



St. Michael's Church of England Primary School

Carlisle Road, Dalston, Carlisle, Cumbria CA5 7LN • Tel: 01228 711544 • Acting Headteacher: Mrs L Smith

Our school values: Respect • Kindness • Challenge • Forgiveness • Perseverance

22 October 2021

Dear Parents

I want to share a few more updates as we come to the end of a really busy and positive half term.

COVID 19

This term we have seen multiple cases in school amongst our pupils and staff. We have tried our very best to limit the spread of the virus by going back to isolated bubbles and ensuring our hand washing routines are adhered to, classes are well ventilated and social distancing occurs when possible. We have not had any positive cases logged in the past week and it is our intention to open things up more for our children. We want them to access as normal a teaching day as possible at St Michael's, under the current climate, living alongside COVID 19. We hope to go back to face to face assemblies, shared playtimes and lunches, class school outings to enhance our curriculum and invite parents back in for Information Evenings and so on. This plan to move forward will always be reviewed and adapted in relation to the cases we may have within school.

Poppy Appeal

After half term we will be selling poppies, wrist bands (£1), reflector poppies (50p) and snap bands (£1.50) in school in aid of this very worthy charity. Children can bring their money into school and the 'shop' will be open at morning playtimes.

School Council

All classes have voted for two class representatives to be part of our School Council. I am going to run these meetings weekly and the first thing we will discuss will be school playtimes and how we can make them more fun and varied. I am keen that our pupils have a 'voice' within school and that we are proactive in considering their views and opinions, to make their childhood days at St Michael's the best that they can be.

Children in Need

Friday 19 November is Children In Need day and we would like our children to take part in this event. The theme will be 'Fancy Dress Friday'. Children can come into school dressed in dressing-up clothes, fancy dress, party clothes or just non-uniform. It feels like a suitable themed day to embrace happier times and the re-opening of more normal times. Children in Need merchandise, for example t-shirts or headbands, can also be worn. We ask that pupils bring a donation of £1 for this worthy cause.

Year 6 Application for secondary places

Please make sure that, if your child is due to transfer to secondary school in September 2022, you have completed the on-line application by 31 October 2021.

Uniform

Many of our pupils are coming into school looking really smart and ready to learn - thank you. Please can I remind you that pupils must wear a shirt and tie, grey trousers, shorts or skirt and smart, plain black shoes. We ask that pupils do not wear jewellery to school. Smart, tidy uniform impacts on a healthy, effective approach to learning. We encourage our pupils to wear our school uniform with pride. I'm sure you will support our school in keeping our dress code expectations high, with all uniform being clearly named.

Flu Vaccination

Pupils who received their flu vaccination should have brought home a note from the nurse. If you think your child should have received a vaccine, but has not shared a note, you can check that it was administered by calling your GP's surgery. Children who were absent on the day and did not receive a letter, please contact your GP to find out about available clinics.

Breakfast Club and Lunch Shop

After half term, we will be launching our booking system for Breakfast club and After School Club using Lunch-shop. This will allow you book and pay for sessions online. You will need the same log in details as you use to book a school dinner. Further details will be included in the pack to launch the wrap around care that your child will bring home after half term, if you access the service. Please can you let school know if you require a log-in reset.

We have appointed three staff to join the wrap around care. Miss Peascod and Mrs Fairlam will lead our Breakfast Club and Mrs Todhunter will lead our After School Club. Ms Rennie will continue to be our support assistant to both clubs. Please continue to book for the first week back using the email kidsclub@st-michaels.cumbria.sch.uk

Homework

Thank you to all parents who completed our online homework survey. We have also considered what our pupils think about homework and the types of tasks that would help them best with their learning. The findings were as follows-

88% of our parents are in favour of homework. The types of activities parents prefer to support their children with include 82.9% reading/phonics, 77% maths recall (times tables) and 60% spelling. Our traditional homework grids, being project based, were much less popular (37%).

The preference was for homework to be something that could be completed daily and for approximately 20 minutes. As a result, we have agreed to continue with our expectation of regular reading, ideally four times each week, spellings or phonics tasks weekly and an oral maths task, for example learning number bonds or times tables.

We are always keen to take on board parental views and work with our families to best meet

the learning needs of our pupils. I appreciate that our children have had a lot of home learning and many are enjoying attending clubs after school, that have previously been closed during previous lockdowns. I hope you feel we have got the best approach to homework at this time and be reassured it is something we regularly review and will adapt if needed.

Cross Country

St Michael's pupils took part in the Carlisle Schools Cross-Country Championships on Wednesday, with children from years 3, 4, 5 and 6 taking part. It was great for a sporting event on this scale to be back on the calendar and the children thoroughly enjoyed their morning at the Sheepmount. The children raced in the following groups; Y3/4 girls, Y3/4 boys, Y5 girls, Y5 boys, Y6 girls and Y6 boys. In some of the races there were over 80 children taking part, so it was a tough field of competitors. All the children gave it their absolute best and rose to the challenge. Lots of the children finished in the top 20 and Bel Dickinson (Y6) completed her race in 2nd place! Well done Bel. The Y6 boys and Y6 girls both came 2nd overall on points, which is an excellent achievement. It was fantastic to see the children display so many of our school values: they showed

respect to children and adults from other schools, faced the challenge of the race and showed perseverance to get to the finish line. They supported and encouraged each other with passion and pride.

Mrs Johnston

I'm sure you will join me in sending Mrs Johnston, her husband and their son, Barnaby, our very best wishes as she awaits the arrival of her second baby. Mrs Johnston starts her maternity leave today and will be a big miss on our team. We wish her well over the coming months and hopes she enjoys this very special family time. In her absence, Mrs Miller has very kindly offered to increase her teaching commitment to four days and Mrs Shennan will cover the fifth day. This is great for our Year One pupils and provides continuity.

I hope you enjoy some relaxing, family time over half term and look forward to welcoming our pupils back to school on Monday 1 November.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lorna Smith".

Mrs L Smith
Acting Headteacher