

St Thomas Primary School



Autumn Term 2026

As we welcome everyone back for the start of this new session, we are delighted that our new P1 pupils have settled in so well. Our school roll currently stands at 35 and there are 5 pupils in the nursery. There have also been some changes to staffing where we welcome Mrs Emma Sutherland (P5-7 class teacher with Mrs Magee and Mrs Keedwell), Mrs Stella Burks (Pupil Support Assistant) and Ms Fiona McKenzie (Breakfast Club Support Worker). Also, as you will be aware from the letter sent at the end of last term, Mrs Keedwell is acting as Interim Head Teacher in the absence of Mrs Raikes.

An Open Event is planned for Tuesday 29th September (3pm-4pm) where you are invited to come into school to visit your child's classroom to see their learning environment. You can come in at any time between the times specified. We look forward to seeing you there!

Over the summer break the school has had CCTV installed which covers the outdoor and reception area. Notices advising this have also been installed.

The calendar is beginning to fill up. Please check out the dates planned so far, below.

Breakfast Club has resumed and this runs from 8.20 -8.45am on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Healthy breakfast options are provided including toast, cereals fruit and yoghurt. There is no charge. Thank you to all who have returned their completed consent forms.

This session, as an alternative to recorder sessions, P5-7 pupils will enjoy ukulele sessions with Mrs Gillies. These are funded by the Youth Music Initiative. Brass tuition continues with Mr Gray for P6/P7 pupils (who have registered). We also hope to welcome Mrs Dawson back later in the session.

Mr Patterson from Keith Grammar School P.E. department is visiting all the Keith ASG schools to provide some Friday P.E. sessions to pupils, with the aim of providing links that will enable smooth transitions to Keith Grammar School. Sessions here at St Thomas are for P5-7 pupils.

Once again this year we will host Outfit Moray for Bikeability sessions for the whole school. This will take place in November and details will be sent out soon.

P1-4

Welcome back to everyone for term 1 of 2026/2027! It's so lovely to see all our pupils back and even better to see some lovely fresh P1 faces! P1 children have settled in really well and already know our morning and afternoon routines. In literacy this term Early Level learners will be working on recognising and writing individual letter sounds, while First Level learners have already begun to explore using a variety of sentence starters in their writing. Numeracy this term has looked a little different for us, as we have merged groupings across both classes. This has been a fantastic opportunity for the children to show leadership and empathy while we learn about number value and place order. IDL this term is all about "Deserts" with many children already so knowledgeable about them! PE this term is on a Tuesday afternoon. Children can come to school dressed in P.E kits on a Tuesday, or can bring a P.E kit to hang on their peg. There is a small stock of P.E. kits at school if your child does not have one. I look forward to seeing all of our children grow and learn this year – we are off to a fantastic start! *Mrs Ironside*

P5-7

This term we will be learning all about Climate change and fragile environments, with particular focus on Scottish landscapes. We are going to be researching how weather affects climates, and how that impacts our geographic and social environments. Our class novel this term is "The Wilderness Wars", by local author Barbara Henderson. In Numeracy we are revising Number Order, Place Value and learning different strategies for addition and subtraction. Paired alongside number processes, we are doing a block of learning on "measure" this includes, perimeter, area, weight and length. We will continue with Spelling shed work lists and CYPIC writing in class. It promises to be a fun and exciting term. *Mrs Magee & Mrs Sutherland*

Parents Portal

We are aiming to have all parents registered for the Parents Portal. Some parents already use this and find it useful for reporting absences, accessing ipay (for school meals), viewing the school calendar etc. Once all parents have registered we aim to invite online booking for parents' evenings and use the permission slip facility. Check out the link below which has useful guides to help with registration:

<https://online.moray.gov.uk/site/wss/request/ParentsPortalLink>

ATTENDANCE

Habits of good regular attendance are important for your child's educational development, social skills and future positive pathways. However, we do understand that absence due to illness is unavoidable and should this be long term we will aim to support parents/carers in any way we can. In line with Moray Council guidelines absences will be monitored and we will contact parents/carers if absences rates are causing concern.

Please be aware that if your child has vomited/had diarrhoea they should not attend school and should remain absent for 48 hours since their last bout of vomiting/diarrhoea. This is particularly important to minimise the spread and to keep the school open.

Please be reminded of our general health and safety guidelines:

- Children should not come to school too early but should aim to arrive as close to the bell as possible.
- Mornings tend to be busy for staff, so if you wish to speak to a teacher, please call to make an appointment or you can pass on a message via the office.
- If your child is unable to attend school you should contact the school advising them of the reason for absence on each and every day your child is absent from school. Details regarding how you can advise the school of your child's absence are available here:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/my/public/stthomaspskeith/uploads/sites/5613/2025/03/12112153/Reporting-A-Pupil-Absence.pdf>

ROAD SAFETY MARKINGS AT THE SCHOOL GATE

Please be reminded that you **should not be stopping or parking on the yellow zig-zag lines outside the car park gate**, particularly at dropping off and picking up times. We understand that stopping or parking on Chapel

Street can be challenging and that you want your child to get out of the car as near to the school as possible, however there is a very important reason for these lines and that is to protect children who are coming round the corner and also children crossing the road to school. Due to their size they may not always be visible to a driver. Please do not drive into the school staff carpark to drop children off. The safety of our children is a top priority and your help with this is appreciated.

Cost of the School Day

Talking about money can be challenging. When struggling with costs, you may feel unable to talk about money, however, it could mean that you are missing out on help available and it may also be affecting how young people feel at school. At St Thomas', we want every family to know that support is available to reduce the cost of the school day and we are here to help families maximise income.

We are an inclusive school, where everyone belongs and can take part in everything we offer, without any barriers. We believe we offer high-quality experiences for all children and we then offer additional experiences or materials for those that require them, ensuring equity of opportunity. There are lots of ways we break down the barriers associated with poverty and here are just a few:

- Building a culture of dignity and respect, where we all care for each other and give support when it is needed.
- Having a thoughtful approach to how donations are given, eg. 'chuck it in a bucket' with no obligation to donate.
- Carefully considering how to take part in special days such as World Book Day with minimal costs to families.
- Providing recycled school clothing free of charge to anyone that requires it.
- We do encourage pupils to change into a PE kit for PE lessons. Boys and girls are offered separate changing areas. For pupils who do not have a PE kit from home, we offer a new PE kit (shorts and t-shirt) for them to wear and keep at school. Please send your child to school with suitable footwear for PE, it is not easy to do PE in heavy boots, slippers or wellies.
- Never charging for materials or experiences that take place during the school day.
- Having a 'No Child Left behind Approach' for residential trips, funded (partly or in full, depending on circumstances) by our enterprise projects, local grants and support from the Parent Council.
- Working with the Parent Council to provide low-cost or free social events.
- Asking for donations from the Parent Council. They have previously funded a whole-school set of class novels, buses for school trips and play equipment and so on.

Useful links:

[Talking about the cost of the school day](#)

[Child Poverty Action Group](#)

[Moray Council Website- Need Help with Money](#)

[Benefits Services](#)

[Help with Council Tax](#)

[Benefits Services- Help with Rent](#)

[Citizens Advice Scotland](#)

[Moray Food Bank Plus](#)

[MFR Cash for Kids](#)

[Scottish Child Payment](#)

To support the Cost of the School Day, the school has a bank of recycled and new sweatshirts/cardigans/jackets/trousers/pinafores/polo shirts. These are free to anyone and can either be collected or sent home with your child on request. Parents are welcome to come into school to view or can phone the school with their requests.

All donations of good condition school uniform items are gratefully received. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Change of clothes – we have a small stock of clothes that are used when pupils’ own clothes have gotten wet/muddy.
Please remember to return these items to school for use or alternatively you can include a spare set of clothes in your child’s bag if you think that it may be required.

School Website

Please check out our website, see the link below.

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/my/stthomaspskeith/>

School Uniform Suppliers

Our online uniform suppliers are www.myclothing.com

We also have a range of good quality recycled school clothing in our School Clothes Bank (see information above)

Parent Council

Date of next meeting – AGM (To be confirmed)

Canteen

Canteen menu can be accessed here or on the school website under parent information:

<https://www.moray.gov.uk/media/paefvo3e/file147882.pdf>

The Catering Department have a number of vacancies for Relief Catering Assistants. Please visit:

https://www.myjobscotland.gov.uk/councils/moray-council/jobs?parent_cat=2090

Dates for your Diary

See the link below for a full list of holiday dates:

<https://www.moray.gov.uk/learning-and-education/schools/school-term-dates-and-holidays/>

Tuesday 29 th September	Open Event for Parents	3-4pm
Tuesday 3 rd – Friday 6 th November	Bikeability	Details to follow
Tuesday 15 th December	P5-7 Christmas Party	Afternoon
Wednesday 16 th December	P1-4 Christmas Party	Afternoon
Tuesday 22 nd December	End of Term	Usual finish time

