

## ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Punctuality is very important; please make every effort to arrive at school on time. It really is essential that we build and nurture good time-keeping habits from the very earliest age and we would ask parents to support us in our drive to achieve perfect punctuality. A record of each child's attendance and punctuality is included in the end of year report to parents.

<b>START OF THE SCHOOL DAY</b>	<b>8.55am</b>
<b>LUNCHTIME</b>	<b>12noon - 1.00pm</b> for Infants <b>12.15pm - 1.20pm</b> for Juniors
<b>END OF SCHOOL DAY</b>	<b>3.10pm</b> for Infants <b>3.15pm</b> for Juniors



At the end of school, we would ask parents to make certain that they are here in good time to collect their children. **Please ensure you inform the school if a different person is to collect your child at the end of the day - even if it is just for a single occasion.**

## ATTENDANCE

At St. Thomas Becket we have over 400 children on roll and take pride on our excellent attendance record. The percentage attendance level at the school remains above both borough and national averages which is very encouraging.

Where a child's attendance begins to fall below the school average because of illness or a series of minor illnesses, the school is required to ensure that days missed are verified by doctors – even for single days.

Please help us to maintain and to improve on our excellent record. We have a computerised registration system in place and individual records are retrieved for each pupil giving numbers of absences, authorised and unauthorised, as well as the number of occasions they are late and these will be recorded in a child's annual report.

## ABSENCES AND LATE ARRIVALS

It is essential that you let us know by telephone if your child is absent and that you send a note when he or she returns to school. In the event of a child being absent with no information given to the school, we have a policy of telephoning home to ensure the child's safety. Children who arrive after 9.00 a.m. should be signed in by parents and must go to the Office to be registered.

## LATE COLLECTION

It is imperative that, if parents should know that they are likely to be a little late that they contact school. If pupils are collected late, a late register is taken and children must be signed out by the person collecting them and a reason for late collection written. This register is scrutinised by the Educational Welfare Officer and may result in referral to Social Services in case of regular late collection. Where a child remains uncollected at school after 4.00 p.m., with no clear reason and where school is unable to contact a parent or other carer, Social Services may be asked to collect the child and take him/her into care until contact is made.



## ABSENCE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

For the sake of children's safety, children who need to be taken home during the school day must be collected. We keep a book in the School Office which must be signed by the adult collecting the child and a reason given.





## LEAVE DURING TERM TIME

Permission for holidays is not automatically given and, by law, Headteachers may only authorise up to ten days absence each year during term time in 'exceptional' circumstances. Any time taken that is not agreed by the head teacher will be recorded as unauthorised.

There are some thirteen weeks of school holidays and, clearly, it is best for your child's learning to take holidays during these school holiday periods. In cases of

exceptional leave please fill in a holiday request form which can be obtained at the office. You will appreciate that it is not possible for teachers to set work to be completed during holidays taken in term time.

## POLICY ON CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES AND REMISSIONS

During each year we encourage the classes to go on outings to places of interest that are relevant to the topic they are studying. The Education Act 1988 states that all normal activities that take place in school hours shall be free. However, no extra funds have been made available to cover the costs of trips: therefore, the Governors have decided to ask parents for a voluntary contribution to the costs of outings. If sufficient people do not contribute, the outing will not be able to take place. Parents at St. Thomas Becket have always supported the school in this way and we are grateful for that support.

The Governing Body has a Remissions policy in case of family hardship in accordance with DfES guidelines. Full details are available at the school.

## AFTER- SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

We have a strong tradition of after-school events which cater for a wide range of ages and abilities. In the past year we have been able to offer opportunities for children to participate in netball, football, French, athletics, dance, tennis, rugby and gymnastics.

## HEALTHY EATING

We cook our meals on the premises and aim to provide increasingly high standards. There is a wide range of choices for the children and menus are prepared with both health and enjoyment in mind.

We are convinced that the best meal for children in the middle of a long school day is a hot meal.

In keeping with our Healthy Eating Policy, please remember that children's packed lunches must provide a substantial midday meal rather than one based around sweets, fizzy drinks and crisps which are not allowed. So that parents may monitor their children's welfare, any uneaten food in packed lunches will be brought home at the end of the day. Please note that lunches containing nut derivatives are not permitted due to the fact that some children have potentially serious nut allergies.

All children, whether taking school lunch or packed food have access to unlimited quantities of water.

Under the Fruit for Schools scheme, all children under seven receive some fruit each day. We also encourage children of all ages to bring in a piece of fruit to eat at morning playtime and to drink fresh milk.

## SCHOOL MEALS

In line with the majority of other schools in the borough, the school uses a secure website called ParentPay to enable parents to pay for their child's meals online. If you do not have access to the internet or do not wish to use this payment method, parents can request a ParentPay Paypoint card, which allows you to pay for meals at participating stores.

School meals must be paid for in advance. If you think that your child may be eligible for free school meals please contact the school office.

All KS1 children are now eligible for a free school meal under the Universal Infant free school meal offer.



## **PACKED LUNCHES**

Children bringing packed lunches to eat during lunchtime, are accommodated in the dining hall. Water is provided but children may bring their own carton drink.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT**

At St. Thomas Becket, each individual child is encouraged to develop his or her own abilities. Through everything we do, we aim to help the child to respect each other's cultures, religions, languages, likes, dislikes and different outlooks. The children are encouraged to participate in all activities to avoid gender stereotypes. We take special care to encourage less verbal or confident children and to value their contributions.

We also feel it is important that teaching materials reflect our multi-racial society and that all children should have equal access to the curriculum. Our teaching and learning policy emphasises the right of all children to full access to our curriculum.

## **HOMEWORK**

We hope that children will participate in local activities outside school hours to extend their experiences, for example, cubs, brownies and swimming clubs or other school-based after-hours activities. However, we expect all the children to be involved with our Home-School Reading Programme and to bring books home to read each evening and at weekends.

Teachers will set specific homework tasks in relation to the work children are doing in class.

Children are strongly encouraged to learn tables and spellings at home and will occasionally be asked to continue their study interest at home.

## **BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE**

The principle school rules centre round the need to treat others as we ourselves would wish to be treated and to show proper care and regard towards property in the widest sense. We expect all members of our school community to do nothing that would bring the good name of our school into disrepute.

Obviously, it is expected that children carry out the directions of the teacher, helpers and midday supervisors.

Bullying, offensive comments, racial remarks and physically aggressive acts are not tolerated in any manner or form. Each issue either seen or brought to the attention of staff is looked into and dealt with.

The normal sanctions for unacceptable behaviour range from depriving the child of break times to being placed on report. In cases of serious misconduct, parents will be informed.

In order to maintain good behaviour and discipline, we rely on the full support of parents.

## **SECURITY OF PRIVATE PROPERTY IN SCHOOLS**

The Authority does not insure property, including money. Parents are advised in their own interest, to obtain insurance cover against loss of or damage to their property while on school premises or elsewhere. It is important that children do not bring unnecessary items to school.

## **PARKING**

Parking can be a problem both before and after school. Birchanger Road can be very busy. The safest parking is either along the side of Woodside Green or in Dickenson's Lane.

Parents are earnestly requested not to block neighbours' houses or businesses when parking.



## CREDENTIALS

The success of St. Thomas Becket Catholic Primary School has been acknowledged in a number of ways.



The **Active Mark for Sports England** Recognizing St. Thomas Becket's focus on Physical Education and the quality of the PE & Games curriculum.



The **Healthy School Award** for our development of the Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship curriculum. This is a key component of the new agenda for schools, Every Child Matters.



The **Investor in People Award** For our commitment to staff development and building links with other agencies.



The **ICT mark** which recognises excellence in ICT and is awarded to schools demonstrating that they are committed to using technology to improve their overall effectiveness and efficiency.

