



Friday 2nd September, 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you have had a wonderful summer break and your children are looking forward to returning to school. I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself formally as the new Head Teacher of St Thomas More Catholic School.

Since starting at St Thomas More in 2014, I have loved every part of my journey, starting as Assistant Head Teacher, then Deputy Head Teacher and finally Head Teacher. From my experience of working at the school for the last eight years I know that a successful school depends on students, staff and families working together to build a strong community. Our staff here at the school are hugely committed to ensuring that the highest standard of teaching and learning is achieved and I can assure you that we will always do our best by every child in our care.

Our school offers consistency and continuity, which is why since opening in 1967, there have only been three previous Head Teachers, with me proudly stepping up as the fourth. I am delighted to have been appointed as the new Head Teacher and feel extremely honoured to be in a position to build upon the success the school has already achieved under the leadership of Mr Parkinson.

The strong partnership between our school, parents, carers and governors, is imperative in enabling our students to achieve every success during their time here and when they progress onto the next steps in their learning journey and I look forward to being a more central part of this.

As a parent, my goal has always been to ensure that my children are happy in life and achieve their potential. I believe in the importance of strong discipline, providing a safe, calm and purposeful environment for all. This is the philosophy that I bring to my role as Head Teacher at St Thomas More Catholic School. The needs of our students are always paramount in the life and decision making within the school. As a key leader in your children's lives, I feel it is important that you have a voice and that as a school, you find us approachable so that we can allocate time to listen to your concerns, worries and thoughts about our school. I am dedicated to building opportunities for students to achieve the highest academic standards and ensuring that their individual personalities, talents and interests are nurtured and developed to their full potential in the light of the teachings of Christ.

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

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0191 499 0111
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Below are a few updates for you with regards to the leadership team and more general information.

Senior Leadership Team

- I am pleased to announce that Mrs Lennox and Mr Shield have been appointed as our new Deputy Head Teachers. Together, our experiences of working within the school will provide a strong foundation of knowledge and understanding of our local community and our school's potential.
- Mr Lennox remains as our Pastoral Lead and Mr Olsen as our Inclusion Lead.

Safeguarding & Pastoral - Key Staff

- Mr Shield is now our Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Please do not hesitate to contact him or Mr Lennox, who continues to be our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, if you have any queries.
- Our pastoral team remains as follows:

Pastoral Team	
Head of St Bernadette House	Miss Kathryn McNeill
Head of St Catherine Laboure House	Mrs Joanne Cervantes
Head of St John Fisher House	Mr Alastair Young
Head of St Therese House	Mrs Deborah Ashdown
Director of Sixth Form	Mr John Davis

School Day

- A reminder that we have now moved to a 5 period day, with a change to our lesson timings and the end of school on a Friday.
- Do remember that all students can access Homework Club on a Monday to Thursday until 18:00 in our school library.
- School timings are as follows:

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Monday - Thursday		Friday			
All Year Groups		Year 7, 11, 12 & 13		Year 8, 9 & 10	
08:45	Pastoral	08:45	Pastoral	08:45	Pastoral
09:05	Lesson 1	09:00	Lesson 1	09:00	Lesson 1
10:05	Movement	10:00	Movement	10:00	Movement
10:10	Lesson 2	10:05	Lesson 2	10:05	Lesson 2
11:10	Break	11:05	Break	11:05	Break
11:25	Lesson 3	11:15	Lesson 3	11:15	Lesson 3
12:25	Lunch	12:15	Lunch	12:15	Movement
13:25	Pastoral	12:25		12:20	PSHE
13:30	Lesson 4	12:55	PSHE	13:10	Lunch
14:30	Movement	13:45	Movement	13:45	
14:35	Lesson 5	13:50	Lesson 4	13:50	Lesson 4
15:35	End	14:50	End	14:50	End

Term Dates

- A copy of our dates for next academic year are on our school website and can be accessed using the link below.
- <https://www.stthomasmore.org.uk/parents/key-information/term-dates/>

Parent Welcome & Information Evenings

- We are aware that for many parents Covid restrictions have meant that they have had limited opportunity to come onto the school site.
- During the Autumn Term we will hold several welcome evenings to address this.
- Below are some key dates, and we will write to you closer to each event with more details.

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Year Group	Event	Date
Year 7	Year 7 Parents' Welcome Evening	Thursday 22nd September 2022, 5.30pm
Year 8	Year 8 & 9 Parents' Welcome Evening	Thursday 15th September 2022, 5.30pm
Year 9		
Year 10	Supporting your child in KS4 evening for Year 10 Parents	Thursday 20th October 2022, 5.30pm
Year 11	Supporting your child in KS4 evening for Year 11 Parents	Thursday 6th October 2022, 5.30pm
Year 12	Year 12 Parents Welcome Evening	Tuesday 4th October 2022, 5.30 pm
Year 13	Supporting your child through Year 13	Thursday 13th October 2022, 5.30 pm

Communication with School

- We kindly ask that you do not email individual staff directly.
- Our House emails are the central pathway for contacting the school via email & will be generally responded to within school hours.
- You can also contact us by using the school reception number [0191 499 0111].

St Bernadette	St Catherine Laboure	St John Fisher	St Therese	Sixth Form
s_stbqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk	s_stclqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk	s_stjfqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk	s_sttqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk	s_6frmqueries@stthomasmore.org.uk

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Return to School Dates

- A reminder of our return to school schedule:

Monday 5th September	Staff Training Day
Tuesday 6th September	Year 7 Induction Day
Wednesday 7th September	All students return to school - Pastoral Day <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year 13 AM only• Year 12 PM only
Thursday 8th September	Lessons begin for all students

Arrangements for Students' First Day

- On students' first day back to school they should arrive as usual, congregating on the yard or heading straight to their pastoral room.
- If students are unsure of their pastoral room they should wait on the yard where staff will direct them.
- Students will spend the day with their tutor, where timetables and other key information will be distributed.

Hopefully that is everything you need to prepare for next week. I very much look forward to meeting you at one of our welcome evenings.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Jillian Turner

Head Teacher

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