



More News



December 2014

And a wonderful time was had by all..



The school recently held its annual Parish Christmas Party where over 50 elderly people came in to have a festive afternoon tea followed by entertainment. Each Year 11 form class was responsible for providing everything for a table, and students from the performing arts and music departments danced, sang and played the handbells for the visitors.

Christmas Cracker!



One of our Year 12 students Jing MacArthur has produced a stunning design to win this year's Diocesan Christmas card competition. Jing used the traditional method of Chinese paper cutting to create the fabulous festive scene. Well done Jing!



Hoping you all have a very Happy and Holy Christmas, with warm wishes from all of us at St Thomas More!



What a reTREAT!



Our Year 8 students have recently been on retreat, with 49 students spending the night at Ampleforth Abbey in North Yorkshire, which has been home to a community of Benedictine monks since 1802. The school has a long history of visiting the Abbey and Father Bede led the activities as usual. As well as a tour of the Abbey and the school, students participated in a session entitled 'Everything you want to know about a monk', and learnt the monks' sign language, as they are required to remain silent during meals.

Four form groups in Year 8 also took part in the annual retreat to the Youth Village, with remaining students visiting in February.

A Night at the Oscars

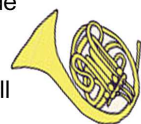
The Media Oscars night is always a swish night in the partnership calendar and this year was no exception! Fifteen St Thomas More students put on their party clothes and enjoyed a meal and presentation ceremony at Hardwick Hall Hotel in County Durham. Jamie Briggs won an oscar for his ICT animated e.birthday card, Kate McGinley won one for her photo of coloured bubbles, and Matthew Thompson was highly commended for his photo of folded books. Jing MacArthur was also presented with a special prize as her work using the traditional Chinese method of paper cutting will be used as the Diocesan Christmas Card this year.



Soloist Evening

A large group of extremely talented young people recently took part in the annual soloists' concert featuring students from Years 7 right through to 13.

The students performed a wide variety of pieces played by instruments ranging from the flute to the euphonium, as well as vocals.



A Flying Visit



A Royal Navy pilot from North Shields flew into his old school on Thursday 6th November in his own Lynx helicopter. Lieutenant Ian Brannighan left St Thomas More Academy in 1997, and is the pilot of a Lynx Mark 8 from Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton. After landing on the roof of the Royal Victoria Infirmary, the helicopter then flew on to North Tyneside where it landed on the school field. Students had the chance to look around the helicopter and chatted to the crew about life in the skies and their experiences within the Fleet Air Arm.



"This is a real privilege for me," said 35-year-old Ian, who also attended Star of the Sea Primary School in Monkseaton. "I have tried on numerous occasions to visit St Thomas More Academy with the Lynx helicopter; I remember a similar visit when I was at the school and it definitely leaves a lasting impression on students to see the Navy up close when we are normally so far away.

"I'm happy to finally have the chance to achieve this visit to my own school as it's not easy to bring the Royal Navy to the North East outside of the Sunderland Airshow or the visit of our ship, HMS Dauntless.

This will be the first time I've managed to get back to the school where my brother, my sister and I were all educated and where it all started for me so it will be particularly special to achieve this as well as support the efforts of increasing awareness of the RN in the North East."

Lieutenant Ian Brannighan joined the Navy in 2002 and by 2006 was flying Lynx helicopters on the front line from frigates and destroyers with 815 Naval Air Squadron.



Remembrance Day

At 11 o'clock on Tuesday 11 November the school remembered all those who have lost their lives in conflict with a two minute silence. Year 13 students Kate and Laura Brown also played 'The Last Post' on the trumpet.





Children in Need



On Friday 14 November, students in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 took part in an event to raise funds for Children in Need. The audience were treated to a range of performances from singers, musicians and dancers – and what a talented bunch they are! Everyone felt tremendously proud of the young people taking part, both on stage and behind the scenes, and a total of £500 was raised.



Heritage Skills Day

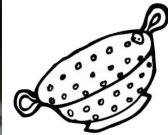
Students in Year 9 are taking part in a cross curricular heritage skills project involving their History and Design Technology lessons. This is in partnership with the Heritage Skills in Education organisation that is running a competition in which students have to plan how the Watch House in Cullercoats could be used, whilst still maintaining its heritage.



The students have visited the historic building and will have to eventually canvass local opinion about their plans. They will have to present their proposals to a panel in May. As part of this project they recently tried their hand at being a stonemason, creating a stained glass window, and making a rolling pin using traditional wood turning tools. These are all trades linked to the heritage industry, and the students thoroughly enjoyed the day.



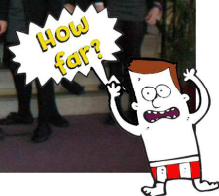
Master Chefs Cooking up a Storm!



Year 10 students Jade Mason and Katy Burton recently came third in the Diocesan Masterchef competition and were awarded a certificate and a Jamie Oliver recipe book. The girls made Hoisin glazed chicken served with stir fried vegetables and a timbale of vegetable rice followed by individual baked Alaska featuring homemade luxury vanilla ice cream. Sounds delicious!

Aspire Channel Swim Challenge

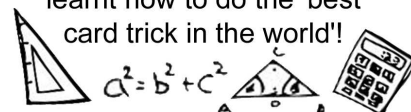
38 of our Year 8 students recently swam a total of 2500 lengths of Tynemouth pool to raise money for charity. This is equal to 38 miles, well over the distance needed to swim the equivalent of the English Channel. Mr Stanton and Mrs Forsten led the group and an amazing total of £603 has been raised so far.



It's Mathstastic!



Four students from Year 9 attended the Mathstastic Day at the Centre for Life in Newcastle. They did some Maths puzzles, had a session on astro-navigation, and learnt how to do the 'best card trick in the world'!



★ STM Sporting Superstars

We're a sporty bunch here at St. Thomas More and over the last half term our students have made some outstanding sporting achievements.



Ice skating

Elliott Thompson, in Year 10, recently came third in the British figure skating championships. These were held in Sheffield and Elliott was competing in the novice class. Now you might think you have to get up early, but Elliott trains at Billingham ice rink four mornings a week, and this means that he has to get up at 4.45am to be there for a 6 o'clock start! His tremendous dedication to his sport really does have to be admired and we are very proud of him.



Diocesan Swimming Gala

A number of students in Years 7 to 11 recently took part in the diocesan swimming gala held at the Dolphin Centre in Darlington. Alfie Kelly, Josh Shell and Madeline Brandon all smashed the race records in individual events, and overall the team did fantastically well. Special mention to team captains Aiden Pang and Eleanor McCabe who led the team so well.

Diocesan Badminton Competition

Students in Years 8, 9 and 10 recently took part in the Diocesan badminton competition, with our Yr9 girls coming first. Well done to them!

Rugby teams update

The Year 11 rugby team are unbeaten so far this term, and the Year 7 and 8 rugby team are through to the late stages of the county cup.

Archery

Year 13 student Charlie McFarlane is now ranked 7th nationally for Archery. This is an achievement he has made in just 2 years after taking up the sport, when it would usually take up to 6 years to get to this level. Charlie trains at the Backworth Miners Welfare on Friday, Saturday and Sunday where he is preparing for the county championships in February – another dedicated sportsman!

Table Tennis

Boys from Years 7, 8, 10 and 11 recently represented North Tyneside in a table tennis competition. They played against teams from schools in Newcastle, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland. The tournament took place at Sandhill View School in Sunderland and was incredibly close, with the winners only being decided in the last game.

All photos and additional information can be found on the PE department's twitter account (@STM_PE).

