

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CE JUNIOR SCHOOL

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



NEWSLETTER

25th March 2022



I am sure we have all been enjoying the wonderful weather this week and making the most of the sunshine! Signs of spring are rapidly emerging after the long winter months and generally we all start to feel much better and more positive as the season of spring stretches out ahead of us. This Sunday (27th) is Mothering Sunday and I hope everyone has their plans well advanced as to how they are going to treat their mums and other special adults who undertake mothering duties. Our PTA Mothering Sunday Sale held on Thursday was a great success and some very discerning shoppers picked up some wonderful gifts which I hope will be secretly hidden away until Sunday. Thank you to the PTA Committee and all the volunteers who helped plan, organise and run the event in the school hall.

Despite it being Mothering Sunday this weekend the clocks change so don't forget to move your clocks forward by one hour at 1a.m. on Sunday 27th March 2022 as Daylight Saving Time/British Summer Time starts. Unfortunately that does mean we lose an hour in bed - this seems rather unfair on all our mums so please try and let them have an extra lie in on Sunday morning!!

As we prepare to break up for our Easter holiday next Friday (1st April) I am sure we are all looking forward to a good rest and a couple of weeks away from school. This term has been yet another challenging time and has once again tested our resolve. On Wednesday we reached the second anniversary of the initial National Lockdown and a 'Day of Reflection' encouraged us to remember the personal sacrifices, loss and adjustments we have all had to make since March 2020. Many of these sentiments are experienced and echoed at Easter. We look with hope to the Easter story - Christ descending into the depths of despair before returning in love and glory - can offer a way of holding onto hope when there is uncertainty and change all around.

"I have come in order that you might have life – life in all its fullness." (John 10:10)

Staffing Update

Following an internal recruitment process I am delighted to inform you that **Mrs Clare Emery** has been appointed as our new School Librarian. Mrs Emery is very enthusiastic about taking on this new role in school and continuing the wonderful work undertaken by Mrs Forder as well as introducing new and exciting ideas and events to further develop our library environment. Mrs Emery will also be assisting Mrs Coughtrey with our regular library drop in sessions that take place at lunchtime and encouraging all children to complete the St Thomas' Reading Tree Challenge. Our aim is for every child in school to at least complete the Bronze Award (reading 5 books across 3 different branches of the tree). Each week we see a growing number of children meeting this milestone as well as those who have moved on to Silver and Gold Awards...we await our first Platinum Award!! In this 'Essex Year of Reading' please, please do encourage your child to engage with this school based challenge – thank you!

We have added to our Teaching Assistant (SEND) team this week and are delighted to welcome **Miss Catherine Allix** to our school community. Miss Allix will be supporting in Year 4 and join our existing team of wonderful Teaching Assistant staff. I am sure you will make Miss Allix feel very welcome as she takes on this new post and adjusts to the various roles and responsibilities.

Sadly, **Mrs Natasha Hodges** has announced her resignation from our Teaching Assistant (SEND) team and Midday Assistant (MDA) team and will leave St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School at the end of this term – her last day in school will be Friday 1st April 2022. Mrs Hodges is moving on to a new role at Becket Keys Secondary School and I am sure you will join me in congratulating her on this exciting new adventure as she prepares for a new challenge. Equally, I know you will want to express your thanks for her dedication and commitment to our school in the time she has been here. She will be sorely missed by our school community.



School Uniform – Final Reminder!

I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents that **after** the Easter break all children must be wearing summer uniform as set out in the school prospectus. The Governing Body continue to uphold high expectations by regularly reviewing and tightening up the uniform policy and we would request that all parents adhere to this. From the beginning of the summer term all children must wear summer uniform as set out in the school prospectus and homework diaries.

All girls in Year 3 & 4 must wear the green checked gingham dresses as part of regulation summer uniform. Girls in Year 5 & 6 may choose to wear either the green checked gingham dresses or a white school polo shirt with logo with a grey skirt.

Boys need a white school polo shirt with logo and shorts or trousers – also in grey.

Shoes need to be sensible black leather shoes (not boots) with soft soles or leather sandals (black or brown). Black trainers are not permitted. 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. Incorrect or inappropriate uniform will be flagged up in the new term by putting a gentle reminder sticker in your child's homework diary. Please help support us in achieving greater consistency, smarter presentation and a sense of pride – thank you.

A reminder - jewellery can cause problems in school due to Health & Safety requirements. Children may wear an inexpensive named analogue or digital watch to school providing it is not too big or colourful and they will not be distracted by wearing it. Smart watches are not permitted in school. Smart watches can cause issues with data protection and data security if these devices are trying to access our school Wi-Fi or have the ability to record and/or capture video or audio. No bracelets, rings or necklaces are permitted.

Parents' Evening – 30th & 31st March 2022

Thank you to all those parents/carers who have accessed SchoolCloud and booked your parents' evening appointments for next week. If you have yet to make your appointment you have until 6:00p.m. this evening to do so – don't miss out!

It is very clear from monitoring the appointment booking system that there is still an appetite for remote virtual appointments and our decision to make available hybrid appointments has proved to be well supported. Please remember that each date (Wednesday 30th & Thursday 31st) have been split into two blocks of appointment types. Face-to-face meetings will run between 4:00 – 5:30p.m. with remote virtual appointments between 6:00 – 7:30p.m. Whether you choose to attend virtually or in-person the appointment time will be strictly timed to **10 minutes**.

If you are arriving for a face-to-face appointment you will need to enter via the main School Office reception entrance. From here you will be able to make your way to your child's classroom – the appointments are **NOT** taking place in the school hall. Don't worry if you are not sure where to go – there will be someone to guide you in the right direction! Please do not arrive too early for your appointment – 5 minutes beforehand should be enough. When you arrive if the appointment slot before you has not concluded we would ask you to sit on the seats provided outside the classroom and wait for the classteacher to invite you in. Once your appointment has finished you can exit the school via the main entrance.

Children must not attend in-person or virtual video meetings as it is important that they are conducted in a quiet, professional manner and parents and classteachers can have discussions without distraction and interruptions, maximising the limited time. I hope you have had sufficient time to arrange necessary child care if needed. It is very unfair on parents who do make these arrangements when others attempt to bring their children along. Please be respectful towards others and I thank you for your support in this matter.

Lent Eucharist

We are delighted to be going to St Thomas of Canterbury Church on **Friday 1st April 2022** to celebrate our Lent Eucharist with Fr. Mark – we do hope you will be able to join us! The Eucharist service will start at 9:30a.m. As always we would greatly appreciate any help you may be able to give in escorting children safely to and from the church. If you are able to walk with your child's class then please speak to your child's classteacher for further details and information. I am sure it will be a lovely service allowing us to reflect upon our journey through Lent and look forward to the glory of Easter Day.



Local Authority Governor Vacancy

The Governing Body of St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School have a vacancy for a Local Authority appointed Governor on the Full Governing Body. This is a wonderful opportunity for someone to play a strategic role in supporting and developing the school whilst representing the views of the Local Authority.

The Governing Body, with the Headteacher, has overall responsibility for the running of the school. No special qualifications are needed and the most important thing is to have a keen interest in our school and be prepared to play an active part in the work of the Governing Body. I do hope that you will give this opportunity some serious consideration. If you have any questions then please do not hesitate to contact me via the School Office.

If this opportunity is of interest to you and you would like to nominate yourself for consideration then please put this in writing and email to clerk@stthomasjnr.essex.sch.uk

Red Nose Day – Thank You!



Last Friday (18th) was Red Nose Day and St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School has always been at the heart of this event. Our boundless energy and imagination (led by Miss Pullin) always make this day what it is and inspire so many of us to take part. Once again the enthusiasm and effort this year was truly extraordinary!

The total raised so far for Red Nose Day 2022 is: **£719.09**

The money raised for Red Nose Day will help some of the most vulnerable people in society find safety and support – and turn their lives around.

We are very grateful for your support with this event – thank you!

HM The Queen – Platinum Jubilee

The Queen's Green Canopy is a unique tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 which invites people from across the United Kingdom to "***Plant a Tree for the Jubilee***".

Through the Woodland Trust, we managed to obtain a community tree pack which we have now planted at the bottom of the school field to mark this prestigious event. On Monday 14th March our CATS representatives successfully planted 15 tree saplings with both myself and Mr Powis on hand to assist the children – and add some weight to the digging! Donning their welly boots the children really got in to the spirit of this event and we very much hope, over time, that the trees will grow and flourish. We discussed how the children will probably have children of their own by the time they are fully matured!

It was wonderful to have our children participating in this special event to create a legacy in honour of The Queen's leadership of the Nation, which will benefit future generations.



Finally....

A few reminders...

- As mentioned at the beginning of this newsletter, the clocks change this weekend so don't forget to move your clocks forward by one hour at 1a.m. on Sunday 27th March 2022 as Daylight Saving Time/British Summer Time starts.
- There are a few parents who have still not returned school dinner menus for after the Easter holiday. If you are intending for your child to have a school dinner in April then this must be returned as soon as possible.

Thank you for all your continued support over the course of this term.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life.” John 3:16

Have a great weekend – Happy Mother's Day!

**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**