

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY
CE JUNIOR SCHOOL

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

NEWSLETTER



21st July 2021



It feels very surreal for me to be writing the final newsletter of this academic year, which on the one hand seems to have flown by, and on the other, was even more challenging than the previous year. When I think back to the summer of 2020, I don't think any of us would have concluded that on our return in September we would be starting what has turned out to be an even more challenging and difficult year, trying to operate our school within the continued global pandemic. In this last newsletter I have to mention and commend every member of our wonderful staff for their collective courage, bravery,

tenacity and sheer determination that has shone through on behalf of our children, families and wider school community. They have all been a true inspiration and remain, in my eyes, definitely the unsung heroes of this pandemic.

As we finally reach the school summer holiday I realise how difficult the past 18 months have been and the sacrifices that all families, education and childcare settings have had to make. This has been an enormously challenging time for everyone and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for everything you have done to support us.

Staffing Update

There are a few final staffing updates to bring to you ahead of the summer break.

I am delighted to announce that we have now successfully appointed a new Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) to join the school staffing structure. Following a rigorous recruitment process earlier this term we are delighted to welcome **Mrs Gail Djemal** to her role as HLTA. Mrs Djemal will be joining us in September and take on responsibility for providing cover for regular planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time for our teaching staff. She will also work closely with our SENCo, Mrs Joanne Watts, in planning and delivering intervention programmes for our vulnerable children and those supported through our SEND provision. I am sure you will all make Mrs Djemal feel very welcome as she prepares to join our school in the new academic year.

Sadly we will be saying a fond farewell to some further members of our teaching assistant staff who leave us today. They will remain in our thoughts and prayers:

Mrs Bernie Eyo will be leaving to take on the post of Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) at another school. We are very sorry to see such a respected and well established member of our support staff moving on but I am sure you will wish her continued success as she takes this next exciting step in her career.

We will also be saying goodbye and good luck to **Mrs Kate Wilson**. Mrs Wilson is leaving to pursue an exciting opportunity away from education and once again I am sure you will join me in thanking her for her dedication and service to our school. I am sure she will take with her many fond and happy memories.

Finally, we will be saying goodbye to **Miss Aisling Smyth** as she leaves her post as Teaching Assistant working in Year 6. However, we will be welcoming her back next term in a different capacity as she begins her teacher training through the Essex & Thames Primary SCITT. Miss Smyth will complete her first placement at our school and we are looking forward to supporting her as she pursues a career in primary teaching.



Congratulations!

It was wonderful to join virtually (via Zoom) the two services at St Thomas of Canterbury Church on Sunday morning to see twenty five of our Year 5 (and one Year 6!) children receive the sacrament of Confirmation from Bishop Norman. It was a lovely service at which the candidates were able to confirm their baptismal promises and profess their faith in Jesus Christ. During the service Bishop Norman calls them by name, lays hands upon them and anoints them with the Oil of Chrism.

Please hold these newly confirmed candidates in your prayers:

Sophie Sharp	Ryan Baron	Isabella Crawford	Dylan Watters
Florence Drake	Thomas Farel	Jackson Fisher	Dylan Haylor
Drew Hodges	Dolly Humphrey	Rohan Keith	Christian Ludwig
Finley Morrell	Louie Newnham	Samuel Northcott	Tiffany Osemwekhae
Erin O'Reilly	Abbey Snow	Scarlett Stevenson	Ava Sweeney
Charlie Tasker	Poppy Taylor-Smith	Nathan Tilden	Rose Tucker
Grace Weeden			



Thank you

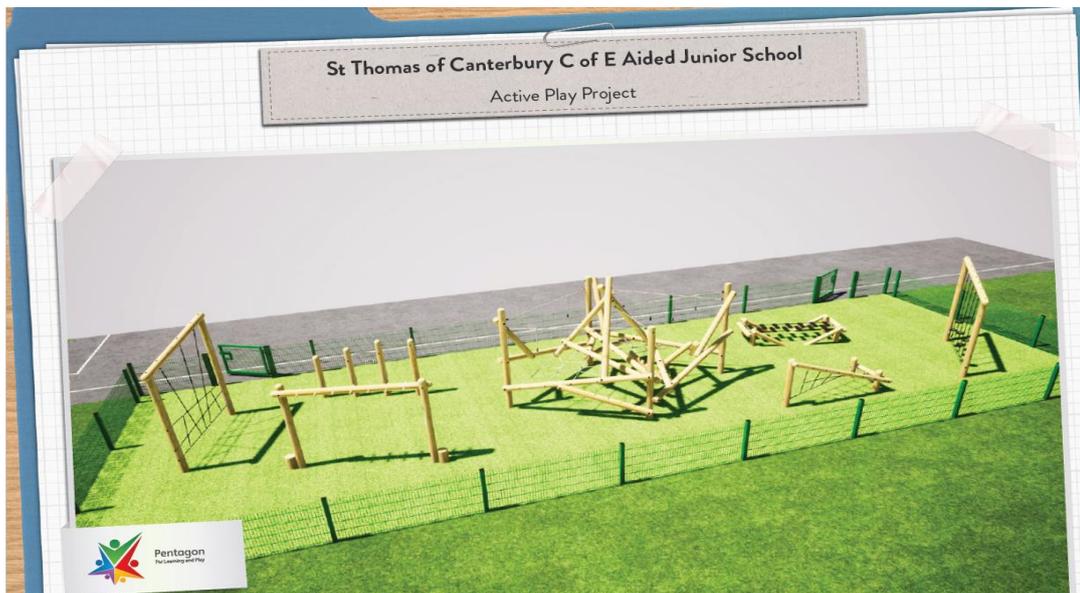
After a long and distinguished career at St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School we have said a sad farewell to **Mrs Terry Ashby** as she looks forward to a well-deserved retirement. Mrs Ashby has a long association with our school both as a parent and a member of staff and I know this is an emotional time as she leaves our school family. I know Mrs Ashby has experienced many changes during her time at the school and I hope she is able to take many fond and happy memories with her.

Mrs Ashby has very generously donated a new bench (pictured below) which will be installed over the summer break. It is a bench which encourages friendship and helping people resolve their differences in a mature, understanding and empathetic way. We will be locating it next to our new piece of active play equipment (details below). I am sure the bench will prove a valuable addition to our outdoor area and remind us of Mrs Ashby and her contribution to the school.



New Outdoor Equipment

As we prepare to break up for the end of the academic year I thought I would whet your appetite for the new one starting in September. Over the summer holiday period we will be installing a new Active Play Project. Funded through the Sport Premium Grant as well as our own delegated budget we are very excited to see this new equipment being installed ahead of the new academic year. Below is an image of what we hope the finished project will look like. This will be situated adjacent to the Upper School playground and timetabled for all children to use on a rolling rota across the week. I can't wait to try it out!!



School Dinners - REMINDER

Following our Governing Body meeting held on Wednesday 7th July 2021 and subsequent discussions at the Finance & Premises Committee meeting this term, I am writing to inform you that the cost of school dinners will increase from September 2021. The cost of school meals has remained unchanged since the reintroduction of hot school meals many years ago.

From September 2021 the cost of school dinners will be **£2.35** per day (£11.75 per week).

I am sure we have all seen the cost of our own weekly food shopping increase in recent years so this modest increase will help us continue to provide high quality nutritional hot meals to your children. From September Parent Pay will be adjusted accordingly and I would remind you to ensure your lunch account is kept in credit. School dinners must be paid for at the time they are taken.

The current 2-week rolling menu will continue in September 2021. We will return in September, (Thursday 2nd September) on **WEEK 1** of the menu.

New menus will be created and ready for after the October half term at which point we will return to a 3-week rolling menu.



Finally....

Thank you to all those who joined us at St. Thomas of Canterbury Church for our Leavers' Eucharist this morning to celebrate the passing of another school year – what a year it has been! It also gave us a fitting opportunity to say goodbye and good luck to our Year 6 children as their time at St. Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School draws to a conclusion.

As this is the last newsletter of this academic year I would like to pass on my thanks, and the thanks of all the staff, for your support and trust over the course of this year. It has been another very challenging but very successful year and I hope you and your children get an opportunity over the summer holidays to reflect upon the many positive experiences, challenges, progress and achievements which have been made.

Wishing you and your family a well-deserved, safe and happy summer holiday!

Mr D. Moran
Headteacher