



## Newsletter St. Matthew's Lutheran Day School

12351 ALL SAINTS PLACE • WOODBRIDGE, VA 22192  
(703) 494-3090

September, 2009

Dear Parents,

Welcome to school! If this is your first experience as a “school parent,” you’ll be learning and growing right along with your child this year. Besides your preschoolers, St. Matthew’s includes a wonderful community of parents and teachers. There will be chances for you to meet and get to know some of them as the year progresses. Your child will need you by his side throughout school, and St. Matthew’s is a good place to learn ways you can help your child in this new enterprise. Here are a few things parents have taught me through the years:

A reliable structure or routine at home is “key” to less stress and greater success. It will help your child adapt easily to and live comfortably within a school structure. (The daily routine that will order his/her day at preschool is child-centered: designed and carried out to teach and coach school rookies into becoming school “pros,” channeling but not dampening a zest for and love of learning.)

The structure you adopt at home will have the added benefit of ensuring your child gets sufficient rest (11-12 hours at this age) and arrives at school feeling energetic and agreeable. That serves everyone – child, parent, teacher, school friends, learning.

Check your child’s tote everyday. Your child trusts you to know when to be where. (Children seem to know the virtue of being on time.)

If you don’t already keep a family calendar, start one now. There will be events, occasions, “due dates,” and “opportunities” throughout the year to keep track of.

Keep your teacher informed if your child is having difficulties that he may not be able or willing to verbalize. Also, if there are changes at home that may affect her in school, or if a medication or illness is causing a change in mood or energy level, let your teacher know. (That last item comes from the teachers.)

Welcome aboard. We’ll work together to give your child the best “third,” “fourth,” or “fifth” year of life that we can. Read on!

This newsletter contains **dates and schedule details** through October as well as some hints about **snacks and carpooling**. You’re also receiving your child’s **Class List**, a second description of the **carpool routine**, and the student & family **information on-file**. To stay “in the know,” put all Day School newsletters, notes, and lists in the folder your teacher gave you on her home visit. If you forget a detail and can’t find that folder, all is not lost. **Newsletters are posted** on [dayschool.stmatthews.us](http://dayschool.stmatthews.us) filed under “Director’s news” or your teacher’s name.

**The Class Lists** include all children attending the Day School with your child. Use it now to find carpool partners (check the map number) and use it later in contacting classmates who have become your child's friends. Your teacher's name and phone number and your assistant teacher's name are also listed. Please do NOT use this list of names for solicitations.

**Check the printout of Information On-File**. Make any additions or corrections. Most importantly **add cell phone numbers and e-mail address** if they’re missing. If everything is correct and complete, write “OK” on the top and **send it back to your teacher on your child’s next school day**. Be sure that two persons OTHER THAN PARENTS are listed as emergency contacts. If we are unable to reach you, we turn to



emergency contacts. The most typical "emergency" occurs when a child is found to be ill at school and needs to be taken home. And remember for your child's sake: ***Keep us up-to-date on changes in phone numbers through the year. We can't contact you or your emergency back-up if the numbers are wrong. Include their cell numbers if available.***



**GO GREEN! Form a carpool.** Carpooling makes sense for a number of reasons: children get to class sooner because the line is shorter; you drive less often and conserve gasoline. Use the map numbers on the class lists to find potential carpool partners in your area or neighborhood. If your schedule is variable, **we can accommodate "sometime" carpooling.** Call and ask to speak to Kathy Lundgren to find out how you might carpool part-time, or if you need more than one carpool card. If you want help finding a partner, call or send us a note. We'll "advertise" for you.

If you haven't already given us carpool information, fill out the form at the end of this newsletter and send it in on or BEFORE the "Carpool lists due date" listed at the end of this letter. It's OK if each parent/driver sends in the form. It provides a cross-reference for us to catch variances, misunderstandings and the like. Your carpool number will be sent home "by return tote." Take it out and use it at pickup time on the next class day.

**Become a Carpool Helper.** Help us keep children secure. You can cut your idling time and safeguard the children walking to their classroom by becoming a parent volunteer at carpool time. If you can help, please fill out the form at the end of this letter. A parent helping at arrival will park and bring their child to class early (by 8:50 for morning arrival, 12:20 for afternoon arrival). You'll stay for the 15 – 20 minute carpool window (either outside, or inside supervising children in the back hall). At the end of the day, volunteers come in at 11:35/2:50 and their child remains with his/her teacher until carpools end at about 11:55/3:10.

**Until carpooling begins, you will walk your child to and from the classroom.** As you do so, please help us keep track of all the children in the building. They are just as new to us and our routines, as we are to them and theirs. Pick-up and dismissal times are busy: children are eager to reunite with family, moms are tending babes and toddlers and preschoolers; children and moms and teachers are chatting; moms and moms are chatting . . . well, you get the picture, it's a swirl of bodies, especially at the three-foot level. We're quick to get the carpool system up and running, because we can better safeguard children when there are fewer people in the classrooms and halls. Until then, we worry about children following the wrong set of mom-legs out the door. Fix your eyes on your child and redirect any other children you may attract on those first few days. When you take your child from the room, be sure to tell the teachers, "I have so-and-so."



When you come to pick up your child, we'll ask you to wait in the narthex until we indicate that the teacher has finished and is ready to dismiss. We don't want any child to be anxious about being the last one picked up, so it's better if no one sees Mommy until everyone sees Mommy.

**Orientation Evenings.** These "parents only" meetings are planned as an occasion for you to:

- ★ meet parents of children in your child's class. (You might make contacts for trading "toddler care" if necessary, to enable you to participate in your child's class, or plan play groups for non-school days.)
- ★ go to your child's classroom to hear about your child's daily activities & your teacher's goals for the class (It's too soon for a conference, so don't expect a detailed report.)
- ★ learn more about St. Matthew's program from the director
- ★ sign up to volunteer in your child's classroom



**Here's the schedule of orientation evenings.** Plan to arrive at 7:00 and be home by 8:30

**Sept 21** Diane Hughes' class  
Patti Parente's class

**Sept 28** Jeralyn Lorenz's PM class  
Tina Occhiuzzo's 3 day class  
Christa Wallace's class  
Pat Victorson's class

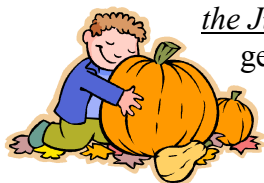
**Sept 29** Jeralyn Lorenz's AM class  
Tina Occhiuzzo's 2 day class  
Jen McLaughlin's class

**Oct 5** Tina Wyckoff's class  
Lisa Dravvorn's class

**Oct 6** Jenni Booth's class  
Kathy Lundgren's class

**Lunch Bunch – watch for a note to come home on September 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>.** In the meantime ... put your child's name on the Lunch Buddies list by calling Sue at 703-494-3090 or e-mailing her at [stmatthews@stmatthews.us](mailto:stmatthews@stmatthews.us). Beginning October 1 & 2, children who join from the 4 morning/week classes will attend on Thursday afternoon and 3 morning/week children will attend on Fridays, extending their day until 1:30. (Tuesday/Thursday children may be registered now for the Thursday group, but will start November 5<sup>th</sup> and factor in the teacher's opinion of the child's readiness for the program.) A brief description: Beginning as carpool dismissal starts, Lunch Buddies will gather to enjoy activities which include an outdoor time, a bag lunch and drink from home, an interactive story, and center activities. The tuition will be \$45/month - a little less than \$7/hour for the 30 session program. Chris Ogden and Stephanie Andrews will be our teachers this year. Both are excellent teachers and masters of creating and making the most of "teachable moments" in an intentionally enriched environment – indoors and out. Chris will send out a note with her plans on September 24 & 25

**Pumpkin Patch Family Field Trip - October 7<sup>th</sup>.** (*Note. The date has changed from that advertised in the July letter.*) Details of this all-school field trip will be sent home later this month. In



general, parents accompany their child (bring along grandparents, siblings & friends, if you like) to Belvedere Plantation, north of Fredericksburg. Children who attend the Day School on Tuesday and Thursday enjoy the Wednesday trip and have class as usual on Tuesday and Thursday. It's a great opportunity to get acquainted with other parents and children from your child's class.

Children may play in the hay barn, pet small farm animals, ride on a hay wagon, pick a pumpkin, and have a picnic. This "real life" experience will serve as a point of reference for many conversations during the fall months, and it's a great chance for you to get acquainted with other parents in your child's class. If you are unable to bring your child, you may be able to arrange for your child to accompany another Day School family. Let your teacher know if you need our help.

**School Pictures - October 22 & 23.** Class and individual pictures will be taken during school and will be back in time for Christmas giving. Siblings (friends and neighbors are welcome, too) may have their pictures taken on Thursday, the 22<sup>nd</sup>, beginning at 12:30. The package will consist of one 8x10, two 5x7's, and 16 wallets for \$28. The 5x7 class picture is \$7.00. Our photographer is terrific, and a portion of the sales benefit the Day School!

You will pay for your pictures before they're taken. If you are not pleased when they are returned, we will return your money. No child's picture will be taken if we have not received payment.

**Grandparents Day.** We invite Grandparents to visit their grandchild(ren) in school the day before Thanksgiving holiday. This year that's November 24 for the 2-day/week classes and November 25 for the 3 & 4-day/week classes. Pass that along to Grandmas and Grandpas who'll be in the area.



**Another word about snacks.** Your teacher will give you guidance on the amount and suitability of the snack you send. The rule of thumb is that it be reasonably nutritious, and that it be neat – that is easy to eat sitting on the floor picnic-style (Yogurt, applesauce, and canned fruits are NOT easy to

get from container to lips without drips, so avoid them, please.) We praise the nutritious choices that are sent in, trying to reinforce healthy eating, just as you do at home.

**Wet wipes.** A small “take along” pack of anti-bacterial wet wipes is preferable to the individually wrapped variety. It’s hard for little ones to open and unfold the tightly packed cloths. Save yourself money and time and pack a week’s worth of wipes in an easily opened flat pack.



**Cold and Flu Avoidance.** A useful and healthful habit to establish is to help your child wash hands thoroughly when you get home from school. (We give the children a squirt of hand sanitizer when they arrive, and sing the entire ABC song before we stop scrubbing in the bathroom.) In class, we teach the children to cough or sneeze “into their elbow” to reduce the number of germs on the hands, and to throw away used tissues in the waste basket. Since parents have to manage these things for very young children, now is the time to teach your child to do them on their own. You’ll have to say it more than once (!) and monitor them as they practice these behaviors, but by year’s end we’ll establish habits that will keep them (as well as siblings, mom, and dad) healthier.

**Keep feverish or contagious children at home.** Read the symptoms in the Parent Handbook and protect other classmates and their families. Young children are more likely than other age groups to be carriers of colds and flu. If this is your first preschooler, it’s probably impossible to avoid an extra cold or two this year, but if we do our part at school and you do yours at home, we can keep them to a minimum.

#### Here’s an expanded schedule for the first few days:

##### For 3 & 4-day classes

September 14/16	3 day AM classes meet 9:00 - <u>10:45</u> (1/2 class each day)
September 14/16	3 day PM classes meet 12:30 - <u>2:00</u> (1/2 class each day)
September 14/15	4 day AM classes meet 9:00 - <u>10:45</u> (1/2 class each day)
September 14/15	4 day PM classes meet 12:30 - <u>2:00</u> (1/2 class each day)
September 16	4 day classes meet regular schedule – all children
September 18	3 day classes meet regular schedule – all children
September 21	M/W/F/ & M/T/W/Th CARPOOL LISTS DUE (sharing or not)
September 22	Carpooling begins for PM 4-day class
September 23	Carpooling begins for 3 day (AM & PM) and AM 4-day classes

##### For 2-day classes

September 15/17	1/2 the class each day from 9:00 - <u>10:45</u>
September 22	All 2-day children meet 9:00 - <u>10:45</u>
September 24	Classes begin regular hours - (dismissal <u>11:45</u> ) T/Th CARPOOL LISTS DUE (even if you are NOT sharing a ride)
September 29	Carpooling begins T/Th classes

**Visitor sign-in & sign-out.** The front inner doors are locked after classes begin. To enter, push the button to the left of the front door and someone will come to let you in. After carpools begin, adults must sign-in and get a visitor’s badge before going into the classroom. When you leave early with your child &/or other children, sign them out in the office log before you collect them from the classroom. This enables us to account for all children at carpool time. Your ID will be checked as a security measure.

**Date corrections to the July letter– please check your calendar and make changes as necessary.** The Parent Handbook calendar is correct, but the July letter calendar had 3 errors:

Pumpkin Patch trip was changed to Wednesday, October 7<sup>th</sup>.

October Teacher Workday is Monday, October 12<sup>th</sup> – Columbus Day. (School as usual on 10/13)

There WILL be class for Tuesday/Thursday children on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. The teacher meeting will be held that afternoon. Monday, December 21<sup>st</sup> is the last day of school for all 4 day classes.

**Welcome again** to St. Matthew’s. This will be a great year - full of new friends and fun. We’re committed to providing a positive, supportive setting in which your child will continue to grow and learn.

Remember, you play an important role in your child's education. We look forward to sharing with you the successes and challenges your child has along this part of their journey. Together we can work to strengthen the attitudes and behaviors that will serve your child well, and influence him to learn and practice effective ways of living and growing in a community of life-long learners.

Come to the Beginning School Orientation Evening for your class. Read your newsletters as they come home, and ask questions of me or your teacher. We'll do our best to keep you informed.

Sincerely,  
Mary-Catherine Deadman, 494-3090 (office) 491-3591 (home)

**T-SHIRTS.** We request that children wear their St. Matthew's T's on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of each month (school spirit day) and for security when they go on field trips. If you missed ordering yours at the Open House, please fill out the form below and send it in with \$9.50 for child sizes, \$15.00 for adult. Sweatshirts are \$15.00 for children, \$20.00 for adults. (Call to ask if we have your adult size in stock before you send in money.) Since the smallest sweatshirt size for kids is S(6-8) you may want your smaller child to wear their school T-shirt over a turtleneck in cold weather. We should have them by the Pumpkin Patch trip.

-----

**T-Shirt Order form**

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Amount paid \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

T- Shirt cost: child sizes - \$9.50, adult sizes \$15.00. Sweatshirt: child sizes - \$15.00, adult \$20.00

Indicate the number of T-shirts of each size below:

<b>Child</b> XSmall (4-6) _____	<b>Adult</b> Small (34-36) _____
Small (6-8) _____	Medium (38-40) _____
Medium (10-12) _____	Large (42-44) _____
	X-large (46-48) _____

Indicate the number of Sweatshirts of each size below: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Youth</b> Small (6-8) _____	<b>Adult</b> Small (34-36) _____
Medium (10-12) _____	Medium (38-40) _____
Large (14-16) _____	Large (42-44) _____
	X-large (46-48) _____

-----

**Carpool information**

My child's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Riding alone

Carpooling with: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I can volunteer to be a carpool helper (inside or outside, arrival or dismissal) as my schedule allows. Please check here and then look for sign-up sheets with specific dates. You'll find these on the table by the "Welcome" sign when you enter the building, and at the Orientation Evening meeting for your child's class. If you miss those opportunities, call Kathy Lundgren any time during the year. Carpool helper duties begin in October.