

# St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Infant School

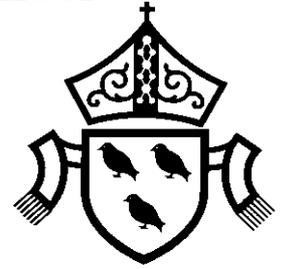
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Headteacher Mrs C B L'Estrange BA Ed (Hons) NPQH



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11<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents,

The Autumn term is certainly under way now and we look forward to our Reception children being in school full-time as from Friday. Here is a reminder of times and ribbon colours for the Reception classes from Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September:

RS	Arrival: 8.50am	Collection: 3.10pm	Blue
RB	Arrival: 9am	Collection: 3.20pm	Pink
RN	Arrival: 9am	Collection: 3.20pm	Blue

Thank you to everyone for your support with our arrival and collection arrangements. Once you have dropped or collected your child from school, please can you keep moving and leave the school premises as quickly as possible. We are staggering our arrival and departure times in order to support social distancing as much as we can; we cannot do this if families remain on the school grounds. Please help us to do this at this critical time.

**Social Distancing Measures** Below is a message to parents from Dr Mike Gogarty, from Public Health (*Director of Wellbeing, Public Health and Communities, Essex County Council*), on the importance of maintaining social distancing whilst waiting outside the school gates / premises:

*'Education settings have been able to return to full-time opening for all students this term, due in large to a reduction in COVID-19 cases in the community. This reduction is thanks to the sacrifices every member of the community made earlier this year, by staying at home, not seeing friends and relatives in person, and maintaining social distancing measures. However, as restrictions have been eased and schools and colleges are now returning full time, we must all remain alert.*

*Schools and colleges have measures in place for pupils attending in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19. They are asking pupils to wash their hands more regularly, restricting time spent in communal areas and, importantly, keeping pupils in class or year group-sized bubbles. This limits the number of people each pupil and staff member comes into contact with in their setting.*

*When travelling to and from settings, we know groups of pupils and parents must arrive at the same time. Schools have put measures in place to aid the safe entry and exit of pupils. These may include queueing systems, one way systems or monitors to oversee arrivals and departures. It is crucial that pupils and parents maintain a two metre distance from others at the school gate. The whole school population, whether on school grounds or off it, must remain vigilant and observe social distancing measures. It is vital we all play our part if we're to avoid a spike in the community and the reintroduction of lockdown measures. I thank you for your support.'*

**Walking Together** Thank you for the lovely 'feet' which have already been sent into school. I look forward to seeing everyone's feet on display in the hall and sharing some photos with you.

**Full re-opening protocol and expectations** Thank you to everyone who has already completed this. This is for all children in our school. There are still a few more families to complete this so, if you have not done this yet, please do so by Monday. Here is the link to the form <https://tinyurl.com/y4h7ymaj> - thank you.

**Allergies and Intolerances** - KS1 (Year 1 and Year 2) Thank you to everyone who has already completed and returned this form. Please can you complete the form at [tinyurl.com/KS1-Allergy-Intolerance-Form](https://tinyurl.com/KS1-Allergy-Intolerance-Form) by Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September. Apologies about the incorrect link last weekend. Reception families - you do not need to worry about this - this form was part of your induction pack of forms. Thank you.

**End of the day arrangements** Thank you to everyone who has already completed and returned the pink forms. Just a few more to come in please – Monday would be fantastic.

**Houses** All the children in the school are allocated one of our four houses named after the writers of the four Gospels – Saint Matthew, Saint Mark, Saint Luke and Saint John. The houses are used for various events and competitions in the life of the school including the punctuality bear, cross-curricular weeks and sports day. Each house also has a specific colour allocated to it - Saint Matthew - green, Saint Mark - red, Saint Luke - yellow and Saint John - blue. Next week the children in KS1 will have a sticker inside their reading diaries reminding you of their house and colour. The children in Reception will come home wearing a sticker indicating their house on Monday.

**St Matthew's Feast Day** Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September is the Feast of Saint Matthew. We invite the children in Saint Matthew's house to come to school wearing something in their house colour – green. They can swap one or more items of their school uniform for something green – socks, skirt, trousers, top etc. During the day, our Worship will focus on Saint Matthew and the children in Saint Matthew's will have a special treat of a drink and cake.

***A few reminders about school life: Learning at home:***

Curriculum updates accompany this letter. These give an overview of the topics which your child will be learning about this half term. Please read them carefully so that you can support your child in their learning.

**Continuing our Learning at Home** Many parents ask classteachers how they can support their child in their learning and make links with their child's work in school. Accompanying the newsletter you will find '*Continuing our Learning at Home*' which gives tasks which can be completed at home to develop the learning taking place in school. Your child is very welcome to bring any of this work into school to be displayed on their class '*Sharing/working at home*' wall. This provides the opportunity for their efforts to be valued. We hope that you will find this useful and that it will be an enjoyable time for you to share with your child. The English focus this week is reading which is a very important part of your child's learning journey. The children in Year 1 and Year 2 have started to bring reading books home this week. Once books have been returned to school, they will be quarantined for 72 hours before going back into circulation as part of our COVID-19 management processes.

**Scooters** If you do leave your child's scooter in our 'scooter park' please ensure that you collect it as you pass by on your way to collecting your children. We really want to maintain our 'moving circle' and it is difficult to do this if parents are re-entering the school grounds. Please can we also remember that scooters are not to be used in the school grounds at any time. This includes the area from the entrance gate on Sawyers Hall Lane and in the car park.

**Birthday Assembly** We had our first Birthday Assembly yesterday via MS Teams. It was lovely for the children to see one another and we were able to introduce some of our new friends in RS, as they had six birthdays to celebrate!

**Birthday Sweets** If you do wish to celebrate your child's birthday by bringing in sweets for their friends, we will still facilitate this at this time, but we will hold the sweets securely in school for 72 hours before distributing them so that everyone will hopefully feel comfortable in taking them home.

**Our School Family Celebrates** There are many things to celebrate in our school every day – the moments when children achieve something they have been striving for, the first time they master using a skipping rope, the moment when a skill clicks or when a text comes alive with expression, that kind word to spur a friend along or a joke to make them laugh. The children work so very hard every day in all areas of school life. We celebrate all these things and many more on a weekly basis with the *Headteacher's Awards*. These awards are very important to all of us and that is why the recipients' names are listed here in the newsletter to mark their achievements. I always enjoy giving these awards and I know that the children are excited by seeing their names in print! Winning the Punctuality Bear and the Attendance Cup is also a highlight of the week with the winners also being included in the weekly newsletter. I trust the children are telling you how important it is to be at school every day and to be on time.

## Headteacher's Awards

So, the first awards of the new school year go to ...



Week ending Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September

Y2C	Isabelle Goksel	Y2B	Luke Thompson
Y21C -Y2	Hope Medland	Y1	William Lamb
Y1P	Alfie Stanford	Y1FA	Grace Morrell
RS	Darcy Dallaway	RB	Rowen Evans
RN	Amelia Miller		

**Attendance Cup** This week's winners are RB with 98.3%.



**Punctuality Bear** This week's winners are Saint Matthew's, Saint Mark's, Saint Luke's and Saint John's all with the fantastic 100%.



**Think of a Question** is a family challenge!

There will be an interesting picture in the newsletter every few weeks. The picture will also be on display at school.

The idea is to talk with your children about the picture and think of questions that you could ask about it.

Your children will be coming home with some speech bubbles for your first question. Please send any questions that you think of at home into school and they will be added to the whole school display. So, for our first 'Think of a Question' ....

**Information Evenings** will be taking place this half term. Unfortunately, these will not be face to face as in previous years. The presentations will be shared with you virtually in due course.

**Together at Home** is a useful resource which we started sharing during lockdown. The authors of this resource are currently continuing to create the input on a weekly basis. I know that many parents found it useful so I will continue to share it with you. It is to be used as a time of reflection as a family.

Please keep both Father Mark and Father Matthew in your prayers at this time. Father Mark has been formally instituted and inducted as Vicar of St Thomas' Parish - we are delighted that this has finally taken place. Father Matthew (Dad of Evelyn, Y2C) will be ordained deacon at Chelmsford Cathedral on Sunday morning. We are really looking forward to working with him and getting to know him.

I hope everyone has a good weekend.

Yours sincerely,

*C B L'Estrange*

Caroline L'Estrange  
Headteacher