



More News



March 2016

A Celebration of Young People



Chloe-Marie Davison and James Sharp (both Year 7) were invited to St. Mary's Cathedral to attend an event with Bishop Séamus Cunningham. The event was a celebration of young people and continued the message of "Love Undeserved" which was the theme of last year's Youth Friday celebrations. Schools were also invited to make a donation to the Diocesan Youth Ministry Team - the team which run our fantastic Year 8 retreats - so James and Chloe were invited to present a cheque from St Thomas More to the Bishop.

Women's World Day of Prayer

Participant Clare Nelson writes that, "a group of Year 12 students, attended the Women's World Day of Prayer at St Columbas United Reform Church. The theme for this year was, "Receive Children. Receive Me", and was written by the Cuban WDP national committee. The celebration was international and translated into more than 60 languages and 1000 dialects. The service included readings, songs and reflections on the people that live in Cuba. This was an eye opener to some students as they hadn't heard of the celebration before. The students took part in the service either by reading, singing or bringing gifts forward, helping others to reflect on the theme. The students really enjoyed it and can't wait for the next one".



Lourdes Ball

Staff and students went to the HCPT Diamond Ball where the evening was accompanied by Jazz music provided by 6th form students. There was a four course dinner and then ex student Finn Healy entertained guests with a comic routine and acted as auctioneer for the charity auction. Altogether, the evening raised an amazing £10,139! All funds raised contribute to the St Thomas More Family and Youth Group Easter Pilgrimage to Lourdes 2016. The school has 25 students from Years 12 and 13 heading to Lourdes for a week at Easter along with 5 children who have additional needs. The group are grateful to The Catenians who kindly subsidised the travel costs of the students getting to Lourdes through their bursaries. One of the major events will be the Trust mass celebrated by Cardinal Vincent Nichols to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the HCPT, during which ex-student Rachel Thornton will be the lead vocalist.



Space Seeds



Thanks to Mrs O'Neill the school is set to receive 100 seeds that have been up in the International Space Station, with Tim Peake, for an investigation into how microgravity affects growth. Two classes of Year 7s and a Year 8 class are going to take part in looking after them when they arrive next half term. The seeds came back down to Earth this month when Scott Kelly returned from the International Space Station. The out-of-this-world, nationwide science experiment will enable the students to think more about how we could preserve human life on another planet in the future, what astronauts need to survive long-term missions in space, and the difficulties surrounding growing fresh food in challenging climates. Mrs O'Neill, stated that "We are very excited to be taking part in Rocket Science. This experiment is a fantastic way of teaching our students to think more scientifically and share their findings with the whole school and wider community."

Maths Challenge

Caitlin Pang, and Jemma Rowell (Year 9) and Daniel Borg and Alex Adderley (Year 8) reached the Regional final of the Maths Challenge. Although they did not win, they were superb all day. They competed in four different tasks; a crossnumber, a group challenge, a time trial and a relay and finished 5th overall out of 23 schools. They received a special mention for achieving the highest points in the crossnumber challenge as well.

Vienna



Thirty Year 13 Psychology students travelled to Vienna for 3 nights to visit the Sigmund Freud museum. Whilst they were there they also visited the burial crypts of St. Michael's Cathedral, and the world's oldest zoo. Some students even managed to fit in a trip to watch a football match. The whole group traveled to Mauthausen concentration camp, and students commented that the visit was their over-riding memory of the trip. One evening was spent at Europe's largest outdoor ice-rink and their last day included a visit to the Narrenturm, a former mental institute which has since been used to house medical preparations for the purposes of training. The trip was one of the most memorable the Psychology department have ever run, with the enthusiasm of the students enhancing every trip and excursion.

NSPCC number day



In February, the maths department ran a "Beat the Teacher" event during lower school lunch. Students could try to win prizes in Play your Cards Right or by challenging and beating a teacher at either Connect 4 or Countdown. Students who attend the weekly Maths Club helped to run the event and raised £25 for the NSPCC.

Year 9 Bake Off

In February there was a Languages Bake-Off. Following this the Year 9 students have made a video to accompany their baking talents and they are going to a presentation day in March at Sunderland University, where they will show the video and find out if they are one of the prizewinners so keep an eye out for the results in the next newsletter.



Flying High

Ryan Waugh Year 10 was awarded a flying experience this term at RAF Leeming. He was chosen by Cadet staff for immaculate uniform and went up for 25 minutes, taking over the controls for 20 minutes.



Year 9



In February 40 students from Year 9 went to London with the History and Music Departments. The trip started with a tour of BBC Broadcasting House where students were able to visit the One Show studio and take part in a radio play. The next stop was the Cabinet War Rooms and Churchill Museum in Whitehall, followed by an evening at Mamma Mia in the West End. On the Saturday they went to the Imperial War Museum and, following a short drive north to Watford, they went to visit the Warner Brothers Harry Potter Studios exhibition.

World Book Day

The English Department were resplendent on World Book Day, dressing as their favourite literary characters—they have perhaps set the challenge for other STM staff for 2017! They really caught the students interest and enabled them to discuss great works of fiction.



Year 12 Biology



The Year 12 Biologists went to Edinburgh Zoo in February. They participated in a Conservation workshop which focused

on captive breeding programmes, as well as having a guided tour of the Zoo by Education Officers and a visit to the Panda enclosure.

Year 7

A group of Year 7 students and Mr Wild went to the Festival of Maths at the Life Centre in Newcastle. This is a joint event run by the University of Newcastle and the Life Centre and challenged the students with a range of maths puzzles and games. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day.



Yr 13 Achievements



Mrs Donkin was delighted to receive a letter about Liam McConville in Year 13 who has been selected to be one of Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant's Cadets in Tyne and Wear. This is a great accolade and as stated,

"is one he richly deserves!"

Also, Greg Bojke and Jacques Hall were presented with their DoE Gold Awards by the



Music News

The Spring concert took place recently where a wide range of groups including the School Orchestra and Crescendo Choir entertained the audience with pieces such as Mission Impossible and medley from Sleeping Beauty. Over one hundred students took part.

Council Corner

The Student Council have been meeting with the dining hall caterers to discuss possible changes to the menu, for example increasing the options for vegetarian students. They also hosted a coffee morning selling fairtrade products during fairtrade fortnight.



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Dance Festival



Many of our talented students participated in this year's North Shields Dance Festival at The Parks at the beginning of March. The theme was literacy and its title, 'A tale to tell....' Dancers from Years 7, 8, 10, 11 and 13 performed some amazing dance pieces based on the theme.

Students performed over the 3 nights and put on a spectacular show doing St Thomas More proud! Well done to all dancers involved and a special thanks to our Community Sports Leadership Award students for helping each evening.



Swimming

The students were a credit to St Thomas More Academy in February when they participated in the Southern Partnership Swimming Gala. The Year 9 girls team came first overall in their year group, and many STM records were broken by some very fast times.

Netball

St Thomas More girls competed at the Catholic Partnership U14 Netball Tournament in March. They were 4th in the Catholic partnership tournament but won the North Tyneside tournament overall—congratulations!

Table Tennis



We told you about Adam Webster (Year 9) in the last newsletter, and we are very happy to hear that Adam is now under 15 and under 18 Northumberland table tennis champion!

*Remember that you can see all the latest PE news on Twitter:
@STM_PE*



Badminton



Melvin Cherian, Christian Sharp, Will Wigham, Oliver Thompson (with Robson Harris in reserve) competed in the North of England final of the Centre Parcs National Badminton competition. They finished in a very close second place, but it is a massive achievement for them to get that far, as we think this is something that has only ever happened once before in St Thomas More history!