



**Our values**

Respect  
Honesty  
Kindness  
Responsibility

**Dear Parents, children, families, friends, governors and volunteers,**



A huge thank you for all your hard work and support during the Autumn term. It has been incredibly busy and full of the best learning! The children are absolutely loving having a wonderful text at the core of their class activities – I'm pretty confident that many of these wonderful books have made it on to Christmas lists. We really appreciate the part you play in our school and look forward to working together again in the Spring Term. Thank you for encouraging hard work, creativity and enthusiasm for being at St Matthew's School!

Wishing you all a magical, fun and relaxing Christmas. Mrs Judith Holt



Days gone by....

A wonderful photo taken outside St Matthew's early 1900's! Can you notice the changes? What a wonderful school uniform these children were wearing.

Classes were called Standards and lessons were given in the subjects knitting, needlework, domestic economy, nature study, singing, cookery and scripture; arithmetic, reading and writing were a must. They had exams called 'labour certificate' and holidays given for the 'Band of Hope'. There were even excursions to the 'sea-side' !

*School log book: May 30th 1899... 'The results in this school were of a most satisfactory character. In all the groups there was evidence of careful and exact teaching having been given and the pupils answered with a readiness and accuracy generally which were pleasing. Careful supervision of the work is evidently exercised and I was much struck with the tone and discipline of the school...' Signed: R.E Spencer, Inspector of Schools*

Thank you to our wonderful team of volunteers who support us on a weekly basis to ensure that our children are enjoying their reading. I would also like to thank all the parents who come along on school trips and to parents who help supervise the children on visits or walks to church or the library. Again, we simply could not attend without your ongoing support!

Christmas events

It was great to see so many parents, families and neighbour's attending the many festive events. The church services and the nativity plays were outstanding and the children were so very proud of their achievements; there is something magical hearing children's voices singing joyfully Christmas carols and acting out the Christmas story.

Children and staff made a huge effort to learn and rehearse their nativity play for this. St Matthew's is always keen to see this good attendance at the events as this fosters and develops a great community ethos and environment. Monies raised/generous donations to a local charity.



The house points have been collected for this term and counted and we are pleased to announce that **BARNETT'S** house have won. **WELL DONE!**

#### First Aid stickers

Children who have had small injuries sustained in school are checked by our team of First aiders and parents receive in their book bags at the end of the day an accident advice form which informs them of the nature of the accident. From beg next term, children will also have a sticker on their jumper which serves as a reminder to check the book bags for this accident report.

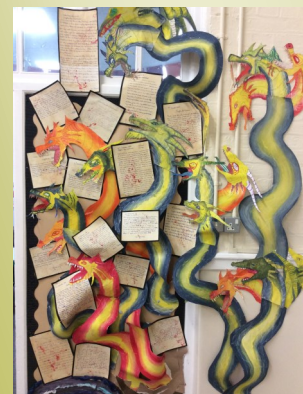
### **ART WORK**

Our 'artist in residence', Jago Tibbets Williams is doing a fabulous job creating excitement and love of art in both children and staff. He works with each year group for a short term. The focus has been around the class core text or school values so far and he carefully and systematically teaches skills that build into a finished piece. All children can therefore create wonderful art using these skills and also apply them at other opportunities in the curriculum with independence. Teachers are becoming far more confident with teaching art as steps are clearly broken down - the impact is therefore magnified across the school. Gifted and talented artists from all year groups have additional time creating art with Jago where he encourages them to be more independent and follow their own ideas. They have created the ballon sculptures and the wonderful 'values trees'.

The generous contributors your group have made to art at St Matthew's is helping to bring enjoyment in creativity to life. It really is amazing! We now have many creative after school clubs as a result and all children are benefitting.

#### **Farewell**

With great regret our admissions officer Mrs Dianne Wickens leaves our school at the end of this term. We would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her valued contribution to the school and for all her hard work and commitment during the time here and wish her every success in the future and in her new endeavours.





### Christmas Holiday

The school will close on Friday 18th December 2015.

#### Return to school 2016

Staff return to school on Monday 4th January 2016 for Training.

Pupils return to school on **Tuesday 5th January 2016**

School Website – we are now posting information and news regularly on our school website. Please visit our website regularly to view what has been happening. Please visit our website.

#### Drama club

Mrs Manuel and Miss Huskisson would like to say a massive well done to all the students who worked so hard in the drama club production of Alice in Winterland.

The show was a great success and we had some great feedback from the audience.

Thanks to all the parents for providing costumes, patiently waiting after extended rehearsals over-ran and of course coming along to see the show.

We hope you enjoyed it as much as we did!



### Governors' Blog

*Hello, since September the Governing Body have continued to strive to develop and improve our practices so we can effectively challenge and equally support the school in moving closer to the achieving the school's vision.*

*Major Developments in the Governing Body include:*

*Setting the agendas for all meetings including three meetings each one focussing entirely on one of the following: School Improvement Plan (SIP); School Data; Results and Review. These meetings are intended to both develop governors knowledge and give us more opportunity to discuss these items in depth with both the senior leadership and wider leadership teams.*

*Increasing the Governing Body skills base by recruiting Isobel McDougall, who has expertise in Early Years education, as an associate governor, - we look forward to working with her.*

*Developing the role of our monitoring pairs, each pair of governors focussing on specific areas of the SIP. Ensuring that a timetable and focus of the year's monitoring visits is produced.*

*In addition to the above we continue to monitor the schools progress, budget and carry out all our other statutory duties.*

*The Governing Body wish to thank all the staff, but especially the children for all their hard work and creative talent they have shown in their Christmas shows and church services this year - Well Done!*

*Finally we would like to wish all of you, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

#### School Uniform

Please can you ensure that children come in to school wearing the correct uniform.

The children look so smart when they come to school in the correct uniform. Please remember that this includes all children with long hair having it tied back.

School uniform is a white collared shirt and a school tie.

Please Please Please can you name your child's uniform and also check at night they have brought home the correct clothing. We are constantly being asked to find lost clothing and it is very difficult. Your help in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

We also would like to ensure your child can enjoy playtimes and we have many children complaining of the cold. They do not have any hats, scarves or gloves to help them keep warm. It would be a big help if they could come in dressed for the weather conditions.



School Website – we are now posting information and news regularly on our school website. Please visit our website regularly to view what has been happening. Please visit our website.

The attendance for this week is as follows: 95.7%

#### Maths Zone

**A new page on our website under Pupils that will support your child with interactive, fun Maths activities at home. Please follow the links and choose an option with your child that challenges them comfortably rather than allowing them to choose the easy option! We have very able children at St Matthews who love beating their teachers, see if they can beat you too!**

#### **SPORTS EVENTS/NEWS**

***This has been a busy term at St Matthew's Primary with loads of after school clubs and festivals and events happening.***

***Our Sports and PE coordinator has been busy this term working in our school to provide more opportunities for our pupils to be more active and give them more opportunities to be involved in sports.***

***Find out about all about our efforts in the sports section on the website***

#### **B Team netball match**

On Tuesday 24th November the St Matthew's 'B' Netball team played in the B league at Skinners Kent Academy against Bishop's Down and St Augustine's school. The team consisted of Darlene, Kyra, Scarlett P, Paige, Rosie, Lucy and Emily and several of these girls had never played for the school before. They all gave a very good account of themselves showing some promising skills. Both games were only lost by one goal, so the coaches were extremely pleased with the team.

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#### **Attendance**

At this time of year, Head teachers often get requests from families wishing to leave school a few days early or return later in order to beat the Christmas traffic or take advantage of cheaper flights etc. I am afraid that I am not able to authorise such requests under Government legislation and any absence taken at this time of year will be recorded as unauthorised unless we are sure that your child is legitimately ill.

I am a very approachable person and do understand what it is like to be a working parent so if you do need to speak to me about days off, please do catch me. I will always listen and even if I can't authorise the absence. Many thanks.