ST ETHELBERT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL, IN THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

Headteacher: Mr S Marshall
St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School and Nursery
Dane Park Road
Ramsgate, CT11 7LS

Telephone: 01843 585555
Email: admin@stethelbertsschool.co.uk
Website: stethelbertsschool.co.uk

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Latest Newsletter from Mr Marshall

God of Creation, who molded humanity from the fertile earth: Grant that we, following the good examples of Queen Bertha and King Ethelbert, may gladly receive and fruitfully nurture the seed of the Gospel to the bounty of your kingdom. Amen

St Ethelbert, pray for us.

St Augustine, pray for us.

Dear St Ethelbert's Community,

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Welcome back to Term 4 out of 6. I honestly cannot believe that we are heading towards Easter. Mind you, the weather is showing a slight improvement with temperatures rising, so spring may be in the air! It has truly been a lovely first week back at St Ethelbert's and it has been good to be back. We had a celebration on Wednesday to celebrate Saint Ethelbert's Feast Day.

Year 6 went on a trip to Dreamland on Wednesday as well. This wasn't to go on the rides but take part in workshops from a range of community teams such as the police, Southeastern Rail; Kent Road safety; transport etc. This is an event that supports transition to secondary school, which is fast approaching now and learning about the wider experiences of life as they grow older. The children were impeccably behaved. Well done all!

A message from the Department of Education

I receive hundreds of emails each week but it was lovely to see us receive the following email from the Secretary of State for Education. It is wonderful for our school community to be recognised for such an achievement. The staff work exceptionally hard for all the children.

Dear Mr Marshall,

Congratulations to you and your team on the excellent outcomes the disadvantaged pupils at St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School achieved at the end of the 2024/25 academic year. Your school's performance places it among the very best nationally, and this is a significant achievement.

This success reflects the dedication of your staff and the hard work of your pupils. It shows what can be achieved when ambition and commitment come together. Thank you for everything you do to give children the best possible opportunities to succeed.

Your school's achievements demonstrate what is possible, and I hope you will continue to share your

experience and best practice with others. Even the strongest schools can go further. We encourage you to lead the way as a system leader - sharing effective practice, championing networks, supporting collaboration, and helping raise standards across the sector.

There are real opportunities available for you to support improvement for a wider group of pupils including through:

- engaging actively with your region's RISE networks and partnering with nearby schools and trusts;
- contributing to regional roundtables and professional communities to spread the approaches that are working in your context; and
- sustaining excellence by continuing to focus on disadvantaged pupils

Please pass on my thanks and congratulations to your staff and pupils. I look forward to working with you as we strive together to raise standards for all.

Yours sincerely,

Bridget Phillipson
Secretary of State for Education

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Saint Ethelbert's Feast Day was on Wednesday.

Here is some information about our patron Saint: 'Ethelbert was probably born around 560 and succeeded his father to the title of King of Kent in about 580. He died in 616. As King of Kent Ethelbert was 'Bretwalda', or Britain-ruler, as overlord in the east of England as far north as the river Humber. The marriage agreement that he made when he married Bertha, a French princess, allowed her to continue to practise her Christianity although Ethelbert was then a pagan. It is probable that Augustine's mission to England in 597 was, in part, as a result of this marriage. When Augustine landed on the Isle of Thanet a meeting was arranged with Ethelbert who insisted on it being outdoors as he was concerned that Augustine might 'work his magic' on him inside a building. The meeting was successful and Augustine and his followers were allowed to preach and baptise in Canterbury. Later Ethelbert was himself baptised and as a result gave his palace site for Augustine's first church, this is now the cathedral. Meanwhile Ethelbert moved his palace 7 miles to the coast at Reculver. With Ethelbert's authority Augustine placed his Archbishop's throne at Canterbury, not in London as ordered by Pope Gregory. The archbishop of Canterbury has remained the head of the Church of England ever since. But for this history, Canterbury would not have the importance that it has today. As a result, Ethelbert is commemorated with three statues, one outside the Cathedral's porch carved in 1870 and another on the 'Screen of the Six Kings' in the centre of the cathedral dating from 1460. The third statue is modern and is to him and also Queen Bertha in Lady Wootton's Green, Canterbury showing the possible scene in 597 when the King meets Bertha as she returns from her prayers in St Martin's church with the great news that Augustine has landed. The site of these statues is on the route that Bertha is thought to have taken. There is further information about the event and also the details of their clothing and accoutrements on storyboards by the statues. There are two stained glass windows depicting him in the Chapter House of the Cathedral. The first in the west window shows him being baptised and the second in the east window shows him standing. Ethelbert's further claim to fame results from an entry in a document written over 500 years after his death. The Textus Roffensis is a 12th century document that contains the only copy of a set of laws laid down by Ethelbert. These laws are the first English laws ever written down and specify compensations that should be paid for particular offences; the penalties depended on who was the perpetrator and also who was the victim. For instance, theft from the King was to be fined nine times the value of the goods stolen and compensation for killing a freeman was 50 shillings to the king as overlord. Ethelbert and Bertha were also grandparents of Saint Eanswythe.

God Bless

Mr Marshall
Headteacher

Make-up

We have noticed that some children are bringing make-up into school. These are strictly not allowed in school. Please check your child's bag and remove. These must be kept at home. Thank you

Class Photos

This year, whole class photos will be on **Monday 9th March**. Please make sure the children come in wearing full school uniform, even though this is an expectation every day. Weather permitting, we will have traditional photographs outside in front of the church like before. If not, the photographs will have to be in the junior hall. We are praying for kind weather!

World Book Day

World Book Day is on Thursday 5th March. Children are welcome to come to school dressed as a character from a book, but if your child prefers it, they could come in their uniform and bring in a book to share with their class instead.

The children will have great fun during the day exploring books and undertaking fun book-based activities. Your child will be coming home next week with a voucher which they can use to buy a book. Please click on this link to find out which books they could buy and where they can buy them from: https://www.worldbookday.com/participating-retailers/.

Competition! Take a photograph of your child reading in an unusual place! There will be a prize for the most unusual location! Please email any photographs to admin@stethelbertsschool.co.uk.
Happy reading!

Mrs Webb and Mrs Russell

Breakfast Club – IMPORTANT NOTICE

Due to a significant increase in the number of children attending Breakfast Club and to ensure we maintain a safe environment for all pupils, please note the following:

- All sessions **must** now be booked in advance through School Money. Bookings can be made up until midnight the night before the required session.
- To ensure the safety of all children, attendance is now strictly capped at 30 pupils per session. Once this number is reached you will not be able to make a booking. All children must be booked in advance to

attend. If a child has not been pre-booked, they will unfortunately not be able to join breakfast club that morning.

- A parent or carer must now check their child in with a member of staff at either 7:45 am or 8:00 am.

Exceptional Circumstances: We understand that emergencies happen. If you require a space due to exceptional circumstances and are unable to book online, please contact the School Office directly. Please note that admission in these cases is at the sole discretion of the Headteacher.

We appreciate your cooperation and support in helping us keep our breakfast Club safe and enjoyable for all children.

Important Reminder: School Lunchbox Guidelines

We have recently noticed an increase in chocolate-based items in lunchboxes. To maintain our healthy eating standards and ensure the safety of all pupils, we would like to remind you of our policy regarding lunchbox contents.

🍫 Chocolate & Sweets

Under our Healthy Eating Policy, chocolate and confectionery are not permitted. This includes:
Chocolate bars and bags of chocolate buttons.
Chocolate-covered biscuits or cereal bars.
Chocolate spread (e.g., Nutella or supermarket brands) in sandwiches or wraps.
Sugary confectionery e.g. Haribo, marshmallows, lollipops etc.
We kindly ask that these items are replaced with healthier alternatives such as fresh fruit, yoghurts, or plain rice cakes.

🥜 Strict Nut-Free Zone

We have several pupils with severe nut allergies. To keep our school environment safe for everyone no nut products of any kind should be brought into school.
This includes peanuts, tree nuts, peanut butter, and nut-based chocolate spreads.
Please Note: If these items are found in a child's lunchbox, staff will remove them for the safety of the school community. They will be returned to the parent at the end of the day.

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Thank you for your continued support in keeping our children healthy and safe. You can find our full Healthy Eating Policy on the school website.

PTFA – Mother's Day Gift Wrap

There will be a Mother's Day gift wrap event on Thursday 12th March. The payment for each gift (£2.50) is available through 'School Money'.

The children can choose a gift from our various stock of items, which will be wrapped and ready for someone special.

We are looking for additional volunteers to help the children choose and wrap gifts during the morning of the event. Any help would be very much appreciated.

If you are able to support, please contact:

ptfa@stethelbertsschool.co.uk

SEND

Please click here for the latest Kent County Council Newsletter for SEND. Here you will find the latest news on Children's mental health, KCC SEND progress to date and further general advice, guidance and support.

Children showing our school values this week				
Year Group	**Class Name/Saint Name**	**Child**	**Value**	**Reason for Value**
Nursery	United Kingdom Saint George	All of Nursery	Inclusion	Working together and being amazingly well behaved when visiting the animals this week!

Reception	Poland Saint Jadwiga	Asmin	Knowledge	Always following our carpet rules and being ready to learn!
		Riley	Thoughtfulness	Making sure the forest school was super tidy at the end of the session
Year 1	Romania Saint Andrew	Zach	Knowledge	His understanding of flags, countries and the equator in Geography lessons.
		Charley	Knowledge	Writing independently using her phonic knowledge
Year 2	Hungary Elizabeth of Hungary	Rose	Thoughtfulness	Always willing to hep others who may be sad or lonely.
		Isabelle	Knowledge	Her excellent understanding of pence and pounds in maths.
Year 3	Japan Paulo Miki	Riverlynn	Knowledge	Suggesting how to add drama and tension to her adventure story.
		Jacob	Inclusion	Always insisting that he help others to complete tasks.
Year 4	Italy Catherine of Siena	Bailey	Thoughtfulness	Being a kind and considerate member of Italy class.
		Emilia	Knowledge	Writing an informative newspaper report in History.
Year 5	India	Maisie	Inclusion	Being a fantastic team leader during PE.

	Saint Mother of Teresa	Bailey	Inclusion	Showing fantastic teamwork during rugby in PE.
Year 6	France Saint Vincent de Paul & Saint Therese of Lisieux	Ava	Inclusion	Putting in extra effort to be an active member of the class.
		Poppy	Knowledge	Producing fantastic work in RSE based on thoughts, feelings and actions.

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Well done!

Class Masses

If you would like to join us for a class Mass then you are very welcome. Children lead the Mass with readings and bidding prayers.

Date	Year Group attending Mass
Friday 6th March	Whole School Mass (lead by Year 6)
12th March	Year 4
19th March	Year 3
26th March	Year 2

Mass will be on Thursday mornings at 9.30am in St Ethelbert's church

Attendance this academic year…

Class with No Lates: Year 4

Our attendance policy states that we aim for a 100% attendance

Reception	**95.1%**
Year 1	**97%**
Year 2	**97.3%**
Year 3	**92.2%**
Year 4	**100%**

Year 5	**97.1%**
Year 6	**94.6%**
Whole School this week	**96.1%**
Whole School academic year to date	**95.1%**
National Average academic year to date	**94.8%**

It will be a non-uniform day on Monday for Year 4 who achieved 100% attendance this week. Well done!

PLEASE NOTE – IF YOU NEED TO CONTACT A MEMBER OF THE WRAPAROUND CARE STAFF AFTER 4PM THE NUMBER TO CALL IS 07400 170519

DIARY DATES

2025/26

March 2026
1st St David's Day
5th World Book Day - Dress up
9th Class photos
12th Mother's Day Gift Wrap - PTFA
17th St Patrick's Day
17th St Gertrude's Day
20th Red Nose Day - wear red
24th Feast of Saint Oscar Romero
24th/25th Parents Evening – 3.20-6.00pm
30th Easter hats and bonnets due in
30th Sharing the learning - parents invited in from 2.30pm
30th Multiplication Table Check parent's info meeting 3.20pm
31st Passion Service - 10am
31st Stay and Play session for children starting Nursery in Term 5 - 3.30pm-4.00pm

April 2026

2nd END OF TERM 4
20th TERM 5 STARTS
22nd SEND Parents Evening
23rd St George's Day
24th Swimming Year 4 - 1.10-1.55pm (5 sessions)
25th Feast of St Mark

May 2026

4th Bank Holiday
Year 2 Tests
7th Crowning of Mary - whole school Mass
11th - 14th Year 6 SATs
22nd Sharing the Learning - parents invited in from 2.30pm
21st Summer Census
22nd END OF TERM 5