

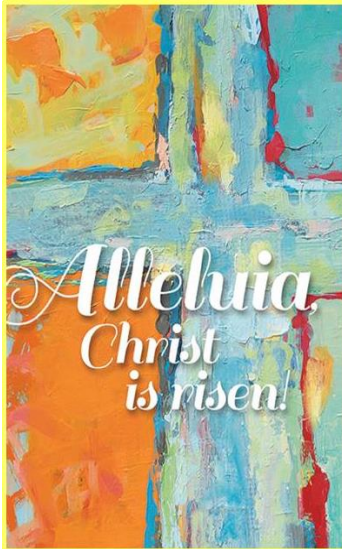
ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CE JUNIOR SCHOOL

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



NEWSLETTER

21st April 2023



A warm welcome back to the Summer Term and I do hope you all had a wonderful Easter break. It is always a treat to return for the summer term with lighter mornings, longer hours of daylight, warmer weather (hopefully?!) and a chance to enjoy and make the most of our superb school grounds. As we journey through this season of Eastertide we rejoice at the new life around us and reflect upon the real story of Easter and proclaim the news of the risen Lord –

Alleluia, Christ is risen. He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

The term ahead looks as busy and exciting as ever with lots going on and lots to look forward to. Next week we will issue the 'Dates for the Diary' sheet detailing the events and activities taking place this term. At present there are just a few finishing touches and dates/details to confirm. Please keep it somewhere safe and refer to it as necessary. Please remember that all newsletters and key communication from the school appears on the school website (www.stthomasjnr.org) and are also sent electronically via Parent Hub.

This half term we will be thinking very much of our Year 6 children as they complete their end of Key Stage 2 assessments (SATs). We are very confident that they will approach these with confidence, determination and resilience and demonstrate their true potential and the progress they have made over their time in the Junior School. Good luck to everyone involved!

We will endeavour to keep you up to date and fully informed through use of Parent Hub, the school website and fortnightly newsletters. Please take the time to read them as a great deal of time and effort goes into preparing them. Thank you for your continued support and encouragement and we look forward to working with you in partnership over the coming term.

Summer Uniform – Reminder!

It was wonderful to see all the children returning on Tuesday morning in their summer uniforms with some lovely new, crisp white polo shirts on display. By the end of the week almost 100% of children were in correct and approved summer uniform – thank you! Nobody should now be wearing a school tie and collared shirt (winter uniform), but following the school uniform guidance clearly displayed in your child's homework diary. We have had to mention to a number of boys about the colour of their socks – these must be black or grey only (NOT white or patterned).

Can I also remind you that girls who wear hairbands/clips..etc. must wear them in the approved school colours and they must be of a size that they do not become a distraction or hinderance to themselves or others. Children with long hair are also required to have this tied back and away from their face. We expect our school uniform to reflect our high expectations across the school and we thank you for your support in this matter. As we notice children wearing incorrect uniform they will get a reminder sticker placed in their homework diary.

School Crossing Patrol Service

Please read the following safety message on behalf of the School Crossing Patrol Service:

Pedestrians – Would pedestrians please refrain from crossing Sawyers Hall Lane from the corner of Highlands Avenue and before they arrive at the crossing site to cross with the patrols assistance. Crossing between waiting cars is very dangerous and especially for the unaccompanied children who are following the adults who cross before they get to the patrol. For the safety of everyone please always cross with the patrol – thank you.

Drivers in cars that are stationary focus their attention on waiting for the vehicle in front to move and are not expecting pedestrians to approach from the sides of their vehicles when they are queuing. This practise can cause accidents. This also makes the role of the patrol more difficult as the patrol should only have to

worry about pedestrians at the crossing site. Whilst pedestrians are still weaving between waiting cars, they are unable to release the traffic which then causes other unsafe practices. For safety, please cross with the patrol at the designated crossing site as this will enable traffic to pass the crossing site more quickly.

Drivers – Drivers must stop attempting to overtake vehicles who have stopped for the crossing patrol. Vehicles are then on the wrong side of the road when traffic is released causing gridlock and further delays and puts the crossing patrol in danger. Thank you.

Sharon Wallace

School Crossing Patrol Co-ordinator for Brentwood, Billericay, Basildon & Castle Point

Staffing Update

After 19 years at the school **Mrs Linda Cornwell** has decided that it is time to enjoy a well-deserved retirement and has resigned her Teaching Assistant (TA) position at St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School from the end of this half term.

I know this has been a very difficult decision to say goodbye to our school family and we are very grateful to Mrs Cornwell for her care, commitment and love of the school. She is now looking forward to enjoying her retirement and celebrating her 40th wedding anniversary later this year! I am sure you will join me in wishing her every happiness for the future.

Year 6 SATs



As we draw closer to the month of May, which for all primary schools is a very important month, the children and staff continue to work very hard in preparing for the statutory Key Stage 1 assessments taking place and Key Stage 2 SATs tests that are just around the corner. As a Junior School we have been working exceptionally hard to prepare our Year 6 children for these tests. I am confident

that the staff and children will approach SATs Week, commencing on 9th May 2023, with determination, confidence and faith in their own abilities.

I would ask you to keep them all in your thoughts and prayers. I am sure you will join me in wishing them good luck and every success in their final preparations ahead of the real thing.

Year 5 – Confirmation Classes

It was wonderful to see **30** of our Year 5 children who have now started confirmation preparation classes on Wednesday after school with Fr. Mark. I think this is our largest group to date and all are excited at taking this next important step in their journey of faith. Our weekly class-based Eucharists have really given all our children an opportunity to explore, question and become confident with the sacrament of the Mass and I think this is a key factor in seeing so many children wanting to be confirmed.

These candidates are now preparing to be confirmed at St Thomas of Canterbury Church on Sunday 9th July 2023 and will receive the sacrament of confirmation from Bishop Norman, the Bishop of Richborough. Over the coming weeks these children will continue to complete confirmation preparation classes with Fr. Mark and revisit their baptismal promises and understanding of their faith. I hope you will be able to pray for these children and their families at this very special time.

Summer Term Clubs/ Extra Curricular Activities

Please find attached to this newsletter the new clubs and extra curricular timetable for the **Summer Term 2023**. At this stage we can confirm these clubs but additional ones may become available later on in the term as staff have more time to offer. I would like to thank all the staff and volunteers who are willing to give of their time and expertise for the children of our school. I hope you will encourage your children to offer their appreciation, not only in words, but also through their attendance and dedication. Should you have any queries or concerns, please arrange to speak with the Club Leader. Thank you.



PTA Donation – Thank You!

At St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School we are certainly blessed to have such a proactive and well organised PTA. This is down to the hard work of the PTA Committee, ably assisted by a team of willing volunteers over the course of the academic year. I am sure all of your children have attended or enjoyed one of these events and a lot of time, effort and energy goes in to putting these on!

Recently I have written to the PTA Committee to request funding for 32 new iPads, iPad protective covers and charging trolley. This totals **£9,890 + VAT**.

I am delighted to report that the PTA Committee have agreed to fund this request and we have now ordered the new devices and equipment to further improve and enhance our technology in school. These new iPads will be added to our existing stock and complement our other devices, such as the PCs in the Computing Suite. Thanks to your support and the generosity of the PTA we are able to ensure all our children and staff have the best access to the most up to date technology. Thank you!!

Coronation Celebrations for King Charles III

The Coronation of Charles III and his wife, Camilla, as King and Queen of the United Kingdom and the other Commonwealth realms will take place on Saturday 6th May 2023, at Westminster Abbey and will be conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Charles acceded to the throne on 8th September 2022, upon the death of his mother, Queen Elizabeth II. The Coronation will reflect the monarch's role today and look towards the future, while being rooted in longstanding traditions and pageantry.

To commemorate this historic event we are asking all the children and staff to wear red, white and blue clothing to school on **Friday 5th May 2023**. Over the course of the day we will be exploring the significance of the events taking place over the Coronation weekend, and in the afternoon we will be bringing all the children from both the Infant and Junior Schools together to take part in some activities in mixed age groups in and around the school premises. This will also involve a simple act of collective worship with the singing of the National Anthem and prayers.

We are praying for fine weather on this day so we can also make use of our school grounds to allow all the children from both schools a chance to play and socialise with each other. We will also be making sure that each child has a special Coronation cake to eat made by our own catering team. Please start searching out your red, white and blue items so we can be really patriotic!!



Finally....

Early next week you will receive (via Parent Hub) the new Lower and Upper School Curriculum Guide for Parents for the Summer Term. Please have a look through this with your child to see the exciting areas they will be exploring over the course of this term. Hopefully you will be able to identify some ways in which you can support their knowledge and understanding at home – and bring this in to school to share!

As always we are looking forward to working in partnership with you over this new summer term and thank you in advance for your trust, commitment and support of the school.

Enjoy the 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@stthomasinr.essex.sch.uk