

St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Infant School

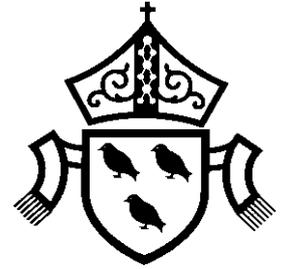
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22nd October 2020

Dear Parents,

Well here we are at half term - we made it! We have packed so much into the last seven weeks and so much has happened in the world around us - but it is certainly good to be back together again! It has been a long half term and I thank you all for your support. It has been great to see all our new friends in Reception settle into school life - they have become very much part of our school family. The children have worked extremely hard in every area of school life, demonstrating a positive approach to their learning and placing value on relationships with their peers. This, of course, does not just happen and my thanks go to the whole staff team for their continued dedication and commitment to our children. The children and the whole staff team have been amazing in how they have adapted to, and created new ways of doing things within, our bubbles and the expectations and requirements of day to day operations. They all deserve a good rest next week! I hope that they enjoy the break and come back refreshed ready for the lead up to Christmas (did I really say that?). Please encourage your children to keep reading over the break but also to have a good holiday.

St Luke's Feast Day was celebrated in School on Monday. It was lovely to see so many of the children wearing additional yellow items of clothing. We remembered St Luke in Worship, remembering how he took time to talk to Jesus' disciples in order to record precise details of Jesus' life and ministry. I wonder who we can have a conversation with over half term, taking time to listen carefully as they share their lives with us, perhaps a grandparent, an aunt or uncle, god-parents - zoom, facetime ... are a great way of catching up with people all over the world, and I'm sure they will have interesting things to share with you.

Class Eucharist Thank you to Father Mark for leading our first Class Eucharist this week with Y1FA. The children were amazing, watching and listening very carefully. Mrs Forbes-Buckingham and I were very proud of the children who read - bible readings can be very tricky indeed and the children read really well. Our next Class Eucharist will be after half term with Y1P.

Hallowed be thy name was the theme of our Worship yesterday. We are looking at each line of the Lord's Prayer in turn - unpacking what it means to help our understanding of the prayer that Jesus gave to us. As part of this, recognising how we have all been called by name, I have a half term challenge for the children! My challenge is for the children to find out what their name means. The children will be coming home with a pro forma to complete. Please encourage your child to decorate these in the border space around the edge as they will form part of a whole school display.

Autumn Parents Evenings Thank you to everyone for joining us for these meetings this week. I know we would all love to have met face to face, but I know that the teachers have really enjoyed their time with you all. Please remember that if you have any questions for your child's classteacher, you can just call the School Office or drop them an email (admin@stthomasinf.essex.sch.uk) and Mrs Infanti and Mrs Giddings will pass the message on.

Flu Immunisations are on Tuesday, 3rd November. These will take place during the school day.

Year 2 Phonics Screening The children in Year 2 will be completing their phonics screening in the second half of the autumn term. Your children will be coming home with some resources to support them with their phonics - please help your children with this.

Recycle Used Postage Stamps The UK's Air Ambulance Services are charities which receive no government funding and rely entirely on charitable donations to continue flying and responding to life threatening medical emergencies. We can help raise funds for their crucial work through the recycling of postage stamps. All funds raised will be donated to the Association of Air Ambulances to be distributed equally to all UK Air Ambulance Services. Whether they are British or overseas, new or used, send any stamps into school and we will then send them on so that they can be turned into funds to keep the UK Air Ambulance Services responding to life threatening medical emergencies. We look forward to receiving all your stamps - all you need to do is cut, or carefully tear, the stamped corner from any envelope or packet that you receive. This project will be on-going. Thank you for your support in this - we never know when we, or our loved ones, will be the individuals benefitting from this vital service.

Recycling Initiative Last year thanks to Mrs Cansell (past parent), we became aware of 'TerraCycle'. TerraCycle's aim is to eliminate the idea of waste by recycling the 'non-recyclable'. Through their various projects, they are able to divert millions of pounds of waste from landfills and incinerators each month. Please send your empty crisp packets into school and we will collect them up so that we can then send them for recycling. Crisp multipack outer packaging is also accepted. There will be a collection point outside my office. We all love crisps - I am sure we will be able to continue to recycle innumerable packets!

Photographs Remember orders need to be placed by 4th November 2020. Details for ordering are on the proofs.

Sorry ... Christmas things!

Tea Towels Preparations are underway to create our 2020 School Tea Towel! Reception have been the first to start, so the self-portraits are underway! Thank you for the orders already received in school. I do hope we can share photographs of our tea towel from all over the world - I know the children would love to see how far our tea towels have travelled. The tea towels will be £4 each. Orders need to be placed by Friday 6th November. We will not be able to order more tea towels than required, so please make sure to place your order. Please send the money into school in a clearly marked and sealed envelope detailing:

1. Child's name and class
2. Number of tea towels required
3. Amount of money enclosed

Cheques should be made payable to 'St Thomas of Canterbury Infant School'. This is a great way of supporting the school as any profit made will go to school funds.

Christmas Cards Advance notice! On Thursday 5th November your children will be coming home with their own artwork for their own Christmas card for you to see. There will be details with the artwork of how to order Christmas cards and gift tags. You must use the unique code indicated on your child's sheet when ordering online. All orders are to be placed online removing the need for money to be sent into school. If you have any questions, please contact Mrs Giddings in the School Office. We have an extremely tight turn round for this year, so please take note of the dates. In order for the artwork to be sent to the printers, all orders must be made by midnight on Sunday 8th November. The children's artwork must also be returned to school by morning registration on Monday 9th November. There is absolutely no flexibility in this. Your child's artwork must be in school by **10am on Monday 9th November**. We will regretfully not be able to accept anything after this time. Please keep an eye on ParentHub - we will be sending you reminders!

ParentHub is a vital tool to enable us to communicate efficiently and swiftly with everyone within the School family and every child has at least one parent on the app! Thank you so much to everyone - this is fantastic as it means that we can communicate with every family in one go. This is the first time this has happened!

Winter Uniform Don't forget that it will be winter uniform from after half term:

Girls: grey tunic or skirt, polo shirt with school logo, sweatshirt or cardigan with school logo.

Boys: long grey trousers, polo shirt with school logo, sweatshirt or jumper with school logo.

School uniform Over the half term break, please could everyone check that every item of school uniform is clearly labelled with your child's name. This does include their book bag. There is no need for the children to have a rucksack in school, especially as we do not have space for these in the classrooms. Please check that your child returns to school with a complete PE kit - shorts, t-shirt, tracksuit bottoms, socks and plimsolls that fit - again all clearly labelled with your child's name. Many thanks in advance.

Poppies for Remembrance will be on sale in school after half term. Children can bring in a donation to buy a poppy.

Headteacher's Awards



Week ending Thursday 22nd October

Y2C	Kaceia Tsang	Y2B	Eleanor Riisnaes
Y21C -Y2	Olivia Willard	Y1	Cameron Polaczek-Mohamed
Y1P	Sophie Callender	Y1FA	Lucia Gunyon
RS	Victoria Kangethe	RB	Claudia Deitch
RN	Rex Sanderson		

Attendance Cup This week's winners are Y21C with the fantastic 99.2%.

Punctuality Bear This week's winners are Saint Luke's and Saint John's with the fantastic 100%.



Let's Think Our first conversation starter was:

It is important to try to keep a positive mindset in these challenging times.

Share with your family all the things that you are grateful for.

We have received so many fantastic responses, many of which have brought a tear to my eye - we truly do have so much to be grateful for. Thank you to everyone who has contributed; here is a small selection:

'I'm grateful for people smiling at me', Peaches, RS

'I'm grateful for people who look after cats, dogs and other animals', Isabelle, RN

'I'm grateful for my home, food, teachers, water, family ...', Isabelle, Y2B

'I'm thankful for food and water', Luke, Y1P

'I'm grateful for my Mum, my little brother and that we can play together', Amitoj, Y2C

'As a family we are grateful for happiness, nice food, a nice house and all our blessings', Rahib & family, Y2C

'We are grateful for God as he made the planet, for our family, our Nanny, our food and drink', Amelia & family, RN

School Council Voting has taken place and the ballot papers are with the Returning Officer!

Together at Home this week is another New Testament Story from John's Gospel - A miraculous catch. I am extremely fortunate to have been able to visit the Holy Land and I have been on a boat on the Sea of Galilee and, to this day, you can still feel a very treasured atmosphere there - I can only imagine what it would have been like to have witnessed this amazing miracle. If you do complete any of the activities, please do email me a photo - I would love to see them.

Keeping safe It is vital that we all continue to do everything we can to keep safe within the 'Tier 2: High Alert' guidelines. I completely understand that this change has led to additional challenges for us all but, as we all know, it is vital that we all play our part for the safety of everyone in our families and our community. I am sure that we all continue to remember the importance of the rule of six outdoors and not meeting with anyone outside your household indoors. If anyone should be travelling overseas during half term, please ensure that you do check the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office website for details regarding up to date quarantine requirements upon your return.

Don't forget the clocks change this weekend - it's one hour back which means an extra hour in bed at the start of the holiday, which I am sure will be much appreciated by us all!

I hope you all have a good week and stay safe.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline L'Estrange
Headteacher