

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

Newsletter

Autumn Term 1



FAITH WEEK

As always, the school year started with our School Faith Week. This gave the children and staff the opportunity to reflect on what makes our school an incredibly special place. The children were reminded of our core Mission – Try to be like Jesus in all that you think, do and say. They reflected on our Core Aims, Virtues, Class Saints, School prayer and St. Thomas More. They created some beautiful art work, prayers, posters, music and even a rap!



Attendance

Current whole school attendance figure:
96%

Dunstable Mass

On Friday 6th October, Mrs Howes and Mrs Herbert had the honour of accompanying some of our Mission Ambassadors to a Mass in Dunstable. They joined with other children and staff from the Diocese and reflected on their roles and made promises to lead and inspire our mission across the school. Bishop David officially commissioned them into their new roles. The children made us very proud with their beautiful manners, enthusiasm and reflective responses.



Book and Biscuit

St. George class (EYFS) welcomed their families into school for their first 'Book and Biscuit' afternoon. The children had a great time sharing their favourite stories with their families, especially outside in the adventure playground, while also showing them around their classroom for the first time.

A huge thank you to everyone who attended and for the encouragement you give your children; this is promoting a love of reading for pleasure within St. George's class. It was wonderful to see this event supported by so many parents and the children are very excited to invite them back into school in the near future!

FAITH FRIENDS

Every Friday, children from across Key Stage 2 are invited to join together with a member of the school chaplaincy team to take part in 'Faith Friends.' This is a wonderful opportunity to finish the week with spiritual reflection. So far this year, the children have meditated, explored creation, prayed the Rosary and created their own crosses.

The school has been gifted a beautiful large set of Rosary Beads from two special members of the Parish. A huge thank you to Mrs Tucker and Mrs Parsler for our very thoughtful gift.



Music

Music is very important to us at St. Thomas More and we are very proud to inform you that we have yet again been awarded the Music Mark, due to our commitment to music across our school. As part of our commitment, we are very lucky to have several fantastic peripatetic music teachers who come into school to offer instrumental lessons to pupils. Currently we have spaces for piano, string and guitar lessons. We hope to add brass lessons soon. If you are interested in your child having instrumental lessons in school you can find more information here: <https://www.nmpat.co.uk/learn-with-us/music/lessons/>



Visit to St. Edward's Church

On Tuesday 17th October, St. Rose Class (Year 1) walked beautifully to St. Edward's Church in town. They met Fr. Elvis for the first time and listened very carefully to what he had to say as we discussed Baptism and the role of Godparents. We also learnt that the font is by the entrance of the Church to act as a constant reminder of our invitation and belonging to God's family. The children were excellent role models to our local community and made sure that everyone knew how amazing St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School is.

Sea Life Centre

Year 3 had an amazing time at the Sea Life Centre in Birmingham. The children loved seeing all the sea creatures especially the penguins and turtles. We were very lucky to see the penguins being fed and the children thought that it was awesome to see the penguins eating the fish whole. I asked the children what their favourite part was and they all agreed that it was definitely walking through the 360 tunnel and seeing the turtles, sharks, sting rays and all the other fish swimming over their heads and under their feet. All the children were incredibly well behaved and we were very proud of them.



Pupil Premium

Due to the current climate, many families are finding that their financial situation is changing. If your household income has changed, you may meet the criteria for extra funding through the government called Pupil Premium funding. You can apply on-line at <https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/schools-and-education/free-school-meals-and-pupil-premium>. If your application is successful, this will automatically make you eligible for Pupil Premium funding. Alternatively, please contact the school office on 01536 512112 and they will support you in processing a claim. If you are currently having any difficulties at home, please do contact us for us to explore ways that we can help you.

St. Teresa Class

In September, St Teresa class (Y2) celebrated their class saint's Feast Day. The children learnt all about her life whilst creating some wonderful art work which is now on display outside their classroom. After discussing St Teresa's qualities as a class, the children then spent the day demonstrating these through a range of fun games and activities.



Term Dates Academic Year 2023 – 2024

Term	Start Date for Children	End Date for Children
Term 1	Monday 4 th September	Friday 20 th October
Term 2	Monday 6 th November	Wednesday 20 th December
Term 3	Thursday 4 th January	Friday 16 th February
Term 4	Monday 26 th February	Friday 28 th March
Term 5	Monday 15 th April	Friday 24 th May
Term 6	Monday 3 rd June	Wednesday 24 th July

Reminder – On **Friday 24th November**, there is a Trust training day and the school will be shut to pupils.

Uniform

It has been truly remarkable to see the children wearing their beautiful new uniforms. A huge thank you to all of the school family for supporting with this change. The children have been very proud to show off their smart new uniforms to any visitors.

Just a reminder to please ensure that black shorts, leggings or jogging trousers that are worn for PE are plain, without logos or writing on them.

Children are still able to wear the old uniform, as per previous communication.

The Ark

The Ark is a community group for families, from both the school and local communities.

The group meet on a Thursday morning from 9am to 10.45am in the school hall.

All are welcome.

£2 per family

Contact - thearktots@gmail.com for more details.

ECO Stewards

The children have voted across the school and have selected their ECO Stewards for the year. A huge well done to Suri, Rayan, Roman, Annabelle, Ziba, Vlad, Samuel, Miya-May, Eva, Albert, Gabrielle and Harvey.

The children have already been planning ways to support and look after our school environment and our Year 5 representatives met virtually with children from across our Trust to share approaches and ideas.

We have begun celebrating our 'Good to be Green' achievements and are looking forward to sharing more ways that children and staff have been seen to be making wonderful choices for our school and our world.

Our School Prayer

Loving Father,

Thank you for my school, family, friends and all who help me to be the best that I can be.

Help me to make the right choices as I learn, love, pray and play at St. Thomas More.

Guide me to live my life as you want me to. I know that you are always there for me.

St Thomas More – Pray for us.
Our Lady Immaculate – Pray for us.
Amen

Mission Ambassadors

In class, the children have been voting to choose the STM Mission Ambassadors. These children will be following the word of Bishop David, to help guide our school in our faith, while also living out our Mission Statement; To try to be like Jesus in all that we think, do and say. Congratulations to Chloe and Thomas (year 6), Anya and Sirr David (year 5), Davina and Cole (year 4), Ayla and Oliver (year 3), Keeva and James (year 2) and Aoife and Lakhan (year 1), who will be representing their classes this year. In our meetings so far, the children have chosen the new houses (Truth, Triumph and Trust) and also discussed how they plan to support the first charity of the year.

Friends of St. Thomas More (FSTM)

We're off to a great start this term; raising a whopping £574.94 at our school disco. This couldn't happen without the support of our wonderful school community – thank you and well done everyone!

With Christmas just around the corner; we're looking forward to preparing for all our festivities. With our biggest occasion being the Christmas Fayre, last year was a hugely successful event, largely because of the amazing raffle we were able to offer the school community. This year we would like to go even bigger so we would greatly appreciate any prize donations you or anyone you know are able to offer. Please contact fstmvolunteers@gmail.com if you would like to contribute. We invite you to get in touch if you would also like to advertise your business or sell products by hiring a stall at the event.

Please continue to support our school as all funds raised will go towards exciting projects, trips, equipment, treats and events for our children. If you would like to play a vital part in enhancing your child's time at our lovely school and help raise much needed funds; we invite you to join Friends of St Thomas More (FSTM). Please drop an email to fstmvolunteers@gmail.com if you are interested in joining!

Lights, Camera, Action!

The children across the school had a wonderful day to launch our first topic of the year – Lights, Camera, Action! The children were immersed in music, drama, story and film, as they took part in creative activities to inspire them for their learning. We were very lucky to be joining via technology by Puppet Soup. They showed us their different puppets and how they were made. They then taught the children skills to make their own puppets. There were some wonderful creations across the school!



A message from Mrs Howes -

We have had a busy start to this academic year! Though it feels like a long time ago now, the year started with us receiving our wonderful OFSTED report. We were delighted to share our 'Good' news with you all and to see how far we had come since our previous inspection. It is a very exciting time at St. Thomas More and we have a wonderful future to look forward to.

Over the term, it has truly been a pleasure to visit the classrooms daily and witness such happy, engaged and enthusiastic children! Thank you and well done to you all. A special congratulations to our wonderful St. George Class for settling so well into their first term at school, we are very proud of you all.

A huge thank you to all of our families for your ongoing support. Another thank you must also go to my hardworking and dedicated staff. Wishing you all a restful, safe and enjoyable half term break with your beautiful families and we look forward to welcoming you back on Monday 6th November.



Harry Potter Trip

St. Joseph Class (Year 6) had the most magical adventure on their recent trip to Warner Bros Studio to visit 'The Making of Harry Potter.' The children loved viewing sets and props, looking at costumes, finding out how the magic was created and being fully immersed in the world of Harry Potter.



Primary Science Quality Mark

At the beginning of the year, we were delighted to be awarded the Primary Science Quality Gilt Mark. This recognises that the teaching and learning of science across the school is of a high standard and that children are challenged to be the best scientists that they can. A huge thank you to all who made this happen and a special thank you to Miss McCormack, our Science Lead, for always celebrating and promoting science across our school.

