

# ST. THOMAS MORE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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26<sup>th</sup> June 2015

## SCHOOL NEWSLETTER 19

Dear Parents,

It is fantastic to see lots of summer sunshine at last. Let's hope it lasts for the last few weeks of term.

In those last few weeks there is a huge amount happening, so please keep a record of dates posted in the newsletter or check out the dates on the website calendar.

Next week, on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June, parents of Year 2 children will have the chance to meet with the Year 3/4 team to see what life in the juniors is like. There is very little difference but I know parents often feel anxious about the transition. We will be organising a series of events for our Year 2 children over the next few weeks to introduce them to life in the juniors and we are very confident it will be a smooth transition.

Speaking of the Year 3/4 team, there will be a little movement of staff next year which I am pleased to announce here. Movement is always a good thing and with some staff changes for September, it makes that movement possible. The staff teams will be as follows.

Year R: Mr Barber/Mrs Buckingham and Mrs Pedder

Year 1: Mrs Silk

Year 1/2: Mr Potter

Year 1/2: Mrs Carpenter

Year 3/4 Mrs Hackett

Year 3/4 Mrs Ward

Year 3/4 Miss Moon

Year 5 Miss Ridd

Year 5 Mr Cordwell

Year 6 Mrs Meades/Mr Vaux

Year 6 Mr Crozier/Mr Vaux

As you will see we are introducing an additional class next year. For many years now we have operated sets. However, research suggests that setting is not always effective in meeting the needs of pupils. While setting was hugely beneficial to our school during a period of growth in standards and quality of teaching, we feel that now our teaching staff is extremely strong, the time is right to move away from setting.

This is not a decision we have taken lightly. For some time now we have found that by setting in Key Stage 2, teachers might only be with children in an English or Maths lesson for one hour, making it difficult to

address gaps in learning and to ensure they have regular practice in the areas where they need it most. They also find it difficult to plan cross curricular learning where English skills are applied in history lessons or maths skills in science lessons. Having the children in the same class all day everyday should help us to bring the curriculum alive and the give flexibility to play with timetables.

We will continue to run the Booster class for English and Maths in Year 6 each morning because we have seen phenomenal success from this initiative for several years now. Mrs Meades will teach this booster class and Mr. Crozier and Mr. Vaux will team teach the remaining children.

We have also made a slight change to the make up of Year 1/2 classes. The set up we've had for a few years now is good but there has always been a higher degree of need among the 15 Year 2 children in the mixed Y1/2 Jupiter class. The new set up should make the classes far more balanced and easier to manage resulting in better progress for all. There will be a meeting arranged for the 7<sup>th</sup> July at 3:30 for parents of Year R and Year 1 children moving to Year 1/2 next year to meet the team and explain this change in more detail.

All of these changes were discussed at the last Parent Forum but if you have any questions, don't hesitate to catch me on the playground or make an appointment to see me. The next Parent Forum will be held on 8<sup>th</sup> July at 18:30.

Also mentioned at the last Parent Forum was a change of direction on academy conversion. St Thomas More's had originally responded to a call from Bishop Philip to begin exploring how schools could work together to form Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs). We did a substantial amount of work on this and indeed had DfE approval to form a MAT. However, just as we were in the final stages of plans to convert, Bishop Philip and the diocesan trustees had a change of direction and now wish to propose a larger MAT or umbrella trust. The details of this proposal are outlined in a consultation document which you can find on our website and parents are welcome to make their own response. That said, the wording of the response form and the questions asked are not easy for parents to answer. Please feel free to complete it if you wish, but I would also welcome a separate response from parents outlining any questions or concerns you have. Just note them in a letter addressed to me or the chair of governors and we can include them in our response to the diocese. All responses, including ours, have to be made by the 14<sup>th</sup> July so could I ask that if you are responding to me or the chair of governors, that you do so by 7<sup>th</sup> July. We will discuss the consultation some more at the next Parent Forum.

### **Tommy Childcare**

Please ensure all childcare accounts are paid in full by Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July. Any accounts not cleared will result in the childcare place being withdrawn. If you will have any problems paying by 6<sup>th</sup> July please contact Mrs Miller or Mrs Fry by Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June. Invoices were sent out 2 weeks ago and you can also access your account balances online. Please pay via the scopay website or alternatively pay by cash or cheque (made out to HCC) to the school office.

### **PTA update**

We will be looking for a treasurer to join our PTA from September. Helen Dunning has been our treasurer for 2 years and has done the most wonderful job but due to full time work commitments has made the difficult decision to stand down as from September. Helen will continue to be involved in our events as a valued member of the PTA and school community. I would like to extend a personal thank you to Helen for all her support.

In light of this, we are looking to our parents to volunteer as our next treasurer. You do not have to have a financial background or be able to attend every meeting or help with every event. It is a matter of keeping a log of money coming in from our events and any money that is paid out to the school. I cannot stress enough that if we do not find a treasurer, the PTA is not legally allowed to function.

### Summer Fair

Time for a clear out? We desperately need donations for our Summer Fair. Please donate any items you have that are clean and in a saleable condition. We are looking for books, DVD's, toys, games, puzzles, nearly new, unwanted gifts, teddy bears and sweets. We also need donations of plants and cakes on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July or on the Saturday.

Don't forget Non School Uniform Day is on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July. Please bring in a bottle for the tombola if your child dresses in their own clothes for the day.

Thank you to the parents who have offered to man a stall or just help set up and close down on the day. We really do need some more helpers so if you can spare some time on the day, please get in touch with Mrs Fry or Rosie Miller.

### Summer Book Fair

The Book Fair is arriving in school soon to sprinkle a little reading magic, with hundreds of new children's books to browse and buy.

**Come and join us!**  
**From Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July**  
**Including the Summer Fair**

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There are **over 200 titles** for you and your child to choose from, and with prices starting from **only £2.99**, there's sure to be a book for everyone.

If you can't make it to our Book Fair, try **discounted Gift Vouchers** available at **bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/parents**. They're a great way to ensure your child doesn't miss out.

Don't forget that every book you buy can help to get **FREE BOOKS** for our school!

Thanks  
Miss Moon

### Radio Solent Cool Schools

On Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July, two of our children will be reading the weather for Radio Solent's Cool School segment. Please listen in on 96.1FM/103.8FM/DAB.

### Sainsbury's Sports Vouchers

Thank you to everyone who collected the sports vouchers from Sainsbury's. We managed to collect an amazing 6,201 vouchers. Due to such a large amount of vouchers, we have been able to purchase sports bibs, tag rugby belts, junior goalposts, bean bags and javelins.

Thank you!  
Miss Ridd

### Annaliesa's Little Princess Fundraiser

Annaliesa, a year 5 pupil, is raising money for the little Princess Trust. Annaliesa is cutting her hair to donate to this wonderful charity that makes wigs from real hair for children who are affected by cancer and the treatment they receive. Annaliesa is donating her beautiful long hair and ALL of the money she raises through Justgiving.com to enable the Princess Trust to produce a wig, which normally cost £350 each. Annaliesa is hoping she can raise enough money to produce 2 wigs which will help 2 children affected by this terrible disease. If you can help and would like to donate, please visit [www.ustgiving.com/Annaliesa-Bower](http://www.ustgiving.com/Annaliesa-Bower). Many thanks

### **Bottle Top Artwork**

Thank you to everyone who collected so many bottle tops. Thank you also to the parent's who came in to our workshop and helped to create these fabulous pieces of art. These will be displayed in our Infant playground as soon as they are ready to display. They have all turned out so well.

Thank you,

Mrs Carpenter, Mr Potter and Mrs Lindley



### **Building Fund**

Thank you so much to all those who responded to my recent letter about the building fund. In the last year, contributions have dwindled and so we are desperately asking you to contribute something towards this. We are only asking for £2.50 a month to maintain a learning environment that children, staff, parents and the wider community can be proud of. We are incredibly grateful to those who have contributed in the past and those who continue to do so. We are very proud of our school, but, part of being a Catholic school means we have to pay for our buildings. A small contribution from everyone can help us to guarantee a steady income to meet the Diocesan Levy.

### **Facebook**

In recent weeks we have had several community and curriculum events take place and have found it very easy to post photos of the events on our school Facebook page. We have had lots of positive comments about the postings and so we want to make sure that everyone is aware that to become a friend of St Thomas More's on Facebook, you must do 2 things:

1. Fill out a paper request form, (available at the office), and return it with your Facebook name.
2. Then make a request to be our friend on Facebook.

You can understand that we want to be very careful about who we accept and so, we need the paper request so that we can verify the Facebook request.

If you have any comments to make about the page or have any suggestions, please don't hesitate to let me, Mr Sendall, Mr Barber or the office staff know about it.

### **Free School Meals**

Are you entitled to free school meals? Once your child reaches year 3, all school meals are charged at £2 per day. If you are unsure if you qualify, please visit: <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/caterers/freeschoolmeals>. Please note that the criteria for free school meals is the same, regardless of the method of checking, but for the online system, all you need to do is enter your name, national insurance or asylum number, your

address and your child's details. Press submit and if the result comes back 'found', this means your child is eligible for free school meals and the system automatically tells us that you are entitled. If you do not have access to the internet, please come into the school office and make an appointment with Mrs Fry to help you apply.

### **Changes to our Admissions policy for 2016-17**

You will remember earlier in the year we launched a consultation on proposed changes to our admissions policy for 2016-17. That consultation has now concluded and the admissions policy for 2016-17 has been published on our website. If your child is due to start school in September 2016 or in subsequent years you should make yourself aware of the changes to the section criteria. The most significant change is the change in ranking of 'siblings of no faith'. Until now, siblings have always managed to gain a place in our Reception class, regardless of their faith. ***It is now considerably less likely that siblings who are not baptised Christians will be allocated a place in our Reception class, regardless of whether or not they have an older sibling already at the school.*** If you would like to discuss this further, please feel welcome to make an appointment to discuss the matter with me in person.

### **Year 3/4 Wind Chime project**

Year 3/4 would like to ask you to donate some of the following items, so that we can create wind chimes for our school pond area to make it more relaxing and appealing. These items are:

- \*Any size shells
- \*Small pebbles
- \*Off cuts of copper piping

If you could bring in more than one of the items above we would greatly appreciate them. May we remind you that all the donations given will be used to enhance our pond area.

Thank you  
Year 3/4

### **Preschool Mud Challenge**

Members of the preschool are taking part in the Cancer Research 5K Mud Run! If you would like to sponsor them, please see a member of the preschool team, or visit the STMS preschool page at [justgiving.com](http://justgiving.com). Many thanks

### **Preschool – Please note date change**

Our preschool children will be participating in the National event of Barnardo's Big Toddle. Our event will happen on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July. We will be toddling around the local area. If you would like a sponsorship form for your child, please see a member of staff or look out for the preschool Facebook page.

### **Church News:**

#### **St Michael and All Angels' Holy Communion Programme.**

To love and serve – 27<sup>th</sup> June – 09:30  
Mass – 28<sup>th</sup> June – 10:00

#### **2015/2016 Communion Programme**

First Communion Forms will be available from 22<sup>nd</sup> August at St. Michael and All Angels' Church, for children aged 8 and above by the end of August 2016.

#### **Ss Thomas' Church, Holy Communion Programme.**

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June – 19:30 – parents' session  
Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June – 14:00 – childrens' session  
Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> June – 9:00 – Mass

### St Patrick's Church Holy Communion 2015/16

There will be an information meeting for the families of children who want to take their First Holy Communion in the 2015/16 period at St Patrick's Church on:

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August after 18:00 Mass

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August after 10:00 Mass

Application Forms and further information will be available at these sessions.

Yours sincerely,



Colin Flanagan.

ITEMS FOR YOUR DIARY		
Date	Time	Event
Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> June		Induction for new Year R children
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> June	14:45	Year 2 transition parents meeting
Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July	08:45	Non school uniform day – bring a bottle for the tombola
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> July	18:30	Information evening for new Year R parents
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> July	15:30	Current Yr R and Yr 1 parents meeting with Yr 1/2 Team
Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> July	18:30	Parent Forum
Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup> July	13:00	Summer Fair
Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> July	13:30	Yr 5/6 Dress rehearsal performance
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> July		Induction for new Year R children
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> July	13:30	Yr 5/6 production
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> July	18:30	Yr 5/6 production
Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> July	18:30	Yr 5/6 production
Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> July	18:30	Yr 5/6 production
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July		Annual reports to parents
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July	14:00	Leavers' Mass
Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> July	09:00	End of Term assembly
Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> July	Tbc	Year 6 Leavers' BBQ
<b>Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July</b>	<b>15:15</b>	<b>End of term</b>
<b>Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July</b>	<b>08:45</b>	<b>INSET DAY</b>