

Dear Parents/Carers

Assemblies this week have focused on the important time of Advent in the Church's Calendar. It is lovely to think that Christmas is only a few weeks away and Advent gives us the time to spiritually prepare so that we can celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ in the right way. We were once again honoured this week to be able to invite Father Peter Hapgood-Strickland into school on Thursday to say an Advent Mass for Year 8, I was also very grateful to Sister Dolores who also attended Mass to support at Holy Communion. Father Peter and Sister Dolores remarked on how well behaved and prayerful the students were during Mass and we were very proud of them. Thank you to Ms Hague for preparing Mass, members of the GIFT Team, Harry, Jack, Carrie and Daisy who read beautifully during the service and to Paul who provided the lovely music on the Piano.

GCSE League Tables

We are very proud that with the publication of the National League Tables on Thursday our progress and attainment results at GCSE confirm us as one of the leading secondary schools in Tameside, the North West and England, the Progress 8 score of +0.43 means that as a year group students at our school achieved significantly above similar students in the overwhelming majority of other schools across the nation. Well done to the class of 2024, their parents/carers and of course the school staff.

Admissions 2025

We have received the early application data for Year 7 in 2025 and it is fantastic news that up to this moment we have had 441 applications for just 160 places, this is just another indication of the success and popularity of our Catholic Community.

St Marys Food Bank Appeal

With the cost of living crisis, we are aware that more families and individuals are experiencing times when they are struggling to find enough money to put food on the table. As part of our Catholic mission of Social Justice we are committed to trying to find ways to support those in need in our community. So, we can try to help those in need who might otherwise go hungry at Christmas, we are asking all forms to collect non-perishable food items so that the school can make a significant donation to St Mary's Foodbank based in Haughton Green. This local foodbank has been operating for many years and is a wonderful charitable cause to support.

We asking students to bring in the following items if possible, Powdered Milk, Tea/coffee, Instant Noodles, Tinned Soup, Cereals, Tinned Fruit/Veg/Meat/Fish/Tinned Meals, Rice/Pasta, Multi pack crisps/biscuits, Toiletries – non-liquid only e.g. Bars of soap.

We do understand that our families may be facing their own pressures so please only donate if you are able. Please give any donations to your child to bring into school on Friday 13th December

Christmas Activities

We have got three lovely real Christmas Trees in school and thank you to members of the GIFT Team for decorating them so beautifully, staff have also been decorating their classrooms and offices to make the school look extra festive.

Christmas Dinner: On Wednesday 18th December, the only food available for lunch will be our famous St Thomas More Christmas dinner, tickets for which must be purchased in advance through Parent Pay or at the till in the dining room. Any child who does not purchase a ticket in advance will need to bring a packed lunch. Deadline for purchase is Friday 13th December.

All students in receipt of Free school meals will automatically be provided with a ticket in advance.

Thank you to all the students who have decorated their form rooms as advent calendar doors they are a lovely addition to the lead up to Christmas and shows the talented artists that we have in school.

The 18th December will also be our annual Christmas Jumper Day when students can wear a Christmas themed Jumper or Hoodie instead of their school uniform jumper. Please note that students must still wear full uniform if substituting their school jumper for a Christmas themed jumper.

On Christmas Jumper Day we are supporting the amazing Willow Wood Hospice Charity. If you are able please donate to this worthwhile charity through our parent pay website to support this amazing charity. Many thanks in advance for your generosity.

<https://willowwood.org.uk/>

Extra-Curricular Activities

Well done to the students who participated in sporting fixtures this week for the school, including the students at the table tennis tournament and Tameside Cross Country, the PE staff have told me you represented the school superbly.

Year 9 students who went to the Royal Armouries History Trip had a fantastic time I believe and were fantastic ambassadors for our school.

Reminder: Additional GCSE Languages

If any Year 11 students can speak a second language such as Polish, Arabic, Chinese, Russian, or Italian, then please speak to Mrs Laycock in Room 29B at either break or lunchtime before the end of term. It is possible that you might be able to take an extra GCSE in a second language without any additional study.

St Thomas More RC College Fantasy Football League.

Mr Turner is getting quite a lead at the top of the fantasy football competition can anyone catch him this weekend!

Mr Turner continues on top spot in the League this week with 743 points

T Haslam was our in school winner with 83 points

There is still time to join the league as there are weekly winners for every gameweek and there is always the chance to win the whole league and take the trophy off reigning champion Mr Turner!

Once students have created a Premier League account and a team at [Fantasy Premier League](#), [Official Fantasy Football Game of the Premier League](#) they can join the school mini league named;

St Thomas More League

The league code is; v25n52

Alternatively, you can click on the link below to join the league.

<https://fantasy.premierleague.com/leagues/auto-join/v25n52>

Special Mentions

Well done to Joshua McK in 11O.

Amazing! Joshua and his family have set up a community group called Youth Space for young people with Autism to socialise and the group has just won the “Best Community Group” trophy at the Excellence in Hyde Awards, Well done Joshua

Well done too to Paul K in 10T.

Paul has had an amazing week!

He has passed his grade 4 piano exam, with distinction! And he also graduated from the “Foundations of technical theatre” course with Oldham Theatre Workshop gaining AQA certification. Brilliant Paul

Well done also to Lily F in 7T

Lily competed in the North west regional Irish Dancing Competition for 2024 in Oldham.

Lily danced all three rounds and finished in a strong position in the whole of the North West region.

Lily is very committed and dances classes 2 or 3 times a week

Amazing Lily we are very proud of you

St Thomas More RC College Achievement Point League

Another brilliant week of points collection well done to all the students in school on working so hard

Please note: The achievement point list below is collated and calculated at approximately 11am each Friday. This can mean that sometimes students may have slightly different points totals by the end of the day on Friday which are not reflected in the figures printed. Please do rest assured though that the points total and students highlighted are accurate at the time of production of the list.

T	H	O	M	A	S
Year 7 Total					
Valentina F 2580	Dalyn McG Erin K 2500	Ella F 2220	Rohan G 3060	Abigail B 2400	Una L 2310
Year 7 Weekly Winner					
Valentina F 120	Kacper C 160	Ella F 170	Maddie D Maya L 190	Abigail B 200	Cassie D 180
Year 8 Total					
Aiden F 2970	Jacob B 1880	Abbie H 2870	Milena R 2430	Charlotte L 2820	Charlie M 2830
Year 8 Weekly Winner					
Charlotte H 190	Zuzanna F 180	Abbie H 220	Milena R 190	Eleanor L 220	Erin L 230
Year 9 Total					
Miracle O 3080	Chris M 2530	Thomas H Oliver D 2460	Finlay D 1600	Carrie M 2660	Ole M 2420
Year 9 Weekly Winner					
Lucy M 220	Chris M 130	Oliver D 220	James L 150	Angel O Carrie M 2000	Ole M 170
Year 10 Total					
Olivia K	Jack R	Dominik C	Kaitlyn F	Harry C	Reve MM

3100	1970	2470	3020	2870	1990
Year 10 Weekly Winner					
Paul K 200	Jack R 150	Isabella S 250	Olivia M 200	Harry C 220	Reve MM 110
Year 11 Total					
Jess K 2180	Hope C 1930	Joshua McK 2430	Daisy N 2640	Mia Rose L 1980	Megan T 2040
Year 11 Weekly Winner					
Eid A Maddie Mc 80	Luca H Caitlin Mc 120	Meida K 220	Daisy N 210	Poppy C 160	Megan T 120

Reminder: Year 10 Work Experience

A reminder that for Year 10 the deadline to complete their work experience paperwork is the last day of term in December. The work experience itself takes place in the Summer Term but the placements are arranged many weeks in advance, if your son/daughter needs any help or support in completing the paperwork then please see Mr Wright in room 42.

Finally

Please remember that you can contact school each weekday Monday to Friday either by calling 0161 336 2743 or emailing admin@stmcollege.org.uk during normal school hours, if you do want to visit school to talk to a member of staff that can of course be arranged but do please contact school prior to your journey so that mutually convenient time and date can be arranged for an appointment.

God bless

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2024 Year of Prayer

As you may be aware in the Catholic Church 2025 has been designated as a Jubilee Year by Pope Francis with 'Pilgrims of Hope' as the theme.

The Holy Father has therefore asked that 2024 be year of prayer, as a preparatory year for the Jubilee.

Prayer for the Start of Advent

Dear Lord, Come into our world so often touched by darkness

Light up our lives with your arrival.

Strengthen our resolve to work for change in our world

And to share the hope of your birth that each Advent brings.

Amen.