



Longton Hall Road, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent. ST3 2NJ

Tel: 01782 882900 | Email: [office@stmca.org.uk](mailto:office@stmca.org.uk) | [www.stmca.org.uk](http://www.stmca.org.uk) | @StThomasMoreCA

Headteacher: Mr M Rayner BA(Hons) NPQH

Parents/Carer,

This has been a short but very productive half term. We will be sending a full newsletter at the end of term, however we wanted to take this opportunity to update you with some of the fantastic achievements and news from this half term, as well as also remind you of some key information.

I would like to congratulate all the students for their support with the non-uniform day at the end of last term. We managed to raise £1400 for a past pupil, Luke Boulton. Luke has completely lost his sight and this money will allow him to purchase the technology which will be able to read for him. It will transform his life and allow him to regain at least a little of the independence he has lost.

I am delighted to see so many students engaged in student leadership and the extensive range of extra-curricular activities on offer in our academy. It is also fantastic to see so many students using our new 3G facilities at break and lunchtime.

A very exciting initiative called the 'Honours Programme' was launched to students and families on 23rd January. 162 students are involved in this programme across the Academy, from Year 7 to Sixth Form. Students will be given a bespoke package of provision, development of key skills and enhances careers education, information, advice and guidance in order to stretch and challenge them to achieve the highest grades in examinations and fulfil their full potential. This programme is inclusive and students can earn their place on the Honours Programme at any time in the academic year if they achieve the criteria through internal assessments. Please speak to Mrs Barker or Mrs Rowley if you would like more information.

'Honours Programme' students have been provided with year group specific reading lists and a Charter of Opportunities that they must complete in order to graduate from the programme at the end of the year. All resources will be available on the school website, so any student is able to access them if they wish.

Upcoming 'Honours Programme' events include workshops with local companies including Autonet and KMF, visits to leading Universities, and a CREST Science qualification.

Attendance is a key part of success and I am delighted to say that our current attendance is 95.4% compared to a national of 94.6%. We recently sent out our updated attendance policy and letter from the LA, a copy of which is available on the school's website. Please be reminded, following on from our recent email that St Thomas More works in conjunction with





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Stoke-on-Trent Education Welfare Service and the local authority's Code of Conduct. The school is not able to authorise holidays taken during term time, and unauthorized leave of absence may result in a penalty notice being issued.

Both Year 11 and year 13 students are again approaching mock examinations after half term in preparation for the final examinations after Easter. We will continue to support these students through this time. Public examinations are a challenge but it is imperative that students use every moment wisely and revise thoroughly. Facilities for revision and intervention are in place. Please support your son/daughter by ensuring a detailed revision programme is implemented, as this commitment to learning will certainly pay dividends.

Year 11 students are also applying for post 16 study. Applications to our Sixth Form are still most welcome and we would encourage students to make their applications to Mrs Bradbury. Course discussions with students and parents will take place after half term.

Students have access to a huge variety of extra-curricular and enrichment activities after school. At such activities students are obviously supervised and registered; can we please take this opportunity to remind parents that students must not be in school past 3.30pm if they are not in an after school club.

In order to continue to further improve standards, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the expectations regarding uniform and behaviour at St Thomas More Catholic Academy. Our school is underpinned by the values of Faith, Excellence and Respect. As such all students must follow our expectations in order that they can achieve their absolute best in all that they do. In terms of uniform, trainers, hoodies or round neck jumpers are not acceptable. Equipment is also a non-negotiable expectation. I would therefore like to remind you that all students should arrive to school with a bag which is big enough to include a pencil case, student planner, PE kit and all necessary books (text books and exercise books). The pencil case should include at least two pens, a pencil, rubber and ruler. Furthermore, students have been reminded that hoodies will be confiscated, if worn to school. Similarly, any mobile phones seen during the day (apart from in the dining hall at brektime and lunchtime only) will also be confiscated and stored securely at the main school office.

I am also very concerned about the number of students using aerosols deodorants in school. We have repeatedly asked students not to bring them into school or to spray in school. Can I ask that you remind students that aerosol deodorants should not be sprayed in school?





The behaviour of a very small minority of students while travelling to and from school is also, during recent weeks, not meeting the expectations of our school and certainly not reflecting the Faith, Excellence and Respect that we represent. The vast majority of our students are fantastic ambassadors for our school, however there are unfortunately a few students who are not behaving in an acceptable manner, either before or after school, and therefore are clearly choosing to ignore the examples set both at home and at school. These issues tend to occur in the local community and are a result of issues on social media. This is clearly unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Can we therefore ask for your support in ensuring that your child walks home directly and does not act in a manner which could cause disappointment for either you or the school. In accordance with the school's Behaviour for Learning policy, consequences for any such behaviours will be issued as the policy does include travel to and from school. Sanctions including fixed term and permanent exclusions can be, and have been, applied to those students who choose to break the rules and/or negatively affect the reputation of St Thomas More. I can assure you that all incidents are treated very seriously as we will not tolerate any such breaches of our expectations and rules. Please be aware that this does, and always will, include those students who seem to enjoy watching and encouraging others' bad behaviour as this will also not be tolerated.

On a more positive note, we are extremely thrilled to announce that St Thomas More is one of a handful of schools across the city to have been chosen as a pilot school for the government's Trailblaze initiative. This initiative has been launched in order to address and support the mental health needs of young people, and to promote the importance of tackling any myths regarding mental health. As many as 1 in 10 children are currently affected by mental ill health, and therefore the school is extremely excited to be a part of this pilot, in order that we can continue to develop the already strong practices embedded within school to support our young people. I am sure that more details will follow in our next newsletter as we learn more about how the pilot will be implemented. Mrs Stubbs, the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, attended the citywide launch held last week, and will be working with CAMHS and the local authority over the coming months to ensure that we are able to fully embed all of the excellent support systems that this strategy will include.





# St Thomas More Catholic Academy

FAITH | EXCELLENCE | RESPECT



Archdiocese of  
Birmingham

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During our recent Pastoral Week, students completed and participated within a range of workshops, trips, assemblies and activities which covered various key topics: community cohesion, mental health, careers information and guidance, healthy hearts, social media education, and a National Enterprise Day were just some of the opportunities made available to students and they clearly enjoyed – and learnt much from – each one of them!

Enjoy the half term break; we look forward to welcoming our students back for the next half term.

Yours sincerely

Mark Rayner  
Headteacher



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FAITH, LOVE & LEARNING