

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

"Let all that you do be done in love." 1 Corinthians 16:14



NEWSLETTER

1st March 2024

Happy St. David's Day! As well as being the feast day of St. David, the 1st March is also the meteorological start of spring. Although judging by the weather recently, which has been decidedly grey, cold and damp, we still have some way to go. That said, the mornings and evenings are becoming lighter and that always makes us feel hopeful for a new season in which to enjoy the wonders of God's creation.

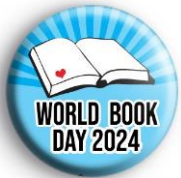


I am sure, like us, many of you are still coming to terms with the very sad and distressing news which we shared with our school community on Wednesday. The death of Mrs Rosie Infanti has devastated our school family but we are extremely grateful for your messages of condolence, your kind words and your reassurance of support and prayers. Please do continue to look after each other as we continue our grieving process together. I would like to take this opportunity to commend all of the staff on their emotional resilience and commitment to their roles and responsibilities this week. It has not been an easy task, but as always they put the needs of our children before anything else.

Today is also national Secondary School Offer Day. Year 6 children across the country will have been notified of their secondary school places for September 2024. Please do pray for these children and their families as they receive this important news in preparing for their continued learning journey in to Key Stage 3.

As always, thank you for your trust, care and love for our school.

REMINDER: World Book Day 2024



World Book Day 2024 is next week - **Thursday 7th March**. As we have done in previous years we are hoping to be able to celebrate this day by inviting your children to dress up! This is a day devoted to celebrating good books and literature and I hope we can do this in style! You may also have spotted that on Tuesday 5th March we are very excited to be welcoming an author (James Campbell) in to school to work with the children.

The children will be undertaking lots of book related activities in their classrooms across the course of World Book Day, and to get them in the spirit we are asking them to come to school dressed as one of their favourite book characters. The emphasis is once again on simple costumes and you do not need to go to great lengths or vast expense to provide a costume for this day. The children can wear their costumes to school and it would be even better if they could bring a copy of the book from which their character comes. Please bear in mind that the children will be completing normal lessons throughout the day so the costume needs to be practical for school. For the same reason we ask that the children do not wear hair dye or make up. The staff are going to join in with the fun and festivities and I am sure we are all looking forward to seeing what costumes and characters emerge! The children **do not** need to pay anything to dress up and at the end of the day they will come home with their World Book Day voucher which they can exchange at a local book shop for one of the World Book Day special titles or money off a full-priced book.

Staffing Update

Over the past few weeks we have been on a very successful recruitment drive for new Midday Assistants (MDAs). Our Midday Assistant team, led by Mrs Dansey (Senior Midday Assistant) do a fantastic job in supervising our children during a very busy lunch time period. Making sure over 500+ children are fed and watered each day is no easy task but our dedicated MDAs do it day in and day out, come rain or shine! I am sure you will join me in thanking them for their care and commitment.

I am delighted that we have expanded this team further with some recent appointments. Welcome to **Miss Laura Atkins, Miss Jade Oakley, Mrs Param Selvaraj, Mrs Jenia Rahi** and **Mrs Carly Fairweather**. All these people have

started or are due to start and are currently undertaking their induction to their new roles in and across the primary school. They are a very welcome addition to the staffing structure and I am sure you will all join me in wishing them good luck as they take up post.

Respect Our Neighbours

Sadly, in our first week back after half term, I have received an email from a local resident in Highland Avenue regarding illegal parking, anti-social and disrespectful behaviour outside of their property.

The resident was attempting to access their private drive but was prevented by a vehicle that was illegally parked and blocking both pedestrian and vehicular access. When asked to move they were subjected to aggressive behaviour including threatening language and threats of physical violence. This is completely unacceptable.

Illegal parking and blocking residential properties is a traffic offence and the local residents have been encouraged to report this to the local borough council and police. All the schools in Sawyers Hall Lane have also requested greater presence from traffic enforcement officers to ensure our school population, both adults and children, are protected and kept safe from harm.

Please can I ask all parents/carers to lead by example and to show respect to our neighbours and our local environment. Thank you for your support in this matter.

School Uniform – Reminder!

I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents/carers that **AFTER** the Easter break all children must be wearing **summer uniform** as set out in the school prospectus. The Governing Body continue to uphold high expectations by regularly reviewing and tightening up the uniform policy and we would request that all parents/carers adhere to this. From the beginning of the summer term all children **must** wear summer uniform as set out in the school prospectus and homework diaries.

All girls in EYFS (Reception), Year 1 & 2 (Key Stage 1) and Year 3 & 4 (Lower School) must wear the green checked gingham dresses and bottle green cardigan with logo as part of regulation summer uniform. Girls in Year 5 & 6 (Upper School) may choose to wear either the green checked gingham dresses or a white school polo shirt with logo with a grey skirt. White socks must be worn.

All boys need a white school polo shirt with logo, bottle green jumper with logo and shorts or trousers – also in grey. Grey or black socks must be worn.

Shoes need to be sensible black leather shoes (not boots) with soft soles or leather sandals (black or brown). Black trainers are not permitted. We do not like lights or toys in the shoes so please bear this in mind when you are purchasing any new shoes. Incorrect or inappropriate uniform will be flagged up in the new term by putting a gentle reminder sticker in your child's homework diary or reading diary. Please help support us in achieving greater consistency, smarter presentation and a sense of pride – thank you.

A reminder - jewellery can cause problems in school due to Health & Safety requirements. Children may wear an inexpensive named analogue or digital watch to school providing it is not too big or colourful and they will not be distracted by wearing it. Smart watches are not permitted in school. Smart watches can cause issues with data protection and data security if these devices are trying to access our school Wi-Fi or have the ability to record and/or capture video or audio. No bracelets, rings or necklaces are permitted.

Parents' Evening

Next week, you will receive a Parent Hub message with details about booking appointments for Parents' Evening. Spring term Parents' Evening will be taking place on **Tuesday 26th March** and **Wednesday 27th March 2024** – 4:00 – 7:00p.m.

The letter and accompanying SchoolCloud guide will explain how to make your appointments online. Please note that the booking window opens at 6:00p.m. on Friday 8th March 2024. We will also send you a Parent Hub reminder to alert you to when this booking window goes live.

I do hope that all parents/carers will take this opportunity to meet with your child's classteacher to discuss their progress to date and celebrate the achievements they have made since September 2023. We look forward to seeing you.

Finally....

In the coming weeks we will be sharing with you the new school dinner menus for the summer term which will begin after the Easter holiday. Please look out for this information and remember to return your menu choices as soon as possible.

There will also be additional information from the PTA regarding the Mothering Sunday Sale next week and details about Red Nose Day 2024.

Those of you with eager eyes will have noticed on your arrival on Monday morning that our EYFS/Reception outdoor environment and area has had a much needed face lift and undergone a transformation. This work started on the non-pupil day on 16th February and extended in to the half term holiday. A small but dedicated group of volunteers from the PTA, organised and led by Mrs Coughtrey spent many hours (often in the rain!) painting, planting, building, cleaning, disposing and brightening up the outside area accessed by our youngest children in school. This is all in time for the improving warmer weather as we enter spring and move in to the summer term. My thanks go to Mrs Coughtrey and her 'Groundforce DIY' team for providing such a bright, colourful and purposeful area. Below are some before and after photographs for you to enjoy!!

BEFORE....



AFTER....!!!



I wish you all a wonderful weekend – see you on Monday!

Mr D. Moran
Headteacher

And...please remember if you have any questions or queries or comments feel free to contact us:

admin@stthomaspri.essex.sch.uk

A Christian community where children are known by name and loved, which empowers them to learn and to grow in faith, knowledge and fellowship.