



St. Matthew's RCHS Newsletter

Round Up

Week 15 Friday 21 December 2023

Headteacher's Message

Dear St. Matthew's Parents and Carers

As we have reached the end of this term, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible journey we've had together. The past few months have been a testament to our collective dedication and the remarkable progress we've achieved as a school.

I am immensely proud to share that this term has been filled with numerous accomplishments and moments of celebration. Our students have displayed remarkable achievements across various areas of school, showcasing their determination and commitment to learning. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to each and every one of them for their outstanding efforts.

One of our core strengths lies in our community's unity and commitment, reflected in our strong attendance rates surpassing national and regional averages. This is a remarkable achievement in itself as many schools are battling with falling levels of attendance. Moreover, our focus on punctuality and adherence to uniform standards has significantly improved, creating an environment conducive to learning and growth. We are continuing to work with the students who struggle to get to school on time as we know that lost learning time adversely affects academic achievement.

The enthusiastic start made by our Year 7 students is truly commendable. They've embraced the diverse learning opportunities provided and are thoroughly enjoying their academic journey within our school. It's delightful to witness their engagement in both lessons and the wider curriculum. Year 11 have made a strong start to their final year, and we look forward to next term as we build towards their final examinations. Year 9 have been very settled in lessons and have maintained strong attendance and the challenge is there for year 8 and 10 to now match these achievements.

At St. Matthew's, our Catholic ethos continues to thrive. I'm heartened to see so many children actively participating in prayer and reflection, especially during year group assemblies and liturgies. This spiritual engagement is a testament to the values we uphold and cherish.

While we celebrate our achievements, we remain steadfast in our commitment to continuous improvement. We recognise the ongoing journey to deliver the best possible educational experience for our community. This pursuit both excites and challenges us, but our resolve to raise standards across the school remains as strong as ever.

As we approach the final Sunday of Advent, let us look to Mary, our heavenly mother, as a guiding light. Her unwavering faith and acceptance of God's will serve as an inspiration to us all. Let us strive to emulate her love, kindness, and unwavering trust in our own lives.

In the words of Pope Francis, "Let the model of Mary be reflected in our lives." May this festive season be filled with joy, love, and moments of reflection for each of us.

Thank you for your continuous support and partnership in making St. Matthew's School a thriving and nurturing environment for our students.

Wishing you all a blessed Christmas and a peaceful holiday season.

God bless

We **Pray** · We **Care** · We **Achieve**



Attendance Information

BE ON TARGET



School re-opens on Monday 8th January 2023 for all students

100% attendance	0 days missed	Excellent	0 lessons missed	Gives your child the best chance of success and gets them off to a flying start
95% attendance	9 days of absence, 1 week and 4 days of learning missed	Satisfactory	45 lessons missed	
90% attendance	19 days of absence, 3 weeks and 4 days of learning missed	Poor	95 lessons missed	Less chance of success. makes it harder to make progress.
85% attendance	27 days of absence, 5 weeks and 3 days of learning missed	Very poor	140 lessons missed	Serious implications on learning and progress
80% attendance	36 days of absence, 7 weeks and 3 days of learning missed	Unacceptable	190 lessons missed	
75% attendance	45 days of absence, 9 weeks and 1 day of learning missed	Unacceptable	230 lessons missed	



Students need to be in school to maximise their **LEARNING AND SUCCESS**

Attendance continues to be a key priority in school this year for all pupils. If students are not in school, they are not learning. Please remember that every school day is important for your child.

Please try to follow these simple steps:

- ◆ Try to judge how 'severe' your child's absence is. Do they really need to stay at home?
- ◆ Is your child better by mid-morning? If they are, send them into school.
- ◆ If your child has an extended or intermittent but persistent condition, contact their Head of Year and arrange a meeting to set up a supportive action plan. There is a lot of support we can offer to prevent your child from missing school.
- ◆ Non-urgent doctor, dental appointments and check-ups should be made out of school time where possible. School finishes at 3pm.
- ◆ If your child has a cough, cold menstrual pains, please send them to school. usually once they get with their friends, they forget they feel unwell.

Don't think that the 'odd day off can't harm'. Research carried out on the effects of broken weeks and achievement is astounding. A student can have 95% attendance but still have 10 broken weeks! Hugely detrimental to your child's learning, leaving big gaps in knowledge.

The Attendance Team would like to take this opportunity to thank-you for your continued support in ensuring your child attends school regularly and wish you all a very peaceful and joyous Christmas.

If you need any support or advice to help your child improve their attendance, please get in touch with us at school or email attendance@smrchs.com.

G Matthew – Strategic Attendance Lead

C Grainger – Attendance Lead

S Ross – Attendance Officer/ Safeguarding Officer



Important message

We still have some students who have debt on their Parent Pay Account, we will be making contact with you to discuss this on a one to one basis.

In the meantime please check Parent Pay and top up funds to clear any debt if you are in a position to do so before your child/children return to school after the Christmas holidays.

If you are struggling to clear this debt, we suggest your child/children bring a packed lunch each day upon returning to school as they will no longer be served in the cafeteria if a debt appears on their account when they go to be served.

We are here to help you please contact the Finance Team to discuss further or email parentpay@smrchs.com

Children on Free School Meals have a £2.50 daily allowance for a meal at lunchtime. This allowance is not to be used for snacks at break time. If you wish your child to buy snacks or spend more than the allocated £2.50 you should top up their Parent Pay account accordingly.

Children on Free School Meals will now have a daily spend limit of £2.50, they will not be permitted to go over this limit and will be refused any items over the cost of £2.50. If you put additional funds on their Parent Pay account we will remove or change the daily limit to one you chose for your child.

If you have not activated the account please do so immediately.

If you have misplaced your unique username and password to activate the account contact the Finance Team straight away.

Your child will need their account activating to:

- ♦ **buy snacks / meals from the catering service**
- ♦ **purchase academic items**
- ♦ **go on school trips/events**



How To Activate A New Account

You will need an activation letter or email from school to get started. If you have lost this or not yet received it, email the school at parentpay@smrchs.com

You need a valid email address as a username and for account verification.

1. Navigate to parentpay.com
2. Select Login at the top right corner of the screen
3. Enter the username and password provided in your activation letter / email and select activate.
4. Complete the activation as detailed on screen.
5. That's it you're all done!

How To Top Up A Parent Pay Lunch Account

1. Navigate to parentpay.com
2. Select Parent Login
3. Username—this is your email address
4. Password—this is what you chose once you had activated your account
5. Select Login
6. Click Continue—(or if you want to set up one click payments follow the screen prompts)
7. Select Pay for meals
8. Enter how much you want to pay (minimum payment is £5)
9. Select Add to Basket
10. Click on Basket and check the amount is correct
11. Click proceed to Checkout
12. A receipt will be sent to your email address from Parent Pay.
13. That's it you're all topped up!

The Minimum Top Up is now £2.50.



Free School Meals

We encourage all parents/ carers to check if their child is entitled to free school meals (FSM). Being registered for free school meals benefits both the student and the school as we will receive extra funding. It is the parents/ carers responsibility to apply for free school meals on behalf of their child.

Applying for Free School Meals only takes a few minutes. Please click on the following link to apply:

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

If you are struggling with your application, please contact finance@smrchs.com and the Finance Team will be happy to assist you with your application.

Qualifying criteria for free school meals:

You are receiving Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)

Income Support

Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

The guarantee element of Pension Credit

Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)

Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit



BLUE DOT DEAL—A STUDENT FAVOURITE

The Blue Dot Deal still remains a favourite and is exceptionally good value allowing your child to chose 4 items, for example; if they wanted something to eat at break they could chose something from the hot deli, get a roll for lunch from the cold deli, select a drink and get a fruit pot or something from the Homebake all for £2.50.

4 AMAZING ITEMS £2.50

HOT DELI Garlic Bread Pizza Melt Bap/Boat Cheese On Toast/Bap Pizza Melt Quesadilla BBQ Melt Bap	4OZ POTS Selection of Fruit Pots Selection of Jelly Pots Selection of Yoghurt Pots Selection of Seed Pots
COLD DELI A Selection of Rolls: Ham, Cheese, Tuna, Chicken Mayo, Egg Mayo	HOMEBAKES Mini Muffin Mini Cookie Mini Shortbread Mini Flapjack
DRINKS 125ml Radnor Drink Carton 330ml Water Bottle 8oz Slush Small Generation Juice	

* Not all items are available everyday



Year 10

- ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
- ☆☆ **Top 5 Achievers** ☆☆
- ☆☆ * Keane G ☆☆
- ☆☆ * Ameer H ☆☆
- ☆☆ * Miriam J ☆☆
- ☆☆ * Christina M ☆☆
- ☆☆ * Anthony Ou ☆☆
- ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆



**Highest attending form this week
10A—Sta 97.72% attendance**

Well done!

63 pupils across year 10 have 100% attendance, which is fantastic.



It is not about the presents but the spirit that matters the most when it is Christmastime. It is about spreading happiness and staying close to family and friends.

Wishing all of year 10 a blessed and safe Christmastime and a peaceful holiday.

Well done to my 10B GCSE Art pupils, Malath, Ollie, Olivia and Richard for attending art club most days, to ensure they are up to date with their sketchbooks!



Teacher Shout Outs

From Miss Rayson -

10Y are amazing! The level of commitment to learning and engagement is brilliant and I'm so proud of how focused and motivated they are. Mekhi's creative writing, Skye's poetry analysis, Ellie and Luke always giving answers and interpretations. They are all just brilliant. Merry Christmas.

Year 9

Well done to all of year 9, What a fantastic start to the year. I am so proud of each and everyone of you.

Wishing you and your loved ones a wonderful Christmas and a very peaceful New Year.

Mrs King



Year 9 girls have ended their netball season with a fun dodgeball celebration. It has been a pleasure to have them represent St. Matthews this year.

Well done!



Artwork by 9J amazing!

Artwork by 9H fantastic!



To cap what has been an outstanding term for 9C, we looked at the importance of caring for others during the season of advent. Pupils explored the different religious teachings based around the Golden Rule. They compared how other religions approach their relationship with others in the same way. As always, the discussions were very mature and though provoking. Have a wonderful break 9C. Mr. Hall.



Year 9

WOW!

By Etinosa Article in the Year 9 Gazette

Hair, hair is the first thing you see when you look at someone. It can change the shape of their face. It can accentuate their features and complexion. As someone who thinks about their hair often, I even feel insecure and undesired when it is undone.

Hair has been the staple of beauty since the 1700s. It is important to everyone, even those without it. My curly hair has been the

topic of many conversations ever since I was young. All I've ever heard was "your hair is so thick!" "I can't braid this!" "It

would look better straight." All I have ever heard: complaints, complaints, complaints.

How would you feel if the thing you loved was surrounded by negative comments? My hair invited invasive questions and

unwanted, unnecessary, undue attention. It invited pulling and prodding. You may ask: why do we never see your natural hair?

My hair is thick, bush-fierce like a lion. I'm a fish, my hair is the shark. It swallows me whole, consuming my time and effort. I

could spend hours detangling, styling, washing, drying. I AM TIRED! I AM EXHAUSTED! My skin is wrinkling from fatigue.

You may say it's not that important, but it is!

Between 1619 and 1807, African Americans under slavery would braid maps into their hair as a way to escape and achieve

freedom, as well as grains and seeds as a way to survive after slavery. My hair holds importance and history.

Thinking of it through the perspective of someone who has 1a straight hair who can just brush and go: they wouldn't be able to

fathom the hours I have dedicated to my hair. The river of tears that have fallen from my eyes because of my hair. Put yourself

in my shoes.

Hair, hair is the first thing you see when you look at someone. It can make or break you, it can ruin or accentuate your facial


features. Hair is the first thing you see when you look at a person.



Highlights of the week

Year 8

- ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
- ☆ **Top 5 Achievers** ☆
- ☆ ● Charlotte K
 - ☆ ● Merit E
 - ☆ ● Chigozie E
 - ☆ ● Arlo B
 - ☆ ● Megan E
- ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆



Highest attending forms are 8G with 97% attendance

61 students with 100% attendance across the year groups

Very Well Done!



Just to shout out year 8 you have had so many positive shout outs this year so far well done! We are so proud of all your achievements, successes and feedback so far this year. Here are some examples we have put up in the Yr8 office and also the winners of the rewards breakfast.

Keep striving to be the best version of yourselves enjoy the Christmas break and have a wonderful Christmas we will see you in the New Year.

Ms Travis, Miss Ray and Miss Flitcroft



Miss Richards wanted to shout out all your hard work in art this term! Well done year 8. This is just one example of the lovely work so far from 8B

8E have really stepped up, their storytelling skills have developed brilliantly, and they are all so willing to share ideas and answer questions in class, its great to see how much they are engaging and learning. Have a great Christmas. Miss Rayson



Year 7

- ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
- ☆☆ **Top 5 Achievers** ☆☆☆
- ☆☆ • **Louie G** ☆☆☆
- ☆☆ • **McKenzie O'M-W** ☆☆☆
- ☆☆ • **Basit A** ☆☆☆
- ☆☆ • **Divine U** ☆☆☆
- ☆☆ • **Curtis M** ☆☆☆
- ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Highest attending forms this week
7B—7Est
Well done!

72 pupils across year 10 have 100% attendance, which is fantastic.

- ★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★
- ★ **Our Stars of the Week** ★
- ★ Mrs Walsh's – **Louie G** ★
- ★ Mrs Rolt's - **Abraham A-K** ★
- ★ Mr Johnson's – **Maisie E** ★
- ★ Mrs Lennon's – **McKenzie O'M-W** ★
- ★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Year 7 Reward event



It's been great to see so many Y7s involved in the student newspaper this term! Miss Alexander

Aarush year 7 comes to art club almost everyday to perfect his amazing art skills!

Ms Richards





Year 7

Year 7B and 7I enjoying their reward breakfast for top attending forms .. waffle and ice-cream went down a treat!



**To all of Year 7
Enjoy the Christmas
Holiday From
Mrs Rolt,
Mr Johnston and
Mrs Lennon**



Beehive

The KS3 Beehive students were in the Christmas spirit this week and enjoyed their Cinderella Pantomime. Wonderful behaviour shown representing the Beehive and St Matthews. We are glad you had fun!



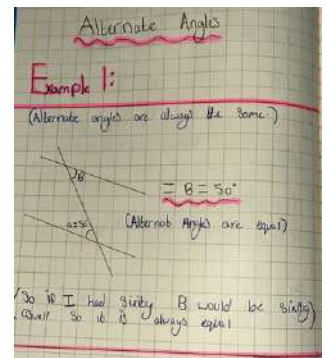
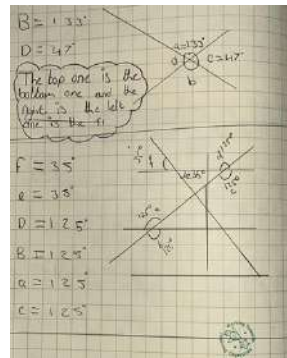
The year 9 nurture class built some fantastic volcanoes this week. There was an interesting mixture of reality and imagination! The fairy-tail volcano was a must - no-one could change their mind! Great effort everyone.

A very proud Miss Mallinson and all the team

Well done !

The year 8 nurture class have been working hard this week understanding alternate angles and they have made great progress!

Well done!



They also welcomed the Travelling Crib into there form room and enjoyed the readings

A huge shout out to Lacey (11k) who has been doing a great job helping out with the KS3 students at break and lunch. It is most appreciated by all the Beehive staff! A big thank you!



Modern Foreign Languages

It has been a week of preparing for the mid-year exams for years 7-10 and feedback/analysing papers for year 11 post PPEs. Year 7-10 all have revision materials to help them prepare for the exams after Christmas and we look forward to lots of successes and achievements in the new year.

Here are some highlights from this week:

8Y German enjoyed playing 'Would I lie to you?' to practise their speaking skills on the topic of future holiday plans. Kayden and Mohammed were particularly competitive when playing this. Here are John and Great also eagerly trying to earn as many points as possible, whilst practising their phrases.



8X French were playing 'one pen, one dice' to practise their translation skills on the topic of describing a day in the past and David and Kelsey were making

excellent progress this week, whilst being extremely competitive.



Bailey and Edward in 9Y French were practising their French phrases about a recent concert through playing 'Would I lie to you?' and were really focussing on their accurate pronunciation skills.



Here are Edward and Chris from year 10C French who were preparing for their mid-year speaking assessment by preparing for the photo card element of the exam. Fantastic progress and excellent effort and engagement was shown by all the year 10 French classes in their careful preparation.



Ms Prendergast launched her Christmas card competition a few weeks ago and has had some amazing entries. We look forward to her selecting the winners at the end of term.





Modern Foreign Languages



The MFL team would like to wish all our students and their families a very happy and holy Christmas and best wishes for the new year.





Chaplaincy Corner

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given.” This passage from the Prophet Isaiah sums up our final week in school because we have been focusing during our student liturgies on the theme of Jesus coming to bring light into our world which contains so much darkness.



The liturgy which all students took part in throughout the week was made up of scripture readings, reflections from Mr Passarello and Mr Sharrock, bidding prayers from our students, videos, and of course the singing of a good old Christmas carol. We reflected on the fact that when we do things for other people we are spreading the light and joy of Christ to them and we are showing them the face of Jesus. Jesus lived on Earth as a human

being, but he no longer has a physical body here and so the only bodies that can be used to spread the love of God are our bodies. The challenge for every member of our community is thus to use our bodies to spread the light and joy of Christ to others.



A very practical way to spread the light of Christmas that we are inviting everyone to take part in is to light a Christmas candle during their Christmas day meal. On Friday every student and every staff member will receive a card and a scented candle, and we invite everyone to make this candle, which represents the presence and love of God among us, the centre point on their Christmas meal table.

We also invite you to take a photo of the candle on your table and email it to Mr Sharrock (t.sharrock@smrchs.com) so that we can make a beautiful collage of everyone's Christmas celebrations.

On Friday we will also be joined by a couple of friends of Mr Sharrock – Father Aaron and Deacon Jay. These young Americans studied for the priesthood with Mr Sharrock in Rome and this is a wonderful opportunity for our students to see that there are still young people willing to give up their lives to serve God and serve the Church as priests!

Wishing you all a very peaceful and holy Christmas. May God bless you all.



Chaplaincy Corner

As we come into the final week of preparations for Christmas we would like to share with you the times of the Christmas Masses at some of the Catholic churches in our area. The times of Masses on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day can be found in the following table. You are all very welcome at any of these Masses, no matter what your journey of faith has been so far: Jesus is there waiting for you!

Church	Christmas Eve	Christmas Day
St John Vianney's, Moston		11:30am
St Dunstan's, Moston		10am
St John Bosco's, Blackley	5:30pm	9:30am
Mount Carmel, Blackley	7:30pm	11:30am
St Clare's, Blackley	6pm (Romanian) 8pm (English)	8am and 10:30am (English) 12:30pm (Romanian)
Christ the King, Newton Heath	7pm, 11pm	10am
St Patrick's, Collyhurst	7pm	9:30am
St Malachy's, Collyhurst		11am
St Margaret Mary's, New Moston	6pm, 11:30pm	8am, 10:30am
St Chad's, Cheetham Hill	11:30pm	8am, 11am



Spotlight on SEND

SPOTLIGHT ON SEND — Support Staff

What an incredible term our support staff have had.

From in-class support to interventions, this talented and dedicated team hold us together.

The care we can offer to our students, simply would not be possible without them.

I would like to say THANK-YOU to them all, for their continued dedication to our wonderful students.

Wishing all of our families a very happy and peaceful Christmas & we will be fresh and ready to go in 2024.

Mrs. Holt.

SENDCO.





London overnight theatre trip to see **Wicked the Musical** and **Harry Potter Studio Tour** Tues 16th & Wed 17th July 2024



The total cost of this trip is **£225**

A **£75** deposit required by ParentPay to secure a place.

If your child is interested in going on this trip then please ask them to see Mr Millington urgently before all the places are filled.

Trip is now open to anyone who plays a musical instrument or is interested in Music or drama at KS3.

Included in the cost...

- Coach travel
- Tickets to see Wicked the Musical
- Sightseeing in London
- Evening meal in a restaurant
- Overnight stay in hotel
- Bed and breakfast
- Harry Potter Studio tour



Highlights of the week

CHRISTMAS 2023 HAMPER APPEAL

The SMRCHS family have always been incredibly generous at Christmas time and this year will be no different!

We would like to raise funds and collect donations to support the families within our school who may need a little extra help over the festive period.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- Donate a new, unwrapped gift and drop it off at school.
- Donate a voucher that we could raffle.
- Support our Christmas jumper day.
- Buy raffle tickets.
- Share this post with your friends, family & local businesses.

SPREAD THE WORD!

www.smrchs.com

FROM US TO YOU, THANK YOU

We have had Form group collections, staff collections, teddy bear raffles, Christmas Cake raffles and much, much more.
We Pray, We Care, We Achieve

What a difference all our support and contributions collectively will make to families within our community over the Christmas period.

