ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY
CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

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

NEWSLETTER

6th November 2026



Welcome back after what I hope was a wonderful half term break last week!

It is always a real joy after the October half term to see the return of winter uniform with pristine white shirts and school ties on display in Key Stage 2. 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 in Key Stage 2 do not have school ties on or are wearing school ties with polo shirts or shirts with the incorrect collar. 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 in Key Stage 2 must be wearing collared plain 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…and don't forget to tuck your shirts in!

Thank you to everyone who has already sent in a shoebox for the Operation Christmas Child appeal. We have witnessed a growing number being carried into school and carefully stored in the classrooms and corridors over the past few weeks. Our collection date has now been confirmed as the week commencing 16th November 2026, so please do keep sending in your donations to ensure they get to vulnerable children ready for Christmas.

This morning we were in attendance at the Brentwood & District Branch of The Royal British Legion Schools' Remembrance Service when our Year 6 House Captains and Year 2 CATS Reps laid a wreath and class crosses on behalf of St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School. It was a fitting tribute and allowed us to pay our respects to our local heroes.



As always there are a number of important reminders in this newsletter regarding up and coming events and I hope you will respond to them accordingly. Please remember that the vast majority of the correspondence we send out to you is always freely accessible via Parent Hub or from the school website, so if you think you may have missed a letter, please visit www.stthomaspri.org or check your Parent Hub channels.

Parents' Evening – Thank You!

We were thrilled to have **90%** of our parent/carer 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 continuing to develop stronger links between home and school. I do hope you were able to share some of the positive feedback with your child/ren and demonstrate how proud you are of their enthusiasm and efforts. Many thanks for your continued support.

Open Classrooms – 10th November 2026



We are very excited to be inviting you to our 'Open Classrooms' opportunity as previously advertised on our 'Dates for the Diary' sheet. 'Open Classrooms' for parents/carers will be held on **Tuesday 10th November 2026** from 3:30p.m. until 4:15p.m. This is a wonderful opportunity for you to view your child's working environment, see where they sit and marvel at the displays within the classroom. The classteacher's will also be present to answer any questions you might have about the work on display. You will also get a chance to look at some of your child's exercise books (English and Maths) to see the work they have completed to date. It is not an opportunity to discuss academic progress and attainment as this will have been covered during parents' evening.

This is an open invitation with no designated appointment times and I'm sure your child will relish the opportunity to proudly show you around their classroom. Please remember to wait on the playground until 3:30p.m. Unfortunately we are not able to admit any pushchairs due to health and safety/fire regulations.
We look forward to seeing you!

Staffing Update

We are delighted to welcome **Miss Jenna Thompson** to our Learning Support Assistant team this half term. Miss Thompson was already an important member of our Midday Assistant (MDA) team, but has now extended her roles and responsibilities into our LSA team and providing additional support for our children with identified special educational needs. I am sure you will join me in congratulating her on her new post and wish her every success as she settles into this role.

Sadly, we will be saying a fond farewell to **Miss Katy Forder** at the end of this term as she prepares to leave our school community at the end of December. Miss Forder will be preparing to embark upon a new and exciting chapter in her life as she relocates to Scotland! As you can imagine, we are deeply saddened that we will be saying goodbye to such a valued and dedicated member of our school family.

Miss Forder's connection with St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Primary School is truly unique. Having been a pupil here and then serving the school in a variety of roles over the past nine and a half years, contributing enormously to the life of the school and becoming an integral part of our community. From her early days volunteering through to her current responsibilities in administration, finance and SEND support, she has always approached her work with commitment, care, professionalism and good humour.

I am sure you will join me in wishing Miss Forder every happiness and success in Scotland. In the coming weeks we will be starting a recruitment process for a new Finance Assistant and SENCo Support Assistant to take up post in the New Year.

CHANGE OF DATE: EYFS/Key Stage 1 Christmas Eucharist

Due to unforeseen circumstances it has become necessary to change the date of the EYFS/Key Stage 1 Christmas Eucharist from the date previously communicated on our 'Dates for the Diary' sheet circulated at the beginning of the autumn term. The new date for the EYFS/KS1 Christmas Eucharist is now **Thursday 17th December 2026**, starting at **9:15a.m.** Please do change this on your calendars/diaries to avoid disappointment. We do hope that many of our parents/carers and other visitors from EYFS/KS1 will be able to join us for this festive act of worship.

Coats!



With the colder, wet weather starting to appear on a regular basis, I would like to give a general reminder about coats. Rather worryingly, we still have a growing number of children across the primary school 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.

PLEASE REMEMBER – PUT YOUR CHILD'S NAME IN ALL THEIR SCHOOL CLOTHING!!!

Reception Admissions for September 2027

As you may be aware, the primary school (Reception) admission round opens on **Monday 9th November 2026** for parents/carers of children to apply for a Reception school place for the academic year that starts in September 2027. Even if you have a sibling at our school already, you still need to apply if your child is due to start in Reception in September 2027.

The statutory national closing date for applications is **15th January 2027.**

From 9th November 2026, applications can be made online via www.essex.gov.uk/admissions. 99% of parents/carers in Essex applied online last year. All of the application information is available from this website.

The website www.essex.gov.uk/admissions also has a copy of the Primary Education in Essex 2027-2028 booklet and the Schools Admissions Policies Directories contain details of all admission policies.

Health & Safety

At this time of year we are blessed with an explosion of vibrant autumn colours, as the leaves change into shades of red, orange and yellow. This also means they fall from the trees! Mr Powis spends hours of time each day clearing the leaves within our school boundary to ensure it is tidy and free from slip hazards. Each autumn he literally clears tonnes and tonnes of leaves!

Sadly, this attention to safety does not always extend beyond our school gates, and I am aware that some parents/carers have raised concerns about the slippery pavements in Sawyers Hall Lane due to the wet leaves that have collected on the ground. Please take care when arriving and leaving school each day, especially as the afternoons get darker. We have reported our concerns to Brentwood Borough Council in the hope that they may be able to help clear the leaves making it safer for pedestrians, both adults and children. If you share the same concerns I would suggest you report it via the Council online portal too.

Finally….

Early next week we are aiming to send out information about our various **Christmas productions and performances** at the end of this term. This will include details about dates, times and ticket allocations. Please look out for this letter…coming soon!

…..Be Bright, Be Seen!

As darker evenings arrive, the Safer Essex Roads Partnership's "Be Bright, Be Seen" campaign urges parents/carers to discuss road safety with all children, particular 11 and 12-year-olds who are increasingly travelling independently to secondary school. The initiative encourages bright clothing, safe crossing habits, and awareness of distractions such as mobile phones and peer pressure.

Thank you for your continued support and trust in our school.

Have a good 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.

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:
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