



St Michael with St Thomas C of E Primary School

Newsletter – Friday 7th March 2025

Parent Progress Meetings

Pupil Progress meetings are open for booking on Arbor. These meetings provide a valuable opportunity to discuss your child's progress, the results of the latest assessment week, and any next steps in their learning journey. We look forward to meeting with you to discuss your child's achievements and progress and to work together in supporting their continued success.

England's Biggest Ever Football Session

Today as a school, we took part in England's Biggest Ever Football Session. During lunchtime, every child and adult participated in a football game to celebrate this empowering game. We highlighted the importance of inclusivity in sports, showing all children that girls belong in football. As a school, we see the importance of everybody being involved in any sport and movement, and we want all children to see that they are important and are able to do any sports. We always love having the opportunity to get involved in all of these celebrations. Miss Ashton would like to say a big thank you to all children and adults for taking part in this fantastic event!

World Book Day

We have had a fantastic, week-long celebration of World Book Day, filled with exciting activities that sparked our love for reading. From embarking on a thrilling book hunt and creating personalised bookmarks to enjoying library visits and our dress up day, the week was packed with fun. We also embraced the opportunity to read in unusual places. But perhaps most importantly, we were able to spend time sharing the books and characters we love the most, celebrating the stories that inspire and connect us all.

Easter Bingo

We are excited to kick off our Easter activities and cannot wait to get started! Our Easter Bingo event is available to book on Arbor for just £5.00, which includes a hotdog, crisps, a drink, and plenty of fun. Additionally, we will be holding a non-uniform day on Friday, 28th March, to collect donations of Easter treats for bingo prizes and the raffle hamper. Any support with these donations will be greatly appreciated, and we thank you in advance for helping make this event a success!

Easter Egg Decorating and Easter Bonnet Competition

We are thrilled to be holding our annual egg decorating and Easter bonnet competition again this year! After seeing the fantastic entries from previous years, we cannot wait to see the incredible creations the children come up with this time. For the decorated eggs, the possibilities are endless – whether its a character, fun patterns, or anything else that sparks their imagination! Just a reminder:

- **All eggs must be hard-boiled** to ensure they are ready for display.
- No entries should be in boxes larger than a shoe box, as they will not be displayed,
- Entries **must not** be brought into school before 31st March 2025.

Winners will be announced on 4th April 2025. We look forward to seeing all the wonderful and creative designs!

School Visitors

We had visitors in school this week who were truly blown away by the children's behaviour and learning. It was wonderful to see them so impressed by the enthusiasm, focus, and creativity our students demonstrate every day. It is always a pleasure to share the amazing things happening at St Michael with St Thomas, and we are so proud of the incredible pupils and staff. Their hard work and dedication really shine through!

Red Nose Day

Red Nose Day is back! On 21st March 2025, we will be supporting this fantastic cause by wearing something red. It is a fun and easy way to contribute to a fantastic cause that helps change lives. We encourage everyone to join in the spirit of giving and show your support by wearing red on the day. Donations for this worthwhile cause can be made via the link below. Let us come together and make a difference!

https://donation.comicrelief.com/?cartId=rnd25-bbc&utm_source=website&utm_medium=bbc&utm_campaign=rnd25_register_uk_fundraise_cr0002707

Looking Ahead:

Here are some important dates for your diaries to help you plan for the next few weeks:

- 10th March – Y6 Library visit
- 10th March – Y4 Library visit
- 18th March – Y4 Clonter Opera Trip
- 21st March – Red Nose Day
- 25th March – Y5 Pupil Progress Meetings
- 25th March – Y6 Pupil Progress Meetings
- 26th March – Reception Pupil Progress Meetings
- 26th March – Y1 Pupil Progress Meetings
- 27th March – Y3 Pupil Progress Meetings
- 27th March – Y4 Pupil Progress Meetings
- 28th March – Non-uniform day (Easter treat donations)
- 31st March – Y2 Pupil Progress Meetings
- 31st March – Easter Egg competition entries
- 3rd April – Easter Service Y4 (Church 9:30am – Parents welcome)
- 3rd April – Easter Bingo (children only)
- 4th April – End of Term

Please note, these dates are subject to change – please ensure you check them each week for any amendments or additions.

Living Our Values

Our Christian Value for this half term is:

Forgiveness

"We look after each other and always try to be kind"



St Michael with St Thomas Church

Come and join the Sunday services at our beautiful church! See times below.

Don't forget Children's Church on the first Sunday of every month.



Holy Communion Service

🕒 Every Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth Sunday at 10:30 a.m. for 1 hour

Let's Talk About Rights!

This week our Article of the week for you to discuss at home is: *Article 23: A child with a disability has the right to special care and education to help develop and enjoy a full and decent life*

What does this mean?

- How do children access this right?
- How can duty bearers help to ensure children have this right?

Article of the WEEK



Ready, Respectful, Safe!

Ready



**We are ready to learn,
ready to listen and ready
to embrace
opportunities.**

**We respect our friends,
our teachers, our visitors
and all members of our
community.**

Respectful



Safe



**We know how we can
keep ourselves safe and
make sure we do all we
can to keep our school
family safe.**

Quotes from Miss Slingsby's
#Positivegossip Book this week:

- Nell (Rec) for beautiful singing in the Ash Wednesday service
- Eva (Y2) for sharing her beautiful reading with Miss Ashton
- Frankie (Rec) and Hazel for excellent singing during the Ash Wednesday service
- Josh R for superb reasoning skills in maths – Mrs Bonnett
- Dylan Y3 for working hard on his homework in homework club – Miss Ashton
- Reception children – for always saying 'Hello' when they see me in the corridor – Miss Bates

Headteacher's Award Winners

Rec – Ted for always showing an eagerness to learn
Y1 – Charlotte for being a fantastic role model this week
Y2 – Esmay for trying hard to use her 'Fred Fingers'
Y3 – Theo for writing a fantastic narrative in writing
Y4 – Freddie for brilliant behaviour for learning this week!
Y5 – Zac for being a wonderful ambassador for our school
Y6 – Alfie for listening respectfully to others and working extremely hard this week

Lunchtime Superstars

Rec – Theo

Y1 – Lola

Y2 – Heidi

Y3 – Dylan

Y4 – Erin

Y5 – Ruby

Y6 – Faith

Attendance Counts!

#momentmatter

Whole School Attendance – this year:

95.4%

Whole school attendance – this week:

95%

Class attendance winner:

99.3% - Y5

Class Attendance:

Rec – 95.7%

Y1 – 95%

Y2 – 96.4%

Y3 – 93.1%

Y4 – 96.3%

Y5 – 99.3%

Y6 – 87.9%



Important reminder regarding reporting absences.

Please be reminded that you need to notify school before 9am with the reason for absence for this to be recorded appropriately.

Please note 'Feeling unwell', 'poorly' or 'under the weather' is not sufficient, more detail is required such as 'has been sick' or 'has a temperature' is required.

There are lots of ways to notify school of absence. You can call the school number and leave a message on the absence line, you can send a message via Arbor or you can email the school office.

Thank you for your continued support

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators USING TECHNOLOGY TO BOOST READING SKILLS

The way we engage with text has changed dramatically over the years. Whether reading captions on social media, instructions in a video game or an e-book on a digital device, technology plays a major role in modern literacy. While traditional books remain invaluable, digital tools can enhance reading skills by making text more accessible, interactive and engaging.

1 CHOOSING THE RIGHT TYPE OF TEXT

Before integrating technology, consider the types of text that a child engages with. If they need help on occasion, digital reading pens can assist by scanning and reciting words or sentences. These tools are especially useful for students with reading difficulties, and can even be used in exams if they're part of their routine learning process. Proper training and practice are required, but they can be a great help when tackling printed text.

2 READING ON SCREEN

Many devices now allow users to customise text for better readability. Adjusting font type, size and background colour can significantly enhance comprehension. For many readers, white text on a black background is the easiest to see, whereas other styles – such as dyslexia-friendly fonts – are designed to help those who are struggling. Teaching children how to personalise text settings on their devices empowers them to read more comfortably and with greater confidence.

3 ACCESSIBILITY TOOLS

Most modern devices include built-in tools designed to support readers. These features can be found in Settings under Accessibility and may include text-to-speech, speech-to-text and screen magnification functions. Enabling these tools can make digital reading more user friendly, especially for children with learning difficulties or visual impairments, who might have an easier time with spoken language than the written word, or who might simply require a closer look at the text.

4 INTERACTIVE READING PROGRAMMES

Many digital reading devices, such as Kindle and other e-readers, offer features like word highlighting, adjustable text speed and built-in dictionaries. These tools help learners to break down complex words and phrases while maintaining an appropriate reading pace. Some programmes even allow users to track their progress, making reading a more structured and motivating experience.

5 VIDEO GAMES AND READING SKILLS

Many video games require players to read instructions, character dialogues and mission objectives, making them an unexpected but effective literacy tool. Games that involve storytelling, puzzles or problem-solving often include large amounts of text – encouraging children to read these texts aloud or discuss them can improve their comprehension and vocabulary in a fun, engaging way.

6 SUBTITLES AND CLOSED CAPTIONS

Watching videos with subtitles or closed captions is an effective way to enhance reading skills. As children watch their favourite shows or online videos, they can follow along with the text, gaining a better understanding of how written words sound when spoken aloud. This is particularly beneficial for reluctant readers, as it exposes them to words in a familiar, engaging context. Repeatedly watching content with subtitles reinforces word recognition and comprehension.

7 USING AUDIOBOOKS

Audiobooks are an excellent way to develop listening and reading skills simultaneously. Children can follow along with the text while listening to a narrator, reinforcing word recognition and fluency. For struggling readers, listening to an audiobook before attempting to read the text independently can boost their confidence and comprehension.

9 TEXT-TO-VOICE TECHNOLOGY

Text-to-voice software reads digital text aloud, making it easier for learners to follow along. Most smartphones, tablets and computers come with this function built in. When enabled, users can highlight a passage or sentence and press Play to hear it read aloud. This tool is particularly helpful for auditory learners and those who struggle with decoding written words.

8 VOICE-TO-TEXT FOR WRITING AND READING

Voice-to-text tools allow users to dictate words, which are then transcribed into text. This feature helps children see the connection between spoken and written language. By using text-to-voice to have their dictated words read back to them, learners can identify mistakes and improve their reading and writing skills simultaneously.

10 SOCIAL MEDIA AND PARENTAL CONTROLS

While social media provides opportunities for reading, most platforms have age restrictions of 13–16 years old, making parental guidance essential. Many social media videos include captions and comments that can encourage reading. However, it's important to use the platform's parental controls (such as time limits and content filters) to create a safe and educational online environment for children. Encouraging responsible social media use can ensure a balanced and productive approach to digital literacy.

Meet Our Expert

Catrina Lowri is a qualified special needs teacher and experienced SENCO. She recently launched her own site, Neuroteachers, which offers a library of short, 'how-to' and explanation videos for educators. Catrina also writes and delivers online training and events for multi-academy trusts, businesses, schools and training organisations.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

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