

St. Michael's CE (VA) Junior School



Friday 10th September 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,



A message from Mrs Prigg

Welcome back everybody to a new term and one where we can once again all be together. The children have returned with a spring in their step and have settled back into school life.

This week the year 6 children have prepared their speeches for House Captainship and after yesterday's voting throughout the school, here are the results:

St Andrews - Reuben and Elizabeth
St David - Georgia and Oscar
St George - Ellie and Mia
St Patrick - Max J. and Megan

Important dates for your diary

Autumn Term:

- September 13th - Moulsham High School to visit year 6*
- September 16th - Aylmerton Parents' Evening*
- September 17th - Achievers' assembly - parents welcome*
- September 20th - Great Baddow High School to visit year 6*
- September 23rd - SMASH meeting*
- September 25th - clearing the Woodland area - please see the 'Save the Date' section below*
- September 27th - 1st October - Year 6 to Aylmerton*
- September 27th - Year 3 Open afternoon from 2.30pm*
Parents welcome to visit their child's new class teacher - 3.20pm - 4.30pm

- October 6th - Open morning for Prospective parents*
- October 7th - Harvest at the Church 10am - more information to follow*
- October 13th - 3.40pm - 7pm - Parents' Evening - face-to-face*
- October 14th - 3.40pm - 6pm - Parents' Evening - face-to-face*
- October 20th - Parent Voice - 9.45am*
- October 22nd - Inset day - staff training day*
- October 25th - Half term*

- November 1st - Children return to school*

- December 15th - Christmas Dinner and Christmas jumper day*
- December 16th - Christmas Carol service at the Church - 10am - more details to follow*
- December 17th - Autumn term ends*

Our website

Remember that you can access lots of important information on our website which you may find useful. Please look on <http://st-michaels-jun.essex.sch.uk/> .

Dinner Menu

Next week will be Menu Week 3.

Amazon Wish List

If you would like to help the school, have a look at our Amazon wish-list – no gift is too small and every gift is important to us.

You can use the following link in your browser to access our wish list and then log in <http://amzn.eu/iLEmThl> .

Safeguarding Monkey

Our online safety experts have been alerted to an extremely dangerous website and app called 'Monkey', which allows users to have video calls with strangers. The platform markets itself as 'an alternative to Omegle, with a TikTok vibe'. Our online safety experts reviewed and tested this platform and have found that it contains large amounts of inappropriate, disturbing, and harmful content transmitted via web cameras.

What is Monkey?

- Monkey is an online video chat service that is like Omegle or Chat Roulette, with a TikTok style interface.
- Users can talk to strangers from all over the world via webcam.
- Once a conversation is finished, or one user wishes to leave the conversation or talk to someone else, they click 'next' and are presented with a new user who could be from anywhere in the world.
- Users are asked to select their gender before meeting people.

Age Rating:

- The website states that all users must be over 18, but there is zero age verification. Users only must tick a box to confirm that they are over 18. Google Play Age Rating: Parental Guidance.

The app is currently only available on Android devices.

The 2 Johns

The 2 Johns are running a free online parent workshop covering:

- Favourite Apps and Games
- Dangers faced online
- Influencing Young People online
- Solutions for parents to help keep children safe online
- Stranger Danger 2021

To book a place please call 0300 2470014 Mon - Fri 9am -5pm.

Parent Voice – 20th October 2021 at 9.45am

I would like to invite parents to the first Parent Voice session. This will give parents an opportunity to informally meet with me, in the hall, to chat about a particular school matter whilst enjoying a cup of tea and biscuit! The matter we will be discussing at this meeting is regarding school communication with parents and what systems we currently use to communicate with parents and which ones you find most useful. If you are unable to attend, but would still like your voice heard, I will be sending a Google Form home for you to comment on the current communication systems that we use and to gather your thoughts.

Open Afternoon

We would like to start to invite parents back into school and would like to start by inviting **Year 3 parents** to an open afternoon from **2.30pm – 3.20pm on Monday 27th September**. Parents are welcome to join their children in their classrooms and to work with them, familiarise themselves with the classroom and the children's environment at St Michaels. Please arrive at the front office at 2.30pm to sign in.

From 3.20pm on the same day, we would like to ask **all other year group parents** to come and meet their child's new class teacher and to spend time in the classroom. We will open the school from **3.20pm – 4.30pm** on this occasion. Please meet your child at 3.20pm on the front playground and enter your child's classroom from there.

Year 6 children will be at Aylmerton that week so we will organise another opportunity for year 6 parents to visit school.

Mrs Bowcher

Mrs Bowcher will be working at St Michael's on a Thursday and Friday and will be teaching and working with groups of children across years 3 and 4.

Bike Shed

Mr Jonathan very kindly 'spruced up' our bike shed during the summer holidays by repainting it. Bikes and scooters can now be brought to school if parents are satisfied that their child is safe to travel to school in this way.

For safety reasons, children must dismount from their bike or scooter before entering the school grounds and not ride their bike or scooter until out of the school grounds at the end of the day. All children must wear a helmet if riding a scooter or bike to school and the children are responsible for the safe keeping of this in their classroom.

Even though we do lock the gate next to the bike shed, the school cannot be responsible for the safekeeping of bicycles so please ensure your own insurance covers any losses.

For the safety of all the pupils and parents on the front playground, please can parents ensure that younger siblings are not riding their bikes or scooters at the beginning or end of day.

Save the date **Saturday 25th September**

We are extremely lucky to have a Woodland area at St Michael's which sits just behind the bike shed. All the planned attempts to clear this and the surrounding area have always been delayed owing to Covid-19 restrictions however, as the restrictions lift and as we turn our attention to Forest School starting again after the October half term, we are hoping that you can help the school clear the site, it is very overgrown!

I am asking if there are any willing parent volunteers who would be prepared to give up any spare time on Saturday 25th September to help me clear the site. I do appreciate that your time is precious and that parents are busy people so I would appreciate any help that you would be prepared to offer. Rather than a morning and afternoon session, I am suggesting two morning sessions: 9.30 – 11.00am and 11.00am – 12.30pm. If you would be interested in helping, please come into the school office and sign up.

Thank you in advance, Mrs Prigg

St Michael's is a Food Bank Donation Point!

Our school is now a place where food items can be donated for the Chelmsford Food Bank. Last term, many of you generously donated and these items were gratefully received by the Food Bank over the summer holidays. Items will be regularly dropped off at the Beehive Lane depot. There will be a permanent donation box outside the office window in the main reception foyer and one in the hall. Items needed now include:

SMALL AND MEDIUM JARS OF COFFEE

TINNED RICE PUDDING

SPONGE PUDDINGS

LONG LIFE MILK

TINNED PEAS

TINNED CARROTS

TINNED MIXED VEGETABLES

SACHETS OF POWERED POTATO

SACHETS OF POWERED CUSTARD

CUPPA SOUP

LONG LIFE FRUIT JUICE

TOOTHBRUSHES

TOOTHPASTE

LIQUID SOAP

TOILET ROLLS

MEN'S SHAMPOO

WASHING UP LIQUID

SMALL OR MEDIUM WASHING POWDER, GEL OR LIQUID

Items can be sent in with your child or dropped off in the foyer. Thank you in advance.

How lovely to return back to school-life as we once knew it this week. Gathering together for our Collective Worship felt particularly special for us all and how we'd missed singing practice with Mrs Maxwell! There has been a wonderful buzz around school and your children have settled back into school life superbly well. We are looking forward to a busy term.

Have a lovely weekend – here's hoping that the sunshine hangs around!

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Orton