Dear Parents/Carers

Salford Diocese Theme of the Week for Schools
ALL SAINTS *'Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in Heaven.'*
Sunday's Gospel *Matthew 5: 1-12*

It has been fantastic to welcome back the students and staff to St Thomas More RC College as we begin the Winter/Christmas half term. Students have looked exceptionally smart this week and there has been a fantastic focus in lessons especially from Year 11 students who are preparing for their Mock GCSE exams in a few weeks.

I wrote to parents/carers earlier this week sharing the Ofsted report that we are all so proud of, that confirms that the school is giving our students a fantastic opportunity to achieve excellent and expected outcomes through their educational journey with us.

We are so pleased that Ofsted clearly recognised that:

Most pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education employment or training. This is because they secure the qualifications they need for future success.

And that

Pupils behave well and understand the school's high expectations. Pupils treat others with respect and kindness.

Thank you to the parents/carers who have sent in messages of support and thanks following the publication of the Ofsted report and I will take this opportunity to share with you part of the message we received from Tameside Local Authority following the confirmation of the school's report:

The report is a really positive reflection of the culture and community that the leadership team, governors and staff have worked hard to build. Just as importantly, it reflects the contribution of your children and families, who are such an important part of making St Thomas More RC College the school that it is.
The report speaks to a school with strong values, high expectations and a genuine commitment to ensuring every child is known, supported and able to succeed. That is something everyone connected with the school should be proud of and certainly resonates with the Tameside Education Strategic Framework.
Please pass on my thanks and congratulations to governors, staff, pupils and families. It is a well-deserved outcome and I know how much work goes into achieving it.

Thank you as always to all the families associated with our community for your ongoing support that benefits all the young people we educate and care for in school.

Student Spotlights

Well done to Jessica in Year 11 who won a bronze medal place for finishing third in the Under 17 Female, North West and Yorkshire Region 2026 BMC Youth Climbing Series.
This is an absolutely fantastic achievement and because of her success and skill she has now qualified for the National Grand Final event on the weekend of 28th and 29th November.
Well done Jessica we are so proud of you and good luck in the final !!

Operation Christmas Child: Shoe Box Appeal

A final message to say that this is the last opportunity to donate to the schools Shoe Box Appeal in support of Operation Christmas Child, collection deadline is Monday 9th November

https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/ways-to-give/

The Samaritans Purse is an extremely worthwhile charity that supports some of the most vulnerable children and families right across the world throughout the year but especially at Christmas. Each form group will be putting together Christmas Shoe Boxes that can include the following items

Toys - A football and pump, cuddly toys, dolls, toy cars, small musical instruments, yo-yos, skipping ropes, balls, small puzzles etc.

School Supplies - Pens, pencils & sharpeners, crayons or felt pens, stamps & ink pad sets, writing pads or notebooks, solar calculators, colouring & picture books etc.

Hygiene Items - Toothbrush, bars of wrapped soap, comb or hairbrush, flannel etc.

Other Items - Hat, gloves, scarf, sunglasses, cap, socks, T-shirt, flip-flops, hair accessories, jewellery set, watch, wind-up torch etc.

Please don't include: - Toothpaste, sweets, lotions and liquids; used or damaged items; war-related items (e.g. Toy Guns); seeds, gum, chocolate or food items; religious or political literature; medicines, aerosol cans, sharp or fragile items.

Any donations of the above items that students can bring into school would be gratefully received. Please note: there is also the option of making a small financial donation on the School's Parent Pay website if families would prefer.

Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Faith in Action Awards

We were very proud of our students this week who successful completed their Bronze, Silver and Gold Faith in Action Awards and were presented with their certificates and awards in a lovely ceremony conducted by Fr Peter Hopkinson Vicar General of Salford Diocese. We also welcomed Sister Dolores and Father Joe into school alongside further delegates from Salford Diocese to celebrate the student's success in their Faith in Action Awards.

Parent Monthly Safeguarding Newsletter

November's Safeguarding Newsletter for Parents/Carers is now available on the school website along side the other monthly editions, this latest bulletin is about Anti Bullying due to the proximity of Anti Bullying Week which takes place on Monday 16th to Friday 20th November 2026, with the theme of "Break the Silence".

All safeguarding parent/carer newsletters can be found at:
https://www.stmcollege.org.uk/news/parentscarers-safeguarding-newsletter

It is reassuring to know that Ofsted confirmed the following about our community:
"Bullying is not tolerated. Leaders act quickly when any unkind or discriminatory behaviour occurs. This ensures pupils feel safe."
We are never complacent though and we know students can be unkind to each other at times so we encourage students to report any issues when they occur so that they can be dealt with effectively.

We are really pleased that we have found that we have had far fewer incidents of students being unkind to each other through social media or messaging apps since the start of our Smart Phone ban in school last half term and this resonates with Ofcom research that found in 2022 that:

"Among young people (ages 8-17) who have experienced bullying, 8 in 10 (80%) experience it through a smart phone or smart device". Ofcom 2022

Year 11 Parents Evening

Thank you so much to all the parents/carers who attended Year 11 Parents Evening last night, the event was a great success and an opportunity for staff to help the students focus on their learning as they prepare for their mock exams and their final exams in the summer.

The message is very clear that the more revision and preparation that students can complete at home over the coming weeks and months will be key to their success and final outcomes, it is very important that all year 11s have started revising for their December mock exams from now.

Reminder: Year 10 Work Experience

The year 10 work experience programme has launched. Coordinated by Our Futures, year 10 students will undertake work experience in the week commencing Monday 12th July 2027.

Work experience provides students with a valuable opportunity to experience the world of work, develop important skills such as communication, teamwork and problem-solving, and to gain a better understanding of the responsibilities and expectations that careers demand. It also enables students to explore potential career paths, build confidence and make more informed decisions about their future education and employment.

Students have received a set of three letters in tutor time, and they are:

A letter addressed to the student outlines the programme and how they can access this.
A second letter to parents/carers that requires consent to be given to undertake work experience.
The final letter is addressed to a prospective work experience placement provider and should be given to the organisation that your child wishes to undertake their placement with. The placement will have to submit the necessary Employers' Liability Insurance so that Our Futures can conduct the relevant health and safety checks to approve the placement.

Key work experience deadlines:
Parent/carer consent to be completed by Friday 27th November 2026
Final deadline for work experience placement documentation is Friday 22nd January 2027.

Year 10 students can access support at the weekly Careers Cafe with Mr Wright in room 42 from 3pm each Tuesday.

Reminder: PE Update – Shin Pads for Football

When your child is taking part in football during lessons during the school day, if possible, it is recommended that they bring shin pads with them to school to wear when taking part in competitive elements of the lesson.

For students taking part in football after school (either recreationally or competitively), shin pads are compulsory. Students who do not wear shin pads will not be able to take part. This is in line with FA guidance, which requires shin pads to be worn when competing.

The PE department only has a limited number of spare shin pads available that can be lent to students when necessary for after school sessions. We therefore ask that all students bring their own shin pads whenever they are playing football in sessions after school and were possible in PE lessons.

Achievement Point League

Well done to all the students who have continued the year so brilliantly and are collecting so many achievement points by doing the simple things really well in school. Bravo!

Remember that you can log into satchel one to check your child individual achievements and successes at any time as the parent page is updated daily, if you are unable to log in for any reason please contact school for help. admin@stmcollege.org.uk

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.

Total Points

T	H	O	M	A	S
Year 7 Total					
Ziv 1880	Eva 2040	Malcolm 1570	Max 1910	Emmelinn 1400	Daisy 1760
Year 8 Total					
Esme 1820	Lily 1820	Nancy 2100	Dora Margot 1820	Billy 2060	Shaun 1800
Year 9 Total					
Mikayla 1666	Isabelle 1770	Ella 1490	Heidi 1490	Daisy 1650	Darcie K 1440
Year 10 Total					
Charlotte 1690	Albie Abbie 1600	Steven 1750	Milena 2310	Josh 1570	Isabelle 2170
Year 11 Total					
Lucy 1970	Archie 1740	Lucas 1930	Finlay 1780	Carragan 1720	Ole 1810

Weekly Winners

T	H	O	M	A	S
Year 7 Weekly Total					
Morgan 360	Eva 350	Nancy 350	Max 700	Enzo 240	Dylan Daisy 240
Year 8 Weekly Total					

Joseph Sam 240	Enya 370	Bella 400	Margot 280	Keeley 420	Efe 250
Year 9 Weekly Total					
Maizie 270	Erin 170	Ella 240	Cain 250	Daisy 250	Darcie 230
Year 10 Weekly Total					
Victoria Sophia 250	Abbie 240	Mitchele 240	Milena 300	Jacob 260	Ruby 340
Year 11 Weekly Total					
Hassanat 270	Willow Doreen 220	Isla 320	Oliver 280	Jessica 280	Erica 260

Reminder: Year 11 - Speakers of other languages.

If you can speak and can write in a different language, please could you let your Form Tutor know or come and speak to Mrs Laycock (R29B) as soon as possible? You may be able to sit a GCSE in your own language, which will support your applications for college, apprenticeships or future employment.

Exam Invigilator: Vacancy

CASUAL POSTS: During exam periods only (2wks Dec; 8wks May & June)
Hours as required: 8.15am – 4.00pm

St Thomas More RC College is looking for Exam Invigilators, responsible for the supervision of external (GCSE) and internal examinations in the examination rooms in accordance with the rules and regulations of the respective examination boards and the school as instructed by the Exams Manager.

If you interested and require any further information or an informal discussion about the post, please do not hesitate to contact our Exams Manager via: *Email: r.mansoor@stmcollege.org.uk*

Reminder: Smart Phone Free School

As you will be aware St Thomas More RC College is a Smart Phone Free Site since September, Students are not allowed to bring Smart Phones onto the school site.

Students are permitted to bring into school an Approved Non-Smart Basic Phone for their journey to and from school should parents/carers wish them to, (Nokia 105, Nokia 106, HMD 105), but these approved phones must remain switched off in a student's bag for the duration of the school day until students have exited the outer green gate.

As a school, we firmly believe that our policy is overwhelmingly in the best interests of children in the lives they lead and the progress that they are able to make in school.

We recognise that Smart Devices with access to cameras, social media and the internet, have some very limited benefits, but we believe overall Smart Devices are very harmful to students and to the school environment due to their addictive nature, potential for distraction and the unsuitable content

that can potentially be accessed. This view is increasingly supported by policy makers and a large and growing number of parents and carers and is further supported by scientific research.

We are hopeful that our approach to Smart Phones can support students to reduce the time spent on Smart Phones and empower parents/carers of students joining St Thomas More RC College in future years to delay the purchase of a Smart Phone for their son/daughter if they wish.

Some of the benefits of Smart Phone Free School Environments include:

- *GCSE results 1–2 grades higher at schools with an effective smartphone ban.*
- *In-class phone bans improve academic outcomes, especially for vulnerable student groups.*
- *School mobile phone bans increased test scores by 6.4%, with the greatest gains among low-achieving students.*
- *PISA 2022 shows students distracted by digital devices in class scored 15 points lower in maths - almost three-quarters of a year's learning.*

Some of the risks of Smart Phones for young people are explained at:

https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/resource/are-smartphones-really-that-bad-for-kids

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
H Brophy

Prayer of Mission

Loving God,

You have called us as Your disciples to go forth into the world and tell the Good News.

Strengthened by Your grace and emboldened by the gifts of Your Holy Spirit,

we embrace the call to give of ourselves to others, especially those who are poor and vulnerable.

Help us to commit ourselves to share the love and joy that comes from the Gospel to every creature,

to go forth into our world at home and abroad and bring the saving message of Jesus Christ.

Guard missionaries throughout the world with your loving care and protection and help all those

they encounter to open their hearts to Your grace alive in them.

Enliven us all to recognize that we are sent forth into the world to bring about a culture of

life, justice, peace, kindness and love.

Amen

Upcoming Events (dates may be subject to change for unforeseen circumstances)

Wednesday 21st October	Whitby and York Residential
Thursday 5th November	Year 11 Parents Evening
Thursday 26th November	Presentation Evening
Monday 30th November – Friday 11th December	Year 11 Mock Exams
Sunday 29th November	Start of Advent
Tuesday 1st December	Tameside Cross Country
Tuesday 15th December	School Christmas Dinner Day
Thursday 17th December	School Closes 12:15pm (Christmas Holiday)
Wednesday 6th January	School opens for Students
Thursday 14th January	New Year Mass
Wednesday 20th January	Year 7 Anti Racism Workshop
Thursday 21st January	Year 10 Parents Evening
Wednesday 3rd February	Year 9 Buddhism Workshop
Friday 5th February	Year 7 Christianity Workshop
Tuesday 9th February	Year 9 Octagon Trip
Wednesday 10th February	Ash Wednesday Liturgies
Thursday 11th February	Start of Lent
Friday 12th February	School Closes 2:45 (half term holiday)
Monday 22nd February	School opens for Students
Monday 22nd February	Year 10 JD Sports Media Trip
Thursday 25th February	Year 9 Parents Evening
Friday 26th February	GIFT team visit to Manchester Cathedral
Thursday 4th March	World Book Day
Monday 8th March	Year 9 Pathways Information Released
Wednesday 10th March	Careers Fair
Wednesday 17th March	GCSE Drama Palace Theatre Trip
Thursday 18th March	Year 7 Parents Evening
Thursday 18th March	Mass for Lent
Thursday 21st March	Palm Sunday
Friday 26th March	Good Friday
Sunday 28th March	Easter Sunday
Thursday 25th March	School Closes 2:45pm (Easter Holiday)
Monday 12th April	School Opens for Students
Monday 12th April – Wednesday 14th April	Year 7 PGL Trip
Thursday 15th April	School Mass for Year 11 Success in Exams
Friday 16th April	Year 9 Holocaust Education Talk
Monday 19th April – Tuesday 20th April	GCSE Art Exam
Thursday 22nd April	Willow Wood Enterprise Challenge
Friday 23rd April	Silver Duke of Edinburgh Practice Expedition
Thursday 29th April	Year 8 Parents Evening
Monday 3rd May	Bank Holiday
Wednesday 5th May	GCSE Exams Begin
Wednesday 5th May	Year 10 Geography Fieldwork Residential
Friday 14th May – Sunday 16th May	Silver Duke of Edinburgh Expedition
Wednesday 19th May	National Numeracy Day
Friday 28th May	School Closes 2:45 (half term holiday)

Monday 7th June	School Opens for Students
Monday 7th June – Wednesday 9th June	Year 8 Mosque Visit
Wednesday 16th June	Year 9 Green Power Trip
Friday 18th June	GCSE Exams End
Monday 21st June – Tuesday 29th June	Year 10 Exam Series
Monday 28th June	Year 7-9 Reading Tests
Monday 28th June	Year 11 Prom
Wednesday 30th June	Year 9 and 10 Residential Poland Trip
Thursday 1st July	Year 6 Induction Day
Monday 5th July	Year 7 Spelling Bee
Tuesday 6th July	Year 8 Spelling Bee
Tuesday 6th July	Tameside Athletics
Thursday 8th July	Key Stage 3 Rewards Evening
Monday 12th July – Friday 16th July	Year 10 Work Experience Week
Thursday 15th July – Friday 16th July	Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Expedition
Wednesday 21st July	School Closes 12:15pm (Summer Holiday)