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| Description: StMatthewsCrest | St Matthew’s Primary School296 Drumsurn RoadLimavadyBT49 0PXTelephone 028777 63887Email: akealey695@stmatthewsps.drumsurn.ni.sch.ukPrincipal : Mrs AM Kealey BA Hons (ED) PQH NI |

02/09/2019

Dear Parents

Welcome back to a new school year at St. Matthew’s! I trust you all had a happy and healthy Summer break. The children have returned to school looking fantastic in their new uniforms and all ready for another exciting and very busy year ahead! I had the opportunity to speak with many of the children today about their summer break. It was lovely to hear the many wonderful stories of children spending quality time with their friends and family, over the summer holidays.

As a new school year begins, we ask all of our pupils to take **responsibility** for their own development by:

**working hard, coming to school prepared and on time, being courteous and polite, respectful and kind.** A new school year is a great time to reassess your goals and **aim high!!**

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to our new Primary One pupils and parents who will be starting over the next three weeks. For our new parents this may be the first time you have been back in a school setting since you were there. A lot of things have changed. I do hope that you and your child will have positive experiences whilst here at St. Matthew’s. Should you have any worries/concerns please make an appointment to talk to your child’s class teacher or alternatively contact me here at the school.

Please ensure children are in school, ready for the start of the school day at 8:55am. Children can be dropped off after **8:45am** when they will be supervised in the School Assembly Hall, unless attending the breakfast club.

**Children are not to be dropped off prior to 8:45am as supervision IS NOT available, unless attending the breakfast club.**

**Reminders:**

**St. Matthew’s is a nut-free zone.** Please do not send anything with nuts in it, eg Nutella, peanut butter, to school. ****

**Can we please remind you that school starts at 8.55am.**

Children should go directly to the assembly hall for morning assembly . All new P1 children will go their classroom for the first three weeks only. Their buddies will meet them at the school porch and take them to the assembly hall from week 3 onwards. School doors will close at 9:05am. We would therefore encourage children to be in on good time for the start of the school day. Thanks for your help with this matter.

The main entrance is to be used by all parents/guardians and visitors and for security purposes works on a buzzer system. All parents/guardians and visitors must report to reception upon arrival**.** If a child is being picked up early for any reason, the Secretary or class teacher will bring the pupil to school porch.

**Uniform**

The children have returned to school looking so smart in their new uniforms and all ready for the new school year ahead. Our school uniform is an important expression of our pride in ourselves as a school and we expect all students to be in correct uniform at all times. Please remember leggings are not to be worn as part of our school uniform.

**Thank you**

As always the school looks in great condition. Many thanks to Eileen and James O’ Connor for all their hard work during the summer holidays.

**Pupil Attendance** continues to be good at St. Matthew’s, with our average attendance at 95.6% last year. We would love to see this improve this year! All absences, appointments etc. must be explained by letter to the class teacher. These are kept on file. Thank you for your support in this area.

**Road Safety**

 Please do not drop children off on the school lane or staff car park. Children

 must be dropped off and picked up at the bottom of the school lane and cross

 over safely with Mrs Feeney the ‘school crossing’ patrol lady.

**Contact details**. We would ask that you ensure we have your up to date details, particularly mobile phone numbers. Please send any change of information to Mrs Mullan in the office. We need your mobile number for you to be able to receive text messages. If you are not receiving texts, please let us know.

**School Website/APP**

Our new school website will give information on lots of aspects of our school life. We regularly upload school letters/newsletters/ photographs giving you a flavour of our very busy school here at St. Matthew’s P.S. Please download the school app **SCHOOLS NI APP** to receive all notifications from us**.** Any problems please contact us at school.

**Free school meals**

I would like to remind all parents of the importance of registering your child for free school meals. The Department of Education statistics continue to show that quite a large percentage of children who may be entitled to a free school meal are not doing so. It is important to note that even if your child is registered to receive a meal that they can still opt to bring their own lunch on any particular day. Further information on entitlements or to register can be done online at [www.eani.org.uk/i-want-to](http://www.eani.org.uk/i-want-to)

***PLEASE REGISTER IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD IS ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS***

**School Dinners** cost £2.60 per day or £13 per week and should be paid on a Monday morning. New school menu will be posted on our school website as soon as possible. Your child can then choose what day/days they want to take dinners. Our dinners are excellent and both healthy and nourishing. Please send in the correct dinner money with your child to speed up the collection of monies. This is very important as it allows us to free up our school secretary to complete other administrative tasks. School money pouches can be purchased from the school office at a cost of £4 per pack.

**P1/P2 School Bags**

If you would like to purchase one of our new school bags you can purchase one from the school office costing £5.

**PTA** I want to personally thank all the members of the PTA who work tirelessly to raise much needed funds for our school. I would actively encourage all new parents and those others with an interest in the well being of the school to become involved. If you feel that you can make a contribution in any way, please speak to either myself or any member of the PTA.

**Finally**

I look forward to your continued support during our new school term and the year ahead. We all have the same goal which is the very best education for the children in St. Matthew’s P.S. School life is a reflection of family and community life. As always, the incoming year will provide its share of ups and downs but if we all stick together, support and respect each other both as parents and educators then the children can be confident of enjoying another very successful year!

We are a small, happy school and you can rest assured that we will always do our best to cherish and nurture every child. We are all looking forward to the upcoming year and trust that you and your children are also. I wish you all a very happy and successful year with us at St. Matthew’s.

*Yours faithfully*

**AM Kealey**

**Principal**