All children in Reception Class, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to a free school meal. I would encourage you to take full advantage of this. For parents/carers choosing to provide a healthy packed lunch, please note that large chocolate bars (e.g. Mars Bars) and sweets are not suitable items. A healthy drink e.g. water or carton of fresh fruit juice is fine. **No nut products are allowed.**

If you are entitled to free school meals, due to receiving benefits, then you still need to apply via the gateway. Please ensure you do this, as your child will also receive free school milk. Infant children are provided with a piece of free fruit every day, and all children in school have access to fresh drinking water. Please note that children are **not** allowed any other drinks (e.g. flavoured water or fruit cordial) in water bottles.

Initial Diary Dates

11th September: Y1 hearing tests
18th September: Individual photographs Reception-Year 6 (Babies and younger children 8.30am)
24th September: Air ambulance assembly
24th September: Flu immunisations
3rd October: Y6 family worship
9th October: Flu immunisations
17th October: Y5 lead Harvest worship
24th October: Break Up for half-term
3rd November: Start back after half-term
4th November: Nursery photographs
7th November: Y4 lead family worship
25th November: Parent/Carer consultations

Extra Curricular Activities

We are currently putting a programme of extra-curricular activities together. Individual staff will inform you of clubs available.

Consent Forms

The office will be sending out data collection sheets for each child. Please ensure contact details are up to date in case we need to contact you in an emergency and return to school as soon as possible.

Finally

I look forward to working closely with you and your children over the coming school year. I am sure we have another happy, exciting and successful year ahead!

Yours sincerely,

Mrs A Barker
Headteacher