

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

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



NEWSLETTER

14th March 2025



As we continue through this period of Lent, we are reminded that it is not just about giving things up but also what we can take on to focus our hearts and minds and help those that are vulnerable or less fortunate than ourselves. Next week we will be coming together as a school community to mark Red Nose Day, which has become an established favourite in our school calendar. Mrs McKechnie has been busy planning our event and has shared the following information via Parent Hub on Wednesday:

This year for Red Nose Day the children of St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School will be allowed to come to school on **Friday 21st March 2025** wearing non-school uniform (even better if it could be **RED!**)

In addition, on the morning of **Tuesday 18th March**, the school playground will be open from 8:30am for both the children and parents/carers to have a go at running the Daily Mile together. Cross-country club members can arrive at the normal time to set up and for everybody else the gates will open at 8:30am. This could be just for fun or maybe you could race and whoever loses needs to put a donation in the bucket!

We ask that ALL children make a **donation of £1** for the privilege of wearing non-school uniform. Children need to wear comfortable footwear. Normal hair and jewellery rules apply. Thank you in advance for your support.

Please use the link below to pay in your non-uniform money and any other donations.

The school will not be taking in any cash.

https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/rnd25-st-thomas-of-canterbury-church-of-england-aided-primary-school-brentwood?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL

Please do take the time to read the rest of this newsletter as it contains some important information and reminders.

Staffing Update

After over 30 years of service and dedication to St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School, **Mrs Lou Franklin** has taken the difficult decision to retire and will be leaving our school at the end of this term (4th April 2025). Mrs Franklin has been a longstanding and highly valued member of our fantastic learning support team and has worked with many of your children as they have progressed through EYFS and Key Stage 1. As well as a member of staff, Mrs Franklin has also been a parent and had her two children come through the school. Mrs Franklin has requested to purchase a gift to the school of an abundance of spring bulbs which will brighten up our school grounds each year! I am sure you will join me in thanking Mrs Franklin for her dedication, care and support for the school and wish her all the best for her retirement and the opportunity to spend more time with her family and explore new adventures.

Sadly, we will also be saying a fond farewell and goodbye to **Mrs Emily-Jane Gore** who will be leaving us at the end of this academic year. Mrs Gore is another longstanding member of our school community and has been a much valued and highly respected classteacher for the past 17 years. As well as being a classteacher, Mrs Gore has also spent time as part of the senior leadership team of the school and her contributions to school life have been wide and varied. Mrs Gore is moving on to a new school in September in Billericay. This will allow her to work closer to home, reduce travel time and be able to spend more time with her family. I know many of you, like us, will be sad to hear this news and will join me in wishing Mrs Gore all the very best for the future. She and her family will be in our thoughts and prayers.

Today is **Mrs Antrobus'** last day with us in school as she prepares to start her maternity leave next week. We wish her continued good health and a chance to relax ahead of the birth of her baby in April. Please do pray for her and her family at this exciting time.



With Mrs Antrobus going on maternity leave next week we have given some careful thought and consideration to covering some of her senior leadership team roles and responsibilities. I am delighted to inform you that from next week, **Mrs Katie Knight** will be taking on the role of **Key Stage 1 Lead** within our school and continuing the hard work and development within this team in Year 1 and Year 2. In a similar way, **Mrs Mel Pritchard** will be taking on the role of **Lower Key Stage 2 Lead** and responsibility for overseeing the staff and children in Year 3 and Year 4. Both of these teachers are very familiar with the routines and high expectations at our school and I have every confidence that both members of staff will excel in these new roles. I am sure we can rely upon your full support and co-operation.

Lunchtime Prayer Spaces

Before half term all of Key Stage 2 were invited to visit the school Sacred Garden for prayer and reflective activities over two lunchtime sessions as an optional activity. This is as part of the next stage of the Prayerfully Learning Together research project in association with Chelmsford Diocese, Prayer Spaces in School and Brentwood Schools Christian Worker Trust with volunteers from local churches.

Year 5 focus group children, some Year 6s and class Worship Leaders met to discuss situations that come up at school and at home in which pupils felt reflection or prayer at school would be helpful for them.

Key Stage 2 pupils were able to participate in activities about:

- arguments, saying sorry and forgiving – using zips and sand.
- exploring ways we could cheer up each other when feeling low – contributing to a Cheer Up corner, pegging up encouraging comments that other pupils could take away with them to help them.
- remembering those we miss – the 'Empty Chair' activity - a poignant and special time.

The focus group pupils also wrote some prayers, some of which were included in the activities.

Some pupil comments:

"I liked it because I got to say sorry."

"I like it here because of the chance to express myself."

"This place is brilliant, and I think there should be more."

"It was the best thing in this month, so good and perfect."

Thank you to all the pupils and church volunteers that planned it and ran these prayer and reflection activities.



REMINDER: Parents' Evening – 2nd & 3rd April 2025

On Friday next week (21st), you will receive a Parent Hub message with details about booking appointments for Parents' Evening. Spring term Parents' Evening will be taking place on **Wednesday 2nd April** and **Thursday 3rd April 2025** – 4:00 – 7:00p.m.

The letter and accompanying SchoolCloud guide will explain how to make your appointments online. Please note that the booking window will open at **4:00p.m.** on Friday 21st March 2025. We will also send you a Parent Hub reminder to alert you to when this booking window goes live.



***PLEASE NOTE:** The booking window will be open for 10-days. Parents/carers **MUST** book within this time frame. We will not allow any bookings after the booking window has closed – there will be no exceptions. In previous years we have had parents/carers asking to make late bookings. This causes a great deal of additional administrative work and does not allow teaching staff adequate time to prepare for the meetings. Please support us by ensuring you make your booking on time!

I do hope that all parents/carers will take this opportunity to meet with your child's classteacher to discuss their progress to date and celebrate the achievements they have made since September 2024. We look forward to seeing you.

REMINDER: St Patrick's Day – 17th March 2025

We will be celebrating St Patrick's Feast Day on Monday 17th March!



On **Monday** we are inviting all the children who are in St Patrick's House to wear non-school uniform and dress in their House colour which is **GREEN**. This opportunity is only for children in St Patrick's House as the other Houses have either celebrated their saints' day or will get their opportunity later in the academic year – April for St George. We do hope that all the St Patrick's children encouraged by their House Captains will take pride in marking this event. In preparation, the children in St Patrick's House may like to research some facts about the life of St Patrick and share it with their classteacher.

Finally....

A few reminders...

- We break up for the beginning of the Easter holidays on Friday 4th April 2025 – this is our last day.
- Letters detailing the new SUMMER school dinner menus for after the Easter holiday will be distributed on Wednesday (19th) next week. If you are intending for your child to have a school dinner in April when we return for the summer term then this **MUST** be returned by **Wednesday 26th March 2025**.

Thank you for all your continued support over the course of this term.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life." John 3:16

Have a great 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