Friday 20th November 2026

Head Teacher's Weekly Update

Dear Families,

As we come to the end of another successful week at St Thomas More, I would like to thank our pupils, staff and families for their continued commitment and support. The positive atmosphere around school remains a reflection of the high standards our pupils demonstrate each day, both in the classroom and through their wider contribution to school life.

One of the highlights of the week was our **Sixth Form Open Evening**, where we were delighted to welcome a large number of families into school. It was wonderful to see so many prospective students exploring our Sixth Form facilities, speaking with staff and current students, and learning more about the wide range of academic and enrichment opportunities on offer. The evening provided an excellent opportunity to showcase the exceptional provision available within our Sixth Form, and we thank all those who attended.

This Sunday, we also celebrate **Youth Sunday**, an important occasion in the life of the Church that recognises the vital role young people play in our communities. It is a time to give thanks for their gifts, talents and contributions, while reflecting on how we can continue to support them to grow in faith, confidence and service to others. As a school community, we are incredibly proud of our young people and the positive impact they have on those around them each day.

Prayer Theme:

"Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Matthew 25:40

We have prayed together as a community:

Heavenly Father,

As we celebrate Youth Sunday, we thank You for the young people in our school, parish and wider community. We are grateful for the gifts, talents and enthusiasm they bring, and for the hope they inspire in others. Jesus reminds us, *"Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."* Help us to follow His example by serving others with compassion, kindness and generosity. Open our eyes to those who need our support and give us the courage to make a positive difference through our words and actions. Bless our young people and guide them to use their gifts to build Your Kingdom, bringing hope, joy and faith to those around them. May they know that they are valued, loved and called to play an important part in the life of the Church today.

Amen.

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Virtual Parental Event: How to Support Your Child's Effective Handwriting & Transcription

- We would like to invite all parents and carers to join us for an online information session on Wednesday 25th November, from 4.30pm-5.00pm which will focus on the importance of effective written communication and the role that strong transcription skills play in a young person's success.

- Whilst technology and electronic devices are an increasingly important part of everyday life, the ability to communicate clearly through writing remains an essential skill. Strong transcription skills, including fluent handwriting, accurate spelling and high-quality presentation, support achievement across all subject areas and enable pupils to express their ideas with confidence and precision.

- During the session, we will explore why these skills continue to be so important in education and beyond, share the work we are doing in school to develop pupils' written communication, and provide practical advice for families on how they can support handwriting, presentation and transcription at home. This promises to be an informative and practical session, and we encourage families to attend and learn more about how, together, we can help every pupil become a confident and effective communicator.

Year 8 Pastoral Drop-In

- As part of our commitment to working closely with families, we are pleased to invite the families of Year 8 pupils to our Year 8 Pastoral Drop-In Morning on 23 November, from 8:30am to 10:00am.

- This informal session provides an opportunity to meet members of our House and Pastoral Teams, discuss how your child has settled into Year 8, and explore any additional support that may be beneficial following their first half term. Whether you would like to share a concern, seek advice, or simply learn more about the support available in school, staff will be available throughout the morning to help.

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- Families are welcome to attend at any point during the session, and refreshments will be available. We value the partnership between home and school and look forward to welcoming families as we continue to work together to ensure every young person is happy, supported and successful.

KS3 Raising Achievement Plan & Assessments

- Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 will complete their Key Stage 3 assessments between Monday 30 November and Friday 11 December. These assessments are an important opportunity for pupils to showcase the knowledge, understanding and skills they have developed throughout the term, whilst also helping teachers identify strengths and any areas requiring further development. In the lead up to the assessment period, subject teachers will provide pupils with guidance on assessment content, alongside revision materials and resources to support effective preparation.
- The next few weeks will also be an excellent opportunity for pupils to strengthen the study habits that will support them throughout their secondary education. Developing regular revision routines, making effective use of resources shared on Google Classroom and engaging in short, focused revision sessions can make a significant difference to confidence and performance. By building these habits now, pupils will be better prepared for future assessments and examinations. As always, we are grateful for the support families provide at home and encourage you to continue discussing revision and preparation with your child in the weeks ahead.



Year 10 & Year 12 Raising Achievement Plan & Assessments

- Last week, we also launched our Year 10 and Year 12 Raising Achievement Plan (RAP). This marks the first formal assessment cycle for pupils beginning their GCSE and A Level studies and provides an important opportunity for them to evaluate their progress, identify strengths and recognise areas for further development as they

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continue their courses.

- Over the next four school weeks, pupils will be supported through a structured programme of revision and preparation, helping them to develop effective study habits and build confidence in their learning. Assessments will take place during the first two weeks following the Christmas holidays, commencing on Monday 4 January and concluding on Friday 15 January.
- We encourage all Year 10 and Year 12 pupils to make full use of the revision materials, support sessions and guidance available to them over the coming weeks. Establishing strong revision routines now will help pupils approach these assessments with confidence and provide a solid foundation for future success in their GCSE and A Level studies.



Year 9 Residential to YMT: Youth Village

- We are delighted to offer our Year 9 pupils the opportunity to take part in a residential visit to YMT Youth Village, Consett, from 3rd to 5th March. This promises to be a fantastic experience, providing pupils with the opportunity to develop new friendships, build confidence, strengthen teamwork skills and take part in a range of exciting activities in a supportive and faith-filled environment.
- Places are limited to 65 students, and we anticipate significant interest in this opportunity. The cost of the residential is £125 per pupil, and families wishing to secure a place should sign up via Arbor at the earliest opportunity. We look forward to seeing many of our Year 9 students benefit from this memorable experience.



Advanced Notice: School Inset Day Friday 27th November

- A reminder to all families that school will be closed to pupils on Friday 27th November for a staff INSET Day.



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A reminder to use our house email addresses if you have any queries.

St Bernadette	St Catherine Laboure	St John Fisher	St Therese	Sixth Form
STM-StBQueries @stm.bwcet.com	STM-StCLQueries @stm.bwcet.com	STM-stjfqueries @stm.bwcet.com	STM-sttqueries @stm.bwcet.com	STM-SixthFormQueries @stm.bwcet.com

Please follow us on social media **[Facebook and Instagram]** where we share regular updates from our school community.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs J Turner

Head Teacher

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