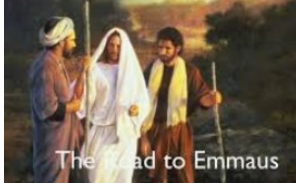




St. Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School



Friday, 17th April 2026



This week's Gospel theme:

"When Jesus was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight"

Luke 24:13-35

A message from Mrs. Rawlinson

Welcome back to the summer term of this academic year!

This week, we were delighted to welcome some very special visitors to school. The children had the wonderful opportunity to meet chickens, rabbits, goats, guinea pigs—and even the cutest little lamb! Our Early Years children especially enjoyed being able to cuddle and stroke the animals. A huge thank you to Acorn Farm for bringing such a lovely experience to us.

We have ended the week with a truly special Spirituality Day. Each class visited different classrooms throughout the day, taking part in a range of activities focused on spirituality and faith. It has been a fantastic day, and I'm sure the children have enjoyed it just as much as the staff.

Before Easter, I shared a questionnaire with parents, and I have since taken time to review the responses and reflect on the thoughtful feedback provided. Over the coming days and weeks, you will begin to see how we have listened and responded through a 'You said, we did' approach.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to contribute—your input is greatly valued.

Finally, we have a vacancy for teacher/SENDCo. Please follow the link for further information and feel free to share with anyone who may be interested in this exciting opportunity. Thanks.

[St Helens Borough Council | Jobs | Search here for your perfect career - Job Information | Apply for Teacher - SENDCO](#)

Parents Forum

The next parents' forum meeting will take place on **Monday 18th May at 4:30pm.**

During the meeting, there will be opportunities to:

- Find out about and discuss the questionnaire results
- Learn more about the renewed OFSTED framework and gradings
- Bring your own agenda items for discussion

Parental contributions to school life are always greatly valued, and it would be wonderful if you are able to attend with a shared focus on school improvement. Thank you in advance for your support.

A Message from a Governor who is also a member of Parish Church Bowling Club

Can parents please be aware that the small car park in front of the Scout Hut on Dartmouth Drive is owned by the Trustees of The Church of St Helen and is for the exclusive use of those visiting the Scout Hut and the Parish Church Bowling Club. There is a sign to this effect just before the entrance to the car park.

Over the winter a new gate has been installed at the entrance to the car park to replace the original one which was damaged beyond repair by a falling tree about 2 years ago. This gate is only unlocked when the Scout Hut or bowling green is in use, and is locked again once the cars of everyone attending have vacated the car park. During the summer months bowls matches will take place on two afternoons and three evenings each week. The timing of these, particularly the afternoon matches, coincides with the end of the school day, when parents are picking up children and possibly taking them to the playground in Dartmouth Drive or attending after school events.

Parents, and other members of the public, are politely asked, and strongly advised, not to park in this car park if it is open and there are spaces. If any cars are left in the car park after all the bowlers have departed, we will assume that they belong to someone attending the Scout Hut, who knows the combination to unlock the padlock on the gate, and lock the gate as we have been asked to do.

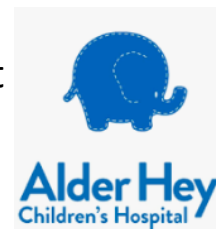
London Marathon Countdown!

I will be travelling to London on Friday next week ready for the run on Sunday.
The excitement is building as it is starting to feel very real!

I will be running to raise money for Alder Hey Children's Hospital and from the bottom of my heart, a massive thank you for the amazingly generous donations made already.

The total amount has blown me away and knowing I am doing it with your support will help carry me through the 26.2 miles.

THANK YOU ALL.



ADDvanced Solutions News

Please use the link below for the summer term newsletter of information and events from Advanced Solutions—helping the health and wellbeing of neurodiverse people.

[ST HELENS Summer 2026 - What's On Guide](#)

Fundraising help

Throughout the year, fundraising events such as the Christmas fayre, Easter Bingo, Christmas Card designs etc are organised by parents volunteering their time. The aim is to host fun events for the children/families to enjoy while trying to raise money which can be spent on the children to enhance their enjoyment and learning at school.

Anyone is welcome to help out or have a go at organising an event and all help is really appreciated as many hands make light work. If you are able to help in any way, no matter how small, please let us know.

St Helens Family Hub

On Tuesday, from 3pm we have two members of staff from The St Helens Family Hub Team on the playground available for parents to chat to.

Family Hubs provide a welcoming and accessible point of contact for families with children of all ages.

The support available through the Family Hub includes:

Parenting support and guidance – including help with routines, managing challenging behaviours, child development, and tailored support around **sleep and toileting**.

Speech and language support – offering advice and signposting to services that can strengthen children's communication skills, supporting GLD.

Family support and wellbeing – providing early help, emotional support, and links to local services.

Healthy lifestyle advice – practical guidance on healthy eating, nutrition, and routines to support overall wellbeing.

Volunteering and community opportunities – helping parents and carers build confidence, skills, and local networks.

Practical advice and signposting – covering a wide range of issues that may affect family life.

Their aim is to work alongside schools, professionals, and families to ensure every child has the best start in life.

School Milk - Reception Over 5's, Year 1 & Year 2

From 13th April, children over five will no longer receive daily milk through the school's subsidised scheme. A letter with details on how to order school milk for your child going forward was sent home before the Easter holiday.

If you have not yet ordered and would like your child to receive milk you can still register. A copy of the letter can be requested from the school office should you have mislaid the original.

We will continue to supply milk free of charge for children under five.

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about APP & PLAY STORES

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Since the introduction of Apple's App Store and Google's Play Store, an estimated two million apps have been made available on each. Ofcom's 2025 media use and attitudes report states that more than half of children aged between 3 and 7 use apps or sites to communicate with each other, and, by the ages of 10 to 12, 45% of children are playing games on their mobile phones. This guide will help you ensure that children use the app stores and their content safely.

MALICIOUS APPS WITH MALWARE

Although Google and Apple must approve the apps on their official stores, inappropriate content sometimes slips through the net. For example, in 2023, the security company Kaspersky found that multiple iOS and Android apps contained screen-reading software, primed to look for passwords and stealing crypto-wallet recovery phrases captured in screenshots.

UNOFFICIAL COPYCAT APPS

Both official app stores contain copycat apps – often games – designed to look like popular rivals, mimicking their branding, layout and logos. While these will usually just offer a poor experience packed with ads as a quick money-making exercise, they're also more likely to be vessels for malware than the products they're counterfeiting.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

As the App Store and Play Store are for all ages, there's a lot of content available that's inappropriate for children. Examples include apps that have references to alcohol, drugs, sex, violence or gambling. In general, these are sensibly age-rated, but social media sites such as YouTube and TikTok, which both have an App Store age rating of 12+, can be gateways to adult material.

PREDATORY IN-APP PURCHASES

App-making is a business, and most creators have found that 'freemium' software is the way to make money. That means the app will be free initially but will either require the user to watch ads or rely on them making in-app purchases. Some 'free' apps can be predatory, and there are plenty of examples reported where parents have racked up huge bills on behalf of their children's app activity.

ADDICTIVE BY DESIGN

Phone addiction is fast becoming recognised as a real concern, and apps are a big part of this. Freemium apps have a real incentive to keep children checking in every day in order to generate more ad views or secure extra in-app purchases. This can interfere with schoolwork and other offline hobbies.

SIDLOADED BANNED APPS

'sideloading' – the more complicated practice of installing applications on a device from sources other than the official app stores – bypasses Google's and Apple's security procedures; however, it is possible for tech-savvy users. This opens up huge risks – not just apps that would be forbidden by Apple and Google, but pirate ones packed with malware too.

Advice for Parents & Educators

ACTIVATE PARENTAL CONTROLS FOR APPS

Both Google and Apple have apps that can give adults greater control over children's phone activity. 'Screen Time' (iPhone) and 'Family Link' (Android) have a range of features, such as letting you set age-related restrictions on the app stores, require permission to download an app, set daily time limits on specific apps, and control real-world spending.

DO YOUR RESEARCH

If children ask permission to download an app, do your due diligence and research it. Read the app summary and search the internet for reviews and discussions to establish its legitimacy, safety and appropriateness – if it doesn't seem to be appropriate, look for safer alternatives instead.

LOOK BEYOND THE REVIEWS

App store reviews are helpful, but they are easily gamed, and some unscrupulous developers will pay for quick reviews to give their work perceived legitimacy. Take more than a cursory glance at listings by digging out the one- and two-star reviews and looking closely at the developer – for example, if they've published a lot of unrelated apps, that's a red flag.

TALK TO YOUR CHILD

Talk to children and make sure they're aware that apps can be risky. As part of a wider talk about internet literacy, ensure they don't download apps outside of the official channels, nor grant apps permission to access their camera, microphone, or photos without a good reason. Make sure they understand that in-game currency costs real-world money.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, The Telegraph, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.



The National College

Growing Together in God's Love

Important Dates for your Diary

April

- 21st - Family Hub Staff available on playground (from 3pm)
- 22nd - EYFS growing day (parents invited from 2pm)
- 22nd - KS2 online safety talk delivered by a PCSO
- 24th - PTFA Quiz Night - LSH Rugby Club
- 28th - Year 3 visit to World Museum Liverpool
- 28th - Personal Awareness Session for Year 6 delivered by Carl Finney (Judo Education)

May

- 1st - Year 5 visiting Tatton Park
- 1st - Year 1 Grandparent afternoon—History of toys
- 4th - May Day Bank Holiday - school closed
- 11th - Y6 SAT's week
- 16th - Year 4 First Holy Communion (Mass starts at 12.30pm, arrive in Church at 11.30am for photos)
- 18th - Nursery new intake September 2026 parents meeting (3.30pm)
- 19th - Reception new intake September 2026 parents meeting (3.30pm)
- 22nd - May Procession (11am)
- 22nd - Break for Whit Half-term (3.20pm)

June

- 8th - Return to school start of Summer Term 2
- 12th - Year 5 & 6 visit to Edge Hill University
- 12th - Year 4 start weekly swimming lessons at Queens Park (5 sessions)
- 15th - Reception Vision Screening
- 15th - School Nurse Drop in Session—2.45-3.45pm
- 16th - Academy Photography in for Leavers Photo's
- 19th - 1st Non-uniform day for Summer Fayre donations
- 19th - Year 1 & Year 2 trip to Knowsley Safari Park
- 25th - Sports Day - EYFS – 9 to 10.30am, KS1 10.30 to 12noon, KS2 from 1.30pm
- 26th - 2nd Non-uniform day for Summer Fayre donations
- 29th - Start of De La Salle transition week for Year 6 (Monday –Thursday)

July

- 3rd - PTFA Summer Fayre—3.30pm
- 10th - Year 6 Leavers Mass - 11am in Church
- 10th - Last swim session for Year 4
- 10th - Year 6 Leavers Party—6pm LSH
- 19th - **End of Summer Term : break for Summer holiday at 1.30pm**

Attendance

Good attendance at school is not just valuable —
it is essential.



For week ending Friday, 17th April 2026 the whole school attendance is 95.8%

Reception = 95.8%
Year 1 = 93.3%
Year 2 = 98.5%
Year 3 = 98.4%
Year 4 = 88.8%
Year 5 = 96.4%
Year 6 = 99.6%