

# ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CE JUNIOR SCHOOL

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



## NEWSLETTER

13<sup>th</sup> January 2023

### 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 rather belated Happy New Year! I do hope 2023 has got off to a good start? I know I have been able to speak to many of you at the Infant or Junior School gates since our return to school and it is wonderful to see this new spring term getting off to a positive start.

Last week you will hopefully have received the letter on behalf of both the Infant School and Junior School Governing Bodies about the proposed amalgamation to form a new primary school. The target date for this is September 2023. This is still in the very early stages of planning and exploration but it is very important that we have your engagement during the various consultation processes. Please look out for further communication in the coming weeks which will also include input from the Local Authority and the Diocese of Chelmsford. This is an exciting time in the life and work of our two schools and any future developments will always have the children at the heart of our decision making. Please pray for all those tasked with taking on this responsibility and pray that the Holy Spirit is in action.

The 'Dates for the Diary' list for this spring term is almost finalised and it is our intention to circulate this on Monday once a few final dates have been confirmed. This will be distributed in the normal fashion via Parent Hub and added to the school website.

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.

### Staffing Update

As we start this new spring term, I am delighted to welcome a new member of staff to St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School. **Mr Daniel Smith** has been appointed to our midday assistant (MDA) team and is now working every lunchtime to help supervise and safeguard our children during this very busy period of the school day. Many of you will be familiar with Mr Smith, who continues to work at Faces and many of the children have enjoyed seeing a friendly face in school. I am sure you will welcome Mr Smith as he embarks on his new role ably supported by Mrs Dansey our Senior Midday Assistant.

### Healthy Schools Award

We all know how important it is to stay healthy – both in body and mind. At St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School we pride ourselves in promoting and developing the children's physical health, through good quality PE lessons and engagement with The Daily Mile, as well as promoting and nurturing good mental health and wellbeing. This is developed through our PSHE curriculum and ably supported this year by our new Mental Health and Wellbeing Ambassadors.

As part of this ongoing work we have recently been successful in self-evaluating and being revalidated against the Healthy Schools Award. This means we can proudly display the Healthy Schools logo on our school website that outwardly celebrates this wonderful achievement. My thanks to Miss Berner, our PE Subject Leader, for guiding us through this process.



## Gift a Book at Christmas – Thank You!

A very big thank you for your kind and generous donations towards the 'Gift a Book at Christmas' scheme 2022. Due to your kindness and generosity, we raised over £350, which has meant that over 80% of the books on our wish list have been ordered. We have also been able to take out an annual subscription for the two periodicals 'The Britannica Magazine' and 'Brilliant Brainz', which the children are very excited about reading. It is wonderful that we can continue to extend the range of good quality titles and genres in our library and I hope your children will be able to share them with you over the course of this term.



## 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, Anglia Ruskin 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 another SCITT student this term, **Mr Philip Van Mellaerts** who will be on placement with us for the spring and summer terms. Mr Van Mellaerts will be based in Year 5 and work closely alongside Mrs Sprake in 5SP. I am sure you will join me in welcoming him to St Thomas' Junior School and wish him every success on his placement with us.

➔ Please see further details at the end of this newsletter about how to get in to teacher training.

## Curriculum Information Leaflets for Parents – Spring Term 2023

Hopefully by now you will have received, via Parent Hub, a copy of the new Spring Term 2023 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 are now 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 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023 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 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at 10:45a.m. in the School Hall. This service will also be celebrated with Fr. Mark.

The **Lent Eucharist** will take place on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 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 2023**

For those of you with younger children due to start school in September 2023 now is the time to make your application. This applies to all parents of children born during the period 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019. You MUST now apply for primary school places as the closing date is THIS SUNDAY 15<sup>th</sup> January 2023. Please apply online by visiting [www.essex.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.essex.gov.uk/admissions)

This also includes 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 2023 Year 3/junior school place BEFORE the deadline of 15<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

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 (17<sup>th</sup> April 2023). The application form is available to be submitted 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....**

On Wednesday and Thursday this week we were invaded by Egyptians as the Lower School children enjoyed a day of exploring life in Ancient Egypt Day. There was a range of activities, challenges and experiences over the course of the day and it was fantastic to see so many children excited and engaged in exploring history. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those parent helpers who came in to assist and be a very valuable extra pair of hands. Thanks to your support the two days ran very smoothly and we are very grateful for the time you gave up to facilitate this.

Please continue to hold the life and work of the two schools in your thoughts and prayers.

Have a wonderful weekend.

**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)



Essex and Thames  
EDUCATION

## Do you want to be a teacher?

Training with us could not be easier! We are currently training around 100 teachers a year in our dynamic partnership of schools.

Our school is proud to work in partnership with Essex and Thames SCITT, one of the country's leading providers of initial teacher training. Providing teacher training for almost 25 years and working in partnership with Anglia Ruskin University, the courses offer excellent value for money and an opportunity to train with some of the very best teachers in the area.

Visit [www.etpscitt.co.uk](http://www.etpscitt.co.uk) for details of all our courses. We'd love to welcome you to our partnership to begin your new career. Just get in touch with us to discuss your options.

Email us at [saffron@ete.org.uk](mailto:saffron@ete.org.uk) or ring us on **01268 988580**. Or apply [here](#).

We look forward to hearing from you.