

# ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CE JUNIOR SCHOOL

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



## NEWSLETTER

7<sup>th</sup> January 2022

### Happy New Year!



May I take this opportunity on behalf of everyone at St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School to wish you a very Happy New Year! I do hope 2022 has got off to a good start?

I hope that you all managed to enjoy a very well deserved rest over the festive period and, more importantly, that you and your family stayed safe and well. Sadly, I am acutely aware that many family Christmas plans were put on hold or even cancelled due to the rising number of COVID-19 cases over the Christmas break. COVID-19 continues to be a virus that we learn to live with and the imperative to reduce the disruption to children's education

remains. Our priority is to continue delivering face-to-face, high quality education to all pupils. The evidence is clear that being out of education causes significant harm to educational attainment, life chances, mental and physical health. That said, we continue to manage staff absences related to COVID-19 often at short notice. We are doing everything possible to maintain staffing levels to ensure we can deliver the high quality education you expect from our school. We maintain a strategic overview of our staffing structure and deployment but may have to make staffing changes if we come under continued pressure. Thank you for your continued support and understanding in these challenging and uncertain times.

New 'Schools COVID-19 Operational Guidance' was also issued at the beginning of January 2022 and thankfully, for primary school settings, there is little material change to what we were experiencing before Christmas. In addition, we have also seen announcements with regard to testing and particularly related to confirmatory PCR tests following a positive lateral flow device test. This change has caused some confusion but hopefully the information below from the Department for Education (DfE) and the Local Authority will be useful.

On a more positive note, on Thursday we were able to bathe in the light and joy of the Epiphany; where simply being in the presence of Jesus provides the hope and trust needed to navigate the year ahead with joy. *"With gold of obedience and incense of lowliness, kneel and adore him, the Lord is his name!"*

Despite the continued challenges we are all facing the staff and I look forward to your continued support, trust and confidence over the coming term and hope once again we can continue to work in collaboration and partnership with you and your children.

### Update Regarding Positive Lateral Flow Device (LFD) Testing

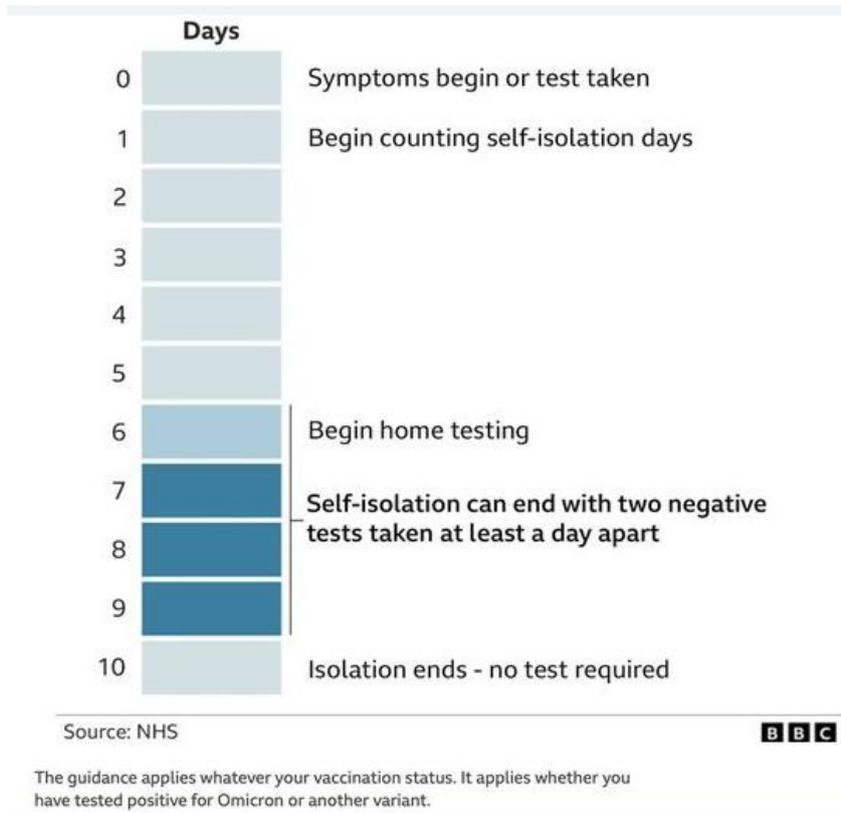
The requirement for confirmatory PCR tests is to be temporarily suspended for positive lateral flow test results. From Tuesday 11 January 2022, in England, people who receive positive lateral flow results for COVID-19 will be required to self-isolate immediately and will not be required to take a confirmatory PCR test. This is a temporary measure while COVID-19 rates remain high across the UK. Whilst levels of COVID-19 are high, the vast majority of people with positive LFD results can be confident that they have COVID-19.

Anyone who develops one of the three main COVID-19 symptoms (high temperature, loss of smell/taste, new continuous cough) should stay at home and self-isolate and take a PCR test. They must self-isolate if they get a positive test result, even if they have had a recent negative lateral flow test - these rules have not changed.

Under this new approach, anyone who receives a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test result should report their result on [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) and must self-isolate immediately but will not need to take a follow-up PCR test. After reporting a positive LFD test result, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace so that their contacts can be traced and must continue to self-isolate.

In line with the reduced self-isolation approach announced on 22<sup>nd</sup> December, anyone who tests positive will be able to leave self-isolation 7 days after the date of their initial positive test if they receive two negative LFD results, 24 hours apart, on days 6 and 7.

The DfE guidance has also been updated in line with the UKHSA announcement, and clarifies that children can return to school after day 7 if they have had two negative LFD tests. The flowchart below may be useful in interpreting this guidance.



## Staffing Update

As we start this new spring term, I am delighted to welcome two new members of staff to St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School. **Ms Victoria Myers** has been appointed to our teaching staff team and is covering regular PPA time across the school for two days a week. **Miss Claire Hedman** has been appointed to the teaching assistant team within Year 3. Both of these names may already be familiar to you and your children as they worked on a regular basis across the autumn term. I am sure you will make them feel very welcome as they continue in their respective roles within our school.

In addition, we also welcome **Mrs Melanie Tucker** who has been appointed as an additional tutor to deliver one-to-one tuition and targeted intervention work as part of our catch-up programme within school.

I am sure many of us had some lovely gifts and surprises over the Christmas period. **Miss Sarah Pullin** was certainly one of those as she got engaged to be married on Christmas Day!! I am sure you will all join me in congratulating Miss Pullin and her fiancée (Mark) as they take this exciting next step in their relationship and start planning for a wedding in the future. It is a joy to have such uplifting news to share at this time and I am sure you will all pray for God's blessing on their future plans.



Finally, a reminder that **Mrs Chloe Moran** has now taken up the permanent post of SENCo from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 and her working days are Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

## Essex & Thames Primary SCITT

We are delighted to be continuing our partnership with the Essex & Thames Primary SCITT. This partnership involves the school working with Essex & Thames Primary SCITT to help train and produce high quality teachers. The continuing improvement of pupil progress and the well-being of children are at the heart of this collaboration and inform all aspects of the training. There is also a close relationship between the SCITT, Christ Church Canterbury University and the school which provides an ideal environment for the exchange of ideas that informs practice across the partnership. As part of this work we have welcomed two SCITT students this term, Miss Gabrielle Chambers and Mrs Donna Pollard who will be on placement with us for the spring term. Miss Chambers will be based in Year 5 and work closely alongside Miss Berner in 5B. Mrs Pollard will be based with Mrs Pritchard in 4P. I am sure you will join me in welcoming both to St Thomas' Junior School and wish them every success on their placement with us.

## Curriculum Information Leaflets for Parents – Spring Term 2022

Hopefully by now you will have received, via Parent Hub, a copy of the new Spring Term 2022 curriculum information guide for parents. These are produced by teaching staff as a guide and indication of the themes and topics being covered this term. Please take the time to read this through and discuss it with your child. We hope it will give you some ideas about how you can support your child's learning and homework. We would highlight and promote the opportunities to research curriculum themes at the local library, via the internet or by visiting a museum. The most important thing is to talk to your child and find out what they have been doing and learning. Copies of this guide will also be available via the school website under the 'Curriculum' tab. If there are any aspects of the work your child is covering which you feel you may be able to offer help or advice with then please approach your child's classteacher. Thank you for your support!

### School Eucharists

The Eucharists for this term are detailed below. In response to parental feedback and comment the Eucharists which will be held before half term will see the Upper School Eucharist taking place at 9:15a.m. and the Lower School Eucharist at 10:45a.m. Many Upper School parents have expressed that it is often difficult to attend when the Eucharist takes place later in the morning so we will endeavour to alternate the earlier time between the Lower/Upper School throughout the academic year.

The **Upper School Eucharist** will take place on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at 9:15a.m. in the School Hall. This service will be celebrated with Fr. Mark.

The **Lower School Eucharist** will take place on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at 10:45a.m. in the School Hall. This service will also be celebrated with Fr. Mark.

The **Preparing for Passiontide Eucharist** will take place on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 at 9:30a.m. at St Thomas of Canterbury Church.

I do hope you will be able to join us for one or both of these services.

### **IMPORTANT REMINDER: Primary School Admissions – September 2022**

For those of you with younger children due to start school in September 2022 now is the time to make your application. This applies to all parents of children born during the period 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018. You can now apply for primary school places between 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 up to and including the closing date of 15<sup>th</sup> January 2022. Please apply online by visiting [www.essex.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.essex.gov.uk/admissions)

There are now new admissions arrangements for Year 3 junior school places. If you have a child at an Essex infant school (Year 2), you must apply for a September 2022 Year 3/junior school place between 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and 15<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

The School Admissions Regulations (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) 2012 requires that all parents of Year 2 children in an infant school will need to make a formal application and submit this to the Local Authority by the statutory national closing date. Offer places will then be communicated to parents by the LA in writing on the national offer day (19<sup>th</sup> April 2022). The application form is available to be submitted online and in a hard copy on request for those parents unable to apply online. To access the online application form please visit [www.essex.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.essex.gov.uk/admissions) selecting 'Apply for a School Place'.

I have previously written to parents/carers of children in Year 2 at St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Infant School with further details of how to navigate these admissions arrangements.

### Finally....

It was my intention to share the 'Dates for the Diary' information for the Spring term with this newsletter. However, we are still awaiting some further information and confirmation so I hope this will be finalised and distributed early next week.

Please continue to support each other at this difficult time and look after your family and loved ones.

**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](mailto:admin@stthomasjnr.essex.sch.uk)