

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CE JUNIOR SCHOOL

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



NEWSLETTER

8th October 2021

**BE STRONG
AND
COURAGEOUS**
JOSHUA 1:9

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1: 9)

I found myself reciting these words in my head on Tuesday afternoon as, along with 18 children and 6 adults, I crawled into a very small space as I entered a cave complex deep in the Brecon Beacons. Not something I would rush to do again! However, I am delighted to report that the Year 6 children have taken every challenge in their stride this week whilst they have been away to the Rock UK Summit Centre in South Wales. They have had an amazing time away on our Year 6 residential trip and certainly packed a lot into a relatively short space of time. The Rock UK centre and staff have been amazing, the scenery has been stunning, the weather changeable, but nothing has dampened their spirits and I am confident each and every adult and child who has attended this week will have forged friendships and memories which will stick with them for a long time to come. We await the arrival of our Year 6 children later today and I am fairly sure there will have been quite a bit of sleeping on the journey home!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Year 6 parents and carers for trusting us with your amazing children. Also a huge thank you to all the school staff and volunteers who have been away this week looking after the children and keeping them safe. It is always a pleasure to be part of these residential experiences but is also extremely tiring. I am sure everyone will sleep well over the weekend and can have a well-deserved lay in tomorrow morning!

Next week we prepare to wave off our Year 5 children as they depart on Wednesday morning for their residential trip to Letton Hall, Norfolk.

Finally I would like to remind you that we are still collecting harvest produce and items for the **Brentwood Foodbank** and very much rely on your support to ensure we have a generous amount to donate. At present we have a growing but modest amount of food items in each class and would urge you to try and pop a few extra items in your shopping basket or trolley. We will continue collecting harvest donations up until the end of this half term (22nd October). So if you have not yet donated – it's not too late!!

Parents' Evening 2021



Our Autumn Term Parents' Evenings 2021 will once again be conducted virtually via video appointment in line with our continued COVID-19 protective measures, systems of control and risk assessment. This is to ensure the safety of our parent community and that of our staff.

Our previous experiences of using virtual video appointments for Parents' Evening shows a greatly increased attendance rate and the ability to ensure the meetings are conducted in a timely and efficient manner. It also means you can join from the comfort of your own home without having to come back to the school on a cold, damp autumn evening. We do plan to have face-to-face Parents' Evenings in the Spring Term 2022.

We will be facilitating our virtual video appointments for Parents' Evening using a purpose built platform provided by **SchoolCloud**. On Monday we will be sending out further details via Parent Hub about how this will work and how you go about booking video appointments with your child's classteacher. Appointments will be available on Wednesday 20th October and Thursday 21st October 2021 between 4:00p.m. and 7:30p.m. The appointments will be kept strictly to 10 minutes per child.

You will be sent instructions about how to book and log in to these video appointments where you will be able to see and speak to your child's classteacher to discuss how your child has started the new academic year 2021-2022, their progress so far, any gaps that are apparent in their learning and how we can work together to best support their continued achievement over the course of this academic year. As well as your child's classteacher there will also be an opportunity for those children supported through our special educational needs (SEND) provision to meet with Mrs Watts our SENCo.

As with our face to face appointments children must not attend these virtual video meetings as it is important that they are conducted in a professional manner and parents and classteachers can have discussions without interruptions and maximise the limited time. The meeting should be conducted in a quiet environment free from distraction.

If for any reason you are unable to access the video appointments on offer I would ask you to contact the School Office so we can discuss an alternative option.

School Stationery Shop

We often have children who have items missing from their pencil case either because they have been lost or broken. It is very important that all children are properly equipped for school each day and have the correct equipment to be able to access their learning. In order to help alleviate this problem we are reinstating our School Stationery Shop with a range of essentials that are competitively priced.

The shop will be open every week on a **Wednesday** during morning break (10:30-10:45a.m.) Mrs Dansey will 'man' the shop and be very happy to assist your child in purchasing any of the items below. Please ensure children bring in cash only and the correct money where at all possible. We do not have lots of change!

Glue Stick	75p
Whiteboard Pen	35p
Pencil	10p
Handwriting Pen	25p
150mm Ruler	10p
Rubbers	10p
2-hole Pencil Sharpener	55p
1-hole Pencil Sharpener	10p

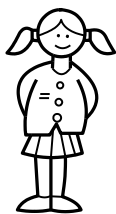


PTA Donation – Thank You!

I am delighted to be able to share with you that we have received an extremely generous donation from the PTA of £6,500 towards the purchase of another class set of iPads to improve and extend our technology offer to your children. This money will allow us to expand our iPad provision to three whole class sets which will enrich our computing curriculum as well as support other cross-curricular links. Without the support of the PTA and your attendance at PTA events this level of funding would not be possible and I am extremely grateful for this act of generosity.

On behalf of all the children, staff and Governors of St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School I would like to say a huge THANK YOU!! We will be placing the order for our new iPads next week and look forward to seeing them in use very soon.

REMINDER - School Uniform



With the autumnal weather starting to make an appearance it is time to start getting ready for the colder winter months ahead. I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that after the October half term holiday all children must be wearing winter uniform. This means all children wearing ties and white shirts with collars. Girls need to wear grey skirts or pinafores. Boys need shorts or trousers – also in grey. Boys need to wear a green jumper with the school crest on. Boys socks **must** be grey or black only – white socks are not

acceptable. Girls can wear a green jumper or green cardigan – again with the school crest on. Girls tights should be grey, green or black. Shoes need to be sensible black leather with soft soles. We do not like lights or toys in the shoes so please bear this in mind when you are purchasing any new shoes, especially from Clarks.



Jewellery can cause problems in school due to Health & Safety requirements. Children may wear an inexpensive watch (no Smart watches) to school providing it is not too big or colourful and they will not be distracted by wearing it. 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. We prefer boys to have short hair. Children's hair should not be coloured or have patterns shaved into it.

Advent Calendars 2021



Once again we are excited to be joining up with St Thomas of Canterbury Church to offer you the opportunity to purchase 'The Real Advent Calendar' which includes a free Christmas story activity book. These advent calendars from The Meaningful Chocolate Company are a great way to share the true Christmas story and have a new design for 2021. These are not available to purchase in the shops so this is a wonderful opportunity to get your hands on one!

If you wish to purchase one at **£4.50** each then they are available to order via Parent Pay. Orders must be placed by Monday 1st November 2021 and will be distributed in school after half term.

Healthy School – Healthy Snacks

We are proud to be a healthy school and promote healthy lifestyles and diet. We encourage you to send in a healthy snack for your child to eat at morning break. The vast majority of children do bring in a piece of fruit or healthy cereal bar. However recently we have observed a few children who are not eating a healthy snack! Please can we ask you to support us in this matter and remember that under **no circumstances** should children be bringing in crisps, chocolate, chocolate covered snack bars or sweets. It is also worth pointing out that a number of fruit based snack products marketed in the main supermarkets contain a very high sugar content and are probably not as healthy as you might think! The classteachers will be reminding the children about what constitutes a healthy snack.

Can I also remind you that we have a number of children with severe allergies to nuts so please **do not** send in any snack items that obviously contain nuts. Thank you for your co-operation.

Finally....

IMPORTANT REMINDER - As you are well aware, the statutory closing date for applications from parents of Year 6 children (for a secondary school place in Year 7 from September 2022) is **31st October 2021.**

I would like to remind any parents of Year 6 children who have yet to submit an application, that they must do so by 31st October 2021.

Applications can be made via the Essex website www.essex.gov.uk/admissions

You might also find it useful to watch the following link: <https://youtu.be/Q0a8fi06WKY>

Thank you for your continued support this term and I would ask you to keep the life and work of our school in your prayers.

Mr D. Moran
Headteacher