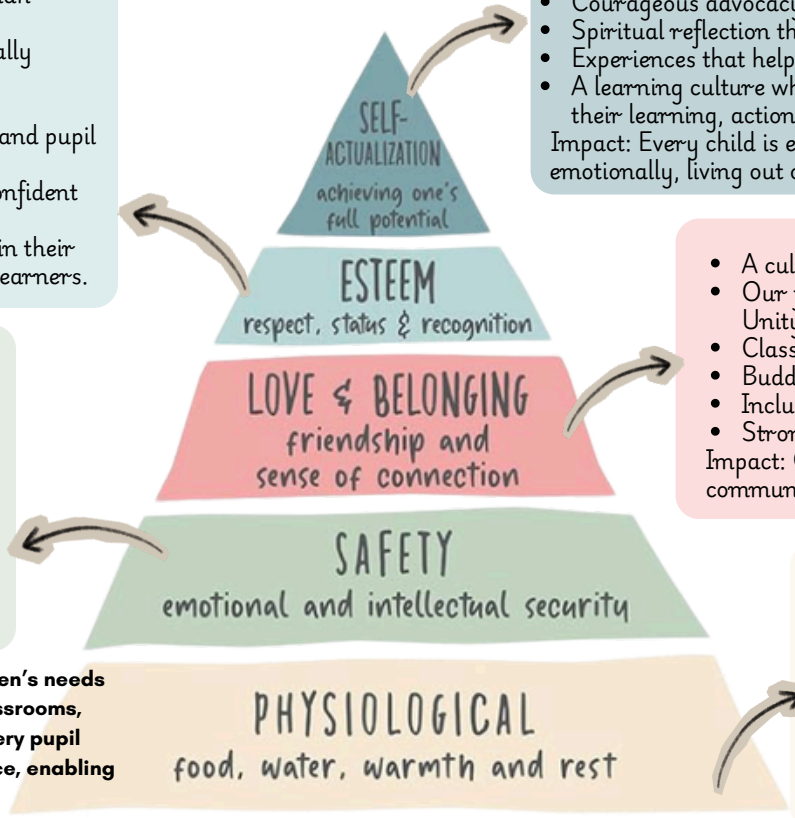
ST THOMAS
Church of England Primary School

Therapeutic Learning Environment

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in Practice

At St Thomas', our Christian vision, "Let Your Light Shine" (Matthew 5:16), reminds us that every child is uniquely created, deeply valued by God and deserves the opportunity to flourish. We recognise that children learn best when their physical, emotional and social needs are met. Our therapeutic approach is therefore rooted in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, ensuring that we create calm, safe and inclusive environments where every pupil can access learning and reach their full potential.



At St Thomas' we provide:

- High expectations with appropriate adaptive teaching.
- Independent workspaces that support access rather than separation.
- Scaffolds that build independence before being gradually removed.
- Recognition of effort, resilience and personal growth.
- Opportunities for leadership through worship, teams and pupil roles.
- Rich vocabulary and oracy opportunities to develop confident communicators.

Impact: Pupils develop resilience, confidence and pride in their achievements while becoming increasingly independent learners.

At St Thomas' we provide:

- A broad, ambitious curriculum built on strong foundational knowledge.
- Creative, sporting, musical and outdoor learning experiences.
- Courageous advocacy and opportunities to serve others.
- Spiritual reflection through RE, worship and prayer.
- Experiences that help children discover their unique talents and purpose.
- A learning culture where children are encouraged to let their light shine through their learning, actions and relationships.

Impact: Every child is empowered to flourish academically, socially, spiritually and emotionally, living out our vision and becoming the person God created them to be.

At St Thomas' we provide:

- Consistent routines and clear expectations across school.
- Trauma-informed, restorative behaviour approaches.
- Trusted adults and strong pastoral support.
- Therapeutic classrooms with soft lighting, calm colours and purposeful organisation.
- Visual timetables and predictable classroom structures.
- Regulation stations and individual support plans where needed.

Impact: Pupils feel secure, know what to expect and develop confidence to take risks in their learning.

At St Thomas' we provide:

- A culture where every child is known and valued.
- Our four team families: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, promoting Unity across the school.
- Class worship, collective worship and opportunities to lead.
- Buddy systems and pupil leadership roles.
- Inclusive classrooms where every voice is heard.
- Strong partnerships with families and our church community.

Impact: Children feel connected to their class, school and wider community, strengthening wellbeing and engagement.

Our learning environments are intentionally designed to meet children's needs before expecting learning to take place. Through therapeutic classrooms, adaptive teaching and nurturing relationships, we ensure that every pupil experiences Respect, Unity, Resilience, Honesty, Gratitude and Service, enabling them to thrive and truly let their light shine.

At St Thomas' we provide:

- Calm, uncluttered classrooms with therapeutic layouts.
- Access to drinking water throughout the day.
- Well-organised lunchtime routines and nutritious meals.
- Movement breaks and sensory regulation opportunities.
- Flexible seating where appropriate to support comfort and attention.
- Quiet spaces for children who need time to regulate.

Impact: Pupils are physically comfortable, emotionally settled and ready to engage in learning.