

St Thomas' CofE Academy



Dear Parents,

It has been a wonderful week here at school, filled with learning, laughter, and plenty of proud moments. Our children continue to impress us with their curiosity, kindness, and enthusiasm for new challenges.

As always, I am grateful for your continued support and partnership. A particular thank you goes to our wonderful PSA who give up their time to plan exciting events such as the Christmas Fair. Without you, these events would not be possible.

Have a lovely weekend,

Mrs Pierpoint

Friday 28th November 2025

‘Learning for life with Jesus’

Dates for your diary:

Wed 10 th Dec	KS1 Nativity 1:30pm
Thurs 11 th Dec	KS1 Nativity 5:30pm
Fri 12 th Dec	Dougie Mac Christmas Jumper Day
Mon 15 th Dec	EYFS Nativity 2pm
Wed 17 th Dec	EYFS Nativity 09:30am
Wed 17 th Dec	KS2 Carol service at St Thomas' Church 6pm
Thurs 18 th Dec	Christmas dinner day
Fri 19 th Dec	PSA Panto visit
Fri 19 th Dec	School closes for Christmas
Christmas holidays Mon 22nd Dec - Friday 2nd Jan	
Mon 5 th Jan	School reopens for staff and children
Wed 14 th Jan	Young Voices - Choir
Thurs 15 th Jan	Year 1 Topic launch day

SHINE workshops

We would warmly like to invite parents and carers into school to learn alongside your child. Following the success of our SHINES we would like to launch our Autumn term SHINE workshops - all of our autumn terms events will have a UNICEF - Rights Respecting Schools Focus

Please come into school for a fun filled and creative afternoon, where you can work alongside your child and learn new skills. This is also an opportunity to look at the different areas of our Rights Respecting Schools and how we teach and use this in school.

All of these sessions will start at 2:00pm and finish at 3:15pm. All sessions will be held in school.

Dates:

Monday 22 nd September	Year 6
Monday 6 th October	Year 2
Monday 13 th October	Year 4
Monday 20 th October	Year 5
TUESDAY 11 th November	Year 3
Monday 17 th November	Year 1
Monday 24 th November	Reception
Monday 1 st December	Nursery

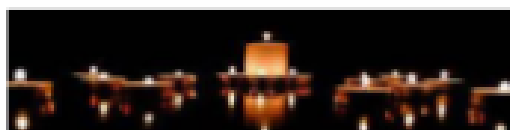


Inspire sessions at St Thomas' Church.

2:00pm - 3:00pm at St Thomas' Church

Dates:

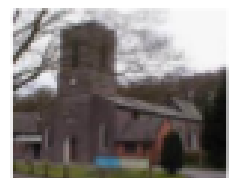
Tuesday 4 th November	Year 3
Tuesday 25 th November	Year 5
Tuesday 27 th January	Year 6
Tuesday 3 rd March	Year 4
Tuesday 28 th April	Year 2
Tuesday 23 rd June	Year 1
Tuesday 7 th July	Nursery
& Reception together in school	



We are really delighted to be continuing to work alongside Reverend Baker from St Thomas' church. We want to support children in their spiritual development and continue 'Learning for Life with Jesus.'

Following the great success of our Inspire workshops last year, each class will be spending an afternoon at St Thomas' to deepen their spiritual understanding and engage in fun craft-based activities around scripture lead by Reverend Baker and their class teacher.

We would love parents/ carers/ grandparents to join us for our Inspire workshop. Please come and work alongside us as we follow Jesus' path.



‘Learning for life with Jesus’

Friday worship & coffee



morning



Every Friday morning at 9am we have a worship in school led by Reverend Iain or Tom from St Thomas' Church. We warmly invite all parents/grandparents/ carers/ parish members to join us every week.

Each week a different class or school group will also be joining the coffee morning to show you some of their learning and share things they are proud of.

Everyone is welcome to every worship and coffee morning - we hope to see everyone soon.

Dates: Autumn 1

Friday 12 th Sept	Everyone welcome - start of new term
Friday 19 th Sept	Year 3
Friday 26 th Sept	Pupil leaders leading <i>MacMillian Coffee Morning</i>
Friday 3 rd Oct	Year 5
Friday 10 th Oct	<u>No Worship and Coffee morning today.</u>
Friday 17 th Oct	Reception
Friday 24 th Oct	Year 6

Dates: Autumn 2

Friday 7 th Nov	Year 1
Friday 14 th Nov	<u>INSET DAY</u>
Friday 21 st Nov	Nursery
Friday 28 th Nov	Year 2
Friday 5 th Dec	Year 4
Friday 12 th Dec	Eco and School Council
Friday 19 th Dec	Everyone welcome - end of term, coffee and mince pies

Term dates 2025/2026

Autumn Term 2025

INSET DAYS	Monday 1st and Tuesday 2nd September 2025
Autumn Term One	Wednesday 3 rd September – Friday 24 th October 2025
Half Term	Monday 27th October 2025– Friday 31st October 2025
Autumn Term Two	Monday 4 th November 2025 – Friday 19 th December 2025
INSET DAY	Friday 14th November 2025
Holiday	Monday 22 nd December 2025 – Friday 2 nd January 2026

Spring Term 2026

Spring Term One	Monday 5 th January 2026 – Friday 13 th February 2026
Half Term	Monday 16th February – Friday 20th February 2026
INSET	Monday 23rd February 2026
Spring Term Two	Monday 23 rd February 2026 – Friday 27 th March 2026
INSET	Friday 20th March 2026
Holiday	Monday 30 th March 2026 – Friday 10 th April 2026

Term dates 2025/2026

Summer Term 2026

Summer term one Monday 13th April 2026 – Friday 22nd May 2026

May Day **Monday 4th May 2026**

Half Term **Monday 25th May 2026 – Friday 29th May 2026**

Summer term two Monday 1st June 2026 – Friday 17th July 2026

INSET DAY ***Monday 20th July 2026 (Twilights)***

Summer Holiday **Tuesday 21st July 2026 – Monday 31st August 2026**

(2026/2027 academic year commences on Tuesday 1st September 2026)



Christmas at St Thomas'

You are warmly invited to celebrate with us

Wednesday 10th December

KS1 Nativity 13:30

Thursday 11th Dec

KS1 Nativity 17:30

Monday 15th Dec

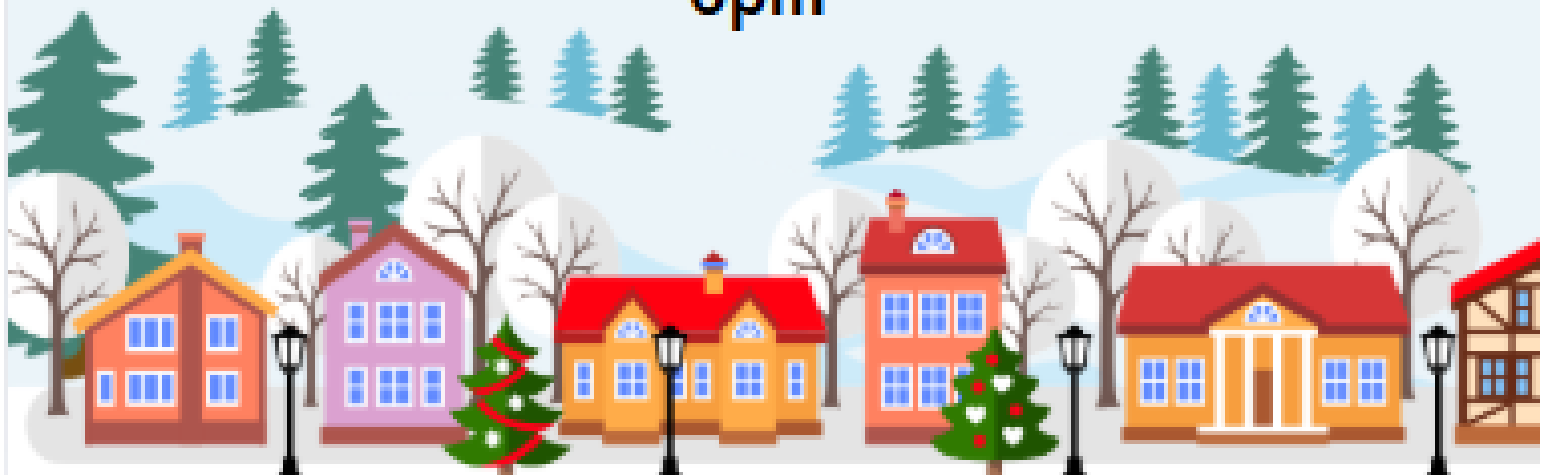
EYFS Nativity 2pm

Wednesday 17th Dec

EYFS Nativity 9:30am

KS2 Carol Service at St Thomas' Church

6pm



DougieMac

Christmas Jumper Day

Do your bit in a festive knit



When:

Friday 12th December

Give your donation to:

St Thomas' CofE Academy

www.dougiemac.org.uk

 /DougieMacHospice

 /DougieMacStoke

 /DMHospice

 /DougieMacHospice

Sip and support drop ins

St Thomas' now offer drop in sessions in school where parents and carers can speak to our Education Mental Health Practitioner about any concerns or questions they have. This may include questions around diet, sleep, routines, mental health and support services available.

When:

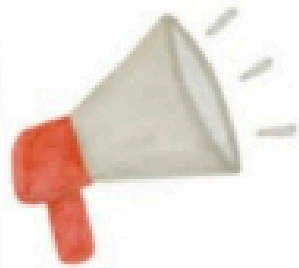
Fri 28th Nov 09:30am

Fri 5th Dec - Early help team

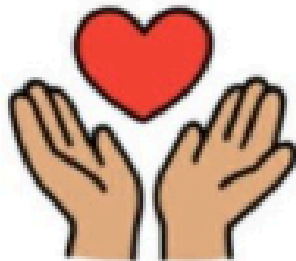
drop in

Fri 9th Jan 09:30am

Hannah will be available in the Haven for a chat during the coffee morning on the above dates. Everyone welcome!



JOIN US FOR OUR SUPPORT GROUP FOR SEND CHILDREN/YOUNG ADULTS & FAMILIES

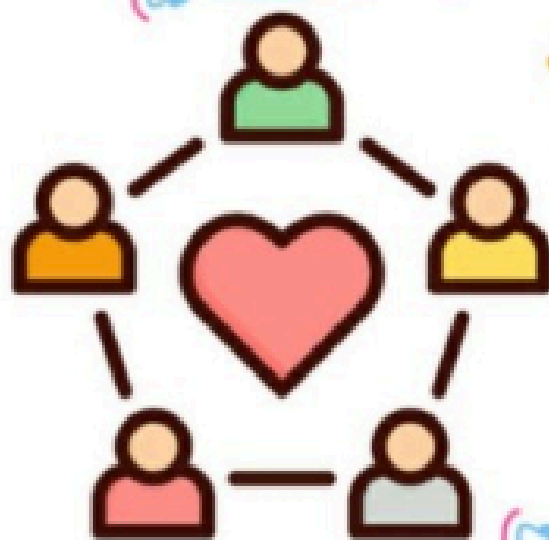


EVERY OTHER
SATURDAY
@ 10AM - 12PM

MEET OTHER
FAMILIES

REFRESHMENTS
AVAILABLE

SUPPORT
EACH OTHER



SENSORY
ROOM

TOYS &
ACTIVITIES FOR
CHILDREN



NEWCASTLE FAMILY HUB
CEMETERY ROAD
NEWCASTLE UNDER-LYME
ST5 6DH



JOIN OUR FACEBOOK
GROUP HERE!



**JOIN US FOR OUR SUPPORT GROUP
FOR SEND CHILDREN/YOUNG ADULTS
& FAMILIES**



**ON THIS
SATURDAY!
13TH DECEMBER
10AM - 12PM**

**PLUS!
A SPECIAL VISIT FROM
SANTA!**



**REFRESHMENTS
AVAILABLE**



**SUPPORT
EACH OTHER**

**TOYS
& ACTIVITIES
FOR
CHILDREN**

**SENSORY
ROOM**



**NEWCASTLE FAMILY HUB
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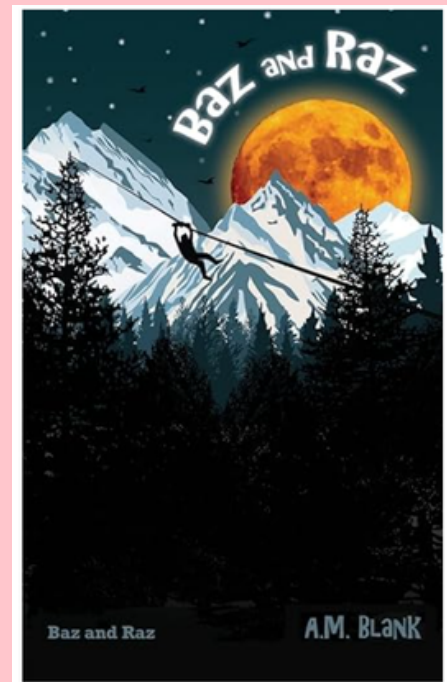


**JOIN OUR FACEBOOK
GROUP HERE!**



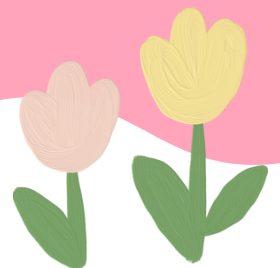
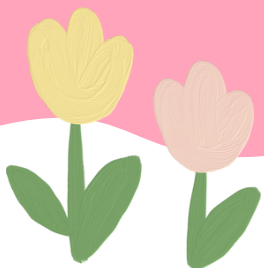
Alan Blank visits Year 6!

Year 6 had a wonderful afternoon with Alan Blank, the author of Baz and Raz. He shared some of his book with them and talked about his life as an author. They all loved the experience and were full of fantastic questions.





Nursery and Reception had great fun taking part in World Nursery Rhyme week. They listened to, recited/sang a Nursery Rhyme a day and took part in Nursery Rhyme themed activities over the week: Sing a Song of Sixpence, Humpty Dumpty, When I was one (the pirate song), I hear thunder, Two little dickie birds.



A huge congratulations to our dancing stars who performed on stage on Sunday night! Mrs Buggy and Mrs Greatbatch were blown away!



GO ST THOMAS'!



Our Year 5/6 football team played last Tuesday and were absolutely fantastic.

Their attitude, teamwork and sportsmanship shone throughout and they represented the school with real pride. We're incredibly proud of every single one of them

We are delighted to share that we have achieved the Silver UNICEF UK Rights Respecting School Award - a recognition of our commitment to ensuring children's rights are upheld throughout of all school life.

A special thanks to Mrs Ashton who is our RRSA lead in school and has done a wonderful job at championing this very important project



Stronger Starts

Our recent application to the Tesco Stronger Starts programme has been successful and our project has been selected to go forward for the customer vote in local Tesco stores.

Voting will take place in store from the first week of October 2025 until mid-January 2026. If our project receives the most votes in the region, we could be awarded up to £1,500 in funding! Second place could receive up to £1,000 and third place £500 – all of which would make a huge difference to our school and pupils.

How you can help:

We would love your support in spreading the word and encouraging friends and family to vote for our project when shopping at any of the following Tesco stores:

- Sandyford Express – ST6 5EL
- Kidsgrove Superstore – ST7 1DX
- Audley Express – ST7 8EE
- Fegg Hayes Express – ST6 6SH

PSA

Newsletter



- **Non uniform day:** 07/11/2025
 - Bottle Donation for Fayre
- **Non Uniform Day:** 11/11/2025
 - Chocolate Donation for Fayre

collected by entrance on the morning of.

- **Bric-a-Brac:** please kindly donate any unwanted toys, teddies, items and bring this into the office between 3-19th November
- **Bag Competition:** to be decorated with a Christmas theme or hobby. Filled with contents to the value of £1. Please return by 20/11/2025
- **Christmas Fayre:** 21/11/2025 5:30pm
- **Christmas Panto:** 19/12/2025 2pm



Join our Facebook Page * PSA - St Thomas' C of E* for all the latest news on all the fundraising we do to help our school and enhance our children's school experience. New PSA members always welcome.

Christmas Fayre

As always our staff and parents host an evening full of festive fun with lots of games, tombolas, raffles, stalls and of course a visit to Santa in his grotto.

Grab a hot dog or just snacks at the refreshment stall in the community room before making your way around the activities spread out through the hall, library and classrooms.

If you would like to donate any raffle prizes, bake some treats, or would like to kindly help out on the night please speak to ladies in the office, or get in touch with us via our Facebook page PSA - St Thomas' C of E Academy.

2026 Events

Feb: Glow disco 04/02/26

March: Mother's day gift stall 11/03/2026
1-4p. Easter treasure hunt 25/03/2026
3-4pm

April: Break the rule day 14/04/2026

May: Disco 20/05/2026

June: Father's day gift stall 17/06/2026.
Summer fayre 05/06/2026 3:30-5:30pm

Non uniform days for summer fayre TBC.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI-GENERATED VIDEOS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

AI-generated videos are increasingly difficult to spot and easy to share. From fake news clips to deepfake abuse, children and young people face new risks every day online. These videos can imitate real people, spread false narratives or even generate harmful content from scratch. Understanding these dangers is crucial for schools and families who want to protect children in a fast-evolving digital world.

DEEPPAKE ABUSE CONTENT

Shockingly, artificial intelligence is now being exploited to create child sexual abuse material (CSAM). These synthetic images and videos are a form of digital abuse, often generated by manipulating real children's photos, including ones shared innocently online. Alarmingly, the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) has identified a sharp rise in this disturbing trend, whether real or AI-generated, this content causes lasting trauma – and its creation or possession remains a criminal offence under UK law.

BLURRED REALITY

Regular exposure to fake content can erode a child's trust in real-world evidence, if everything can be faked, they may begin to question genuine videos – including actual abuse or injustice. This is known as the 'herd's dilemma', where real harm is dismissed as fake news. It can discourage victims from coming forward or speaking up.

USED FOR BULLYING

Deepfake technology is already being used by peers to create embarrassing or explicit clips of classmates. These videos can be edited to appear as though a child said or did something they never did. Once shared, they are almost impossible to delete completely. AI-generated bullying adds a new layer of harm that is deeply personal and difficult to prove.

EMOTIONAL MANIPULATION

AI-generated videos can be used to provoke strong emotions, including fear, anger or guilt. False footage of crying children, injured animals or burning buildings may be created purely for clicks, donations or political influence. Children may feel upset or powerless, unaware that what they are watching has been digitally invented to manipulate their reaction.

DISINFORMATION

AI-generated videos can spread fake news, making it harder for children to separate fact from fiction. False clips may include deepfake interviews, hoax disasters or fabricated health claims. AI is already being used to produce misleading or persuasive material that appears authentic. If they can't develop media literacy, children may accept false content as truth.

IMPERSONATION AND SCAMS

With just a few photos or voice clips, AI tools can imitate someone's appearance or speech. This makes it easier for scammers or bullies to create fake videos of children, teachers or celebrities. These impersonations can be used for fraud, harassment or humiliation – and can spread quickly through social media or group chats, due to the viral potential of video, in particular, on social media.

Advice for Parents & Educators

TEACH HOW IT WORKS

Explain to children that videos can be faked – and show them how. Demonstrating side-by-side examples of real vs AI-generated clips helps to build awareness. Discuss how faces, voices and even movements can be copied by machines. Understanding the technology reduces fear and builds confidence in navigating digital content safely.

TALK ABOUT TRUST

Always keep lines of communication open. If a child sees something upsetting or unbelievable, they should feel safe discussing it without judgement. Create an environment where they know they will not get in trouble for asking questions. This also helps you step in quickly if harmful content has been shared. Trust is vital and needs to be nurtured.

ENCOURAGE CRITICAL QUESTIONS

Help children question what they watch. 'Who made this? Why was it made?' is it trying to persuade me? These habits encourage digital thinking, especially when videos seem too shocking or convenient. Reinforce that not everything shared by friends or influencers is true, even if it looks convincing at first, and that the initial approach should always be one of scepticism.

STRENGTHEN PRIVACY SETTINGS

Advise children not to share voice notes, selfies or personal videos on public platforms. AI tools often scrape content from social media to create deepfakes. Use privacy controls to limit who can see their content and turn off facial recognition where possible. Fewer public images means fewer opportunities for misuse.

Meet Our Expert

Brandon O'Reilly is a paedagogue and digital education consultant with over a decade of experience in education. As Director of Digital Strategy across multiple schools and an adviser to The National College, he specialises in digital safety, EdTech, and pastoral care.





As World's Children Day was last week, our Article of the Fortnight is #4 - Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights by creating systems and passing laws that promote and protect children's rights.





God, I praise you for the gift of knowledge. I pray you would help our children learn well and flourish. May they discover their unique talents and gifts. Give them a passion for the world around them,
Amen

