

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

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



# NEWSLETTER

17<sup>th</sup> May 2024



This Sunday is **Pentecost Sunday**. The Day of Pentecost marks fifty days since Easter Day and brings the Easter season to an end. It is a major feast of the Church's year when Christians recall how God's Holy Spirit was given to the disciples after Jesus' Ascension, empowering them to begin the work of making disciples of all nations. The Acts of the Apostles describes how the crowds gathered in Jerusalem – representing many nationalities and speaking many languages – were able to hear the disciples preaching in their own language!

Jesus had promised his followers that, although they would not see him after his Ascension, they would receive the Holy Spirit to guide and inspire them. The colour most often associated with Pentecost is red, representing the tongues of fire which the Acts of the Apostles describes appearing above the heads of the disciples as a sign that they had received the Holy Spirit.

It was wonderful to welcome some parents/carers and friends of the school to our Pentecost Eucharists this morning which reminded us of the significance of these events and how the Holy Spirit is active in our school and our lives. My thanks to Fr. Mark for celebrating both of our services and to all those who helped with the liturgy through readings, prayers and music. It was a very uplifting experience.

As we prepare to move in to the last week of this half term I would like to thank you as always for your continued support, patience and prayers.

## Baby Berner Has Arrived!!

Baby Berner has arrived! We were delighted to hear last week of the news of the birth of Charlotte Grace Pentecost on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2024 (2:15a.m.) weighing 9lb 8oz. Mother and baby are doing very well and enjoying the time bonding as a new family.

I am sure you will join me in congratulating Miss Berner and her partner on the birth of their new daughter. We will be praying for their family and friends at this exciting new phase in their lives as they welcome their first child in to the world.



## Well done Year 6!



Our Year 6 children have been amazing this week and I wanted to take this opportunity to congratulate all our Year 6 children on their determination, perseverance and resolve during SATs week (May 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>). Without exception the children tackled these tests with a superb attitude and demonstrated their desire to do well and showcase their learning and progress across Key Stage 2. I know that the Year 6 staff were very proud of their conduct and efforts and we hope this has paid off and will be reflected in the results due in early July. Congratulations to everyone in Year 6 – children and staff!

I would also like to extend thanks to all the other children and staff in our primary school for your support of our Year 6 children this week and for making some small adjustments to our normal routine and timetable. You have all been fantastic too!

## REMINDER: Dust Off Your Wheelbarrows!!

Today we will be taking delivery of a huge quantity of bark chippings which needs to be spread in the school spiritual garden and other surrounding areas. We need your help!!

We are looking for willing volunteers of all ages, armed with shovels, rakes and wheelbarrows to help undertake this task TOMORROW (Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2024). If you are able to help and assist with this task tomorrow morning we would be delighted to see you! We intend to start at 8:00a.m. but you are welcome to join us at any point during the morning. We will open up the school car park so you can drive in and continue working until we have finished. As the saying goes, 'many hands make light work', so the more volunteers we have the quicker we will complete the task. We should definitely be finished by 12 noon. Please do bring your own tools as we have only a limited number in school.



Please do come along to take part in this activity and help support our school community. We will provide refreshment for all the workers and we may even throw in a chocolate biscuit! I look forward to seeing you there.

## Promoting the Essex Local Offer

The new Essex Local Offer website has now launched! It provides information about help available for children and young people (aged 0-25) with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This includes:

- Clubs, groups and activities
- Support and advice for young people and families
- Learning
- Financial support
- Health and wellbeing
- Housing and employment

We are being encouraged to share this information with you to ensure children and young people with SEND, and their families, are aware of the Essex Local Offer and support available in their local areas.

Visit [www.send.essex.gov.uk](http://www.send.essex.gov.uk) for more information and to sign up to their newsletter. Please see further information and QR code at the end of this newsletter.

## National Framework for Penalty Notices

From 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024 the Department for Education (DfE) are introducing a new Framework for Penalty Notices. The flyer at the end of this newsletter sets out the changes that will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued for unauthorised holidays. Please read the information at the end of this newsletter – *'Helping parents to understand the changes to fines for term time holidays'*.

## REMINDER: Healthy Snacks

We are proud to be a healthy primary school and promote healthy lifestyles and diet including participation in The Daily Mile™. We encourage you to send in a healthy snack for your child in Key Stage 2 to eat at morning break. Please note: The children in EYFS and Key Stage 1 are still receiving their free piece of fruit or vegetable each day through the National Fruit Scheme. The vast majority of KS2 children do bring in a piece of fruit or healthy cereal bar. However recently we have observed a few children who are not eating a healthy snack! Please can we ask you to support us in this matter and remember that under **no circumstances** should children be bringing in crisps, chocolate, chocolate covered snack bars or sweets. It is also worth pointing out that a number of fruit based snack products marketed in the main supermarkets contain a very high sugar content and are probably not as healthy as you might think! The classteachers will be reminding the children about what constitutes a healthy snack.

Can I also remind you that we have a number of children with severe allergies to nuts so please **do not** send in any snack items that obviously contain nuts. Thank you for your co-operation.

## Finally....

Next week is our final week of this half term which seems to have raced by since our return on 15<sup>th</sup> April. Thankfully the weather is beginning to feel more 'summer-like' and the temperature is rising!

Half term is from Monday 27<sup>th</sup> May to Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024. Once it arrives, have a super half term week, stay safe and I look forward to seeing you all again on **Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024**.

**Mr D. Moran**  
Headteacher



 Essex County Council  
Special Educational Needs  
and Disabilities

## The Essex Local Offer website

provides information about help available to children and young people (aged 0 to 25) with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

You can also find information on:

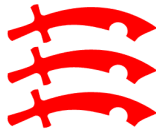
- support, groups and activities
- health and wellbeing
- help with learning
- housing and employment
- advice for young people
- financial support

Visit [www.send.essex.gov.uk](http://www.send.essex.gov.uk) for more information and to sign up to our newsletter



*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](mailto:admin@stthomaspri.essex.sch.uk)



Essex County Council

## Helping parents to understand the changes to fines for term time holidays

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued for unauthorised holidays recorded by schools after 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

### Who may be fined?

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent who allowed the holiday receiving 3 separate fines.

### First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for an unauthorised term time holiday the fine amount will be:

**£80 per parent**, per child if paid within 21 days.

Increasing to **£160** if paid between days 22-28.

### National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.

For example: a 5 day holiday would meet the national threshold.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

### Second Offence (within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be: **£160 per parent** (who allowed the holiday), per child, payable within 28 days.

### Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and local authorities will need to consider other available measures to address the absence concerns. This may mean that cases are presented before a Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines of up to £2,500.

Cases found guilty in the Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

**ATTENDANCE  
MATTERS.**  
**ALL DAY, EVERY DAY**