



**ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**HORSE SHOES LANE SHELDON BIRMINGHAM B26 3HU**



**HEAD TEACHER: Sister Susan B. Phil (Ed) Hons**  
**DEPUTY HEAD TEACHER: Malcolm Tipping BA QTS Hons, NPQH**

**TEL/FAX: 0121 743 3289**

**Christ is the centre of our school community  
where we live, love and learn together**

## **WELCOME**

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to St Thomas More Catholic Primary School.

Our school is a caring, happy, well ordered Christian Community.

In the RE Inspection Report (February 2007) it states that St Thomas More is a good Catholic School with outstanding features.

“One of the major strengths of the school is the standard of pupils’ personal development and well being. This is outstanding and the result of excellent pastoral care provided by all adults.” Ofsted January 2007.

The time at primary school is probably the most important in your child’s life in terms of their personal development. We will provide a caring environment for your child, and give a wide range of balanced learning opportunities for all children to achieve high academic standards, to develop their God given potential to the full and grow into independent and responsible people.

I would be delighted to meet you, come and see us on any school day. Please ask any questions you need.

We look forward to developing an open, responsive, respectful relationship with you and we hope you and to your support as we embark on being the school of your choice.

***Sister Susan***

Head Teacher



Welcome	1
Mission Statement	3
School Aims	3
Who's Who Names of School Staff	4
Criteria of Admission	5
Parental Involvement	6
The School Curriculum	7
Religious Education	8
English	9
Mathematics and Science	10
Technology	11
History Geography and Music	12
Art PE and Extra Curricular Activities	13
Special Educational Needs	14
Gifted and Talented	14
Equal Opportunities	14
Discipline	15
Pastoral Care	16
Child Protection	16
Family Life	16
School Induction/Transfer	16
Homework	16
The School Day/Term	17
School Uniform	18
School Meals	19
Healthy Living	19
Water in School	19
Educational Visits	20
Health and Safety	20
Medicines and Accidental Injury	20
Absence from School	21
School Governors	22
Complaints Procedure	23
Pupil's Views	24

**CHRIST IS THE CENTRE OF OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY  
WHERE WE LIVE, LOVE AND LEARN TOGETHER**

At St Thomas More School we recognize the importance of our faith; that Jesus is present in all of us and because we are made in the image of God we live, love and learn together.

We place emphasis on every child developing their gifts and talents to their fullest potential by enabling their learning in every aspect of school life.

Guided by the teachings of the Church, we pray, learn, celebrate and love each other by using the gifts we have been given by God the Father, Son and Spirit.

**CATHOLIC ETHOS**

To develop the children's understanding and living of the Catholic faith so that they can recognize that God is at the centre of everything and experience God's love for them through prayer and in all different situations in their lives.

**LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Provide the highest standards of accommodation possible (stimulating, safe and tidy) in order to create a learning environment that reflects the Church's teaching regarding the dignity of the human person.

Ensure that the resources available for use are of good quality and are deployed to support the learning of each child.

**LEARNING COMMUNITY**

We are committed to developing a community where pupils, staff, parents, governors and parish work together to live out our Mission and put into practice the aims of our school.

We support our parents with their role as the first educators and carers of their children.

To encourage the children's participation in their own development by recognizing their views and wishes through consultation.

To enable them to become socially confident and independent, developing a feeling of personal self worth, with respect for self and others.

Be aware of everybody's efforts on behalf of the school and appreciate them.

Share and celebrate individual and group achievements.

**CURRICULUM**

To enable each child to achieve the highest possible standard of work and behaviour in relation to their age, ability and prior attainment.

To provide a curriculum that is broad and balanced that fulfills the National Curriculum requirements and Diocesan RE guidelines.

**STAFFING**

To appreciate that the Staff is the school's most important resource in meeting the needs of children.

To provide a suitable blend of staff in terms of quantity, experience and expertise.

To enable the staff to carry out their duties and responsibilities.

To provide for the Professional Development of all staff in meeting the needs of the individual and the school.

**FINANCE**

To plan realistically and use the Schools resources efficiently to ensure good value for money from the available funds.

To ensure that financial decisions are teaching and learning driven whenever possible.

**SCHOOL STAFF**

Head Teacher	Sister Susan
Deputy Head Teacher	Mr M Tipping
Reception	Miss T McGrory
Reception	Miss K Jefferies
Year 1	Miss C Reaney
Year 1/2	Mrs M Poole/Mrs M Maher
Year 2	Mrs K McGrory
Year 3	Mrs C McHugh/Mrs M O'Connor
Year 3/4	Mr P Johnson
Year 4	Miss S Cahill
Year 5	Miss E Cosgrove
Year 5	Miss J Gallagher
Year 6	Mrs M Bradburn
Year 6	Miss D Hallahan
	Miss H Delaney
	Mrs O'Connor
SENCO	Mrs A M Nicholls
Administrative Officer	Mrs D Patrick
Assistant Administrative Officer	Mrs A Sansom
Teaching Assistants	Mrs M Barrows
	Mrs D Doherty
	Mrs K Ford
	Mrs E Galbraith
	Mrs G Fitzgerald
	Mrs C Harris
	Mrs E Henry
	Mrs K Quinn
	Mrs J Rowles
	Mrs A Shakespeare
Building Site Supervisor	Mr P McNab
Cleaners	Mrs S Carr
	Mrs E McLoughlin
Midday Supervisors	Mrs R Andrews Mrs A Aulton,
	Mrs J Burrows, Mrs E Galbraith,
	Mrs M McGrory, Mrs J Harris,
	Mrs M Newman, Mrs K Quinn,
	Mrs J Rowles, Mrs A Sansom,
	Mrs S Slavinski
Catering Supervisor	Mrs R Stokes
Catering Assistants	Mrs S Boland
	Mrs T Kinsella

## CRITERIA OF ADMISSION

### CRITERIA OF ADMISSION

The School's Admission Number is 45

- Baptised Catholic children who are in the care of the local authority (looked after children) or provided with accommodation (e.g. children with foster parents). Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.
- Baptised Catholic children living within the Parish of St Thomas More who have brothers or sisters in the school at time of admission.
- Baptised Catholic children living within the Parish of St Thomas More.
- Baptised Catholic children living outside the Parish of St Thomas More who have brothers or sisters in the school at the time of admission.
- Baptised Catholic children living outside the Parish of St Thomas More.
- Non-Catholic children who are in the care of a local authority (looked after children) or provided with accommodation (e.g. children with foster parents). Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.
- Non-Catholic children who have brothers or sisters in the school at the time of admission.
- Non Catholic children.
- A map of the Parish of St Thomas More can be viewed in the School and the Church.

Parents wishing to apply for places in the Reception Class should complete the application form in the local authority booklet, following the instructions and closing dates indicated there and fill in our application form.

At other times of the year and for other year groups parents should apply direct to the Governors via the school.

Parents who are considering applying to St Thomas More School for admission of their child/children are welcome to visit. Please ring the school office in order to make an appointment.

### OVER SUBSCRIPTION

If there is over-subscription within a category, the governors will give priority to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest straight line distance measured from the front door of the school to the home address. Where the final place in a year group is offered to one of twins or triplets etc, the parent has to decide which child will take up the place. In a very small number of cases, it may not be possible to decide between the applications of those pupils who are the final qualifiers for a place (e.g. children who live at the same address or have the same distance measurement). If there is no other way of separating the applications according to the admission criteria and to admit both or all of the children would cause the legal limit to be exceeded, the Local Authority will advise the school if there is a tie for the final place and the governors can draw lots to decide which child is allocated the place.

#### Note 1

Children with a Statement of Special Education Needs that names the school must be admitted. This will reduce the number of places available to applicants.

#### Note 2

In all categories, for a child to be considered as a Catholic, evidence of Catholic Baptism or Reception into the Church will be required. Those who face difficulties in producing written evidence of Baptism should contact their Parish Priest.

#### Note 3

The definition of a brother or sister is:

- A brother or sister sharing the same parents;
- Half-brother or half-sister, where two children share one common parent;
- Step-brother or step-sister, where two children are related by a parent's marriage;
- Adopted or fostered children.

#### Note 4

The home address of a pupil is considered to be the permanent residence of a child. The address must be the child's only or main residence for the majority of the school week. Documentary evidence may be required. Where care is split equally between mother and father, parents must name which address is to be used for the purpose of allocating a school place.

## **PARENTS AND THE SCHOOL**

We value the involvement of parents in the life of our school and we aim to provide a welcoming atmosphere for all parents.

Education is the joint responsibility of the parents, teachers and children. We all need to work together to provide the best possible learning environment for all our children.

Reporting to parents takes the form of:

- Autumn term - parents' evenings to inform parents about the work and expectations for the coming year and to discuss targets.
- Spring term - parents' evenings to inform about progress.
- Summer term - annual written report with an opportunity to discuss the report and progress if required.

You are welcome to discuss any issues with us but it is helpful if an appointment is made. This helps us to ensure that we are available and that information is to hand. If an urgent problem arises, someone will always be available to see you.

Please come to the school on other occasions during the school year, including:

- Class Assemblies and Masses
- Themed Weeks
- Inspire Workshops
- Christmas and Easter Productions
- Celebration Meetings
- Sports day
- Open evening

We are always grateful for the voluntary help given by parents. There are numerous ways in which you can help in the class or with small groups of children.

## **LIFELONG LEARNING**

We actively encourage our parent population to take part in furthering their own academic achievements. The school acts as a placement centre for parents who wish to follow NVQ courses related to education.

## **PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION**

There is a thriving Parent Teacher Association, to which all parents of pupils are automatically members. The Association organises functions throughout the year, adding colour to the social calendar. It is a fundraising organisation, and the money it raises is used to buy educational equipment that the school would otherwise not be able to afford.

This year, the PTA is raising money to provide us with Interactive Whiteboards.

## THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

At St Thomas More School the staff and governors are continually working towards ensuring that the children receive the very best education they can provide. The children receive a strong Catholic education which permeates the whole school.

To promote excellence and enjoyment in the curriculum, St Thomas More School 'blocks' foundation subjects. This means that children will study History, Music, Geography, Art and Design, Technology in blocks of time throughout the term rather than every week. This promotes creativity and raises the children's enthusiasm. Children study Literacy and Numeracy every day and Religious Education, Information and Communication Technology, Science, Physical Education and Citizenship each week.

In line with the National Curriculum the children are taught subjects which are placed in the following categories:



### CORE

- Religious Education
- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Information Communication Technology

### FOUNDATION

- Design and Technology
- History
- Geography
- Music
- Art and Design
- Physical Education
- PHSE/Citizenship



The progress of all the children is monitored throughout their school life. Where children are assessed to have particular strengths or weaknesses, every effort is made to provide for the needs of these children within the framework of the curriculum.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

As a voluntary aided Roman Catholic School Religious Education is an integral part of our ethos, aims and relationships.

Our faith permeates all aspects of school life. We believe that links between home, school and parish are vital.



We use the curriculum strategy for Religious Education in the Catholic Primary Schools of the Archdiocese of Birmingham: Learning and Growing as the People of God. It makes learning about our faith lively, interactive and relevant.

There are numerous opportunities for cross curricular activities that link with and often stem from RE lessons. We use the Internet, we visit places of worship and we invite people to speak about their Faith.

The children come together for collective worship throughout the school week; this can be in full school assembly or in class assemblies.

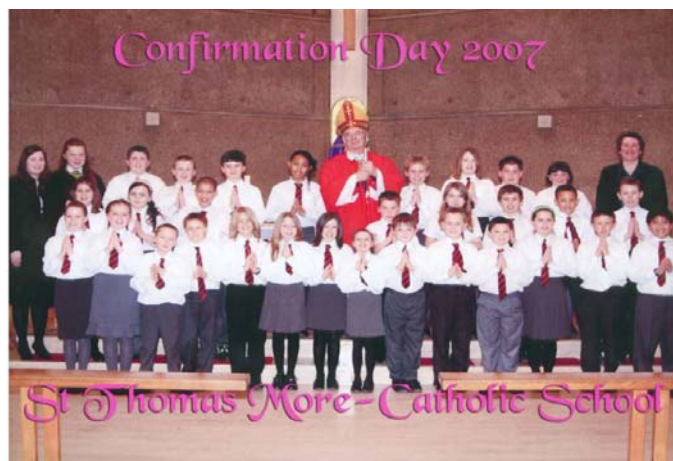
Every day children and staff participate in regular prayer.

Our Parish Priest regularly celebrates Mass in school. Each class has their own celebration of the Mass and the children are involved in the planning and participation of the celebration.

In addition, we celebrate Whole School Masses at the beginning and end of term, our school feast day, holy days of obligation and other significant occasions in St Thomas More Church.

In Year 3, Catholic children are prepared for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion and in Year 6 for Confirmation.

The children are supported in the preparation and celebration of the Sacraments by the school, parents and the parish.



## ENGLISH (LITERACY)

English is a vital way of communicating. Children are given many opportunities to use and develop literacy competence in a variety of ways including:

### **Speaking, listening and interaction:**

Through class or group discussions, tapes, DVD's, radio and television, role play and drama, collaborative work, listening to stories and poems and following instructions, describing events and experiences, drama activities, and taking part in assemblies.



### **Reading:**

A child's reading experience at our school will be wide and varied. The school offers a large selection of story books, poetry books, information books and computer programs. In addition the children are encouraged to bring in their own reading materials from home.

Our aim is to promote reading for pleasure, for when a child enjoys a book he/she is likely to want to read more.

Children are able to take books home and share their reading with someone from the family.

Children frequently listen to stories being read and they are encouraged to read their own written work to others.

### **Writing:**

Our aim is for all children to become independent writers, aware that there are many purposes for writing.

The children's desire to record experiences and their motivation to write for a particular audience are recognised and developed.

The content of the written work is the prime concern, though spelling, handwriting and punctuation are taught and discussed with the child as they are very important skills for written communication.



### **Spelling**

Through use of dictionaries and word banks, word lists for particular areas of study, spelling programme.

### **Handwriting**

Through pre-writing activities, study and practice of letter formation, attention to presentation.

The Literacy Hour is taught daily in all classes and provides a dedicated literacy teaching time for all children.

**MATHEMATICS**

Children are given many opportunities to acquire mathematical concepts and skills and apply these in practical situations.

The curriculum covers work in:

- Using and applying mathematics
- Number
- Shape, space and measures
- Handling data



A daily mathematics lesson, lasting 45 to 60 minutes, is taught throughout the school. Lessons are highly structured with 10 minutes mental maths, a teaching activity, independent or group work, and a plenary session to sum up the work covered.

The children are encouraged to see the relevance of mathematics in the world around them.

**SCIENCE**

Science is a core subject which stimulates children’s natural curiosity about our world.

The essential qualities of science are doing and investigating. Children will have first hand experiences that are reinforced by secondary resources, direct teaching and research.

Wherever appropriate, science will use a range of skills acquired through the study of other curriculum areas including Maths, English and ICT.

The key scientific skills of :

- Observing and investigating
- Making hypotheses
- Planning experiments
- Predicting outcomes
- Interpreting results
- Considering evidence and communicating finding in a variety of ways



are taught through the main areas of scientific enquiry: life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes that include electricity, forces and motion, light and sound and the Earth and beyond.

## INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

In information communication technology, children are expected to find things out, develop ideas and make things happen, exchange and share information, review, modify and evaluate work as it happens.

The children use a range of ICT tools and information sources to support their work in other subjects.

The school has a dedicated ICT Suite where all 30 computers in total are networked and linked to the Internet and each class uses the facilities on a rota basis. Each classroom has an additional two networked computers and one Interactive Whiteboard.

The school also benefits from links with Archbishop Ilsey Catholic Technology College, which provides us with technical support, training and resources.



## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Design and Technology is about providing opportunities for pupils to develop their capability, through combining their designing and making skills in order to create high quality products.

In design and technology children are encouraged to apply their knowledge and skills to solve practical problems safely by:

- Recognising opportunities
- Drawing on their own experience to generate a design
- Planning and making
- Evaluating processes and products
- Communicating ideas in different ways.

We hold regular INSPIRE workshops where parents can work with their children on a given task.



## HISTORY

The pupils are given opportunities to develop an awareness of the past. They learn about changes in every day life over periods of time.



Our approach involves children:

- growing in knowledge and understanding of history
- interpreting history
- using historical sources
- communicating their knowledge in a variety of ways
- understanding how the past has influenced the present
- increasing their understanding of the values and attitudes of others.

## GEOGRAPHY

Geography is taught in blocks through the academic year. Our teaching of geography promotes an understanding of the world that God has given to us. Children learn values such as respect for other cultures, and respect for the environment. Work includes the following elements of geography:

- geographical skills
- a knowledge and understanding of places
- physical, human, and environmental geography
- geographical enquiry
- helping pupils develop their own values and attitudes towards places and environments and learn how they can begin to influence change.

## MUSIC

Our work in this area of the curriculum encourages children to enjoy and understand music both as listeners and performers through:

- performing with voice or instruments
- listening to and appreciating the works of others
- composing
- appraising
- responding to a range of musical and non-musical starting points
- developing musical knowledge and understanding.



The children have the opportunity to learn to play the violin, viola and guitar. Parents are required to pay for these lessons.

**ART AND DESIGN**

Art and design is an area which enables children of all abilities to feel that they can achieve something of value.

All the children are encouraged to be creative and to try a variety of activities which are designed to provide opportunities to give expression to their own talents.

We aim to provide opportunities for children to learn skills and express themselves in a variety of media and forms, such as:

- painting
- printing
- drawing
- sculpture
- use of fabric
- sketching
- ICT



In the use of these media we encourage discussion, experimentation, interpretation and appreciation of art derived from the locality, the past and present and other cultures.

Where appropriate, local artists are involved in projects so as to share their expertise and provide additional creative stimulation.

Artistic creativity is included in many aspects of the curriculum and visual displays throughout the school stimulate interest and enjoyment.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

A variety of physical activities are offered to children throughout the school to give a balance of experience, enjoyment and to encourage fitness and the development of physical skills. These include:

- gymnastics
- athletics
- swimming
- movement and dance
- a range of games
- outdoor activities

All children are expected to take part unless excluded for medical reasons. A written note is required to confirm this.



**EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

We consider extra curricular activities as an important part of our school life. Teachers sometimes provide these activities in their own time, at lunchtimes or after school: -

Basketball  
Netball

ICT  
Football

Dance  
Literacy

Environment  
Gardening

## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

The term 'special educational needs' has a legal definition. Children have a learning difficulty if they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age.

Special educational needs could mean that a child has difficulties with:

- All of the work in school
- Reading, writing, number work or understanding information
- Expressing themselves or understanding what others are saying
- Making friends or relating to adults
- Behaving properly in school
- Organising themselves
- Some kind of sensory or physical needs which may affect them in school.

We aim to enable all pupils to develop their abilities, interests and aptitudes as fully as possible.

When special needs are identified we fully consult with parents. We record our children's special needs on the Local Authority's system of special needs forms and we liaise with other agencies, with parental consent, where appropriate, to set up support strategies.

Some children will require additional help and support over a long period of time, whilst, for others, support will be over a relatively short period and perhaps in one area of the curriculum.

The school has a special needs policy giving full details of policy provision and practice.

## **GIFTED AND TALENTED PUPILS**

We are aware of the needs of all our pupils and this includes those of a higher ability when compared with the majority of their peer group.

We are committed to providing a curriculum, which helps to develop these talents and abilities intellectually and socially, enabling pupils to attain high levels of achievement.

A register of Gifted and Talented pupils is maintained in school.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

It is part of the Christian ethos of the school that all pupils and members of staff be treated justly with regard to their equality in the eyes of God. Therefore, every attempt is made to carry out this policy within the school in every aspect of school life.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Discipline in the school follows Christian principles. The purpose is to develop the character of the children to respect their own person and belongings, and to respect other people and their property. This is summed up in our school code of conduct:

Care for yourself, care for others and  
care for your environment.

## **REWARDS**

At St Thomas More School our policy on rewards is to encourage good behaviour. As a School we aim to be consistent in our approach by:

- Recognising and highlighting good behaviour as it occurs
- Ensuring that all children are praised for good behaviour
- Ensuring that all criticism is constructive
- Explaining and demonstrating the behaviour we wish to see
- Encouraging children to be responsible for their own behaviour
- Letting parents know about their children's good behaviour
- Informing parents of their child's unacceptable behaviour
- Rewarding individual children and groups of children for behaving well



A structured reward system exists to maintain this policy. By the use of certificates, letters to parents, weekly celebration meetings and general assemblies the promotion of positive behaviour is encouraged and displayed.

## **SANCTIONS**

Any incidents of unacceptable behaviour occurring in school will be treated fairly but with firmness. Parents are informed when their children persistently show disregard for school discipline. Parents are expected to co-operate with the school in finding ways of assisting their child to develop into responsible members of the school community.

For serious misconduct a child may have to be excluded from school for either a fixed period of time or permanently. Parents would always be informed in writing. This sanction would always be reported to the Chairperson of the Governors. Parents may appeal against the exclusion of their child.

## **PASTORAL CARE**

Each teacher is responsible for providing a caring environment which fosters good adult/child relationships, and where children are encouraged to have respect for each other. Everything possible is done to ensure that children are happy in school and that they work to the best of their ability to achieve their full potential.

An anti-bullying policy is in place.

## **CHILD PROTECTION**

In matters of Child Protection the school follows the procedures laid down by the Local Authority and the Archdiocese. This includes the involvement of other agencies including Social Services, Health Services and/or the Police.

## **FAMILY LIFE**

The Governors have agreed to follow the Diocesan Family Life Programme "All that I am." This is designed to assist parents by: promoting a gradual understanding and healthy appreciation of self; of growth, of relationships with others; of emotions; love; marriage and family life, as well as a growing awareness of the facts of human reproduction.

Parents of pupils in Years 5 and 6 will be given the opportunity to see the programme of work each year.

## **SCHOOL INDUCTION**

Our carefully planned programme of induction for children starting school in Reception includes:

- Visits to school/invitations to school events
- Information meeting
- Individual appointments/dates for first day at school

## **SECONDARY TRANSFER**

At the age of 11 years, the majority of our children usually transfer to the Archbishop Ilesley Catholic Technology College or St Peter's Catholic School Solihull.

## **HOMEWORK**

We believe that a strong partnership between school and home is very important. Parents are rightly keen to support their children's learning at home.

The school has a policy of regular, timetabled homework, when children will take work home with them to complete. This is a good opportunity for parents to talk with their children about schoolwork. A copy of the Homework timetable will be sent to all parents at the start of each term

## THE SCHOOL DAY

### Foundation Stage: Reception

#### Key Stage 1: Years 1 & 2

8.45am	Morning session begins
12.00 noon	Morning session ends
1.15pm	Afternoon session begins
3.10pm	Afternoon session ends

#### Key Stage 2: Years 3, 4, 5 & 6

8.45am	Morning session begins
12.15pm	Morning session ends
1.15pm	Afternoon session begins
3.15pm	Afternoon session ends

## MORNING ARRIVAL IN SCHOOL

Parents and children are allowed on site from 8.30am. At 8.35am the bell will ring and parents must leave the premises. Members of staff are on duty. At 8.45 am another bell will ring and the children will line up and be collected by their class teacher.

## SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES 2008/09

<b>Autumn Term 2008</b>	<b>Spring Term 2009</b>	<b>Summer Term 2009</b>
Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> September to Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> January to Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> February	Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> April to Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May
<b>HALF TERM</b> Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> October to Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> October	<b>HALF TERM</b> Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> February to Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> February	<b>HALF TERM</b> Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> May to Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> May
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November to Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> December	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February to Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> June to Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July

All children are expected to wear school uniform and we ask for your co-operation in this matter. All items of clothing and footwear should be clearly marked with the child's name.

## **RECEPTION BOYS WINTER UNIFORM**

Grey trousers, white polo shirt, red jumper.

## **BOYS WINTER UNIFORM YEARS 1 TO 6**

Grey trousers, white shirt, red jumper and school tie.

## **RECEPTION GIRLS WINTER UNIFORM**

Grey skirt or pinafore dress or grey tailored school trousers, white polo shirt, red cardigan or jumper.

## **GIRLS WINTER UNIFORM YEARS 1 TO 6**

Grey skirt or pinafore dress or grey tailored school trousers, red cardigan or jumper and school tie.



## **BOYS SUMMER UNIFORM RECEPTION TO YEAR 6**

Long or short grey trousers, short sleeved white polo shirt or shirt.

## **GIRLS SUMMER UNIFORM RECEPTION TO YEAR 6**

Red and white gingham dress or short sleeved white polo shirt or blouse with a grey skirt.

Our Uniform Supplier is Clive Marks 2286 Coventry Road Sheldon.  
Telephone 0121 722 2286

## **PE KIT**

Black PE shorts, red school T-shirt (red school sweatshirt optional) and black pumps. Every child should have a PE bag suitable for holding his/her kit.

## **SCHOOL FOOTWEAR**

It is essential that pupils wear sensible, smart footwear to school. Traditional, flat black slip on, lace up or Velcro strap school shoes are the safest footwear for your children to wear in school. Fashion boots and shoes are not suitable for daily school wear due to playtime activities the children undertake.

## **ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT AND INFORMATION**

- (a) Swimming costume/trunks and towel.
- (b) In Key Stage Two children require an old shirt to protect their uniform during art lessons.

Watches are allowed but teachers cannot be responsible for minding them.

Nail varnish, stick on tattoos and jewellery must not be worn with the exception of one stud in each ear.

No extreme hairstyles please, (e.g. no bleaching, colouring etc), short hair should not be below grade two and all long hair should be tied back.

## SCHOOL MEALS

Children are encouraged to have a school meal which provides a balanced diet. Special diets can be catered for. Money for school meals (£1.65 per day) is to be paid in advance on Monday mornings.

**Credit is not available.** Money must be given to the class teacher in an envelope with the child's name on it.

Free school meals may be applied for if you are in receipt of Income Support. Forms are available at the school office.



A packed lunch may be brought in. All food must be in proper containers. Drinks must be in a small screw top PLASTIC container. In case of change over between dinners and packed lunches, a half term's notice in writing is required.

## HEALTHY EATING

We encourage the children to eat healthy foods. The government provides fruit for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 and we encourage the children in Key Stage 2 to eat fruit at morning break. We have received Birmingham's Award for Healthy Schools.

## WATER IN SCHOOL

Purified water coolers have been installed throughout the school so that every child has access to fresh, cooled water at all times during the school day. All children require a clear sports bottle labelled clearly with their name and class.

## MILK SCHEME

Subsidised school milk is available. Each term you are able to request that your child has a carton of milk. The cost is subsidised by the Milk Marketing Board. Children under five years of age are entitled to free milk.

## **EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM**

At the beginning of each school year, you will be required to complete an emergency contact form; the form also acts as permission for local visits (within the vicinity of the school).

## **CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

In order to keep the school records up to date, it would be appreciated if you would inform the school office of any change of address or telephone number.

## **EDUCATIONAL VISITS**

The school organises educational visits, which are many and varied. These usually link with the curriculum topics being studied.

Where activities of social or educational value take place, parents will be asked to provide a voluntary contribution towards the activity. Where sufficient contributions are not forthcoming, it may be necessary to cancel the activity, although we will try and keep any trip going as long as it is financially viable.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

For Health and Safety reasons parents are requested not to bring their dogs or cars into the school grounds. Please do not park cars in front of the Church Hall.

## **MEDICINES AND ACCIDENTAL INJURY**

The only medication, which can be brought into school, is medication prescribed by a doctor. Parents/Guardians will be asked to complete a permission form and medicine should be given to the school office.

If a child is taken ill or has an accident, every effort is made to contact the parents. In case of serious injury and the parents not being available, a member of staff will take the child to the hospital or their own doctor's surgery. **It is vital that we have up-to-date information about your address, work and a telephone number left in school, in case of an emergency is essential.**

## **ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL**

Parents are asked to inform the school of the reason of the child's absence as soon as possible, either by writing a note or by telephone.

Class registers are regularly inspected and any absences without explanation and persistent lateness will be noted.

Parents of pupils of compulsory school age are under a legal duty to send their children to school regularly and risk prosecution if they fail in this duty.

The school is required to account for all absences. The rate of unauthorised absence in the academic year 2005/6 was 0.7% and the rate of authorised absences was 5.7%.

Punctuality is very important. You need to make sure that your child attends school as regularly as possible, as every day really does make a difference.

If your child needs to leave school early, due to a medical appointment, please send a note to the School Office. All children on these occasions must be collected from school by a responsible adult.

Holidays during term time are discouraged as it does have an adverse impact on the children's education. Please take holidays during school holiday time.

When this is unavoidable an Application for Leave of Absence Form must be completed and returned to the School Office before the holiday commences.

## **SCHOOL BUILDING AND ICT FUND**

St Thomas More is a voluntary aided school. The Governors are responsible for funding 10% of all external repairs and improvements to the school, ICT projects, as well as providing the initial capital for any works they undertake. They have decided to ask parents of children at our school to make regular voluntary contributions to our school's building/ICT fund account. In line with diocesan guidance we have set a voluntary contribution of £10 per pupil per term or £15 per family per term.

Please note for every £1 you contribute to building work the government will put in £9.

If you are a tax payer and make your donation through the Gift Aid Scheme for every £1 you donate the Inland Revenue will return to the school an extra 28p.

### GOVERNING BODY

The Board of Governors at St Thomas More comprises of a wide range of people who bring different skills and experiences to this important role.

The Governors are jointly responsible for the conduct of the school ensuring that the best possible Catholic education is provided for the pupils.

There are currently sixteen Governors, lead by the Chairperson, **Mr J Harris**.

Our parent Elected Governors are:

**Mrs D Carville**

**Mrs S Nighingale**

**Mr R Wilcox**

**Mrs P Wright**

What is the precise role of the Governing Body and how does it benefit the success of your children's education and personal development?

The answer can be summarised in three sections –

**To provide a strategic view** – The Governors focus on the key issues of raising standards of achievement, establish high expectations and promote effective teaching and learning.

**To act as a critical friend** – Critical in the sense of its responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance, but a friend because it exists to promote the success of the school and its pupils.

**To ensure accountability** – The Head Teacher reports to the Governors on the school's performance in all areas. In their turn the Governors are answerable to the Diocesan authority, parents and Local Authority for the overall performance of the school.

To achieve these aims the Governing Body meets at least once a term and deals with specific subjects through a number of sub-committees.

These are:

Building Health and Safety

Mission Curriculum and Admissions

Staffing and Finance

Governors undertake regular training courses provided by the Local Authority to ensure that the latest educational practice is applied in their role.

Beyond the practical framework we have outlined above it is clearly the sincere aspiration of all the Governors to lend their time and skills to the ongoing success of the school and the affirmation of its unique Catholic character.

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

In the first instance, parents should discuss any problems with the child's class teacher and then the Deputy Head Teacher. Most problems can be sorted out this way.

If you are still dissatisfied, there are three levels at which complaints could be considered.

### **1. The Head Teacher**

If after talking to your child's class teacher and the Deputy Head Teacher you are still worried about something concerning your child at school you should first ask to discuss the difficulty with the Head Teacher. You can do this by telephoning the head, writing a letter or making an appointment to meet.

It may be suggested to you by the Head Teacher that it would be more appropriate for you first to talk with another senior member of staff or one of the teachers.

### **2. The Governors**

Most complaints will have been resolved by this stage but, if you are still unhappy, the next step is a formal complaint to the Governing Body in writing.

Send in the letter to the Chairperson of Governors at the school. Try to keep a copy of the letter: it may help you later. The Governors will let you know who will investigate your complaint and how they will deal with it.

### **3. The Diocese**

If you are still dissatisfied, you can ask the diocese to carry out an investigation.

You should write to:

The Executive Secretary  
The Diocesan Schools Commission  
61 Coventry Road  
Coleshill  
Birmingham

RE requires a lot of understanding and thought since the Bible isn't always easy to interpret. Luckily our amazing RE teachers in Year 6 guide me and support me so I can fully understand the class task. One of the RE teachers is our Head teacher, Sister Susan, who also supports Year 6 for their Confirmation which is always very successful and meaningful. RE also provides excellent opportunities for meditation which helps us to understand our lessons in a deeper way.

At St. Thomas More School you will be sure of a great education and will make lots of new friends too. Our mission statement tells us that we need to live, love, and learn together and we try to remember this every day in our actions.

Literacy at St Thomas More is fantastic for everyone, We have covered a whole host of different types of writing. Something that I particularly enjoyed was story writing, this gave me a chance to let my imagination soar and put my author skills to the test. My teacher Miss Hallahan helped me improve my story writing dramatically by giving me a great range of amazing ideas.

The Computer suite has 30 computers which children use to learn ICT skills and each class has at least one computer to use daily in their class work. The computer suite is also used for the School Newspaper. For the past two years the newspaper has entered a competition in the Times Educational Supplement and we have received a Commendation for the second year running. It was hard work but lots of fun and we learnt lots of new ICT skills and learn to work as a team—we are often featured in the local press too!

Our outside environment is enriched by a beautiful garden area where we can sit and play in the water and sand, play board games and meet with our friends to talk. We all have the opportunity to grow lovely plants and vegetables for the garden and Mrs Shakespeare helps us. Reception have their own playground with a play house and lots of play equipment including bikes for exercise. There are another two playgrounds for Infants and Juniors with games painted on the ground to encourage us to play together. We can play football and running games to keep us fit too! There are grassed areas and we use these in the summer months. We recently had a gazebo built where we can have lessons in the fresh air.

Our school has bought an interactive whiteboard for every class. The Interactive whiteboards have many exciting facilities such as allowing children to take part more fully in lessons, they can even become teachers as one of the Year 6 classes attempted recently and it was great fun. The interactive whiteboards improve our lesson because they enable the teacher to go on to the internet to find many interesting and useful websites around the world. It also makes lessons more interesting and learning easier.

Numeracy is a great subject. We have been learning about measurements, mean mode median and range, percentages and fractions. I enjoy measurements and Mr Tipping and Miss Hallahan are great maths teachers.

Music is a particularly popular lesson in school. We have a visiting viola and violin teacher and a guitar teacher who come in weekly to teach children from reception upwards. I really like music and in our weekly assemblies and school masses I play the whistle, recorder and guitar. This Year our music teacher Mrs Morgan's organised a CD production company to come in and record our voices. We also have class assemblies were we are given a theme from a parable to act out in front of our parents and the whole school, these are thought provoking and give a fuller meaning to our RE lessons.