

St. Michael's School



**WELCOME TO
FORM 3 & FORM 4**

September 2009

Welcome to Form 3 and Form 4 which, along with Form 5 and 6, form the Prep Department at St. Michael's School. This leaflet will outline some of the changes for your child as they move into Form 3 or 4 and give a brief outline of their curriculum.

Staff

There are two classes in Form 3, 3B and 3P and two classes in Form 4, 4M and 4O. Mrs Clare Blaney and Mrs Morag Pedgrift are the Form 3 teachers. Mrs Vivienne Moore and Mrs Marilyn Overton are the Form 4 teachers.

If you have any concerns about your child in Form 3 or 4 please speak to the class teacher. It is often possible to see them very briefly at the end of the day but do make an appointment to be sure that they are available if you need more than a few minutes.

The School Day

Children in Form 3 and 4 enter by the main gate at the end of Chapel, which opens at 8.15am. Children should have arrived by 8.30am and parents must wait with their child until the gate is opened.

The school day for Form 3 and 4 ends at 3.30pm and collection is from the Chapel playground, entry through the main gate. It is important that you

let the school know if there are any changes to your collection arrangements.

In Form 3 the children start to move around the school more for lessons with different members of staff. There is an increasing need for the children to become more independent and organised. They are given a lot of support by their Form Teachers as they start this process but the aim is to encourage the children to take responsibility for their own organisation as soon as is possible.

Assembly

The Prep children have assembly every day and on Friday mornings the classes take it in turns to lead assembly in the Hall. Parents are welcome to attend assembly at 8.45am on Fridays and coffee is served afterwards in the Refectory.

Breaktime and Lunch

The children need to bring a snack and a drink for morning break. Please make sure that this is clearly named. Please avoid chocolate, blackcurrant juice and fizzy drinks – cut up or dried fruit is ideal.

Children also need to bring a packed lunch. Any uneaten food will be sent home so that you can see what your child has actually eat-

en. Please remember to provide another drink for lunchtime. There is a water fountain in the playground but your child may bring in a clear, plastic, named bottle of water to drink from during the day if they wish.

Uniform and Equipment

A complete list of uniform and equipment is available from the office and on the website. Please make sure that everything is clearly named. From Form 3 children need a school rucksack. These can be obtained from Ward's or the National Schoolwear Centre. The children may still use their blue book bag for carrying their possessions around school if they wish to do so.

The main changes in uniform are regarding PE kit and it is important to check these carefully against the Uniform List. Swimming kit is required for Form 3 in the Summer Term and a reminder is sent out at the end of the Lent Term.

Children need one pencil case with a limited amount of basic equipment. Children will start to use pen during Form 3 and although they may use a blue/black biro for self-marking, they do not write in biro. A simple cartridge pen, roller ball or Berol handwriting pen is ideal, with blue ink. It is also most

helpful to have a Prittstick or gluestick.

Homework

Homework takes on greater importance from Form 3 and instead of a Home/School Link Book the children have a Homework Diary. This is for them to record the homework that needs to be done and for you to sign the diary to say that the homework has been completed. Reading should still be done daily and there will be weekly spellings and tables or number bonds to learn. In addition to this for Form 3 there will be approximately half an hour a night of homework which will usually be one core subject and a foundation subject. It will take Form 3 a little while to settle into the routine of more formal homework but it should not become a source of great anxiety or worry. Form 4 will have approximately 45 minutes of homework a night. If you have any concerns about your child's homework or they are regularly taking considerably longer to do their homework, please speak to your child's Form Teacher. The children will often be given some activities to do during the longer holidays.

Rewards and Sanctions

Prep children are awarded housepoints for things like general helpfulness, tidiness and teamwork. The housepoints go towards a house cup which is presented each week in assembly. Merits are

awarded for work, although not usually for homework, and these are stamped into the Homework Diary. Merits are added up each week from Friday to Thursday and anyone who has five merits during that time stands up in assembly on Friday mornings, when parents are present.

Sanctions depend on the level of misdemeanour but may include some loss of Breaktime. In the case of extreme poor behaviour, girls may be referred to the Senior Teacher, Mrs Cook or boys to Mr. Gerrard. The staff lay down clear boundaries regarding expectations of behaviour and Form Teachers will discuss any concerns regarding behaviour with parents so that everyone can work together to promote good behaviour.

Expectations

By the end of Form 3 and Form 4 at St. Michael's it is anticipated that most children will have achieved the following expectations in terms of independence, personal organisation and self-discipline:

By the end of Form 3 and 4 Independence

- To copy homework task from the board accurately or from verbal prompt in Form 4

- To write and underline the date and title on each piece of work
- To write legibly in pen
- To notify form teacher when they have finished a reading book

Personal Organisation

- To be able to organise their own school bags and belongings at the beginning and the end of the day
- To be able to organise themselves to go to extra-curricular activities
- To bring all the correct equipment to school
- To take the correct books and equipment to lessons

Self-discipline

- To go to the toilet at breaktimes and in between lessons as appropriate
- To line up quietly
- To always remember to put hand up to answer questions
- To allow others to speak without interrupting
- To show consideration and respect to others at all times
- To move around the school in an orderly way, without supervision

Extra-Curricular Activities

There are a number of extra-curricular activities available for children in Forms 3 and 4. Mrs Howers publishes detailed information about these in the Summer Term for the following year. Activities currently available are: Ballet, Cookery Club, Form 3 and 4 Football, Gardening Club, German, Netball, Outdoor Challenge (Form 4), Recorders (Form 4), Spanish, Speech and Drama, T'ai Chi, Junior Choir (for pupils in Form 3), and Form 4 have the opportunity to join Training Choir, by audition. Pupils from Form 3 upwards can be considered to learn to play the flute, clarinet, guitar, percussion, trumpet or trombone, in addition to piano and string instruments already offered. Training Orchestra is for pupils from Form 4 and although this is in school time on Friday afternoons, it does not finish until 3.45pm. From the Prep department children who learn an instrument are also expected to attend a theory class for their year group. The Form 3 string players have an ensemble, as do the Form 4 training violins, with Form 5. Please address any queries regarding music tuition to Miss Tucker and extra-curricular activities to Mrs Howers.

Early Morning Care

Early Morning Care is available from 7.45am – 8.15am each morning held in the library. Parents need to bring children to the front door and wait until it is opened before leaving their child. There

is a daily charge for Early Morning Care which will be added to your account at the end of each term.

After School Care

Children may be looked after at school until 4.45pm in After School Care, with a drink and biscuit served at 3.30pm. Children should be collected by 4.45pm from the Chapel playground, entry through the main gate. There is a daily charge for After School Care which will be added to your account at the end of each term. Please advise your child's teacher or the office if your child will be staying for After School Care.

Assessment

Throughout a child's time in school, informal assessment takes place on a daily basis. Assessments give an indication of how the children are performing at a particular time in a particular subject area. They can also show how children are performing compared to their peers and the progress they are making. More formal assessments take place in reading and maths in the Lent Term, and in VR in the Summer Term. These results are reported as raw scores on the end of term reports. The children also take part in end of year exams in the Summer Term and the week before exams is set

aside as a revision week. Guidance is given to the children about what to revise and how to do so. The exam results are reported as percentages on the end of Summer Term report, except for English and maths which are reported as National Curriculum levels. Each individual child's average percentage is also reported, as well as the year group average.

Curriculum

Form 3 and 4 follow Key Stage 2 of the National Curriculum as their core curriculum, with the addition of French.

In English, pupils cover many aspects of English including: speaking and listening, reading, comprehension, writing, spelling, language, literature and use of the Library. They may borrow Library books to take them home. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of texts and are encouraged to read regularly and frequently to develop fluency and comprehension. There is an increased emphasis on independent reading as they go up through Form 3 and into Form 4. They begin to experience writing of different genre. The children are taught in three ability groups across the year group. They also continue to have an additional Speaking and Listening lesson with Mrs Thomas in their class groups. Form 4 may work towards taking an external exam later on in the school year. Verbal Reasoning is introduced as part of the English curriculum.

Reading is a key part of learning and the core scheme used in school is the Oxford Reading Tree. The scheme enables children to develop their reading skills at a steady pace and there is breadth to the scheme to allow reinforcement at different levels and to experience different types of text. It is important that children do not rush through each stage as their comprehension needs to keep apace with the mechanical process of reading. Please support this by reading regularly with your child at home and by being advised by the class teacher on the appropriate level for each individual.

In maths, pupils cover aspects that include: using and applying mathematics, number, shape, space and measurement. There continues to be an emphasis on numeracy skills and mental maths. It is important that children have a sound grasp of multiplication tables and number bonds. There are also opportunities for applying maths to practical tasks. The children are taught in three ability groups across the year group.

In science, the pupils work in the science laboratory and they cover work about life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. There is an emphasis on experimental and investigative work where pupils are encouraged to make systematic enquiries and

to communicate their findings in a variety of ways. In Form 3 specific topics will include magnets, food, materials, springs, plant growth, light and shadow. In Form 4 they will include the skeleton and movement, electric circuits, forces and motion, heat and temperature, separating mixtures, the sun, Earth and moon, habitats and classification.

In ICT, pupils use the Technology room and broaden their understanding of skills and knowledge of programs which will include word processing, an introduction to spreadsheets, data bases and simple programming using Logo. There is also an introduction to internet research.

In history, the children are taught in their class groups but one teacher in the year group will teach both classes history and the other will teach them both geography. Pupils in Form 3 will cover topics about the Stone Age, Romans, and Anglo-Saxons. In Form 4 they will cover topics about the local area, Vikings and Ancient Egypt.

In geography, pupils in Form 3 will cover topics about rivers and the water cycle, use of maps and atlases, weather and locational knowledge. In Form 4 they will cover topics about mapwork, coastal study and India.

In RE, pupils in Form 3 look at a wide variety of biblical stories, festivals, from different faiths and

examples of people who have been inspired by faith. Themes for Form 4 include finding out about the Bible, the life of Jesus and looking at religious buildings. There are a few occasions during the school year when Prep mass is held at St. Margaret's, instead of in the school Chapel.

In art, pupils in Form 3 use a variety of techniques and media including pastels, paints and charcoal. In Form 4, natural forms, landscapes and perspective are studied as well as finding out about expressionism, the Impressionists and looking at the lives of some major artists. In design and technology, pupils in Form 3 investigate photo frames and pneumatics and cover aspects of food technology and sewing. In Form 4 the children investigate gears and pulleys and continue to cover aspects of food technology and sewing.

French, music and PE continue to be taught by Monsieur Domenech, Miss Tucker and Mrs Bourne respectively. In French almost all of the work is interactive oral work. Activities in music include listening, performing and composing. Form 3 continue to learn how to play the descant recorder and they will need a recorder book which is purchased through school. In PE, the children in Form 3 cover activities related to gym, dance and athletics and, in the summer term, swimming. In Form 4 they continue with aspects of gym, dance and athletics and also learn about

health related fitness and volleyball skills. From Form 3 the children have an afternoon Games lesson which takes place off-site. The children travel to and from this lesson by coach.

All pupils also have time with their class teacher which may be Form Time or Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). This gives the children the opportunity to explore issues regarding behaviour, friendship, change and develop confidence and self-esteem.

Parents' Evenings

Parents' Evenings are held each term. The Lent Term meeting gives the opportunity to meet the specialist teachers who teach your child. If you have any concerns regarding your child before Parents' Evening please don't hesitate to contact your child's Form Teacher or to arrange with the office to see the individual subject teacher so that your child's time in Form 3 or 4 can be happy and worthwhile.

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