



Monday 9 th September	
Tuesday 10 th September	<u>After School Activities – Rugby for year 1, 2 and 3 children</u>
Wednesday 11 th September	<u>After School Activities – Rugby for year 3, 4, 5 and 6 and Choir</u>
Thursday 12 th September	<u>After School Activities - Drumming</u>
Friday 13 th September	



Stars of the Week



Faith Nolan, Theo Thompson, Abigail Clegg, Poppy Boardman, Isaac Morgan, Bella Baxter, John-Daniel Slack, Teddy Long, Riley Farrington and Alex Bond

Welcome Back

It was a pleasure to welcome everyone back to school on Wednesday morning and to welcome our new children into class 1. Everyone is very excited about a new school year and is very much looking forward to a fantastic and successful year. The children all looked very smart in their school uniforms.

I would like to thank everyone who has taken on board the request to leave large bags at home – it has made a big difference to the cloakroom areas, making them much tidier and therefore safer.



Mr Stuttard is back to teach P.E. temporarily as his replacement has left the company unexpectedly. We are all pleased to see Mr Stuttard back in school. This year P.E. will be on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for all children. Children need to have a P.E. kit in school in a draw string bag. This kit should contain a plain t-shirt, plain shorts, plain jogging trousers and sweatshirt, pumps for indoor P.E. and trainers for outdoor P.E. All items of clothing should also be named. We cannot guarantee the return of clothing that is misplaced in school, however most named items do find the way back to their owner.

All long hair must be tied back for P.E. and earrings must be removed. If your child wears earrings, please provide a small box for your child to put them in once they have removed them. Thank you.

Wisepay and School Dinners

Thank you to everyone who ordered school dinners before the return to school. It won't surprise anyone to learn there has been a small glitch in the system which has affected children now in year 3 and reception. Children in year 3 are not entitled to universal free school meals. The system has not accounted for this. If you have a child in year 3 and have ordered them a school dinner a note will be going home to request payment for those meals. Similarly, the parents of children in reception are being asked to pay for meals when they are entitled to universal free school meals. Mrs Milne and Mrs Whittles have been in contact with Wisepay to make the relevant changes. If your child is in reception, please try again today. Thank you.

Volunteers

We are looking for volunteers to come into school to help with reading. There is an increasing number of children who are finding reading very difficult or who are not reading at home. This is having a big impact on progression in school.

If you are able to spare a couple of hours a week to hear some children read, we would be very grateful. Volunteers do need to be DBS checked. If you are able to help, please contact Mrs Whittles in the school office.

Parking



The traffic wardens have been at school this week. It is important for the safety of your children that you park sensibly and considerately. There have been many near misses over the past few years. There is space to park on Haugh Lane, the car park near the Cedar Tree is also available and there is also space on Two Bridges Road. Please try and avoid driving up Church Street to park your car as it obstructs the view of oncoming traffic for pedestrians and it also means that cars have to drive right past the school gate.

The staff car park is not big enough for the staff and cars get blocked in easily. The car park can be used by parents before 8.00am and after 4.00pm. Thank you for your cooperation.

Reading and Homework



It is important that all children are heard read at home on a daily basis. This only needs to be for 10 minutes, little and often works best. When you have heard your child read, record in their reading record book what they have read.

We will be introducing a new system at the end of September, where children are RAG rated according to how much support they get at home for reading. Children who are not supported at home will be rated red and they will be heard read in school every day by either a volunteer, teacher or teaching assistant. This will mean that teaching assistants will be taken away from other vital work. Children rated amber are those who receive some support from home, but not enough and they will be heard on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Those children rated green are well supported at home and will be heard at least once a week by a member of staff.

Reading is a priority for us as more and more children are finding reading challenging and fewer children are being supported at home. The ability to read is integral to the rest of the curriculum.

In order to support you with the increasing expectation of reading with your children, we are removing spelling homework. All spelling will be done in school. However, spellings will be placed on the school website by the class teachers on the class pages.

Maths homework will be based on Times Tables Rock Stars, an online game that has been purchased by the Parents Association. Instructions will be sent home in due course. This is to support children in the learning of times tables. There is a new times tables test that has been introduced by the Government and all year 4 children will be expected to complete the test in the summer.

Children in years 1 to 6 will have weekly homework linked in to Command Joes. These are activities and there is an element of choice for the children. This will replace the learning logs. There will be 7 or 8 weeks' worth of activities over a term. Children can choose to complete activity one or activity two each week. Each activity has point attached. At the end of the Commando Joe's unit, the children will bring their completed tasks to school and will do a short presentation based on the tasks they have completed and the learning that has taken place during the Command Joe's sessions.

Children who earn the most points will be rewarded in assembly.

Class 1

A big welcome to all of our new families who have joined the St. Thomas' Community. The children have come into school beautifully and confidently. Well done to all of you, who have allowed your children to come into school on their own. It is vital that the children become as independent as they can as soon as they can.

The Parent's Association (FROST) have organised a 'Meet and Greet' for Monday 9th September from 9.00am until 10.00am for all reception parents. This is a chance to meet other new parents and find out about the parent's association.

Class 1 will be going outside a lot this year – even in the rain! Therefore, can you bring a pair of wellie boots for your child to keep in school. Thank you.

Playground Etiquette



In order to provide a safe environment for the children we do not allow dogs on the playground, smoking and vaping are also prohibited. We also ask that you do not stand too near the gates or the doors to allow space for movement, in the same way we ask you not to stand on the ramp.

In addition we expect adults to supervise their children on the school yard before and after school and to behave in an appropriate and respectful manner.

The school gate is generally unlocked just after 3.00pm, unless there are children on the playground. In which case, the gate will remain locked until the children are inside.

Class 1 will be setting out their outdoor equipment for the day before school starts, we ask that you do not let your children play with this equipment as it will have been set out specifically.

Speaking to Staff

It is really important that communication between school and home is open and positive. In the first instance, if there is a problem, you should speak to the class teacher in order to resolve any issues. As you can appreciate, the teaching staff are very busy and will try their best to speak to you at the earliest opportunity. However, we ask that if you need to speak to the class teacher, you do so by a prior appointment.

If there is a message for the teacher, this can be given to the adult who is at the entrance of a morning, who will pass it on or to the office staff via a telephone call or email.

It is possible to email staff directly – however, they may not respond immediately if it is received outside of their working day.

Holiday Requests and Absences from School

It is against the law to take children out of school for holidays during term time and they can result in a fine. Therefore holiday requests cannot be authorised unless there are exceptional reasons. However, if you do intend on taking your child out of school for a holiday, we request that you inform school in writing with the dates. This makes it easier for the teachers to plan work and it allows us to set a 'g' code for your child rather than a 'u'. (A 'g' is more favourable than a 'u' in the eyes of the education welfare team and the Local Authority).

Although the Headteacher and the Governing Board do not issue many fixed penalty notices, for taking holidays, fines will be issued for those taking holidays with a poor attendance record and for holidays which are extended.

Children are able to have time away from school to go to medical appointments, however there needs to be proof of this. Proof can be in the form of an appointment letter or completed form that the school office staff will give you.

Application for new school places

The application process is now open for high school and primary places for the September 2020. These must be done online via www.rochdale.gov.uk

Website details

All important information is put onto the school website: www.stthomasce.rochdale.sch.uk the information includes all of our school policies, calendar date and specific class information as well as useful links and Governors information. The newsletter is uploaded weekly and it is our main communication tool.

Water Bottles

All of the children have now been given a water bottle. This bottle will be given to your child on a Friday to take home to be washed and must be returned on a Monday ready to use. Thank you for your cooperation.