



St Thomas's

CE Primary School

July 2026 Newsletter

In This Issue



This month

- **Message from the Head of School**
- **Attendance and Punctuality**
- **Dates for the Diary**
- **School Uniform**
- **Free School Meals**
- **Rights Respecting Schools - Silver Accreditation**
- **Summer Fair**
- **Term Dates for 2026/27**
- **Prayer**

Message from the Head of School



As we reach the end of another successful school year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support. As my first year as Head of School comes to a close, I have been truly grateful for the warm encouragement and partnership from our families. Your support has meant a great deal to me and has helped make this year such a positive one for our school community.

I would also like to thank everyone who has attended the events, performances and celebrations throughout the year. It has been wonderful to see so many families sharing in the achievements of our children.

A particular highlight of the term has been our fantastic Year 6 production of *Peter Pan*. The children delivered an outstanding performance and should be incredibly proud of themselves. Throughout the year, our Year 6 pupils have been excellent ambassadors for the school, demonstrating kindness, responsibility and resilience. They have been wonderful role models for our younger children, and we wish them every success as they move on to the next stage of their education. We now look forward to seeing our current Year 5 pupils rise to the challenge of becoming our new school leaders in September.

As the summer holidays begin, I encourage everyone to take time to rest, recharge and enjoy time with family and friends. Please remember to stay safe over the break, whether you are travelling, spending time outdoors or simply enjoying the warmer weather at home.

Thank you once again for your support throughout the year. I wish you all a happy, safe and relaxing summer holiday, and I look forward to welcoming everyone back in September, refreshed and ready for another exciting year ahead.

Best wishes,

Mrs E. Butler

Head of School



Attendance and Punctuality



Our school gates are open from **8:40am** until **8:55am**, and open again at **3:10pm** when school finishes.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:55am and will be kept open by the class teacher until 9:00am. Following this, any late arrivals will be recorded by staff in the office who will record and update any changes on arrival.

Absence

Parents must notify the school on each day of absence by 8:45am or as soon as practically possible.

When phoning school to inform of your child's absence, please press 1 on the menu unless you need to speak to the office staff. When leaving a message, please clearly state your child's name, class and the reason for their absence.

If your child has sickness/diarrhoea, they must not attend school for 24 hours after the bout of symptoms.

Medical or Dental Appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence if the office has been informed of the appointment in advance.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

We request that an appointment card is shown at the office in advance of the appointment so the class teacher can be informed.

Holidays During Term Time

Taking holidays in term time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away during term time.

If you need to request a holiday during term time, then you will need to complete a Leave of Absence form which can be obtained from the school office.

Although the school will look at each request for leave on its own merit, requests will only be authorised for exceptional circumstances.

When taking your child out of school when a holiday is not authorised/requested, you may face legal action under Section 444 (1) or (1A) of the Education Act 1966 or be issued with a Penalty Notice under Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

Penalty Notices are issued **per parent, per child** at £80 each if paid within 21 days and rising to £160 each if paid within 28 days. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in the Local Authority taking legal action against you under Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1966.

The full version of our attendance policy can be found on the school website. We appreciate your cooperation in supporting your child's attendance and punctuality. Regular school attendance enhances their learning experience and helps them achieve their full potential.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding attendance, please do not hesitate to contact the school office. Together, let's ensure every school day is filled with enriching educational experiences for our children.

ATTENDANCE



WHAT THE NEW RULES MEAN FOR ME

1

I'm a single parent of one child and we want to go on holiday for a week

Your holiday will not be authorised and you must talk to the school before you book anything.
Because your child will miss 5 school days you will be given a penalty notice fine.
The fine is £160 but if you pay it within 21 days it will be reduced to £80



£160

2

IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE

10

IN

10

If your child is absent for 10 or more sessions in 10 weeks and their absences are unauthorised, the school will consider prosecution

1

day =

2

sessions

A PENALTY FOR EACH CHILD






+£160
+£160
+£160
+£160

4 children & 1 parent = £640

Reduced to £320 if paid within 21 days

3

4

FOR A FAMILY OF TWO PARENTS







+£160
+£160
+£160
+£160

4 children & 2 parents = £1,280

Reduced to £640 if paid within 21 days

5

If in any period of not more than 3 years, your child has a 2nd and 3rd leave of absence or pattern of irregular attendance...

SECOND TIME

2 parents and

1 child = £320

2 children = £640

3 children = £960

4 children = £1,280

No discount for early payment

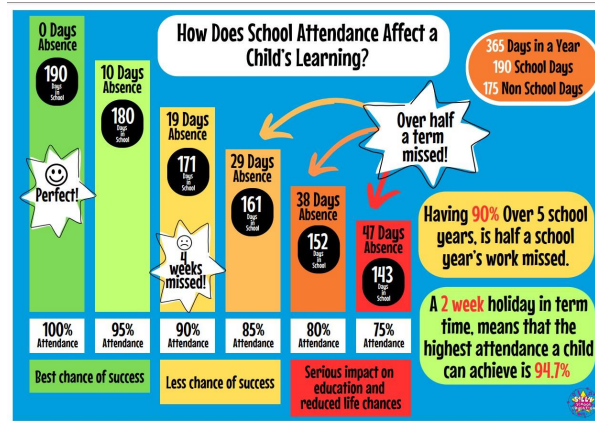
THIRD TIME

A penalty notice fine will not be given. Instead your case will be taken to court. A magistrate can fine each parent £2,500 for each child.

1 parent & 4 children = £10,000

2 parents & 4 children = £20,000





School Uniform



A reminder of our school uniform before we return in September. Our school jumpers, cardigans and bookbags can be bought at Smart Start Schoolwear, located opposite M&S on

The Rock in Bury. Any other items without the school logo may be bought at local shops or supermarkets.

Please find the list of our branded items available at Start Smart Schoolwear and their prices below;

- School Jumper £11.99 (Available in sizes 2 - 3, 3 - 4, 5 - 6, 7 - 8, 9 - 10, 11 - 12 and 13 - 14)
- School Cardigan £12.99 (Available in sizes 2 - 3, 3 - 4, 5 - 6, 7 - 8, 9 - 10, 11 - 12 and 13 - 14)
- Velcro Book Bag £6.99
- Satchel Book Bag £11.99

Please make sure that all items of clothing, footwear and anything else your child brings to school is clearly labelled with their name. School will make every effort to find lost items, but we do not accept responsibility for any loss or damage to personal property or clothing.

The school uniform and PE kit are as follows. Black school shoes are to be worn rather than trainers

School Uniform



Jumper with Logo



Cardigan with Logo



White Polo Shirt



Grey Trousers



Grey Shorts



Grey Skirt



Grey Pinafore



Red Gingham Summer Dress

PE Kit



Red T-Shirt



Black Shorts



Black Tracksuit Bottoms



Black Leggings



Black Pumps



Black Trainers

Free School Meals



From September 2026, the price of school dinners will be increasing to £2.90 per day, which will total £14.50 for the week.

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 get a free meal at lunchtime, under the government's Infant Free School Meals scheme. **You do not have to apply for these. But if your child is in a Key Stage 1 Year Group and you get one of the qualifying incomes it will help the school if you make a claim for free school meals, as they can get extra funding.**

From Year 3 onwards, free school meals are only available if you meet the eligible criteria. You can view the eligibility criteria and apply for free school meals on the [Bury Council website](#)

Important Changes to Free School Meals from September 2026

From September 2026, there will be changes to who can and cannot receive Free School Meals.

End of Transitional Protection

Temporary protections that allowed children to continue to receive free school meals without rechecking eligibility will stop at the end of the 2025/2026 school year.

From September 2026, all families will need to meet the current eligibility rules to continue receiving free school meals.

Two Types of Benefit-Based Free School Meals to be Introduced

1. Targeted Free School Meals

Available to children from households receiving Universal Credit and with annual earnings of £7,400 or less (excluding benefits)

Children eligible for **Targeted FSM** will also qualify for:

- Pupil Premium funding for their school
- Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme
- Other support linked to FSM eligibility where applicable

2. Expanded Free School Meals

Available to children from households earning more than £7,400 but who are still in receipt of Universal Credit.

Children eligible for **Expanded FSM** will:

- Receive a free school meal
- Not qualify for Pupil Premium funding
- Not qualify for the HAF programme
- Not automatically qualify for other benefits linked specifically to **Targeted FSM** eligibility

If you are currently receiving FSM, you do not need to take any action at this stage. The local authority will check your eligibility and confirm if you continue to qualify from September 2026.

If your child is on school dinners, please ensure that you pre-order their lunch choice on School Grid. Orders should be placed at least a week in advance to provide accurate numbers for the kitchen. If you do not place an order for your child, then they will receive a cheese sandwich at lunch time.

If you have any questions regarding free school meals, please contact the school office.

Rights Respecting School - Silver Accreditation



After achieving our Silver Accreditation for being a Rights Respecting School last month, we wanted to share with you the Assessor Reflection from our report;

"It was a pleasure to experience the warm, inclusive and purposeful rights respecting culture at St Thomas's CEP Bury. Children, staff and leaders spoke with pride about the school's rights journey, and it was clear that children's rights are becoming part of everyday language, relationships and decision-making. The visit highlighted many strengths, including the visibility of rights across the school environment, children's growing confidence in recalling and discussing articles, and the way staff use rights-respecting language to support positive relationships, restorative conversations and children's understanding of fairness and respect. Children were able to talk confidently about trusted adults, being listened to, and the ways school helps them feel safe, included and valued.

Pupil voice is developing well through Pupil Parliament, leadership groups, questionnaires and opportunities for children to influence school life, including playground choices, enrichment, clubs and wider charitable action. The school has established a strong foundation with clear strengths in relationships, inclusion, wellbeing and participation, and is well placed to continue deepening pupil-led advocacy and action as it moves towards Gold on its Rights Respecting journey."

Thank you to all of our pupils, staff and families for their hard work in making this possible.



Summer Fair



Our Summer fair was a tremendous success once again this year! Thanks to your incredible generosity and support, we raised an astounding **£1,158** for our school fund.

The resounding success of the fair was a collective effort, and I extend my deepest gratitude to each one of you for your contributions, whether it was through donations, support, or simply being there to enjoy the festivities.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to all of our staff for their exceptional dedication and hard work in orchestrating this fantastic event.

Once again, thank you for your unwavering support, generosity, and for making our Summer fair an outstanding achievement.

Dates for the Diary



Our key dates for the diary are listed below, please note that these dates may change and reminders for upcoming events will be sent via email

Thursday 16th July - Year 6 Leavers Assembly at 9:15am

Friday 17th July - School closes at 2pm for the Summer holidays

Wednesday 2nd September - School reopens for Autumn term

Thursday 24th September - Year 3 trip to Bolton Museum

Term Dates for 2026/27

HOLIDAY PATTERN 2026-2027						
	PUPIL DAYS			PAD DAYS		SCHOOL DAYS PER HALF TERM
	BANK HOLIDAYS					
	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS					
	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	
	24	25	26	27	28	Autumn Open
Sept 2026	31	1	2	3	4	
	7	8	9	10	11	
	14	15	16	17	18	38 days
	21	22	23	24	25	
	28	29	30	1	2	
October	5	6	7	8	9	
	12	13	14	15	16	
	19	20	21	22	23	
	26	27	28	29	30	Autumn Half Term
November	2	3	4	5	6	
	9	10	11	12	13	
	16	17	18	19	20	
	23	24	25	26	27	35 days
	30	1	2	3	4	
December	7	8	9	10	11	
	14	15	16	17	18	
	21	22	23	24	25	
	28	29	30	31	1	Autumn Close
Jan 2027	4	5	6	7	8	
	11	12	13	14	15	
	18	19	20	21	22	30 days
	25	26	27	28	29	
	1	2	3	4	5	
February	8	9	10	11	12	
	15	16	17	18	19	Spring Half Term
	22	23	24	25	26	
	1	2	3	4	5	24 Days
March	8	9	10	11	12	
	15	16	17	18	19	
	22	23	24	25	26	
	29	30	31	1	2	
	5	6	7	8	9	
April	12	13	14	15	16	Spring Close
	19	20	21	22	23	
	26	27	28	29	30	
	3	4	5	6	7	33 days
	10	11	12	13	14	
May	17	18	19	20	21	
	24	25	26	27	28	Summer Half Term
	31	1	2	3	4	
	7	8	9	10	11	
June	14	15	16	17	18	
	21	22	23	24	25	30 days
	28	29	30	1	2	
	5	6	7	8	9	
	12	13	14	15	16	
July	19	20	21	22	23	Summer Close
	TOTAL PUPIL DAYS					
195						

Prayer



Dear God,

As we come to the end of another school year, we thank You for all the learning, friendships, achievements and happy memories we have shared together.

As we begin our summer holidays, we pray that You will watch over all our children, families and staff. Keep us safe wherever we go, protect us in our travels, and help us enjoy a time of rest, joy and renewal.

Bless those moving on to new schools and new adventures, and help them to face the future with confidence and courage.

We ask that You bring us back together safely in September, refreshed, happy and ready for a new year of learning and growing together.

Amen.

Contact Us



If you wish to contact us

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Visit us on the web at www.stthomascep.co.uk

On Twitter @StThomasBury