



21st September 2022

Dear Parent/Guardian,

### **Year 7 Retreat – Thursday 13th to Friday 14th October 2022**

I do hope that your child has made a successful start to their time here at St Thomas More. In my role as school chaplain it has been great getting to know all of our new starters and I look forward to supporting them as they continue to grow in their journey of faith.

I'm really excited to be able to offer our Year 7 students an opportunity to attend an overnight retreat at the Hexham and Newcastle Diocesan Youth Village in Allensford, Consett next month.

The retreat is optional, but we really encourage pupils to get involved and make the most of the experiences and opportunities that we offer. We have secured 65 places initially, which we offer on a first come first served basis, however, if there are more pupils interested then we will organise further opportunities later in the year.

#### **What is involved in the retreat?**

- The retreat provides pupils with the opportunity to take a step back from their studies and their daily routines at school.
- This is a great opportunity at the start of year 7 to strengthen current friendships and even make new friendships.
- Our retreats are about reflecting and growing as individuals and are open to pupils of all faiths or none.

During the two days there will be a variety of activities on offer that are all linked to the theme, The Adventures of Paul, focusing on building a community based on love. Students will enjoy a range of outdoor team building challenges, reflective craft activities, social justice themed CAFOD sessions, capture the flag, a nature walk, various art and drama activities, and even an escape room themed activity on Thursday night! These activities are interspersed with opportunities for prayer and further reflection on the theme.

Pupils will stay overnight at The Youth Village, which is always a highlight of the retreat, especially as pupils begin to form and cement new friendships, sharing double or triple rooms within each chalet. The Youth Village is set in the beautiful and peaceful surroundings of the Derwent Valley, and is the home of the Youth Ministry Team, who lead our retreats.

OLD DURHAM ROAD, GATESHEAD  
TYNE & WEAR, NE21 4BQ

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### How do I secure a place?

If you wish your child to attend, please return the attached consent form to your pastoral tutor as soon as possible but no later than **Monday, 3rd of October 2022**. Remember places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Once I have received your consent form you will be given a letter to confirm your place on the retreat.

### What happens on the day?

- Students should come to school in non uniform and make their way to school as normal on Thursday 13th October and get registered in pastoral before making their way to the sports hall.
- We will leave school at 9am and will be spending the night at The Village before returning to school on Friday in time to return home on the school buses.
- Students will be accompanied by members of staff from the school.

### What do I need to bring?

- 1 change of clothes (for the next day)
- Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, etc)
- Towel
- Appropriate outdoor shoes (They will get muddy!)
- Outdoor clothing (To keep you warm)
- Any necessary medication clearly labeled with your full name (this should be handed to the member of staff staying in your cabin)
- Money for tuck shop

As we consider this to be a valuable part of a child's education we will be fully covering the cost of the retreat, but we would like to ask you to consider making a donation towards the retreat before Friday the 13th of October. The cost per pupil is £80 and any donation, however large or small, will enable us to continue offering the retreat to pupils in the future, irrespective of their ability to pay. Please make payment via ParentPay.

Yours faithfully,

Cody Kettner  
School Chaplain

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NAME OF PUPIL: .....

YEAR & HOUSE:

.....

Please complete and return this form to your pastoral tutor, not later than **Monday, 3rd of October 2022**

Venue: Year 7 Retreat , The Youth Village, Allensford

I hereby authorise Cody Kettner (Party Leader) or any other member of staff present, to consent to such medical treatment including inoculation, surgery or blood transfusion, which in the opinion of a qualified medical practitioner may be necessary for my child in the course of the school visit, where it is impractical for contact to be made with me due to prevailing circumstances. I include below details of medical conditions or medication of which the school should be aware for the purposes of the school visit:

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.....  
.....  
.....

**DIETARY REQUIREMENTS**

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.....  
.....

**EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS (at least two please)**

(Home/Work or relative/friend)

1).....  
.....

2).....  
.....

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I acknowledge receipt of and have read the information in this letter and I give consent for my child to attend the Year 7 Retreat.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: ..... Date:  
.....

\* Payments for this trip should be made via our online payment system ParentPay. Details of this service can be found on our school website under the 'Parents' section:

<http://realsmart.stthomasmore.org.uk/parent-pay/>

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