Parent Helpers
The children really benefit from having their parents in the class with them as they:

- Enable the teacher to provide a wider range of activities.
- Enable the teacher to ensure that small groups have adult supervision.
- Work 1:1 with students providing quality learning experiences.
- Share their expertise to enrich programs e.g. craft activities.
- Assist in the preparation of work tasks and the setting up of equipment.

General Guidelines for Parent Helpers
The classroom teacher is responsible for the education, control and behaviour management of the children. The parent is a helper, working under his / her direction. As such, the classroom teacher is the professional and facilitates the learning. The school expects parents to respect the teacher's expertise and maintain a professional attitude as they work alongside the teacher. The school stresses the importance of being professional and it insists that parents do not discuss classroom events, and/or children outside the class or school. Because teachers are entrusted with the development of whole classes of children and have the long term good of each child at heart, we ask that parent helpers also provide for all of the children by being supportive, enthusiastic and respecting confidentiality.

The teacher, as the caring professional and facilitator, will at all times provide the guidance needed by classroom helpers. If there is any part of the program that helpers are not clear about, we ask that they discuss it with the teacher and not outside the classroom.

Health and Safety
For a variety of Health and Safety issues, it is very important that we know exactly who is on the school premises and where they are. We therefore ask that every adult who comes into the school does so via the Office. Helpers must first sign on in the visitors book and wear a visitor's badge. At the end of the session it is necessary to return it to the Office and to sign off. For your own protection/safety we ask that parents do not enter the classroom unless the class teacher is present. St. Thomas’ requests that all parent helpers have a working with children check.
performed. Further information regarding a working with children check can be obtained from the Office.

**The School Day**
For your information, the times of lessons are as follows:
9.00-10.30
10.50-12.20
1.10-3.15

**Confidential Information**
Occasionally in school you will become aware of information about children which is confidential or private to the child or their family. This is a delicate matter that requires a great deal of tact on your part. Any information that leads you to believe a child is at risk should be mentioned to the Principal. But any conversation with parents outside of the school is a breach of the school's confidence. Even a comment to a fellow parent such as, ‘your Jimmy reads well,’ is not acceptable as other parents will wonder why you have not said that to them about their child. It is very important to treat anything you hear or see in school with regard to particular children as being in absolute confidence and entirely a matter within the school. Similarly, you may find that parents who are friends will ask about the progression or behaviour of their children in school. Again, this is a matter requiring a great deal of tact on your part and it is very important that you firmly suggest that if they are worried in any way about their child then they must discuss the matter themselves with the class teacher.

**Supervising Children**
Whenever you are supervising students, the following points will be of help:-
1. Always treat children with respect and in the same sort of way that you would expect them to treat you.
2. Be friendly towards them.
3. Do not raise your voice. If you speak normally to the children they will have to be quiet in order to hear what you are saying.
4. Tell them exactly what to do in as much detail as possible and ask them to repeat the instructions.
5. Don’t be afraid to quietly and calmly correct a child that is misbehaving but never try to physically move the child at any time. If in doubt, speak to the nearest member of staff.
6. Praise the children wherever possible.
7. Do not let the children become ‘silly’ or over-friendly with you. They must learn to behave socially towards adults who are not close friends. Encourage them to be polite to one another.
8. If you are concerned about a child for any reason, have a word with the class teacher – Do not speak directly to the parents of the child. This is the teacher’s job.
9. At school, teachers talk about cuddling, sitting on others’ knees etc. as something that is done at home with family. Please respect this within the classroom (A cuddle or hug for your own child as you leave is OK).