



**St Thomas CE  
(vc) Primary  
School  
Newsletter**

**Spring 1  
Week 2  
26.1.24**

## Diary Dates

- **Monday 8th January- Start of Term**
- **Friday 2nd February NSPCC Numbers Day**
- **Friday 9th February- End of term**
- **Monday 19th February- INSET Day- children not in school**
- **Tuesday 20th February – Start of Spring 2**



## Acting Head Message



Good afternoon.

First of all, apologies for the later Newsletter this week. My computer had that Friday feeling and didn't want to play ball so I had to wait for the updates to complete.

I've been really proud of the children in school this week. They always show such dedication to everything we challenge them to. In collective worship we have been thinking about how we can make our school a



better place. Each week the children vote to work on something that they would like to improve. Last week the most voted for was to make our lunchtimes a nicer experience for everyone. The children really rose to the challenge, offering to help the younger children, pouring drinks for each other, lining up quietly and making playtime fun for all. Today we had our first Friday lunch VIP table. Some of our lunchtime staff nominated the children they noticed making a difference. These children were given an early lunch pass, had lunch at the top

table and had music whilst they ate. The children enjoyed it so much, we hope to do it again soon. Well done to those who were recognised this time!

I said last week we would share some of the changes we are making as a school. This week I would like to share some staffing changes. Mr Boosey, is now our assistant headteacher for behaviour, attitudes and attendance, whilst Mrs Washington is now our assistant headteacher for Curriculum and Assessment. Mrs Jones and Mrs Littlewood are now senior curriculum leads and will be driving forward the curriculum with Mrs Washington. It may be that they return calls, or become a point of contact as the school keeps driving forward.

Have an enjoyable weekend.

Mrs Goddard

#teamthomas

## Collective Worship



This week we reminded ourselves of the story of David and Goliath and Alex and the Lions. We reminded ourselves about being brave, sticking up for our beliefs and being a leader who influences change. We learnt more about the British Value of democracy and how we can use voting to influence who and what we believe in. We watched a short film and the children asked some great questions.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-feDZRxJKw>

**'From Tiny Seeds Grow Mighty Trees'**





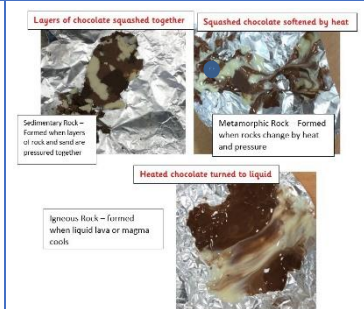
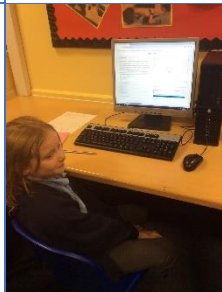





## FOST requests and information

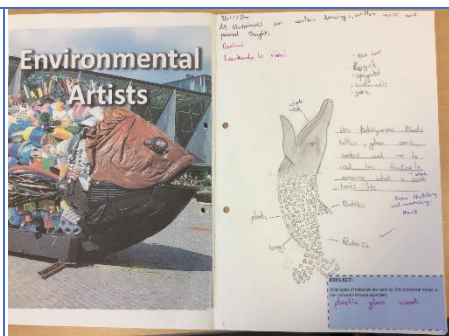


Apologises that this week's meeting had to be cancelled.

**Keep a look out here for more FOST fundraisers here.**

Reception		This week in reception in maths we have been measuring and comparing the capacity of different containers in different ways and we have been continuing to practice using our phonics knowledge to write lots of imaginative captions and sentences.	
Year 1		Year 1 have been busy making moving vehicles in our DT lesson this week.	
Year 2	As a class, 2W decided to keep the cloakroom area in our classroom tidy. We have been consciously picking coats up off the floor and making our classroom tidier. Alfie has been a super star this week and been a great role model to the rest of the class.		
Year 3		This week Year 3 explored how rocks are formed with the use of chocolate. We were able to demonstrate what happens layers of mud and sand in Sedimentary, Metamorphic and Igneous rock	
Year 4		This week in computing, we have been learning about algorithms and writing code. We have written code to command a turtle to make a square on the screen. This has been challenging as the code needs to be perfect, otherwise the computer does not understand the command.	
Year 5	Continuing with the Sow, Grow, Farm theme; The Year 5s sampled their own soup making in the classrooms this week. It was an experience enjoyed by all!		 Prepare, eat and evaluate carrot & lentil soup
		The Year 5 book which we've just about finished reading is coming to a theatre in Sheffield (The Lyceum).	
		I think tickets start at £15 but would be a fantastic experience if anyone is able to take this opportunity of seeing this wonderful book come to life!	

**Year 6**



**Year 6 have been exploring different environmental artists. They have been looking at the different types of materials that can be use to create art in this style, so the can plan and make their own.**

## **NUMBERS DAY.**

**On Friday 2nd February, we will be celebrating numbers day. Pupils are invited to come to school dressed in digits or alternatively as their favourite timestable rockstar character. We are asking for a voluntary donation of £1 to help us raise money to go toward the NSPCC charity. Throughout the day, we will be completing lots of number inspired lessons.**



## **Attendance**

We continue to monitor attendance and we are identifying persistent absentees. (less than 90%) We are keenly aware that there may be genuine and compelling reasons for pupil absence and the monitoring involves working with families to remove barriers and support pupils in their school attendance

**Attendance Matters**





# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about GROUP CHATS

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### BULLYING

Unkind comments or images which are purposely aimed at an individual can be shared freely in a group chat – allowing and often encouraging others to join in the bullying behaviour. If this content is shared in a group of their peers (especially a larger group), it serves to amplify the hurt, embarrassment, anxiety and isolation that the victim feels.

### EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

This common issue with group chats can happen in several ways: starting a new group, for instance, but deliberately excluding a certain child. Likewise, the chat may take place on an app which one child doesn't have access to, meaning they can't be involved. A child can also feel isolated when a group chat is used to discuss or share images from an event that everyone else but them attended.

### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some discussions in group chats may include inappropriate words, swearing and unsuitable images or videos. These could be viewed by your child if they are part of that group, whether they actively engage in it or not. Some chat apps have a disappearing message function, so your child may be unable to report something they've seen because it can only be viewed once or for a short time.

### SHARING GROUP CONTENT

It's important to remember that – while the content of the chat is private between those in the group – individual users can easily share a message, photo or video with others outside of the group or screenshot what's been posted. The risk of something your child intended as private becoming public (and potentially going viral) is higher if there are people they don't know well in the group.

### UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Within larger group chats, it's more likely your child will be communicating with people they don't really know. These strangers may be friends of the host, but not necessarily friendly toward your child. It's wise for young people not to share personal details and stay aware that they have no control over the messages and images they share after they've put them online.

### NOTIFICATIONS AND FOMO

A drawback of large group chats is the sheer number of notifications. Every time someone in the group messages, your child's device will be 'pinged' with an alert: potentially, this could mean hundreds of notifications a day. Not only is this highly distracting, but young people's fear of missing out on the latest conversation results in increased screen time as they try to keep up with the chat.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats are often an arena for young people to gain social status. This could cause them to do or say things on impulse, which could upset others in the group. Encourage your child to consider how other people might feel if they engaged in this behaviour. If your child does upset a member of their group chat, support them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

### PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

In any online communication, it's vital for young people to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Discuss the importance of not revealing identifiable details like their address, their school or photos that they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they lose control of where it may end up and how it might be used.

### GIVE SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Remind your child that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded in a group chat, instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their hurt feelings and help to put them back in control by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. On a related note, you could also empower your child to speak up if they're in a chat where others are being picked on.

### AVOID INVITING STRANGERS

Sadly, many individuals online hide their true identity to gain a child's trust – for example, to gather information on them, to exchange inappropriate content or to coax them into doing things they aren't comfortable with. Ensure your child understands why they shouldn't add people they don't know to a group chat – and, especially, to never accept a group chat invitation from a stranger.

### BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If your child is in a chat where inappropriate content is being shared, advise them to block the users sending the material, report them to the host app or platform and exit the group. If any of this content could be putting a minor at risk, contact the police. Emphasise to your child that it's OK for them to simply leave any group chat that they don't feel comfortable being a part of.

### SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Having a phone or tablet bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be a massive irritation and distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to your child that they can still be part of the group chat, but that it would be healthier for them to turn off or mute the notifications and catch up with the conversation at a time which better suits them.

## Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing Internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



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