



ST ETHELBERT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY
HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL, IN THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

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Latest Newsletter from Mr Marshall

Prayer for the New Academic Year

Loving God, as we begin a new academic year at St Ethelbert's School and Parish, we thank you for the gift of new beginnings. Bless our children, parents, staff, families and parish community. Give us wisdom to learn, courage to face challenges, and kindness to care for one another. Help us to grow in faith, hope and love, following the example of Jesus each day. May St Ethelbert's be a place where everyone feels welcomed, valued and supported. Guide us, bless us, and stay with us throughout the year. Amen.

Dear St Ethelbert's Community,

A Wonderful Start to the New School Year

On behalf of all the staff and governors at St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, welcome back! I would especially like to extend a warm welcome to our new families. We hope the summer holiday was kind to you all and you managed to get some relaxation during the glorious weather. Ms Dowd (Deputy Headteacher) and myself look forward to getting to know you all over the new academic year.

It has been wonderful to welcome everyone back to school, and we are delighted to say that it has been a very settled and positive start to the new school year. The children have come back looking incredibly smart, happy and ready to learn, and it has been lovely to see them settling into their new routines so quickly and any anxiety disappear quickly, as they begin their next adventure.



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We are excited to let you know that our school newsletter will be sent out **every Friday** during term time to keep you updated with all the latest news, events, and important information. **This week**, you will receive a **hard copy** of the newsletter containing essential information. **From next Friday** onwards, to help us save paper and be more environmentally friendly, the newsletter will be sent **via email**.

Please make sure you:

- Check your email inbox (and your spam/junk folder, just in case!)
- Ensure the school has your most up-to-date contact details so you don't miss out on any important news.
- If you need to update your contact information, please get in touch with the school office as soon as possible. Have you changed your number or address over the summer?

We also place the newsletter on our school website and copy it on our School Facebook page. If you do go on our school Facebook page, please remember to 'like' and 'follow' us.

Next week in the newsletter, I will explain our priorities for the year that Ms Dowd and I have been working on over the summer, which we are really excited about. As you know I always have high expectations in mind whether it is regarding teaching & learning, attendance, punctuality, behaviour, uniform, respect, or manners. I know you want the same so your children achieve their potential, so please support us with this. Working together, to get an exemplary education for the children. Ms Dowd and myself continue to be on the gates every day so we look forward to seeing you then for a chat.

Please find below some helpful information to any general start of year questions:

Uniform

We are aware that there have been some issues with the school uniform shop over the summer, and we have followed this up as a school. We appreciate that some families may still be waiting for orders to arrive, and we do not want this to become an additional worry at the start of term.

We may have some spare uniform available in the school office for families who need it, so please speak to us if this would be helpful. Equally, if you are waiting for an order to arrive, we are very happy to give families some



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breathing space while this is sorted. We know that you are doing your best, and our priority is that the children are happy, settled and ready to learn.

A Very Busy Summer!

Although the school may have looked quiet over the summer, there has been a huge amount happening behind the scenes! We have been working hard to improve our buildings and facilities and make sure that our school continues to provide the very best environment for our children and staff.

Our car park has been cleared and we will soon have a brand-new electronic entrance on Hereson road to make things safer; new fencing and new tarmac. The car park is still being completed and we expect the work to be finished within the next few weeks. We are very pleased with how it is looking so far.

Our Year 3 and Year 4 classrooms have also been decorated. They look incredibly fresh and bright, and the difference this has made to the learning environment is fantastic.

We have also made some important changes to our Year 2 space. The classroom has been made slightly smaller to create an additional room for group work. We desperately needed this extra space, and it will make a real difference to the way we can support children in smaller groups.

Over the next few weeks, we will continue to make changes to our internal spaces. The Thrive Room will move into our new group-work room, our staffroom will move into the current Thrive Room, and our existing staffroom will then become a much larger music and computer room, as well as providing another valuable space for group work. This will free up space in our canteen where wrap around care is held because at the moment it is a multi-use room. It is an exciting change that will give us much more flexibility across the school.

Keeping Warm This Winter

In the junior building, we have also installed a brand new permanent boiler, with new pipework throughout and new radiators. This is a major improvement and means that we will be warm and comfortable throughout the winter months, something we are all very pleased about!

Finally, a huge thank you to everyone who helped clean, organise and put the school back together over the summer. There were certainly moments when we wondered whether everything would be ready in time for the children returning, but through a huge amount of hard work, teamwork and determination, we did it!

We are incredibly proud of our school and excited about the improvements we are making. Most importantly, it has been fantastic to see the children back, looking smart, feeling settled and ready for another successful year of learning.

Here's to a brilliant year ahead!



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Individual and Sibling photos

Individual and sibling photos will be on Monday 14th September. Please make sure the children are smart and in full school uniform.

Kent Test – Year 6

This will take place next Thursday 10th September for children that have entered the Kent Test 2026. Any questions then please speak to the class teacher or refer to my previous letter sent out last year.

Wrap Around Care - Reception to Year 6

We are delighted to be able to offer our wrap-around care provision at St Ethelbert's again this year from 7.45am until 6.00pm, Monday to Friday. Breakfast club will remain as it is now, starting at 7.45am at a cost of £2.50 per day, per child. After school, we can offer children care from 3.20pm until 6.00pm. This is open for children from Reception to Year 6. The cost is £6.50 per day, per child to cover staffing, resources and food. This will include up to two hours and 40 minutes of after school provision such as arts and crafts, outdoor play and a small snack and drink such as beans on toast. You may want the provision every day due to work commitments or ad hoc days. Either way, you must pre-book and pay in advance via school money. The booking system is now live via school money. Children can be collected **no later** than 6.00pm at Dane Park Road entrance. Any questions then please contact the school office. To speak to a member of the wraparound care staff after 4pm please call 07400 170519

School Money and Class Dojo

Any issues accessing school money then please phone the office. Any issues with Class Dojo then please speak to the class teacher at dismissal. If you need to speak to the class teacher at dismissal, can I ask you to wait until the teacher has finished dismissing all the children. Most importantly, we need to make sure all the children are safely dismissed to parents before engaging in conversation. It also means other parents who need to go, do not need to wait for a long period of time. If it is easier, please message the class teacher on Class Dojo or book a meeting via the office. The teacher will get back to you when they are available. Teachers are not expected to respond during the evening or during teaching time. Thank you.



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Homework

Homework will begin from next Thursday. Homework is to be completed and returned the following Monday please (or Tuesday if it is a bank holiday). Please read our homework policy on the school website to see what your child will get for homework.

Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance at school is statutory – please don't be late! Please make sure your child is in school every day. The gates open for registration at 8.40am prompt and will close at 8.50am. If your child is late then both you and your child will need to come into the school office to register the reason for the lateness, including for Nursery children. If you are late three times with your child in a term, then you will be asked to attend a meeting with me to discuss the reasons and a moving forward plan. If children are not collected by an agreed adult/carer at the end of the school day, they will be taken to the office. If a parent/adult picks up later than 10 minutes after the actual collection time, then the collection adult must sign them out electronically, and again provide the reason. Please collect on time – 3:10pm Reception, Years 1 & 2 and 3:20pm Years 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Second Hand Uniform

This year, we will display uniform on the playgrounds at certain times throughout the year. There will be a recommended price attached to each item as a donation towards the school. Items to be paid via school money.

Allergies - We are a nut free school

A number of children, staff and volunteers have allergies including some, which could potentially have very serious consequences. Parents should ensure that they do not give children any food to eat, which contains nuts. This includes chocolate spread. We also ask that you do not bring in cake or sweets for your child's birthday (please see below). Benedict's Allergy Law has been effective since 1st September 2026. Thank you.

Water Bottles

Please make sure your child comes into school with **water** in a labelled water bottle. We do not allow juice in school. Thank you.



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A quick reminder for all parents of our new Year 3 children

Now that your children have moved up into Key Stage 2 (KS2), their school day is slightly longer. Their new home time is **3:20 pm**, rather than the 3:10 pm finish they were used to in Key Stage 1. Thank you.

PE Days

Children will come into school dressed in their PE kits on their PE days; this will allow the children more time for PE and also allows the PE kit to get washed in between lessons. Please ensure the children are wearing **black trainers** and a plain **navy tracksuit** with a **navy top (no logos please)**. We understand some of you have ordered from the school wear shop and are still awaiting delivery.

Class PE Day

Reception	Thursday
Year 1	Thursday
Year 2	Thursday
Year 3	Friday
Year 4	Friday
Year 5	Tuesday
Year 6	Tuesday

School Uniform Policy - ESSENTIAL

Please see our school uniform policy on the school website. Please make sure that the uniform policy is fully followed, especially for black polished shoes (not trainers) and the correct PE uniform. Ties must be worn. Let's continue to take pride in our uniform. A big thank you to parents and carers as the children look so smart. Thank you!

Birthdays

Sometimes families like to mark their child's birthday by bringing in something for the other children in the class. The school would prefer that this optional gift for the class is a book, which can be shared and enjoyed together. Because of allergies, Benedict's Allergy Law and food hygiene, staff will not distribute sweets or cakes sent in by parents. If this arises, staff will return the items to parents explaining why they cannot be distributed.

After School Clubs



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Next week, you will receive a Google Form regarding after school clubs e.g. choir, homework, sports and forest school. Most of our children attend a club so space is limited but we try to accommodate as many children as possible. Clubs will start from Monday 14th September.

Communication

I believe communication between school and home is essential to your child's academic progression and success, so whether you prefer email, phone call, text or face-to-face conversation, all of St Ethelbert's staff members will be happy to help. If you need to talk to someone:

- The class teacher is always the first point of contact. The easiest time is at the end of the day once all children have been dismissed. Please make an appointment at the office or directly with the teacher.
- If you need to speak to a senior member of staff, then please speak to a middle leader: Miss Rees, Mrs Webb, Mrs Russell, Mrs James or Mrs Vernon.
- Mrs James is my SENDCO who works on a Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, so please make an appointment with her regarding SEND concerns you have with your child.
- If the issue still doesn't get resolved, then please make an appointment via the office to speak with myself or my deputy Ms Dowd.
- If you need help at home, need help with your child's anxiety or behaviour then Jane from Spurgeons is here to listen and help. She is like a family liaison officer for our school. Conversations can happen in a group or a 1:1. If you would like more information and contact details, please speak to the school office.

Attendance and punctuality have been excellent this week, thank you. Please keep it up throughout the year.

Wishing you all a relaxing weekend and I am looking forward to a successful year ahead.

God Bless

Mr Marshall

Headteacher