

# Newsletter

## August 2021



Education Resources  
Executive Director **Maureen McKenna**  
**St Michael's Primary School**  
**Head Teacher: Ann Marie Stafford**

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope that you had a good holiday and would like to welcome you back to a new year at St Michael's. All of our children have come back to school enthusiastic about the new year and have settled well with their new class teacher.

As this is our first newsletter of the year, I have tried to include as much information as possible to help you to ensure your child has the best school experience. Also, even though we have only been back at school for a few weeks, the diary is already filling up with a number of fantastic opportunities for your children that we hope will widen their experiences and teach them new skills in a fun and active way.

### New Children



We are delighted to welcome all 54 of our new Primary 1 children into St Michael's. They have all settled extremely well and are already very familiar with school routines and are making new friends. We would also like to welcome children who have started throughout the school.

### New School Staff



I would like to welcome new staff to our school; Miss McGettrick teaching Primary 4b, Miss Sloan teaching Primary 1b and Miss Bone, who is covering Mrs McIlwraith's maternity leave, teaching Primary

2a. I am certain that all of these new staff members will be an asset to what is already a talented and hard-working school staff.

### School Uniform

It is lovely to see all of our children beginning their new school year in full school uniform and I would like to thank you for all of your support in ensuring that they are all so well turned out. Please remember that we expect our children to wear a blue shirt and school tie and to only wear their polo shirt on gym days. We would also like your child must have separate shoes for gym, shoes that have not been worn outside. For example, the little black sandals that you can buy in any shoe shop. Please ensure shoes or trainers worn to school are black.



### Health & Safety – Pierced ears



I would like to remind you that jewellery, particularly pierced earrings, are **not allowed** in P.E. and physical activities in school. Children are allowed to wear earrings at other times, however, these should be small studs only, as dangly earrings and hoops can cause accidents in the playground. This is a Glasgow City Council directive that every school must follow.

### Homework



All written homework will now be done through SHOWBIE. All children have a username and password that will enable them to access their class page and the tasks they need to complete. Mr Gallagher manages this for the whole school. If you have any problems with log ins etc please contact him through our SHOWBIE mailbox- [showbiehelp@glow.sch.uk](mailto:showbiehelp@glow.sch.uk) and he will get back to you as soon as possible. Thank you!

### Additional Class Activities



At the moment, we are still in a period of transition from COVID restrictions and this will mean that we do not have as many opportunities on offer for our children. Mr Gallagher is currently working with our Active Schools Co-ordinator to see what we can organise.

From next week, our Primary 4 children will participate in the Determined to Dance programme with a local Dance coach and our Primary 6 children will receive Gaelic Football coaching. We expect to have more opportunities in place over the next few months and you will be kept informed if your child is involved.

## After School and Lunchtime Activities



Again, Mr Gallagher works hard with our Active Schools Coordinator and school staff to ensure that we provide plenty of opportunities for our children to participate in sport outwith the school day. Again, due to the transition from COVID restrictions these will slowly build up as the school year progresses.

Our current lunchtime and after school clubs are as follows:

- ✚ Monday after school – Primary 3 will have football coaching with a local coach for 4 weeks. P4 will get this after the October break.
- ✚ Monday after school- School Football team will play matches at Glasgow Green. (Details to be confirmed)
- ✚ Tuesday at lunchtime- Primary 5 will have Gaelic Football with a coach for 6 weeks.
- ✚ Tuesday after school- Primary 5 will have Handball with Mrs Devlin
- ✚ Wednesday after school – Football Training for the children involved in the school team. (Details to be confirmed)
- ✚ Wednesday after school – Choir for Primary 5-7 with Miss Neil and Mr Murphy. Auditions for this will take place during lunchtimes this week. The teachers will let you know by letter if your child has secured a place in the choir.
- ✚ Wednesday after school – P6 and 7 girls will be involved in monthly football coaching sessions at the Emirates Arena with Miss Hughes (dates will be issued to relevant children).
- ✚ Thursday at lunchtime Primary 6 and 7 will have a Determined to Dance with a local dance coach.
- ✚ Thursday after school- Primary 4 will have gymnastics with a sports coach for 4 weeks. Primary 3 will get this after the October break.

Permission forms for clubs will now be on SHOWBIE and should be completed by parents.

As always, I can't thank school staff, parents and local coaches enough for giving up their precious free time so that our children have access to these opportunities.

## School Assemblies



Each month a class in our school will be responsible for leading a whole school assembly on a topic of their choice. We would like you to share this experience with them and will be inviting you to come in and watch when it is your child's turn to perform so look out for the invitation in your child's school bag. P4a will start things off this year and their assembly will be on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September at 9.45am. If your child is in Mr Murphy's class keep an eye out for your invitation. COVID restrictions mean we are still limiting the number of adults that come into the school. Therefore, attendance at this is restricted to one adult per family. That way, we can ensure social distancing.

## Play



Primary 1, 2 and 3 are continuing a play-based approach to learning this session. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others. The children will be provided with excellent opportunities to develop both, academically and socially through play-based teaching and learning methods, which will allow them to learn by leading their own play and taking part in play which is guided by teachers, CDO and support staff. The children will also be offered increased opportunities to learn outdoors as we continue to develop our outdoor learning environment.

## St Michael's Day Celebrations



As you know, St. Michael is our school patron and his feast day is celebrated on 29<sup>th</sup> September. This is usually a day of celebration for our school community and we like to ensure the children have a nice day. To help with this, the Parent Council have arranged 'All Star Fitness' to come into the school. You may remember, that this was the company that came in during our health week in June. They were really well organised and the children had a ball so we look forward to them coming in again. We will also celebrate Mass and the children will participate in fun activities in their classrooms.

## COVID 19



We appreciate that there continues to be a lot of anxiety from children, parents and staff about our return to school this year. I would like to reassure you that school staff are working very hard to safeguard everyone's health and wellbeing and we are pleased that the children have come back and settled into our 'new normal'.

Our measures include:

### **Enhanced Hygiene and Cleaning Processes**

Enhanced hygiene will be key to ensuring that we minimise the risk of COVID 19 within our school.

- ✚ All staff and visitors must use hand sanitiser upon entering and leaving the building.
- ✚ Regular hand washing routines for children have been built in to the school day.
- ✚ Classroom doors will be kept open and rooms well ventilated.
- ✚ An additional cleaner has been appointed who will be in school throughout the day. She will provide additional cleaning for classrooms, offices and toilets and will also ensure touch surfaces are cleaned regularly.
- ✚ Children may bring a school bag, including pencil cases etc and lunch-box which will remain in their classroom; these will be taken home at the end of the school day.
- ✚ As a school we have modified corridors with child-friendly signage to encourage regular hand washing and social distancing where appropriate. Please be assured, staff will promote this very sensitively through a nurturing approach.

### **Gym and Music**

- ✚ Thankfully, the restrictions on Gym, dancing and singing have been lifted and we are now able to participate in these activities again.

### **Adults within the school building**

- ✚ Unfortunately, we are still being asked to limit the adults, other than school staff, who enter the building to minimise the risk of infection. All visitors to the school must have a prior arranged appointment with a member of the Senior Leadership Team: Mrs Stafford, Mr Gallagher, Mrs O'Neill, Miss Boyle or Miss Flanagan.

### **Breaks and Lunchtime**

- ✚ Breaks have been staggered to allow fewer groups of children in the playground. This will also allow staff to be in the Staffroom over a staggered period.
- ✚ Lunch will span over a period of 1 hour and 15 minutes. Children will be in sittings and tables wiped down in between these sittings. Again, this will be managed sensitively and children's needs taken into account.

### **Water**

- ✚ Children can now access the water filling station. If you want your child to drink water throughout the day they should come to school with a full bottle which they can top up if required.

### **Outdoor Learning.**

- ✚ Our children will continue to be taught outside as much as possible to minimise the risk of infection. Please ensure your child always has a warm jacket and appropriate footwear on as we will be out in all weathers.



**\*Mask wearing in the playground is now down to personal choice. However, to minimise infection and prevent an outbreak of COVID in our school community, I would ask that parents/carers still wear a mask to help to keep everyone safe.\***

### **Flu Vaccinations**

Given the impact of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable in society this year, it is imperative that we do all we can to reduce the risk of our population from contracting seasonal flu. Delivering the childhood flu immunisation programme this winter will help to protect against children contracting flu themselves but also to protect against children transmitting flu to any vulnerable people they come into contact with. The NHS Flu Vaccination Programme for children takes place in our school on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October. Permission forms and information regarding this has already been issued to parents and should be returned to school as soon as possible. NHS Scotland would like me to reassure you that the vaccination will be given while maintaining good Infection Prevention & Control. For more information, please click on the following link. [www.nhsinform.scot/childflu](http://www.nhsinform.scot/childflu).

### **Parent Council**



We have a small but active Parent Council in our school who work tirelessly throughout the year to provide extra things for your child. We badly need new members- people who can bring some fresh ideas and enthusiasm. If you can spare some time each month please let either Mrs Stafford or Mrs Murray (mum of Robyn in P4). We expect to get Parent Council Meetings up and running as soon as possible. The Parent Council will be in touch with dates over the next week or so.

### Groupcall Messenger/Expressions App



Glasgow City Council, Education Services is always looking at ways to improve and enhance our communication with parents and students. In recent years, changes to technology have allowed us to send out text messages, make use of Twitter feeds and highlight information on our website, so that you can keep up with what is going on in our school community.

A new programme is now available here in St. Michael's and it is called **Groupcall Messenger**. It allows us to provide information directly to you, our parents and carers, through your mobiles and email addresses at high speed.

Depending on the reason for contacting you, we will either send a text, email or both. **This will now be our main method of communication with you** so it is important that we have your current email and mobile contact details.

Please also remember to download the free Groupcall app by visiting <http://parents.groupcall.com>

The school office have already sent forms for you to complete in relation to this and we have had a large number of forms returned, however, we are still waiting for some so if you have not completed this please do so as soon as possible.

If you require support with this, please contact Mrs Robertson or Mrs Watson in the school office who will be happy to help.

If you change your email address or mobile number, it is important that you let us know or the app will stop working.

### School Twitter/Parent Council Facebook



twitter @StMichaelsGCC

Our school twitter account is available for those of you who use Twitter. This is another way for you to find out what is going on in the school. We post pictures of the children learning and events such as the Hallowe'en Disco or class assemblies.

Our Twitter handle is: **@StMichaelsGCC**

For those of you who use Facebook, the Parent Council also have a Facebook Page '**Saint Michaels Parent Teacher Association**'. The Parent Council share items on this page from the School Twitter and also put on reminders and other useful information for parents.

### Annual Data Checks



Your child has brought home a number of important forms and letters. These must all be signed and returned to the school. The most important of these is the annual data check because it contains all of the information we have about your child. Please look at it and check that the information we have is correct and change it, if need be, as it is essential that we have the most up to date information so that we can contact you in an emergency. There is also an outings permission slip that must be returned that allows your child to participate in a wide range of out of school activities. **If this is not completed and returned to us, your child will be unable to take part and will remain in school.** We also enclosed our social media and health consent letters. If you have not already done so, please read and sign these and return all of the letters to the school in the envelope provided as soon as possible!

### Car Parking



A few of our parents are still parking on the Zig Zag lines. This is not only selfish but puts our children at risk.

I would also like to remind you that parking in the school car park is not allowed. This is for a number of reasons; there is not enough space to accommodate all of the parents who would want to use it, there is no access to the school playground from their and we have almost had children hit by cars as parents leave the car park. Please think carefully about where you park and help us to keep your children safe.

### School Crossing



Please encourage your children to use the school crossing- lollipop lady- to cross roads. At 3pm the roads outside the school are extremely busy and I am always worried when I see children, and sometimes parents, taking risks when crossing the road.

### Dogs in the Playground



I would like to remind you that dogs are not allowed in the playground under any circumstances. This is a health and safety issue as I need to ensure that all of our children are kept safe. If you have a dog, please wait for your child at the gate.



### **Breakfast Club and School Meals**

As you know we have a daily breakfast club in the school which means your child can come into school at 8am and have breakfast. The cost of breakfast for those who normally pay is £2. If your child receives a free meal it is provided free of charge. Children will be dismissed to their classes from the breakfast club at 8.45am and will then be supervised by support staff and the school management team.

There is **no supervision** if children come to school earlier than **8am** so they will not be admitted into the building.

**Also, only children having breakfast should be in the hall.**

School Meals are free for all children in Primary 1- 4 (Primary 5 after Christmas). The cost is £1.90 for those children in Primary 5-7 who are not entitled to a free meal.

### **Cashless System**

At the moment, school catering staff are not handling money therefore school meals and breakfast (if you pay) should be done the Friday before online using your child's unique code which was issued recently. Please speak to Mrs Robertson in the school office if you need support with this.

### **Free School Meals**

Children and young people of parents/carers receiving Income Support, income-based Job Seekers Allowance, Working Tax Credit (where income is less than £7500\*), Child Tax Credit only (where income is less than £16,105\*), Universal Credit (where income per month is not more than £625) and income-related Employment and Support Allowance are entitled to a free midday meal. Information and application forms for free school meals may be obtained at

<https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=17885>

### **Pupil Absence**



Within Glasgow Primary Schools good attendance is encouraged at all times and children are rewarded accordingly. Parents are asked to contact the Pupil Absence Reporting Line (0141 287 0039) if their child is going to be absent. This should be done before 9.30am on the first day of absence. If the child is going to be absent for some time, it would be helpful to know at the earliest opportunity. The school uses daily text messaging to inform parents of their child's absence if no contact is made. All unexplained absence is investigated by the school and appropriate action taken.

The Pupil Absence Reporting Line (PARL) service has been created to provide an efficient flexible way for parents/carers to report absence. It is recognised that in some circumstances, for example, to report or discuss a sensitive issue, you may still require to speak directly with the school. The following guidance should be applied:

**Please phone the Pupil Absence Reporting Line to report the following absences:**

- **Sickness absence:** if the absence lasts more than one day, parents and carers are required to call on subsequent days to provide an update. A letter should be provided to the school when the child returns from their absence.
- **Medical or dental appointments:** Parents and carers should call the PARL to report absences for medical or dental appointments. The school requires a letter or appointment card as evidence of the appointment to ensure permission is given to be absent from class.

**Please phone the school directly to report the following absences:**

To make sure you receive the right support you require, parents and carers should still contact the school directly to report absences of a sensitive or personal nature, for example:

- Bereavement
- Serious illness, for example, an absence which is going to last more than one week
- Injury, for example, broken limb
- Contagious diseases or illness

The pupil absence service is provided by a dedicated team of experienced Education support staff. The information you provide to the team is updated in the school's system when you call, so that we are immediately aware of all absence information.

### **Late-coming**

We still have a number of children who come into school late on a regular basis. Therefore, I would like to remind you of the importance of getting your child(ren) to school on time. Being late means that your child misses important lessons and this can be very disruptive and damaging to their education.



Our Education Liaison Officer (Attendance Officer) is now looking closely at our persistent latecomers and intends to contact/visit their parents/guardians if he does not see improvement. If you wish to discuss this please do not hesitate to contact me at the school.

### **Concerns**

If you have any concerns regarding any aspect of your child's education or wellbeing, please do not hesitate to get in touch. You can do this by either speaking to or writing a short note to the class teacher or by making an appointment to see myself, Mr Gallagher, Mrs O'Neill, Miss Flanagan or Miss Boyle.

### **Dates for you Diary**

Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> September at 9:45am	- Assembly P4a
Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> and Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	-September Weekend- School closed on these dates.
Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	- St. Michael's Day School Celebrations (Details to follow)
Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> October 2021	-Parents' Evening pending COVID restrictions (TBC)
Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2021	-In-service Day Children not at school
Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> October-Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> October 2021 (inclusive)	- October Holiday- school closed

### **Sacramental Dates**

To be confirmed due to COVID restrictions

### **Parent Council Dates**

To be confirmed due to COVID restrictions

I hope you have found this newsletter to be informative and apologise again for the amount of information it contains. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at the school.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs A.M Stafford  
Head Teacher