

Monday 7th February 2022

Dear Parents/ Carers,

I will be sending another newsletter before the end of term, however I wanted to take this opportunity to share just a couple of our sporting successes. Both the U12 and U13 girls netball teams are City Champions and the U14 boys' football team have progressed to the semi-final of the County Cup. These are brilliant achievements and show our commitment to, and the value of, extra-curricular activities: well done to all who have represented St Thomas More!

In another 'field', it is wonderful to see that our achievements span academically as well as in the sporting world, our Science Team has won the regional Top of the Bench Competition and will now progress to the national finals. It is an annual competition run by the Royal Society of Chemistry and winning this competition is another superb achievement. Year 13 students have been receiving offers from universities following submission of their applications through UCAS. 87% of Year 13 students have applied to university, 31% of which have applied to Russell Group universities, and four of whom have now received offers from Oxford and Cambridge. It is wonderful to see this aspiration amongst our students and we could not be prouder of them.

This week is national Children's Mental Health Week, with a theme of 'Growing Together'. What an apt theme, following on from the celebration of so many of our students' successes as they all 'Aspire to be More' and very much evidence how all of our STM community continually 'grow together!' The aim of this national week of focus on children's mental health is to encourage us to be able to reflect on how far we have come, and also consider how we can help others on their journey. Life is full of challenges but it is important to see difficult moments in our lives as opportunities for growth. 1 in 6 children have a diagnosable mental health issue, so it is really important to help each other out when we can, and to find ways to take care of our mental, as well as our physical health. Small changes to our daily routines can have a massive positive impact on our mental health. As with the national picture, we have seen a significant rise in mental health challenges and remain steadfastly committed to supporting our young people to overcome their challenges, and feel positive about themselves. We have a team of staff and a range of support systems in place to support our young people, should you feel that your child is struggling, please contact us in school.

Unfortunately, we continue to have a significant number of Covid cases in both the staff and student population. This half term we have experienced more absence of staff and students than at any point during the last two years. This has led to unavoidable "cover" lessons; however, all staff have been working tirelessly to ensure students receive face to face learning and as "normal" a school experience as possible. It is even more important that students work with us at this time by ensuring they have the correct uniform and equipment and are ready to engage in their learning and futures. We expect students to model our values of faith, excellence and respect at all times, and will



St Thomas More Catholic Academy

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continue to support them to understand these values within and throughout our daily school lives. We ask for your continued support with this in order that we can maintain the highest standards: we do not tolerate disrespectful or defiant behaviour. Your support, as always, is much appreciated and plays a crucial role in helping us to work with your child to achieve their very best.

Yours sincerely

Mr M Rayner
Headteacher



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