

# St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

## Newsletter

### Autumn Term 1



## LIVE SIMPLY

We are so incredibly excited to announce that yesterday, we achieved our Live Simply Award. This is a journey we commenced two years ago and actions that we have taken have become such a large part of what we do and stand for at STM. Some of our faith inspired actions have included - increased recycling, looking after our school grounds, working in partnership with the local community and supporting charities and those in need. This journey has taught us how to live more simply, how to be more sustainable and how to work in solidarity with communities around the world. A huge thank you to the whole school family for supporting us on this journey. We look forward to continuing it together.



### Attendance

Current whole school attendance figure:  
**94%**

## Dunstable Mass

On Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October, some of our STM Ambassadors travelled to Dunstable to take part in Mass. 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. The children were officially commissioned and they made us very proud with their beautiful manners, enthusiasm and reflective responses.



## Lights, Camera, Action!

To launch our 'Lights, Camera, Action' topic, we were joined by a local actress, who led workshops about how she followed her dreams and what it is like to work in the industry. The day finished with a whole school dance workshop to 'Matilda'.



## EYFS TRIP

St. George Class (EYFS) were very excited to go on their first school trip to the Lighthouse Theatre, where we watched the Hungry Caterpillar. The children were fantastic ambassadors, representing St. Thomas More so beautifully and we are so proud of them all! It was wonderful to see how engaged all the children were, joining in with the stories.



### Term Time Absences

We are seeing an increase in term time absences. Please be reminded that a form should be completed and returned to the office, if you do require one. We are unable to authorise holidays and where possible, absences for reasons other than illness, should be avoided. Please come to speak to us if you would like support with attendance. Further information regarding attendance procedures will be sent home next half term.

## Longtown

St. Patrick Class (Year 6) had the most amazing, memory making week in Longtown. The children excelled at trying new things, including gorge walking and canoeing. They worked brilliantly together and showed incredible leadership skills. It was a pleasure for the staff to witness every child shining so brightly and being such beautiful friends and ambassadors for our school. Thank you to the staff who made this trip possible.



## Rainbow drop in

On 25<sup>th</sup> November at 2:45pm, we're delighted to welcome Simone, our Healthy Child Practitioner, to the Rainbow Room Drop-In. Simone will be available to chat with parents and carers about topics such as sleep, toileting, healthy lifestyles, emotions and behaviour. You can drop in for general advice or request a private 1:1 chat, if needed. Please contact the school office for further information. You do not need to confirm attendance.

**Reminder** – We are a nut free school. Please be mindful of this in packed lunches and when you send in any snacks. This is to keep members of our school family safe.

Please also ensure that snacks for break in KS2 are a healthy and balanced choice, as we are having an increased number of crisps and chocolate.

# Sea Life Centre

St. Bernadette Class (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 and sea lions being fed, and the children thought that it was awesome to see the penguins eating the fish whole. I asked the children what was their favourite part and they all agreed, 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 Mrs Grove and Mrs MacFarlane were very proud to be their teachers.



## St. George Class Visitors

This term, St. George Class (EYFS) have welcomed a variety of visitors into school, with a focus on people who help us. We have had visits from Northamptonshire Fire Service and Northlands Vets so far, and we are looking forward to welcoming more visitors next term. We have learnt about their roles in the community, asked lots of questions and enjoyed hands on experiences to support our learning.

We also welcomed our families into school for our first book and biscuit event. The children were keen to share their favourite stories and eat some treats with family and friends. A huge thank you to everyone who supported this event!



## St. Teresa Class Feast Day

This term, St. Teresa class (Year 2) celebrated their class feast day in remembrance of their class Saint, St. Teresa. We had a great time recapping our learning from the week about St. Teresa and why she is still such a significant figure within our Catholic community from all her charitable work. We then spread our joy and celebration through music, games and cake!



## Term Dates Academic Year 2025 – 2026

Term	Start Date for Children	End Date for Children
Term 1	Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September	Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> October
Term 2	<b>Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> December
Term 3	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> January	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> February
Term 4	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February	Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> March
Term 5	Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> April	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May
Term 6	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> June	Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> July

**Reminder – The school is closed for a Trust training day on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> November**

## Uniform

It has been lovely to see the children looking so smart to start the new school year.

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 should also not be wearing trainers, unless it is their PE day. School shoes should be black. Children are able to wear boots when the weather is wet/cold or can wear wellingtons and change into their school shoes once they arrive.

## Gosspiel Snake



St. Teresa Class (Year 2) started our Gosspiel Snake. If you would like to help us grow his tail, please decorate a faith inspired pebble and add it to our snake! We look forward to watching him grow!

## Football

This term, our Year 5 and 6 boys have been working hard competing in KTFC's indoor sports league at KLV every Thursday afterschool. The boys have made a fantastic start already and the competition begins to heat up even more as we go into next term and battle our way up the league table. The commitment, enthusiasm and sportsmanship has been second to none, and we continue to be so proud of the manner in which the boys have represented our school.

## 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

## STM Mission Ambassadors

Over this term, the children have voted for new STM Ambassadors. Congratulations to Martina and Primo (Y1), Ethan and Sofia (Y2), Mateo and Florence (Y3), Alwyn and Thea (Y4), Rebecca and Nikith (Y5) and Martha and Jai (Y6) for being voted by your classes to represent them this year! Over the year, Mrs Archer and Miss Clarke will lead them in charity launches, pupil voice and making life at STM better and better!

## Friends of St. Thomas More (FSTM)

Following the Friends of St Thomas More's Annual General Meeting that took place on the 29<sup>th</sup> September, we are pleased to announce the committee is:

Chair – Cheryl Loak

Secretary – Carlea Hinks

Treasurer – Charlotte Hefford

FSTM are looking forward to planning an exciting year and making lots of memories and raising funds for the school. Thanks to everyone that supported our first disco of the school year. It was a great success and we made a profit of £266, which will go towards future events and items required by the school.

Please drop an email to [fstmvolunteers@gmail.com](mailto:fstmvolunteers@gmail.com) if you are interested in volunteering and supporting with events.

## Recorders!

St. Bernadette Class (Year 3) have really been enjoying taking part in a whole class recorder project. We are all learning the recorder together in our music lessons and the class have made fantastic progress so far! Our main focus has been on using a gentle breath, so our recorder doesn't squeak, and learning to play the first three notes. The recorder uses the same finger positions as the flute, clarinet and alto saxophone, so it's a great starter instrument. We have loved learning different tunes and are even starting to read music! We will be carrying on with recorders after half term and look forward to sharing our progress with parents.

## A message from Mrs Howes -

We have had another busy start to the academic year! There has been lots of school trips, with lots more booked to look forward to, wonderful progress and wow moments witnessed, blossoming friendships and a huge focus on empowering our children to reach their full potential, especially by growing a deeper understanding of behaviours for learning and metacognition.

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 and especially for giving your time to attend parent consultation meetings. If you have any concerns or questions over the next half term, please do not hesitate to speak to the class teacher, so that they can help. 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 10<sup>th</sup> November.

## Maths

At St Thomas More, maths has never been more exciting! Our Key Stage 1 children are embracing a brand-new way of learning through **teaching for mastery**. Lessons are filled with curiosity, problem-solving, and hands-on exploration, helping every child build deep understanding and confidence in maths. The children are loving the challenge — they're talking about numbers, spotting patterns, and celebrating their success every day!



## English

In the 1<sup>st</sup> half of our 'Lights. Camera. Action' topic we have already learnt so much and developed our reading, writing and oracy skills! Here is just a glimpse into what our children have been doing:

- High quality daily phonics lessons
- Enjoying our brand-new class reads (1 copy per child) - either linked to their class topic or exposing them different themes and texts styles
- Reading lessons – developing their fluency, prosody, and comprehension skills
- Making the most of our reading sheds at break times and lunch times
- The successful launch to this year's STM Reading Challenge
- Inspiring and engaging Writing lessons, including: Sentence Stacking (fiction), Oracy to Writing (becoming a storyteller), Non-fiction genres (using graphic organisers) and Poetry
- Opportunities to challenge themselves in every lesson
- Working on whole class and individual targets
- Developing their independent writing and partner writing skills
- Developing their metacognition skills through planning, drafting, editing, and creating a final piece
- Orally rehearsing sentences using 'Talk Frames' and the 'Think it. Say it. Write it. Read it. Edit it.' approach
- Developing vocabulary
- Striving to develop their handwriting skills and presentation