

St Thomas More Catholic Academy
Year 7 Induction
Wednesday 1st July 2026

Welcome to
St Thomas More Catholic Academy
“Aspire to be More”



Key staff:

Deputy Headteacher

Assistant Headteacher

Head of Year

Student Support

SENCO

Mr Shufflebotham

Mrs Todd

Mrs Leese

Miss Nuttall

Mrs Sloan

Mrs Britton

Mrs Wheeler



Year 7 Form Tutors:

7RL: Mr Barnett

7JB: L Machin

7DB: Miss Hall

7MK: Mr Mycock

7TL: Miss Jones

7TC: Miss Howie

7VP: Mrs Willis



New Academic Year:

- Year 7 will begin on Thursday 3rd September – a dedicated day for year 7 students
- Students should arrive at school **no later than 8:45 am**
- All students should wear school uniform
- Pencil case containing all basic stationery should be brought every day, in addition to a bag big enough to hold their exercise books
- Students will not need to bring their PE kit on the first day (beyond that students will need to bring it on set days)
- Phone Pouches will be distributed



Start and end of the day:

Students can arrive from 8:00am and must be on-site for 8:45

School finishes at 3:20

Year 7 have their own entrance and exit via the green gate

Encourage students to stay for extra-curricular activities and homework club

Attendance and punctuality are tracked

Parents' cars are not permitted onto site



Free Breakfast Bagels

- Available for all students
- Monday – Friday
- 8.00am – 8:45am
- From the Dining Hall

Wake Up and Fuel Up!



Key Dates:

- **First day:** Thursday 3rd September
- **GL assessments** w/c 7th September
- **Reading assessments:** w/c 22nd September
- **Transition theatre workshop:** Tuesday 8th September
- **Review of groups/ settings:** October half term
- **Year 7 In-house Retreat:** Wednesday 15th October 2025
- **Year 7 Parents' Evenings:**
 - Thursday 22nd October 2026 (form tutor)
 - Thursday 4th March 2026 (class teachers)
- **Assessment period:** 11th – 22nd January 2027
- **Assessment week 2:** w/c 14th June 2027

Full calendar to be issued via email in September, and published on school website



Why we are phone-free

Introducing Phone Locker pouches

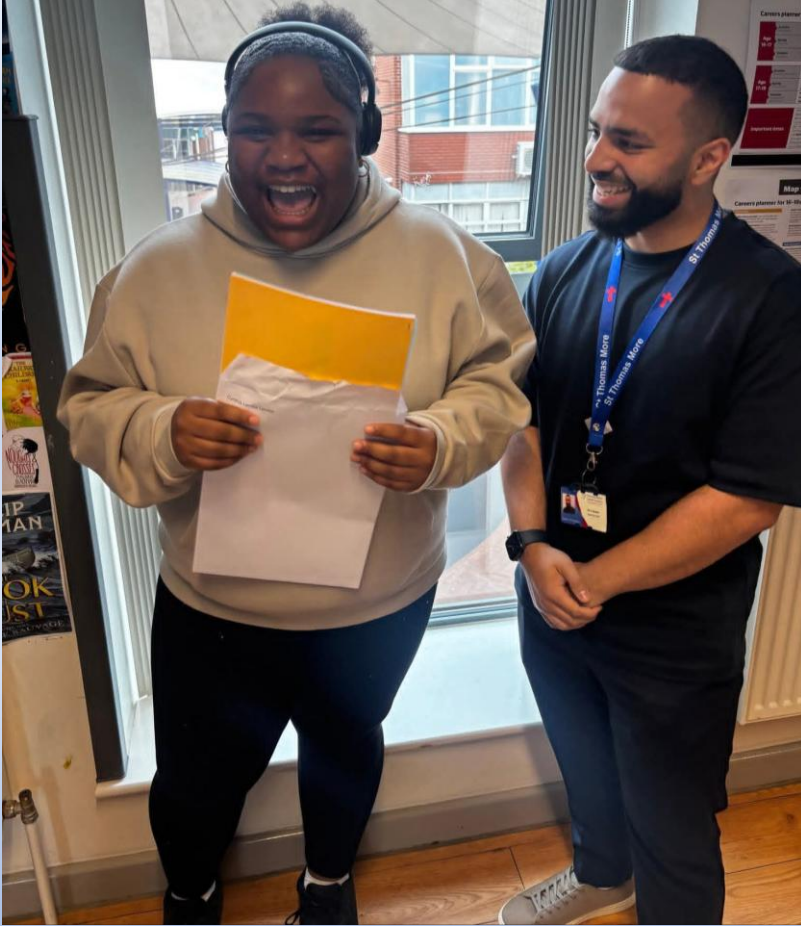
S⁺ Thomas More
Catholic Academy
FAITH | EXCELLENCE | RESPECT



Why ban phones at STMCA?

- To support the **well being and mental health** of our community
- To ensure students can **focus fully on their learning** without distraction
- DFE / Government guidance becoming statutory
- To **strengthen safeguarding**, particularly in relation to social media, online bullying, and inappropriate use of devices
- To support a **calm, orderly, and safe school environment** for everyone





Achieving Success

Phones can be a distraction that affects focus, participation and learning.

Other schools have proven that going 'phone-free':

- ✓ Improves focus on your work
- ✓ Improves interaction in class
- ✓ Improves student exam scores
- ✓ Supports Y11 GCSE examination regulations

As seen on TV!

A documentary on Channel 4 found a school in Essex which went phone-free found in just 3 weeks...

- 17% decrease in symptoms linked to depression
- 18% decrease in anxiety amongst students
- 3% boost in working memory





Who are Phone Locker?

- Used by schools in 20+ countries globally
- Also used by famous musicians and comedians
- You'll find them at concerts and festivals



Beyoncé



Chris Rock



Adele

Phone-Free Environments

The Phone Locker pouch

The lockable pouch means Pupils keep hold of your phones, but cannot access them without an unlocking base at the end of the school day.



How it works



Insert

Put phone in Airplane Mode and insert into pouch.



Lock

Push the lock button, and then take the pouch to class.



Unlock

Unlock by placing the locking mechanism near the base.

Daily Process

- On arrival, pupils must place your phone and air pods into your own Phone Locker pouch.
- Staff will be present from 8am at the Student Entrance. The phone is placed in the pouch before pupils enter.
- At the end of the school day, over 20 stations will be situated at front of school, allowing pouches to be unlocked
- Staff on duty will also have unlocking devices.



Behaviour Policy

- If a pouch is damaged or lost there will be a £25 replacement cost
- Using other magnets or trying to open will cause damage
- Honesty is the best policy- if you have forgotten your pouch but have a phone tell the first adult and this can be kept for you until the end of the day.
- **Any mobile phone seen in school will be confiscated** and will only be returned to a parent/carer the **following day**.
- Phones confiscated on a Friday would need to be **collected on a Monday**.



What happens if there is an emergency at the school?

We follow normal practiced procedure. Such as evacuation or lockdown. Without the distraction or risk of noise from phones.

What if I need to contact my parents/carer?

You can use the phone at green desk in an emergency or you can ask your Student Support officer to call home on your behalf.

What if I forget to unlock my pouch?

You can return to the school as the stations are at the front and will not need to come back into the building.

I attend extra curricular clubs- can I unlock my phone?

You are welcome to unlock your pouch before attending an organised extra-curricular club. It is up to you.

What if I have to leave early for an appointment?

Parents can call and report a planned absence in advance and this will be added to your Arbor profile. You can unlock your pouch when signing out.

What happens if my phone goes off in the pouch?

Phone signals are blocked when in the pouch, this includes Bluetooth. We suggest to protect battery life phones are switched off before placing them in the pouch.

Mrs Todd
Deputy Headteacher



Y12 and 13 - Empowered

Y10 and 11 - Independence

Years 7, 8 and 9 - Resilience





Interventions



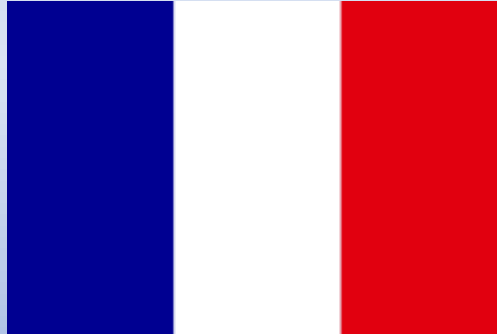
How to support from home:

- ✓ Have a copy of timetable on display
- ✓ Help students to pack their bag the night before
- ✓ Have a regular routine with homework
- ✓ Speak positively about the school
- ✓ Give them time to decompress at the end of the day
- ✓ Communicate with Mrs Britton/Form Tutor
- ✓ Attend Parents' Open Morning / Evenings
- ✓ Good sleep pattern



Mrs Leese
Assistant Headteacher

Developing the whole child



Homework:

Red week

Bedrock
Sparx
Seneca

Blue week

Bedrock
Sparx
Hegarty
Seneca

+ MAPPER:
All subjects fortnightly

*All homework is completed online,
we do not issue detention for
homework – we offer support via
Progress Coaches*



Learning Resource Centre:

- No "cover" lessons
- Students complete work independently online in the event of a teacher's absence
- LRC open Monday – Thursday after school



Hubb summer school 2026:

- 5 days of provision from Monday 17th August – Friday 21st August
- 9:30 – 13:30
- Enrichment activities + Flipout Friday
- Activities are free and lunch is provided
- Booking link will be emailed out by this week
- Parents to self-declare eligibility



Coats

- Outdoor coats must be recognised as an 'outdoor garment'.
- Hoodies, tracksuit tops and sweatshirts are not acceptable school coats.

Bags

- Bags should be big enough for A4 folders, books, planner and pencil case.
- A separate bag is needed for PE Kit.

Planner

- This will be used for noting down each lesson focus and homework. It may also be used as a communication tool between form tutors and parents.

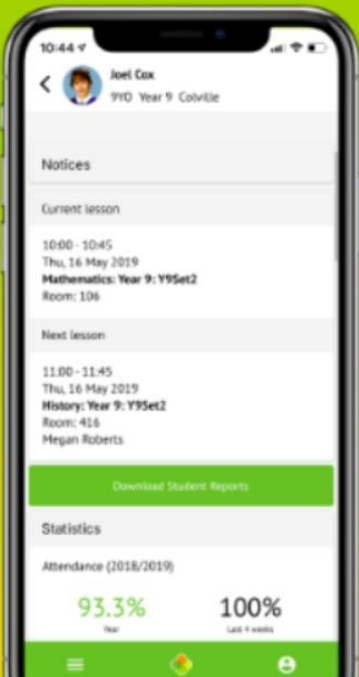


Miss Nuttall

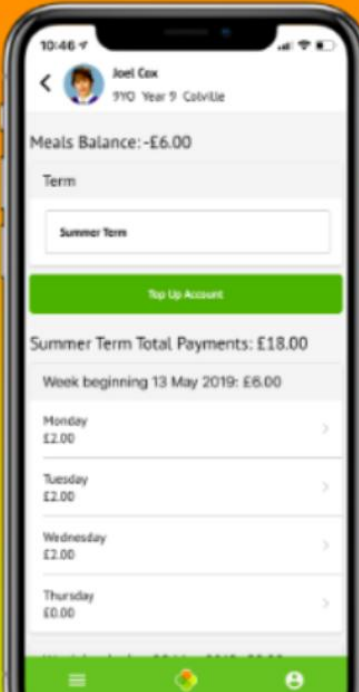
Assistant Headteacher

Arbor

Check on your child from anywhere



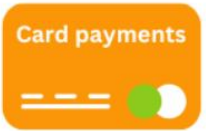
Make payments on the go





Arbor App & Portal

- View your child's Timetable, Clubs and Attendance
- Pay for School Meals
- Sign up to trips and after-school clubs
- Update your details
- Provide consent for photos
- Receive instant messages







Changes to Free School Meals Sept 2026

1. “Targeted” FSM (in place until July 2026-continuing from Sept 2026 after eligibility checks)

At present, Free School Meals are available to pupils in secondary school if parents/carers receive certain benefits.

You may be eligible now if you receive one of the following:

Universal Credit and your net earned household income is £7,400 per year or less (after tax and excluding benefits)

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (with income under £16,190 and not receiving Working Tax Credit)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (for a limited period after employment changes)

2. “Expanded” FSM (from September 2026)

From the start of the 2026/27 academic year, the government is expanding eligibility significantly:

All families receiving Universal Credit will qualify, **regardless of income**

The £7,400 earnings threshold will be removed entirely

This means many families who are currently not eligible may become eligible from September.



Attendance-School is not the same when your child isn't here!

As a nation and as schools we are still recovering from the pandemic- so far this year 1 in 5 students in secondary schools in England miss more than 20 schools days in a year...that is over **100** lessons missed...that is **6000 minutes** missed in one academic year- By the time students with an average attendance of 90% sit their GCSE they will have **missed nearly 30,000 minutes of learning!**

DfE research finds missing just 10 days of year 11 halves the odds of getting a grade 5 in English and maths- 10 days absence = 95% attendance

Every Minute Counts- be here, on time, every day!



Absence Procedure

- Attendance is expected daily: if your child is feeling under the weather we can look after them in school in most instances, if they are too unwell in the morning please **report their absence by 8.30am** by ringing the school office. We will encourage you and your child to see how they feel after 2 hours and if they are feeling better we would love to see them in the afternoon! They will not be in trouble for being late.
- Any student not in school is not in 'line of sight'; this forms part of our safeguarding responsibilities. If you haven't reported your child's absence and we are unable to make contact with you, our EWO Mrs Dutton may complete a home visit.
- **No holidays / requests for leaves of absence will be authorised**



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SCHOOL UNIFORM

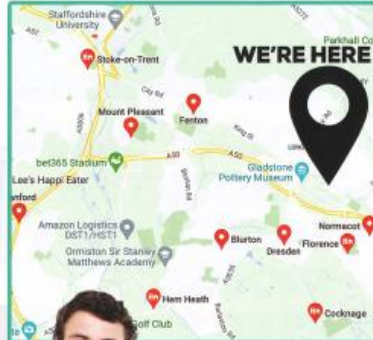
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OPENING HOURS
MON- FRI 7:30AM - 6PM
SAT: 7:30AM-5PM
SUN: 10AM-4PM



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