



# St Thomas's

## CE Primary School

March 2026 Newsletter

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## Message from the Head of School



Dear Families,

I hope all our families who celebrated Eid enjoyed a peaceful and joyful time with loved ones. We are very much looking forward to continuing the celebrations with our Eid parties in school tomorrow. If you are able to, we would be grateful for any food contributions to help make the day special for the children.

This term has brought so much to celebrate across our school community. We are incredibly proud to have been *reaccredited with the Inclusion Quality Mark*, a recognition that reflects our commitment to ensuring every child feels seen, valued, and included. In addition, we are delighted to have achieved the *Bronze Certificate for the My Happy Minds programme*, marking the progress we are making in supporting pupils' wellbeing, confidence, and emotional understanding.

Alongside these achievements, I do need to raise an important matter regarding school attendance. Last week, our attendance dipped slightly. Good attendance is vital - not only for children's learning now, but for their future life chances. When children attend school every day, they build secure knowledge, strong friendships, and positive habits that set the foundations for later success. Please continue to support us by ensuring your child is in school on time every day unless they are genuinely unwell.

As we look ahead to next week, I am very much looking forward to welcoming parents and carers to our Easter service on Wednesday.

Thank you for your continued support and for everything you do to work with us in creating such a vibrant, caring, and successful school community.

Warmest 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

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

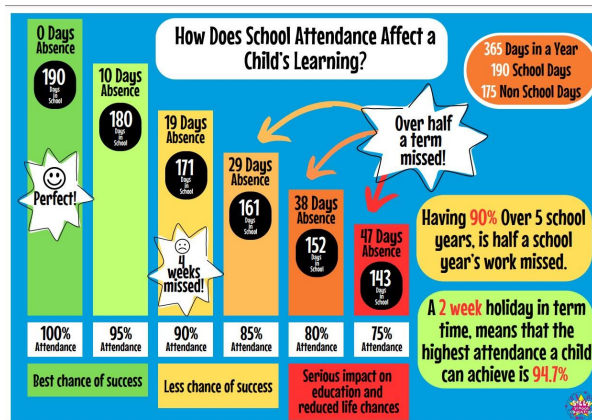
No discount for early payment



### 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





## Information on Statutory Assessments



As we approach the end of the Spring term, it is important to keep you informed about the upcoming assessments that will be taking place for our students during the Summer term.

### **Key Stage Two Statutory Exams for Year 6:**

Our Year 6 pupils will be undertaking the Key Stage Two statutory exams, which are a crucial part of their educational journey. These exams include assessments in Reading; Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling; and Mathematics. The tests are designed to measure the children's ability to apply their knowledge in these key areas of the curriculum. We encourage parents to support their children by ensuring they have ample time for revision and rest.

### **Phonics Screening for Year 1:**

The phonics screening check for Year 1 is a short assessment to ensure that children are making sufficient progress with their phonics skills to read words. It is not a formal test but a way for teachers to identify if any additional support is needed. The check consists of 40 words, both real and pseudo-words, that your child will read to a teacher. We recommend that parents engage in regular reading practices with their children to build their phonics skills.

#### **Multiplication Screening for Year 4:**

Year 4 pupils will participate in the Multiplication Tables Check (MTC). This check is designed to determine whether pupils can recall their times tables fluently, which is essential for future success in mathematics. The MTC is an online, on-screen assessment where pupils will answer questions on time tables 2 to 12. We advise parents to help their children practice their multiplication tables regularly.

We understand that assessments can be a source of anxiety for some students, and we aim to support them through this period with additional resources and guidance. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher if you have any concerns or require further information.

Further information is also available from the following Government websites:

National curriculum assessments: key stage 2 tests information for parents - GOV.UK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-national-curriculum-tests-and-results-information-for-parents>

Phonics screening check: information for parents - GOV.UK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-screening-check-information-for-parents>

Multiplication tables check - GOV.UK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/multiplication-tables-check>

## Emotionally Friendly Schools - 5 Ways to Wellbeing

We are pleased to inform you that as a school we are working towards being accredited the bronze award for Emotionally Friendly Schools. By adopting a whole school approach, we can ensure that wellbeing is central to everything that we do.

### **5 Ways to Wellbeing**

The NHS 5 ways to wellbeing is an evidence based framework designed to improve mental health and emotional wellbeing through these [five daily actions](#). Developed by the New

Economics Foundation (NEF), these steps aim to help people feel more positive, resilient and connected.

Our Happiness Heroes have chosen to focus on:

**Connect: Ask someone about their day and really listen.**

Talking and listening to one another, being there and feeling connected are just some simple strategies you could introduce into your life and you will feel the benefits.

If you need support with your wellbeing, speak to one of our EFS Team members who might be able to help or direct you to the right support.

Mrs Haughton (DSL), Mrs Lewis, Miss McCoy, Mrs Hughes, Mrs Hussain, Mr Hyde or Ms Corrigan.



We are also joined by Emma, a Mental Health Support worker from Early Break, each Monday in school to help provide support to children experiencing mental health symptoms such as anxiety, worry or low mood, and also works alongside the teachers to make the school an emotionally friendly and supportive place for all.

More information about Emma and the work she does can be found on the leaflet below.



Hello, my name is Emma Freeman

**Who are Early Break Mental Health Support Team (MHST)?**

We are a service that works with Bury/HMR schools and colleges to support children and young people experiencing mental health difficulties.

We offer low level early intervention/preventative support for low mood, anxiety, worry and behaviour difficulties.



I am an Early Break MHST Practitioner

**How can I help?**

I'm trained to help children and young people experiencing mental health symptoms such as:

Anxiety, Worry or Low Mood

**Who to ask for support**

For Parents/Staff:

- Teacher/Staff Members
- Mental Health Lead

For Children:

- Parents
- Teachers
- Mental Health Lead
- Any trusted adult

**What do I do?**

Support children, young people or parents on a 1:1 basis or in a group for 6-8 sessions.

Work with teachers to make school an emotionally friendly and supportive place for all.

Support schools/colleges with their mental health offer, e.g. advice, signposting, staff training, parent/carer workshops.

**A bit about me**

I have an undergrad & masters in clinical psychology and love working with/ helping young people!  
I have a dog called Kika. I enjoy taking her for walks with my family and doing CrossFIT.  
I love all things Disney and love going to Disney World in Florida!

My allocated day is

Monday

For any further questions please email

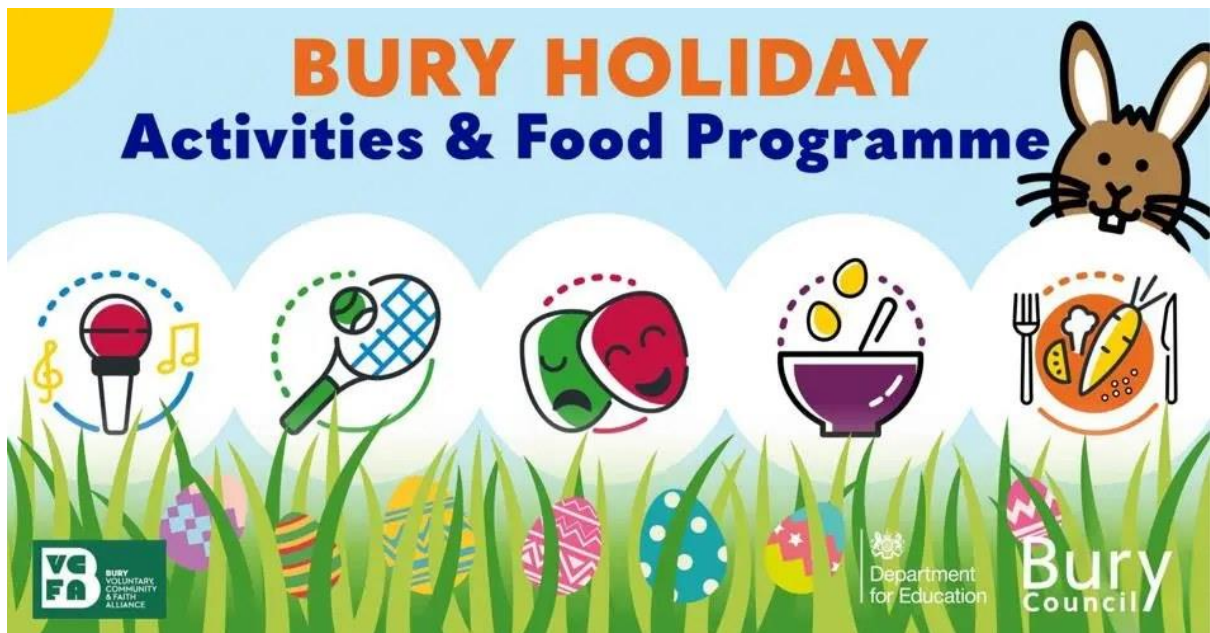
info@earlybreak.co.uk

Young People's Mental Health Support Team  
Work in Education

© Early Break August 2025

in partnership with:  
NHS Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust

## HAF Spring 2026



HAF vouchers for Spring 2026 have now been issued to families who receive benefit related free school meals and activities are now available to book.

Information on how to claim your vouchers, a list of available activities and provider booking links can be found on the [Bury Council website](https://www.bury.gov.uk).

Quality Sport will be holding their holiday club at St Thomas's from Tuesday 7th April to Friday 10th April. Details on how to book with Quality Sport can be found of their poster below.

**BURY HOLIDAY Activities & Food Programme**

**HAF SPRING 2026**

**Vouchers have been issued.**

HAF is funded by The Department of Education to provide Food and Activities to families in receipt of benefits related Free School Meals.

Eligible families should now have received your email from Holiday Activities with a link to log in and redeem your voucher codes with 4 credits to book onto our fantastic Spring Holiday Activities programme.

If you are in receipt of benefits related free school meals but have not received your voucher email please contact school.

Our programme this Spring is bigger and better, with 31 providers in venues across the whole of the borough.

**Activities Available include**

- Forest Schools
- Football Camps
- Multisport Clubs, Martial Arts, Gym Sessions, Swimming
- Guided walks
- Drama and Theatre Workshops
- and so much more .....

SEND Provision is offered by a number of Providers. With SEND Specific Places provided by Bee Inclusive and Funtime

A full list of Providers, dates and time, and the level of need they are equipped to provider activities for can be found on the Bury HAF Webpage.

**Find activities**

Scan the QR code to find and book activities

[bury.gov.uk/bury-haf](http://bury.gov.uk/bury-haf)

**Quality Sport**  
Holiday Clubs

**BURY EASTER SPORTS HOLIDAY CLUB!**

**07-10 APRIL 2026**  
Tues - Fri

**LOCATION:** St Thomas' Primary School  
Pimhole Road, Bury, BL9 7EY

**TIME:** 9am - 3pm **PRICE:** £24

**HAF BOOKINGS:** HAF Bookings For This Site Are Taken Through Bury Council's Booking System 'Holiday Activities'

**BOOK ONLINE TODAY!**

**HAF FUNDED PLACES AVAILABLE TO BOOK NOW!**

**Book Your Childs Paid Place Online:**

**Why Choose us as your childcare provider?**

- Over 20 years of experience in the childcare sector
- All of our coaches are enhanced DBS checked, hold relevant safeguarding certification and are paediatric first aid trained.
- Convenient online booking system where parents can book 24/7 and pay by card or childcare vouchers (including tax free childcare).

[www.qualitysport.co.uk](http://www.qualitysport.co.uk) [info@qualitysport.co.uk](mailto:info@qualitysport.co.uk) 07507 579 852

**Holiday Club & FREE HAF**

**PROACE SPORTS**

**AT ST PAUL'S C of E Primary SCHOOL - Bury**

**7<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> April**  
**Monday – Friday 9-3pm**  
 (free drop off from 8:30)

**Lunch & Snacks included!**

**BIKEABILITY – 7<sup>th</sup> April for Y3+**

**FREE HAF Places available for FSM eligible children**  
**Or £28/day**

**Childcare vouchers accepted!**

**To book:** Please download the **ProACE Sports and Swimming App**, register as a non-member at ProACE Sports Club, add your child as your family member, Go to Holiday Camps, select St Paul's Bury and select any days, Pay by card or Email for childcare voucher detail. Info: [hello@proacesports.co.uk](mailto:hello@proacesports.co.uk)

## Arbor Parent Portal and App

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to all parents and carers who have already signed up to our Arbor Parent Portal and App. Your support in helping us introduce this new system is greatly appreciated.

For those who have not yet registered, we strongly encourage you to do so as soon as possible. Arbor is an important step forward in how we communicate and work together as a school community. It allows us to bring a range of key features into one place, making everyday tasks simpler, quicker, and more efficient for families.

Through the Arbor Parent Portal and app, you will be able to:

- View your child's attendance
- Update your contact details
- Check and manage consents
- Sign up for Parents' Evening appointments
- ...and much more as we continue to introduce additional features

By using Arbor, you will have easy access to important information and tools, helping you stay connected and informed about your child's school experience.

If you have not yet activated your account, please take a few moments to get started. If you need any assistance, do not hesitate to visit the school office - we are happy to help.

We are currently trying to streamline our communication systems and number of apps. Arbor will become our new messaging system which will replace Parent Hub after the holidays. It is therefore essential that you sign up to Arbor please.

Thank you for your continued support.



## Staffing Updates

Mrs McKean has decided that after 35 years of teaching that it is time for her to sadly say goodbye to St Thomas's and move on to pastures new. Herself and Dottie will be leaving us on Wednesday 29th April and we wish her all the best and thank her for everything she has done for all the children at St Thomas's.

Ms Carney will be teaching in Y5B Monday to Friday and Miss Edge will be moving to Y1, teaching Y1A on a Monday and Tuesday in the absence of Mrs McKean. Mrs Worrell and Mrs Baig remain in Y1A.

We hope you will join us in thanking Mrs McKean and wishing her all the best for the future!

## 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 posted on Parent Hub

**Friday 27th March** - Eid Class Parties

**Wednesday 1st April** - Easter Service at 2pm

**Thursday 2nd April** - School closes at 2pm for Easter holidays

**Monday 20th April** - School reopens for Summer term

**Friday 24th April** - SEND Parent Coffee Morning

**Monday 4th May** - School closed for May Bank Holiday

**Tuesday 5th May** - Year 4 Science of Sound Workshop

**Monday 11th May** - Year 6 SATs Week

**Thursday 21st May** - Whole School Trip to Burrs Country Park

**Friday 22nd May** - School closes for half term break

**Monday 1st June** - School reopens for Summer 2

# Term Dates for 2025/26

HOLIDAY PATTERN 2025-2026						
	PUPIL DAYS			PAD DAYS		SCHOOL DAYS PER HALF TERM
	BANK HOLIDAYS					
	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS					
	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	
	25	26	27	28	29	Autumn Open
<b>Sept 2025</b>	30	1	2	3	4	38 days
	8	9	10	11	12	
	15	16	17	18	19	
	22	23	24	25	26	
	29	30	1	2	3	
<b>October</b>	6	7	8	9	10	
	13	14	15	16	17	
	20	21	22	23	24	
	27	28	29	30	31	Autumn Half Term
<b>November</b>	3	4	5	6	7	34 days
	10	11	12	13	14	
	17	18	19	20	21	
	24	25	26	27	28	
<b>December</b>	1	2	3	4	5	
	8	9	10	11	12	
	15	16	17	18	19	
	22	23	24	25	26	Autumn Close
<b>Jan 2026</b>	29	30	31	1	2	30 days
	5	6	7	8	9	
	12	13	14	15	16	
	19	20	21	22	23	
	26	27	28	29	30	
<b>February</b>	2	3	4	5	6	
	9	10	11	12	13	
	16	17	18	19	20	Spring Half Term
	23	24	25	26	27	29 Days
<b>March</b>	2	3	4	5	6	
	9	10	11	12	13	
	16	17	18	19	20	
	23	24	25	26	27	
<b>April</b>	30	31	1	2	3	
	6	7	8	9	10	
	13	14	15	16	17	Spring Close
	20	21	22	23	24	24 days
<b>May</b>	27	28	29	30	1	
	4	5	6	7	8	
	11	12	13	14	15	
	18	19	20	21	22	
	25	26	27	28	29	
	1	2	3	4	5	
<b>June</b>	8	9	10	11	12	35 days
	15	16	17	18	19	
	22	23	24	25	26	
<b>July</b>	29	30	1	2	3	
	6	7	8	9	10	
	13	14	15	16	17	
	20	21	22	23	24	
						Summer Close
<b>TOTAL PUPIL DAYS</b>						<b>195</b>

# 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	38 days	
	7	8	9	10	11		
	14	15	16	17	18		
	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	35 days	
	9	10	11	12	13		
	16	17	18	19	20		
	23	24	25	26	27		
December	30	1	2	3	4		
	7	8	9	10	11		
	14	15	16	17	18		
	21	22	23	24	25		Autumn Close
Jan 2027	28	29	30	31	1	30 days	
	4	5	6	7	8		
	11	12	13	14	15		
	18	19	20	21	22		
	25	26	27	28	29		
February	1	2	3	4	5		
	8	9	10	11	12		
	15	16	17	18	19		Spring Half Term
	22	23	24	25	26	24 Days	
March	1	2	3	4	5		
	8	9	10	11	12		
	15	16	17	18	19		
	22	23	24	25	26		
April	29	30	31	1	2		
	5	6	7	8	9		
	12	13	14	15	16		Spring Close
	19	20	21	22	23	33 days	
	26	27	28	29	30		
May	3	4	5	6	7		
	10	11	12	13	14		
	17	18	19	20	21		
	24	25	26	27	28		
	31	1	2	3	4		Summer Half Term
June	7	8	9	10	11		30 days
	14	15	16	17	18		
	21	22	23	24	25		
July	28	29	30	1	2		
	5	6	7	8	9		
	12	13	14	15	16		
	19	20	21	22	23	Summer Close	

TOTAL PUPIL DAYS

195

## Prayer



### Spring Prayer

As we embrace the beauty and renewal of spring, we give thanks for the new life and fresh beginnings that this season brings. We are grateful for the vibrant colours, the blossoming flowers, and the warmth of the sun that remind us of Your endless love and grace.

During this special time, we also celebrate the end of Ramadan and the joyous occasion of Eid. We thank You for the strength and patience shown by those who have observed fasting and prayer throughout Ramadan. May their devotion and faith be rewarded with peace, happiness, and blessings.

We pray for unity and understanding among all people, regardless of their faith or background. Help us to appreciate the diversity within our community and to support one another with kindness and compassion.

As we move forward into this season of growth and renewal, may we be inspired to nurture our relationships, seek new opportunities, and spread love and positivity in all that we do.

## Contact Us



If you wish to contact us

### **St Thomas's Primary School**

Pimhole Road

BL9 7EY

0161 764 7565

stthomas@bury.gov.uk

Visit us on the web at [www.stthomascep.co.uk](http://www.stthomascep.co.uk)

On Twitter @StThomasBury