



NEWSLETTER

27th September 2024

On Monday next week, we will be waving off our Year 6 children, staff and willing volunteers as they head off for their residential trip to the Rock UK Summit Centre in South Wales. This is always a highlight of the academic year for our Year 6 children as they venture off to explore a new location, contrasting landscape and take part in a number of unique experiences and challenges. It is also an opportunity to get to know each other, to build and reinforce friendships and to develop a growth mindset as a team. We have our fingers crossed for fine weather and good traffic! I am sure you will join me in praying for all those involved in this trip and we look forward to welcoming them back next Friday when I am sure they will be full of stories...and also very tired!

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!

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. This is particularly evident for our younger children in Reception and Key Stage 1. I 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. If a child continues to be persistently late then this can lead to a penalty notice from the Local Authority for irregular school attendance. Please support us and more importantly your child with arriving to school on time.

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!



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!

Congratulations!

During collective worship last week 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-	Rishana Randall & Fletcher Barnes
ST DAVID-	Ellie Palmer & Arsene Luk
ST PATRICK-	Emily Dobinson-Lay & Ezekiel Katalayi
ST ANDREW-	Isabelle Ware & Jasper Coleman

SPORTS CAPTAINS

Olivia Willard & George Weeden

MUSIC CAPTAINS

Hattie Ricketts & Destiny Odeyemi



MH Ambassadors 2024-2025

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:

James Shackleton (NEW)
Ines Khan (NEW)
Joey Hardwicke (NEW)
Lola Egalton (NEW)
Vrinda Vavilikolanu (NEW)
Grace Morrell
Ava Vaughan
Thomas Nunn
Taylor Demetriou

Taylor Wootton
Sienna Buckle
Ollie Benns
Luke O'Leary
Eliyas Halabi



NEW - Worship Leaders

In addition to the above and new for this academic year, we now 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. I am sure you will join me in congratulating the following children on their new and important role in school:

1NC – Max Butfield & Eva Taran

1A – George Romer-Ormiston & Amber Shafaat

2K – Bea Adams & Albert Beltrami

2MP – Mya Moore & Leah Bailey

2P – Isaac Miles & Emilia Laws

3CA – Lillie Ashworth & Lek De'Milia

3B – Billy Isitt & Ivy Harrington-Farrow

4M – Michelle Owusu-Sekyeré & Max Hutchinson

4B – Poppy O'Neil & Kavin Anandha Kumar

4TW – Evelyn Madden & Mabel Shacklady

5S – Phoebe Tolliday & Grace Newell

5DC – Sasha Gien & Max Saunders

6S – Darcy Palmer & Flynn Townsend

6M – Emily Wood & Hannah Tilden

6G – Mia Little & Connie Smith



C.A.T.S 2024-2025

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

2P – Anna Zhrebina & Gio Suleyman

2MP – Rebecca Durrant & Isaiah Roberts

2K – Willa Shacklady & Freddie Simmons

Lower School

3CA – CeCe Leal

3B – Lucy Huntingford

4M – Lily Little

4B – Harriet White

4TW – Edward Taran

Upper School

5S – Jude Howard

5DC – Harry Daw

6S – Scarlett Mugo

6G – Zack Whayling

6M – Isla Shand

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.

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 put it in writing and email in to the School Office so we can update our system.

The new statutory guidance for schools 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSIE)' came in to force on 1st September 2024. 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 2024 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 2024 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 Collection 2024

As in previous years, our Harvest collection of gifts will be to support the **Brentwood Foodbank**. 13 million people live below the poverty line in the UK. Every day people in the UK go hungry for reasons ranging from redundancy to receiving an unexpected bill on a low income.

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.

Brentwood Foodbank is a collaborative project that seeks to engage with the whole community to tackle food poverty in our local area.

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 stewing steak
Tinned ham
Tinned minced beef & onion
Tins of soup

Tinned meatballs
Tinned Irish stew

Coffee
Tea bags 40 & 80s

Cleaning products



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.

Contacting Staff

When parents/carers contact members of staff we always try and respond as soon as practically possible. However, please be aware that your message/email may be just one of many that staff are dealing with and responding to. We will always prioritise our communication dealing with the most urgent matters first – this may lead to a slight delay in response time in getting back to you. With a school population of over 500 children I am sure you can appreciate we are extremely busy!

Some individual members of staff experience a particularly heavy caseload e.g. the Senior Leadership Team, and this can lead to parents/carers not receiving an immediate response. Please do not interpret this as us ignoring you because we will get back to you as soon as possible. Thank you for your understanding.

Harvest Eucharists

As we near the end of September and move further in to the autumn season, we turn our attentions to giving thanks to God for the beauty of our creation and the harvest we receive. We would like to extend an invitation to all parents/carers who would like to join us for one of our Harvest Eucharists taking place over the next couple of weeks.

The **EYFS/Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 Harvest Eucharist** with Fr. Mark will take place at 9:30a.m. in the KS1 Hall on Friday 4th October 2024.

The **Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 & Year 6 Harvest Eucharist** with Fr. Mark will take place at 9:30a.m. at St Thomas of Canterbury Church on Friday 11th October 2024.

You are very welcome to attend either/both opportunities and join us for this very special service of thanksgiving. As always we would greatly appreciate any help you may be able to give in escorting Key Stage 2 children safely to and from the church. If you are able to walk with your child's class then please speak to your child's classteacher for further details and information.

News from the Parish Church of St Thomas of Canterbury

Fr Mark writes;

A group of 20 pilgrims for St Thomas were in Walsingham last weekend on pilgrim to the Shrine of our Lady of Walsingham. During our visit, we remembered the school and its work during our offering of prayers and intercessions in the Holy House. To find out more about the work of the Shrine please visit <https://www.walsinghamanglican.org.uk/>

This Sunday sees our usual programme of worship;

08.00 Said Mass (lasting about 45 minutes)

10.00 Sung Mass with Holy Baptism (lasting about 75 minutes)

18.00 Choral Evensong (lasting around 50 minutes)

Wednesday mornings are always 'Cake and a Cuppa' when friends old and new gather to catch up on the news and enjoy a slice of delicious homecake cake. This runs from 10.00 to 12.00 and some will stay on for the 12.15 Mass.

On Thursday our toddler group meets in the hall following a Toddler Service at 10.30. A small charge covers the costs of running this group and providing drinks and snacks for all.

On Friday we have a 'Crafty Fridays' group when there is an opportunity to undertake various craft activities with the chance for a natter. This runs from 10.00 to 12.00.

Sunday the 6th of October sees a slight variation in our pattern of worship,

08.00 Said Mass (lasting about 45 minutes)

10.00 Sung Mass with Holy Baptism (lasting about 75 minutes)

18.00 Choral Evensong and Benediction (lasting around 50 minutes)

Looking forward we shall be keeping Harvest Thanksgiving on the 20th of October when there will be a potluck lunch after the 10.00 Sung Mass with an exciting competition we can all get involved in. Look out for further details coming soon and stick the date in your diary!

Finally a reminder for those with children in Year Six who are on our Family Roll list, please check your inboxes or SPAM folders for an important communication about the completion of the Secondary School Admissions process and how to get SIF's completed by me. The email is sent from our iknow church system.

Finally....

On Friday 13th September we were delighted to welcome the Shorter family in to our collective worship session with Key Stage 2 to collect a fundraising cheque on behalf of Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH). This money was raised a few years ago by the then Junior School as part of our charitable fundraising for that year. The Shorter family have become ambassadors for GOSH following their son, Milo, being diagnosed with leukemia when he was a pupil at our school. Milo went through a long period of extensive treatment but is now on the road to full recovery and it was a joy to welcome him back in to school to speak to the children about the care he had received from GOSH. We were able to hand over a cheque for **£3907.59** which will go towards the continued care they provide for their patients.

We are now in the process of inviting representatives from Little Havens Children's Hospice, our chosen charity for last year, to come and be presented with their cheque from our fundraising activities last academic year. We look forward to sharing with you how much we have managed to raise!

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 2024**. 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