

# ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CE JUNIOR SCHOOL

*"Realising the potential of every child within a caring, Christian community"*



## NEWSLETTER

4<sup>th</sup> November 2022



It was wonderful to welcome back our children on Monday morning after what I hope was a relaxing half term break. It is always a joy after the October half term to see the return of winter uniform with pristine white shirts and school ties on display. I know that as a school we take great pride in our appearance and presentation both in school and when out in the local and wider community. Thank you for continuing to support our high expectations and school uniform policy. A few children do not have school ties on or are wearing school ties with polo shirts. If you need a school tie they can be ordered and paid for through ParentPay and we will

give the tie directly to your child. All children must be wearing collared white shirts with their top buttons done up so you can clip on your tie. Let's see if next week we can have 100% correct school uniform!

This half term will inevitably be another busy one in the life and work of our school. As we begin the month of November we will be focussing on the theme of remembrance and observing the local and national acts of remembrance next Friday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2022. We have also asked for your support this week with Operation Christmas Child and it has been very impressive to see families purchasing the flat packed boxes from the School Office with some being returned already. I do hope that across both the Infant and the Junior Schools we can bring some joy to a child's Christmas and allow them to learn more about the birth of Jesus Christ.

### Parents' Evening

We were thrilled to have 92% of our parent community sign up for parents' evening this week through our online virtual platform, SchoolCloud. Over the course of the two evenings we enjoyed the opportunity to meet with you and discuss the successes of your children and their achievements since the beginning of this academic year. I know the teaching staff really enjoy these opportunities and developing stronger links between home and school. I do hope you were able to share some of the feedback with your child and demonstrate how proud you are of their enthusiasm and efforts. Many thanks for your continued support.

### Staffing Update

Over the next couple of weeks we will be saying goodbye to two members of our support staff as they move on to new adventures and experiences.

**Mrs Rashpal Sharpe** will be leaving us next Friday as she prepares to relocate with her family and leave the Brentwood area. Mrs Sharpe has had a long and successful association with our school working in many different year groups alongside many different children. Mrs Sharpe did leave our school for a short period of time but missed us so much she returned for a second stint! I am sure you will join me in thanking her for her care, dedication and loyalty and wish her every success for the future – we will miss her.

**Miss Amy Marsh** will be leaving us on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November as she moves on to a new position as a Nursery Nurse. Miss Marsh has been a committed and longstanding member of our Midday Assistant team and has also undertaken some Teaching Assistant work in her time with us. I know she is excited to be taking on this new role and we wish her every success and happiness at her new setting. I know the staff and children will miss seeing her in school every day.

### Challenging MND

Over the past 2 years we have been supporting the children's chosen charity Challenging MND. Each year the children choose a charity, facilitated through the House Captains and CATS reps, and consider how they can plan and deliver a variety of fundraising events. Due to the impact of the pandemic and the fact we were unable to hold many of the planned activities due to restrictions we extended our support for Challenging MND in to a second year.



Yesterday we were delighted to welcome Alex Gibson and Liane, the CEO of Challenging MND, to collect our final fundraising cheque. Thanks to your hard work and support we were able to hand over a cheque for £4,145 – which is an amazing achievement. Both Alex and Liane spoke about how this money will make a positive difference to those suffering from motor neurone disease. As a way of saying 'thank you' back to the children Challenging MND kindly provided a red wristband to every child in recognition of what they had achieved. We took the opportunity to take some photographs of this occasion – a lot of happy, smiley faces!



Now we turn our attention to this year's charity. After much debate, deliberation and moral dilemmas the children have voted to support **Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital (GOSH)**. I know this is a charity close to many people's hearts and in the past we have had children from within our own school community who have benefitted from their expert care. As we move through this academic year there will be lots of opportunities to support GOSH and I hope you will give generously to this very worthy cause.

## The Royal British Legion - Poppy Appeal 2022

As we move in to the month of November we always turn our thoughts and prayers to 'remembering' and the act of remembrance. This is our chance to remember before God all those men, women and children who have been affected by war or conflict, both in this country and around the world, as well as mark the ultimate sacrifice made by service men and women. As in previous years we will once again be supporting the work of the Royal British Legion and making poppies available to the children and adults for a modest donation. These will be on sale from Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November up to and including Friday 11<sup>th</sup> November. The House Captains will be visiting each classroom after lunch every day to collect donations and distribute poppies – a minimum donation of 50p is suggested. It would be a fitting tribute if on 11<sup>th</sup> November every child in school was able to wear their poppy with pride.

The Royal British Legion have also supplied us with some further items that can be purchased to support their charitable work. The House Captains, supported by the School Office staff, will be taking charge of these items on sale alongside the poppies, beginning on Wednesday. Below is a list of the items on sale:

- Poppy zip pull – 50p
- Poppy silicon wristband – £1.00
- Poppy snap band – £1.50
- Poppy reflector – 50p

If you would like your child to purchase one of these items then please bring in your money to school. Please send in the correct money as we are unable to provide change. Stock is limited so once they're gone, they're gone!

Many thanks for your support.



## Keep Safe - Firework Safety

This weekend some of you may be enjoying Bonfire Night fireworks at home or attending an organised firework display. The Essex County Fire & Rescue Service have issued some good advice to help everyone stay safe while enjoying fireworks, so please read their top tips on firework safety:

### The Fireworks Code

- Only buy fireworks marked CE.
- Don't drink alcohol if setting off fireworks.
- Keep fireworks in a closed non-flammable box.
- Follow the instructions on each firework.
- Light them at arm's length, using a taper.
- Stand well back.
- Never go near a firework that has been lit. Even if it hasn't gone off, it could still explode.
- Never put fireworks in your pocket or throw them.
- Always supervise children around fireworks.
- Light sparklers one at a time and wear gloves.
- Never give sparklers to a child under five.
- Keep pets indoors.
- Don't set off noisy fireworks late at night and never after 11pm.



### Bonfire Safety

- Site the bonfire well away from houses, garages, sheds, fences, overhead cables, trees and shrubs
- Never leave the bonfire burning unattended
- Build the stack so that it is stable and will not collapse outwards or to one side
- NEVER use flammable liquids - paraffin or petrol - to light the fire
- Don't burn foam-filled furniture, aerosols, tins of paint and bottles
- Keep everyone away from the fire - especially children, who must be supervised at all times
- Pour water on the embers before leaving

## Mobile Phones

Please can I remind all parents and children, particularly those in Year 6, that the Junior School has a **no mobile phone policy** for children which has been determined and agreed by the Governing Body. Children must not bring mobile phones to school and if found or seen they will be confiscated and kept in the School Office and a parent/carer will be contacted to come and collect the mobile phone. This policy applies when your child is on the school premises and we should not be seeing children using mobile phones before/after school whilst on the playground. Thank you for your continued support.

## Year 2-3 Admissions for September 2023

The process for Year 2 to Year 3 transfers for Year 3 admissions into junior schools for September 2023 requires that parents of current Year 2 children at an infant school need to make a formal application to the Local Authority and can do this via their website [www.essex.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.essex.gov.uk/admissions).

The junior admissions round opens on **7<sup>th</sup> November 2022**, for parents of children to apply for a junior school (Year 3) place for September 2023.

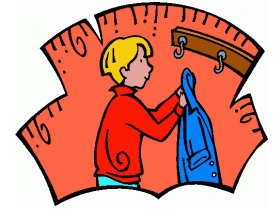
The statutory national closing date for applications is **15<sup>th</sup> January 2023**.

Next week I will be writing to all the parents of children currently in Year 2 of the Infant School explaining the importance of making this application through the Local Authority. However, if you know of parents who are in this position please can you remind them of the importance of making this application before the deadline.

In the week commencing 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022 we are looking forward to welcoming some of these parents as they visit the school for our Year 2 Parent Tours. This is an opportunity for them to learn a little more about the school and to see the school in action over the course of the afternoon.

## Coats!

With the colder, wet weather now starting to appear I would like to give a general reminder about coats. Rather worryingly, we still have a growing number of children who seem to come to school without a coat. Many of you may arrive by car in the morning but the children still need a coat in school to wear at morning break and lunchtime. Please ensure your child has a coat in school every day and that it is clearly named. The staff are constantly reminding children to put their coats on during the day and we hope by wrapping up we can prevent coughs and colds developing. Thank you.



## Finally....

Sadly we received communication from the Secretary of The Brentwood County Ground Club this week to raise concerns regarding parents and carers from the schools in Sawyers Hall Lane using their private car park to drop off and collect children. A Parent Hub message was sent out on Wednesday morning which I would ask you to take note of. Please help us to respect our neighbours and the local community.

We are continuing up to the end of November 2022 to welcome visitors for parent tours of the Infant School for prospective parents and carers who have a child due to start school in September 2023. Already we have welcomed a good number of families who are considering St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Infant 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 Infant School Office and book in for a tour – we would be delighted to see them!

You should have received a Parent Hub message this week with details of the annual flu immunisation session for children taking place on **Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022**. Please can we encourage all parents/carers to use the electronic flu consent form which was attached and complete this online for your child to receive the vaccine. Please contact the School Office if you have any questions or queries.

Many thanks to all those children and families who supported our 'Wear Your Wellbeing' fundraising day before half term in aid of Kids Inspire. Between the two schools we raised a grand total of **£699.20**

During half term our harvest donations for the Brentwood Foodbank were collected on behalf of both the Infant and Junior Schools. As you can see from the picture, there was a generous 'harvest' to share – thank you for your support!



Have a great weekend!

**Mr D. Moran**  
Headteacher

**And...** please remember if you have any questions or queries or comments feel free to contact us: [admin@stthomasjnr.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stthomasjnr.essex.sch.uk)