



ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

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

18th September 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

Important Notice to All Parents/Carers

We hope you have settled into the new academic year. Good attendance, punctuality and children's wellbeing remain top priorities for us at St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School. We share your wish for the best for all our children, and we are looking forward to continuing to work in partnership with you to achieve this. I kindly ask for a few moments of your time to read this important notice.

We work hard to ensure our children have the best opportunities for success in the future, to feel safe and supported in school, and to develop a sense of belonging both with their peers and as a part of our wider school community.

To support this, regular attendance at school will be key.

As a reminder, our school gates open at 8.45am and our school day starts at 8.55am. Please be aware that due to Department for Education (DfE) requirements, any child/ren arriving more than 30 minutes after the start of the school day must be recorded with an **unauthorised absence** (U code).

If an occasion arises when it is unavoidable for your child to miss school, we ask that you contact the school as soon as possible using the Studybugs app or before 8:00am by telephone on 01277 223651 on every day of absence. Information regarding the school day, our attendance procedures and how we monitor and follow up on absences can be found in our attendance policy at: <https://www.stthomaspri.org/school-policies.html>

We expect all our children to attend school as regularly as possible, and to aim for 100% attendance. However, we do recognise that children may sometimes experience illness or exceptional circumstances that prevent regular attendance.

Regarding illness, the NHS advises us that it is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with common or minor illnesses. For example, common colds, minor coughs, sore throats or headaches alone do not mean children are too unwell to attend school. To help parents decide whether certain illnesses or symptoms require time off school, the NHS has produced the following guidance: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

In addition to mild illnesses, we are aware that some of our children have been absent from school due to feelings of anxiety in recent years. The specialist advice regarding anxious thoughts and feelings, which is also accessible via the above NHS link, is that worry and mild or moderate anxiety, whilst sometimes difficult emotions, can be a normal part of growing up for many children and young people. It is recognised that a prolonged period of absence is likely to heighten a child's anxiety about

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

Sawyers Hall Lane, Brentwood, Essex CM15 9BX

Telephone: 01277 223651 admin@stthomaspri.essex.sch.uk www.stthomaspri.org

Headteacher: Mr D. M. Moran



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stthomascofeprimary>



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attending in the future, rather than reduce it. With the ongoing support we have available for our children, being in school can often help alleviate the underlying issues. If your child is struggling with anxious thoughts and feelings, please contact us as early as possible (if you haven't done so already) so that an effective support plan can be discussed and arranged.

If any difficult circumstances arise that you feel we can help with, please accept our assurances that we will work with you to ensure that opportunities are always provided to discuss and resolve any problems that may be preventing our children from attending school.

We look forward to working together to ensure the best possible year for all our children. If at any point you feel that you or your child needs support, guidance or advice, please feel welcomed and encouraged to contact us at an early stage so we can work together to resolve any problems that may arise.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Dean Moran
Headteacher

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