



Frequently Asked Questions – Admissions

How do I apply?

In order to apply for a place for your child to join Year 7 at St Thomas More Catholic School, please complete the online application form which is available on the website of your home Local Authority. This needs to be completed in the September or October that your child is in Year 6. This online portal opens in early September and will always close on 31st October. For further information please visit the website for your home Local Authority, e.g. if you live in Gateshead please visit www.gateshead.gov.uk and follow links for Schools and Admissions.

Who is the Admissions Authority?

The Governing Body of St Thomas More Catholic School is the Admissions Authority, and therefore has responsibility for its own admissions. The Local Authority undertakes the co-ordination of admission arrangements on the school’s behalf.

Can I apply for a place if I don’t live in Gateshead?

Yes, you can still apply, however you must apply to your home local authority. If you live within Northumberland for example you must apply to Northumberland Local Authority. The Local Authority will then forward all applications received for Gateshead Schools to Gateshead Local Authority.

Do I need to apply if my child has an Education, Health and Care Plan?

If your child is being assessed for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) you should still complete an application form, however if your child already has an EHCP in place there is no need to complete an application form as the EHCP will name the school that your child will attend.

What happens if I miss the deadline of 31st October?

If you miss the deadline of 31st October then your application will be classed as late, and you will severely reduce the chance of gaining a place at your preferred school. You must give a reason as to why your application was submitted late. Late applications received in mid-late December will not be processed until after National Offer Day (1st March). For further information regarding late applications please consult the website for your home Local Authority.

What are the Feeder Primary Schools for St Thomas More Catholic School?

There are 9 Catholic Primary Schools within our catchment area. These are our feeder primary schools. They are:

Corpus Christi, Gateshead	St Agnes, Crawcrook	St Joseph’s, Blaydon
St Joseph’s, Highfield	St Mary’s, Whickham	St Mary & St Thomas Aquinas, Stella
St Matthew’s, Prudhoe	St Philip Neri, Dunston	Sacred Heart, Byermoor

If my child is in a Feeder Primary School do I still need to apply?

Yes. Students who attend a feeder primary school DO still need to make an application if they wish for their





child to join St Thomas More School. Although we do endeavour to offer places to all children who attend a feeder primary school, places are not guaranteed on this basis alone.

What is the Published Admissions Number?

The Published Admissions Number (PAN) is the number of students that we are able to offer places to for each Year group. The PAN for Year 7 is 235. If we receive more applications than the PAN, we will apply the Oversubscription Criteria to ascertain which students will receive an offer.

What is the Oversubscription Criteria?

St Thomas More School was originally constituted to provide an education to the children of Catholic families. In developing a policy for admissions there are various things to consider: the place of siblings, of other Christian denominations, the place where families live. These priorities are therefore reflected in the oversubscription criteria below. For further information regarding the Criteria and/or the Admissions Process please see the Admissions Policy which is available on the school website.

Order of Priority	Oversubscription Criteria	Notes
1a	Catholic looked after and previously looked after children with sibling link	(see notes 2&3)
1b	Catholic looked after and previously looked after children without sibling link	(see notes 2&3)
2a	Catholic Children who attended a catholic feeder primary school with sibling link	(see note 3)
2b	Catholic Children who attended a catholic feeder primary school without sibling link	(see note 3)
3a	Other Catholic Children with sibling link	(see note 3)
3b	Other Catholic Children without sibling link	(see note 3)
4a	Other looked after and previously looked after children with sibling link	(see note 2)
4b	Other looked after and previously looked after children without sibling link	(see note 2)
5a	Catechumens and members of an eastern Christian Church with sibling link	(see notes 4&5)



5b	Catechumens and members of an eastern Christian Church without sibling link	(see notes 4&5)
6a	Other children who attend a catholic feeder primary school with sibling link	
6b	Other children who attend a catholic feeder primary school without sibling link	
7	Other children who have an older sibling at the school at the time of admission	(see note 9)
8	Children of a member of school staff who has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which application for admission to the school is made	(see note 10 & 12)
9	Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidence by a minister or faith leader	(see note 6 & 7)
10	Children of other faiths whose memberships is evidenced by a minister or faith leader	(see note 6 & 7)
11	All other children	

Within each of the categories listed above, the following provisions will be applied in the following order.

Frequently Asked Questions – [New Starters](#)

What time does school start and finish?

School Pastoral starts at 8.45am every day. If pupils arrive at school after 8.40am the gates will be locked and they will have to use the main school entrance, in order to sign in at Reception, stating the reason for lateness. Pupils should then go straight to pastoral. Lessons finish at 3.35pm every day (Friday 2.50pm) . There are lots of after school activities available, and the school library is also open after lessons for students to use.

**How many lessons are there each day?**

There are 5 lessons each day Mon - Thurs and 4 lessons on a Friday. The week is therefore structured as follows:

Mon - Thurs		Friday	
8.45	Pastoral	8.45	Pastoral
9.10	Lesson 1	8.50	Lesson 1
10.10	Movement	9.40	Lesson 2
10.15	Lesson 2	10.40	Break
11.15	Break	10.55	Lesson 3
11.30	Lesson 3	11.50	Lunch
12.30	Lunch	12.50	Lesson 4
13.30	Lesson 4	13.50	Lesson 5
14.30	Movement	14.50	End
14.35	Lesson 5		
15.35	End		

How much homework will pupils get?

Pupils will be set regular homework with each task aiming to take approximately 30 minutes to complete. In the first half term, pupils will be given shorter tasks, helping them to build time management and homework routines, without over-burdening pupils. All homework, including the date due, should be recorded by pupils in their homework diaries. Please ensure you support your child by encouraging them to check their diary each evening and manage their time effectively. Study Support Club is available each evening if pupils would like a quiet space to complete their homework, or if they would like to use school resources.

Can my child get a school bus?

School buses are provided by the Local Authority in each area. The majority of our buses are therefore provided by Gateshead Local Authority and managed by Nexus. These run throughout Gateshead, a full list of services, times and stops is available on both our website and the Nexus website.

If your child does not live within Gateshead, then transport is only provided by your home Local Authority under certain circumstances. Please contact your home local authority for further information.



Where do pupils get the bus from?

The school buses will pick up and drop off either at the front of school, or at the back. The place the bus picks up from will never change, and it will be the same place where it drops off. Therefore if on your child's first day the bus drops off at the back of school, this is where it will pick them up from at the end of the day. If your child is unsure which bus to get, there will be teachers who will be out on bus duty at the end of the day who will be able to answer any questions your child might have and are there to make sure everyone gets on the right bus. At the end of the school day, pupils who get the front buses should go straight to the front of school and await their bus. If your child gets a back bus, they are expected to line up sensibly on the yard in their year group and then will be escorted up to the back of school by a member of staff.

FRONT OF SCHOOL		BACK OF SCHOOL	
BUS NO	DESTINATION	BUS NO	DESTINATION
845	Hamsterley Mill	841	Crookgate Bank Top
854	Blackhall Mill	842	Lobley Hill Road
891	Woodside Lane, Woodside	843	Low Fell
861	Stannerford Road, Clara Vale	844	Durham Road, Harlow Green
839	Whickham Broadway	550	Priestpopple, Hexham
840	Lobley Hill Road	551	Dean Terrace, Prudhoe

How do pupils pay for dinner?

You will be given a blank dinner/library card which can be used to pay for your dinner until you have had your biometric fingerprint taken and been provided with your new card which will include your photograph. This should be shown to the catering staff in the dinner hall if you are buying a school dinner. If you prefer to take a packed lunch you can go straight to the hall when your year group is called in.

Historically we have used a system called Parent Pay, however we are in the process of determining which system we will be using in September 2024. Once this is complete you will receive a separate letter with more information on what to expect and how to log on. This will be towards the end of the summer holidays.

Which subjects are studied in Year 7?

Our Key Stage 3 curriculum is designed to challenge and engage our students. We have a core curriculum of English, Maths, Science and Religious Studies. This is then accompanied by subjects in Humanities, Technology, Arts, and Languages:



CORE	HUMANITIES	TECHNOLOGY	ARTS	LANGUAGES
English	History	DT	Art	French or
Maths	Geography	Food	Music	German
Biology	IT		Drama	
Chemistry	PE		Textiles	
Physics				
RE				

What is the Pastoral system?

Our Pastoral system is designed to ensure that each individual in school feels secure, confident and valued. On entry to our school each pupil is allocated to one of our four Pastoral Houses: St Bernadette, St Catherine Laboure, St John Fisher, or St Therese. Working under the general coordination of a Head of House, each Tutor has pastoral responsibility for a group of around 30 pupils. Through a planned pastoral programme the Tutor addresses the social and emotional needs of the pupils and supports their learning and development.

