

MORE LIFE



Newsletter of St Thomas More RC Academy, North Shields

CHRISTMAS 2016



SIXTH FORM 'WEAR IT PINK' WITH PRIDE ONCE MORE

Our annual Pink Day took place on Friday 21st October and once again it was a resounding success, with students in Sixth Form organising a variety of events and giving a donation in order to dress in pink. Activities including three cake sales in the sixth form common room and main school dinner hall, glitter tattoos and selling cookies and milk managed to boost

the total to more than we have ever raised before. In addition to this, quizzes sent out to form classes and cake auctions for staff were a massive success alongside kind donations from all students, enabling us to raise a whopping £1334.82, smashing last year's total by £64. Well done to all involved!

- Darcy Nathan & Anna Jones, Year 12

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A CHRISTMAS PRAYER FROM THE CHAPLAIN

"Where God is born, hope is born. Where God is born, peace is born. And where peace is born, there is no longer room for hatred and for war."

– Pope Francis, Christmas 2015

Lord, we pray for each other and our world during this Advent season. We know that with the arrival of Your Son, Jesus, peace and hope will enter into our hearts seeking to heal and repair our bruised world. Help us to be patient as we attentively wait for His birth this Christmas, and guide us towards opportunities to show peace, hope, joy and love to one another in this special season. Amen.

YEAR 7 VISIT 'AWESOME AMPLEFORTH'

In November, Year 7 students went on a retreat to Ampleforth Abbey in North Yorkshire where they reflected on faith and prayer. The retreat was led by Father Bede, who talked to our students about life as a monk, living in a religious community and also gave inspirational words on how we can have each other on our "prayer radar". One of the highlights was a chance to attend evening Compline, the evening prayers and one of six times the monks pray each day. We ended the retreat the next morning with a celebration of Mass; all students were involved in writing



prayers, practising readings and putting together a drama on the day's Gospel reading. A fun time was had by all, and students learned a lot about a way of life that very few had experienced before! - Michael Thompson

THE BLACK TIE BALL



See page 2 for information

LOURDES 2016

During October half term 13 students and 3 teachers went on an enlightening pilgrimage to the city of Lourdes for 5 days. They stayed at the HCPT Hosanna House and visited many iconic sites including the Grotto, the Boly Mill, the Cachot and many more. The group also visited the church that Bernadette was baptised in and the church of John the Baptist, where many people lit candles for their friends and family back home. On Tuesday night the group went on a torchlight procession and all the students loved seeing people of different nationalities walking together as one loving community. I even had the honour of carrying the HCPT flag during the procession which is an experience I will never forget.

During these 5 days the group learned about the story of Bernadette and found a deeper spiritual meaning of the city. Near the end of the trip there was a talent show and disco where the students were able to bust a move and showcase their amazing talents including singing, karate and playing an instrument, which was a joy to watch. The experience the group had in Lourdes is something they will never forget, and without visiting themselves it is difficult for other people to truly understand what a special place Lourdes is.

- Elizabeth Adamson, Year 9



For your chance to support future students travelling to Lourdes, this year's HCPT Group 36 & 714 Black Tie Ball will take place on Friday 27th of January at the Biscuit Factory Newcastle. For information and tickets contact abmerchant@stmacademy.org.uk, and help us to beat last year's total of £10 000, which allowed us to pay for 5 students to go on the pilgrimage.

ON YOUR MARKS, GET SET, READ...



This half term has seen the launch of a major initiative to improve literacy. All Year 7 students have been enrolled onto the Accelerated Reader scheme. This matches each student with books to suit their reading age and ability. Once completed, quizzes are taken on the book and points and prizes can be earned. Here at STM we have added a further competitive element by adopting a Reading Olympics theme. Students have been winning marathon certificates for long reads, triple jumps for

three books in a series and synchronised swimming for reading the same book as a friend. This has created a real buzz around school particularly in the library where students have been queuing up to quiz.

To date over 500 quizzes have been taken and 6,621,063 words read!

"Accelerated Reader is amazing... I can find and read the right books for me... and I get stickers!" Oliver

- Miss Edwards



Want a chance to get some reading done...? Morning Club is on each day, except Wednesday, in T14 from 8.20 - 8.55am. It is open to any student who needs help with homework or any Year 7 who would like to complete their Accelerated Reading Quiz. Reading Club is in the library on a Thursday and Friday, also before school.



“THEY REALLY BROUGHT THE ROOM TO LIFE”



On Thursday 20th October, St Thomas More participated in a Ceilidh event, hosted by the North Tyneside Music Education Hub. Several primary schools were involved, including Preston Grange, Star of The Sea, and Whitehouse Primary School.

A 'Ceilidh' is a Scottish or Irish dancing event, consisting of a band that performs while others dance. The event worked exceedingly well, with many young people getting up to dance or playing an instrument.

The event concluded with a final Irish song called 'John Ryan's Polka', where most of the audience got up and gave the dancing a go! The outfits that some of the primary school students wore were so pretty and glittery, they really brought the room to life when they danced. The Ceilidh was such a fun event which everyone really enjoyed.

- Abbie Herron, Year 9

Don't miss your chance to see our talented musicians in action...

We have a Singing event and Music concert with Year 5 and 6 students at Whitley Bay Playhouse on 3rd February, a second soloists evening (grades II - IV) on 22nd March and our Spring Concert on 5th April.

SOLOISTS EVENING

On Wednesday 23rd November 2016, Soloist's Evening provided a stage for students playing instruments at grade 5 and above. 21 students from Years 8-13 stunned the audience in the main hall with a wonderful array of different musical talents. From flutes to drum kits; euphoniums to cellos, the hall was filled with beautiful music (even if I do say so myself). Each student stood in front of the audience on their own with nowhere to hide, and had their chance to shine.

And shine they did! Many students played/sang pieces they were preparing for an upcoming exam, or pieces of music that they enjoy performing, meaning there was a variety of classical, jazz and musical theatre - Beyoncé even made an appearance thanks to Sally Brandon in Year 9. Contrasting this, Phillip Fehringer and Nathan Chong brought a bit of Chopin along, while Josie



Allen played Bach's Allemande unaccompanied on the Viola. You couldn't possibly pick a stand-out performance as each student really did so well. As one of the performers, I know that everyone was nervous and eager to do their best, but we all felt incredibly proud and it felt amazing to sit and watch friends dazzle the room with their incredible talent.

- Stephanie Potts, Year 11



SUBJECT TRIPS



HISTORY: VINDOLANDA

On Thursday 20th October, a group of Year 7 students were met by an archaeologist who led us down to the ruins of the fort. She led us through the vicus – or village – and explained the purpose of having the support of the little town by the base of the fort. We went to one of the classrooms where we learnt Latin and Roman Numerals. Afterwards, we went to see the 3D film 'Edge of Empire' which was about life on Hadrian's Wall. - Aaron McDonald-Brown, Year 7

ART: BIG DOODLE

On the 11th October eight STM students visited St Joseph's Academy in Hebburn for the diocesan Big Doodle, the world's biggest drawing festival. Lots of different schools attended and we moved round each table to do a different pattern, each based on a different artist. I met new people from the other side of the year who I still talk to now. At the end of our trip we got to keep our patterns that turned in to a box when we glued them together. - Heather Bennett, Year 8



BIOLOGY: CENTRE FOR LIFE

Year 13 biology students visited the Centre for Life to carry out polymerase chain reactions and gel electrophoresis as one of their core practical assessments. They took a sample of their own DNA to see if they had the gene which allowed them to taste a chemical in certain vegetables such as sprouts. Students used techniques such as micro-pipetting which give them an idea of university level science experiments. - Emily Gray, Year 13

GEOGRAPHY: BLENCATHRA

On Monday 7th November, Year 12 Geography students travelled to Blencathra Field Study Centre in the Lake District, to collect data for their Changing Places and Coasts topics. On the first and last days, they went into Keswick to compare the 'near place' of North Shields with the 'far place' of Keswick, and to investigate how Keswick has changed over the years. Despite extremely cold weather and even snow, the students all had a really good time. - Emily Ashton, Year 12



COMPUTING: EUROGAMER

The moment we walked into the NEC for the Eurogamer convention, we realised how surreal this experience was going to be. Many students met Syndicate, a famous YouTuber who has 9 million subscribers and a net worth of £3.77 million. The purpose of the visit was to research the game industry and future careers, and we saw universities demonstrate how they could create eye-popping visuals right in front of visitors. - Harvey Keithlow, Year 12

ENGLISH: KIDS' LIT QUIZ

Each year over 400 schools in the UK compete in the Kids' Lit Quiz in the hope of going to the World Finals, this year held in Canada. The atmosphere was calm before the quiz started, but you could tell it wouldn't be for long... each team wanted to do the best for their school and progress to the next round. STM team A only lost out to winners Dame Allan's by 2 points, with both STM teams finishing in the top 10. - Aaryn McDonald-Brown and William Beattie, Year 7





HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE: ACUPUNCTURE

My trip to the Sun Hei Acupuncture and Healthy Living Centre was fascinating. Dr. Yui demonstrated acupuncture on one of our students, giving a real insight into how it works. What she enjoys most is helping people with their issues without the need for medication. I enjoyed hearing stories about her clients, including a woman who had tried everything to have a baby, but after attending Dr. Yui's clinic succeeded in getting pregnant.

- Ellie Wood, Year 13

BUSINESS: NISSAN FACTORY

On the 22nd November Year 12 Business students visited the Nissan factory in Sunderland. We were shown the production line of the Leaf and Juke from parts to the completed car as well as seeing their Quality Assurance techniques. We saw how 'Just in time' and 'Lean' production methods make the factory more efficient, and heard how collaboration with Renault allows them to save money by developing new technologies together.

- Jodie Ross & Billy Wright, Year 12



HISTORY: A LEVEL CONFERENCE

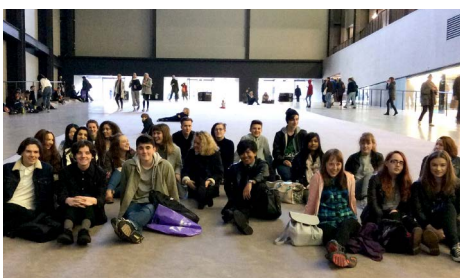
The knowledge gained on this trip was invaluable. Not only did it cement what we had already learnt, it gave us the opportunity to gain insight into previously unpublished facts and theories which we will be able to use in our upcoming A level exams. Meeting John Guy, the UK's leading Tudor Historian, was almost as good as the breakfast provided by Mrs Mole on the train to London.

- Charlotte Mapletoft, Hannah Schubeler, Aksa Ghaffar, Takudswa Masiwa & Eleanor McCabe

TEXTILES: FORBIDDEN CORNER

Students used this trip as inspiration for wall hangings they will be making for their Year 7 Textiles project. The students explored the various gardens, drew sketches, took pictures and made some great new friends at the start of Year 7. The students who attended had won their place through a competition to creatively design a secret garden. Students did this using a range of resources including real bits of nature such as leaves and twigs.

- Miss Adamson



ART: TRIP TO LONDON

Bleary eyed, we assembled at Central Station to depart on our 6:30am train. At the Tate Modern everyone was amazed and inspired by the various exhibitions around the renovated power station. At Infinite Mix we saw how art could be cleverly combined with music to produce unique, abstract pieces and at the Royal Academy, the glorious building was the perfect host for the stunning paintings on show.

- Lucy Penhall, Year 13

FOOD TECHNOLOGY: MASTERCHEF

Representing St Thomas More at the Catholic Partnership Masterchef competition were Chloe Ashurst and Lucy Barnett. Their challenge was to create a two course meal for under £5. The girls went for an Italian theme making Bruschetta and a spicy Chorizo Carbonara. The guest head chef from Alnwick Gardens treehouse restaurant, who worked closely with Jamie Oliver on his healthy schools campaign, praised the girls on their "perfect bruschetta".

- Miss Adamson



“A WONDERFUL TRIP” ON THE GERMAN EXCHANGE



From 22nd to 29th September 2016, a group of intrepid Year 10 students travelled to Oer-Erkenschwick near Dusseldorf in NW Germany to stay with their exchange partners.

Katharine Loughney writes: “I see the German Exchange as a fantastic way to gain independence and to meet life-long friends. If you want to try something new, this is for you! We went to a planetarium, shopping in the city, saw a concert, did a tree-top adventure and went hiking all in one weekend! The family I stayed with were lovely – they looked after me and let me try ‘traditional’ German foods. The friends we made with the other German students were incredible. Everyone was



very well suited to their partners. Overall, a wonderful trip to gain independence.”

Emily Davey writes: “The German exchange was honestly the best experience ever! We visited lots of interesting and exciting places including Schalke Stadium, the Chocolate Factory and the city of Cologne. At the weekend, we

spent time with our partners and their families. To be honest I think that was the best part! They took me to see Starlight Express, to the theme park and went shopping too. My partner even surprised me with a birthday party! The whole experience was really amazing and I would definitely encourage more people to do it!”



YOUNG CARERS CREW CPR TRAINING

CPR is a vital skill to have because it can save someone’s life. When a person suffers from a cardiac arrest, survival depends on immediate CPR. Around 90% of people who suffer a cardiac arrest out of hospital will die, but CPR, especially if performed in the first few minutes, can double or triple a person’s chance of survival.

SAVE A LIFE TODAY!

Step one – place the heel of your hand on the centre of the person’s chest, put the other hand on top and press hard for thirty presses (if you are giving CPR to a baby you use two fingers and press). If you are giving someone CPR you may break their ribs but broken ribs is better than dying.

Step two – place your mouth around the other person’s mouth, squeeze their nose and blow three times with normal breaths.

Step three - repeat steps one and two until help arrives or the person starts breathing by themselves.

- Natasha Skeats & Ellie Peters, Year 9



SPORTING SUCCESSES FOOTBALL & RUGBY



On Thursday 13th October, the talented boys of the Year 10 football team travelled to Whitley Bay to try and end the losing streak against them. They managed to accomplish that task despite going behind after a good strike from one of their forwards. The game dragged a little despite Robbie Fenwick's attempts on goal at the end of the first half. A quick substitution mid way through the second half brought Jack Beverley upfront. With some fantastic play down the right hand side and a brilliant ball into the box, followed by a cushioned header from Ollie Thompson to Jack Beverley, who looped it over the keeper, we pulled it back to 1-1.

With some good attacking and defensive play from both teams, the game was very tight, but after another great effort from Jack, the match ended 2-1 with Jack receiving the Man of The Match award.

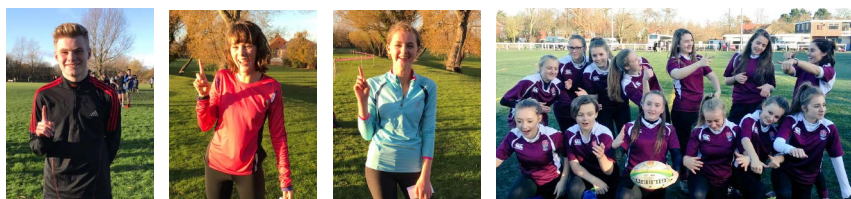
- Ben Baxter, Year 10



On 19th October, St Thomas More racked up another win against St Cuthbert's in the first round of the County Cup storming to a 50-25 victory. Man of the match Dan Hegarty scored a hat-trick of tries for St Thomas More while Matty Penhall went one better earning 20 points from his four tries. Further tries were scored by Jake Lister, Jamie Walker and Luke Scott.

An initially even sided game against tough, sizeable St Cuthbert's opponents turned into a straight forward win after we got into their heads through massive tackles and a couple of fancy tries. Some huge crunching tackles and incredible pace were shown by the Year 7 students who had stepped up to bulk out the St Thomas More ranks for the match. We hope to continue this excellent form in the next stage of the County Cup.

- Cameron McVeigh, Year 8



Our students competed in the North Tyneside Trampolining Competition, with Sally Brandon, Martin Bland and Dominic Dixon all placing first in their categories.

The regional U15 girls rugby tournament was won by a fantastic effort from our STM girls rugby team.

St Thomas More are once again the lead school for the Youth Sport Trust Girls Active Initiative. We have a fantastic team of Girls Active Leaders who are working hard within school and some of our feeder primaries to promote girls sport.



OTHER SPORTING SUCCESSES

STM Table Tennis team, consisting of Riyaz Miah, Jacob Thompson, Abel Arnold & Matty Penhall, qualified for the regional finals after success at the North Tyneside Table Tennis competition.

North Tyneside Cross Country competition saw Matthew Morley, Year 12, Erin Prior, Year 12 and Eira Hegarty, Year 11 all placing first in their categories.

Our netball team showed great effort and resilience against the likes of John Spence and Wellfield in the Central Venue league.

Our finest Year 7 and 8 athletes travelled to Darlington to compete in the Sportshall Athletics Competition. We had great success on the track with first place finishes for all of our teams.





EMMA & JAMIE WALKER KICKBOXING CHAMPIONS

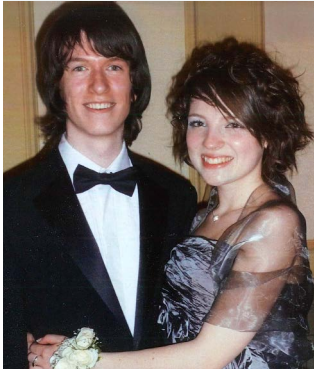
From the 30th October to the 4th November, my sister and I travelled to Dublin to compete in the WKC World Championships for Kickboxing. It was an honour to represent our country on an international scale. Altogether, there were over 200 English competitors at the event, alongside several competitors from Europe and South America, over 100 Americans, and over 200 Canadian competitors!

Both my sister and I medalled in every event we entered. I obtained a silver and two bronzes, and my sister entered 4 categories, winning silver in two, and becoming World Champion in the other two. All in all, the whole week was so exciting and we are now looking forward to competing in Orlando 2017.

- Jamie Walker, Year 8

EX-PUPIL SUCCESSES

Back by popular demand, we are proud to share a few more successes from our past students. 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 may feature in a future issue of More Life.



JACOB MURPHY & ALEXANDRA JEFFREY 2003 - 2010

Jacob and Alexandra met during their time at St Thomas More, and were married on 12th November at St Wilfrids' RC Church in York. Jacob gained a Masters Degree in History at Newcastle University and now works at York Minster, while Alexandra gained a degree in the History of Art at University of York and now works as a Student Recruitment and Widening Participation Co-ordinator at Hull York Medical School. We wish them every happiness for the future!



RICHARD ANDERSON 1996 - 2003

I graduated from the University of Leeds in 2003 with a BA (Hons) in Environment & Business in 2006, and started as a graduate Quantity Surveyor at Brims Construction in 2007, following in the footsteps of my grandfather in the 1950's. I am currently working as a Project Quantity Surveyor back at St Thomas More on their new PE extension.



CHRIS QUINN 2000 - 2005

I work for the world's largest handling agent Swissport, who operate around the world looking after aircraft once they are on the ground. My team and I are responsible for meeting aircraft and organising the changeover of passengers. I'm the first person a passenger sees, so it's important to make a good first impression to make the airline look professional. Without the help of staff at St Thomas More, I wouldn't have the confidence to do the job I do now.

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