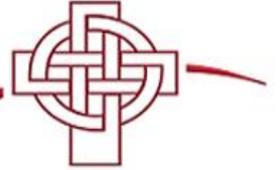


# St Thomas More R C Academy



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Headteacher: Mr D Watson BSc  
Deputy Headteacher: Mr M Henderson BA  
Director of Learning: Mrs K L Gammack BSc, MEd

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DW/LMc

September 2016

Dear Parents

This prospectus is designed to give you information about the school and the opportunities we offer. I hope you find it useful and informative. If you would like to know anything not covered you are welcome to contact us. The prospectus can also be found on our website alongside a range of other information about the school (website address above).

We make every effort to ensure that children feel welcome in the school and identify with it as quickly as possible. Children have the opportunity of visiting us more than once during the year before transfer including a day of sample lessons.

We are very aware of the importance of strong parental support and of close partnership between parents and the school. We have worked hard over years to create a climate which is open and welcoming. We encourage parents to contact us with any information, questions or concerns about their children's education.

We look forward to working with you in the coming years to make your child's education as happy, rounded and successful as possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D Watson', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned below the text 'Yours sincerely'.

Mr D Watson  
Headteacher

## *CONTENTS*

### *PAGE NUMBER*

Contents	1
St Thomas More Roman Catholic Academy	2
Contact with the School	2
Admissions Policy	3 - 7
Starting at St Thomas More	7
Will St Thomas More bring out the best in your child?	8
Pastoral Care of Student	8
Spiritual Life and Chaplaincy	8
Uniform and Appearance	9
Behaviour	9
Working with Parents	9
Curriculum:	9 - 11
	Subjects Taught Teaching Groups Teaching Methods Homework Special Educational Needs Education for Personal Relationships Careers and Work Experience
Extra Curricular Activities:	11 - 15
	Physical Activity Out of School Hours Opportunities Music  Modern Foreign Languages Field Trips, Visits, Outdoor Activities Clubs
Facilities	15
Miscellaneous Information:	15 -18
	School Day and School Year Provisional Dates Transport Lunchtime Arrangements Personal Property Charging Policy Child Protection Data Protection Admissions Data Statistics on Student Absence Provision for Disabled Students School Policies
Appendices	
	Appendix A                      Calendar for Reporting to Parents Appendix B                      Examination Results 2016

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## ST THOMAS MORE ROMAN CATHOLIC ACADEMY

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St Thomas More is a Catholic Academy of approximately 1600 students, including a very strong Sixth Form of around 320. The school was established in 1988 to serve primarily the Catholic communities within St Oswin's Deanery. We have a strong, genuinely comprehensive intake and this is one of the school's greatest strengths. We have established an excellent reputation locally, regionally, and nationally for the quality of education provided, for pastoral care, and for very high levels of achievement.

We are committed to ongoing improvement, and we have an excellent track record in raising achievement consistently at all levels. The school was recently recognised by the Minister of State for Education as one of the **top 100 schools** in England and Wales for sustained improvement 2011 – 2013. Our last Ofsted Inspection graded the school as “good” (2013) and our last Diocesan Inspection graded us as “outstanding” in all categories (2014).

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### CONTACT WITH THE SCHOOL

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You are always welcome at the school, and we would encourage you to contact us if you wish to discuss your child with us. In normal circumstances please contact us by telephone before coming in, so that we can arrange a suitable time with the most appropriate member of staff. The person most likely to know your child best will be the Head of Year, and he / she should usually be your first point of contact. The Pastoral Assistant will be the main point of contact with regard to routine, administrative matters, including absence. Here are details of staff whose names and roles you will find useful:

Ms L Hagan	-	Head of Year 7 (September 2017)
Mrs D Thirkettle	-	Pastoral Assistant
Mrs S Bunyan	-	Assistant Headteacher, Social Standards and Student Achievement
Mr M Henderson	-	Deputy Headteacher Pastoral
Mr D Watson	-	Headteacher



## **ADMISSION POLICY 2017-18**

St Thomas More Roman Catholic Academy was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. The school is conducted by its governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and Articles of Association and seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below.

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At a Catholic school, Catholic doctrine and practice permeate every aspect of the school's activity. It is essential that the Catholic character of the school's education be fully supported by all families in the school. All parents (see note 11) are therefore expected to give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school. This does not affect the right of a parent who is not of the faith to apply for a place for their child at the school.

### **Our Aims Are:**

- ◆ to be a prayerful community based on Christian values notably Love, Justice, Peace, Truth and Tolerance, and to encourage individuals in their commitment to these ideals.
- ◆ to provide a secure, welcoming and ordered environment in which individuals learn to value and respect both themselves and others.
- ◆ to give individuals the opportunities to develop their full potential as human beings, and to encourage and challenge them to do so.
- ◆ to encourage everyone to strive to do their best and to strive for the highest standards in all areas of activity.
- ◆ to help students grow into confident, open, resourceful young people with a sense of responsibility and of service.

The governing body is the admissions authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the coordination of admission arrangements.

The admission policy criteria will be dealt with on an equal preference basis.

### **Feeder primary schools:**

St Aidan's R C Primary School – Wallsend  
St Bernadette's R C Primary School – Wallsend  
St Columba's R C Primary School – Wallsend  
St Cuthbert's R C Primary School – North Shields  
St Joseph's R C Primary School – North Shields  
St Mary's R C Primary School – Cullercoats  
Star of the Sea R C Primary School – Whitley Bay

### **Published Admission Number**

The governing body has set its admission number at 270 pupils to Year 7 in the school year which begins in September 2017. The admission number for Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 is the number on roll at the start of the academic year in question. There are separate arrangements for admission to Years 12 and 13.

### **Children with an Education, Health and Care plan or a statement of Special Educational Need**

Children who have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan or a statement of Special Educational Need where the school is named as the most appropriate educational setting for the child will be admitted.

### **Application Procedures and Timetable**

To apply for a place at this school, the parent must complete a common application form (CAF) available from the local authority in which the child lives. The parent will be advised of the outcome of the application on 1 March 2017, initially by a letter or email from the local authority on behalf of the governing body.

If the parent is required to provide supplemental evidence to support the application (e.g. a baptismal certificate), this evidence should be provided at the time of application directly to the school c/o Head of Governance. If not provided, evidence may be sought by the governing body following the closing date for applications. This information must have been correct at the date of closing for applications.

All applications will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 28 October 2016.

### **Late Applications**

Late applications will be administered in accordance with the local authority coordinated admissions scheme. Parents are encouraged to ensure that their application is received on time.

### **Admission of Children outside their Normal Age Group**

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

Any such request should be made in writing to the headteacher of the school. The governing body will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the headteacher who has statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the governing body will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals.

### **Waiting Lists**

In addition to their right of appeal, applicants will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out below and not in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. The waiting list will be held open until the last day of the autumn term. Inclusion on the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

### **In-Year Applications**

An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside the admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. Applications should be made to the school by contacting Mrs L McArdle, Head of Governance on 0191 2588360 or [info@stmacademy.org.uk](mailto:info@stmacademy.org.uk)

Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria will be applied.

### **Right of Appeal**

Where a parent has been notified that a place is not available for a child, every effort will be made by the local authority to help the parent to find a place in a suitable alternative school. Parents who are refused a place have a statutory right of appeal. Further details of the appeals process are available by writing to the chair of governors at the school address.

### **Fair Access Protocol**

The school is committed to taking its fair share of children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admission round the governing body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by both the diocese and the governing body for the current school year. The governing body has this power, even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number.

### **False Evidence**

The governing body reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place where false evidence is received.

### **OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA**

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority.

- *First priority in each category will be given to children who will have an older sibling attending the school in September 2017.*
  - *Second priority in each category will be given where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the children which can be most appropriately met at this school. (See note 13).*
1. Looked after and previously looked after children (see notes 2 & 3)
  2. Catholic children who attend a feeder primary school (see note 4)
  3. Other Catholic children (see note 4)
  4. Children attending feeder primary schools who are Catechumens or are members of an Eastern Christian Church, children of other Christian denominations or other faiths (see notes 5, 6 & 7)
  5. Other children who attend a feeder primary school
  6. Children of a member of school staff who has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which application for admission to the school is made (note 12)
  7. Other children who are Catechumens or are members of an Eastern Christian Church, children of other Christian denominations or other faiths (see notes 5, 6 & 7)
  8. Any other children

### **Tie Breaker**

Where there are places available for some, but not all applicants within a particular criterion priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distance is measured as a straight line, from a single fixed central point of the parental home residence (including flats) to the central point of the school, using North Tyneside Council's Geographic Information System (GIS), with those living closer to the school receiving higher priority. In the case of flats if there is more than one home address with the same measurement the flat with the lowest number will be offered the place.

In the event of distances being the same for two or more children where this would determine the last place to be allocated, random allocation will be carried out in a public place and supervised by a person independent of the school.

## NOTES AND DEFINITIONS

1. An **Education, Health and Care Plan** is a plan made by the local authority under section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014, specifying the special educational provision required for a child. A **Statement of Special Educational Needs** is a statement made by the local authority under section 324 of the Education Act 1996, specifying the special educational provision for a child.
2. A **looked after child** is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989):

An **adoption order** is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

A **child arrangements order** is an order outlining the arrangements as to the person with whom the child will live under the provisions of section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

A **special guardianship order** is an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian or guardians.

3. A **previously looked after child** is a child who immediately moved on from that status after becoming subject to an adoption, child arrangement order or special guardianship order.
4. **Catholic** means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This will be evidenced by a certificate of baptism in a Catholic Church or a certificate of reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism or reception should contact their parish priest who, after consulting with the Diocese, will decide how the question of baptism or reception is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church.
5. **Catechumen** means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church and is a person who is receiving instruction in preparation for baptism. This must be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.
6. **Eastern Christian Church** includes Orthodox Churches, and must be evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism or reception should contact the Diocese who will decide how the question of baptism or reception is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church.
7. **Children of other Christian denominations** means children who are members of a Church or religious community that practises Trinitarian baptism recognised by the Catholic Church. Applicants must provide a baptismal certificate or where child baptism is not practised, a letter confirming their church membership from their minister or faith leader.
8. **Children of other faiths** means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definitions above. Applicants must provide a letter of support to confirm their faith membership from their minister or faith leader.
9. **Home address** is the primary parental address which will be used in applying the admission criteria. This means that, when stating the choice of school, the parental address at the time of application should be given. The address of childminders or other family members who may share in the care of the child must not be used as the home address. Documentary evidence may be requested.

10. **Brother or sister** means a child who lives as a brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, or the child of a parent's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling. It also includes natural brothers or sisters where the child for whom the school place is sought is not living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling.
11. **Parent** means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for the child, or who has care of the child (having care of a child means that the child lives with and is looked after by that person).
12. **A member of staff** includes all school staff who are under the direct employment of the governing body of the school.
13. To demonstrate an exceptional social, medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the governing body will require compelling written evidence from an appropriate professional, such as a social worker, doctor or priest.

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the local authority's admission guidance for parents.**

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## **STARTING AT ST THOMAS MORE**

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We have established a number of activities and visits to the school for primary children before they join us, in order to make the transition and settling-in period as smooth as possible. Pastoral staff visit our partnership primary schools in the Autumn term to meet the children and discuss secondary school life. This gives the children an opportunity to ask questions and be given reassurance. Children are taken on a tour of St Thomas More in the Spring term, to get a feeling for the buildings and the atmosphere of the school. In the Summer term they spend a day here, experiencing sample lessons, having lunch and meeting key staff. Our staff remain in contact with the primary schools and visit at important stages of the year, to exchange information and discuss many aspects of the transfer to St Thomas More. We provide a comprehensive transition project for Year 6 children to work on once their Key Stage 2 SATs are finished. The project is based on the novel "Kenzukye's Kingdom" which the children read and then complete the accompanying work booklet which covers a range of curriculum area. The children will engage with further work on this project when they start Year 7 at St Thomas More. Parents of Year 6 children will also be invited to meetings in September and July.

N.B. Year 5 children also visit St. Thomas More in the Summer term and taken part in sample lessons.

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## **WILL ST THOMAS MORE BRING OUT THE BEST IN YOUR CHILD?**

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The challenge of encouraging children to develop to their full potential goes far beyond examination results, which only measure one aspect of an individual. We are concerned to promote their spiritual, social and emotional growth too and seek to provide many opportunities for their personal development.

This is achieved through the spiritual and religious values we promote, the emphasis on positive relationships, by encouraging involvement and participation, and in the very wide extra-curricular life of the school. Our examination results are extremely good and consistently recognised by the Department for Education as significantly above the national average. They reflect our determination to help all children achieve maximum success.

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## **PASTORAL CARE OF CHILDREN**

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We want children to enjoy their time in school, to feel happy, to develop a sense of belonging, to be known and valued as individuals and to achieve highly. We also want them to develop a sense of respect for themselves, for other people, and for the whole school community. We have high expectations of all children with regard to standards of behaviour, work and achievement.

All teachers have an important role to play in the pastoral care and welfare of children. Particular responsibilities lie with the form tutor, who is in contact with the children daily, monitors general progress and gets to know each child individually. Form tutors also encourage children to discuss any problems they have if they wish to do so. They meet regularly with the Head of Year. Form tutors also deal with routine but important matters such as notices, absence notes, punctuality and homework diaries.

The Head of Year has overall responsibility for all children in a particular group. He or she co-ordinates the work of the form tutors and deals with any matters of a general or more serious nature. If you wish to contact us about your child, then the Head of Year is the usual first point of contact. He/she will remain with the year group for five years, throughout their time in the main school (Years 7 – 11), which provides continuity and allows him/her to get to know the children really well. Heads of Year work under the leadership, guidance and support of Mrs Bunyan, Assistant Headteacher, who has responsibility for Social Standards, including Behaviour, and for Student Progress and Achievement. These roles are complemented by our extended Pastoral Support Team which includes three Learning Mentors, Attendance/Family Support Worker, Pastoral Assistants, Special Needs staff, School Counsellor and School Chaplain. Mr Henderson, Deputy Headteacher, maintains an overview of this aspect of our school.

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## **SPIRITUAL LIFE AND CHAPLAINCY**

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St Thomas More's mission in providing a welcoming community based on Christian values is supported by the work of the School Chaplain who provides a living faith presence to both staff and students, in developing and encouraging individual commitment to the ideals of love, justice, truth and tolerance.

These core themes are emphasised and filtered throughout school life via the Chaplain's role in liturgies, staff-student prayer, retreats, prayer days, year assemblies, liaison with our partnership primary schools and parishes, together with an on-going spiritual interaction between staff and students. With the interpretation of Christian values using music, art, drama, dance and language, faith is kept alive within the school, encouraging daily witness and acknowledgement of God's presence in our lives.

The school is blessed with support and leadership from the Parish Priests of the Deanery who visit school regularly to celebrate Mass with students and staff.

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## **UNIFORM AND APPEARANCE**

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We have a school uniform which is simple, smart and reasonable in terms of cost. All children in the 11-16 age range are expected to wear the uniform and we appreciate parents' co-operation in ensuring that high standards of appearance are maintained. We expect children to avoid extremes of fashion with regard to both appearance and uniform. Details of the uniform will be distributed at the July intake meeting.

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## **BEHAVIOUR**

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School rules are few and are framed positively wherever possible. They revolve around politeness, concern and respect for others, and observing high, common standards of behaviour and work, in school, on the way to and from school, and also with regard to homework. When children fall below expectations, we try to act fairly, quickly and effectively. Sanctions include break or lunchtime detention, referral to Head of Year and Senior Staff, placing on report and time spent in the "Padua" room. After-school detention is a possibility for older children, and parents are usually informed in advance. We work closely with parents, whom we contact very quickly whenever necessary. Parental support and co-operation are extremely valuable and appreciated. Exclusions from school form the ultimate sanction, but they are relatively infrequent and used judiciously.

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## **WORKING WITH PARENTS**

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We want to make a reality of the idea of partnership with parents and we will contact you readily if the need arises. You are welcome to contact us at any stage, to discuss concerns you may have about your child's welfare and progress. To enable key staff to effectively manage their time, we ask parents to make an appointment if they wish to meet with staff in person.

We provide parents with regular information about children's progress and with regular opportunities to discuss it. In each year, you will receive three written reports and an invitation to one Parents' evening.

In your child's first year here you will also be invited to a Parents' Evening in the first half-term to discuss how your child has settled in.

A typical pattern of meetings and reports is given in Appendix A. Each year we also organise several evenings which give an insight into the school's work. These may include New Intake Meetings in September and July, Sixth Form Information Evenings and Options for Year 10.

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## **CURRICULUM**

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We provide a broad and balanced education designed to meet the needs of all our children. The National Curriculum guides much of what we teach, with the exception of Religious Education which receives particular emphasis and is central to our curriculum provision.

**In Years 7, 8 and 9** all children study the following subjects - RE, English, Maths, Science, French, History, Geography, Art, Music, PE, Technology, Information Technology, Citizenship and Personal and Social Education. Some children will also study German as a second foreign language from Year 8 onwards.

**In Years 10 and 11** most children study 9 subjects to examination level. Compulsory subjects are RE, English (both Language and Literature), Maths and Science together with general programmes in Physical Education and PSCHE. Students with high ability in Science will have the opportunity to take examinations in the three separate Sciences. Most students are also expected to include a Foreign Language and a Humanities subject in their programme, together with another subject from a Technology-based subject, a second Foreign Language, Music, Art and Design, Business Studies, GCSE PE and ICT. We also offer vocational courses in Health and Social Care, ICT, Business Studies, Sport and Performing Arts. The exact subjects available are reviewed each year.

Our Sixth Form is very strong, with around 320 students are enrolled each year. We offer a wide range of subjects at A/S and A2 levels, together with a smaller number of vocational courses. Full details are available in a separate Sixth Form Prospectus.

### **Teaching Groups**

We believe that the ways in which children are grouped for teaching purposes are very important. They influence children's attitudes, confidence, motivation and achievement. All arrangements about groupings are considered carefully and reviewed each year.

Our main aims are to keep expectations high for all children, and to avoid labelling them negatively, while at the same time ensuring that all children are challenged to achieve their full potential.

Some teaching groups are mixed-ability, notably in Year 7. Setting by subject becomes more common as children move through the school. Arrangements are sophisticated, flexible and sensitive to the needs of individuals. When children are setted, it is done on the evidence of performance in that particular subject. They may be in different sets for different subjects. The following shows the broad pattern of grouping:

Year	7	Teaching in mixed-ability form classes in all subjects except Mathematics where setting is introduced from September and English from January. (Some SEN students are taught in very small groups in Maths, English and Science).
Year	8	Setting in Religious Education, Mathematics, English, Languages, History, Geography and Science with mixed ability continuing in Art, Music, Design Technology, ICT and PE.
Year	9	As in Year 8, with setting extended to Music and ICT.
Years	10 & 11	Setting by subject in all areas, except Art, Core PE and PSCHE.

### **Teaching Methods**

Throughout the school a wide range of teaching methods and strategies are used to ensure that all students achieve well in relation to their capability.

### **Homework**

We believe that children have a right to regular homework and a responsibility to complete it. It should be closely linked to work done in school and can take various forms, all of which are useful in helping children to learn and to take responsibility for their own learning. Ideally it should be done soon after arriving home and before other evening activities. A quiet place to work, away from other distractions, is a great help. As a broad guideline we would expect children in Year 7 to spend up to one hour per night on homework, rising gradually through Years 8 and 9. In Years 10 and 11, they should be spending up to ten hours per week on homework, in order to achieve maximum success in examinations.

Parents are encouraged to take an interest in homework, to check that it is being done regularly and to contact us if problems arise, e.g. too much or too little. Each child is given a Homework Timetable (Years 7, 8 and 9), and a Student Planner (all year groups), which parents are asked to sign.

### **Special Educational Needs**

Children with Special Educational Needs are given support and assistance in a variety of ways to help them achieve their potential.

Teachers work closely with primary schools at transition, attend annual review meetings and plan support accordingly. Support is provided in a number of ways through advice to staff and resources, Reading and Spelling support, small class teaching, in-class support, withdrawal for individual or small group work. Strategies for students are supported by teaching staff across the curriculum and pastoral staff. A philosophy of inclusion underpins our work for students who have learning difficulties and disabilities. We work closely with outside agencies to provide flexible and appropriate support for students.

### **Education for Personal Relationships**

Education for Personal Relationships is covered in a planned, progressive programme throughout the school, beginning in Year 7. It is covered primarily in the Personal and Social Education Programme, but also in Religious Education and Science. It is set clearly in the context of relationships and responsibility, with emphasis always given to moral and social considerations.

### **Careers and Work Experience**

A programme of careers education is provided across year groups. Children are encouraged to explore many vocational areas, to learn how to make choices and decisions, to research careers, and more importantly, routes to them. They are encouraged to appreciate the value of qualifications and lifelong learning in planning their future. Use is made of external careers services to complement work done in school. The school also offers work related learning experiences in Key Stage 4. These add another dimension to the curriculum and help in the preparation of students for life in the working world.

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## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

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The school provides an extensive range of extra-curricular activities for children. They are invaluable in providing them with opportunities to develop all of their talents and abilities, to develop more interests and to excel in some areas. They also give children great enjoyment. These activities take place mainly after school and occasionally at weekends. They are important in creating a sense of belonging to the school, strengthening good relations between children and staff, and giving children self-confidence. We have highlighted some of the main areas of activity below, please also see the Curriculum Activities Report to Governors 2015 / 2016 (separate document in this pack).

### **Physical Activity**

We offer an extensive and varied programme designed to encourage a positive attitude and lifelong commitment to a healthy lifestyle and exercise. A wide range of classroom lessons are further consolidated with a multitude of out of school hours opportunities where those with talent and commitment to school representation are encouraged to play for the school in local and regional competition.

We have developed strong links with the Youth Sports Trust and through this membership we have contributed to Physical Activity work shops regionally as a hub school focusing on girls' participation in particular.

Our 'Girls Active' work – an initiative to encourage non- participating girls to take part in regular activity and has gained national recognition within the Youth Sports Trust.

## **Out of School Hours Opportunities**

Many students from all age groups attend sports activities before and after school. Clubs exist for all the major games and in other areas such as trampolining, badminton, dance and table tennis. These clubs have been successful in North Tyneside competitions with our Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 going on to represent the area or the region.

We have a strong tradition in boys' football with many age groups reaching semi and final rounds and achieving high placement in leagues. The most successful team being the Year 11 & U18s who reached the finals of the league, league cup and county cup!

We have had major success in rugby this year both in terms of participation numbers and competition success. With continued support from the RFU and local clubs we are one of the highest participating schools in all rugby competitions.

We have organised five primary school festivals this year ranging from High Five to Athletics and all our primary schools continue to show great commitment to this aspect of our transition work.

Badminton continues five mornings a week and during curriculum time – we have been very successful in local competitions and through this a number of boys have been selected for development and county squads. North Tyneside Badminton Association continue to support our work with coaching and staff training.

Athletics is a major strength, much class work is consolidated at athletics club where seventy to one hundred students attend. Over forty have gone on to represent North Tyneside and record numbers going on to represent Northumberland. The amazing success of Sports Day encourages a great commitment to athletics in school. Next year will be the 10<sup>th</sup> Sports Day to be held at Monkton Stadium. We are aiming to beat our creditable third place at the Catholic Partnership competition.

The Chance to Shine cricket programme has been extended to boys and girls this year – a number of girls are now members at Tynemouth Cricket Club.

## **Further Opportunities**

### **Table Tennis**

This continues to be a very popular sport within school and we have competed in many competitions this year. Staff and students have become qualified coaches, offering their services both within school and the wider community. The Northumberland Table Tennis Association have provided invaluable coaching and staff training this year.

**Dance** and the Dance Festival continue to be an important aspect of our work with many students accessing dance opportunities and representing the school at the Dance Festival. Many of our dancers are gifted and attend North Tyneside's gifted and talented opportunities. We have also supported dance in school by holding an evening of dance where we showcased exam and class dance work. The Performing Arts students this year enjoyed a trip to London's West End to see Billy Elliott but also excitingly attended a workshop at the world famous Laban School of Dance

An annual and always successful ski trip took place in Austria this year – this trip is offered to all Year 8 students and a number of very positive and enthusiastic Key Stage 5 students who have displayed leadership qualities throughout the year. This year's trip is again to the Austrian Alps.

World class events are important aspects of sport and we have attended Wimbledon and the Golf Open in Troon this year – these world class events encourage and inspire our students.

We continue to take great pride in once again being the highest participating school in all North Tyneside events.

### **The Future**

We are looking forward to moving into a completely re-furnished and up dated department in 2017 – two sets of extended and modernised changing rooms, modernised gym, new movement hall and staff office. This will bring the department into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and fully support the fantastic work already carried out.

### **Music**

The Music department has a high reputation for the quality of music education it offers. St. Thomas More is one of only thirty schools nationally to be awarded ‘Musical Futures: Roland Champion School’ status, with the department delivering INSET to music teachers across the North East. The department has worked with Durham University Music PGCE students and SCITT providers to host trainee teachers, as well as supporting local schools in their music delivery programmes.

The department adopts a practical approach towards learning and all students in the classroom develop their performance, composition and listening skills through ‘hands-on’, engaging, practical activities, as well as developing their critical listening and music theory skills.

There has been considerable investment in music equipment and ICT facilities, with more than twenty PCs and a separate MAC room, housed in the department, each running specialist music software such as Sibelius 7, Cubase, Logic, Auralia, Musition and Fruity Loops.

The school has a wide range of experienced peripatetic teachers who provide tuition in brass, clarinet, drum kit, flute, guitar (acoustic, bass, electric), saxophone singing, violin, viola vade ‘cello. We are still finding that in this digital, technological age, increasing numbers of students want to learn, and gain so much from learning a musical instrument. This is helped by our innovative Year 7 scheme whereby each student gets to learn to play either a clarinet, flute, trumpet, violin, viola or ‘cello in class, at no cost, for at least one term. In the second term, students can continue receiving lessons at a subsidised cost, whilst lessons in the third term are non-subsidised. Significant numbers of students are being successfully entered for external exams such as ABRSM graded practical and theory exams as well as Rockschooll and Trinity Guildhall exams.

One of the highlights of the school year is the annual school production, which this year was ‘The Sound of Music’ and was staged at the Royal Grammar School, Newcastle. This involved a live student orchestra, singers, dancers and technical crew. Previous productions have included: ‘Joseph’, ‘Grease’, ‘Wizard of Oz’, ‘Bugsy Malone’, ‘Oliver’ and ‘Guys and Dolls’ and ‘Annie’.

The department offers GCSE Music, BTEC Music and A Level music. Regular formal and informal concerts are held over the year, ranging from solo recital evenings, to specialist Flute and Brass nights, as well as full ‘tutti’ music concerts. Significant numbers of extra-curricular opportunities are available for students to access and participate in with popular ensembles being the School Orchestra, Chamber Choir, Crescendo Choir and Orchestra, Upper School Choir, Handbell Group and Uke group, as well as separate ensembles for Brass, Flute and String players.

## **Modern Languages**

In 2015-16, the department continued in its aim to take as many opportunities as possible to bring the French and German languages to life.

### **Year 7**

In February, all Year 7 students watched *Les Aventures du Lapin*, a live performance by the renowned Hexham-based theatre company Théâtre Sans Frontières which received rave reviews from our audience. Favourites were the Banana Song and the Zombie scene. Most agreed that actions were very powerful aids to understanding words and asked the company to “please come and do more shows”.

### **Year 8**

In September, we received the news that our MFL department was the only one in the North East to have been awarded a grant of £4,000 by BASLA to work with the Théâtre Sans Frontières to write and perform a play in French about the life and works of the scientist Louis Pasteur to our feeder primary schools. One class of Year 8 students are currently rehearsing in preparation for June 2016 performances along with two classes of Year 9 students.

Also in September, a small group of Year 8 students travelled to St John’s School in Bishop Auckland to attend the annual favourite diocesan partnership event The European Day of Languages. The students took part in activities which ranged from French story-telling to Greek dancing.

### **Year 9**

In September, our 20 year - plus friendship with our German partner school continued with the visit of 22 students from Oer-Erkenschwick, North Tyneside’s twin town. Our student eagerly await their turn to visit Germany in September 2016.

In December, twelve Year 9 students attended the Diocesan Partnership’s MFL Eurovision Song Contest, where they performed their self-composed target language for which they were awarded second prize!

In March, fifteen Year 9 students made a video in German for The Great Languages Bake-Off organised by Routes into Languages for schools throughout the North –East. They won third prize and we got to taste some seriously good Black Forest Cherry Gâteaux.

### **Year 10 and Year 11**

In July, 26 students will be heading to Germany to enjoy 5 days in the Rhineland and 22 students will be heading for a 5-day stay in the French capital.

### **Year 12**

In June, 6 German students, 1 Ethics and Philosophy student and 1 History student will be taking part in a cross-curricular trip to Berlin organised by Mrs Wakeman.

Apart from these events the Modern Languages curriculum includes as many projects as possible aimed at making the language-learning come alive including: film-viewing, food-tasting and contact with native speakers wherever possible.

### **Field Trips, Visits, Outdoor Activities**

Field trips are an important part of many courses and they are organised regularly. Children also have the opportunity to take part in outdoor activities, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, visits to the theatre, art galleries and museums.

## **Clubs**

Many departments organise activities and clubs, especially for the younger children, and these include Mathematics, Science, Art, Information Technology, Chess and Drama. Children are also encouraged to enter local and national competitions.

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## **FACILITIES**

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The school is served by a full range of modern facilities and accommodation which cater for all aspects of the curriculum. There are seven fully equipped Information Technology rooms located near the school library and an extensive wireless network ensures that portable devices such as Netbooks, laptops and ipads can be used throughout the school. Other accommodation comprises twelve Science laboratories, six Design Technology rooms, four Food and Textiles Technology rooms, four Art & Design rooms with specialist facilities for photography, ceramics and screen-printing and four specialist Music classrooms. All other departments have their own specialist classrooms located together in one area of the school, all with data projectors and many with interactive whiteboards. For Physical Education, we have extensive fields, netball and tennis courts, a gymnasium, Sports Hall, Dance Studio and Table Tennis Studio.

We have the services of a full-time, qualified Librarian who looks after the main school library and the dedicated Sixth Form library/study area. There is a Learning Support Centre from which the Learning Mentors support students in various ways e.g. 1:1, small groups, clubs. The main school hall is used for daily assemblies, events and concerts. There is a separate, dedicated dining hall which provides an excellent dining experience for the students.

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## **MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION**

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### **School Day and School Year**

The school day consists of five one-hour lessons. It begins at 8.55 am and finishes at 3.05 pm (Tuesdays 2.45 pm), with a 45 minute lunch break. This arrangement gives twenty-five hours of taught curriculum time per week. We operate three terms per year, with holidays at the usual times. Full details will be published later in the year.

### **Provisional Dates for 2017 / 2018**

Monday, 4 September 2017 to Friday, 22 December 2017     **Autumn Term**

Monday, 8 January 2018 to Thursday, 29 March 2018     **Spring Term**

Monday, 16 April 2018 to Friday, 20 July 2018     **Summer Term**

*Please note these dates are provisional at this stage and will be confirmed at a later date.*

### **Transport**

Most children come to school by bus, and for many there are special school buses for our children. This applies to all of Wallsend which is covered by several routes and to most areas at the coast. Buses collect children close to home and drop them off outside school. For most there is no need to cross a busy road, but we are also served by school crossing patrols.

### **Lunchtime Arrangements**

Children remain on the school premises at lunch-time, which allows them to take part in activities, clubs, or use the library, IT rooms, and other support available. Both hot and cold meals are available in school and payment is by cash.

### **Personal Property**

Children are responsible for their own personal property in school. Occasionally items do go missing. This is often due to forgetfulness or carelessness. Problems will be kept to a minimum if:

- clothing and other items are clearly marked with the owner's name.
- valuable items, including expensive mobile phones, or equipment are not brought to school.
- children only bring to school amounts of money needed for the day.

Unfortunately we are not able to accept liability for items of personal property in school.

### **Charging Policy**

All education provided at school, wholly or mainly in school hours, is free of charge. Activities which take place outside of school hours may be charged to parents. Voluntary contributions will be sought from parents occasionally to support particular activities.

### **Child Protection**

There is an agreed policy procedure within the Local Authority for dealing with cases of suspected child abuse, and we follow these procedures. A copy of our Safeguarding Children / Child Protection Policy is available on the school website.

### **Data Protection**

We make extensive use of computers for administrative purposes. Information about students is held on computer to assist with the efficient running of the school. More details regarding this is available in the information for parents section of our school website [www.stmacademy.org.uk](http://www.stmacademy.org.uk)

### **Admissions Data**

The total number of applications for St Thomas More, received before the relevant deadline of 31 October 2015 was 361.

### **Statistics on Student Absence 2016**

Percentage of student attendance Years 7 – 11	95.69%
Percentage of student sessions missed through authorised absence Years 7 – 11	3.29%
Percentage of student sessions missed through unauthorised absence Years 7 – 11	0.76%

### **Provision for Students with Disabilities**

Admission of students with disabilities is the same as that of non-disabled students. School facilities include ramp access to all buildings and areas, marked risings, handrails in designated areas, accessible toilets and a lift providing access to the three-storey block.

Students with disabilities are fully integrated into all aspects of school life unless precluded by Health and Safety guidance. The Academy follows advice and recommendations from supporting outside agencies.

The Governing Body oversee the full implementation of the school Single Equality Duty including the Accessibility Plan.

Information regarding school policies (see list below) is available on the school website [www.stmacademy.org.uk](http://www.stmacademy.org.uk) A hard copy of any of the policies is available on request.

- Articles of Association
- Admissions Policies 2016/2017 & 2017 / 2018
- Anti Bullying Policy
- CCTV Policy
- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Collective Worship Policy
- Community Cohesion Policy
- Complaints Procedure Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Data Protection Guidance
- Drugs and Alcohol Education Policy
- Exam Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Home School Agreement Policy
- ICT Acceptable User Policy
- Local Offer Policy
- Looked After Children Policy
- Marking and Assessment Policy
- Model Publication Scheme and Proforma
- No Smoking Policy
- North Tyneside Guidance – Children Missing From Education
- Recruitment and Selection Policy Statement
- Safeguarding Children / Child Protection Policy
- Sex Education Policy (Education for Personal Relationship)
- Single Equality Duty and Data – including the Accessibility Plan
- Special Educational Needs and/or Disability SEND Policy and Local Offer for SEND students
- Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Uniform Policy
- Website Privacy Policy

The Following documents are statutory and can also be accessed from the school website:

- Information regarding the Board of Directors/Governing Body – Membership, Committees, Roles, Attendance
- Promotion of British Values Statement
- Mission Statement
- Register of Business Interests
- Accounts Ending 31.08.16

Further information concerning the following is available from the school if required:

- Chair of Governors
- Examination Boards and Syllabi used
- Ofsted and Denominational Inspection Reports are available on the school website or alternatively hard copies can be requested from the Head of Governance c/o the school

**Calendar for Reporting to Parents 2016 – 2017****Autumn Term****September**

Thursday 29 September	Year 7	Parents Evening with Form Tutors
Friday 30 September	Year 11	Interim Reports to be completed

**October**

Monday 3 October	Year 11	Interim Reports to parents this week
Wednesday 19 October	Year 13	Parents Evening

**November**

Friday 11 November	Year 12	Data from HODs
Thursday 17 November	Year 12	Parents Evening
Monday 21 November	Reporting week for Years 7, 8, 9 and 10	
Friday 25 November	Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 Interim reports to be completed	
Monday 28 November	Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 Interim reports to parents this week	
Wednesday 30 November	Year 8	Parents Evening (ASRE)

**December**

Thursday 8 December	Year 8	Parents Evening (THOMC)
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**Spring Term****January**

Friday 6 January	Year 12	Interim and Form Tutor Reports completed
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**February**

Wednesday 1 February	Year 11	Parents Evening
Thursday 2 February	Year 13	Data collection from HODs
Thursday 9 February	Year 13	Parents Evening
Thursday 16 February	Year 9	Parents Evening (THOMC)

## **March**

Wednesday 1 March	Year 9	Parents Evening (ASRE)
Monday 6 March	Year 11	Final Reports completed
Monday 13 March		Reporting week for Years 7, 8, 9 and 10
Thursday 16 March	Year 13	Interim and FT reports completed
Friday 17 March		Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 Interim reports to be completed
Tuesday 21 March		Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 Interim reports to parents this week
Thursday 23 March	Year 12	Parents Evening
Monday 27 March	Year 11	Final Reports to parents

## **April**

Monday 3 April	Year 10	Parents Evening
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## **Summer Term**

### **April**

Thursday 27 April	Year 7	Parents Evening (THOMC)
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### **May**

Wednesday 3 May	Year 7	Parents Evening (ASRE)
Friday 12 May	Year 12	Final Grade from HODs
Friday 12 May	Year 13	Final Grade from HODs

### **June**

Monday 12 June		Reporting week for Years 7, 8 and 9 (Interim + FT comment)
Friday 16 June		Years 7, 8 and 9 Interim reports to be completed by subjects and FTs
Friday 30 June		Year 10 reports to be completed (Interim + FT comment)

### **July**

Monday 10 June		Years 7, 8 and 9 reports to parents this week
Monday 17 July		Year 10 reports to parents this week

# Student Achievement 2016

## GCSE

	STM 2016	North Tyneside average 2015
Attainment 8	54.7	50.9
EBacc	44%	25%
A*-C in English and Maths	72%	66%
5+ A*-C inc. English and Maths	71%	63%
A*-C English	82%	78%
A*-C Maths	79%	72%

## A Level (A\*-E grades are pass grades at A level)

13% of all grades were A\*

33% of all grades were A\*-A

59% of all grades were A\*-B

81% of all grades were A\*-C

99.5% of all grades were A\*-E