

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

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



NEWSLETTER

10th October 2025

It seems hard to believe that the first half term of the academic year is almost over, as we draw nearer to a well-deserved half term holiday in a couple of weeks. Such a lot has been achieved since our return to school on 3rd September 2025 and I am extremely proud of the staff and children who have all worked so hard to ensure we have had a successful start to the academic year. I am particularly impressed with our new Reception children who have demonstrated such a love of learning and joy and excitement at being part of our school community in their EYFS setting.

Following their departure on Monday, we have certainly missed our children and staff in Year 6, as they have ventured off to South Wales to explore the Rock UK Summit Centre and surrounding area. I know many of the parents/carers in Year 6 have thoroughly enjoyed receiving the daily updates about their experiences and I am sure there will be some excited but tired children returning on Friday afternoon full of tales to tell of their adventures! These residential opportunities for our children really are a fabulous addition and extension to our curriculum and offer so many opportunities which we would be unable to replicate in school. I am sure you will join me in thanking the staff and other adult volunteers who have given of their time and energy (and sleep!) this week to ensure our children have a fabulous time away.



I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that we are still collecting harvest produce and items for the **Brentwood Foodbank** and very much rely on your support to ensure we have a generous amount to donate. At present we have a growing but rather modest amount of food items in each class and would urge you to try and pop a few extra items in your shopping basket or trolley. We will continue collecting harvest donations up until the end of this half term (24th October). So if you have not yet donated – it's not too late!!

Staffing Update

I regret to inform you that we will sadly be saying goodbye to **Mrs Clare Emery** at the end of the autumn term (December 2025) as she leaves her post as Learning Support Assistant. Mrs Emery has taken the decision to resign to allow her to explore exciting new personal and professional opportunities and I am sure you will join me in thanking her for all her hard work and dedication to our school and our children over the years she has worked here. As well as being a highly valued member of our LSA team, Mrs Emery also holds the post of School Librarian as well as Clerk to the Governing Body. Two very different but equally important roles. Over the course of the remainder of this term we will be looking to recruit and fill these various vacancies and responsibilities to allow us to continue the good work in all of these areas.

Parents' Evening 2025



Our Autumn Term Parents' Evenings 2025 will once again be conducted virtually via video appointment. Our previous experiences of using virtual video appointments for Parents' Evening shows a greatly increased attendance rate and the ability to ensure the meetings are conducted in a timely and efficient manner. It also means you can join from the comfort of your own home without having to come back to the school on a cold, damp autumn evening or worry about child care. We do plan to have hybrid (face-to-face or virtual) Parents' Evenings in the Spring Term 2026.

We will be facilitating our virtual video appointments for Parents' Evening using a purpose built platform provided by **SchoolCloud**. On Monday 20th October we will be sending out further details via Parent Hub about how this will work and how you go about booking video appointments with your child's classteacher.

Appointments will be available on **Wednesday 5th November** and **Thursday 6th November 2025** between 4:00p.m. and 7:00p.m. The appointments will be kept strictly to 10 minutes per child.

You will be sent instructions about how to book and log in to these video appointments where you will be able to see and speak to your child's classteacher to discuss how your child has started the new academic year 2025-2026, their progress so far, any gaps that are apparent in their learning and how we can work together to best support their continued achievement over the course of this academic year.

As with our face to face appointments children must not attend these virtual video meetings as it is important that they are conducted in a professional manner and parents and classteachers can have discussions without interruptions and maximise the limited time. The meeting should be conducted in a quiet environment free from distraction.

School Development Plan 2025-2026

Following our Full Governing Body Business Meeting on the 25th September 2025, I have pleasure in drawing your attention to our new School Development Plan key priorities for 2025-2026 which were approved at this meeting.

The School Development Plan (SDP) is formulated as a result of our reflections and responses to our Local Authority monitoring and support visits, external moderation of standards and quality assurance exercises as well as our own rigorous and regular internal monitoring, self-evaluation and review of standards and achievement. We have also given deep consideration to our school Christian values and Christian distinctiveness.

The complete SDP is a comprehensive, robust and lengthy document and we have chosen to share with you the key priorities which are succinct by design. We want it to be a 'living' document which will help steer the school to become even better. The key priorities will be overseen by the Governing Body, its various committees as well as members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

The School Development Plan 2025-2026 can be accessed via the school website (www.stthomaspri.org)

From the home page: 'Key Information' → 'Reports & Key Documents' → 'School Development Plan'.

School Development Plan



REMINDER – Winter School Uniform

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that AFTER the October half term holiday all children must be wearing winter uniform.

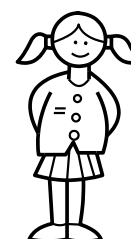
WINTER

[Must be worn for the second half of the autumn term and spring term]

EYFS/KS1

Grey skirt or pinafore dress, ***white polo shirt**, ***bottle green cardigan or jumper**, White/grey/black socks or plain green/grey/black tights.

Grey tailored trousers (or tailored shorts), ***white polo shirt**, ***bottle green jumper**
Grey or black socks only.



Key Stage 2

Grey skirt or pinafore dress,
white shirt, school tie,
***bottle green cardigan or jumper**,
White/grey/black socks or plain green/grey/black tights.

Grey tailored trousers (or tailored shorts),
white shirt, school tie,
***bottle green jumper**,
Grey or black socks only.



This means all children in Key Stage 2 wearing ties and white shirts with collars.

N.B. Items marked * must have the school badge embroidered on the garment.

Shoes need to be sensible black leather (no trainers or boots). We do not like lights or toys in the shoes so please bear this in mind when you are purchasing any new shoes.

Jewellery can cause problems in school due to Health & Safety requirements. Children may wear an inexpensive watch (no Smart watches) to school providing it is not too big or colourful and they will not be distracted by wearing it. No bracelets, rings or necklaces are permitted. Children are not allowed to wear earrings for PE under any circumstances so it makes sense to leave these at home altogether. However, if you insist on your child wearing earrings please ensure they are plain gold or silver studs and that they are capable of taking their earrings out themselves.

May I also remind you that long hair must be tied back with a black, white or green hairband. We prefer boys to have short hair. Children's hair must not be coloured or have patterns shaved into it.

Children's Chosen Charity...or Charities!

During the Autumn Term each year we turn our attention and thoughts to deciding and selecting this year's charity. I am delighted to report that after much debate, deliberation and moral dilemmas the children, supported by their CATS reps, have voted to support not one, but TWO charities which are very close to our hearts and relevant to our school community. The two charities are: **Kids Inspire** and **Rock UK**.

Kids Inspire is a children's mental health charity offering free trauma support to families who otherwise couldn't afford it. Their mission is to ensure that all children and families get the necessary support they need to recover from trauma. At the heart of Kids Inspire is a simple belief – every child deserves the chance to thrive! Through our membership of the Brentwood Collaborative Partnership (BCP) we have direct access to Kids Inspire therapists who work in school on a regular basis. Many of our families have valued their support and intervention and this is a charity we have greatly benefited from and would like to give something back in terms of our fundraising.



Rock UK have been transforming young lives since 1922. As a charity supported through kindness and generosity, they look to see young lives changed through the experience of outdoor adventure. At Rock UK young people grow in confidence, see their fears challenged and learn more about their own spiritual, mental and physical capabilities. This we witness first hand every year, as our Year 6 children and staff are welcomed so warmly to the Rock UK Summit Centre in South Wales.

These are two very worthy causes and ones which we have directly benefited from in the past. As we move through this academic year there will be lots of opportunities to support both Kids Inspire and Rock UK and I hope you will give generously to these very important causes.

Operation Christmas Child 2025



Operation Christmas Child
A PROJECT of SAMARITAN'S PURSE

Operation Christmas Child is a charity we have continued to support for many years. Once again we are asking the children and you as parents/carers to support Operation Christmas Child through their annual shoebox appeal. If you would like to purchase a flatpack, decorated shoebox they are now on sale at school from each classroom (ask your classteacher!) for **50p** each...while stocks last!

Thanks to your generosity all our shoeboxes and the gifts they contain go to children suffering through war, poverty, natural disaster and disease in countries in Eastern Europe and beyond.

I hope in the run up to Christmas and on Christmas Day itself you will spare a thought for these children receiving our shoeboxes! Last year we managed to package up and send off **105** shoeboxes for this appeal – let's see if we can beat this total this year!!

Respect

It is with regret that I feel it necessary to remind some parents/carers about their conduct on school premises and when meeting with or speaking to members of staff.

All our staff are here to help parents/carers and other visitors. They often go above and beyond their roles and responsibilities and always have the best interests of your children at the heart of what we do. We rely on your trust and support in addressing issues, tackling concerns and allowing us to use our professional judgement based on fact rather than supposition and conjecture.

Please treat ALL our staff with **RESPECT**.

We will not tolerate threatening or intimidating verbal or physical behaviour.

Persistent offenders can be removed from the school grounds/premises and may be prosecuted under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996. It is an offence under section 547 of the Education Act 1996 for any person (including a parent/carer) to cause a nuisance or disturbance on school premises.

Notice to Visitors to our School

All our staff are here to help parents/carers and other visitors.

Please treat them with respect.

We will not tolerate threatening or intimidating verbal or physical behaviour.

If you have any concerns, please speak to us

**The Governing Body
St Thomas of Canterbury C of E Primary School**

Advent Calendars 2025



Once again we are excited to be joining up with St Thomas of Canterbury Church to offer you the opportunity to purchase 'The Real Advent Calendar' which includes a free Christmas story activity book. These advent calendars from The Meaningful Chocolate Company are a great way to share the true Christmas story and have a new design for 2025. These are not available to purchase in the shops so this is a wonderful opportunity to get your hands on one!

If you wish to purchase one at **£5.95** each then they are available to order via Parent Pay. Orders must be placed by **Tuesday 21st October 2025** and will be distributed in school after half term.

Finally....

Starting this week and continuing up to the end of November 2025 we are hosting parent/carer tours of the Primary School for prospective parents and carers who have a child due to start school in September 2026. We are looking forward to welcoming a good number of families who are considering St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School for the start of their child's school career. If you have family or friends who would be interested in visiting our school then please do encourage them to telephone the School Office and book in for a tour (dates are on the school website) – we would be delighted to see them!

IMPORTANT REMINDER - As you are well aware, the statutory closing date for applications from parents of Year 6 children (for a secondary school place in Year 7 from September 2026) is **31st October 2025**.

I would like to remind any parents of Year 6 children who have yet to submit an application, that they must do so by 31st October 2025.

Applications can be made via the Essex website www.essex.gov.uk/admissions

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



ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY
CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Are you looking for a Reception school place for your child?



**Come and visit St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School
and experience the thriving school community that would be
delighted to welcome you and your child in September.**

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





ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY
CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

We aim to provide a high quality education, where every child has
the opportunity to realise and reach their full potential.

Children enjoy coming to our school because they are welcomed
into a happy and safe environment.

We can't wait to meet you!

Please contact the School Office to find out more information
and to book a place on one of our school tours.

Telephone: 01277 223651 | Email: admin@stthomaspri.essex.sch.uk | www.stthomaspri.org
Sawyers Hall Lane, Brentwood, Essex CM15 9BX

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



Thank you for your continued support this term and I would ask you to keep the life and work of our school in your prayers.

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