



15th January 2015

School Calendar 2015



Friday 30th January	4 th Class host Assembly – 9am, School Hall
Friday 30th January	Credit Union School Quiz (Best of luck to the children involved!)
Tuesday 3rd – Thursday 5th February (inclusive)	Junior & Senior Infants Parent Teacher Meetings (info about appointment sign-up to follow)
Friday 13th February	School Closes for Mid-Term Break (usual home times apply)
Monday 23rd February	School Re-opens after Mid-Term Break
Friday 27th February	3 rd Class host Assembly – 9am, School Hall
Monday 9th March (all week)	Seactain na Gaeilge
Friday 13th March	School Closes for St. Patrick's Day Break (usual home times apply)
Wednesday 18th March	School Re-opens after St. Patrick's Day Break
Friday 27th March	2 nd Class host Easter Assembly – 9am, School Hall
Friday 27th March	School Closes for Easter Holidays (usual home times apply)
Monday 13th April	School Re-opens after Easter Holidays
Friday 24th April	International Day
Friday 1st May	1 st Class host Assembly – 9am, School Hall
Monday 4th May	School Closed for Bank Holiday
Monday 11th – Friday 15th May (inclusive)	6 th Class Gaeltacht Trip
Monday 18th – Friday 22nd May (all week)	Active Week
Friday 22nd May	Senior Infants host Assembly – 9am, School Hall
Friday 29th May	Annual Sports Day (weather permitting)
Monday 1st June	School Closed for Bank Holiday
Friday 19th June	Junior Infants host Assembly – 9am, School Hall
Thursday 25th June	6 th Class Graduation Ceremony – 9am, School Hall
Friday 26th June	School Closes for Summer Holidays at 12pm

Teaching Practice

This year, we will be welcoming a number of student teachers from The Church of Ireland College of Education for their Teaching Practice. Please note that the children will at all times remain under the supervision of the class teacher.

Junior Infants – Jennifer Scannell (4th – 25th March)
 Senior Infants – Caroline Daly (4th – 25th March)
 1st Class – Erica Porter (23rd February – 20th March)
 2nd Class – Gena McKay (4th – 25th March)
 4th Class – Samantha Ansell (4th – 25th March)

A student teacher from America will also be joining the school for a number of weeks.

ART DISPLAY

The next time that you visit the school, please take some time to check out our beautiful corridors! They are filled with some of the pieces that children created in November and December with Artzone and during Art Week. Well done and thanks to all involved.

Extra Curricular Activities Registration

Registration for Term 2 Extra Curricular Activities is now taking place. Thank you to those who have already signed up and are enjoying the activities! If you wish to register your child for any activities, please send the registration form and payment to the School Office or you can also do this online at www.stmatts.ie. Many thanks.

P.T.O. →



PE Days for Term 2

It is really important for children have a bottle of water and to be wearing the appropriate clothing and runners on their PE days. A list is attached below for your convenience. We will endeavour to keep parents updated when this changes. It would be extremely helpful if children were always dressed for activity as they run in the yard at every break and might also pop outside with their class for an impromptu run around!



Junior Infants	Tuesday & Wednesday
Senior Infants	Tuesday & Thursday
1 st Class	Wednesday & Friday
2 nd Class	Tuesday & Wednesday
3 rd Class	Tuesday & Thursday
4 th Class	Tuesday
5 th Class	Tuesday (Swimming)
6 th Class	Tuesday (Swimming)

Spellings

We previously wrote in depth about the school's developments in our School Improvement Plan. You can find this information in the December Newsletter on our school website.

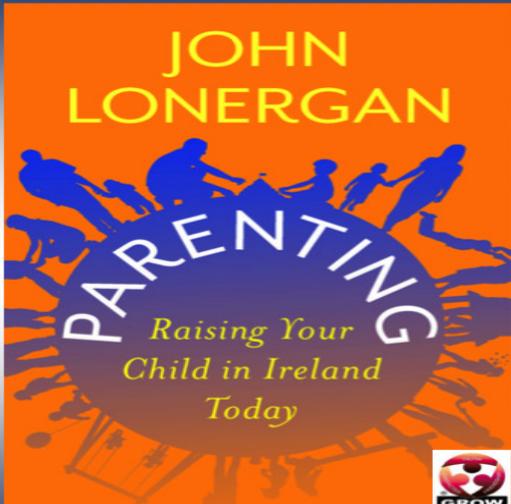
The area of spellings has been highlighted as a main priority. In particular, we are looking at children's attitude to and confidence with spelling, the content of our spellings plan, the way in which we teach and assess spelling, the way in which children learn their spellings, children transferring spellings learned to their written work and pupil development in spelling.

There have been some changes in our spellings programme at St. Matthew's. Children will continue to have a number of common letter string or phonics based spellings (cat, bat, fat, hat etc) to learn as a part of their homework; however, children also have individually assigned spellings, based on common spellings errors your child is making or spellings that your son/daughter needs to target.

Rather than looking at the number of spellings a child is getting incorrect, we will be looking at the type of spellings and letter trains your child needs to learn. Every child will have a notebook to record personal spellings that he/she is working on over time. Most importantly, we will be making a very conscious effort to recognise that spelling is primarily a written and visual skill (not a verbal skill). Children will be assessed through regular dictation exercises, which contain words from their spellings lists. We will no longer test words in isolation.

The most important thing that you can do to support your child is to learn his/her spellings using the 'look, cover, say, write, check' method for every spelling. Also, if a child asks you how to spell something, please encourage them to have a go themselves (and praise the letter trains that are correct) or to look it up in a dictionary. Playing word and spelling games that develop your child's spelling visual skills such as Boogle and Scrabble are simply invaluable to your child's spelling development.





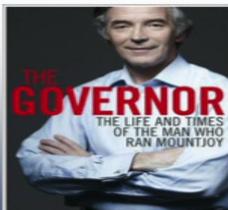
St Matthew's Parents' Association are delighted to invite **John Lonergan**, former Governor of Mountjoy Prison, to our School to present a talk on **Parenting - The Challenges and the Rewards** Thursday February 5th 2015, 1930hrs In lieu of a fee the PA will be making a donation to **'GROW'**

John entered the prison service in 1968 and in the years that followed, as he saw human nature at its worst - and often, unexpectedly, at its best. He developed a deep understanding both of human nature and of Irish society.

For parents he presents a talk called "Parenting - the challenges and the rewards"

This talk lasts about one hour and is a reflective and awareness raising look at parenting

GROW is a Mental Health Organisation which helps people who have suffered, or are suffering, from mental health problems. Members are helped to recover from all forms of mental breakdown, or indeed, to prevent such happening.





Information note for Parents on the Primary Online Database.

Dear Parent,

As you may be aware, the Department of Education and Skills is currently developing an individualised database of primary school children, called the Primary Online Database (POD).

Individualised data coverage has already been in place for a number of years at pre-primary, post-primary and third level education, and is an extremely valuable resource in monitoring the progress of all students through the education system, including vulnerable subgroups, developing education policy, forward planning, and underpinning payments and teacher allocations to education institutions. The new system at primary level will allow the Department to identify children leaving the education system early or not making the transfer from primary to post primary level. It also will in time deliver benefits to schools and parents by reducing form filling and allowing records to be transferred between schools automatically as your child moves school.

The Department is now in the process of rolling out and populating POD across all primary schools. This means that schools are now being asked to provide individual details about your child, including your child's PPS number, name, address, date of birth and nationality, into the POD system. A full outline of all of the data requested, the reasons for collecting each piece of data, and how the data will be used, accessed, stored, shared and retained is given in the POD Fair Processing Notice available on the "POD" area of the Department's website www.education.ie or on request from Statistics section. A Frequently Asked Questions document is also available on the website which outlines answers to some of the regular queries from parents we have received to date.

The Department takes the protection of your child's data very seriously. All data on POD is stored on the Revenue Commissioners servers, with the same security protections in place as for Revenue records. Within the Department, only a limited number of Statistics section staff will have access to the individual records. Two optional pieces of information requested about your child, religion and ethnic or cultural background, are considered under Data Protection legislation to be sensitive personal data and require your written consent in order for the data to be transferred to the Department. The current retention policy for POD data is for POD records to be maintained until the pupil reaches the age of 30. This is to allow longitudinal analysis in line with the national and international priorities for lifelong learning, and to allow for pupils to obtain their record from the Department in the future.

A POD helpdesk is in place to answer queries and provide any further information you may require, and is staffed from Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5pm. The helpdesk staff can be contacted by email at pod@education.gov.ie or at 01 8892311.

Best regards,

Diarmuid Reidy
Senior Statistician
Statistics Section
Department of Education & Skills



Primary Online Database or POD

Enclosed, you will find a letter from the Department of Education and Skills in relation to the Primary Online Database or POD that the Department are in the process of setting up. This will be an electronic database of primary school pupils, which will involve schools maintaining and returning data on pupils to the Department at individual pupil level on a live system. The database will allow the Department to evaluate progress and outcomes of pupils at primary level, to validate school enrolment returns for grant payment and teacher allocation purposes, to follow up on pupils who do not make the transfer from primary to post primary level and for statistical reporting.

The database will hold data on all primary school pupils including their PPSN, First Name, Surname, Name as per Birth Certificate, Mother's Maiden Name, Address, Date of Birth, Gender, Nationality, whether one of the pupil's mother tongues is English or Irish, whether the pupil is in receipt of an Exemption from Irish and if so the reason for same, whether the pupil is in receipt of Learning Support and if so the type of learning support, whether the pupil is in a Mainstream or Special Class. The database will record the class grouping and standard the pupil is enrolled in. The database will also contain, on an optional basis, information on the pupil's religion and on their ethnic or cultural background.

In order for the school to meet the Department's requirement, we would ask that parents fill in the following information about your child and return it to the school as soon as possible.

Forename: _____

Surname: _____

Birth Certificate Name:
(If different from above) _____

PPSN: _____

Mother's Maiden Name: _____

Nationality: _____

Is English the main/primary language spoken at home? _____

The Department has consulted with the Data Protection Commissioner in relation to the collection of individual pupil information for the Primary Online Database. Both religion and ethnic and cultural background are considered sensitive personal data categories under Data Protection legislation. Therefore, the following two questions are optional. All other information held on POD was deemed by the Data Protection Commissioner as non-sensitive personal data.

Ethnic or cultural background: _____

Religion: _____

I consent for POD specific information to be stored on the Primary Online Database (POD) and transferred to the Department of Education and Skills and any other primary schools my child may transfer to during the course of their time in primary school.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

P.T.O. →