

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

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



NEWSLETTER

26th September 2025

There is certainly an autumnal feel in the air with the mornings feeling decidedly chilly, reminding us we are now well into the autumn term! At this time of year we are reminded of the beauty of our school environment as we watch the leaves changing colour and falling to the ground. I have seen many children arriving to school clutching leaves of various colours marvelling at how nature produces such an explosion of colour. However, spare a thought for Mr Powis (Caretaker) who spends many hours during this autumn season sweeping up and removing leaves from the school site to keep us all safe.



It was lovely to see St Thomas of Canterbury Church full of our Key Stage 2 children, staff, parents/carers and other visitors this morning. Our first visit to the church for this academic year and for some of our Year 3 children perhaps their first experience of being in this beautiful building. As always, we were given a warm welcome by Fr. Mark as we came together to celebrate our Harvest Eucharist. At this time of year many services are held to give thanks for all the farmers who work so hard all year round to help grow, produce and supply the food that many of us take for granted. Once again, our Harvest Appeal will be in support of the **Brentwood Foodbank** and there are details later on in this newsletter about how you can support their very important work.

In order to allow our younger children to celebrate Harvest, we would also like to extend an invitation to all parents/carers who would like to join us for our second Harvest Eucharist taking place in 2 weeks time. The **EYFS/Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 Harvest Eucharist** with Fr. Mark will take place at 9:15a.m. in the KS1 Hall on Friday 10th October 2025. You are very welcome to join us for this very special service of thanksgiving.

As always, there is a lot to digest in this newsletter – some for information, some for action. Please do take a careful note so you are able to take a full and active role in school life. We have been incredibly impressed with how the academic year has got underway and with your support and encouragement for the school and your children. Thank you!

One Way Please!



When arriving at the **EYFS and Key Stage 1** entrance each morning it is very important to keep the flow of pedestrian traffic moving to get the children in to school safely and quickly and allow parents/carers to complete the one-way 'loop' and get on with your busy day. For this reason we would ask you to have done your goodbye routines and given your child their book bag/lunchbox...etc. before you get to the second pedestrian gate. This will avoid clogging up the loop and having parents and children backing up on the path.

If your child is using their scooter to travel to and from school can I also ask that they park their scooter against the fence of the scooter park rather than leave it in the middle of the gravelled area or immediately inside the gate. It is wonderful to see so many children scooting to school but the scooter park is becoming very congested and some children have tripped on abandoned scooters. The scooter park is plenty big enough to accommodate the number of scooters arriving on site – you may just need to walk a little further in order to park safely and responsibly!

Don't Be Late!

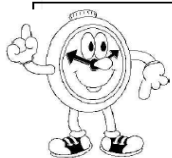
Nobody likes to be late. I am sure we have all been in the situation where as adults we have arrived late for a meeting or appointment, or been the person who arrives late for the cinema or theatre. Arriving late is often embarrassing, puts a spotlight on the late arrival and also causes unnecessary disruption to all the other people who have arrived on time. This is exactly the same scenario when your child arrives late for school.

Over the past few weeks we have become increasingly concerned at the number of children arriving late for school. We fully appreciate that on the odd day there may be a situation beyond your control that contributes

to lateness – but this should be the exception to the rule! Children arriving late are often anxious coming in to school and do not experience the positive start to a school day we all desire.

It is also disruptive to the rest of the class and classteacher who are settled to their early morning routines and eager to get their learning underway. Please can I ask that all parents/carers respond to this reminder and ensure that ALL children arrive to school on time every day. Punctuality is just as important as attendance and is a good life skill and habit to instil in our children from a very early age. Please also see below for some useful reminders about the impact of poor attendance and punctuality!

Punctuality - Why does it matter?



When your child arrives late at school, s/he misses the classteacher's instructions and the introduction to the lesson.
Your child may also feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late!
Being late for school has a huge impact on your child's learning, progress and confidence.

As a parent/ carer you are responsible for ensuring your child is in school

Minutes late per day during the academic year	Equals days worth of teaching lost in a year
5 minutes	3.4 days
10 minutes	6.9 days
15 minutes	10.3 days
20 minutes	13.8 days
30 minutes	20.7 days

Frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning lost and can seriously disadvantage your child.

School begins at 8:55a.m.

Please help your child to be punctual - THANK YOU!



Congratulations!

During collective worship earlier this term, I had great pleasure in presenting badges to those children in Year 6 who have been chosen to take on positions of responsibility this year as House Captains, Sports Captains and Music Captains. I am sure you will join me in congratulating these children on achieving these prestigious positions in school and we look forward to seeing them developing in these roles and being outstanding role models for St. Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School.

The Year 6 children chosen were:

HOUSE CAPTAINS

ST GEORGE-	Matilda Allen-Ross & Flynn Townsend
ST DAVID-	Joshika Shankar & Max Saunders
ST PATRICK-	Phoebe Smith & William Lamb
ST ANDREW-	Matilda Bannister & Iryna Vynohradova

SPORTS CAPTAINS

Harriet Hodges & Rosie Lamb

MUSIC CAPTAINS

Freya Prowse & Kemi Ogundehin-Veasey

Congratulations!

MH Ambassadors 2025-2026

This year we are delighted to be continuing with children's Mental Health Ambassadors in our Primary School with Key Stage 2 children taking on these positions of responsibility. This initiative is being organised and led by Mrs Coughtrey and Mrs Pritchard. This term our new Year 4 MH Ambassadors are receiving training to become peer mentors, by teaching them strategies to create positive mindsets, which they can share within our whole school community. The MH Ambassador team will meet regularly to develop ways to disseminate their learning to children and families of St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School. I am sure you will join me in congratulating the following children on their new and exciting role in school:

Toby Stevens-Meyrick (NEW)
Phoebe Berwick (NEW)
Willow Rourke (NEW)
Sophia Kinsey (NEW)
Casey Smith (NEW)
Ines-Imani Khan
Joey Hardwicke
Lola Egalton

James Shackleton
Grace Morrell
Ava Vaughan
Thomas Nunn
Vrinda Vavilikolanu
Taylor Demetriou



Worship Leaders

In addition to the above, we also have two children from each Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 class who have been proudly elected to serve on the Worship Team in the role of Worship Leaders. These children will be tasked with assisting with collective worship opportunities in their classrooms, maintaining and developing the class 'Sacred Spaces', seeking opportunities for prayer and praise as well as helping to co-ordinate the evaluation and development of whole school collective worship through the use of Worship Appreciation Books. This will be a pivotal role in continuing to strengthen and enhance our Christian distinctiveness and spirituality. I am sure you will join me in congratulating the following children on their new and important role in school:

1B – Harrison Jardine & Arilena Filipi
1A – Makena Ochieng & Hermarnie Higgins
2K – Joshua Goode & Matilda Abbott
2P – Emilia Price & Thomas Bishop
2NT – Jacob Brookman & Lily Shaw

3P – Kirill Duchuk & Sophie Kato
3CA – Isa-Jawad Panjwani & Holly Durrant
4Ba – Hugo O'Hara & Niamh Satterley
4WC – Jessica Sofineti & Grace Gardner
4Bu – Justin Singh Ghotra & Reeko Shorinwa

5S – Charlie Butler & Annabelle Tomlin
5AS – Elodie Ball & Darcey Dodd
6S – Albert Dunnett & Dolcie Derbidge
6Mc – Jack Bailey & Henry Simpson
6Ma – Winnie Bright & Alexis Obazee



C.A.T.S 2025-2026

Since the last newsletter we have also been busy choosing the Children Able To Speak (CATS) who have been successfully nominated and elected by their peers to represent their classes this year. The CATS members (School Council) will be involved in charitable work as well as decision making this year and be used to share and express their opinions about our primary school. This is a very privileged position and one which comes with great responsibility. Below are the names of the children who make up our new CATS group. Congratulations to:

Key Stage 1

2NT – Zane Arakji & Bella Whiting 2P – Fred Isitt & Sophia Rowlinson

2K – Martin Berwick & Coralie Leal

Lower Key Stage 2

3P – Dorothy Webster

3CA – Lolu Oyinbo

4Ba – Raffi Cohen

Upper Key Stage 2

5S – Poppy O'Neill

5AS – Mia Daci

6S – Ami Iwajomo

6Mc – Teddy Ilines

6Ma – Lennon Haylor

Urgent Reminder – NO NUTS!

This is a repeat reminder from the previous newsletter about the importance of maintaining our school as a nut free environment. This week we have noticed a number of children who have items in their lunchboxes which contain products that potentially could have nut products in them. This has been particularly the case for new children starting in Reception.

We are proud to be a healthy school and promote healthy lifestyles and diet for all our children. Please can we ask you to support us in this matter and remember that under **no circumstances** should children be bringing in food items that contain nuts. We have a number of children across our school with severe allergies to nuts so please **do not** send in any snack or packed lunch items that obviously contain nuts. Thank you for your co-operation.

Eco-Warriors

All of us will be aware of the regular reminders about how our world is being affected by climate change and challenges on sustainability. We often talk to the children about the concept of stewardship and how we are commanded to look after and respect God's creation.

I am delighted to inform you that we have now chosen our new Eco-Warriors who will focus on what we can do as a school community to be more sustainable and eco-friendly. This committee of 'Eco-Warriors' are already setting out what they wish to achieve to make St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School more eco-aware. This year's Eco-Warriors are:

2K – Abubakar Dayatar
 2P – Roman Hutchinson
 2NT – Jack Harvey-Gavit
 3P – Lucas Harrington-Farrow
 3CA – Veronique Ball
 4Ba – Louie Miles
 4WC – Samuel Cristescu
 4Bu – Harry Durrant
 5S – Ellie Carr
 5AS – Mabel Shacklady
 6S – Darby Jackson
 6Mc – Sasha Gien
 6Ma – Srinivas Ramamurthy



I am sure you will join me in congratulating these children on their new positions of responsibility as they get to work in and across our school.

IMPORTANT - Contact Details

It is vitally important that the school holds all current and up to date contact details for every child on roll in case of needing to contact you in emergencies. Recently it has come to light that some contact details, especially mobile telephone numbers, are out of date or not working. Please can I ask you to make sure that all contact details we hold for you are up to date. If you have recently changed mobile or landline numbers, or moved house we must be informed as soon as possible to ensure we hold the correct details. If you need to inform us of recent changes please use the **Arbor app** which links directly with our education management information system (MIS). From here, you can check all your child's confidential information, contact details and inform us of any changes that need to be made.

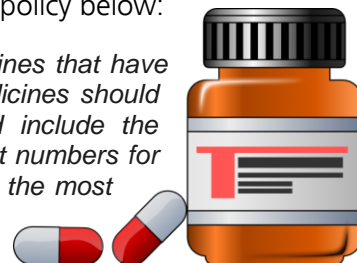
The new statutory guidance for schools 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (KCSIE)' came in to force on 1st September 2025. One aspect of safeguarding that is very clear in this document is that schools need to have more available emergency contacts for children. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 says that schools should have at least two emergency contacts for every child in the school in case of emergencies, and in case there are welfare concerns at the home. Thank you for your support in this matter.

For your information our Child Protection Policy has also been updated to reflect the new KCSIE 2025 guidance and this policy and Part 1 of KCSIE can be found on our website.

Administering Medicines in School

At the beginning of a new academic year we always like to take the opportunity to remind parents/carers of the school policy on administering medicines in school. I would particularly urge ALL parents to take note of this information. The full policy adopted by the Governing Body can be accessed via the school website. You will also find a copy of the 'Administering Medication Form' which can be downloaded, completed and returned to school. Can I please draw your attention to the extract taken from the policy below:

"St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School can only accept medicines that have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse prescriber or pharmacist prescriber. Medicines should always be provided in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacist and include the prescriber's instructions for administration. Office staff will seek new up to date contact numbers for all those pupils in need of medicine. We will only guarantee medicine will be given to the most serious of cases – in these cases it is good practice to ask parents and pupils to be involved in reminding the office staff.



Medicines will be stored in a secure cabinet during the day or a staffroom fridge where necessary.

Parents/Carers should make arrangements to collect the medicine from the school office at the end of the day unless alternative arrangements are made with the school staff. Medicines will not be handed to a child to bring home."

It is very important that all parents/carers adhere to these guidelines. We do experience a number of parents who hand in medicines without the original container or instructions for administration. Please help us to implement our policy for the safety of your children and the protection of our staff. The School Office may refuse to accept medicines brought into school.

Harvest Appeal Collection 2025

As in previous years, our Harvest Appeal collection of gifts will be to support the **Brentwood Foodbank**. Unfortunately, the number of people in our local community who require emergency food are still incredibly high. During the first half of 2025, Brentwood Foodbank has provided 2,101 emergency food parcels to people who can't afford essentials. Feeding 5,620 people, of whom 1,983 were children.

Brentwood Foodbank is part of the Trussell Trust network of foodbanks and they help local individuals and families in crisis through the provision of emergency food supplies donated by churches, schools, businesses and the general public.

At present the Brentwood Foodbank is struggling and having to buy food on a weekly basis to keep up with demand caused by the cost-of-living crisis. Your Harvest donation would be immensely valuable in enabling them to provide short-term emergency food to people in crisis in our local community.

The **Brentwood Foodbank urgently** need the following items:

Tinned corned beef/ham
Tinned tuna/salmon
Tinned ravioli/macaroni cheese
Tinned mince & onion
Tinned tomatoes

Tinned hotdogs
Tinned sardines/mackerel
Tinned chilli con carne
Tinned beans & sausages
Tinned mixed vegetables

Jars of pasta sauce
Pasta

Rice bags/pouches/savoury rice

Tinned custard
Tinned fruit
Biscuits
Sugar

Tinned rice pudding
Jams/chocolate spread
Tea/coffee
Bottles of squash

Laundry gel
Shower gel
Washing up liquid

Shampoo
Toothpaste



I do hope that every child can bring in at least one item on this list. I am sure we are all able to put one or two extra items in to our shopping trolleys and baskets to help those that are less fortunate than us. We will be pleased to accept your donations between now and the half term holiday when we will arrange for the items to be delivered to the Brentwood Foodbank. Please send items in to school with your child and they will be collected in their classrooms by their classteachers. Please be mindful of use by/sell by dates and ensure they have a long enough expiry date to be used by the Brentwood Foodbank. Thank you for your support in this matter.

Finally....

On Friday 12th September we were delighted to welcome Georgina Brown, the Local Engagement Officer from St Francis Hospice to our collective worship sessions with both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 to collect a fundraising cheque on behalf of St Francis Hospice. We were able to hand over a cheque for an amazing **£7,921.24!!**



After her visit Georgina wrote:

It was lovely to see you this morning.

*I can't even begin to explain how shocked I was when your total raised was revealed, this is truly incredible!
We can't thank you enough for choosing to support us.*

You truly are superstars and we are so grateful for the support you have shown us 😊

Thank you!

REMINDER... Once again may I remind all parents of children in **Year 6** that your Secondary School applications need to be completed and returned to the Local Authority by **31st October 2025**. Applications can be made online via www.essex.gov.uk/admissions. 98% of parents in Essex applied online last year. I am sure you all have this in hand and are busy visiting various Secondary Schools at this time.

You might also find it useful to watch the following link: <https://youtu.be/Q0a8fi06WKY>

Thank you for your continued support and prayers.

Have a lovely weekend!!

Mr D. Moran
Headteacher

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

And... please remember if you have any questions or queries or comments feel free to contact us:
admin@stthomaspri.essex.sch.uk