

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY
CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

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



NEWSLETTER

2nd October 2026

It was lovely to see St Thomas of Canterbury Church full of our Key Stage 2 children, staff, parents/carers and other visitors this morning. Our first visit to the church for this academic year and for some of our Year 3 children perhaps their first experience of being in this beautiful building. As always, we were given a warm welcome by Fr. Mark as we came together to celebrate our Harvest Eucharist. At this time of year many services are held to give thanks for all the farmers who work so hard all year round to help grow, produce and supply the food that many of us take for granted. This year we are being asked to embrace and promote an '**Attitude of Gratitude**' as farmers and the rural communities continue to struggle with drought, excessive temperatures, poor crop yields and the challenge of cheaper imported food.



Once again, our Harvest Appeal will be in support of the **Brentwood Foodbank** and there are details later on in this newsletter about how you can support their very important work.

In order to allow our younger children to celebrate Harvest, we would also like to extend an invitation to all parents/carers who would like to join us for our second Harvest Eucharist taking place next week. The **EYFS/Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 Harvest Eucharist** with Fr. Mark will take place at 9:15a.m. in the KS1 Hall on Friday 9th October 2026. You are very welcome to join us for this very special service of thanksgiving.

As always, there is a lot to digest in this newsletter – some for information, some for action. Please do take a careful note so you are able to take a full and active role in school life.

Ofsted Report – Congratulations!

I hope by now you have had the opportunity to read and reflect upon our Ofsted report following our school inspection on 14th & 15th July 2026. The inspection recognised St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Aided Primary School as providing a **strong standard of education**, with particular strengths in **achievement, inclusion, and personal development and wellbeing**. Inspectors praised our pupils as being "highly responsible", "proud of their school", and "highly motivated to learn and achieve highly".

This report is a wonderful recognition of the hard work and dedication of our staff, Governors, children, and families. We are especially proud that inspectors highlighted our nurturing ethos, the high-quality support provided for all pupils, and the positive relationships that help every child feel safe, valued, and successful.

Thank you to those parents/carers who have offered messages of congratulations. We were also delighted to receive an email of congratulations from Carrie Prior, Director of Education at the Diocese of Chelmsford. She said:

I wanted to send my warmest congratulations to you, your staff team and governors on the outcome of your Ofsted inspection.

The report reflects a school where children are flourishing academically, personally and spiritually. I was particularly pleased to see the recognition given to the school's values, strong sense of belonging, commitment to inclusion, and the way pupils speak confidently about the school's Church of England ethos and the importance of kindness and respect. These are hallmarks of a thriving Church school community.

This outcome is testament to the leadership, dedication and care that you and your team show every day. Please pass on my thanks and congratulations to everyone involved.

Warm regards

Carrie Prior
Director of Education

One Way Please!



When arriving at the **EYFS and Key Stage 1** entrance each morning it is very important to keep the flow of pedestrian traffic moving to get the children in to school safely and quickly and allow parents/carers to complete the one-way 'loop' and get on with your busy day. For this reason we would ask you to have done your goodbye routines and given your child their book bag/lunchbox...etc. before you get to the second pedestrian gate. This will avoid clogging up the loop and having parents and children backing up on the path.

If your child is using their scooter to travel to and from school can I also ask that they park their scooter against the fence of the scooter park rather than leave it in the middle of the gravelled area or immediately inside the gate. It is wonderful to see so many children scooting to school but the scooter park is becoming very congested and some children have tripped on abandoned scooters. The scooter park is plenty big enough to accommodate the number of scooters arriving on site – you may just need to walk a little further in order to park safely and responsibly!

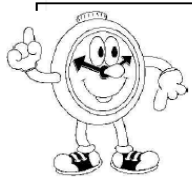
Don't Be Late!

Nobody likes to be late. Arriving late is often embarrassing, puts a spotlight on the late arrival and also causes unnecessary disruption to all the other people who have arrived on time. This is exactly the same scenario when your child arrives late for school.

Over the past few weeks we have become increasingly concerned at the number of children arriving late for school. We fully appreciate that on the odd day there may be a situation beyond your control that contributes to lateness – but this should be the exception to the rule! Children arriving late are often anxious coming in to school and do not experience the positive start to a school day we all desire.

It is also disruptive to the rest of the class and classteacher who are settled to their early morning routines and eager to get their learning underway. Please can I ask that all parents/carers respond to this reminder and ensure that **ALL** children arrive to school on time every day. Punctuality is just as important as attendance and is a good life skill and habit to instil in our children from a very early age. Please also see below for some useful reminders about the impact of poor attendance and punctuality!

Punctuality - Why does it matter?



When your child arrives late at school, s/he misses the classteacher's instructions and the introduction to the lesson.

Your child may also feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late! Being late for school has a huge impact on your child's learning, progress and confidence.

As a parent/ carer you are responsible for ensuring your child is in school

Minutes late per day during the academic year	Equals days worth of teaching lost in a year
5 minutes	3.4 days
10 minutes	6.9 days
15 minutes	10.3 days
20 minutes	13.8 days
30 minutes	20.7 days

Frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning lost and can seriously disadvantage your child.

School begins at 8:55a.m.

Please help your child to be punctual - THANK YOU!



Congratulations!

During collective worship earlier this term, I had great pleasure in presenting badges to those children in Year 6 who have been chosen to take on positions of responsibility this year as House Captains, Sports Captains and Music Captains. I am sure you will join me in congratulating these children on achieving these prestigious positions in school and we look forward to seeing them developing in these roles and being outstanding role models for St. Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School.

The Year 6 children chosen were:

HOUSE CAPTAINS

ST GEORGE-	Amaya Manani & Blake Norford
ST DAVID-	Mabel Shacklady & Darcy Dallaway
ST PATRICK-	Ellie Carr & James Shackleton
ST ANDREW-	Harriet White & Paul Leroyer



SPORTS CAPTAINS

Albert Laws & Harper Benham

MUSIC CAPTAINS

Grace Connolly & Ami Iwajomo

MH Ambassadors 2026-2027

This year we are delighted to be continuing with children's Mental Health Ambassadors in our Primary School with Key Stage 2 children taking on these positions of responsibility. This term our new Year 4 MH Ambassadors are receiving training to become peer mentors, by teaching them strategies to create positive mindsets, which they can share within our whole school community. The MH Ambassador team will meet regularly to develop ways to disseminate their learning to children and families of St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School. I am sure you will join me in congratulating the following children on their new and exciting role in school:

Jessica Iacoboi (NEW)	Antonia Pop
Isaiah Roberts (NEW)	Lola Egalton
Irfan Rahman (NEW)	Ines-Imani Khan
Rebecca Durrant (NEW)	Joey Hardwicke
Anna Zhrebina (NEW)	James Shackleton
Toby Stevens-Meyrick	William Hunneybel
Sophia Kinsey	Vrinda Vavilikolanu
Aleena Rahman	



Worship Team

In addition to the above, we also have two children from each Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 class who have been proudly elected to serve on the Worship Team in the role of Worship Leaders. These children will be tasked with assisting with collective worship opportunities in their classrooms, maintaining and developing the class 'Sacred Spaces', seeking opportunities for prayer and praise as well as helping to co-ordinate the evaluation and development of whole school collective worship through the use of Worship Appreciation Books. This will be a pivotal role in continuing to strengthen and enhance our Christian distinctiveness and spirituality. I am sure you will join me in congratulating the following children on their new and important role in school:

1S – Jacob Nunn & Mia Phillips
1M – Jaivik Chintal Sandeepa & Mila Baikova
2B – Eliana de Los Santos Garcia & Ronnie Heath
2BN – Robyn Whitfield & Harris Higgins
2NT – Henry Clarke & Keiley-Anne Egan-O'Connor

3P – Nathan Murphy & Alice Madden
3CA – Sophia Habershon-Hall & Svojas Kumar



4Ba – Emmie Phillips & Bella Whiting
4Bu – Pemi Ilesanmi & Theo Smith
4S – Zane Mutwiri & Emmanuella Ikpada

5WC – Jessica Wright & Samuel Goode
5S – Caroline Bright & Darcey Port
6S – Lucy Willard & Isla Saggars
6M – Annabelle Tomlin & Jimil Patel
6SP – Jessica Joseph & Arabella Silkman

C.A.T.S 2026-2027

Since the last newsletter we have also been busy choosing the Children Able To Speak (CATS) who have been successfully nominated and elected by their peers to represent their classes this year. The CATS members (School Council) will be involved in charitable work as well as decision making this year and be used to share and express their opinions about our primary school. This is a very privileged position and one which comes with great responsibility. Below are the names of the children who make up our new CATS group. Congratulations to:

Key Stage 1

2B – Florence Tarten & Phoebe Eldridge 2BN – Avneet Dhothar & Courtney Lee

2NT – Tomisin Simeon & Naylane ben Chaabane

Lower Key Stage 2

3P – Eva Taran 3CA – Emilia Price 4Ba – Isla Carr
4Bu – Frankie McDowell 4S – Musa Matikiti

Upper Key Stage 2

5WC – Samuel Dingley 5S – Beau Goodwin 6S – Max Hutchinson
6M – Elliott Osborne 6SP – Abraham Cristescu

Urgent Reminder – NO NUTS!

This is a repeat reminder from the previous newsletter about the importance of maintaining our school as a nut free environment. This week we have noticed a few children who have items in their lunchboxes which contain products that potentially could have nut products in them. This has been particularly the case for new children starting in Reception.

We are proud to be a healthy school and promote healthy lifestyles and diet for all our children. Please can we ask you to support us in this matter and remember that under **no circumstances** should children be bringing in food items that contain nuts. We have a number of children across our school with severe allergies to nuts so please **do not** send in any snack or packed lunch items that obviously contain nuts. Thank you for your co-operation.

Eco-Warriors

All of us will be aware of the regular reminders about how our world is being affected by climate change and challenges on sustainability. We often talk to the children about the concept of stewardship and how we are commanded to look after and respect God's creation.

I am delighted to inform you that we have now chosen our new Eco-Warriors who will focus on what we can do as a school community to be more sustainable and eco-friendly. This committee of 'Eco-Warriors' are already setting out what they wish to achieve to make St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School more eco-aware. This year's Eco-Warriors are:



1S – Isaac Hall
1M – Maelieh Roberts
2B – Phineas Smith
2BN – Jorge Heelis
2NT – Leo Bishop-Riza

3P – Noah Medland
3CA – Harper Brown
4Ba – Willa Shacklady
4Bu – Sophie Kato
4S – Davyd Didovych
5WC – Lek De'Milia
5S – Daisy Whiting
6S – William Hunneybel
6M – Amelia Shorter
6SP – Lola Egalton

I am sure you will join me in congratulating these children on their new positions of responsibility as they get to work in and across our school.

IMPORTANT - Contact Details



It is vitally important that the school holds all current and up to date contact details for every child on roll in case of needing to contact you in emergencies. Recently it has come to light that some contact details, especially mobile telephone numbers, are out of date or not working. Please can I ask you to make sure that all contact details we hold for you are up to date. If you have recently changed mobile or landline numbers, or moved house we must be informed as soon as possible to ensure we hold the correct details. If you need to inform us of recent changes please use the **Arbor app** which links directly with our education management information system (MIS). From here, you can check all your child's confidential information, contact details and inform us of any changes that need to be made.

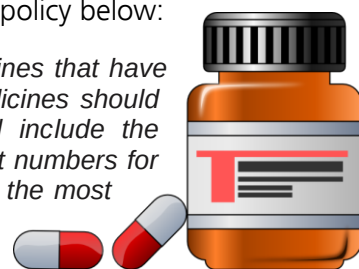
The new statutory guidance for schools 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE)' came in to force on 1st September 2026. One aspect of safeguarding that is very clear in this document is that schools need to have more available emergency contacts for children. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 says that schools should have at least two emergency contacts for every child in the school in case of emergencies, and in case there are welfare concerns at the home. Thank you for your support in this matter.

For your information our Child Protection Policy has also been updated to reflect the new KCSIE 2026 guidance and this policy and Part 1 of KCSIE can be found on our website.

Administering Medicines in School

At the beginning of a new academic year we always like to take the opportunity to remind parents/carers of the school policy on administering medicines in school. I would particularly urge ALL parents to take note of this information. The full policy adopted by the Governing Body can be accessed via the school website. You will also find a copy of the 'Administering Medication Form' which can be downloaded, completed and returned to school. Can I please draw your attention to the extract taken from the policy below:

"St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School can only accept medicines that have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse prescriber or pharmacist prescriber. Medicines should always be provided in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacist and include the prescriber's instructions for administration. Office staff will seek new up to date contact numbers for all those pupils in need of medicine. We will only guarantee medicine will be given to the most serious of cases – in these cases it is good practice to ask parents and pupils to be involved in reminding the office staff.



Medicines will be stored in a secure cabinet during the day or a staffroom fridge where necessary.

Parents/Carers should make arrangements to collect the medicine from the school office at the end of the day unless alternative arrangements are made with the school staff. Medicines will not be handed to a child to bring home.

We will only administer non-prescribed drugs (e.g. Calpol) where parents/carers have brought in the medicine and signed a consent form."

It is very important that all parents/carers adhere to these guidelines. We do experience a number of parents/carers who hand in medicines without the original container or instructions for administration. Please help us to implement our policy for the safety of your children and the protection of our staff. The School Office may refuse to accept medicines brought into school.

Harvest Appeal Collection 2026 – ‘Attitude of Gratitude’

As in previous years, our Harvest Appeal collection of gifts will be to support the **Brentwood Foodbank**. Unfortunately, the number of people in our local community who require emergency food are still incredibly high. During the first half of 2026, Brentwood Foodbank has provided 1,132 emergency food parcels to people who can't afford essentials. Feeding 2,946 people, of whom 1,131 were children.

Brentwood Foodbank is part of the Trussell Trust network of foodbanks and they help local individuals and families in crisis through the provision of emergency food supplies donated by churches, schools, businesses and the general public.

Your Harvest donation would be immensely valuable in enabling them to provide short-term emergency food to people in crisis in our local community.

The **Brentwood Foodbank** **urgently** need the following items:

Tinned spaghetti & sausages	Tinned hotdogs
Tinned corned beef	Tinned tuna
Tinned sardines	Tinned macaroni cheese
Tinned custard	
Pasta sauces (jars)	Squash (drink)
Shower gel	Shampoo



I do hope that every child can bring in at least one item on this list. I am sure we are all able to put one or two extra items in to our shopping trolleys and baskets to help those that are less fortunate than us and live out our ‘Attitude of Gratitude’.

We will be pleased to accept your donations between now and the half term holiday when we will arrange for the items to be delivered to the Brentwood Foodbank. Please send items in to school with your child and they will be collected in their classrooms by their classteachers. Please be mindful of use by/sell by dates and ensure they have a long enough expiry date to be used by the Brentwood Foodbank. Thank you for your support in this matter.

Finally....

In the final newsletter of the 2025-2026 academic year (20th July 2026), I was delighted to share with you the grand total raised for our two chosen charities – **Rock UK** and **Kids Inspire**. After a final, final count up that total is now **£5,046.56!**

Next week, whilst some of our Year 6 children are at the Rock UK Summit Centre in South Wales, we will be taking the opportunity to present in-person their money following our charitable fundraising last academic year. The children will be presenting a cheque for **£2,523.28**.

We will also be inviting representatives from Kids Inspire to visit us again very soon, so we can also present them with their half of the fundraising total.

REMINDER...Once again may I remind all parents of children in **Year 6** that your Secondary School applications need to be completed and returned to the Local Authority by **31st October 2026**. Applications can be made online via www.essex.gov.uk/admissions. 98% of parents in Essex applied online last year. I am sure you all have this in hand and are busy visiting various Secondary Schools at this time.

We have been incredibly impressed with how the new academic year has got underway. Thank you for your continued support and partnership. Together, we have much to celebrate, and we look forward to building on our continued successes in the year ahead.

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.



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stthomascofeprimary>



Instagram: @stthomascofeprimaryschool

And...please remember if you have any questions or queries or comments feel free to contact us:
admin@stthomaspri.essex.sch.uk