

# More News 27th September 2024

## St Thomas More Catholic Primary School Newsletter



### Pupil-led Prayer

We have a reminder of what our school is all about this week when Year 6 and Reception met their prayer partners for the first time. Year 6 had carefully planned their own individual prayer time to share with the Reception prayer partner. The Reception children were so attentive and the Year 6 children were thoughtful and gentle in leading their partner in prayer.

What a beautiful afternoon!





## Cafod Family Fast Day

Friday 4th October is Cafod Family Fast Day. This is a day when we reflect on our blessings and recognise when we have more than enough. Families are invited to go without (often one meal on this day) and to donate goods equivalent to what they would have used to those who do not have enough.

We are combining this with our Harvest Thanksgiving and the parish efforts to support those in need. We are asking children to bring in one or more items of non-perishable foods on Friday that can be donated to the Food Bank to make lunches for those in need.

Our STM community always gives generously on these events and I know our school will contribute well again this year.



## PTFA NEWS!

### PTFA Lotto!

**Exciting news!** We held our first PTFA Lotto draw in Wow Assembly today.


The winners for September's draw are:

- 1st (£50 prize!) - number **64** - Deborah King
- 2nd (£? prize) - number **33** - Julie Hill
- 3rd (£5 prize) - number **51** - Cathy & Barry Gill

(e-gift Amazon voucher)


If you would like a chance of winning £50 e-gift Amazon voucher in the next draw, it's not too late to join - you can sign up easily using the QR code below.

STM PTFA PRESENTS



FOR FULL DETAILS & TO SIGN UP  
SCAN / PRESS THE QR CODE

**£1 month**  
**11 draws a year**  
**Sept-July**  
**Allocated number**  
**No number limit**  
**Must be aged 16+**



**WINNER**  
**1st prize £50**  
**2nd prize £10**  
**3rd prize £5**  
**Amazon e-Gift Voucher**

**ANY QUERIES EMAIL**  
**stm-ptfa@hccmac.co.uk**

## Disco

The first school disco of the academic year will be held on Friday October 18th. As always, the event can only run with enough willing helpers. If you are able to help out for an hour or two, please let the PTFA committee know by clicking on this [link](#).

More information can be found on the [PTFA Lotto page](#) of the website.

## PTFA Tuck Shop

To celebrate the arrival of half term, the PTFA will be running a tuck shop on the playground at the end of the day of Friday 25th October.



## Pre-loved Sales - Donations Needed

The PTFA will be running a pre-loved uniform sale at the disco, so remember to bring along some change. There are lots of items of school uniform that can be bought for a very reasonable price and this is a great time to stock up for winter.

If you have any good quality pre-loved uniform that can be used in the sale, please send it in to school. Remember to make sure it's washed first.

## Pre-loved Christmas Jumper Sale - Donations Needed

The PTFA would like to offer a pre-loved Christmas jumper sale before Christmas. This can only happen if enough pre-loved Christmas jumpers are donated though, so if you have any tucked away at the back of a drawer please send them in to school (washed!) to be added to the pre-loved Christmas jumper sale.



## Pre-loved Communion Outfits Sale - Donations Needed

And lastly, if you have any pre-loved Communion clothing (boys' or girls') that you would like to offer to an appreciative home, please do donate it to our pre-loved Communion outfit sale. This can include dresses, shoes, suits/jackets and trousers.




**ST Thomas More Preloved First Holy Communion dresses and suits**

Please donate your preloved First Holy Communion dresses, suits, accessories, smart shoes, etc

So they can be worn again by other families in our School and Parish family when celebrating the Sacrament.

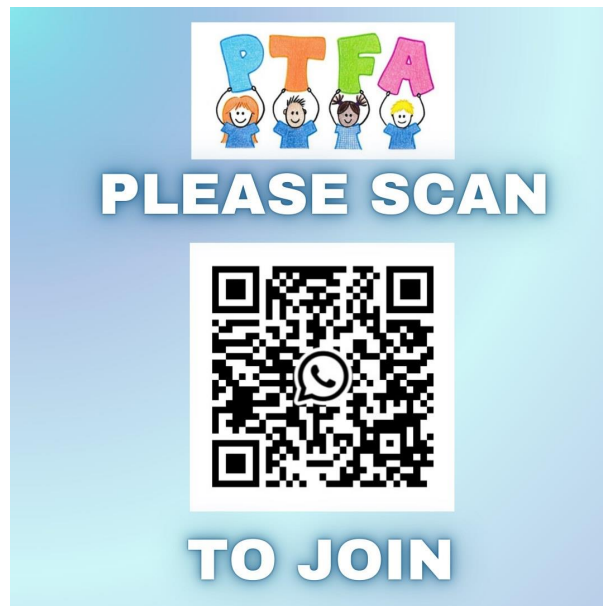
Please drop off at the School Office or any School disco.

The PTFA will make them available to buy or loan at preloved uniform sales and discos.

## PTFA AGM

The PTFA held their annual AGM on Monday. It was fantastic to see some new faces as well as the regular contributors. The minutes of the meeting can be found on the website and at the end of this newsletter. Don't forget to look on the [PTFA page](#) for information on the PTFA.



The next PTFA meeting will be held on 11th November at 6.30pm in the Community Room - put the date in your diary and come along.



As you can see, our PTFA are very active and do a wonderful job of supplementing what the school can provide - **thank you!**

## PE Information

We are excited to share with you further information about the new PE structure we are running this year.

Children will continue to have the weekly long session of PE. This takes half an afternoon and so is 1 hr and 10 minutes of PE lesson. On the days when children don't have the long PE lesson, they will take part in Mini PE, which will last for between 10 and 15 minutes. The Mini PE will take different

forms depending on the needs of the class, the weather and their 'PE diet' and will include activities like cross country, yoga, zumba, grounding exercises, stretching, walking or running the Mile Line, HIIT, etc. These will take place at different times of the day to enable children to participate in physical activity when they most need it. This means children will still receive 2 hours allocation of PE a week.

We have done this for a number of reasons:

- Children will continue to develop skills and 'PE knowledge' through the revisiting of different types of Mini PE across weeks and terms.
- Increased frequency of exercise is more beneficial for physical health than larger blocks of exercise.
- With child mental health at worrying levels locally and nationally, short bursts of PE everyday will support the mental and emotional well-being of children across the school.
- Research shows the most effective way to develop habits is to do little and often rather than big chunks at more spaced out intervals. We want our children to learn how positive the impact of exercise can be on their lives in so many ways and for those who were previously suspicious of physical activity to be reminded of how much fun it can be!
- The provision for PE is less likely to be affected by bad weather (In very bad weather children might miss a whole lesson of PE for two or three weeks in a row; with this system, bad weather might mean they miss 10-15 minutes for one or two days. All the rain this week seems to be testing this intention, but it should be that children are enjoying more exercise in total.)

Staff received training in delivering Mini PE on Wednesday this week and so the new system will now be a regular part of the school day. As always, with any new initiative, we will be reviewing and refining as time progresses. Please remember, the intention with every decision we make is to improve the experience our children have, not to diminish it!

Later in the year, we will be launching our enhanced curriculum provision which will supplement the existing curriculum with additional, life-enhancing skills, such as debating, appreciating nature and performing (more news on this closer to the launch). Some of these units will be heavily PE based, such as children taking part in Bikeability, and so at some points during the year, children will be enjoying far in excess of the 2 hrs PE.

## We're Hiring!

We currently have a number of roles that we are appointing to, including [Admin Assistant](#) and [Office Manager](#). If you know anyone who would be interested in these roles, please forward them the information (adverts available by clicking on the links).

The advert for the new Headteacher can be found [here](#). Please share this with anyone who you think may be interested. Your lovely messages and words have been much appreciated - thank you.

## IMPORTANT - Y6 Secondary Applications

The admissions process for Year 6 pupils to apply to secondary schools for September 2025 is now open. **It is vitally important that parents/carers of children currently in Year 6 completed the application before the deadline of 31st October.** Please see below for more details.

### Starting Secondary School in September 2025

Apply online at  
[www.coventry.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/schooladmissions)  
by **31 October 2024**

for children born between 1 September  
2013 and 31 August 2014

31 October 2024	Closing date for all applications
31 December 2024	If you move house before the 31 December 2024 you <b>MUST</b> contact the School Admissions Team to update your address
3 March 2025	Result emailed by 5pm or details available in your online account
5 March 2025	Parents who submitted a paper application will receive the result by letter



Please go to our website at  
[coventry.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://coventry.gov.uk/schooladmissions)  
Council for details on how to apply. For further help  
call School Admissions on **024 7697 5445**.

### Key facts about the application process

- ▶ All parents of Year 6 pupils must apply for a school place through their Local Authority (the city where you live)
- ▶ Non-Coventry schools and Grammar schools can be listed on your application
- ▶ Even if you already have an older child at the school you must still apply for your younger child
- ▶ You should list three schools in order of preference. There is no advantage in listing fewer than three schools or including the same school more than once; in fact, by not including three realistic preferences, it could result in your child being allocated a school some distance away.
- ▶ If you live within a school catchment area you have more chance of your child being offered a place at that school if you request it and make your application on time. Information regarding the catchment area for your address can be found at [coventry.gov.uk/catchmentareas](http://coventry.gov.uk/catchmentareas)

**School Open Days are advertised at**  
[coventry.gov.uk/school-admissions/secondary-school-open-evenings](http://coventry.gov.uk/school-admissions/secondary-school-open-evenings)  
Please check the details on applying for a faith school as they may require you to provide additional information as part of the application process.

### Increase your chances of getting the school you want

A copy of the secondary school admissions booklet is on our website at [coventry.gov.uk/downloads/download/243/in-year-primarysecondary-school-admissions-booklets](http://coventry.gov.uk/downloads/download/243/in-year-primarysecondary-school-admissions-booklets) Please consider each school's specific admissions arrangements carefully when making your application.

- ▶ Look at the oversubscription criteria in the policy to work out which priority would be given to your application
- ▶ Check how places have been allocated in the last 3 years
- ▶ Check your distance from the school. The Admissions team can confirm this for you, please email: [11plus@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:11plus@coventry.gov.uk) stating 'distance query' in the subject box
- ▶ Compare your priority and distance with how places have been offered in previous years to get an indication of how successful your application might be

## Do You Have the Correct Number for School?

We advise all parents and carers to save the number for St Thomas More School in their phones.

The Parish Office has received a number of calls from parents/carers trying to contact the school over the last few weeks. The church number is completely separate from the school number and they cannot advise or help with any queries or messages.

Please save the school number into your phone to make reaching the right people at school easier:

**024 76 849 910**

## PTFA News!

### Welcome to the PTFA!

Every parent/carer in our school is automatically a member of the PTFA - welcome!

The PTFA are a friendly group of parents and carers who work together to enhance the experiences our children have in school. This can take the form of raising funds to provide the 'extras' that make school life so much more fun, to putting on events such as school discos and arranging for Santa to visit us at the Christmas Bazaar.

All and any help is much appreciated! Whether you are great at planning and organising, or you have a spare two hours to help sell sweets at the school disco, please join in to help make our school an

even happier place. To receive more information about supporting the PTFA and join the PTFA Whatsapp group, follow the link on the QR code below.



## Asda Parentkind Cashpot for Schools

By signing up to the Asda Rewards app you can help to raise much-needed money for the school through the PTFA. It's simple, won't cost you anything, but is already helping the PTFA to support the school.

**Top tip!** When searching for our school, enter the postcode - **CV3 5DE** - as there are lots of St Thomas More schools around and we want the money to come to us and not a different STM!

**Hurry though as the offer is only valid until the end of November!**

# INTRODUCING CASHPOT FOR SCHOOLS

Download and opt-in with Asda Rewards and we will donate ££s to schools.

**HERE'S HOW:**

- 1 Download the Asda Rewards app and opt-in to Cashpot for Schools.
- 2 Choose your primary school
- 3 Shop in-store across Asda & George and scan your Asda Rewards app at the checkout.
- 4 Shopping online? Simply log in to Asda.com using the same details as your Asda Rewards account.
- 5 We'll do the rest! We donate ££s to your chosen school every time you shop, so they can spend it on exactly what they need.

With **Parentkind**

## Free Online Safety Course for Parents and Carers

Matt, the schools' PCSO is delivering some free online safety courses for parents and carers of children of primary age. We were lucky to have Matt in school last year to deliver this course and feedback from parents was extremely positive, with one parent commenting that 'every parent needs to know this!'

Please use the QR code to book onto the course.

### INTERNET SAFETY WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS & CARERS

On September 26th<sup>th</sup> and September 30th, West Midlands Police will be delivering a **FREE ONLINE SAFETY** workshop for parents and carers living in Coventry.

We will share **guidance and strategies** on how to make the internet a safer experience for children.

A number of different topics will be explored, including:

- Apps and appropriate ages
- Safety settings
- Grooming, sexting, bullying, radicalisation and extremism
- Gaming
- Introducing house rules
- How to approach conversations and what to do if your child is a victim

To view dates and times and to book a place, please [click here](#) or scan the QR code above

West Midlands **POLICE**

## Volunteers Wanted!

Do you have a spare afternoon a week that you would like to spend with some fabulous people? We would love to add to our growing group of volunteers. We have lots of varied things that volunteers can help with and at the moment, we are especially looking for volunteers to hear our children read.

If you are able to help, please let the [admin](#) team know. All volunteers require a DBS check (which is free and school will arrange).

## Attendance Update

During the summer holidays, the way attendance law is used by Local Authorities was updated. This means that Fixed Penalty Notice (fines) are increasing and there are more stringent consequences for parents of children who do not attend school regularly. This reflects the importance the DfE is placing on children having good attendance. The latest DfE guidance, which you may find useful, is [here](#).

The ways schools record absences is also changing, which could impact on the 'codes' used for absences.

Please note that Headteachers **cannot** authorise holidays during term time and all requests for leave of absence for exceptional circumstances **must** be made by completing the Leave of Absence form available from the school office.

If you are finding it difficult to ensure your child has good attendance, please contact the school as soon as problems arise so that we can help as soon as and as much as possible.

## Attendance is important!

We monitor all pupils' attendance and will contact you (often by letter and text message) if their attendance is getting lower than we'd expect or your child has had low attendance in the past. Please don't be offended - we have a duty to keep you informed of things that can affect your child's progress and/or wellbeing.

Lastly, please remember that term-time holidays **will not be authorised** and, in many cases, will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine) being issued.

**Whole school attendance so far this year is 96.2%**

Attendance this week is as follows:

Year R	99.3%
Year 01	98.3%
Year 02	96.7%
Year 03	95.6%
Year 04	96.7%
Year 05	94.1%
Year 06	95.0%

## Important Dates

- Monday 30th September, 6.30pm, LGB meeting
- Friday 4th October, Cafod Family Fast Day - please bring in donations of non-perishable foods
- Thursday 10th October, 7pm, Mass of Thanksgiving for Bishop Timothy, STM church
- Tuesday 15th October, Y1 visit to Herbert Art Gallery

- Friday 18th October, non-uniform day - £1 donation
- Thursday 17th October, Y6 Confirmation meeting (more details to come from Y6)
- Friday 18th October, school discos
- Saturday 19th October, 5pm, Mass of Commitment for Confirmandi (more details to come from Y6)

## PTFA AGM Minutes

### AGM MINUTES

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School PTFA

*Date | time 9/23/2024 6:30 PM | Meeting called by Martina McConville*

#### Committee members

Martina McConville Chair | Charlotte Davies Secretary | Nicola Attridge Treasurer | Vinodhini Jayakumar Vice Treasurer |

Attendees: Committee, Clare Staines, Michelle McNally, Laura Donegan, Natalie Gregory, Laura O'Regan, Michelle Walker, Kirstie Warne, Louise O'Rourke, Anna Cahill, Innocent Nsengiyumva

Item	Lead
Welcome	Martina
Prayer	Clare
Apologies	Charlotte

Finance Update – report attached Nicola

Committee Election: Clare

Role	Previously held by	Elected
Chair	Martina	Martina
Vice Chair	Vacant	Vacant
Treasurer	Nicola	Nicola
Vice Treasurer	Vino	Vino
Secretary/s	Charlotte	Charlotte & Louise

Nominations made by all in attendance and motion seconded by all in attendance with agreement from all in attendance.

**Constitution** All  
 Agreed to continue as it is  
 Add to website with roles. Committee/ Clare

Item	Lead
<b>Lotto</b>	Nicola
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draw: First draw Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September</li> <li>- Last sign up Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September</li> <li>- Draw: numbered coins from the OG STM 100 club</li> <li>- Lotto page to please be added on to the school website before Friday's draw - details sent via email to Sarah Collins.</li> <li>- Nicola needs to inform council of winnings every three months.</li> <li>- Aim to approach the church for support once Fr Simon is better.</li> <li>- Thank you to Nicola for organizing.</li> <li>- Keep selling! Chance to sign up each month.</li> </ul>	
<b>Disco: Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October</b>	
Disco 1: 17:15 – 18:15 – nursery, reception, Year 1 and Year 2	
Volunteers: 16:45-18:30 + Mrs Grant	
Disco 2: 18:30 - 19:30: Year 3 and Year 4	
Volunteers: 18:15-19:45 + Mr Webster	
Disco 3: 19:45 – 20:45: Year 5 and Year 6	
Volunteers: 19:30-21:00 + Mr Rooney	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DJ booked.</li> <li>- Volunteers = 7-9 per disco and interest to be sent via Google forms set up by Charlotte.</li> <li>- Used uniform sale to include Christmas jumper sale: appeal for jumper donations needed. Charlotte to make poster.</li> <li>- Put out Holy Communion outfits and start advertising – already have a poster to share.</li> <li>- Blackout – only x1 for the night.</li> <li>- Advertise the lotto and PTFA fundraisers e.g. Asda Cashpot and Easyfundraising. Charlotte to sort PTFA board.</li> </ul>	Charlotte Charlotte Charlotte
<b>Grotto: Friday 06/12/2023 @ 17:30-20:30</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clare to ask Jim Colby re Father Christmas. Laura O'Regan's Dad might be a potential back up.</li> <li>- Clare to ask Julie Mullin and Julie Hoare to decorate grotto with help.</li> <li>- ?Alex to lend + set up/ clear up lights with help. Other to pack up.</li> <li>- Clare to ask school office if Arbor can support booking + payments again.</li> <li>- Everyone to ask for donations for selection boxes (Cadbury's big box) - we need minimum 100 boxes.</li> <li>- Martina and Laura Donegan can donate wrapping paper.</li> <li>- Natalie's ladies at work will wrap the selection boxes.</li> <li>- Charlotte to set up Google forms for Grotto volunteers</li> </ul>	Clare Clare Nicola All Martina/ Laura D Natalie Charlotte
17:45 – 19:00: x6 (x2 sign in/ x2 walk/ x2 grotto)	

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Item	Lead
18:45 – 20:15 pm: x6 (x2 sign in/ x2 walk/ x2 grotto)	
20:15 – end: pack away	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Grotto slots: 10 minute for x9 children (90 children)</li> <li>18:00 – 18:50 – x5 slots</li> <li>19:00 – 19:50 – x5 slots</li> </ul>	
<b>School Requests</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Must come from "PTFA Funding Request Form" signed by Mrs Collins/ Mrs Staines. No add hock or last minute requests e.g. via Whatsapp / to PTFA committee.</li> <li>- PTFA continuing to contribute towards trips £5 (283 children on role).</li> <li>- Clare to ask if staff would like money per class for individual requests or increase school trip donation.</li> <li>- Super markets like Tesco offer donations via "blue tokens" for specific request. Clare to discuss with staff and school to apply directly.</li> </ul>	Nicola Clare
<b>Fundraising Ideas</b>	
Dates to confirm for academic year:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bags 2 schools: Bags to be dropped Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November and pick up by 11<sup>th</sup> November. Martina to confirm date with Bags 2 school.</li> <li>- Virtual Balloon race: TBC</li> <li>- Wonka Bars: TBC - run up to World Book Day (Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025)</li> <li>- Colour Run: TBC</li> <li>- Spring Disco: Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025</li> <li>- Summer Disco: TBC ?end of SATS week</li> <li>- Spring Fayre: TBC. PTFA to pay £10 for table.</li> <li>- Easyfundraising: please promote</li> <li>- Asda Cashpot for school open until end of November: please promote</li> </ul>	Martina All All
<b>AOB:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leavers hoodies now to be organized by school office, not PTFA</li> <li>- Clare / Michelle to speak to Mrs Grant about a school library for parents. Martina and Laura D have book storage to donate.</li> <li>- Tuck shop: Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October – need volunteers</li> <li>- Uniform sale @ Parents evening 22<sup>nd</sup> October and 24<sup>th</sup> October – need volunteers.</li> <li>- School notice board to include PTFA posters for all fundraisers</li> </ul>	Charlotte Charlotte Clare/ Charlotte
<b>Next meeting date: Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plan Grotto</li> <li>- Advertise Vice Chair</li> </ul>	

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