



School Aims

As a Catholic School we aim:

- to promote Gospel values of love, understanding and respect through all our activities and at all times.
- to develop all members of our community spiritually, morally, intellectually, socially and physically.
- to provide the highest possible standards of learning and teaching.
- to develop in our young people awareness of and respect for different cultures and an understanding of our social responsibilities.
- to nurture in our young people creativity and aesthetic appreciation.
- to provide a safe, stimulating and welcoming environment.
- to work in close partnership with parents, the Church and the wider community.
- to provide opportunities for the personal and professional development of staff.



Message from the Head Teacher

Dear Parent/Carer

The 28th of June will mark the end of what has been a very successful academic year for all involved in Saint Matthew's Academy. No doubt all members of our school community are looking forward to a welcome summer holiday. However, it is fitting that we take some time to look back on the year just gone and reflect on what has been accomplished.

Our achievements are due to the work of all members of our school community. As such it is fitting that I should take this opportunity to express my thanks and appreciation to all staff, pupils, parents and local clergy for the enthusiasm, commitment and, most importantly, consistent support shown to our school. The fact that our visitors from Education Scotland spoke so positively about our strong sense of community shows the value we place on our Catholic ethos which, as we know, is central to all we undertake in Saint Matthew's.

Everything we try to achieve in Saint Matthew's Academy is underpinned by our commitment to high quality relationships between young people and staff. These relationships reflect our core Gospel values of community, love, equality, achievement and respect. These values are visible in all aspects of school life and drive our desire for constant improvement.

It is this commitment to each other which must always define our Catholic school. We do not believe in a culture of isolation but rather one which allows us to care for each other and in turn be cared for.

This is the great strength of Saint Matthew's Academy and is why our Education Scotland visit was such a success.

Please be assured that as we prepare to conclude this term and look forward to next session every effort will be made to uphold and enhance the reputation of Saint Matthew's Academy. We always strive to ensure our young people receive the best quality provision and this will remain a key focus for our work next year.

Over the past few months there have been a tremendous range of events taking place here at the school. In order for all young people to take full advantage of these occasions it requires the work of our highly committed staff, both teaching and non-teaching. I would like to publicly thank them on your behalf for their efforts.

It is impossible to include every event which takes place in Saint Matthew's Academy and I would encourage you to follow our twitter feed (@stmatthewsac) or read our weekly column in the local newspapers to gain a deeper insight into the ongoing events within our school.

Should you wish to discuss any matter contained in the Newsletter, or indeed any matter relating to your child, please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of Senior Staff. In the meantime I wish everyone an enjoyable and relaxing summer holiday with a reminder that Saint Matthew's Academy will reopen for all pupils and students on Monday August 19 at 8:50am.

Yours sincerely

S Colligan,

Head Teacher

End of Session

I would like to confirm that term will end at 1:00pm on Friday 28 June. In order to help any arrangements you may wish to make for next session a note of the main Pupil Holiday Pattern for 2019-20 is provided below for information.

A full list of all holidays will be provided with the 1st Newsletter of the new session. For the moment the main dates for pupils and students are:-

Session restarts:

August 19 (Pupils)

September Inservice:

September 20 & 23

October Holiday:

October 12-20

October Inservice:

October 21

November Holiday:

November 15-18

Christmas Holiday:

Dec 21 – Jan 5

February Holiday:

February 7-10

February Inservice:

February 11

April Inservice:

April 3

Easter Holiday:

April 4 – April 19

May Day:

May 4 (TBC)

May Holiday:

May 25

May Inservice:

May 26

Last day of Session 19/20:

June 26

Please note all dates are inclusive.



Junior Awards – Celebrating Success in our Broad General Education

The 10th of June saw our annual Junior Awards ceremony take place. This is an opportunity to recognise the fantastic work of so many of our pupils in S1-S3. Pupils received awards for excellence and effort across the curriculum and also for 100% attendance as this is an achievement which is key to academic success.

Parents and carers joined us and listened to our Head of Service, Andrew McClelland, discuss the importance of hard work in order to achieve potential. Mr McClelland also took the time to compliment the young people on the very positive feedback they received in our recent inspection report.

All pupils in S1- S3 received recognition for their work over the past 12 months in our BGE awards assemblies prior to the evening event. This ensures that everyone can see that their efforts are acknowledged and appreciated in Saint Matthew's Academy.



S6 Young Enterprise Win People's Choice Award at Nationals

Not content with winning Ayrshire Young Business of the Year, our S6 Enterprise group was voted "People's Choice" winners at the national competition in Edinburgh earlier this month.

Our team competed against schools from across Ayrshire to win the overall Business award during the Award Ceremony at Ayrshire College. This led to the national Young Enterprise

Scotland final on the 5th of June in the Corn Exchange Edinburgh.

"Team Pure", as our group was known, also won Best Presentation and Best Product at the Ayrshire night. Their winning product was a reusable, personalised water bottle, emblazoned with the logo of the school and personalised for each child. The team's mission is to reduce the amount of plastic waste produced across the school. All pupils in S1 were issued with their own bottle in order to promote health and wellbeing. New S1 will also receive a bottle thanks to partnership working with our local Primaries.

All pupils are encouraged to bring a water bottle to school to make full use of the water fountain in the canteen as we will be further reducing plastic waste by limiting use of plastic cups in the session ahead.

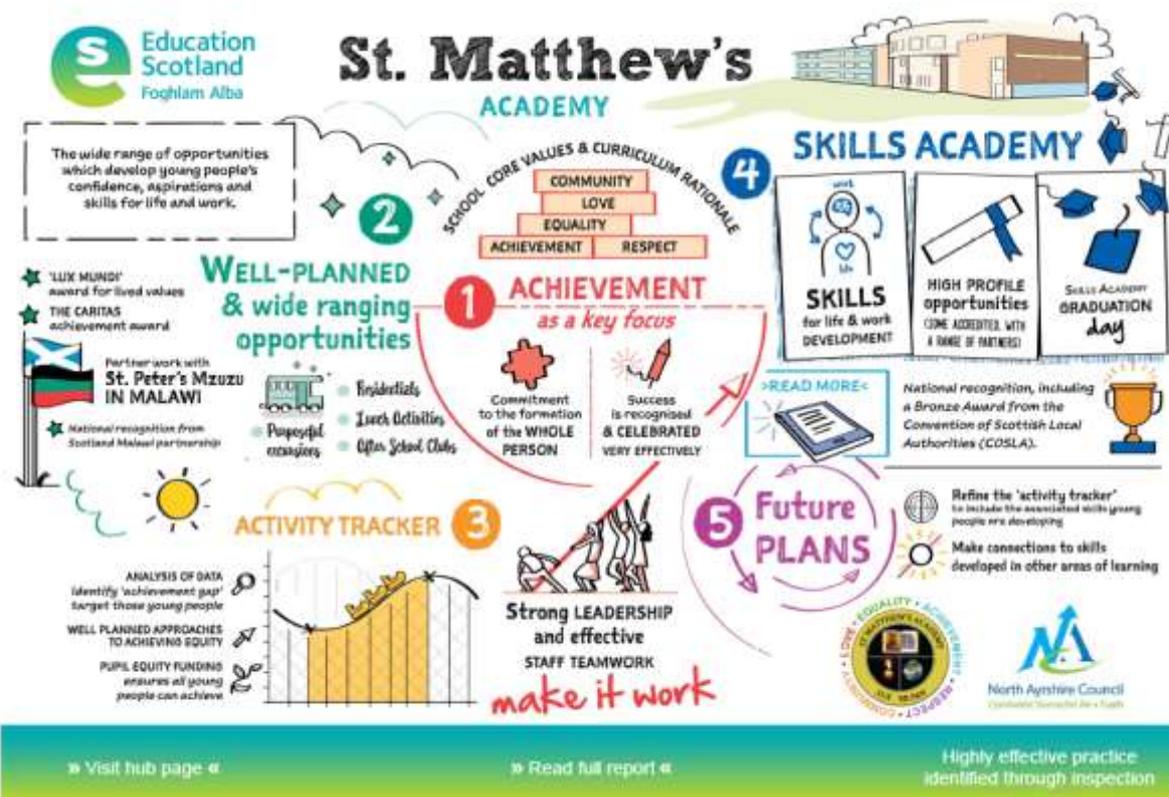
Parent Council – Working in Partnership

A vital element of the success of our Catholic Community is the work of our Parent Body. Effective relationships between the school and home are crucial for academic success and it is essential that these relationships are marked with mutual respect at all times.

As such, we are fortunate to have a Parent Council which plays a key role in the ongoing improvement agenda of our school. Through participation in our Quality Assurance programme the Parent Council helps identify our school priorities and review policy.

In the past year the Parent Council participated in our Education Scotland Inspection. Their responses played a significant role in our visitor's evaluation of Saint Matthew's Academy. Members of the Parent Council also led fundraising efforts for our new Duke of Edinburgh programme and supported our recent Pre Prom thank you to S6 Parents as their children left the school for the last time.

New members are always welcome and the AGM will take place here at the school in September. Parents are asked to look out for the invite to attend which will be sent via pupils early in the new term. The Parent Council is an essential element of our successful school and all parents and carers are invited to play a role in helping as we move forward with our improvement agenda.



Our values underpin our ethos within Saint Matthew's Academy. They are **CLEAR** and we strive to ensure they are visible throughout our school.

Community

- we understand that each of us - pupils, parents, staff, parishes and partners - are called to engage as full members of our Community of Faith and Learning. We must use our gifts and abilities to help and support those around us while at the same time allowing ourselves to be supported.

Love

- Jesus teaches us that the greatest commandment is to love God with all our heart. The second is that we must love our neighbour as ourselves. We show love in our charity, in our service, in our forgiveness, in our compassion and in our patience. Love is the foundation of all our actions.

Equality

- we believe that all people are created in the image and likeness of God. By recognising the equal dignity of all, we celebrate difference and strive to create an inclusive, tolerant and welcoming ethos where each individual has the opportunity and support to participate fully in our community.

Achievement

- our Catholic school is one in which everyone has the opportunity to reach their potential. By providing high quality learning experiences we encourage all to achieve. We pursue excellence in all that we undertake to ensure each member of our community has opportunities to develop and grow their talents and skills in order to fulfil their potential in every area of their lives.

Respect

- Gospel Values only truly exist in our interaction with each other and with the world around us. By ensuring that all relationships are built on a mutual and genuine respect we create a Community of Faith and Learning where all can attain their full potential. We have respect for others and for ourselves as we understand and greatly value the gift of life we have been given.

Our Gospel values are at the heart of the Curriculum for Excellence which Saint Matthew's Academy provides.

Education Scotland Rate Saint Matthew's Academy As "Very Good"

Parents will be aware that our recent inspection report was published this term. It was pleasing to see that Education Scotland recognised many of the qualities within our school. They rightly identified the effective engagement of the young people in creating a strong sense of community as a particular strength. This is entirely appropriate as the overwhelming majority of our young people are highly motivated and immensely proud of their school. They also made reference to the fact that teachers work collaboratively with a strong and shared sense of purpose. Staff in Saint Matthew's Academy work hard to create a positive climate for improvement. This leads to high quality learning experiences and an increasing range of opportunities for young people to be successful.

Very few schools in Scotland have been awarded "Very Good" ratings for both "Learning, Teaching and Assessment" and for "Raising Attainment and Achievement". All members of our school community can take confidence from the assessment Saint Matthew's Academy received.

The letter which was issued to all parents provides a basic breakdown of the ratings the school received and the key strengths of Saint Matthew's Academy. A fuller report on the school is available in the form of the Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) document. This can be found on our school website in the "Documents and Policies" section.

The Summarised Inspection Findings document goes into further detail regarding the quality of learning and teaching within Saint Matthew's Academy. It makes reference to the fact that our school ethos is inclusive and a high value is placed on the rights of young people and taking account of their views. Our visitors stated that teachers use a variety of assessment approaches to ensure young people have appropriate opportunities to demonstrate their learning, for example effective questioning to encourage more detailed understanding.

Comment was made regarding our well-developed strategy for raising attainment. We have aligned this closely with our approaches to learning and teaching, as we are aware that this is the main factor in raising the attainment of all.

Of particular note was our approach to wider achievement. As a Catholic Secondary School much of our curriculum rationale builds on the Charter for Catholic Schools in Scotland. Our approach to Wider Achievement comes specifically from the first lines of the charter which state that a Catholic school will feature "a commitment to the integrated education and formation of the whole person". By aligning this with our understanding of the socio-economic backgrounds of our pupils, we seek to ensure that our young people are provided with opportunities to develop life and work skills which come from a wide range of activities – whether they take place at school or elsewhere.

Above you will see the Education Scotland Sketch Note based on some of the highly effective practice identified through inspection. This is a new method of sharing best practice in Scottish schools and we are one of the first secondary schools to have our work recognised in this fashion. More information can be found on the Education Scotland website.

While we are pleased with this outcome there is no room for complacency. Our mission in the session ahead is to build on this report and ensure the school continues to improve for the benefit of all our young people.

In order to ensure all necessary procedures are in place for next session I would urge all parents concerned to note that:-

Applications for Free School Meals, Clothing Grants and privileged Bus Passes must be completed each year. Application forms are available from the North Ayrshire website.

The Educational Maintenance Allowance scheme for all S5/6 students has been continued next session and information has been provided to returning S5/6 students. All application forms should be returned promptly so that all necessary arrangements can be made for session 2019/20.

A number of pupils and students have made changes to their home address over the past session. Any change of pupils or student details eg Address, telephone number, email, health matters and/or Emergency Contact should be passed to the School Office as soon as possible.

Some S4-6 students have even now still to return books. Given the limited funds available for new books I would ask parents to ensure all books are returned as soon as possible.

Parents are asked to note that all pupils and students have been requested to empty their lockers and return their keys. The school can not be held responsible for any items left in lockers.

Parents are reminded of the importance of maintaining high standards in Saint Matthew's Academy. Therefore it is essential that all pupils and students return in the new term in full uniform. Appropriate uniform is a white shirt, black trousers or skirt, black shoes and a school tie. Jeans, leggings and denim jackets are some of the items which are not school uniform. Please contact the school if you are unsure regarding what is and isn't part of our agreed dress code. Our school can only maintain high standards with parental support.

SQA results will be published on the 6th of August. New S5 and S6 students will have the opportunity to review choices with their Pastoral Teacher here at the school on the 9th August from 10am-2pm.

Emotional Wellbeing – Support Agencies

We have delivered a variety of supports to our young people, parents and staff over the past session. All events are designed to support good mental health. We are aware that for many this can be a challenging time of year. It is important that everyone in our school community knows that support for emotional wellbeing is available and can be accessed when required. However, some may prefer to talk with external agencies and a list of recommended groups is published below.

For Information and Support

The 'see me' website www.seemescotland.org.uk has information as well as fact sheets.

Also www.youngminds.org.uk has information and advice about young people and emotional wellbeing-for parents and for young people themselves. www.samh.org.uk provides a range of information on mental health issues

- ChildLine - 0800 11 11
www.childline.org.uk provides confidential advice and support to children and young people using their free telephone service. The organisation also publishes factsheets online through their comprehensive website.
- Breathing Space -0800 83 85 87
www.breathingspacescotland.org provides a free confidential listening service, offering advice, guidance and support. Advisors can also provide a signposting service to other agencies. Available Mon-Thurs 6pm to 2am and Fri-Mon 6pm to 6am.
- Samaritans - 116 123
www.samaritans.org.uk provides a 24 hour listening service to people in crisis or despair. You can also contact them anonymously by email: jo@samaritans.org
- Parentline - 0808 028 22 33
www.children1st.org.uk/services/46/parentline-scotland provides a confidential helpline to give parents an opportunity to 'offload' and be pointed in the right direction for information and support.
- Papyrus Hopeline - 08000 68 41 41
www.papyrus-uk.org provides information and support about prevention of young suicide.

Saint Matthew's Academy – Community, Love, Equality, Achievement. Respect – Our values are CLEAR

Duke of Edinburgh Awards

Our first batch of Duke of Edinburgh Award winners received their Bronze awards this term in recognition of their efforts throughout the past twelve months.

Through the support of Mr Cridge and his excellent staff team our first group of Bronze award winners received their awards here at the school alongside winners from schools across North Ayrshire.

The Duke of Edinburgh Awards are offered at three progressive levels (Bronze, Silver and Gold). The challenge is to encourage young people to push themselves beyond their existing boundaries, gain new skills and enhance their CVs and university applications.

Our first Bronze group was required to complete a variety of different tasks under the following sections: Volunteering; Physical; and Skills. However the most demanding activity is the 2 day expedition. This requires young people to camp overnight and complete outward bound activities. With Arran so close to hand it is a natural choice for our expedition and our second batch of Bronze students were there earlier this month.

This is only possible due to the commitment of staff and we are fortunate in Saint Matthew's Academy to have so many dedicated colleagues who are willing to give up their time to ensure our



young people can take part in a wide variety of activities.

I am sure parents will join me in thanking all staff who run the many extra events that make our school a place where young people can participate in a host of activities beyond the classroom.

Our greatest success as a school is the partnership approach which staff and parents employ to ensure positive outcomes for young people and we must never forget this. I thank those parents who engaged with the school throughout the past year in that spirit of co-operation and mutual respect.