



SCHOOL FAMILY NEWS

13th February 2026

St Matthew's Starts 2026 in Style!

The New Year has brought many magical moments to St Matthews, and we have had so many wonderful things to celebrate at the start of 2026. Our school community continues to inspire me with its vibrant spirit and enthusiasm. Our commitment to important national initiatives has been evident this half term. We participated wholeheartedly in the NSPCC's Number Day, engaging our children in fun mathematical activities while supporting a crucial charitable cause. Simultaneously, we dedicated time to Children's Mental Health Week, reinforcing our ongoing commitment to supporting the emotional well-being of our young learners.

Chinese New Year

Today has been such a memorable day as we embraced cultural diversity experiencing the wonders of Chinese New Year, creating opportunities for our children to learn about and appreciate different traditions. The excitement and curiosity of our children during these celebrations truly warmed my heart. As always, Chinese New Year brings such colour and excitement to St Matthew's. Chinese New Year is a holiday that is based on the cycles of the moon and the solar year and the festival will take place on the 18th January this year. It is 'Goodbye' to the Year of the Snake and 'Welcome' to the Year of the Horse. It has been a wonderful day at St Matthew's as we celebrated in so many ways including food tasting, and we enjoyed so many craft activities. Learning about different festivals is something that helps us understand the world around us and promotes our Peace Mala values. We had a special assembly this afternoon with Venerable from the Manchester Fo Guang Shan Buddhist Temple and were treated to a Chinese buffet lunch. Finally, ending today with fantastic crafts and activities for our children and parents and carers to take part in. What a wonderful way to bring Spring One to an end!



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EYFS Chinese New Year Stay and Play Session

Our Early Years team hosted a fantastic Play and Stay session on Monday, which was a wonderful opportunity for our youngest learners and their families to connect and explore our learning environment together. One of the most enjoyable activities was our chopstick challenge! Children attempted to use these traditional eating utensils, which not only introduced them to a different cultural practice but also provided plenty of laughter and fun. It was wonderful to see their determination and joy as they navigated this new skill. The event saw a fantastic turnout, with children and staff alike embracing the opportunity to learn and celebrate together. These moments of cultural exploration are so important in helping our children develop a broader understanding of the world around them.



Let Your Light Shine

Fire Safety At Home and in the Community

Yesterday, the children in Years 4, 5 and 6 were invited to a Fire Safety Talk with Stretford Fire Service. The Stay Wise Education Team will be working with us across the year but this was our second session with the Fire Fighting Team and as always they taught us some vital things about fire safety! A huge well done to Laithe, who was set the challenge of getting into the fire fighters suit in under a minute too. It was important as we had the chance to go out and see the fire engine if he did meet the challenge! I am sure many of our families will have seen the joy on the children's faces when they were outside spraying the hose and exploring the fire engine at the end of the day. It will be something we will all cherish, what wonderful memories.



New School Pets

In a delightful addition to our school family, we've welcomed two new members - our adorable guinea pigs, Blossom and Brownie! These furry friends have already become a source of joy and learning for our children, teaching valuable lessons about care, responsibility, and companionship.

School Streets

An exciting development in our local community has been the trial of School Streets, which demonstrates our proactive approach to creating a safer, more sustainable environment for our children. This initiative reflects our broader commitment to community and environmental responsibilities we have to the streets that surround us. We cannot thank the families enough for helping us keep the road safer for our children and families walking into school. We had so many parents sharing how much safer and calmer the environment outside school was. Thank you for this fantastic feedback. A huge thank you to Cllr Ross, the Leader of the Council, and Cllr Adshead for volunteering and supporting our consultation. We will have the opportunity to hear if we have been successful in our application in Spring 2 and will let you know as soon as we have any updates.



January Disney Diner

A highlight of our first two weeks back has to be our first 'Disney Diner' lunch event - a huge success and a truly magical experience for everyone involved! The school hall was filled with energy, joy and wonderful singing as children enjoyed Disney sing-alongs after their meal, creating a fantastic feel-good atmosphere. One child even described it as the "best day of his life" - what an amazing compliment!

A huge thank you to Ms Clare and Ms Sue, whose fantastic cooking and hard work made the day so special. Events like this remind us how important it is to celebrate joy, community and shared experiences together at school.



Mellow Yellow - Monday 2nd February

On Monday 2nd February, we celebrated Mellow Yellow Day at St Matthew's. It was wonderful to see so many children dressed in yellow and taking time to focus on mental health and wellbeing throughout the day. Children explored what mental health means and how it connects to our emotions and behaviours, while taking part in calming activities such as mindful minutes, yoga, singing and practising the "five big breaths" strategy to help with self-regulation. In Early Years, children made positive pencils to remind them of kind thoughts and positive feelings.



Safer Internet Day - Tuesday 10th February

For Internet Safety Day 2026, children across the school took part in a range of activities focused on the safe and responsible use of technology, with a special emphasis on artificial intelligence (AI). Pupils explored what AI is, how it can be used to support learning, and the importance of using it safely and thoughtfully. Through class discussions and practical activities, children learned about checking information carefully, protecting personal data, being respectful online and understanding that AI-generated content is not always accurate.

The day provided valuable opportunities for pupils to develop their digital literacy skills and to reflect on how they can be responsible and safe digital citizens both in school and at home.

The sheer nature of children's use of the internet in recent times will mean this topic will need to keep repeating to keep our children safe. If you would like some support at home, please see your class teacher or click on the links below:

<https://parentzone.org.uk/ollee>

<https://parentzone.org.uk/yourdigitalfamily>

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>



Let Your Light Shine

Year 4, Mastering Number Parents as Partners Workshop

This week, Year 4 delivered an amazing Parents as Partners workshop, focusing on Mastering Number - our whole-class maths programme followed by all children from Reception through to Year 6. In Year 4, developing strong knowledge of multiplication and division is a key part of the KS2 curriculum and an important foundation for success in maths. Through this project, pupils build fluency in key number facts alongside confidence and flexibility with number, supporting strong mathematical understanding.

We were delighted to welcome such a fantastic turnout of parents and carers - thank you for your continued support. A special thank you to Miss Bradburn for planning the workshop, and to the Year 4 children who were incredibly confident and enthusiastic in sharing their learning.



NSPCC Number Day

On Friday 6th February, we had our NSPCC number day supporting the NSPCC Number Day here at St Matthew's. The children took part in a whole day of fun, maths-themed activities to celebrate the incredible work done by the NSPCC. On the day, the children wore numbered themed clothes, for example, wore a top with a number on or a football/rugby shirt. It was a great success and children across the school had the chance to participate in many great activities both large and small linked to numbers.



St Matthew's Community Football Kit

I am delighted to share some wonderful news that highlights the strength of our school community. We have been incredibly fortunate to receive brand new football kits, generously sponsored by the kind residents of the Trees Estate. The children are thrilled with the new kits and will proudly represent our school at upcoming matches - and they will certainly look the part too! This generous gesture shows how powerful community support can be, helping to enrich our pupils' experiences and giving them a real sense of pride and belonging.

We are extremely grateful to everyone involved for their kindness and support. The new kits are a fantastic symbol of the strong connection between our school and the local community, and we know our children will wear them with excitement and gratitude. Mr Glinka is looking forward to taking the team out into the community for their next match - it's time to let your lights shine!

Attendance

Our attendance continues to be a concern at St Matthew's. Our overall attendance is improving but our Persistent Absences (PA) is still very high. Everyday counts at St Matthew's and our recent attendance is rather concerning. We can only do so much as a school and offer incentives for our children but what we really need is our children in school every day, so your support with this matter is vital. We are not focused on statistics or percentages—our primary concern is the wellbeing of our children and their fundamental right to an education. The best way for them to achieve their full potential is through regular school attendance. Your support in ensuring this is greatly valued, it really can make a real difference.

Weduc and Key Dates

Just a reminder that all key information is sent out to our school family via Weduc. Please keep an eye on messages and notices coming out via the app! Key dates for the Spring 2 Term will be attached on the first week of the term and will be added to the Weduc calendar, which also appear on our Website, so please check these regularly.

Our St Matthew's family never stops amazing me, and the way they let their light shine brightly this half term has been nothing short of amazing! The energy, creativity, and compassion displayed by our children, staff, and wider community continue to be a source of immense pride. As we move forward, I look forward to more magical moments, more learning, and more opportunities to grow together.

Enjoy some much needed time with your loved ones and we'll see you all back in school on **Monday 23rd February**.

Have a fantastic half term break everyone!



Miss Lynton
Headteacher