

St Michael's

Church of England Infant School



24th September 2021 Newsletter

Our value this half term is

FRIENDSHIP

Dear Parents and Carers

It has been wonderful to welcome everyone back and lovely to report that the children have returned with a great attitude and positive energy! We have settled into the school routine once again and have remembered how our Bee Rules help and values help provide a framework for managing our behaviours and choices in school. Our new reception children have settled in incredibly quickly! So much so, that we welcomed them in full time three days early! Fantastic! We are enjoying getting to know our new recruits and do hope that they are already feeling part of the St Michael's family.

Meet the Teacher – information about learning and the curriculum evening

We will be holding meetings on 7th October from 18:30-19:15.

This will be in year groups and will be an opportunity for you to meet your child's teacher, learn more about the curriculum and also find out about ways you can support your child at home. We will provide the PowerPoint for you to take away (this will also be available on our website) and a range of resources that you may find helpful.

Followed by



Take one picture from 19:15 to 20:00.

We started the academic year with some therapeutic art! We completed our own version of the 'National Gallery's initiative, 'Take One Picture'. This is where the children look at one picture from a famous artist and create their own version of this. The aim is to inspire a lifelong love of art! This year we chose Vincent Van Gogh's 'Starry Night' and 'self-portrait'. The children spent the first few days at school learning about Van Gogh and his style of painting. They then learnt the skills they would need to create their own versions of his pictures. They have done a remarkable job and we think you will really enjoy seeing the results at our Curriculum evening on the 7th October.

We will be creating a 'gallery' of the children's pictures and The Friends of St Michael's have very kindly agreed to frame every child's picture. You will be able to purchase your child's picture.



Curriculum letters

We have now posted our curriculum letters on our website. If you have mislaid a hard copy, you will be able to find a version of this on the website under curriculum and classes.

Our new KS1 topic 'Take Off' is inspiring the children and they have thoroughly enjoyed learning about Christopher Columbus and his travels. Ladybird class have been thinking about the start of autumn, they have been on an autumn walk to collect leaves and talk about what they noticed.

The New Reading Framework

In September, the government expect all schools to initiate and deliver the principles of the new reading framework. We have recently sent a letter out explaining the rationale behind this and how your child should read with you at home. We will discuss this in more detail at the Curriculum evening and we welcome any questions you may have in relation to this.

Feel Fantastic Friday

We have introduced a well-being and enrichment day here at St Michael's and are very excited to share more information about this with you. Our PE pledge is 'healthy in mind, body and soul'. We believe that having a day where we focus on fitness, outdoor pursuits, art and reading, really feeds the soul and helps children both regulate their emotions and provides a sense of well-being. The children learn to problem solve together, create together and use frequent, talk based strategies, to learn and enrich their vocabulary. We have mapped out the day so that curriculum links are weaved through all the activities. We end the day with 'books and biscuits'. This is a calm end to a busy day and the children enjoy a world of stories before they go home for the weekend. What better way to end the week. The sharing of stories, poems, non-fiction and rhymes fits beautifully with the additional emphasis on reading.

Covid Information

We have once again adapted and changed our school risk assessment now that we entered our new phase of the roadmap. Please refer to the letter sent before we started term for more details. Our three main protective measures (**hand-washing, respiratory hygiene and cleaning of surfaces**) are vital in keeping our school a safe place to be. We will also be ventilating our classrooms and communal spaces.

Please can we ask that parents of any child who is absent from school due to suspected Covid-19 contacts the school office to clarify the reason for their return eg a negative PCR test. This is being recorded for the school and teachers will not be able to easily do this as well as teach children. Please be aware that a staff member may ask you to do this before accepting the child back into class. I am sure you will all appreciate that safety is our main priority and we need to follow systems to get it right.

The school office is no longer out of bounds for parents, however, Mrs Piggott continues to be at the gate each morning to welcome families in and to answer any queries. I will be available at the gate every Friday morning.

School Leadership

You may be aware that the government have recently placed a great emphasis on school collaboration and want to make sure that 'no school stands alone.' We have been developing a close relationship with another small village infant school, Newdigate Infant School, in Dorking. As many of you may know, I was a teacher and leader at this school for almost a decade and Mrs Bliss, our Executive Head, is Headteacher there. This relationship has blossomed and grown and we intend to continue and develop this collaboration as we move forward.

ELSA

The children know that we have an **ELSA (Emotional Literacy Assistant)**, Mrs Leney, in our school who can help them if they are finding it hard to manage strong feelings and emotions which are becoming a barrier to learning. If you feel it would be beneficial for your child to be referred to work with her, please speak to your child's class teacher. We are finding that the demands for this role have grown greatly in the last year so please be aware that we may need to allocate limited sessions or place your child on a waiting list as we prioritise those in most need.

Marvellous Me

Please can we ask that you sign up to our MarvellousMe app if you have not already done so. We are always keen to give more information to as many parents as we can about the children's achievements and 'Marvellous Moments' as well as information about our school day and learning. Please let us know how useful this is once we are underway, our aim is to improve the way we communicate and get relevant information to you as it is needed.

Open Days

This year we will be holding our open days on our INSET day and the following day so we can make sure our prospective parents are able to see the school building as well as the outside area. Please can you promote the school and tell anybody looking for places about us; you are our best marketing tool!

Remember to recommend us to your friends and families!

Open Morning – Friday 22nd October 2021 (09:30 - 11:45)

Open Morning – Saturday 23rd October 2021 (13:30-15:15)

Parent Questionnaire

At the end of the term we sent out a parent questionnaire to all of our families. We had 37 responses and I have summarised them below. Overall, they were incredibly positive and supportive, but we did have a few responses that highlighted areas for us to improve. Our main area for improvement is around your receiving valuable information about your child's progress. We know that the last year has had a massive effect on our ability to communicate progress in the same way as we used to. We are keen to work towards going back to face to face progress meetings which will address this. Please note that we adopt an 'open door' policy here and are always happy to chat to you after school. If you need more than a minute or two, we can arrange a more formal meeting at a time that is mutually convenient.

100% of parents responded that their child feels safe at our school

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
My child is happy at school	62%	35%	-	-	3%
My child feels safe at school.	65%	35%	-	-	-
My child makes good progress at this school	43%	54%	-	-	3%
My child is taught well at this school	51%	43%	-	-	5%
This schools makes sure its pupils are well behaved	46%	41%	-	3%	11%
This school deals effectively with bullying	30%	19%	-	-	51%
This school is well led and managed	54%	41%	3%	-	3%
This school responds well to any concerns I raise	54%	32%	3%	-	11%
I receive valuable information form the school about my child's progress	43%	38%	14%	3%	3%
I would recommend this school to another parent	68%	24%	3%	-	5%

You also gave us 3 words to describe our school and we have made a wordle to capture those words:



Our term dates and inset days are on our website. We have been asked by the local authority to allocate an additional holiday day for the **Queen's Platinum Jubilee** (as the extra bank holiday falls in a school holiday). We know that many community and voluntary controlled schools have chosen 22nd October 2021 as their additional day, but the governors have decided to take ours at the end of the summer term on **21st July 2022**. This means our last day of term will be **Wednesday 20th July**.



God Bless

Nicola Cleather
Head of School

