

# ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

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



## NEWSLETTER

6<sup>th</sup> March 2026



As we enter March and continue our Lenten journey, we are reminded that this season invites us to walk with intention, honesty, and trust. Lent is not a hurried path but a reflective one – a chance to notice where God's light is guiding us and where we may need to slow down, reassess, or simply breathe. In our everyday lives, these weeks often bring their own mix of pressure and perseverance. Yet even in the busiest times and the most demanding decisions, we can take quiet reassurance that God's word illuminates each step, even when the path ahead feels uncertain.

It was lovely to welcome parents/carers, visitors and other guests to our two Lent Eucharists last Friday. It was a lovely act of worship and thanksgiving in our KS1 and KS2 halls led by Fr. Mark, reminding us of the significance of Lent and our journey through this liturgical season. Congratulations to all those children who read our bible readings so confidently, led us in prayer and to our two school choirs who sang so beautifully.

As always, thank you for your trust, care and love for our school.

### The Builders Have Arrived!

No doubt you will have noticed that since our return from the half term break in February, our long-awaited construction work has begun on our new walkway!

This new external walkway/covered canopy will provide a much-needed access route between KS1 and KS2, without the need to walk through areas of high occupancy and disturb teaching and learning. At present to move between these two areas of the school, involves going through multiple doors and walking through areas which are often used for teaching and learning, such as the two school halls and the computing suite. The new walkway will connect the KS1 and KS2 areas of the school in a much more efficient manner and allow quicker circulation between all areas of our primary school. Ratcliff & Burridge, our appointed contractors, are working very hard and in full partnership with the school and we are hoping the project will be completed by the end of April 2026. It is very exciting to see this all taking shape and we can't wait for the final outcome!



Thank you for your support and understanding whilst this work is completed. Please do be mindful that we have contractors on site and make sure you take note of any signs, instructions or barriers whilst the construction is taking place. We want to keep everyone safe on site whilst this project is underway.

## REMINDER: Parents' Evening – 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Next week, you will receive a Parent Hub message with details about booking appointments for Parents' Evening. Spring term Parents' Evening will be taking place on **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March** and **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026** – 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 13<sup>th</sup> March 2026. 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 2025. We look forward to seeing you.

## World Book Day 2026

World Book Day began with a sea of colour and surge of excitement yesterday as the children arrived and shared their costume choices. Thank you for supporting them with this: it really makes the day so special!



At the EYFS/KS1 gate the children were greeted by a giant dinosaur, who on closer inspection, had resemblances of Mr Beales! Their dinosaur fossil dig was a great success and was made even more exciting by the arrival of baby dinosaurs!! Patrick the Stegosaurus and Poppy the Pachycephalosaurus were a huge hit and the children have made a special friend for life. Many more activities followed, from making dinosaur finger puppets to tell stories with to creating moving pictures; the children enjoyed their dinosaur themed day.

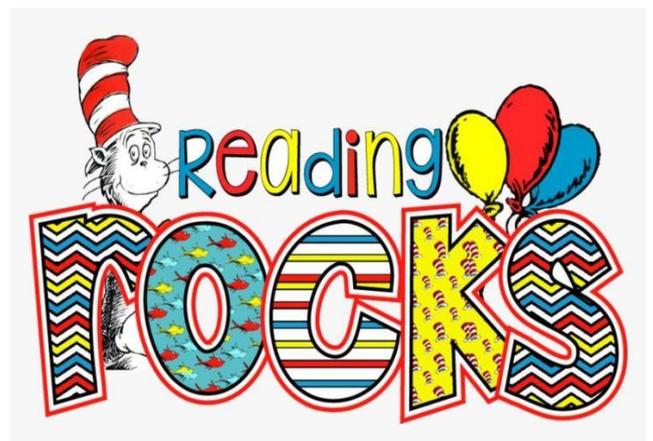
Wednesday. Clare's visit was fantastic and the children showed their enthusiasm by joining in so well with the collaborative workshops. There were so many wonderful ideas I think we will be hearing about them for quite some time.

In KS2 the building had magic and mystery in the air as the children designed their own monsters thinking carefully about the questions and top tips that Clare Harlow, author of Tidemagic, gave to them on

During the day the children also took part in the National Literacy Trust's, Great Big Footy and Booky Quiz, which was organised as a National event for the Year of Reading. Schools have been encouraged to, 'Go All In,' and of course St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School are always up for the challenge and are rising to each opportunity on offer.

Finally in the afternoon, KS2 had a special surprise as every class was visited by Jake the baby Tyrannosaurus Rex. They found out that the baby dinosaurs had been genetically made in a secret lab not far from Brentwood! There were some excellent questions including, "Why would scientists make something that will grow up to be a threat to humans?" and "Where will they live when they are fully grown?"

The creativity and imagination that has been developed and inspired over the last few days has been wonderful not to mention the discussions around what we are all reading and how much we all love to read. St Thomas' truly is a school with reading at the heart of what we do.



## Summer School Uniform – Reminder!

Although we are still some way off, I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents/carers that **AFTER** the Easter break all children must be wearing **summer uniform** as set out in the school prospectus. The Governing Body continue to uphold high expectations by regularly reviewing and tightening up the uniform policy and we would request that all parents/carers adhere to this. From the beginning of the summer term all children **must** wear summer uniform as set out in the school prospectus and home school diaries.

### SUMMER

*[Must be worn for the summer term and first half of the autumn term]*

#### EYFS/Key Stage 1

Green gingham check dress, **\*bottle green cardigan or jumper**, White socks **must** be worn.

Grey tailored shorts or tailored trousers, **\*white polo shirt**, **\*bottle green jumper**

Grey or black socks **only**.

#### Key Stage 2

Green gingham check dress (compulsory for Year 3 & 4)

and/or **\*white polo shirt** with grey skirt (Year 5 & 6 have option of both).

**\*bottle green cardigan or jumper**,

White socks **must** be worn.

**\*white polo shirt**, Grey tailored shorts or tailored trousers,

**\*bottle green jumper**,

Grey or black socks **only**.

#### N.B. Items marked \* must have the school badge embroidered on the garment.

Shoes need to be sensible black leather (not boots) with soft soles or leather sandals (black or brown). Black trainers are not permitted. We do not like lights or toys in the shoes so please bear this in mind when you are purchasing any new shoes. Incorrect or inappropriate uniform will be flagged up in the new term by putting a gentle reminder sticker in your child's home school diary. Please help support us in achieving greater consistency, smarter presentation and a sense of pride – thank you.

A reminder - jewellery can cause problems in school due to Health & Safety requirements. Children may wear an inexpensive named watch to school providing it is not too big or colourful and they will not be distracted by wearing it. Smart watches are not permitted in school. Smart watches can cause issues with data protection and data security if these devices are trying to access our school Wi-Fi or have the ability to record and/or capture video or audio. 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. Children's hair should not be coloured or have patterns shaved into it.

## Rock UK & Kids Inspire Charity Day

You will remember that our CATS Reps organised and held our School Charity Day – 'Wear Your Heart on Your Sleeve' on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026. We encouraged our children and staff to wear as many different colours as possible in return for a 'hearty' donation! Thanks to your generosity and support I am delighted to report that the school raised a very impressive total of **£697.26** (£680.76 in cash & £16.50 via our PAYDIT QR codes) for our two chosen charities! Thank you for all your generosity and support.

## St Patrick's Day – 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026

We will be celebrating St Patrick's Feast Day on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March!



On this day 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....

In 2026, Lent and Ramadan began on the same day, **Wednesday, February 18th**, marking a rare, significant convergence of Christian and Muslim fasting periods. This alignment, not expected to recur for decades, sees both communities observing periods of intense spiritual reflection, self-discipline, and charity simultaneously.

### Key Details for 2026

- **Start Date:** Both Lent (Ash Wednesday) and Ramadan are expected to begin on February 18, 2026.
- **Significance:** This rare, overlapping, and, for many, once-in-a-lifetime, occurrence is celebrated as a moment of "solidarity" and shared spiritual dedication between the two faiths.
- **Duration:** While Lent continues for 40 days (plus Sundays) leading up to Easter on April 5th, 2026, Ramadan lasts 29–30 days.
- **Cultural Context:** This alignment also coincided with the Lunar New Year.

This shared time for reflection, prayer, and fasting is seen as a time of unity, with many communities holding special events.



In the coming weeks we will be sharing with you the new school dinner menus for the summer term which will begin after the Easter holiday. Please look out for this information and remember to return your menu choices as soon as possible.

I wish you all a wonderful weekend – see you on Monday!

Mr D. Moran  
Headteacher

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)

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