

Matthew's C.E (Aided) Primary School and Nursery Centre



'I can do all things because Christ gives me strength' Philippians 4:13

Friday Feature: 21st November 2025

This half-term we are focusing on the Christian Value of Compassion

'Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience' Colossians 3.12

Anti Bullying Week

This week we have celebrated anti-bullying week. This helps children understand the effect their behaviour may have on others and reminds us to be kind and respectful to everyone around us.

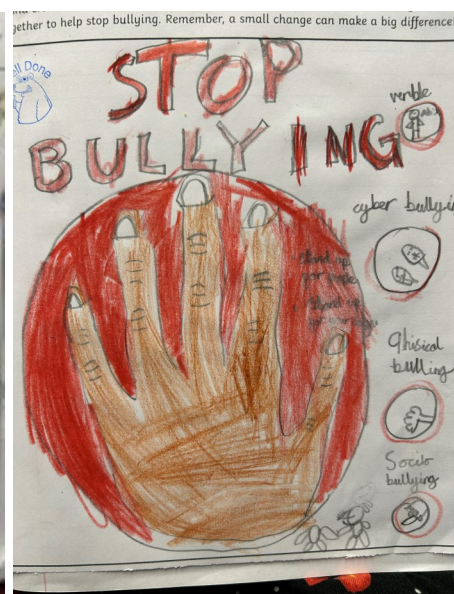
"If you are being bullied it is when a child is doing it over and over again. If you don't want to be bullied tell the teacher. Don't think about it, they will get told off not you" by Lena Class 3 St Celia

Today lots of children came into school wearing odd socks in support of anti bullying.



Mrs Barfield's class have been designing posters to encourage pupils not to bully others.

Our younger children have been working on kindness.



Weekly prayer



Dear Heavenly Father

Our compassion and generosity has led us to the end of this successful week.

We are grateful for what you have done for us.

Thank you for your grace and loving personality towards us.

We are always thinking about you, our loving heavenly Father.

Forever in our hearts.

Amen

by Class 5 St Thomas

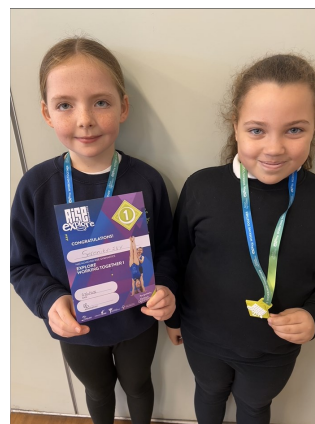
Pupils of the Week



Nursery	Matei
R St Francis	Markella
1: St Teresa	Jamie
1/2: St Nicholas	Oliver B
2: St Joseph	Sienna
3: St Cecilia	Ariyah and Xavier
3/4: St Sophia	Oliver
4: St Kateri	Serenity
5: St Thomas	Jacob D
6: St Padre	George and Daphne

Well Done

Well done to Serenity and Nyah-Rae for winning awards with their gymnastics group.



Attendance Award

This week the attendance award has gone to —



12 St Nicholas



Debating

On Thursday 20th November the Debate Team attended HLC Primary School to participate in the Debate Competition.

St Matthew's were the top of "Everyone deserves forgiveness" which we were given the task of arguing For everyone deserving forgiveness.



Unfortunately we had a difficult job to persuade most of the audience, so the debate ended in a well earned draw!

We thoroughly enjoyed our morning, especially the free biscuits and drinks that were on offer!. We thank HLC for hosting and allowing us to have the opportunity to debate against other schools.

By Alfie—Year 6

Future Dates

5 December	Carols by Candlelight
9 December	EYFS Christmas production 9.30am
11 December	KS1 Christmas production 2.30pm
12 December	KS1 Christmas production 9.30am
15 December	KS2 Christmas production 2.30pm
16 December	KS2 Christmas production 9.30am

Salvation Army Christmas Present Appeal

We are once again supporting the Salvation Army's Christmas Present Appeal, where we ask for presents for children who may not receive anything this Christmas.

As the Salvation Army believes that every child should receive a brand new present at Christmas, we cannot accept second hand items or hand knitted items.

These presents are distributed to the most needy in our community.

Please bring any presents you wish to donate to school no later than Friday 5th December. Thank you

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

School avoidance refers to reduced attendance or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. In 2022-23, more than one in five children in England were found to be absent from school over 10% of the time. This guide focuses on school avoidance with an emotional basis, offering expert mental health advice. However, it's important to remember that school avoidance is a hugely subjective experience which requires a tailored, individual approach.

IMPACT OF SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

REASONS FOR ABSENCE

School avoidance is sometimes underpinned by several factors rather than one single cause. This could include something going on for the child or young person within the family or at school. A child may have caring responsibilities at home, for instance, or a change in family dynamics; bullying and friendship difficulties at school; pressure to achieve in schoolwork and exams; or moving from primary school to secondary school.

PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

You may notice patterns in regular absences or children regularly expressing that they don't want to attend school (particularly being reluctant to leave home on school days). If a child or young person is neurodiverse, there is some evidence to suggest there are more aspects of school life which can cause distress – such as changes in the environment, changes of routine and sensory stimuli.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

There may be an increase in a child or young person's complaints about physical symptoms, particularly on school days or the evening before school. These could include tummy aches, headaches, or saying they feel ill when there doesn't appear to be a medical cause. Always check with the GP first to rule out medical causes or illness.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

School refusal can negatively impact a young person's learning and development. Attending school on a regular basis not only supports academic attainment but is also important for the development of key life skills and the growth of children and young people as citizens.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The difficulties associated with school non-attendance can be far reaching and may have a negative impact on long-term outcomes. It may, for example, lead to reduced future aspirations, poor emotional regulation, mental health difficulties, limited academic progress and restricted employment opportunities.

CYCLE OF ABSENCE

Consistent absences may contribute to sustained school avoidance over time. Further to this, the longer a pupil is out of education, the more likely it is that there is a rise in their ongoing need to avoid the activity making them anxious – increasing their desire to stay at home.

Advice for Parents & Educators

WORK TOGETHER

If there's a concern about a child's absence and emotional wellbeing, it's important that there is clear communication and a consistent approach between the child's parents and the school, so you can take a child-centred approach together towards a plan of support or reintegration. This ensures a consistency of approach from both home and school, creating better outcomes for the child.

MANAGE OVERWHELMING FEELINGS

Acknowledge the child's worries, listen and discuss coping strategies together to help them manage difficulties. These could include mindfulness, deep breathing or going for a walk. This helps them understand that you are working together towards a common goal, and that these strategies can be used when bigger feelings arise.

FOLLOW REGULAR ROUTINES

Children can benefit from a regular and consistent routine. This could be a morning routine, from waking up and having breakfast through to getting dressed, packing their bag and leaving the house. A consistent evening routine which is calm and spent away from screens can also give children much needed predictability and familiarity. Schools can help create a timetabled routine for the child's school day, if required.

RECOGNISE POSITIVE STEPS

Drawing attention to a child's successes – be they big or small – can help to give them some much-needed confidence and motivation. Celebrate these daily victories – such as getting out of bed on time or completing school work – and don't hesitate to let the child know when you're impressed or proud of them. Such an approach can go a long way.

Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: nationalcollege.com/guides/school-avoidance

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