

MORE LIFE

St Thomas More
Catholic High School

AUTUMN 2022



“THE RESULTS ARE A TESTAMENT TO THE STUDENTS’ TREMENDOUS EFFORTS. THEY FULLY DESERVE ALL OF THEIR SUCCESS” - Mr Watson

Sixth Form students enjoyed great success in their A Levels with excellent performances across all subjects. 48% of all grades were A* or A, 90% A*-C and the average grade was a B. 31 students achieved three or more A/A* grades, which was almost a quarter of the yeargroup.

Students have been successful in gaining university places including 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 immensely proud of our students this year. Their hard work has resulted in a fantastic set of results and most have secured their first choice of university or desired apprenticeship placement. They can all look forward to a very bright future!”

SIXTH FORM RESULTS SMASHED

Year 11 students also enjoyed a lovely morning back in August, collecting their fantastic results, enjoying great success in both their GCSEs and BTECs. Most have returned to join the STM Sixth Form where they are enjoying continuing their studies.

Headteacher Mr Watson said, “Our students and staff have worked so hard and they have been rightly rewarded for their great efforts.

With grades falling nationally and regionally it certainly looks like we have again bucked the trend with results as strong as they have ever been.”

If you would like to join us for Sixth Form in September 2023, please come to our Sixth Form Open Evening on Thursday 17th November 5-7pm to find out more about subjects and to get a flavour of life at St Thomas More.

**Year 9 and Year 11
Ambassadors**

02

**Trips and Events
in and out of school**

04

**Year 7 STEM day
run by Year 12**

06

**Year 10 impress
on Work Experience**

07

AMBASSADORS 2022

See below our new Year 11 Ambassadors, who are visible around school with their black ties and new badges. These pupils were successful in their applications and interviews to be St Thomas More Ambassadors and they have settled well into their role, supporting and representing our school during and outside of school hours.

One of their first responsibilities was taking parents/carers for a tour around our school on Year 6 Open Evening. They guided parents and younger pupils around the different departments and facilities our school has to offer and did this with enthusiasm and professionalism. Student Ambassadors this year will be coaching leadership sessions for other pupils and supporting both Sixth Form and Main School parents' evenings. Congratulations to you all!

YEAR 11



Lily ANDERSON Maeesha BEGUM Iona BELL Jacob BELL Rachel BENNETT



Aoife BLAND Rebecca BRENT Macy BUTLER Caitlyn DAVIES Izzy DUTTON Andrew ESPIRITU Paddy FERGUSON Lucy FITZPATRICK



Sam GIBSON Max GODFREY Gethin HEGARTY Nicole INFANTE Charlotte JACKSON Elena JAMES Alex KELLY Semira KILIC



Yasmin LAU Ben LEDGER Aimee McCLARENCE Gregor MACFARLANE Maddison MCGINTY Martha MCINTOSH Joyce MISA Angel MUCHISO



Lucy NEWTON Holly NIVEN Lucy OSHEGBU Sara OSPINA Sam OSWALD Grace PEDDIE Alexis RADICH Michaela REDPATH



Gracie RICHARDSON Alfie RICHES Pasha SADEGHI-AFJEH Katie SCOTT Nitya SINGH Lily THOMPSON Thomas WHITEHEAD Sam WILKINSON

YEAR 9

Our new Year 9 Ambassadors have supported both Sixth Form and Main School parents' evenings in recent weeks. Congratulations to all of you and thank you for representing and promoting St Thomas More in the best way possible!
- Mr O'Connor



Angel ABRAHAM Omar ALMASRI Alison CONWAY Lennon FERGUSON Eloise FERRY



Olivia FLERON Hannah HENDERSON Alice HODGSON Danielle HOUSE Alfie HOWIE Stephanie LOWTHER Carolyn LUKE Benjamin NICHOLSON



Mason PATTON Christopher PEARCE Alannah PENET Cameron QUINN Diya REGI Sonia SANDHU Fidelis UBAH Natan WESOLOWSKI



TRIPS AND EVENTS IN AND OUT OF SCHOOL

ASHLEIGH VISITS RELICS OF ST BERNADETTE



On Saturday 1st October, I visited St Mary's Cathedral in Newcastle to see the relics of St Bernadette. At 11:30am we joined the long queue at the side of the cathedral, where stewards came round with sweets while we waited.

The relics were in a glass case covered with a black cloth near the front, next to a statue of Our Lady. At the end of mass, the black cloth was removed to reveal the special case holding the relics of St Bernadette.

As we were leaving, we wrote prayer petitions and put them in a box that will be taken to Lourdes. It was a very special experience to be so close to the relics.
- Ashleigh Sales, Year 8

GERMAN EXCHANGE BEAMISH TRIP

Over the previous year, a small group of us have got to know our German Exchange partners through social media, zoom calls and in some cases meeting face to face. On the 13th of July, we ventured to Beamish Open Air Museum to show our German friends what life in Northumberland was like throughout history. Unfortunately due to Covid 19 they were unable to join us in person.

We split into small groups, each with the task of filming two short videos about parts of Beamish; our group filmed the farm house and the trams and demonstrated what life would have been like in the past. We used our German knowledge to describe different parts of the houses, animals and transport.



We would like to thank all the staff involved in the German exchange for the past year, including a special thank you to Frau Wakeman for everything she has done for us. We hope you have a lovely retirement, Auf Wiedersehen!
- Hannah McKenzie and Holly Kersey, Year 11

YEAR 8 VENTURE TO THE COAST

Back in July, Year 8 had a fabulous couple of days visiting the coast at Seaton Sluice, observing coastal features they had studied in class and enjoying some well-deserved time with their friends.



YEAR 13 WORK AND PLAY HARD IN THE LAKE DISTRICT

Even before we arrived at Ambleside, the view of the mountainous Lake District was spectacular. The weather was on our side when we arrived at Go Ape, and the look on Mr Murray's face when we started shaking the obstacles in front of him was priceless.

In the afternoon we worked in teams to present parts of our A Level Geography specification and share our revision with one another. We even moved outside for part of it to catch some fresh air and study with a view.

The following day we did a four mile walk around Grasmere, one of my favourite parts of the trip. The calmness of the scenery in early autumn made it pretty special.

The trip adds another excellent experience to my school life. I will remember the Geography but also Mr Murray's speed-dating revision activities.

- Ethan Roberston, Year 13



YANNIK AND GREGOR WOW THE JUDGES



We recently took part in the Rothbury Festival of Music, which brings together people from around the country for three days of music. As well as the duo and band competitions, we also participated with the Northumbrian Ranters and played on the main stage. Before our final performance we couldn't find a practice room to rehearse so we ended up in a field full of sheep, who thoroughly enjoyed our music. In the end, we came second, losing to the Tyneside Fiddle Alliance, a well-known fiddle group within the North East folk scene. We couldn't be happier with how it went, and are looking forward to next year, when we will be participating once again. - Yannik Hardy, Year 10, and Gregor Macfarlane, Year 11

BIOLOGY OLYMPIAD 2022



This year, some Year 12 Biology students took part in the British Biology Olympiad, an advanced problem solving competition that consists of multiple choice questions that challenge and stimulate students to expand their knowledge and talents. Questions are based around the A level syllabus but students may not necessarily be familiar with the topics and ideas. The challenge enables students to demonstrate their knowledge and be rewarded with publicly recognised certificates and medals. - Amber Cramman, Year 13

POETRY LIVE!



On the 6th May we attended a Poetry Live event at Newcastle University. I found this incredibly valuable for tackling my exams, with experts such as exam board markers teaching us how to do the best in our exams! However, it wasn't all about how to sit exams. We also heard poems by some of the titans of modern day poetry, including Simon Armitage, Poet Laureate, who talked to us about the most harrowing poems he has written. He spoke about writing a poem for Sophie Lancaster, a young girl who was killed simply for her looks. Although it was tough to hear, it was incredibly moving. Hearing poems being brought to life by the author's articulate tone created an entirely different experience compared to reading them ourselves! - Kody Walker, Year 10

A LEVEL BIOLOGISTS INVESTIGATE BIODIVERSITY

Back in July, Year 13 biologists visited St Mary's Lighthouse and Plessey Woods over two days, to investigate Biodiversity in different environments.

Whilst at Plessey Woods we learnt how to perform an accurate kick sample in the river, finding multiple freshwater shrimps. At St. Mary's Lighthouse, we carried out seaweed transects using quadrats and systematic sampling. We used statistical tests to analyse our data before writing up our conclusions. This allowed us to pass part of our Biology course whilst having a superb time!
- Issie Ritchie & Ruby Burrell, Year 13



YEAR 11 GEOGRAPHERS AT COBALT AND SEATON BURN



Measuring the changing features of the Seaton Burn on one Thursday morning in September, we investigated the river in comparison to the Bradshaw Model. Some people actually went into the river while most, like me, stayed on the banks to record results. A week later it rained all day, but we still trekked to the top of the Biodiversity Park on Cobalt Business Park to collect environmental data. It was interesting to see all the businesses that clearly thrive at the park and the impact the park is having on the area. We all had fun, making memories like taking pictures at the Sundial or tripping over tree branches! - Joyce Misa, Year 11

STEM DAY

A group of Sixth Form students and I helped organise a STEM Day for Year 7s back in July, where we each ran an activity on a different STEM subject. Mine was Biology and during my activity students created a model ear to show how sound waves cause the eardrum to vibrate. I had fun designing my activity and I know the Year 7s enjoyed it and the other activities too. We hope the day gave them a greater love of STEM!

- William Beattie, Year 13



CYBER BULLYING WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



“Bullying is when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable”
(Oxford English Dictionary, 2021).

It can involve people of any age, and can happen anywhere – at home, school or using online platforms and technologies (cyberbullying). This means cyberbullying can happen at any time.

Cyberbullying or online bullying can take many forms.

- Excluding a child from online games, activities or friendship groups
- Sending threatening, upsetting or abusive messages
- Creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos
- ‘Trolling’ - sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- Voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- Creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name.

Indicators that a child could be experiencing bullying include:

- being reluctant to go to school
- being distressed or anxious
- losing confidence and becoming withdrawn
- having problems eating and/or sleeping
- having unexplained injuries
- changes in appearance
- changes in performance and/or behaviour at school.

You may notice that someone isn’t spending time with their usual group of friends, has become isolated or that other children’s behaviour towards a child has changed.

If you have a concern about bullying, you should follow the [school’s anti-bullying procedures](#) as soon as possible.

If you think a child is in immediate danger, contact the police on 999. If you’re worried a child is at risk of serious harm but they are not in immediate danger, you should share your concerns.

- Follow the school’s child protection procedures (see above).
- Contact the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000 or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk. Trained professionals will talk through your concerns with you and give you expert advice.
- Contact your local child protection services. Their contact details can be found on the website for the local authority the child lives in.
- Contact the police.

**BEN LEDGER
GRAND HOTEL**

My duties included waiting on tables, providing room service and making advertisements. One of my favourite parts was seeing the beautiful architecture of the hotel and learning about the history, including some of its ghosts. I gained an understanding of a working environment and was able to engage in coordinated teamwork.

(Ben is pictured right, with Eliza Reilly)

**JACOB BELL
BEACON HILL SCHOOL**

I worked alongside three other teachers in a class of students with various learning disabilities. I worked one to one with a particular student, helping him learn to draw shapes such as triangles and squares. My high points were practising skills such as teamwork,

problem solving and creativity. I also went to the Beacon Cafe with one of the students, which helped them learn how to interact with others in the real world.

**JOYCE MISA
GERIATRIC WARD**

A fascinating experience to say the least - quite hands on too! I did ward rounds with the doctors for two days, shadowed a nurse, and found out about the different

roles that help maintain the patients and the ward. My most memorable part of the week was my day with the nurses, which made me realise how hard they work, giving every single patient their meds, working with other professionals and sorting out family members.

**ALEX KELLY
ST MARY'S PRIMARY**

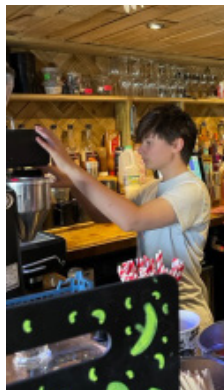
For my Work Experience I went back to my primary

school. A high point was helping a child who was really struggling; I spent a while teaching him how to use apostrophes. The happiness on his face when he understood it was one of the best things I have experienced. It showed me that I am really set on a career working with SEN teaching. I thoroughly enjoyed my week.

(Alex is pictured below, running a PE session)

**JOHN PINOTE
STM MATHS DEPT**

I sorted out the filing cabinets, helped students and supported at Sports Day. I learned the importance of teamwork, good communication and self-discipline, as well as how to act on my own initiative. (John is pictured on the left)



WORK EXPERIENCE 2022

Also pictured to the left: Top row, left to right: Hannah Miller (Tynemouth Surf Cafe), Ruby Wilson & Ashlea Seymour (Re-create today), Hugh Fenwick (RA Jackson Estate Agents). Bottom row, left to right: Andrew Espiritu (Newcastle Building Society), Maryam Hasan (Ravenswood Primary School)



CHARLOTTE NICOLL BOUNCES TO SUCCESS

After seven years of gymnastics I eventually lost interest and was on the hunt for a new hobby. When I tried a trampolining session at the Parks Sports Centre in 2021 I was hooked and immediately joined Park Elite trampolining club to train for my first competition.

Competitions under coaches John Young and John Douglas this year have been great and I recently won gold at the NETTC regional qualifiers, gaining a place in the regional team. My coaches and friends helped me through my nerves and gave me the confidence to perform with a positive attitude. At my last national competition, at the English Institute for Sport in Sheffield, I came fourth in my category and hope to do it all again next year. - Charlotte Nicoll, Year 8



EX-PUPIL SUCCESSES

As always, we like to finish the newsletter with news from some of our ex-pupils. We are always on the hunt for more successes, big or small and of any type. If you or a member of your family would like to feature in a future issue, please e-mail alogie@stmacademy.org.uk. All we need is a few sentences and a recent photograph. We look forward to hearing from you!

FRAN O'HANLON

1999 - 2006



It was during my time at St Thomas More that I first started playing in bands and writing music, which is something that continues to be a big part of my life today. After finishing Sixth Form, I moved to Paris for a year to volunteer with the L'Arche community, working and living with people with learning disabilities. This actually came about because I didn't get any offers to study the course I wanted to at university, which felt like a huge failure at the time but actually ended up leading to one of the most important and brilliant years of my life.

From Paris, I moved to study Medicine at Edinburgh and subsequently worked as a doctor in Sunderland and now in London, specialising in palliative care. I work with people who often have quite advanced illnesses and palliative care is about relieving symptoms, like pain or breathlessness, and focusing on what's important to them and their families; it's a challenging but very rewarding area of medicine and one I'd recommend any budding medics to consider. It feels a long time ago that I was at STM but I enjoyed my time there and wish all of you all the best for your futures.

GARETH DAVIES

2015 - 2017



In Year 13 I secured a place on a Web and Mobile Development degree at the University of Sunderland. I really enjoyed the course and lived in Sunderland for the first two years. For my sandwich year, I secured an internship with Siemens UK as a Business and IT intern at their digital centre in Manchester, a paid position that allowed me to experience life in another city as well as lots of training opportunities. Unfortunately my internship was interrupted by Covid so I completed the final five months from home.

I returned to Sunderland to complete my course, receiving a first class degree and an award identifying me as the top student in my year. I now work as an Associate Technology Specialist for IBM. I work from home but regularly travel to London and Manchester to attend client project meetings.

NEXT ISSUE CHRISTMAS 2022

Address: Lynn Rd, North Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE29 8LF

Phone: 0191 258 8340

Email: info@stmacademy.org.uk

Newsletter: alogie@stmacademy.org.uk

If your circumstances change and you need support: familysupport@stmacademy.org.uk

stmacademy.org.uk

 @STMRCA