

ST MATTHEW'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

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NEWS UPDATE

SPRING 2 MARCH 2021

Insect Hotel competition!



Could you build a whole hotel over Easter?



The details

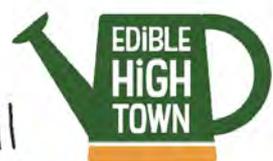
Your hotel needs to be:

- eco-friendly (using recycled or natural materials)
- creative (clever and interesting ideas)
- insect-friendly (do some research about the kinds of places insects like to live..)

Then hand it in at St Matthew's Primary School for your chance to win! you can submit some information about your hotel if you want to.

We want to give our valuable insect allies a wonderful place to live all around High Town.

All entries will be put up in one of Edible High Town's gardens and all entrants will receive a free packet of wildflower seeds. The winner will win an amazing bee observation nest box!



All entries must be received by Friday 16th April

A letter from the Headteacher

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been wonderful to have all the children back in school, school is starting to feel like school again!

Thank you to everyone who is following Covid rules and not sending their child to school if they are unwell and getting them tested promptly; this really helps us avoid having to close class bubbles should a child test positive.

Our new school meal provider has made a great start in revamping school dinners, working with our existing catering managers and staff on an exciting and exceptionally tasty menu. We have planned theme days for every month with them and April's theme is going to be an Italian Pizzeria!

After Easter we are welcoming a number of new class based staff to our team: Mrs Muumbo is joining Year 6, Mrs Parkwill is joining Year 1 and Miss Ahmed is joining Year 3.

After 11 years at St Matthew's, Mr Evans, our Premises Manager has decided to move onto a new challenge, becoming a Premises Manager in a special school.

I am very pleased to tell you that yesterday we received an award for our music provision in school called The Music Mark. Well done to everyone who took part in the many events and projects that helped us achieve this award and to Mr Parker, Mr Green and Mr Rowlands for all their work in making music happen in so many ways in our school.

We usually have a number of year group residential trips going on over the summer term. Due to Covid restrictions we are not able to go ahead with our usual programme so have been discussing class bubbles in Years 4, 5 and 6 each going on an overnight stay to an activity centre we have used before, where it would only be our school there. We'd love to give the children something to look forward and make some fun memories. Watch this space! Let's hope Covid restrictions are lessened as planned soon, so we can see loved ones again, if only outside. In the meantime please enjoy the Easter break as far as you are able. If anyone from your household has a positive Covid test over the holiday, please continue to email us on admin.stmatthews@smps.uk. Senior Leaders will be looking at these daily and will respond to you as necessary.

Stay safe and healthy everyone.

Ms. Jane Thomas

Our new school meals catering company, Miquill, have got off to a magnificent start since they took over our kitchens at the beginning of this half term.



MY FAVOURITE WAS THE VEGETABLE NOODLES - THEY WERE SUPER DELICIOUS!

Aleesa (Y4)



A brand new three-week rolling menu was launched which includes some delicious dishes including Teriyaki Chicken Noodles, Butternut Squash Risotto and Chicken Fajitas. Some traditional St Matthew's favourites are still being served, including our famous Chicken Pie, the midweek Roast Dinner, and everyone's favourite day — Pizza Friday!

FOOD *Glorious*

As well as these delicious regular dishes, when Miquill's managing director, James Colairo-Moss, was pitching to governors, staff and pupils for the contract, he promised special theme days to coincide with our own school special events.

Well, they definitely filled the brief last week on Red Nose Day, with an amazing street food menu, all served from the specially-created street food cart which had been parked in our hall. The children had a choice of honey-glazed chicken skewers or spicy burgers and curly fries.

THIS NEW MENU WILL MAKE YOUR EYES LIGHT UP! I RECOMMEND THE CHICKEN BURGERS — IN MY OPINION THEY WERE DELICIOUS.

Tia (Y4)

The highlight for many were the amazing sides of slaw and couscous ... and of course the yummy chocolate crunch slice dessert!

Talk to a member of staff at the gate if you would like your child to have school lunches after the Easter holiday.

Food!



BREAKING NEWS

A recent Food Standards Agency inspection has seen both of our kitchens awarded the top 5-star rating for food handling, cleanliness and food safety

★ ★ ★ ★ ★



COVID-19 TRACK AND TRACE



We need to continue reporting any positive cases of Covid-19, even during the forthcoming Easter break. If your child has been in school this week and develops symptoms they must stay at home; if they subsequently test positive, this must be reported to us at school via our admin e-mail address at admin.stmatthews@smps.uk.

COVID TESTING DURING RAMADAN

The British Islamic Medical Association has published advice that taking polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or lateral flow device (LFD) tests during Ramadan **does not invalidate your fast**.

However, people may feel more comfortable doing the tests when they are not fasting. In this case, with the move to home-testing, tests can be carried out at any time.



A number of children returned to school after the lockdown wearing **smart watches**.

Please be advised that an analogue or digital watch is permitted in school, but smart watches are not.

Just as mobile phones are not allowed in class, smart watches that have all the functionality of a mobile phone are not either.

The School Governors recently agreed that this should be added to our existing school uniform policy.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

We had a lot of fun last week to celebrate **Red Nose Day**, with talent shows featuring members of staff and “**Bubble’s Got Talent**” in classes. We had two **Smoothie Bikes** running throughout the day in which teachers pedalled for all they were worth to mix a delicious smoothie for the children in their classes. A **virtual Zoom-style quiz** was held in the afternoon with our class families competing against each other - achieved by **the Trees classes**. Well done and **thank you** to everyone who joined in the fun and donated money to the Comic Relief charity, raising more than **five hundred pounds!**



£500

Governing Body

The school's Governing Body is delighted to announce that its membership has just been strengthened with two new members, both of whom many parents will already be familiar. **Mrs Tina Edwards**, a former assistant headteacher at St Matthew's, who retired from teaching a few years ago, and **Mr Sam Willis**, the High Town Community Worker, will both bring a wealth of experience and expertise to the governance of the school. We take pride in our community involvement, which has been strengthened even more during the pandemic, and we're sure this area of the school's work will continue to flourish with Tina's and Sam's input.



Although we are no longer in a period of school closures, there is still the opportunity for families who have someone in the household or a child who is deemed clinically vulnerable and are continuing to shield to apply for a device to support remote home learning from the **Bedfordshire & Luton Learning Link**. For further details, telephone the school on 01582 723970 and ask to speak to Shaheen Hanif, our family worker.

BABY NEWS



Congratulations!

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, Mrs Vicky Hall, gave birth to a beautiful and healthy daughter on Saturday 13th February.

Baby Olivia weighed in at 7lb 11oz and both mother and daughter are continuing to do well.

We would like to wish everyone a happy, restful and safe holiday.



We look forward to having everyone back with us when the school re-opens for the summer term on Monday 12 April 2021.

NHS Test & Trace Support Payment



Are you eligible?

If you're the parent or guardian of a child who's been told to self-isolate

If you're not legally required to self-isolate, but you are the parent or guardian of a child who has been told to self-isolate, you could be eligible for a £500 Test and Trace Support Payment or discretionary payment if all the following apply:

- you're the parent or guardian of a child in your household who is self-isolating, and you need to take time off work to care for them
- your child is aged 15 or under, or aged 25 or under with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, normally attends an education or childcare setting, and has been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace or by their education or childcare setting
- you're unable to work from home and will lose income because you have to care for your child while they are self-isolating
- you meet all the other eligibility criteria for a Test and Trace Support Payment or discretionary payment

How to apply

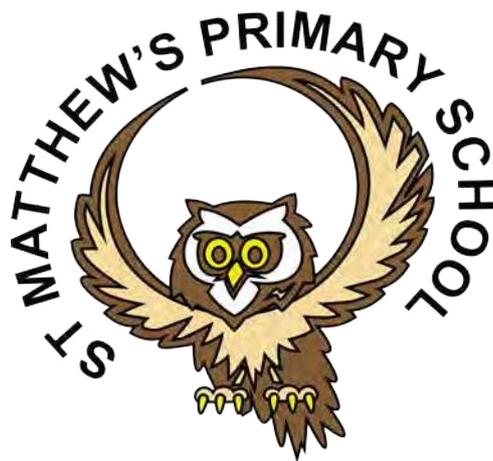
If you think you meet the eligibility criteria for either the Test and Trace Support Payment or a discretionary payment, you can apply through your local council. You can claim up to 42 days after the first day of your self-isolation period.

For the application, you will need to provide the following:

- an NHS Test and Trace Account ID, sometimes referred to as a CTAS number. If you test positive for COVID-19, or are told to self-isolate by contact tracers, you will be provided with an NHS Test and Trace Account ID
- proof that you receive one of the qualifying benefits
- a bank statement
- proof of employment or, if you're self-employed, evidence of self-assessment returns, trading income and proof that your business delivers services that cannot be undertaken without social contact

Further information:

https://m.luton.gov.uk/Page/Show/Health_and_social_care/coronavirus/Pages/I-need-financial-support.aspx



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