

MORELIFE



Newsletter of St Thomas More RC Academy, North Shields

AUTUMN 2019



CELEBRATIONS @ STM



This term has already seen a huge amount of success here at St Thomas More. We have celebrated successful exam results, awarded achievements and celebrated all that the school has to offer at our Open Evening.

Top section: Elizabeth Adamson, Stephanie Potts, Rosie Rice, Madeleine McCabe, Rebecca Mould, Keiran Vasey, Leon Milner, Will Graham, Hal Dixon and Catherine Waugh all celebrate success in their summer exams.



Bottom section: Year 11 successes celebrated at Awards Evening on Thursday 12th September, and a selection of the opportunities available to prospective Year 6 students at Open Evening on Tuesday 17th September.



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SUMMER EXAM SUCCESS

Sixth Form students once again enjoyed great success in their A Level exams. 32% of all grades were A* or A, 80% were A*-C and there were excellent performances across all subjects. Students have been successful in gaining university places at Oxford, Cambridge and Russell Group Universities as well as moving on to employment and higher level apprenticeships.

Head of Sixth Form Mrs Hallam said "We are tremendously proud of our students and how well they have achieved this year in the very challenging examinations. We have a very inclusive Sixth Form and it is testament to the hard work of our students and fantastic staff that the results are again so strong."

Calum Montgomery, who leaves us this year to pursue his passion for music at the Royal Northern College of Music, commented "during my time at St Thomas More, I have definitely become more confident in myself in whatever situation I am in." Teachers were "always there if I needed a chat or to help out with anything I needed."

Olivia Smith, who achieved excellent GCSE results and returns to us for Sixth Form, said "the school has supported my academic progression greatly, especially during the tough GCSE period." "The school has taught me essential life skills which I will now carry with me for the rest of my life."

St Thomas More offers a large number of academic and vocational Post 16 courses across a wide range of subject areas. For more information see www.stmacademy.org.uk/sixth-form or come to our Sixth Form Open Evening on Tuesday 19th November 5-7pm.



Our week in Paris was a truly magical one, and by the end of it the group felt like one big family. Throughout the week we experienced scorching temperatures and no rain (although, not the 40 degrees experienced in Paris the previous week). All the walking and blisters were well worth it because of the enchanting places we visited.

Monday and Tuesday were spent visiting all the major sites of Paris including a boat trip down the Seine, the Champs Elysées, Sacre Coeur, Musee d'Orsay (a personal favourite) and Montparnasse Tower observation deck to watch the sunset over the city. On Wednesday we spent the full day at Disneyland Paris! The fireworks at night were incredible, it really is the happiest place on earth!

The trip to Paris was a memorable one, and we've all created memories that we will treasure for the rest of our lives. - Eleanor Adamson and Molly Dutton, Year 11



After communicating with my German exchange student for a year I finally got to meet her face to face on the 19th of September. She and twenty three of her classmates visited from Oer-Erkenschwick, and we will make the return visit in September next year. My whole family were excited to have Laura to stay and to take her to some of the places we love to visit.

At first I was nervous, but soon enough we were talking. It turned out Laura was just as nervous and excited as me, and we found we had lots of common interests that we didn't realise. We shared our favourite songs and called our friends on FaceTime.

Laura comes from a small town far away from the coast, so she enjoyed a trip to Tynemouth and then shopping in Newcastle. We also had a family trip to Edinburgh, where we visited the Edinburgh Dungeons.



Laura and I really enjoyed the first part of the exchange. I have made so many new friends, both German and English. - Esme Hinchcliffe-Hume, Year 9

GOVERNANCE

The role of Governors is to support and challenge the leadership of the school, to ensure the education and care that is provided for students is as effective as possible. In particular Governors:

- Oversee the finances of the school;
- Hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school;
- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Make strategic decisions about the direction of the school.

The full Governing Body meets four times a year to consider the School Self Evaluation and the Development Plan, and to hear reports from the sub-committees. Eight sub-committees then meet separately up to three times a year on areas including School Finance, Teaching & Learning, Staffing and Admissions.

The Governing Body is made up of the Headteacher, Mr Watson; 11 Foundation Governors appointed by the Diocese; 4 Parent Governors who are elected by parents; 3 Staff Governors who are elected by staff; 1 Governor appointed by the Governing Body following agreement with the Diocese. Apart from the Headteacher, all Governors serve terms of four years before re-election or reappointment.

Link Governors come into school to meet with senior leaders, staff and students, normally two or three times a year, to develop a greater depth of knowledge in the area they are linked to. This allows them to support and challenge leaders more effectively. Links currently exist in a number of areas including Raising Achievement, Post 16, Safeguarding, Attendance, SEND and Vulnerable Students.

Governors would like to hear your views or questions about their role and also any suggestions about how communication can best take place between Governors and stakeholders. Please email any thoughts or questions to governors@stmacademy.org.uk.

E-SAFETY INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Did you know you can now keep up-to-date with all e-safety news via our school website? Visit www.stmacademy.org.uk/safeguarding-3/ for social media support and guidance.

DR ANGELA MACOSCAR



I was elected as a Parent Governor in July 2012. I wanted to be a school governor so that I could know more about the school community and to enrich the STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) aspects of the school.

During my time as a governor my three children have attended the school. I have really enjoyed bringing a different perspective to the governors team and enjoy making a difference to the amazing young people we have at St Thomas More RC Academy. In my day job, I am head of innovation at Northumbrian Water.

CHRISTINE WRIGHT



I feel privileged to have been appointed as a Foundation Governor in September 2016.

I have a very strong attachment to St. Thomas More Academy having been employed here for several years as School Counsellor/Social Worker. My own two

children attended St. Thomas More and have benefitted greatly from their formal education and the many enriching extra curricular opportunities that the school offers. I would like all our students to enjoy the same. Although now retired I have never been busier, living life to the full!

FR CHRIS HUGHES



I was appointed as a Foundation Governor in 2015 and I have recently been re-appointed for a further four years.

I became a governor through my role as a parish priest; I want to see St Thomas More Academy achieve as a school with its Catholic

ethos being central to its life. I believe in a model of education that is not just about intellectual attainment but also about developing young people at every level of their humanity, so that they can flourish and embody the key Christian virtues of faith, hope and love in today's world.



TRIPS & EVENTS



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY TRIP

Back in July we had the opportunity to visit Jesus College, Cambridge, to find out about the university and to inspire us to apply. The accommodation was in the college, where we each had our own student room, with meals provided in the canteen. We attended a sample lecture on lasers as well as some 'organised fun' where we built (and won) the tallest tower made out of spaghetti and marshmallows!

- Stella Pozzi and Aleksandra Szymczak, Year 11

MEETING JAMIE DRISCOLL, NORTH OF TYNE MAYOR

On October 1st, students Jennifer Devine and Megan Shiels in Year 13, along with our School Counsellor Orlean and myself, met with Jamie Driscoll, North of Tyne Mayor, alongside other leaders from Tyne & Wear Citizens. The meeting focussed on the ongoing work on the Living Wage, Hate Crime and the important issue of Mental Health, which we are campaigning on through our Mental Health Core Team in Sixth Form.

- Michael Thompson, Chaplain



YEAR 7 GEOGRAPHY QUAYSIDE TRIP

In the first two weeks of July, all Year 7 Geography classes enjoyed a day out to the Newcastle Quayside, investigating the changes over the past 150 years. Some were lucky with the weather, others less so! I was particularly proud of 7H, who proved how environmentally aware they are by doing an impromptu litter-pick. Beatrice Lewis-Dale said they "saw lots of plastic on the roads, so we got a bin bag and filled it up with litter."

- Mr Logie, Geography

YEAR 7 ALNWICK CASTLE HISTORY TRIP

On Thursday 18th July, a group of Year 7 students visited Alnwick Castle. We did two workshops, where we learnt all about Sir Harry Hotspur and the defence systems of medieval castles. We were guided in great detail around the castle and got to build our own fantasy medieval castle. We also went through the 'Dragon's Quest', which was full of frights, screams and of course smiles.

- Max Godfrey and Nathan Charlton, Year 8



YEAR 8 ATOMIC GIRLS STEM TRIP

On Monday 24th June, a group of Year 8 girls attended a STEM day on equality. We reviewed the Sustainable Development Goals, collectively deciding that Climate Action was the most important. We were then tasked to design technology to encourage a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions. Our idea was an app that detects your personal carbon dioxide emissions, working towards weekly competitions and prizes.

- Tanushri Puthalapattu, Year 9

STUDENTS DESIGN OUR NEW RUGBY KIT

As a part of our RFU grant (see More Life Easter 2019), we had the opportunity this month to take four students to Rockcliffe Rugby Club for a session with Canterbury to create a new kit for the school. This kit is now being manufactured and will be delivered to school for us to use as soon as it is completed. Well done to the four boys for coming up with an excellent design. More on the great start to the rugby term on the website www.stmacademy.org.uk.



SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS

On Tuesday 1st October, all students across the school were involved for the third consecutive year in our School Council Elections, ably supported by an army of Year 9 students who worked tirelessly as Election Officers. Form representatives presented their ideas to their year group through their manifesto pledges and await the results to see who goes forward to represent their year group on the School Council.



HOLY ISLAND 2019

Over the weekend of 12th to 14th July, forty nine Year 9 students enjoyed an amazing weekend on Holy Island. We started with a boat trip around the Farne Islands, seeing seals and puffins, and were then greeted on the island by the gorgeous scenery and warm weather. On Friday evening we visited St Cuthbert's Beach, where we sang silly songs and laughed with our peers (and at our teachers), and scouted for special St Cuthbert's beads along the shore. Saturday saw us racing to the top of Devil's Drop, the tallest sand dune on the island, before ironing the dune to return it to nature after we had finished. Before calling it a night on Saturday, our Sixth Form helpers and two talented Year 9 students gave us a spectacular performance, singing some songs to conclude the day. The trip was an amazing opportunity to meet new people, have fun and relax from the stress of the school year.

- Victoria Peleva, Year 10



CROSS COUNTRY



The Cross Country season is now underway and we have started with some great performances at Gateshead Stadium. Students from Year 7 to Year 10 competed in the English Schools Cross Country Cup at the start of October, running a very tough, undulating and muddy course. Well done to all!

- Mrs Plummer, PE





TEGAN APPLEBY likes Dance, English & Art, and is a very approachable person.



ABEL ARNOLD enjoys playing football and gaming, particularly Minecraft.



ROBERT ATKIN likes Art and playing Bass Guitar. Feel free to talk to him any time.



JOHN CAMPBELL likes sport and will try his best to help out the younger students as much as he can.



RUTH CLARK plays rugby, training four times a week. She also loves all genres of music & many TV shows.



SAM CRAGGS plays the guitar and video games, and is a member of the Air Cadets.



ALANNAH DALY enjoys video games and chatting. She also has an interest in Mental Health issues.



HANNAH DEAGLE loves History and is currently completing her Duke of Edinburgh Award.



MOLLY DUTTON does ballet four times per week. She is also a movie and TV geek.



MOLLY FULLER enjoys all sports, particularly gymnastics, ice skating and dance.

Year 11 Ambassadors have been appointed! They are currently supporting our younger students in form class twice a week and in PSE. They have recently undertaken training on Mentoring and Coaching. Using these newly acquired skills, they will be able to work even more efficiently with Year 7 and Year 8 students. Look out for them in their new leadership roles around school, they are all happy to help!

YEAR 11 AMBASSADORS 2019/20



JESSICA GARRARD enjoys writing, drawing and giving advice & comfort to those who need her help.



ADAM GRAHAM is a compassionate and caring student who enjoys football and other sports.



CAMERON HALES-OWEN is approachable and will help in any way that he is able.



FAITH JOHNSON is an aspiring actor and author who loves baking, singing and dancing.



SASKIA JURIC plays football for North Shields and netball for the school. She is approachable and friendly.



EMILY KENNEDY likes Maths, History and Geography. She would like to be a Lawyer when she leaves school.



NIAMH LATHAM enjoys being a role model for younger students. She enjoys English, History and Art.



JAKE LISTER is friendly and will listen to you. He enjoys English and Business Studies.



CHRYSTA LOIS is friendly, organised and hard-working. She volunteers at her dance school and is an Air Cadet.



KIAN MACOSCAR is kind and helpful. He is excited to be an Ambassador this year.



NEIL MAROMO enjoys sports. He is approachable and easy to talk to, so please ask if you need some help.



CAMERON McVEIGH is very sporty, particularly rugby, football & skiing. He also enjoys gaming.



MATTHEW MILLER is caring, helpful and easy to talk to.



EVAN NATHAN loves sports, Minecraft, YouTube and many genres of music.



UCHE OJIAKO is a good leader. She is friendly and loves to help other people.



DANIELLA ONIONS enjoys talking, singing and cooking. Imagine a world without food?!



MATTY PENHALL plays football for Wallsend and is a very outgoing person.



PATRICK PUSZCZ loves playing the drums. He is approachable and helpful.



SOPHIE RITSON enjoys spending time with friends and family. She is interested in Mental Health.



THOMAS RUMNEY runs three times per week. He also listens to and plays music.



EMILY RUTHERFORD always looks on the bright side of things and loves to listen.



ISAAC SCORFIELD likes American Football and is willing to help with anything.



CAOIMHE STEWART wants to be an architect. She loves Art and Music.



ALEKSANDRA SZYMCZAK wants to study medicine and work abroad as a doctor.



JOSHUA TUPAZ loves Business Studies and his favourite food is Nando's chicken!



ARIELLA WILKINSON enjoys Judo and is here to help if anyone needs support.

COMPUTING & IT @ STM

Computing and IT are areas that are increasingly vital to your future career prospects, and the opportunities offered at St Thomas More are second to none. Watch this space for more information:

BTEC TECH AWARD IN DIGITAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Students who study this course learn a strong mix of creative design and technical knowledge. It is ideal for learners who want to progress to a digital Apprenticeship or BTEC Level 3 Nationals, which are also taught in Sixth Form at STM. It is a new digital qualification that gives students a real insight into the modern fundamentals of IT. The technical skills gained in DIT gives an edge to students going into creative careers. It also gives students the knowledge of analytics, performance, and technical elements that will help them improve their creative output. This qualification is a stepping stone to careers like IT Project Management, Technical Support and Cyber Security.

GCSE COMPUTING

Computer Science is engaging and practical, promoting creativity and problem solving. It encourages students to develop their understanding and application of the core concepts in computer science. Students also analyse problems in computational terms and devise creative solutions by designing, writing, testing and evaluating programs. Studying this course could lead to university or an apprenticeship and on to a career as a business analyst, data analyst, network engineer, cyber security technologist or any number of other careers.



LUCY SMITH GAMES DESIGNER

After leaving St Thomas More in 2014 and trying a couple of different courses, when the Nintendo Switch and The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild came out in 2017 I was inspired to take the plunge into pursuing my real passion - Games Design! I've been a gamer my whole life so I signed up at Newcastle College to study Games Technologies and haven't looked back. Since studying, I have been nominated for the Games Industry Top 100 Women in Games. I am one of the co-founders of Women Making Games North East, director of the Girls' Game Lab, and start as an Assistant Games Designer at Sumo Digital in October! I have learnt that it's never too late to chase your dreams.



EX-PUPIL SUCCESSES

We are proud to continue sharing successes from our ex-pupils. If you or a member of your family are a former student of St Thomas More and have a story to tell, please let us know at alogie@stmacademy.org.uk and you could feature in a future issue of More Life.

DANIEL TAWSE

1997-2002

After graduating from St Thomas More in 2002, Daniel enrolled on the Advanced National Diploma course in Musical Theatre at Newcastle Performance Academy. He then went on to study for three years at The Arts Educational School of Musical Theatre, London, where he graduated with a BA (Hons) in Musical Theatre. Thereafter, as a jobbing actor, Daniel performed in many guises, both in London theatres and around the world. Highlights include: Good Thing Going, Cadogan Hall, London; Guttled: A Revengers Musical, Assembly Rooms Edinburgh and Riverside Studios London; Rocket Man, for ITV; and The Other Child, for the BBC. He was also a company member of The Mercury Theatre, Colchester for over five years. Recently, Daniel has taken a break from acting to focus his attention on writing. After gaining an MA degree in History from the University of Northumbria, Daniel turned a lifelong passion into reality when his first novel, Fairy Boys, was published worldwide through Amazon Publishing. He's an advocate of the saying: 'If you do what you always do, you'll get what you've always got,' and if he could impart any advice on readers, it would be to live by this too! Daniel will be returning to school in the near future to speak to the LGBTQ+ group and to run some creative writing workshops in English.



BILLY WRIGHT 2011-2017

In December 2017 I joined Northumbrian Water as an apprentice Water Regulations Officer, and spent much of the first year shadowing on a wide variety of jobs, including HMP Acklington and St James Park, where we were access all areas! Last year my manager explained to me that it would be a waste of my time to shadow any more and that I was more than capable of doing the job on my own. I travelled to Swindon at the beginning of last month to undergo a three week course, passing all four exams with over 90%, so I am currently the youngest Water Regulations Officer in the country! Since completing that course I have been given my own company vehicle and have been out doing my own inspections. Going forward my manager has enrolled me into a management diploma at Newcastle University on day release as he's hoping I'll be ready to step up when he decides to retire. I have loved the Apprenticeship route and love the work that I do.

JESSICA DORR 2006-2013

After leaving St Thomas More Sixth Form I took a gap year where I worked back at the school as a science technician and at a local pub. I also did some travelling before beginning my Medical studies at the University of Sheffield in 2014. I spent a great five years in Sheffield and qualified as a doctor this July. I have moved back up to Newcastle to be closer to home and now work as a junior doctor in the urology department of Sunderland Royal Hospital, which is very busy but (mostly!) enjoyable and fulfilling.

My brother Joe (2011-2018) decided to follow in my footsteps and has just finished his first year of Mathematics at the University at Sheffield.



NEXT ISSUE CHRISTMAS 2019

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