

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

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



NEWSLETTER



18th October 2024

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. Such a lot has been achieved since our return to school on 4th September 2024 and I am extremely proud of the staff and children who have all worked so hard to ensure we have a successful 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. I would like to thank all parents/carers from across the school for your continued support in ensuring your children are at school and on time everyday ready to learn!

Over the past couple of weeks we have enjoyed welcoming parents/carers and visitors to our two Harvest Eucharists, one in the KS1 Hall and the other at St Thomas' Church. It was lovely to come together in collective worship to give thanks to God for the beauty of our creation and to give thanks for the harvest we benefit from each day. The children all sang beautifully and I am very grateful to all those children who also delivered readings or led us in prayer with such confidence and enthusiasm.

I would like 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 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 (25th October). So if you have not yet donated – it's not too late!!

Welcome Mrs Pallett!

At the beginning of the month (4th October) we were delighted to acknowledge and celebrate the marriage of Miss Hayley Phillips to her long term partner, Ray. I am sure you will join me in congratulating them on their wedding and wish them many years of love and happiness together. As a result of the wedding we have now said 'goodbye' to Miss Phillips and a 'hello' to Mrs Pallett!!

Mrs Pallett has now taken her married surname so please don't be confused if the staff and children refer to her by this...we are still talking about the same person!

Inclusion Review

On Tuesday 8th October 2024 the school took part in an Inclusion Review which was carried out by Local Authority School Effectiveness Partners. Across the course of the day two reviewers spent time in school looking in detail at our inclusive practices. This involved a number of activities including: interviews with Governors, meetings with strategic members of staff with roles and responsibilities for inclusion, discussions with children, parents/carers and wider staff members. Throughout these activities they were collecting evidence against the three pillars for inclusion – *Pillar 1: Positive, mutually respectful relationships, and wellbeing; Pillar 2: Attending and participating; Pillar 3: Achieving and moving on.*

This review was a robust process and highlighted and celebrated the inclusive nature of our school underpinned by our Character Education policy and gospel values. We were delighted with the outcome and the recognition of our school being open and welcoming to all. This is testament and recognition to the hard work of everyone associated with our school.

Parents' Evening 2024



Our Autumn Term Parents' Evenings 2024 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 2025.

We will be facilitating our virtual video appointments for Parents' Evening using a purpose built platform provided by **SchoolCloud**. On Monday next week 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 6th November and Thursday 7th November 2024 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 2024-2025, 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 2024-2025

Following our Full Governing Body Business Meeting on the 8th October 2024, I have pleasure in drawing your attention to our new School Development Plan key priorities for 2024-2025 which were approved at this meeting.

The School Development Plan (SDP) is formulated as a result of our reflections and responses to our Ofsted inspection (February 2023), 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, 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 2024-2025 can be accessed via the school website (www.stthomaspri.org) From the home page: 'Key Information' → 'Reports & Key Documents' → '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.

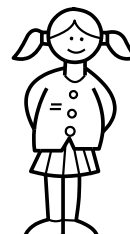
WINTER

[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 should not be coloured or have patterns shaved into it.

Little Havens Children's Hospice

Many of you will be aware that over the past academic year we have been supporting the children's chosen charity - **Little Havens Children's Hospice**. Each year the children choose a charity, facilitated through the CATS reps (School Council) across the primary school, and consider how they can plan and deliver a variety of fundraising events. This has also included retiring collections from school performances and productions, as well as the Music Concerts in the summer term.

Thanks to your hard work, generosity and support I am delighted to announce that we have raised a fantastic total of **£4938.67** – which is an amazing achievement. Next half term, we are hoping to welcome a representative from Little Havens Children's Hospice to come and speak to the children about how this money will make a positive difference to those children receiving care or support through this charity. I know how much the children have enjoyed supporting this very worthy cause.



Now we turn our attention to this year's charity. After much debate, deliberation and moral dilemmas the children, supported by their CATS reps, have voted to support **St Francis Hospice**. This was announced to the children on Monday, when coincidentally the collective worship theme was the life of St Francis of Assisi...coincidence or God-incidence!?!

St Francis Hospice are a charity that cares for people in our community with palliative and end of life care needs. They specialise in providing care for any person, from any faith or cultural background, who have been diagnosed with a serious illness who are living in Havering, Brentwood, Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge or West Essex. Saint Francis Hospice offers experienced, compassionate advice and support.

The hospice works alongside GPs, community nurses and hospital specialists to help manage pain and other difficult symptoms, with an aim for comfort, as much independence as possible, and the best possible quality of life.

The hospice team also provides care for people at the end of life, at home and at the hospice. They assess and address spiritual needs, linking in with local religious leaders and do their best to accommodate any specific dietary requirement, custom or ritual that needs to be upheld.

St Francis Hospice will be a charity that many of you are familiar with and may have had family connections with yourself. St Francis Hospice were also very supportive to the family of Mrs Rosie Infanti in her end of life care and I am sure that this was very much in the minds of our children when making their final choice. As we move through this academic year there will be lots of opportunities to support St Francis Hospice and I hope you will give generously to this very worthy cause.

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.

Over recent weeks we have had a number of incidents when parents/carers have become verbally aggressive, rude and intimidating when meeting with or speaking to members of staff, both in the school building and school office area. This behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

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.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

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

Operation Christmas Child 2024



Operation Christmas Child
A PROJECT of SAMARITAN'S PURSE

Over the past couple of weeks during collective worship Mrs McKechnie and Mrs Antrobus have spoken to the children in Key Stage 2 and EYFS/Key Stage 1 about the work of Operation Christmas Child, 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 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 **121** shoeboxes for this appeal – let's see if we can beat this total this year!!

Finally....

Over the past week and continuing up to the beginning of December 2024 we are hosting parent/carers tours of the Primary School for prospective parents and carers who have a child due to start school in September 2025. Already we have welcomed 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!



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.



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

We can't wait to meet you!

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

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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 2025) is **31st October 2024**.

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 2024.

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>

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