

# Welcome to St. Matthew's

## We know and care about each child

St. Matthew's provides a truly magical start to your child's education. Founded in 1867 it is very much part of the community of Downside Village in Cobham, and holds an idyllic location opposite the village green.

As a small school the sense of family and belonging at St. Matthew's ensures that each child feels worthwhile and is known by us all. We have a strong partnership with parents and welcome parents into school to help with activities and to enjoy full participation in the life of the school.

We believe that children thrive in a happy, stimulating and exciting environment. Praise, encouragement and fun in these vital early years of their education allows every child a fulfilling and delightful school experience.

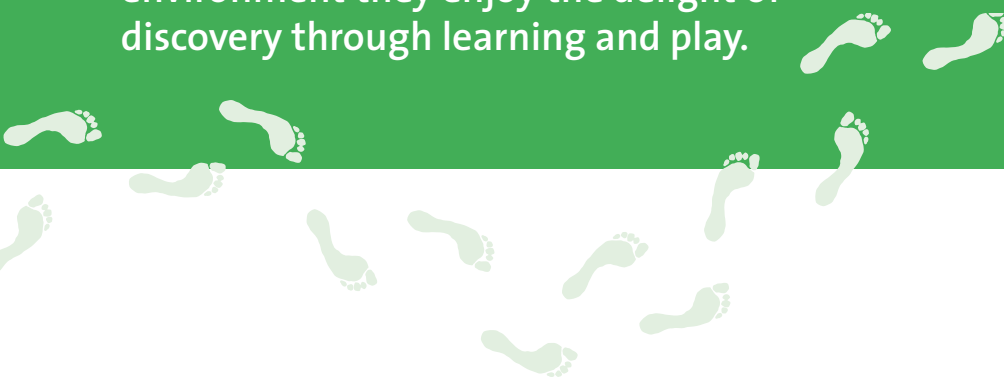
I hope you will visit us to see the special qualities of St. Matthew's, which extend beyond impressive results to a vision of providing a strong foundation for a happy and successful future. You will be most welcome.

Rhian Thornton  
Headteacher



## Our mission:

Every child is nurtured through a high standard of education and wealth of new experiences and challenges. Within a caring and Christian environment they enjoy the delight of discovery through learning and play.



# Setting off

## Life as a Rabbit

The first stage of the journey begins in Rabbits Class. Here the children are warmly welcomed and nurtured, as they are introduced to the many areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

The curriculum allows them to develop their knowledge and skills through a mixture of stimulating activities involving play, adult led tasks and independent learning opportunities.

### Outdoor learning

A strong feature of our Foundation Stage curriculum is outdoor learning. The children work and play in groups in our outdoor covered area, learning through activities which enhance their topics.

They enjoy science activities in the beautiful outdoor areas and help to grow and pick vegetables in our vegetable garden. Standards in the Reception Class are well above the national average, with children reading and writing independently, and to a high standard by the end of the year.

## RECEPTION

### English

English is of course the medium through which all subjects are taught. Through detailed planning we foster an environment where our pupils can become confident in reading, writing and speaking and listening. Through a structured reading scheme and a wealth of complementary texts including fiction, poetry, reference books and our well stocked library, we can extend and enhance the children's enjoyment of books and cultivate a love of literature.

### Dicipline

At St. Matthew's School the relationship between child and teacher is one of mutual trust and confidence, generated by a happy and purposeful environment. This atmosphere and feeling of consideration for others encourages self-discipline, and the occasions are very few when a pupil does not adhere to school rules. At such time the child is given a firm warning and parents are consulted.

**"The school's many strengths include: outstanding quality of leadership and management and a curriculum which has an extremely positive impact on pupils' academic progress and their personal development."**

OFSTED - MAY 2008



# Moving up...

## Life as an Otter

The children are well on their way! By Year One the children are more than ready for the National Curriculum, and are growing into confident learners.

In Year One children build on the cursive script introduced in Reception. Educational Trips and visitors into school make learning fun and add another dimension to the curriculum throughout the school.

### Maths

Our aim is that our pupils should become confident in using and applying mathematics by giving them opportunities to experience a wide range of mathematical activities. Problem solving is a key teaching focus, and through the National Numeracy Strategy teachers ensure that individual needs are met. Challenge for the more able child is a key focus throughout the school, as is support for the less able child.

**“Pupils and parents are hugely positive about the school and work closely with the staff to give a strong feeling that this is our school.” OFSTED - 2008**



### Extra curricular activities

The children's physical, health, spiritual and moral education is an important aspect of the curriculum here. We have a wide range of healthy before and after school clubs for the children, including breakfast club, football, dance, gymnastics and multi-sports.

Emotional health and building self esteem are very much part of a healthy school. House points are awarded for good behaviour while individual stickers are awarded for good work. Four weekly Achievement Assemblies celebrate these successes.

### Sports

At St. Matthew's we are committed to offering a wide range of sporting opportunities for all the children including swimming. We hold our annual sports day on the common, which is a delightful family event.

### Healthy Schools Award

We are delighted to have recently been awarded healthy schools status. We are as a team dedicated to setting good examples in terms of healthy life-styles. The children have fruit daily at fruit-time, and are encouraged to drink lots of water.

### School council

We encourage the children to have a voice in the school. Our School Council is a big success. Each class has pupil representatives on the council who change regularly. The council discuss a wide variety of school issues, and feedback to their classmates.



# Moving on...

## Life as a Badger

The St Matthew's journey reaches its final stage as the children enter Badgers Class. Here they gain more responsibility in terms of Monitor roles, begin to write with pens and become more and more confident and independent in their learning.

The depth of knowledge increases and the level of challenge rises in preparation for the end of the year and Junior school. Our results year on year are excellent, with many children gaining level three's in the core curriculum areas of Maths, English and Science. It is not all work though with plenty of time to enjoy outings and many themed weeks such as Book Week, International Week and Music Week.

### ICT – Information and Communication Technology

Throughout the school ICT is a high priority. The children are taught computer skills to prepare them for life in our modern technological world. Each class has an interactive whiteboard, used as a teaching aid and by the children, and we have a high ratio of laptops to children.

## YEAR TWO

### Foundation subjects

The other National Curriculum subjects, History, Geography, Music, Art, Design Technology and Music are taught through topic work. The topics are usually changed each half term and provide opportunities for our pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of themselves and their world. Piano and violin lessons are available, and the children sing daily in assembly and in our many special assemblies and concerts.

### Science

At St. Matthew's we aim to foster each child's awareness of the world through exploration, observation and investigation. Science is taught inside and outside the classroom mainly through topic work, developing the knowledge and skills required by the National Curriculum.

### Transfer to Junior School

After three years in the small caring environment of St. Matthew's, children are confident and secure enough, at the age of seven, to move onto the next stage of their education. Parents have a wide choice of schools at this stage to choose from, both in the state and independent sector.

**"A high proportion of pupils gain the higher Level 3 in their SATs."**

OFSTED - 2008



# Other pieces of the jigsaw

## R.E. and collective worship

As a Church of England school we have strong links with All Saints Church at Ockham, with the Reverends at the church taking assembly once each week in school. The aim at St. Matthew's is to foster an environment where children can have a sure and sound foundation in the beliefs, practices and history of Christianity.

Through the teaching of R.E. the children are given opportunities to develop a spiritual and moral awareness. Through this teaching and through our link with a school in Uganda they also gain the opportunity to learn about a wide range of other faiths, and we have achieved the International Schools Award.

## Parental involvement

We aim at all times to keep parents well informed about their child's progress and we pride ourselves on our open-door policy. We hold open evenings twice a year for parents to discuss progress, and at the end of the year each child receives a detailed report. We hold regular coffee mornings and information evenings for parents, and send out a weekly newsletter. There is a strong Parent Association which organises a full range of social and fund-raising events. Elected Parent Governors are also important links between the Governing Body and parents.

## Special educational needs

The Governing Body and staff of the school will ensure that all pupils enjoy a broad and balanced education which meets the needs of all individuals. Pupils assessed as having special educational needs will be supported in the classroom, and with external agency support where appropriate. The school's policy on Special Needs is available from the office as is the schools policy for identifying and teaching the more able pupils.

**“There are strong relationships between the Headteacher, staff, governors, Church and parents which keep the school at the centre of the community. St. Matthew's is an outstanding Church school.” SIAS 2008**

