

St. Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

NEWSLETTER

Friday, 2nd October 2026



Reminders

A polite reminder that parents and grandparents are not to drive onto the staff car park when dropping off or picking up your children, including during drop-offs and pick-ups for breakfast and afterschool clubs. Thank you for your understanding and support.

Upcoming Events

Parents evening.

Parents evening for the autumn term will be held on –

“ Wednesday, 21st October from 1.30 – 6.00pm

The purpose of these meetings is to discuss how your child has settled into their new class and any specific targets they have.

Appointments will be published on School Spider from Wednesday, 14th October.

A message will be sent to remind you to book a timeslot.

A message from Mrs. Rawlinson

Every Monday during our Celebration of the Word, we focus on a particular Gospel value and link it to our school mission and values.

Every Friday from now on, we are going to learn about a significant person who has lived our school values. Last week we learnt about Nelson Mandela and how he stood up for what is right. Our next significant person will be Rosa Parks, as we move into Black History Month.

Art

Our Foundation Subject focus this week has been Art, with children exploring new skills, techniques and artists.

This will continue next week, so please ask your child about what they have been learning and creating!



New Intake 2027

If you have a child due to start school or Nursery in September 2027 and are considering St. Thomas of Canterbury as one of your choices, then please come along to our new admission meetings. These will give you all the information you need to help you make your choices and give you a flavour of what school life is like here at St. Thomas of Canterbury.

Prospective parents are warmly welcome to visit school on:

- Tuesday, 13th October at 9.30am
- Tuesday, 3rd November at 9.30am
- Tuesday, 17th November at 4pm

If you know of anyone with a child due to start school please pass these dates on to them.

Attendance

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

For week ending Friday, 2nd October 2026 the whole school attendance is 94.9%

Reception = 91.9%

Year 1 = 96.7%

Year 2 = 94.2%

Year 3 = 94%

Year 4 = 96.4%

Year 5 = 96.8%

Year 6 = 94.6%

Important dates for Your Diary

October

- 13th – Reception/Nursery Intake 2027 parents open day (9.30am)
- 15th – PTFA Halloween Disco
- 21st – Parents afternoon (from 1.30pm)
- 22nd – End of Autumn term 1 (3.20pm finish)

November

- 2nd – Return to school start of Autumn term 2
- 3rd – Reception/Nursery Intake 2027 parents open day (9.30am)
- 11th – Information session for January 2027 Nursery intake (3.30pm)
- 13th – Own clothes day for donations to Christmas Fayre
- 17th – Y1-Y3 Cinema Trip
- 17th – Reception/Intake 2027 parents open day (4pm)
- 18th – Y4-Y6 Cinema Trip
- 19th – Y4 Liverpool World Museum Trip
- 20th – Own clothes day for donations to Christmas Fayre
- 25th – Y2 World of Glass Trip
- 27th – PTFA Christmas Fayre (3.30pm)

December

- 14th – Altru Drama – Alice in Wonderland Performance
- 18th – End of Autum term 2 (1.30pm finish)

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

DISCORD

AGE RESTRICTED
13+

(with a 17+ app not on app stores)

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Launched in 2015, and with over 90 million daily active users, Discord has become one of the main ways gamers communicate – with text, voice, and video chat helping people connect around shared interests. For many young people, Discord can be a useful way to talk with friends, join communities, and explore hobbies. However, like any online platform built around communication, it also carries risks around strangers, inappropriate content, spending money, and time spent online. This guide looks at what parents and educators need to know.

A CHANNEL FOR EVERYTHING

While Discord is strongly associated with video games, it also hosts communities for just about anything you can imagine, such as anime, music, influencers, cooking and sport. Some large servers focus on popular games like Minecraft or Fortnite, but many are private, invite-only spaces where friends or communities with shared interests can chat across phones, computers, and gaming consoles.

A REAL-LIFE DISTRACTION

Like many social platforms, Discord can become a real time-sink. Although it does not rely on endless scrolling in the same way as some apps, constant messages, group chats, and voice channels can keep young people engaged for long periods, especially in larger servers. As Discord is closely linked to gaming, it may also increase the time they spend playing games.

STRANGER DANGER

Users can choose to stay within private servers with only people they know, but joining public servers will most likely bring them to contact with strangers. Many users are just friendly enthusiasts, yet others could have harmful intentions, including grooming, extortion, or radicalisation. In these types of environments, anyone can claim to be another teenager, which can make it harder for young people to judge who is safe to talk to.

A HARASSMENT RISK

There is also a risk from people a young person already knows in the real world. Bullying in the real world can continue online, and Discord servers can make this feel more intimidating, especially if someone uses anonymous or multiple accounts to carry out threatening behaviours. Because Discord works across computers, phones, and gaming consoles, unwanted contact can follow young people into online spaces that should feel safe and private.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

This huge amount of choice can help young people "find their tribe", especially when they have niche interests. However, because users can create servers around almost any topic, younger users may still encounter unsuitable or distressing content. Even in spaces linked to child-friendly games, Discord cannot directly control every conversation, image, or video shared by other users.

A MONEY DRAIN

Discord is free to use, but users can still spend real-world money on it. This may include Discord 'Nitro', a monthly subscription that unlocks customisation features and larger media uploads, or purchases through the 'Shop' for profile cosmetics and game-related items. Small purchases can add up quickly, especially if spending controls are not in place.

Advice for Parents & Educators

USE FAMILY CENTRE

Parents and carers should make use of Discord's 'Family Centre', which gives an overview of a younger user's activity while respecting their privacy. Messages are not shared, but adults can view an activity feed and receive weekly email summaries. Discord says this is designed to support conversations about online behaviour, rather than be about constant monitoring.

CHECK, TALK, REPORT

Review Discord's privacy settings together, including who can send them and requests or private messages. Use this as a chance to talk to them about strangers, privacy, and personal information, making sure young people know to question suspicious behaviour, such as requests to keep conversations secret. Show them how to block and report these kinds of users and reassure them that asking for help will not get them into trouble.

MANAGE TIME ONLINE

Agree clear expectations around when and how Discord can be used, especially during homework, bedtime, and family time. Encourage young people to turn off unnecessary notifications and leave servers that feel overwhelming. If Discord is mainly used alongside gaming, discuss healthy limits for both activities so that schoolwork, sleep, and offline friendships are not affected.

REVIEW SPENDING CONTROLS

Talk openly about paid features such as Discord Nitro, profile cosmetics, and in-game purchases. Make sure the young people in your care understand that digital items still cost real money. Check payment settings on the device they use, avoid storing card details where possible, and consider adding approval requirements for purchases, particularly for younger or more impulsive users.

Meet Our Expert

Sam Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, the Evening Standard, and The New Statesman.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Healthy Families Growing Up Programme

Exciting new family friendly programme for parents and carers of 0-5 year olds in St Helens

The 0-19+ team (NHS) is delighted to launch the HENRY Programme – a nationally recognised initiative.

HENRY offers free, friendly support to help parents and carers feel more confident and build healthy, happy routines at home.

The programme is designed to make family life easier, covering everything from fussy eating and managing behaviour to family routines, emotional wellbeing, and getting active together.

Upcoming sessions

Understanding Children's Behaviour – Thursday 22 October, 1.30pm – 2.30pm

This session helps parents and carers to:

- Understand the feelings and needs behind children's behaviour
- Discover the importance of listening, and how it supports children's needs
- Explore responding with empathy, and how it can positively influence behaviour

Looking After Ourselves – Thursday 3 December, 11.00am – 12noon

- This session explores ways to look after yourself and stay calm, including:
- Understanding the benefits of recharging for emotional and physical health
- Sharing feelings and developing realistic expectations and coping strategies
- Overcoming feelings of guilt and failure

Gaining practical strategies to reduce the stresses of family life

Eating Well for Less – Thursday 4 February, 1.30pm – 2.30pm

This session helps the whole family to eat well for less, including:

- Tips for a cheaper, healthier shopping basket
- Meal planning to make the most of the food you buy
- Recipes for tasty, simple, low cost meals

Feedback from parents and carers who have attended previous HENRY Programmes:

"This was the best thing I could possibly have done to help me be a better mum."

"This was so much better than I expected. I would encourage every parent to do it."

How to get involved

Don't miss out – places are free but limited!

Book your place via Eventbrite

Understanding children's behaviour – Thursday 22 October

Looking after ourselves – Thursday 3 December

Eat well for less – Thursday 4 February

For more information visit HENRY Programme – Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust