



St. Michael's Church of England Primary School



Carlisle Road, Dalston, Carlisle, Cumbria CA5 7LN · Tel: 01228 711544 · Headteacher: Mrs J Paisley
Our school values: Respect · Kindness · Challenge · Forgiveness · Perseverance

29 April 2019

Dear Parents

With our rather strange Easter holidays and the Easter weekend it seems like quite a while since I have written a newsletter and updated you on what is happening in school. So here goes!

Mrs Mattinson

After many years at St. Michael's leading our music curriculum, teaching our choir and providing fabulous music for our performances, Mrs Mattinson has made the decision to retire at the end of this school year. We will very much miss working alongside her but will still see her regularly as she will continue to deliver private piano lessons within school. I am sure that you will join me in wishing her all the best for her retirement.

I hope to bring you news in the near future of how the music curriculum will be delivered next year.

Staffing

As you will know, Mrs Johnston will be leaving us soon for maternity leave; this is due to be around the middle of June. We are pleased to announce that after this time Mrs Carruthers will teach the class until the end of the academic year. We are currently advertising for a new member of teaching staff to cover the remainder of her leave from September 2019.

Also from September, Mrs Lambert, who has been responsible for leading and teaching much of our Science curriculum for several years, is moving into the classroom and she will be joined by Mrs Porter, who will be teaching part-time on a temporary basis: Mrs Lambert will teach the beginning of the week and Mrs Porter at the end of the week. This of course will have an implication for delivering Science, which will be taught by class teachers from September.

I plan to let you know as soon as possible about which teachers will work with each year group next year. Obviously with the changes to staffing there are likely to be some alterations with year groups as well.

Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)

For many years St. Michael's has delivered German lessons to our children; this has worked well and the children have very much enjoyed the experience. However, after a recent review of MFL we plan to phase in French. The thinking behind this is that French is an easier language to learn and it is more widely adopted by secondary schools in the area. The plan is that Reception and Year 1 will learn French this year, extending also to Years 2 and 3 from September. We plan to continue with German for Year 4 and above as they have already spent a significant amount of time learning this language, however there will be the opportunity this term for Years 4 and 5 to learn some French through links with Caldew School. Another change is that each class will receive a MFL lesson every week, the length of these being dependent on the age of the children. If anyone has any thoughts about these changes to MFL, I would welcome your feedback.

The Weather!

Hopefully we will have more of the wonderful weather we have experienced recently in the weeks to come. It is therefore important that all children bring a named water bottle to school and also a hat when it is sunny. If there is a need for sun cream, please apply this before school and if children need to reapply through the day they should do this themselves – generally, staff in school do not apply sun cream to children.

Old Shoes!

I know this is the time of year when children are often outgrowing school shoes, but can I encourage you to hang on to them please. Later in the term we are hoping to take part in a project where children donate old school shoes which can be given to children in other countries that do not have any of their own and may need to walk a significant distance to school. We will bring you further information about this in the near future.

Building Work

You may have noticed that we have recently had some building work and alterations in school. These have been mainly to provide a dedicated changing facility and medical room, improve access via ramps to the school and also to improve the entrance hall and office space. Although not all of the work is complete, we are very happy with the alterations so far. In particular we are thrilled with the entrance hall and the scope this gives us for creating a really welcoming entrance to the school which shows visitors what St. Michael's is all about. Our hope is that this area is completed by May half term and we would encourage you to pop in and have a look at the changes we have made.

Play Equipment

After much planning and deliberating we hope that work to install our new play equipment on the school field will begin later this week. This will be followed by the laying of safety surfacing the following week. We are thrilled to have received several extremely generous donations from local businesses which, when added to the lottery grant, have enabled us to purchase a range of exciting new equipment. The children were very much involved in choosing the various items which can be added to over the years, funds permitting! We will also be taking delivery of a wooden, outdoor classroom in June, which will be positioned at the rear of the school field and will be a fabulous resource for the school.

The work will not affect the children through the day but I ask you to be vigilant about children playing on the school field after school hours in the next week or so. We will talk to them in school about staying away from the work and ask if you could reinforce this at home.

Mrs Paisley's 'Special Homework'

As a school we have just embarked on a project to review and refresh our vision for St. Michael's. As central members of our school community, we are seeking both your views and those of the children, about what St. Michael's means to you and them and how you would like the future of St. Michael's to look. We are also seeking the views of staff, governors and the local community. Later this week we will be talking to the children about, and handing out, some 'special homework' – this will be a very simple task that you can complete with your children at home and return to school. The hope is that these ideas will feed directly into our 'Vision Statement'. We would also like to use the ideas to create a piece of artwork that could be displayed in our new entrance hall and would be a wonderful way of sharing and celebrating the views of everyone in our school community. I therefore encourage you to participate in this very special activity.

Yours sincerely



Mrs J Paisley
Headteacher