

Admissions Policy

Trinity Sixth Form at St Thomas More Catholic Academy

2026-2027

Mission Statement

"Succeeding Together"

The Trinity Sixth Form at St Thomas More is dedicated to the education and development of the whole person, so that all students can realise their full potential.

To achieve this as a community we will:

- Provide the highest standards of teaching and learning;
- Expect students to show commitment to their studies and respect the Christian values of the partners within Trinity Sixth Form;
- Expect all members of Trinity Sixth Form to show respect for the views of others;
- Provide equality of opportunity, with mutual respect and positive encouragement;
- Build and further develop a partnership with parents, schools, parishes and religious communities, higher education and the local community;
- Value staff and support their professional development.

Introduction and Context

St Thomas More Catholic Academy, St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy, and St John Fisher Catholic College all part of St Gabriel the Archangel Catholic Multi Trust have joined together to create a sixth form partnership under the name of Trinity Sixth Form.

Trinity Sixth Form is a 16-19 partnership based in Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme. These three local academies with a tradition of previous sixth form experience have joined together to form this partnership. Their shared ethos of care, support and ambition for their students finds expression in the collaboration of the Trinity Sixth Form. The distinctive identity of Trinity is that we seek to provide a school-based ethos with students feeling known and supported while offering a wide range of level 3 courses, similar to what a large sixth form college can offer. We also maintain close links with parents during this time.

All three of the academies provide a Catholic faith-based education from reception year to the end of sixth form. They seek at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. This means that we aim to succeed together as Trinity Sixth Form. We achieve this by placing the learning and well-being of each student at the centre of every action we take and every decision we make.

Within a framework of equality and diversity Trinity Sixth Form encourages applications from students regardless of race, belief system and gender and welcomes applications from students with disabilities. For students with disabilities we will endeavour to ensure that the offer we make allows equality of opportunity, including making parents and carers aware of physical provision and subject support. All students who are at a school outside the Trinity partnership are welcome to visit one or more of the Trinity sites with their parents or carers in accompaniment. All students on roll at a partner academy are welcome to visit other Trinity sites both prior to and following application.

Every student applying will indicate the preferred home academy where they will be mainly based. The benefit of the Trinity is that students can travel to other centres to study whichever subjects they wish (subject to entry criteria) or they may choose to stay within the chosen home academy. Free minibuss transport is provided to ensure that students can attend the other centres for the lessons.

ADMISSION TO THE SIXTH FORM

The school operates a sixth form for a total of 200 pupils. 100 places overall will be available in Year 12. Whilst the admission number is 10, if fewer than 90 of the school's existing pupils transfer into Year 12, additional external pupils will be admitted until Year 12 meets its capacity of 100.

Applications for the Sixth Form should be made directly to the school using the application form available from the school from Mr Whitehouse and also online applications through the website. Completed application forms must be returned to the school.

Both internal and external pupils wishing to enter the sixth form will be expected to have met the same minimum academic entry requirements for the Sixth Form.

Trinity Sixth Form at St Thomas More Catholic Academy Year 12 - Entry requirements

Admissions – A level Courses

- Equivalent to five or more 9 - 4 grade passes in GCSE subjects, including both English and Maths. This is a grade 4 in Maths and English plus 3 other GCSEs at grade 4 or above;
- Any additional requirements for the specific entry criteria to particular subject/courses are listed in the prospectus. (See Appendix 1);

Admission to vocational courses

- Equivalent to five or more 9 - 4 grade passes in GCSE subjects, including both English and Maths. This is a grade 4 in Maths and English plus 3 other GCSEs at grade 4 or above.

However, if a student achieves a grade 3 in maths OR English, and has all other entry requirements students will be admitted for a vocational pathway.

All students will be required to retake Mathematics or English GCSE qualifications if they have not been achieved at GCSE Grade 4 or above as a compulsory requirement. Students will need to have achieved a grade 3 to access the resit GCSE Mathematics and English courses alongside a vocational level 3 pathway.

- We will not accept students who have achieved a GCSE grade 3 in both English and Maths.

Admission to Level 2 + Steps to Success pathway

Up to twenty places are available on our Steps to Success Level 2+ pathway.

The admission criteria for this pathway is English or maths GCSE (grade 4) and three other GCSEs (or equivalent).

It is appreciated that this will usually be a plan B for students and therefore this option will be opened on GCSE results day, initially for STMCA students and then external students from Friday morning.

All those seeking admission to the Trinity Sixth Form must achieve the necessary grades for access onto the courses they have chosen. Refer to the subject specific entry requirements Appendix 1.

In addition, Trinity Sixth Form has a policy of ensuring that independent careers advice and guidance is available for students.

Applications will be handled in the order submitted

In addition to the Sixth Form's minimum academic entry requirements pupils will need to satisfy minimum entrance requirements to the courses for which they are applying. If either internal or external applicants fail to meet the minimum course requirements they will be given the opportunity of pursuing any alternative courses for which they do meet the minimum academic requirements. Course requirements are published annually in the school's prospectus and on its website.

When Year 12 is undersubscribed all applicants meeting the minimum academic entry requirements will be admitted or permitted to progress.

When there are more external applicants that satisfy any academic entry requirements priority will be given in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out below.

Where there is space in Year 13, ie where there are fewer than 100 pupils in the year group, the school will admit additional pupils up to this number using the oversubscription criteria set out below.

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority. If there is oversubscription within a category, the Board of Directors will give priority firstly to children who will have a brother or sister (see Note 4 above) attending St Thomas More Catholic Academy at the time of admission and then secondly to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance (see Note 6 above)

Please note that Children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan that names the academy **MUST** be admitted. This will reduce the number of places available to applicants. This is not an oversubscription criteria.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA FOR SIXTH FORM

1. Students who are in the care of a local authority (looked-after children) or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents) (Section 22 of the Children Act 1989) and children who were previously looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order. Please see note 1 below.
2. Students in Year 11 currently at St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy and St John Fisher Catholic College
3. Students in Year 11 from schools in the UK but not a partner school, who meet the entry criteria;
4. Students from outside of the three partner schools looking to re-sit courses and eligible for funding from the Educational Funding Authority (EFA);
5. Overseas students with valid permission/visa status to study in the UK and eligible for funding. These are referred to as personal entry criteria;

The entry requirements for admission to the Sixth Form shall be the same for students on roll in Year 11 at St Thomas More the academies and external applicants.

We accept both traditional paper applications and also online applications

Note 1

A “looked after child” has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child who is (a) in the care of the local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (eg children with foster parents) at the time of making the application to the school. A “previously looked after child” is a child who immediately moved on from that status after becoming subject to an adoption, child arrangement order or special guardianship order and includes those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

For the purposes of this policy, a looked after child living with a family where at least one of the carers is Catholic will be considered as Catholic. The carer must forward a copy of their own Catholic Baptismal or Reception certificate directly to the school in order for this priority to be given to the child as failure to do so will result in the looked after child being ranked as a non-Catholic.

Appeals

- Any student refused the offer of a place in the Trinity Sixth Form at St Thomas More or a place on a chosen course has the right of appeal;
- In the first instance, this appeal is to the Headteacher at St Thomas More;
- Parents who wish to appeal against the decision of the Headteacher of St Thomas More to refuse their child a place in the Sixth Form may apply in writing to the Board of Directors/Chair of Governors to. Appeals will be heard by an independent panel.
- Any decision made is binding across the three academies in the partnership;

Appeals for Sixth Form – appeals may be made by the student and/or the parent/carers	
Deadline for lodging appeals and providing evidence to support the appeal (if appropriate)	20 school days from the date of notification that the application was unsuccessful
Where the offer of a place would have been conditional upon exam results - Appeals will be heard	Within 30 school days of confirmation of those results

Where the offer of a place would not have been conditional upon exam results - Appeals will be heard	Within 40 school days of deadline for appeals
Notice of appeal hearing	10 school days' notice of the appeal hearing
Deadline for governing body to submit evidence for the appeal	10 school days before the appeal hearing
Deadline for sending appeal papers to all parties	10 school days before the appeal hearing
Deadline for appellant to submit additional evidence	Five school days before the appeal hearing. Information or evidence not submitted by the deadline might not be considered at the appeal
Late applications for appeals will be heard by	At the same time as previously scheduled appeals or within 30 school days of appeal being lodged
Decision letters sent to appellant	Normally within five school days

Special Consideration

A student may be able to claim special consideration if a medical condition exists (supported by a doctor's note) that has significantly influenced GCSE results in comparison to the predicted outcomes. Such cases will be considered on their individual merits.

False Information

Where the academy has made the offer of a place in the Trinity Sixth Form on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

Late Applications

We will accept applications after the submission date on the basis that:

1. These applications will be dealt with after those submitted by the advertised date.
2. Some courses may well be full.
3. We may have made alterations to the option blocks to accommodate the subject choices for the majority of applicants. Trinity Sixth Form reserves the right to alter, substitute or withdraw courses/programmes as appropriate.
4. Some courses may have to be removed from the offer, e.g. if insufficient students wish to access a course. Offers of places on all courses are made

subject to availability and the constraints of timetabling all of the various combinations requested.

Late applications will be considered up to the end of the third full week of the Autumn Term in Year 12.

Option blocks are locked in place in the final term of the previous academic year meaning that all options may no longer be freely available to choose. Any offers or conditional offers may be subject to the size or projected size of classes. This could affect students wishing to transfer from other providers.

Exceptions will be made for students moving into the North Staffordshire area from other areas of the UK or from other countries. However, these cases will be dependent on the availability of places in chosen subjects, meeting the published entry requirements – academic and personal - and how much of the course has been missed which could impact on the likelihood of the student making progress and achieving well.

Oversubscription Criteria for Trinity Sixth Form

The circumstances of the Trinity Sixth Form partnership mean that we can be flexible as to our student numbers but the key determining factor will be the size of groups for each course.

If there are two or more students who apply at the same time, we will use the following methods:

1. By GCSE grade in the particular oversubscribed subjects,
 2. By average GCSE points score.
- N.B. All of the above refers to GCSE only, not equivalences such as BTEC.

Timetable for Admission

1. Students complete application in Autumn Term of Year 11;
2. Applications processed from December of Year 11;
3. Following the submission of application forms students will be invited for a course discussion;
4. School makes a conditional offer and this is communicated to parents during the spring term of Year 11. Applicants will be made an offer of a place in order to study specified courses. These will be the courses agreed during the course discussion. The offer will be subject to meeting the entry criteria for the course;
5. Option blocks are fixed based on applications;
6. Students will be required to enrol on a specified date, following the publication of GCSE results. Failure to attend enrolment will result in the offer of a place being withdrawn, except where we have received prior notification in writing;
7. GCSE results published August 2026;

8. Admission confirmed or refused August 2026;
9. Appeals September 2026

To ensure that the quality of provision for the students is maintained, the directors of each partner academy have jointly adopted this admissions policy.

Appendix 1

Courses and Entry Requirements 2026-27

The general entry requirement for Trinity Sixth Form is five or more 9 – 4 grades (or equivalent) including grade 4 in English & Maths.

If students have achieved a grade 3 in English or Maths, they can re-sit this qualification alongside a more vocational Level 3 pathway.

AS/A-LEVEL COURSES

It is recommended that students have a grade 6 (B equivalent) at GCSE in their chosen subject/ closely related subject.

Places are available on A Level courses to these students in the first instance.

Exceptions are:

Further Maths – Grade 7 at GCSE

STEPS TO SUCCESS

Up to twenty places are available on our Steps to Success Level 2+ pathway.

The admission criteria for this pathway is English or maths GCSE (grade 4) and three other GCSEs.

It is appreciated that this will usually be a plan B for students and therefore this option will be opened on GCSE results day, initially for STMCA students and then external students from Friday morning.

VOCATIONAL COURSES

For our vocational curriculum, students need to have met our general entry requirement and have a passion for their chosen subject. These are equally demanding courses that are assessed in a more modular way