



12th January 2017

Dear Parents,

Welcome back after the school holidays, I trust that you all had a lovely Christmas.

It is absolutely lovely to be back in St. Matthew's N.S. and greeting all the happy faces each morning. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Casey McConnell and Caroline Swanton who acted as Principal and Deputy Principal while I was on maternity leave. To say that they did an outstanding job would be an understatement. Thank you Ms. McConnell and Ms. Swanton. Casey McConnell will continue to act as Deputy Principal.

Registration is currently underway for this term's Extra Curricular Activities. Registration and payment can be made on our website www.stmatts.ie or at the School Office using the Registration Form.

As we begin another school term, I wanted to bring a number of reminders and school policies to your attention (please see below).

Looking forward to a great term,

Naomi Rousseau
Principal

Additional School Closure

St. Matthew's will be **closed on Monday, 13th March** for Department of Education and Skills training in the Language Curriculum. *The Pre-School will remain open.*

If you are popping into the school during the school day (8.50am – 2.10pm), it is so important that you check in with Lynn in the School Office. Please do not walk down to your child's classroom.

PUNCTUALITY & ATTENDANCE

Lessons begin and the school bell sounds at 8.50am. If a child arrives into their classroom after this time, they are late for school. Children who arrive into school after the Roll Call at 9.10am are marked absent. If your child is late, please allow them to make their way into the classroom by themselves; as parents in the classroom after 8.50am interferes greatly with the lesson taking place. Children who are repeatedly late for school are missing out on individual time with their class teacher, social time with their peers and in some cases considerable time is missed from lessons. Lateness is monitored and communicated with parents.

Please be aware that if your child misses a total of 20 days in the school year, the school must notify the National Education Welfare Board. **School absences must be explained in writing** (sample excuse notes are in the lobby). Please plan family holidays during school holiday periods.

This is a link to the school's policy on **Parent Teacher Communication** <http://stmatts.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/PARENT-TEACHER-COMMUNICATION-4.pdf>

Why not visit our school website www.stmatts.ie and check out our blog section to keep up to date with all the activities that have been happening in our classrooms!

Best of luck to 6th class who will be exhibiting their project at the **RDS Primary Science Fair on Friday**. The RDS Primary Science Fair is a non-competitive forum, showcasing STEM investigations (science, technology, engineering and maths) undertaken by primary school classes across Ireland. It runs alongside the BT Young Scientist Competition undertaken by secondary school students.

This year our project investigated whether 'if colour affects how appealing food or drink is'. Thank you to everyone who took part in our investigation around the school! We will be at our stand from 9.30am - 3.00pm on Friday so pop over for a visit!

This is a link to the school's policy on tackling **Head Lice** <http://stmatts.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Policy-on-Head-Lice-Website-Version.pdf> We ask that all parents are aware of this policy as communication on this matter takes place regularly.



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Head Lice

Unfortunately, head lice can be a part of life; however, it is something that we would all like to avoid. When the school is made aware of head lice in a child's class, parents are informed by text message. The following is some great advice compiled by Olga Keogh, a parent in our school, please take the time to read it.

From talking to other mums can I suggest the following:

Check for head lice regularly:

- Check your child(ren)'s hair every time you wash it
- You will usually find infestation around the ears and nape of the neck, but not exclusively there
- Use a magnifying glass if you're not familiar with eggs and nits (the head lice egg cases)
- Put conditioner in to help with fine combing
- Brush and fine comb in the brightest spot in your house, daylight is best. The Nitty Gritty NitFreeComb is an excellent product, every home should have one. They are available from Boots <http://www.nittygritty.co.uk/site/>
- The itching from head lice is caused by an allergic reaction to their droppings, children who normally have allergies will probably react quicker than others and there are some children who will not react at all, therefore do not assume that because your child is not itchy they do not have head lice.

If you find head lice:

- If (and only if) you do find a live head louse or live eggs, Hedrin Once Lotion/Gel Spray is an excellent treatment, you must follow the instructions to the letter, especially about putting shampoo in once the treatment time has elapsed <http://www.hedrin.ie/>
- Check all the family (including adults) thoroughly if you find a live louse in one child's hair
- Let your teacher know so that all class parents can check and treat as necessary and nip a possible infestation in the bud.

To prevent head lice:

- There are a number of products that help aid in the prevention of head lice:
 - Teangi Tea Tree Shampoo
 - Leave-in Conditioning Spray
 - Tea tree oil dabbed around the back of the ears
 - Hedrin Protect and Go is also worth stocking up on, it does have a funny texture but it isn't as bad if applied to wet hair
- Keep long hair tied up in buns/plaits

Don't panic, head lice are as much a part of childhood as Sponge Bob Square Pants!

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/health/parents-warned-not-to-treat-children-for-head-lice-preventively-30525894.html>

THE FACTS OF LICE: <http://nittygritty.co.uk/site/headliceandnits.asp>

Road and School Lane Safety

- As we approach mid-winter please be mindful that pedestrians are not as visible to drivers in the dim winter light, if you are walking or cycling with your children to or from school it is advisable to use high-vis accessories to improve visibility.
- With the expansion of the school in the past decade, there is increasing pressure on parking at school drop-off and pick-up times. Please be mindful that Cranfield Place and Oswald Road are both residential streets and that the residents need vehicular access to and from their houses at peak times too. Please do not park in front of driveways, or park in a manner that impedes access, blocks traffic or blocks pedestrian access (requiring young children or parents with buggies to walk out onto roads).
- If your children are of an age where they can be trusted to make their own way to school from your car in the mornings, via the school warden if necessary, then, unless you have a specific reason to visit the school, please consider allowing them that little bit of independence. This will in turn hopefully take pressure off parking in the area.
- Please DO NOT park on the yellow box (Tritonville Road) or 'zig zag' yellow lines (Cranfield Place). These areas are for the specific use of the School Wardens and the safety of our children relies on the ability of our School Wardens to carry out their duties safely - it is not an exaggeration to say that careless parking endangers children's lives.
- Cycling/scooting is not allowed on the school lane, it can cause needless accidents.
- If you are bringing a dog to the school in the mornings/afternoons please ensure that they are tied up securely at the lane entrance, that any extension leads are locked tight and please be mindful that not all children, or adults, are comfortable around dogs. If your child can make their own way into school from the school gate it might be a good opportunity to afford them some independence so the dog doesn't need to be left alone.

Thank you for your co-operation, the PTA