



Newsletter 2

St Matthew's Church of England Primary School



18th September 2026

<http://www.st-matthews.gloucs.sch.uk>

Dear Parents and Carers

This term our value is 'Perseverance': always working hard. To celebrate our close connection with the Church, we have included a quote from the Bible on 'Perseverance'. We have attached further information for parents on 'perseverance' with this newsletter.

..."Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you. Ponder the path of your feet; then all your ways will be sure."...

Proverbs 4:25-26

Headteachers update - Welcome Back to St Matthew's!

It is a real joy to welcome everyone back to St Matthew's for a new school year. As I begin my third year as Headteacher, I continue to feel incredibly blessed to work within such a wonderful school community. St Matthew's is a very special place, and I am grateful every day for the support, kindness and encouragement shown by our children, families, staff, governors and wider community.

This year, our vision, "*With Love and Faith, We Aspire and Achieve*," continues to underpin everything we do. Alongside this, we have introduced a whole-school theme of **Stars**. During our first collective worship together, we reflected on how each of us can shine our star a little brighter than we did last year.

Whether we are children or adults, there is always something we can improve. We talked about striving to develop our handwriting, strengthen our learning behaviours, listen carefully to instructions, show resilience, be a good friend, and make positive choices each day.

This theme links beautifully with our school values and reminds us that growth is not about being perfect but about continually trying to be the very best version of ourselves. When we all work together to live out our values, we create a happy, safe and nurturing environment where every child can flourish and where learning and play can thrive.

The staff team returned for two training days before the children arrived. These days provided an important opportunity to focus on our key priorities and ensure we are all working together to provide the very best education and care for our pupils. These priorities come directly from our School Development Plan and have been brought together in a Priorities on a Page (POP) document. This outlines the core areas we will be focusing on throughout the term and year ahead. The POP will be available on our website and displayed around the school so that everyone can see the exciting journey we are on together.

As always, I am hugely grateful for the partnership we share with our families. The support you provide at home makes such a difference to the children's success, confidence and wellbeing. Together, we can ensure that every child continues to aspire, achieve and shine brightly.

I am incredibly excited about the year ahead and all that it will bring. I look forward to seeing many of you at our family services, concerts, celebrations and community events throughout the year. Thank you for being such an important part of the St Matthew's family.

Here's to another fantastic year of learning, growing and shining together.



Our wonderful new Reception children started full time this week. They have been super brave and are getting to know the school, the routine, and exploring and enjoying the infant playground. We are so proud of them and look forward to seeing them progress throughout the year. We would like to invite parents of Reception Class children to our 'Welcome' service at St Matthew's Church on Wednesday 7th October at 9.15am.

Our Y6 children started their swimming sessions on Wednesday. These swimming sessions give them the opportunity to gain confidence in the water and to enjoy reaching their swimming goals. These sessions will continue every Wednesday until 21st October.

Wellbeing

- **Togetherness:** GCC gives families free access to Togetherness resources to support wellbeing. There is support for parents, carers, grandparents and young people. Please share this information with your families. [Gloucestershire | Togetherness - Togetherness](#)
- **Snack-tember:** this is a free, month-long health initiative led by the British Nutrition Foundation throughout September to help children and young people make healthier and more sustainable choices around snacks. You can find further information (resources, lesson plans, assemblies, parent letters, etc) via this link [comms-toolkit-snack-tember-26.pdf](#) (you might choose to use this work as an intervention for your Healthy School Award)

With Love & Faith We Aspire & Achieve.

Jesus said: I have come so you may have life, life in all its fullness. John 10:10

- We are excited that our fantastic array of after schools clubs began this week. Booking your child's club through Arbor hopefully made the process a little easier. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff for giving up their own time to run these clubs. Please make sure your child attends every week. If they no longer wish to attend please let us know so that we can offer their place to another child.

Sporting Fixtures during 2026-27

Whole classes will have the opportunity to take part in one sporting event each year, along with competitive events across the year too. However, to achieve this we will need parents to help provide transport or volunteer to walk with the children for these events to take place. As part of our sporting initiative, we are awaiting confirmation of some new in-house coaching, which we will share with you as soon as possible. There are also inter class sporting activities taking place weekly, which include yoga and cross country this term. These will change termly to incorporate the relevant sports for the seasons. This is exciting times for sport in school and we are looking forward to receiving details from Atlas Games about the fixtures that they are arranging throughout the year.

We will be holding our very special St Matthew's Day service in church today. This is a very personal service for us to recognise why we are called St Matthew's School and to appreciate and connect with our wonderful church. Although parents are not invited to this service, Harvest Festival is just around the corner, and we look forward to seeing you all there.

Just a little reminder that all deposits of £35 for the Y6 residential trip to PGL Osmington Bay, need to be paid via Arbor today to secure your child's place. We appreciate that the initial set up through Arbor caused a bit of a delay, however this is now all up and running and will hopefully make future payments much easier. We have been asked by DGAT (Diocese of Gloucester Academy Trust) to make sure all payments for this trip are made by March 2027. To help you make these payments, here is how you could pay by installments:

September £35

October £65

November £65

January £65

February £65

March £65

If you do experience any difficulties, please contact the school office. If your child is in receipt of Pupil Premium and you would like to discuss this, you can make an appointment to see Mrs James if you wish.

As you are aware, it is a statutory requirement for schools to implement 'Benedict's Law', through staff training on how to administer an EpiPen to a child who could suffer with Anaphylaxis. To enable us to be as prepared as possible, we need to know which children at St Matthew's suffer with an allergy, by completing the 'Allergy Action Plan' form. We also want to know and support children who suffer from any other medical condition. For these medical conditions please complete an 'Individual Health Care Plan'. Even if you filled this form in last year, we do need this completed again so that we have the most up-to-date information. All the details that parents provide will be shared with school staff confidentially, so that everyone at St Matthew's can help your child, should they need it. This is a process that we do annually, however if your child is diagnosed at any point, please let us know as soon as possible.

Attendance—Every week we will be highlighting the importance of attendance. It is a fact that children thrive if they attend school every day. Our focus is to inform parents every week with different facts that give positive reasons for children to be in school. If your child's attendance drops below 96% you will be contacted to discuss how we can help and support your child to be in school every day. We want your child to reach their full potential and with this they will become more confident, have a good routine, enjoy learning and also be at school to take part in the many other non-academic activities that the school provides. All these activities help children to flourish and to broaden their horizons, but to achieve this they need to be in school every day. Here is an 'Attendance Ladder' that explains the impact of your child's attendance. We have also attached further attendance guidance with this newsletter



To celebrate attendance we award an 'Attendance' cup to the year group with the highest attendance of the week. This is announced in our Celebration worship on Fridays. Well done everybody, you're all doing a fantastic job of coming into school every day! Overall we have %. But did you know that: Any child with attendance lower than 96% is considered a 'persistent absentee'.

	Attendance Cup Awards - Week 2	Attendance Cup Awards - Week 3
1 st	YR 100%	YR 99.44%
2 nd	Y6 98.92%	Y1 97%
3 rd	Y1 98.57%	Y6 96.45%



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On Monday, the Flu immunisation team came into school to administer the flu nasal vaccine to the children. Every child who received their vaccine were so brave. They lined up and chatted to the nurses, who re-assured and nurtured the children through this very quick process.

Homework (as referenced in class Welcome letters)

At St Matthew's, we believe that homework should reinforce and strengthen the learning that takes place in school. Research shows that regular practice of reading, spelling and key mathematical facts can help children become more confident, fluent and independent learners. Reading regularly develops vocabulary, comprehension and a love of books, while spelling practice supports children's writing skills and confidence. Regular rehearsal of number facts and times tables helps children develop the mathematical fluency needed for problem-solving and success across the maths curriculum. By completing these short, focused tasks regularly, children build strong learning habits and are better prepared to make the most of their learning in class.

Every blessing for a lovely weekend, Kelly James and the St Matthew's team.

If you would like to view St Matthew's Church news and updates, please visit: stroudparishchurches.org.uk/latest

After School Clubs - Clubs will begin w/c 14.09.26 and finish w/c 12.10.26 for term 1. They will continue w/c 09.11.26 and finish w/c 7th December in term 2.

Day	Club	Staff	Start time	End time	Year Groups	Start Date	Finish Date
Monday	Dance	Miss Bale Miss Fry	3:15pm	4pm	Y3,4,5 & 6	14.09.26	12.10.26 term 1
						09.11.26	07.12.26 term 2
	Eco Warriors	Miss Daniels Miss Young	3:15pm	4pm	Y1,2,3,4,5 & 6 (max 15)	14.09.26	12.10.26 term 1
						09.11.26	07.12.26 term 2
Tuesday	French Club	Mrs Carpenter	Split sessions		All year groups	15.09.26	
						Prebooked children only (fees payable)	
	Colouring Club	Miss Szarko	12noon	12:30pm	Y1,2,3,4 (max 15)	15.09.26	14.10.26 term 1
						11.11.26	09.12.26 term 2
Wednesday	Recorder	Mrs James	12noon	12:30pm	Y2,3,4,5 & 6	16.09.26	14.10.26 term 1
						11.11.26	09.12.26 term 2
	Mindfulness	Mrs Dickinson	3:15pm	4pm	Y3,4,5 & 6 (max 10)	16.09.26	14.10.26 term 1
						11.11.26	09.12.26 term 2
Thursday	Choir	Mrs James Mrs Mirams	3.15pm	4pm	Y3,4,5 & 6	17.09.26	15.10.26 term 1
						12.11.26	10.12.26 term 2
	Homework club	Miss Szarko	12noon	12:30pm	All	17.09.26	15.10.26 term 1
						12.11.26	10.12.26 term 2
Friday	Cozy club	Miss Ward	12:30pm	1pm	Y1 & 2 (max 20)	18.09.26	16.10.26 term 1
						13.11.26	11.12.26 term 2

Ingredients

- 2 cups self-raising flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 150g butter, melted
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 1 egg
- 2 cups fresh blackberries (300g)
- ½ cup rolled oats
- 30g butter, melted



Our recipe this week is 'Blackberry Crumble Slice' – Please send us a photo of your creation

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 180°C fanbake. Spray a 20cm square tin with oil and line with baking paper.
2. Add flour, sugar and cinnamon to a bowl and whisk together.
3. Pour in melted butter and vanilla. Crack in the egg. Mix together until you can no longer see white bits of flour.
4. Set aside 1 cup of mixture for the topping. Place the rest in to the tin and press into the base.
5. Spread blackberries evenly over the base.
6. Add the 1 cup of topping mix back to the bowl. Pour in rolled oats and the extra 30g of melted butter. Mix together with a spoon or press together with your hands.
7. Crumble the oaty topping over the blackberry layer and press down softly with your hands.
8. Bake for 35 - 45 minutes until the top is turning golden and the base is cooked through.
9. Allow slice to cool in the tin before lifting out using the baking paper.
10. Cut into squares. Serve at room temperature. Store in airtight container.

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Dates for the Diary 2026—27

Friday 18th September St Matthew's Day – Church @ 9.15am
 Friday 25th September PTFA September Sizzle
 Tuesday 29th September European Languages Day

Thursday 1st October Autumn Census
 Phonics workshop for Reception class parents–3.15pm

Monday 5th October**World Meningitis Day**

Wednesday 7th October Welcome service for Reception Class – Church @ 9.15am

Thursday 8th October Y3 trip to Cops Grove Farm

Monday 12th October Whole School Photographs

Tuesday 13th October Parents' Evening

Thursday 15th October Parents' Evening

Wednesday 21st October Final Y6 swim session

Thursday 22nd October Harvest Festival – Church @ 9.15am

Friday 23rd October End of term 1


**Head Teacher's Certificate
 Week 2**

Y1	George M
Y2	Ava P
Y3	Freya G
Y4	Alice C
Y5	Yelini N
Y6	Theo E

**Head Teacher's Certificate
 Week 3**

Maisie B
Rupert E
Spencer D
Ezzie L
Harry D
Ivy W

PTA Patch

We will be holding our annual AGM on Monday 21st September at 6:15pm in The Den. Do come and join us!

Our September Sizzle takes place on Friday 25th September, details to follow. If you would like to help please contact the PTFA, we would really like to hear from you!

Our email is: stmatthewspta@outlook.com



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