

# St Thomas' CofE Academy



**‘Learning for life with Jesus’**

**Dear Parents,**

**We have reached the end of Spring 1; it has been a busy half term and I am sure the children are all ready for the break after working so hard over the past 6 weeks.**

**This week has been action-packed with lots of learning taking place, ending with our wonderful discos on Thursday night. A huge thankyou to our fabulous PSA for their commitment and dedication to our school.**

**Please do read our newsletter carefully as it will include key events and dates taking place after the break.**

**I wish you all a happy and peaceful half term and look forward to seeing you all return on Tuesday 25th February.**

**Thank you, as always, for your support,  
Mrs Pierpoint**

**Friday 14th February 2025**





# ‘Learning for life with Jesus’

## Dates for your diary:

17 <sup>th</sup> - 21 <sup>st</sup> February - HALF TERM	
Mon 24 <sup>th</sup> Feb	INSET DAY – School closed to children
Tues 25 <sup>th</sup> Feb	School re-opens to children
Tues 25 <sup>th</sup> Feb	3:30-6:30 Parents Evening Slot 1
Wed 26 <sup>th</sup> Feb	3:30-6:30 Parents Evening Slot 2
Thurs 27 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Young Voices - Birmingham
Fri 28 <sup>th</sup> Feb	9am Friday Worship followed by Y6 Coffee morning
Mon 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mar	Reception SHINE afternoon 2pm start
Thur 6 <sup>th</sup> Mar	World Book Day
Thur 6 <sup>th</sup> Mar	PSA Beetle Drive
Fri 7 <sup>th</sup> Mar	9am Friday Worship followed by Nursery Coffee Morning
Mon 10 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Y1 SHINE afternoon – 2pm start
Tue 11 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Y4 INSPIRE session at St Thomas Church – 2pm start
<b>Tue 11<sup>th</sup> Mar</b>	<b>Y3 Victoria Hall – Halle Orchestra</b>
Thur 13 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Y1 and Y2 visit to the library
Fri 14 <sup>th</sup> Mar	9am Friday Worship followed by Y3 coffee morning
Mon 17 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Y2 SHINE afternoon – 2pm start
Fri 21 <sup>st</sup> Mar	9am Friday Worship followed by SEND parents coffee morning
Mon 24 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Y3 Laches Wood – 1 night residential
Fri 28 <sup>th</sup> Mar	INSET DAY – School closed to children
Mon 31 <sup>st</sup> Mar	INSET DAY – School closed to children
Fri 4 <sup>th</sup> April	9am Friday Worship followed by Reception Coffee
Fri 4 <sup>th</sup> April	Visit to Parliament – School council and Rights Respecting School ambassadors

# SHINE

## workshops

We would warmly like to invite parents and carers into school to learn alongside your child. Following the success of our previous workshops, we would like to launch our spring term SHINE workshops - all of our spring term events will have a Reading 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 methods we use in school to teach Reading.

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

### Dates:

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January - Year 3  
Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January - Nursery  
**Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February - Year 4**  
**Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February - Year 6**  
Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March - Reception  
Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March - Year 1  
Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March - Year 2  
Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April - Year 5

## Inspire sessions at St Thomas' Church.

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

### Dates:

Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup> January	Year 6
Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 4
Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> May	Year 2
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> June	Year 1
Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> 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.

**Please note: Time change to a 2pm start.**



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: Spring 2**

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February - Year 6

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March - Nursery

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March - Year 3

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March - SEND parents/ carers coffee morning

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March - School Closed - INSET day.

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April - Reception

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> April - Year 4



**Parents Evening will take place:**

**Tuesday 25th February**

**Wednesday 26th February**

**15:30-18:30**

**Appointments can be booked via Arbor.**

**Please contact the office if you are unable to book an appointment.**

**We look forward to welcoming you in to school to celebrate your child's achievements with you.**





## World Book Day—Thursday 6th March 2025! Vocabulary Parade!

For World Book Day this year, we will be focusing on vocabulary therefore, we would like the children (and staff!) to come to school dressed as a word of their choice e.g. vibrant, athletic, heroic, artistic, fragile, mythical, fatigued etc.. The list is endless! You really don't have to go out and buy anything extra. Please see some pictures attached for ideas. If your child already had a World Book Day costume in mind, then they could still dress as a character and choose a word associated with their chosen character. For example, for Dogman, your child could be 'playful' or 'officer'. We will have a vocabulary parade in school, and a winner will be chosen from each class, so try to be as creative and adventurous as you can with your word choices!





# St Thomas' Beetle Drive!

## Thursday 6th March

The PSA are holding a family evening with a **BEETLE DRIVE** on **Thursday 6th March. 6-8pm**

A Beetle Drive is a lively game, where you each roll dice to create your beetle, by collecting different body parts per number rolled, race to complete your beetle first. It really is a super simple and super fun game for all ages to get involved in, making it a perfect family night out. Moving around the room, this promises a great opportunity to socialise with other families. Winners from each round will be put into a draw to win the *end of the night prize*, where we will have a child and an adult winner.

Doors will open at 6pm, the game will start at 6:15pm, we aim to have the evening finished for 8pm. Tea, coffee and juice will be available throughout the evening free of charge, or a tuckshop will be available but at an additional cost. (cash only)

Tickets will include entry, evening of game playing and food provided from Wrights Pies. If you can select your orders from the choices below and return your completed slip with correct payment to the school office in an envelope. Last date for ticket orders is 14th February



# Important reminders:

We have reports of headlice in classes. Please check your child's hair regularly and treat accordingly.

Please also remember that long hair must be tied up at all times.

St Thomas' is a NUT FREE school. We have members of our school community with severe allergies to nuts. Please help to keep them safe and avoid bringing any nuts or food containing nuts to school.





# Important reminders:

## Getting Your Child to School Really Matters



### Did You Know... ?

In a School Year, If Your Child is Late Every Day By...	Your Child Would Have Lost Approximately...	or They Would Have Missed Approximately...
5 Minutes	3.5 Days from School	20 Lessons
10 Minutes	7 Days from School	41 Lessons
15 Minutes	10 Days from School	55 Lessons
20 Minutes	14.5 Days from School	82 Lessons
30 Minutes	22 Days from School	123 Lessons

Please Encourage Punctuality to Maintain Attendance

Please do not: Park on the zig-zag or double yellow lines around school, block or park across people's driveways, park or drive on pavements, be rude or abusive to local residents, pedestrians and other drivers. Parking on pavements has been causing an obstruction for parents and residents, including an incident where an Ambulance could not get to one of our local residents in an emergency.

## National Story Telling Week 2025

Children took part in many lovely activities to promote a love of reading! Thank you to those parents who were able to join us for lovely reading time each morning, we hope you enjoyed it as much as the children did! Years 3,4,5,6 have visited the local library and shared many stories with each other. Children were also able to choose a book to borrow. All classes from the early years right the way to Year 6 took part in a shared story writing activity. We ended a fantastic story telling week with a whole school assembly, sharing the story and celebrating all of the children's hard work! We are very impressed with the story they created!



# Bikeability

Children from Year 4 and Year 6 completed their Bikeability programme. The children gained skills and knowledge about how to be a safe cyclist! They had so much fun and the instructors were incredibly impressed with their behaviour and enthusiasm!





# Children's Mental Health Week

## ‘Know yourself, grow yourself!’

We kick started the week with a whole school assembly on the theme and took part in a variety of activities relating to the **INSIDE OUT** movie in our PSHE lessons. In addition, we promoted daily journaling in school and joined many schools across the country in an online workshop.





# Children's Mental Health Week

## TIPS FOR FAMILIES

Place2Be's

CHILDREN'S  
MENTAL HEALTH  
WEEK

- 1 Encourage journalling**  
Just like Riley, encourage your older children and young people to express their emotions and thoughts through journalling. It can be less confronting than speaking out loud and is a helpful way to process what is going on.
- 2 Make space for reflection**  
When children and young people reflect on their different emotions, it can help them better understand themselves and what they need.  
Go for a walk, drive, or try some mindful colouring or baking together.
- 3 Be visual**  
Use imagery, such as emojis or flashcards to help children and young people recognise and label their feelings.
- 4 Practice mindfulness**  
Try mindful activities, and quiet family time, to enjoy being in the present moment. This can help children and young people be aware of their thoughts and emotions and learn a useful new coping technique.
- 5 Communicate**  
Feedback is crucial for helping us see our blind spots and gain greater insight. Children and young people are no different. Creating safe and supportive ways to share your own experience with your child can help them understand themselves and their impact on the world around them.



If you're a parent or teacher, you'll find loads of useful advice to help you support the brilliant young people in your lives – from FAQs to downloadable packs. [Here4You.co.uk](https://www.here4you.co.uk)



# Year 1's visit to Brampton Museum!

Year 1 had an amazing trip to Brampton museum. They went on a magical journey to the past and helped a little boy called William from the Victorian times to find his lost toys. The children made some of their own toys that they thought William might enjoy playing with.



# Chinese New Year

What a Fantastic Chinese New Year Day we have had in Nursery Reception! We have been learning about some of the traditions of Chinese New Year. We've had a great time this morning taking part in lots of activities together. We had delicious lunch and have been dragon and lion dancing this afternoon.





# Safer Internet Day!

Our Pupil leaders and newly appointed digital leaders led us in a whole school worship linked to Internet safety.

We took part in live workshops, teaching us how to be safe online!

## Online safety tips for parents of primary school children 6-10 Year Olds

internet matters.org



### Checklist:

#### Agree on boundaries

Be clear about what your child can and can't do online - where and when they can use the internet, how much time they can spend online, the sites they can visit and the type of information they can share. Agree with your child when they can have a mobile phone or tablet.

When you do give them their first device make sure that it is set up appropriately for them with the right parental controls in place. It's a good idea to **introduce tech-free meal times** and encourage them to **keep phones out of the bedroom at night** to help them build a healthy screen time balance.

#### Put yourself in control

Set parental controls on your home broadband and any internet-enabled devices. Set up a user account for your child on the main device they use and make sure other accounts in the household are password-protected so that younger children can't access them by accident.

#### Explore together

The best way to support your child online is to **talk to them about what they do online** and what sites and apps they like to use. Be inquisitive and ask them to show you their favourites to check they're suitable.

### Search safely

If you let your child search independently, **make sure safe search is activated on Google and other search engines**, as well as restricted mode on YouTube. You can set your default search to one designed specifically for children, such as Swiggle, and can save time by adding these to your Favourites.

### Check if it's suitable

The age ratings that come with games, apps, films and social networks are a good guide to whether they're suitable for your child. **For example, the minimum age limit is 13 for several social networking sites**, including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok.

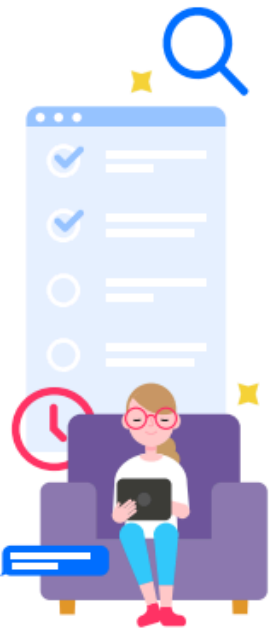
Make use of platforms and services designed with children in mind like CBBC, YouTube Kids, Sky Kids, BBC iPlayerKids. Although sites aimed at under-10s like Spotlite (Formerly Kudos) also have social networking elements. See other similar social networking sites built for kids in our [Social networks made for kids' guide](#).

### Stay involved

Encourage them to use their tech devices in a shared space like the lounge or kitchen so you can keep an eye on how they're using the internet and also share in their enjoyment.

### Talk to siblings

It's a good idea to talk to any older children about what they're doing online and what they show to younger children. **Encourage them to be responsible and help keep their younger siblings safe.**



## Know this stuff matters, but don't know where to turn?

Internet Matters is a free online resource for every parent in the UK. We'll show you the best ways to protect your children online - 1 information, advice and support on all the big online safety issues.

44% of 5-10 year olds have their own mobile phone\*

81% use a tablet to go online\*

\*Source: Ofcom Children and parents: Media use and attitudes report 2022

# All aboard the walking bus!

We have a new and exciting opportunity approaching! We're hoping to launch a Walking Bus. A Walking Bus is where a group of children are escorted to school by adults, either volunteers or school staff.

There is a meeting start point and the option for bus stops along the way where others can join. There are many benefits, here are just a few: helps the environment, healthier and more alert to start the school day, Road Safety & local area awareness. Please complete the survey on Dojo for more information regarding volunteering to support our walking bus!



# Walking Bus



## Parent / Carer Information Introduction

Your school is investigating a Walking Bus to increase the number of children walking to school and reducing vehicles from around the school area.

### What is the Walking Bus?

A Walking Bus is a fun, safe and active way to travel to and from school. Trained and checked adults, either parent/carers volunteers or school staff, lead the group of children from a meeting point to school. Staffordshire County Council Active School Travel Team will be supporting your school with training, guidance and route planning throughout the setting up process.

### Why do we need a Walking Bus?

It is a great way to bring many benefits to the school and you as a parent/carers and to the children walking with the walking bus. There are many benefits, here are just a few.

*Helps the environment*

*Healthier and more alert to start the school day*

*Road Safety & local area awareness*

*Social for leaders and the children*

*Fun & Friendly*

*Free & saves time*

### What's involved in becoming a volunteer?

Not all Walking Buses use parent/carers volunteers, however if your school is looking for support to lead it, the benefits of helping are below.

Please speak to your school to find out more.

- Volunteers walk on a rota basis that's suits the individual
- Helping once a week can make a huge difference
- Buses do not need to run daily, they can be set up to suit the needs of volunteers
- DBS checks are free and completed by the school staff
- All training and equipment is provided

Start to make the journey to your school an active and healthier journey that is fun for everyone!

Get active, get moving, get involved.

### Next steps



### For more information, please contact your school office.

To find out more from Staffordshire County Council Active School Travel Walking Bus scheme [www.staffordshire.gov.uk/activeschooltravel](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/activeschooltravel) or email [walking.bus@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:walking.bus@staffordshire.gov.uk)



## **Exciting news at St Thomas'**

**The Three Spires Trust prides itself on its vision to foster the flourishing of all adults, offering invaluable opportunities for professional development and growth. Therefore I am pleased to announce that Mrs. Tompkins has successfully been appointed as Assocate Assistant Principal, working closely with the school leadership team to drive the school forward and ensure that children continue to receive a fantastic education at St Thomas' CofE Academy.**





# Article of the fortnight

**Article 17, Access to information from the media - Every child has the right to reliable information from a variety of sources and governments should encourage the media to provide information that children can understand. Governments must help protect children from materials that could harm them.**





# **‘Learning for life with Jesus’**

**As we prepare for half term and reflect back on a busy 6 weeks filled with learning, fun and happiness we thank God for the opportunities we have been given.**

**Dear God,**

**Thank you for our families who love and care for us, and for our school where we learn and grow. Help us to be thankful for what we have and to care for others with compassion.**

**We thank you for the unique talents and abilities you have given each of us. Help us to use them wisely and to share our gifts with those around us.**

**Amen**