

## INSPIRING FAITH, LOVE & LEARNING

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Welcome back and a very happy new year to you all. We hope that everyone enjoyed a happy and peaceful Christmas.

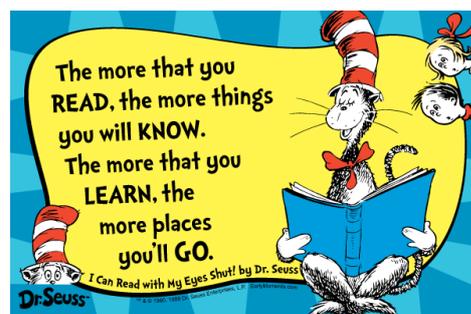
All the staff extend their thanks for the thoughtful Christmas gifts they received, thank you for your kindness.

Welcome to our new nursery teacher Mrs Gallagher who has joined the team at St Thomas', we wish her every happiness at our school. Mrs Gallagher isn't the only new face in nursery, we are being joined by new starters Scarlett, Isabelle, Georgia, Annabel, Zach, Harry & Jessica—we hope you all have a wonderful time as you begin your journey with us.

We have an exciting term coming up; along with this newsletter you will receive a list of diary dates to help you see what's planned. Next week we are also sending out school holiday dates for the 2019-20 academic year to help you plan ahead.

### Forgotten items

We know how hectic mornings can be, trying to get children out of the house with all the things they need for the day ahead, but we're asking for a bit of help to ensure children come to school with everything they need at the start of each school day. Maybe go through everything with your child the night before to make sure they're packed & prepared for the following day. This is a really important lifeskill and helps children get into a routine and develop their independence. If water bottles, homework books, PE kits etc are brought into school late, we will now have a box for them in the school office. It will be the children's responsibility to come and check if anything has been dropped off for them. To minimise disruption to lessons, office staff will no longer be responsible for delivering items to the child's classroom. Thanks for your understanding and support with this.



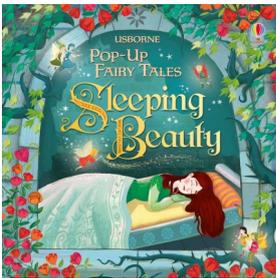
### Reading

This year in school we are having a focus on English, and ask parents to support us in this by encouraging children to read widely and regularly at home. We cannot stress enough how beneficial it is for children to read regularly at home; this doesn't have to be books from school, as long as they find something that excites and motivates them. Pupils from Year 4 upwards are now enjoying regular class trips to the library where they can choose books to take home and be inspired to try new authors or genres. We expect pupils to read at home at least four times a week; remember to record all their reading in their school Reading Record (pupils in KS2 are rewarded with dojos for reaching their targets!)

Reading and writing  
cannot be separated.  
Reading is breathing in;  
writing is breathing out.

## World Book Day

This isn't until March 7th, but just so you have plenty of notice, our theme this year will be "Sweet Dreams". Children are invited to come to school dressed as a character from a book about dreams or sleep, or may simply choose to come to school in their pyjamas or onesie. If you're looking for ideas, why not try The BFG, Peter Pan, The Snowman, Joseph & the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat or Sleeping Beauty for inspiration?



## Attendance

Attendance for last term was 96.7% against a target of 97%, so we're not quite where we want to be yet. We understand that children can't come to school if they're unwell, but it's interesting to note that if it wasn't for unauthorised absences (ie holidays taken in term time) our attendance would be at 97.6%. Please do think carefully about the impact time out of school can have on your child's learning.

## Head Teacher talkshop

Once a term, Mr Moss holds a talkshop when parents are can drop in to see him for a chat, whether it be to discuss something specific relating to your child, or to share an idea you have about how we could improve our school. The next one is on Tuesday 22nd January; no need to book an appointment, just call in any time from 9-11am.

## Correspondence on website

We have added a page to our school website where parents can download any letters that are sent home. We're not quite a paperless school yet, so will continue to send letters home in book bags, but if you find you've missed or lost anything you will now be able to access it on the "Parents" section of the school website at:

[www.st-thomas.co.uk/web/letters](http://www.st-thomas.co.uk/web/letters)

## Recycle your plastic with us

Miss Johnson is planning on building a "Recycle shelter" in the EYFS outdoor area, which will be constructed from plastic bottles. If you have any 500ml plastic bottles at home, or coloured plastic bottle tops, please send them in to Reception class where they will be put to very good use!



## New role for Vicar Michael

Next week Vicar Michael will be licenced as priest-in-charge at St James' church in Latchford. This is a new role in addition to all he does at St Thomas' and St Mary Magdalene's; we're sure you'll join us in wishing him all the best and praying for him in his new role.



## PTA news

The next PTA committee meeting will take place on Monday 21st January in the Mulberry Tree pub, starting at 7.30pm.

As always, the PTA welcome new members and new ideas, so please don't be shy!

If you're new to the school and want to meet some new faces, the PTA are also holding a social event on Saturday 26th January. No agenda, no minutes, just a chance to chat with some friendly faces and enjoy an evening out. Meet at the Mulberry Tree at 7.30pm.

For more info the PTA chair Tracy Buckley can be contacted via [stthomasptanetwork@gmail.com](mailto:stthomasptanetwork@gmail.com)