



Newsletter



2026-2027 Term 1

A Fantastic Achievement for St Richard's!

We are absolutely delighted to announce that St Richard's has come THIRD out of 30 schools in this year's Kent Libraries *Read to the Beat* Summer Reading Challenge!

An incredible 34 of our children completed all six reading goals, helping our wonderful school achieve this fantastic result! We couldn't be prouder! Every book read represents curiosity, imagination, determination and a growing love of reading. Our children have shown us that wonderful things happen when we believe in ourselves and embrace the magic of books.

A huge thank you to our families for encouraging and supporting their children throughout the summer.

To our amazing St Richard's children: your hard work, enthusiasm and love of learning make our school such a special place.

We are so very proud of you! What an achievement. What a community. What wonderful children!

A few reminders for the first week back

When we return on Monday 2nd November, the School Nurse team will be visiting school to administer the Flu Nasal Spray Immunisation. Please make sure

you complete the consent forms that have been previously sent if you would like your child to receive this in school.

Any school photos orders that cannot be completed online, are also due back to school on Monday 2nd November, as they will be collected by the photographers on Tuesday 3rd November.

As in previous years, we will be supporting the Royal British Legion by selling Poppies and other Remembrance Items in school. From Monday, we will be visiting classes each day of the first week of term, selling items for a donation to the charity.

Every Minute Matters – Arriving at School on Time

We would like to remind all parents and carers of the importance of ensuring that children arrive at school before 8.45am, ready to begin their learning.

Our teachers are continually developing exciting, engaging and creative lessons, including additional opportunities to support and extend children's learning from the very beginning of the school day.

These valuable early morning activities help children settle into their routines, develop confidence, reinforce important

skills and prepare for the learning ahead.

Arriving on time means children won't miss out on these important opportunities. Even a few minutes can make a difference to their learning and progress.

From the start of next term, any children not in their classroom by 09.00 will receive a late mark, and anyone arriving 09.30 will receive an unauthorised absence for the morning school session.

Thank you for your continued support in ensuring that every child gets the very best start to their school day at St Richard's.

Is Your Child Starting School in September 2027?

Admissions for Reception places for September 2027 open this autumn. We are looking forward to welcoming prospective parents to look around the school during November and December.

If you have a child or know someone who has a child born between 1st September 2022 and 31st August 2023 please come along to see everything that the school has to offer.

Our Open Days will be:
09.30am Thursday 5th November,
5.30pm Thursday 12th November,
10.00am Saturday 21st November,
and 09.30am Thursday 3rd December.

To enquire or register your interest for these events, please contact Mrs Gillard in the School Office.

New School App

This term we have been extending our roll out of our new school app – Arbor.

Emails have been sent with links for registration and we are pleased that most families have now completed this. This is our new way of communicating with families and as we know things can change last minute, please make sure you take the time to set this up if you haven't already.

We are now able to manage meal booking and clubs on Arbor and after a few teething problems, we are becoming more confident with this. In the new term, we will be introducing school trip payments.

Thank you for being patient with us, while we learn the new system alongside our families. If you need any further help with Arbor, please see Mrs Gillard in the office.

Keeping Our School Community Safe – A reminder about parking

We would like to politely remind all parents and carers of the importance of parking safely and considerately when dropping off and collecting children from school.

I would like to say a big thank to those families who are no longer parking on the zig-zags, that change is really appreciated and I want to say thank you.

Unfortunately, we continue to experience occasions where vehicles are parked across residents' driveways or on the yellow zig-zag markings outside the school. These restrictions are in place to protect our children, families and the wider community.

Please remember:

- Keep driveways clear: Residents must be able to access and leave their properties safely at all times.
- Respect the school zig-zag markings: Please do not stop or park on these markings during the restricted times displayed on nearby signs, even briefly to drop off or collect a child.
- Park considerately: Please avoid parking in locations that obstruct visibility, pavements or access for pedestrians and other road users.
- Think of our neighbours: We are fortunate to be part of a welcoming local community, and we ask everyone to show courtesy and respect to those living near our school.

Working with Kent Police

St Richard's works closely with Kent Police, who regularly monitor parking and road safety around the school. Where parking restrictions are breached, enforcement action may be taken by the relevant authorities.

Winter Uniform

We would like to remind you that we have returned to the winter uniform.

The below uniform must be worn at all times:

Boys:

Grey trousers
White shirt (no polo shirt)
School tie
School Jumper
Grey socks
Black Shoes (no boots or trainers)

Girls:

Tartan School Skirt
White shirt (no polo shirts)
School tie
School Jumper or Cardigan
Navy socks
Black Shoes (no boots or trainers)

No jewellery, except a watch, may be worn.

What our children say...

Year R – Milo and Darlie

"We have been learning about Autumn and how the pinecones fall down and the leaves turn brown! In Phonics, we have learnt F F F Flamingo and B B B Bear and S S S Snake. We had visits from a Policeman, a Post Officer and we went to see the Fire Station. We've learnt tricky words – I, is and The!"

Year 1 – Theo and Maya

"In English, we have been learning about sentences. We learnt that capital letters go at the beginning and full stops go at the end. We have been writing about our own monsters; we all drew and labelled our own monsters and then the monster stole Mrs Ayling's lunch! We found it the next day!"

Year 2 – Willow and Lilia

"In Art we have been learning all about Roy Lichtenstein, he used Ben-Day dots and stripes but only in primary colours. We have been

discovering all different ways to make dots like with bubble wrap, Lego or cotton buds! We have been learning how to do cursive writing in handwriting too."

Year 3 – Amelia and Elliott

"In English we have been writing our own instructions about how to catch a Woolly Mammoth in the Stone Age! In Art, we have been creating Stone Age paintings, using brown paper and red, brown and black colours. We have drawn animals like Sabre Tooth Tigers, handprints and people!"

Year 4 – Orla and Sophia

"In RE we have been learning about the story of Abraham; how God told him to leave Haran and travel to Canaan. He had to walk there, and he had servants to help him carry all of his belongings. When he arrived, God told him he will have a baby, which he did when he was 100! The baby was call. But then God told him he had to sacrifice Isaac, he was about to but then an Angel told him to sacrifice a Ram instead!"

Year 5 – Orla and Zac

"In English we have been learning about a story called The Catch, a Fox steals a Fisherman's Fish! We then created our own story based on the plot but with different animals. In Maths we have been doing lots of times tables, 1 to 12's! We have also been learning about decimal points."

Year 6 – Ethan and Davide

"In English we've been reading adventure stories like The Chronicles of Narnia, we have been focusing on the structure of them. We are currently working

on our first drafts of our own adventure stories; we are hoping to have them published by the end of the week! In Maths we have been learning new methods of multiplication, for example the Chinese Grid method, which is basically a fancier way of the column method."

Dates for Diary

Mon 2nd Nov – School reopens
 Mon 2nd Nov – Flu Immunisations
 Thurs 5th Nov – New Intake Open Day at 09.30am
 Thurs 5th Nov – Special Menu Day
 Fri 6th Nov – Year 5/6 Cross Country Event
 Mon 9th Nov – EYFS Maths Workshop
 Thurs 12th Nov – Michael Rosen Poetry Day
 Thurs 12th Nov – New Intake Open Day at 5.30pm
 Fri 13th Nov – Year 5 Lantern Workshop
 Sat 21st Nov – New Intake Open Day at 10.00am
 Tues 24th Nov – Year 4/5 Lego Workshop
 Weds 25th Nov – Whole School Cinema Trip
 Thurs 3rd Dec – New Intake Open Day at 09.30am
 Sat 5th Dec – School Choir Carol Concert at Dover Town Hall
 Weds 9th Dec- Christingle lead by Year 3
 Thurs 10th Dec – School Choir Trip
 Friday 11th Dec – PTFA Christmas Fete
 Tues 15th Dec – KS1 Nativity performance at 9.30am
 Weds 16th Dec – KS2 Carol Concert
 Thurs 17th Dec – Year 5/6 Tchoukball event
 Thurs 17th Dec – KS1 Nativity performance at 2.30pm
 Fri 18th Dec – Last Day of Term – School closes at 2.30pm

Term dates for the school year

Term 1

Weds 2nd Sept- Thurs 22nd Oct

Term 2

Mon 2nd Nov – Fri 18th Dec

Term 3

Mon 4th Jan – Fri 12th Feb

Term 4

Tues 23rd Feb – Thurs 25th March

Term 5

Mon 12th Apr- Thurs 27th May

Term 6

Mon 7th June – Tues 20th July

Please note that School is closed on the following staff development days:

Tuesday 1st September

Friday 23rd October

Monday 22nd February

Friday 28th May

Wednesday 21st July

End of term prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, Thank you for the start of this school year, for all the new things we have learned, for the fun we have shared in our classrooms and playground, and for our wonderful teachers, friends, and families.

As we finish our very first term, help us to look back with grateful hearts for all the blessings you have given us.

St. Richard, pray for us, Keep us safe and happy during our holiday break, and bring us back rested, ready to learn, and full of joy.

Amen.

Introducing our Attendance Expectations: Thrive Under Five

At **St Richard's**, we believe that excellent attendance gives every child the very best opportunity to succeed. Regular attendance helps children achieve academically, develop positive friendships, build confidence and enjoy coming to school.

This year, our Trust the KCSP are introducing our attendance initiative, "**Thrive Under Five**", encouraging every child to miss **no more than five days of school during the academic year wherever possible**.

Please read on to learn about this new initiative as we all know every lesson matters. Learning is carefully planned so that each day builds on the one before. Missing school means children can miss important learning, experiences and opportunities that are difficult to replace.

Why attendance matters

Children who attend school regularly are more likely to:

- achieve higher academic outcomes;
- develop stronger friendships and social skills;
- build confidence and resilience;
- experience greater wellbeing; and
- be better prepared for the next stage of their education and future life.

Our own experience, alongside national research, **clearly shows that excellent attendance is one of the strongest indicators of future success.**

Our attendance expectations

The expectation is that every child attends **every session, every day**, unless they are genuinely too unwell to attend or there are exceptional circumstances.

We will continue to monitor attendance throughout the year using the following attendance bands:

Attendance	Days Absent	Our View
*Above 99%	2 days or fewer	Excellent
*97–99%	Fewer than 5 days	Good – Thrive Under Five
*95–96.9%	Around 9 days	Below Expectation
*90–94.9%	13–18 days	Poor
* Below 90%	More than 19 days	Persistent Absence

Rather than waiting until attendance becomes a significant concern, we will contact families early if attendance begins to fall so that we can work together to identify any barriers and offer support.

When should my child stay at home?

The NHS advises that many common childhood illnesses do **not** require children to miss school. If your child is well enough to take part in normal school activities, they should attend.

Condition	Should my child attend school?	Guidance
Mild cold or cough	✓ Yes	Children with a mild cold or cough should attend school. Encourage good hand hygiene and provide tissues if needed.
Sore throat	✓ Yes	Most sore throats do not require time off school. Ensure your child drinks plenty of fluids.
Anxiety or worries about school	✓ Yes	It is common for children to feel anxious at times. Attending school usually helps, and we encourage families to speak to us so we can provide support.
Conjunctivitis	✓ Yes	Children can usually attend school. Encourage regular hand washing and avoid rubbing the eyes.
Head lice	✓ Yes	Children do not need to stay at home. Hair should be treated with an appropriate treatment.

COVID-19 (mild cold-like symptoms) ✓ **Yes**

Children can usually continue attending school if they feel well enough.

Please notify the school as soon as possible if your child is absent due to illness using the school's usual reporting procedure.

Where absence has become frequent and attendance is not good or better; we may ask for medical evidence before authorising further illness absence.

Medical appointments and leave during term time

Routine GP, dental and optician appointments should be made outside the school day wherever possible.

Leave of absence during term time will only be authorised in **exceptional circumstances**. Family holidays will **not** be authorised in line with national regulations, and unauthorised holidays will result in a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority.

Requests for exceptional leave should be made in writing to **the Headteacher at least two weeks in advance wherever possible**.

Requests for leave under exceptional circumstances.

Requests for absence due to exceptional circumstances will be considered on an individual basis by the Headteacher (or delegated member of staff). Only the school has the authority to authorise absence, and providing a reason does not automatically guarantee approval. Exceptional circumstances are defined as rare, significant and unavoidable events that are wholly outside the control of the family and cannot be arranged at another time, such as the bereavement or critical illness of an immediate family member. Requests for family holidays, celebrations, reunions, visiting relatives abroad, work commitments or travel costs will not normally be authorised and Headteachers cannot take travel cost variations into account. Where a request does not meet the criteria for exceptional circumstances, or sufficient evidence is not provided, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Working together to support attendance

We know that families sometimes experience challenges that affect attendance, and our approach is always one of partnership and support. If attendance begins to decline, we will:

- keep parents informed of the number of days missed;
- contact families early to discuss any concerns;
- invite parents to attendance support meetings where appropriate;
- agree practical actions to improve attendance;
- provide support to help children return to school successfully; and
- review progress together before any formal intervention becomes necessary.

Attendance will also be discussed during Parent Consultation Evenings.

Everyday counts

Missing just **five days** of school during the year still allows your child to maintain approximately **97% attendance**, giving them the best chance of success.

By working together and aiming to "**Thrive Under Five**", we can ensure every child benefits from the learning, friendships and opportunities that school provides every single day. A full copy of the school's Attendance Policy is available on our website or from the school office.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in helping every child thrive.

Kent
Catholic
Schools'
Partnership



'Academies in Christ'
Part of the Archdiocese of Southwark

ATTEND AND ACHIEVE

School isn't just a place
to be – it's where you learn
most, grow in confidence,
build friendships and
create your future.



Thrive under 5



Students who have **fewer than 5 days**
off per year, statistically **thrive** within education.



BETTER PROGRESS

Excellent attendance
leads to stronger
learning and higher
achievement.



CONFIDENCE GROWS

Being in school
regularly builds
confidence and
resilience.



STRONGER CONNECTIONS

Attend, belong,
and build positive
relationships.



MORE OPPORTUNITIES

Good attendance
opens doors to more
choices and brighter
futures.



Every lesson counts.
Every day shapes your future.
Thrive under 5. Be here. Succeed.