

Aspire to be More

Dear Parents/Carer

As we come to the end of this term and academic year it is a time to reflect on all that has been achieved in the past academic year.

This year has been challenging like no other in the history of the school and modern education! This newsletter is testament to how, as a school community, we have risen to the challenges put in our path and found a way to overcome and succeed. We are all proud of the way in which students continue to adopt to changing regulations and requirements. We continue to pray that next year will not be disrupted and that we can return to the a more normal school life. I would like to congratulate students on the way they have conducted themselves during the end of year examinations, and particularly for the way Year 11 & Year 13 students have coped with TAGS and the ongoing assessments they have sat in the last three months

Although, due to the restrictions, we have not been able to hold some of the whole school events we had originally planned, this newsletter is testament to the fact that staff and students have found the resilience and ingenuity to continue with a broad and rich array of activities.

We look forward to seeing our Year 13 and 11 students at results days, and to meeting our new Year 7 students at our Summer School in the week commencing Monday 23rd August.

It is at this time of year that we say a fond farewell to a number of staff. Mrs Jayne Beardmore has been a loyal servant of the school for 27 years and has been PA to three Headteachers. We wish her a happy and healthy retirement. Mrs Rowley our Assistant Headteacher, is moving to St Gregory's as Deputy Headteacher although she will continue to be part of our MAC and we wish her every success in her new role. Mrs Lewis (LSP/Family Lead), Mr Bruss (Music/ ICT Technician), Mr Arif (English Teacher) and Miss Hopkins (2nd in RE) are also all moving on to promotions and new opportunities; we thank them for their commitment to St Thomas More and wish them good luck for the future

I would like to wish the whole community a peaceful and relaxing summer holiday. I am sure I will be in touch regarding government guidelines but, as it stands at the moment, all students return on Monday 6th September at 9am.

Mr Rayner
Headteacher

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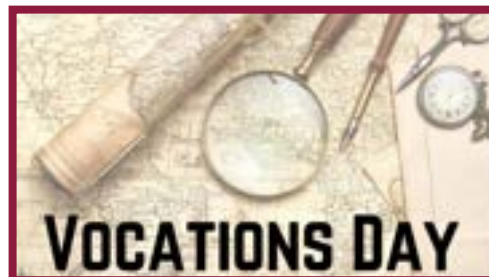
Catholic Life

Vocations Day

Y9s had a wonderful opportunity to take part in our annual Vocation's Day. We welcomed a variety of speakers in to school to deliver sessions that covered all areas of vocations.

The students reflected on talks led by relatable role models and we are so grateful for the speakers that gave up their time to be with our students.

We also included some lovely prayer stations led by Kenelm Youth Trust that were an activity for all students throughout the day.



Quotes from students following the day:

"Take a leap of faith"

"Fascinating and inspirational"

"Follow your dreams"

"The day boosted my confidence"

"I now know how to follow my vocation and ask God for guidance"

"Taught me how to be myself"



Students Riley, Angel, Clayton and Charlotte (7MK) joined together to combine extensive research, and they chose to present their findings by creating a video which was a mixture of live action, commentary and computer automated speech. This was a fantastic piece of work and clearly a creative and original take on group work and presentation. Students were able to share their knowledge and understanding of the RE in the World unit by transferring skills learned in other subjects, which is always great to see. The hard work of the team was clear and was a joy for their teacher to witness. All students received credible marks for their efforts and this is something that the RE department look forward to implementing more often in the future.



RE at STMCA

Quo Vadis and RSE

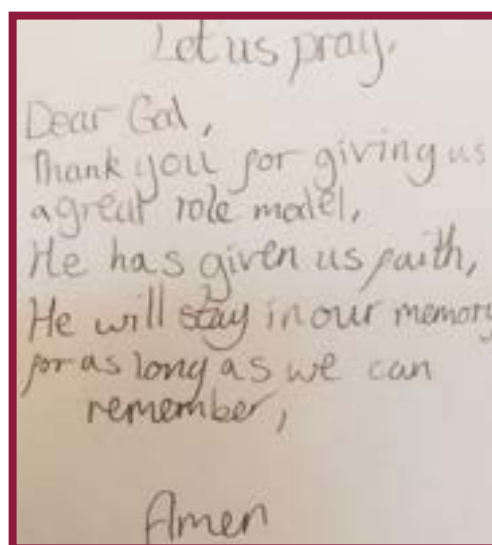
This year, RSE Day is centred around the theme of 'faces' where we have taken time to reflect on and celebrate diversity in our community! This has been interlinked with our RSE units currently being studied by all KS3 students which students are learning about themselves, others and the world around them, with a focus on healthy relationships, vocations and where we are now as well as where we are going in life. All

KS3 students are studying RSE through the TenTen 'Life to the Full' program which delivers RSE from a Catholic perspective. In addition to this, year 9s have the opportunity to explore the Quo Vadis program which reflects on our lives this year, celebrating the positives, and looking at the challenges and how we can cope with anxieties and worries.



St Thomas More's Feast Day

As a school, we have celebrated St Thomas More's Feast Day (22nd June 2021). All students in years 7-10 have explored how St Thomas More links to our lives and our studies in RE, with a focus on his patronages of families and law. We have had some beautiful work complete by year 5s on the transition day, as well as year 7s and 8s at St Thomas More, who have created stained glass window designs and written prayers to reflect on St Thomas More.



Honour Students -Elevate



The Honours students in Y7, 8 and 9 were involved in a really exciting Study Skills Day on Wednesday 23rd June lead by the educational company 'Elevate'. The day covered study skills, memory skills and mnemonics. 93% of Honours students indicated on their feedback forms that they found it an incredibly useful session, and that they would recommend

the programme to others. Our Honours students represented the school in a very positive light and we were very proud of how well they engaged with the programme. We will be running further events with 'Elevate' in the new academic year.



Some of the feedback from students is included below.

"I would rate the overall programme a 10/10! I learned that taking notes is the most efficient way to revise and minds maps are important too" Rebecca Y7

"I would rate the session 10/10 because it helps us with revision." Sana Y8

"I think that this programme was really good. It gives you good ideas on how to develop your revision. 10/10!" Jakub Y8

"One of the most important things I learned today was how to arrange notes and how important they are. The session was useful, fun and time well spent." Holly Y8

Rising Stars have been involved in an intensive programme of activities since returning to school. Rising Stars Students in Y7, 8, 9 and 10 take part in weekly Academic workshops covering Maths, English, Science, RE and Careers, as well as a weekly pastoral session. Y10 Rising Stars also took part in oracy 'Talk the Talk' workshops in June to develop their public speaking and oracy skills. Y8 and 9 Rising Stars are invited on an exciting Outward Bound Trip at the start of July, and Y7 and 10 Rising Stars are invited to reward events in July to reward all Rising Stars students for their hard work and dedication whilst on the programme.



Honours students have been working extremely hard since the programme launched in February, completing weekly competitions and a range of interesting tasks and opportunities through the Honours Team. There is an interesting programme of Honours Masterclasses which started on Wednesday 23rd June, covering topics such as 'Economics', 'Ancient Aliens' and 'Making Money with Maths', which are available for Honours students to sign up to after school on Wednesdays.

English Update



Stoke It Up!

We are extremely proud of our full involvement with the English Excellence Partnership this academic year. Students have engaged with the Stoke It Up reading project; an initiative designed to support students across the City collaboratively reading one billion words.

Gareth Jones Award for Excellence

In a further accolade to the City, students across all year groups have created unique and individual poems, which have been entered for The Gareth Jones Award for Excellence. Within these inspirational pieces of poetry, pupils creatively explore their enthusiasm and love for Stoke on Trent.



Online Masterclasses

Furthermore, despite current restrictions, pupils have had the opportunity to collaborate with other schools across the City, having attended a sequence of English Language Masterclasses taking place on Saturday mornings, via Zoom. Both Year 10 and Year 11 pupils dedicated their time to participate in these sessions which were delivered by examiners; directly impacting on pupil progress.

Students have also been exposed to lecture style sessions delivered by experts within the English Department at STMCA. Topics covered included the construction of gender, the role of the author in influencing our interpretation of a text and the depiction of females in literature across time. Both KS4 and KS5 students appreciated this insight into further education.

English Update

EEP Masterclasses

'Through attending the English Excellence Masterclass, it allowed me to have an insight into the ways how to approach Language questions 4 and 5 in a way which is adapted and checks all the boxes when it comes to the mark scheme. I believe this to be extremely beneficial for me as it allows me to be able to understand what is needed in my responses to reach the upper grade boundaries. Also, our work will always be marked, and we have a direct response from exam markers which is crucial as it allows us all to have specific information on what we need to do achieve the best possible grades. To summarise, I believe the English Excellence Masterclass sessions are necessary to allow students to reach the highest possible grades' (Year 10 student, Lewis)

'I attended an English Excellence Masterclass which allowed me to look in detail at what is expected in an English language paper and what I must include to get the most possible marks. In the sessions we looked at how to answer a Language paper 1 question 4 and 5 as well as paper 2 question 5. In the classes we went over the mark scheme, model responses and how we can improve our work to achieve higher grades. Within the sessions we also looked at how we should tailor our answer so it is relevant to the question, and we had to produce our own answer based on the work we did that session which would be marked by the person delivering our class and individual feedback was given including WWW and EBI via email. Overall, I found the sessions to be very beneficial for my English work as I struggle completing a language paper and these lessons have shown me what to include, how to go about answering the questions and how to apply them to my own work' (Year 10 student, Anna)

STMCA Literacy Festival

To celebrate our whole-school love of reading, we hosted a Literacy Festival for our MAC primary schools, in which Year 5 pupils were treated to an exciting programme of events, including talks from external speakers from Keele University and Stoke on Trent Library. Students were also invited to the book signing event for 'The Clear Vision' a fiction text co-written by four of our male students in Years 9 and 10. The event was thoroughly enjoyed by all and pupils were delighted to receive bespoke book bags.



Maths

Timetable Rock Stars Yearly Results

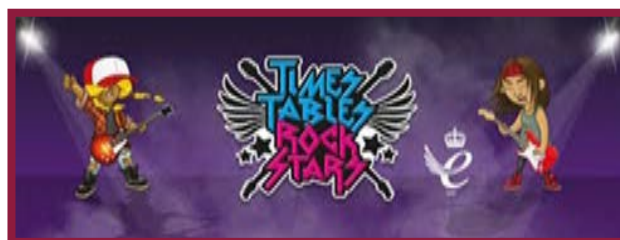
Well done to this years Rock Star Champions

Year 7

Esah
Hasan
Muhammad

Year 8

Noorin
Shaina
Liam



Hegarty Maths

Summer Term Results:

Congratulations to these students and well done to all students embracing online learning! Students have adapted brilliantly to online learning with lots of questions being answered on Hegarty throughout the school. Here are the Hegarty Heroes for each year so far this half term.



Year 7 Hegarty Heroes		
	Name	Questions Answered
1	Muhammad -Zayan	752
2	Michelle	356
3	Miryam	331

Year 8 Hegarty Heroes		
	Name	Questions Answered
1	Shaina	2899
2	Zahi	695
3	Rihanna	359

Year 9 Hegarty Heroes		
	Name	Questions Answered
1	Shayan	1349
2	Alishba	524
3	Sahil	360

Year 10 Hegarty Heroes		
	Name	Questions Answered
1	Bilal	358
2	Kevijan	349
3	Cole	299

Coming soon

Maths will be running the following masterclasses:

Maths in Chess
Making Money with Maths
Ciphers and Code



Aspire to be More

Physicist of the Year!



On Tuesday 29th June The Ogden Trust held the School Physicist of the Year Awards 2021. **Sharliga** won the award from STMCA this year.

Her commitment to her studies during lockdown was exemplary. Sharliga enjoys all aspects of Physics and is always keen to know more. She has a keen eye for detail and an inner curiosity that will ensure she will be successful in

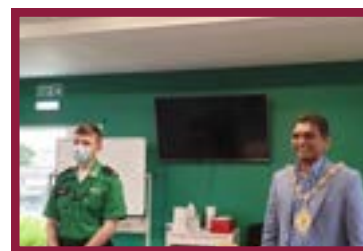
whatever she chooses to put her mind to!



St Johns Ambulance

Student **McKenzie** was personally thanked by the Lord Mayor, as he represented the youth St John's Ambulance team, for all the work they have done through the pandemic and how they have supported the local communities, and to also get a better understanding of what the organisation does.

We are very proud of all of your hard work and dedication, McKenzie.



Off to America

We are delighted to share with you that 4 of our students will be off to America to coach football as part of the David Campbell Soccer School Programme on offer here at St Thomas More Catholic Academy. The students featured in the Sentinel newspaper

"Daniel, Zain, Alex and Julia all study in the Trinity Sixth Form at St Thomas More Catholic Academy in Longton.



And alongside their other subjects, they have been taking a coaching qualification through the David Campbell Soccer School.

On the back of the partnership, all four have now secured paid work placements at U.S. summer camps. They will be spending 11 weeks coaching a range of different age groups.

Eighteen-year-old Julia, from Norton, said: "I'm very excited. I set off on June 3 and will be going to Baltimore.

"I've always been interested in different sports, especially football. When the opportunity came around, I thought I would have a go."

Science

During British Science Week, we had a virtual visitor in year 7. The principal physicist from local company, Lucideon, talked about the equipment on the Mars rover, Perseverance.



Ceramics experts in Stoke on Trent developed very accurately calibrated coloured tiles that are mounted on the rover. The 'Mastcam-Z' camera on the rover uses the tiles as a reference to ensure that the images that are sent back to Earth are showing the same colours that human eyes would see if we were there in person.

We learnt about how our eyes perceive colour and the different factors that can affect this such as the light source and surface reflectance.

Practical Science Lessons: Heart dissection

As part of the A Level Biology course students are required to complete twelve required practicals. Evidence of their work is recorded in lab books and is assessed against specific standards. Students have to gain evidence of mastery of each standard if they are to achieve the practical endorsement. This is a heart dissection. Students have to complete the dissection and identify the key parts of the organ. They do this verbally to the teacher and with labels.



CREST Awards

Some of our students have been working hard on their CREST Award projects.



The Year 7 pupils have enjoyed working on their Bronze Award by making soap, bath bombs and lip gloss and some Year 9 pupils have been completing their Silver Award by investigating solid shampoo, lipstick and toothpaste.

They have all showed great dedication and have used good problem-solving skills as well as making some beautiful products too, including jelly soap!



Super Sewer Session

On 23rd March Year 8 students took part in a Super Sewer Session run by Severn Trent. The students learned about the water cycle and sewage treatment and were surprised to see how fatbergs build up in the drains. They also thoroughly enjoyed the 3 Ps song! The session ended by all students pledging to ensure that they contribute to

keeping the sewers clean by being careful about what they put down the drain.

Science

British Science Week Competition

During British Science Week, we ran a competition challenging students to build a Rube Goldberg Machine.

Rube Goldberg was an American cartoonist, sculptor, author, engineer, and inventor, and his work is an example of the blending of art and science. Goldberg began his career as an engineer, and later became a



cartoonist who drew elaborate illustrations of contraptions made up of pulleys, cups, birds, balloons, and watering cans that were

designed to solve a simple task such as opening a window or setting an alarm clock. Interestingly, Goldberg only drew the pictures, and never built any of his inventions. However, these pictures have since served as inspiration for makers and builders who want the challenge of making wild inventions to solve everyday.

The winner of the competition was Aleena in 9RL who built a fabulous contraption using dominoes, cardboard tubing, string and a balloon to switch on a light up a toy



Medpath

Students in Year 9 had the opportunity to complete the Medpath programme which is run by Keele Medical School and aimed at any student considering a potential career within Medical Sciences. The programme extends further in Year 10 and Year 11 to form a comprehensive programme for students who wish to investigate such careers.



"I took part in the Year 9 Medpath sessions. The sessions were very engaging and helped me confirm that I want a career in health care"
Gracie

"I participated in the year 9 Medpath sessions. They involved case studies, problem based learning and an escape room. I enjoyed the sessions a lot!" *Melissa*

We look forward to running the Medpath programme again next year.

Well done: A fantastic piece of homework from Rebecca in Year 7 as part of the Science Honours programme. Rebecca chose to make a molecule ferris wheel and a model of an atom!



PE

Tennis Club



building on the skills they have been learning in their PE tennis lessons. Mr Stonier is looking forward to building on the previous competition successes of his tennis teams with this new group of students moving forward next summer.

Tennis club has been in full flow since the start of the summer term on different nights for different year groups. Mr Stonier has been encouraging students from his tennis lessons to attend after school tennis club with Mr Blank and himself. Here they have been developing their technique and



Essential Life Skills Project—Year 8 & 9



The Essential Life Skills project has been run through Stoke City with some of our Y8 and Y9 students. The sessions are after school and have been designed to develop a range of skills including; teamwork, leadership and communication. Here you can see the course leader from Stoke City Callum Feeney discussing ideas with our students. Callum is also a former student from St Thomas More Catholic Academy.



Dance Club



The Michelle Moss Dance Academy have been working with our Y7 students this term using the hip hop style of dance for the after school club.

There has been a mix of girls and boys attending every Monday and all have been thoroughly enjoying the experience.

PE

Athletics Club

Athletics club took place after school on different nights for different year groups from Easter until May half term. Students participated in a range of athletic events each week. All students spent the half term in PE lessons going through a structured carousel of events including the 100m sprint, 800m, javelin, shot put, discus, long jump, high jump and triple jump. Students were then given the opportunity to attend after school clubs to develop those skills further.



Year 8 Cricket

In PE lessons this term the Y8 students have been developing a range of cricket skills with Mr Stonier. Those skills have included the long barrier fielding techniques, over arm and under arm throwing techniques, bowling actions and batting positions. The students have also been working in small conditioned games and applying those developed skills into game situations. All PE staff are hoping that next summer we will be able to compete as a school in city cricket festivals, having developed a range of skills in PE lessons.



Football

The Y10 students have been accessing a football club this term within their year group bubble. All students have been welcome to attend. The after school session has been ran by the Stoke City Coaching in the Community staff and has been well attended throughout the term.

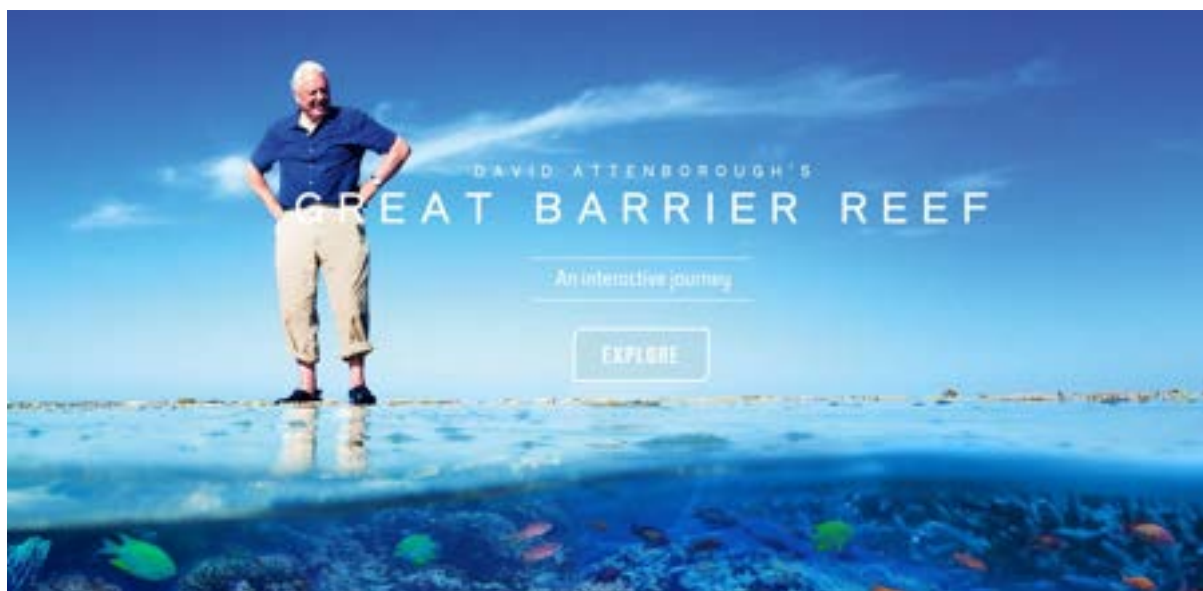
The students have been developing a range of skills and playing in conditioned games to focus on developing those skills further.

Stoke City community club

Our strong links to Stoke city football club, this term have also meant that putting on a late football session from 5-6pm for all students in years 7-10. This club has been very well received by our students at St Thomas More. It has been a great opportunity for students to come along to play football, improving their skills and fitness levels in a friendly environment on our state of the art 3G facility at St Thomas More.

Geography

Well, even though we have had lockdown and restrictions upon restrictions, it has not stopped the geography department venturing out in to the great wide world. Yes, we haven't and couldn't have gone on our fieldtrips to London, Chester Zoos or the amazing Carding Mill Valley. But, ingeniously, the geography department and its students have used the amazing new tool of Microsoft Teams to explore many a different place. For example, the year 8s have managed to explore the great Barrier Reef with the famous Sir David Attenborough as a guide, investigating, the amazing diverse ecosystem, the threats and the solutions. Why not explore it yourself. Just type in the link below and off you go.
<https://attenboroughsreef.com/>



While the year 8s have been exploring the Coral reefs, some of our year 7s over the year have been investigating the pollution around the school and giving some amazing ideas on how to prevent it. As well as this, they have been trying to stop the rising tide of the sea and oceans with this game which was posted on their team (<https://www.latimes.com/projects/la-me-climate-change-ocean-game/>)

As well as the year 7s venturing out in to the school grounds, so have the year 12. The amazing group of A-level students have investigated infiltration rates around the ground and presented their findings as a group with some detailed analysis. Secondly, all of them explored the school grounds in search of trees, not to hug them or talk to them (even though one student actually did, we will not name names though as he will be embarrassed) but to calculate the carbon stored in St Thomas More's trees. Both of the in school activities will help the A-level students to complete their independent study in year 13.

History

Year Nine History: Civil Rights Movement in the USA – a photographic History scrapbook.

During our study of the momentous 20th century, a theme we consistently explore is the search for rights and freedoms. The work of Year Nine students when looking at the incredible struggle for Civil Rights in the USA, has been superb. Here are just a few examples of independently researched and produced work.

Year Nine "Roll of Honour"

Stacey

Abiha

Millie

Afreen

Lydia

Jasmine

Lianne

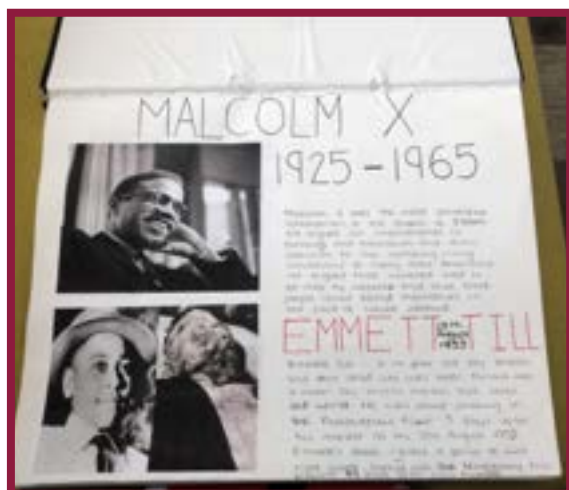
Georgia

Mujahidah

Morgan

Raman

Jayden



Art Update

It's been a really exciting year in the art department.

British Ceramics Biennial Festival workshops

During the Lockdown, we were approached by the British Ceramics Biennial Festival Education group to take part in their Foundations Project. Since returning to school, students in Year 8 have taken part in workshops after school exploring the chemistry of clay. Included in the workshops has been creating glazes, comparing different types of clays, shrinkage rates and even digging for our own clay from the school grounds to create work with. Students have also worked with the artists Joanna and Emma in delivering clay sessions to year 8 classes during a special workshop day. Our BCB ceramics Yr 8 Team have been incredible! This opportunity will continue into Year 9 and we hope to have more students joining in.



As a part of the workshops, students visited Duchess China 1888 in Longton to see the ceramics process in action. As you can see, they had a fabulous time. They were shown the whole production process from start to finish and were even presented with choosing a piece of pottery tea pots, mugs and ceramic teddy bears as souvenirs of their experience.



Sapphire wrote her own account about the experiences.

'In the ceramics club every Wednesday, there are many amazing experiences that I would never have gotten before. We work on chemical experiments with different clays with Emma, Joanna and Natalie, people from the BCB company. This is all to prepare for a festival in September that promotes the work we've done with ceramics. It's an amazing opportunity.



The work is all being prepared for the BCB Festival which takes place at Spode in September as a celebration of the rich cultural heritage of ceramics that we have in Stoke-on-Trent.

As part of the curriculum Year 8 students have made clay gargoyles inspired by Gothic Architecture.



In the Art Department, a group of talented Year 9 artists attended a series of after school workshops to explore printing techniques. This example by Abiha, demonstrates the carving and layering techniques of poly-printing. All of the students thoroughly enjoyed the experience and were able to explore skills that are usually covered at GCSE level. The results are brilliant!



MFL - A Wealth of Languages!

This term our pupils have been expressing themselves in a range of languages. As well as the French learned in class our talented students have written poems in a language they perhaps speak in their community or in a language in which they are interested. These were wonderful to read and I hope you appreciate the selection we have chosen.

Many of our students have an interest in languages such as Korean and Russian and are attempting to learn the basic vocabulary and phrases. In conjunction with Routes into Languages and GCHQ we have offered our Honours students the opportunity to explore languages not usually taught in schools. The feedback from the pupils has been very positive!

Die Wind

Afrikaans:

Dit sak sy tande in my bleek vel in, die wind
steek my brose liggaam deur,

dit was koud, alhoewel die donkerte my
soos 'n serp om die nek van 'n baba
omhels,

honger omvou my swak en brose figuur
en moegheid verdrink my soos 'n oseaan

The Wind

English translation:

It sinks its teeth into my pale skin, the wind
pierces my fragile body,

it was cold, though the darkness embraced
me like a scarf around a baby's neck,

hunger envelops my weak and fragile figure
and fatigue drowned me like an ocean

Katelyn – Year 9

MOTHER TONGUE

أَبَدًا دَائِمًا وَسَلِّمْ صَلِّ مَوْلَايَ
كُلِّهِمُ الْخَلْقِ خَيْرِ حَبِيبِكَ عَلَى
وَالثَّقَلَيْنِ الْكَوْنَيْنِ سَيِّدُ مُحَمَّدٍ
عَجَمٌ وَمِنْ عَرَبٍ مِنَ الْفَرِيقَيْنِ

TRANSLATION

(O) My Lord! Send salutations and greetings forever upon Your beloved (A) who is the best of all creations. (The beloved Prophet) Muhammad (A) is the Leader of both worlds and both creations (man and jinn); and of both groups, Arabs and non-Arabs.

OTHER TONGUE

J'aime le prophète Muhammed (Peace Be Upon Him). Ses cheveux ondulés sont noirs et son visage brille au clair de lune. Je n'ai jamais connu quelqu'un d'aussi beau que toi.

Il est comme le soleil éclairant la voie pour les musulmans. Nous suivons son chemin parce que lui, (Peace be Upon him), est le meilleur de la création. Nous t'aimons Prophète Mohammed (Peace be upon Him).

Samaayah – Year 8

STEM week at St Maria Goretti

Students in Years 4 and 5 at St Maria Goretti enjoyed a science workshop during their STEM week this month. The Year 4 students solved a crime using chromatography while the Year 5 students carried out a scientific investigation to determine the most effective indigestion remedy.



Fab in the Lab



Year 5 students at our MAC Primary Schools have taken part in fortnightly science sessions delivered by the Science department at St Thomas More. It has been a fabulous opportunity for all of our MAC Primary Schools to take part in the same sessions and to see (virtually) practical science in the labs at St Thomas More as well as taking part in practical activities in the classroom. Some students have even

carried out their own investigations at home. We look forward to welcoming these super scientists to St Thomas More in the future!

Word for You Club



We have been having fun at the lunchtime Word For You Club, with science and craft activities, all pointing to God, such as growing flowers, origami jumping frogs, flapping doves, 'capillary action flowers' and 'inseparable books.'

It includes listening to the UCB Radio bible verses such as: 'Nothing can ever separate us from God's love.' Romans 8:38



Princes Trust

Year 10 Princes Trust students have been taking part in some team building activities. Students were set the task of building a structure using spaghetti and marshmallows. Students really engaged and there was big competition over who could make the biggest structure.



St Gregory's Forensics Workshop

All St Gregory's Year 4 students joined us this morning for a forensic workshop where they examined evidence using microscopes and successfully identified the chief suspect for a bicycle theft.

Words To Live By

Year 10 Health and Social Care class were asked to make a "words to live by" collage as an example of how art therapy can be used to support good mental health. I have attached some pictures.

These were the instructions they were given:

Art therapy is a blended field of therapeutic practice that combines art and psychology, by utilising the creative process, artistic techniques and external artwork to support individuals to develop self-awareness, explore emotions and address unresolved conflict or trauma.

As a teen, you may experience harsh, judgmental environments where you don't feel that you can be yourself. This can lead you to suppress your real character/ personality to avoid censure from peers, and it's for this reason that it's essential for teens to identify their core values and identify who they think they are.

It is crucial to create coping strategies that you can come back to over time, and to understand that ideas, feelings, and values will change with experience.

The 'Words to Live By' activity helps you to visualise your core values through a creative collage.



Careers and the World of Work

STMCA students have adapted incredibly well to the new ways of working and continue to prepare for the World of Work, taking advantage of opportunities offered throughout school. Many are using Teams, Chat and year group Channels to request and receive up to date Careers and Labour Market Information, advice about Further and Higher Education and personalised guidance. This Online, 'Covid-proof' strategy is soon to be improved further by the introduction of Unifrog: A Careers platform to allow full access to careers provision and information, individualised for each student.

During the last year we have all learnt new skills, and shown a great deal of resilience; none more so than Year 7, who took part in the National Enterprise Challenge creating new products from recycled air cylinders. This challenge encompassed assessing environmental impact and Scientific skill sets, whilst promoting key employability skills such as problem-solving teamwork and communication. The students showed an impressive ability to build the social skills they have not been able to practice online and need to develop ready for world of work.

As always, at STMCA we 'Aspire to be More' including our year 8 and 9 students who took part in Natwest 'Dream Bigger' programme, where students became entrepreneurs for the day and developed their business skills. Students were challenged to create their own social enterprise to address a common issue affecting their daily life, their school, their family or their local community. Working in teams, students considered what it means to be entrepreneurial, how their company would operate but also how they would market and promote their products or services to their target audience before pitching their business proposal to the judging panel, building important employability skills throughout the day.

Our year 10 students impressed Lancaster University Management School when they combined their business acumen with kindness. Students showed their consideration to all groups of society when they were challenged to create their own social enterprise to address a COVID related issue in a vulnerable group. This allowed them to understand the importance of developing a social conscience while building valuable business, enterprise, creativity, team building and communication skills for the workplace.

We are very grateful for the continuing support from our Enterprise Advisor, Dan Smith Director of Prosurv, one of the UK's leading Project Management and Construction Cost Consultants. His visit this term allowed year 11s a look into the world of Construction, introducing them to many roles and career pathways open to them, from architecture to surveying and planning, to assessing environmental impact of new sites.

The Careers team have been determined to provide a wide variety of employer encounters in school. (since Covid restrictions allowed) Visitors have included: the British Army, who discussed their apprenticeship schemes and different roles and ran team building and organisational activities; The Samaritans who discussed the importance of listening skills, and the value of volunteering for work experience; North Staffordshire Engineering Group, who brought a Virtual Welder for the students to experience welding, and discuss Engineering apprenticeship opportunities.

Student Wellbeing at STM

Our pastoral and inclusion team work closely with a number of external agencies, offering a wide array of support for our students, including 1 to 1 sessions, small group sessions and even whole year group interventions.

Prior to the pandemic, the government and the Department for Education had already begun to recognise the growing importance of promoting and supporting the wellbeing of young people across the country. As a result of this, the national Trailblazer initiative was introduced, allowing a number of pilot schools to more pro-actively support students in dealing with a variety of low-level mental health issues at a much quicker point of identification. St Thomas More Catholic Academy is incredibly proud to be able to say that we were one of the first Trailblazer schools, allowing us to much more quickly and effectively support our young people with their mental health and wellbeing.



In May, the school's work with the NHS Mental Health Support Team was recognised in making a significant positive impact on the wellbeing of a large number of students. The MHST and St Thomas More were approached by BBC local news to discuss and showcase the fantastic support that the MHST offers. This provided an exciting opportunity for a group of year 7 students to partake in a 'What is mental health?' session followed by some interview questions where the students shone.

In March we piloted the 100 & First School Care Package programme. Around 20 staff and 45 year 10 students had the opportunity to take part in the sessions. The workshops offered the chance to listen to the inspirational key note speech by Greig Trout about his life experiences and the mental health challenges he has overcome including anxiety, body dysmorphia, stress and coping with adversity. This was followed by an interactive session identifying the challenges we face and strategies to overcome these to ensure optimal wellbeing. Feedback from the sessions was excellent.



Ruff and Ruby, a Stoke based charity, have been delivering some excellent work with our students. The charity offer a number of programmes and workshops which the school are actively involved with. As an organisation they engage, energise and empower young people to realise their value, reach their potential and reframe their world by promoting positive self-esteem and aspirations. The students really enjoy working with the life coaches and mentors who come into the school on a regular basis. Two of our year 9 students have been selected to represent the voice of the young people of Stoke-on-Trent as part of the Shape Your Gen project. They have attended the initial meeting and are excited to be part of this opportunity.

PSHE

As part of PHSE week, we were privileged to be one of the first schools in the city to offer the Ruff & Ruby Trauma-Tied session to half of our year 10 students. The session consisted of a powerful screenplay following the inspiring journey that Mark Bracewell has travelled to overcome his past. The session included the opportunity for students to take part in a Q and A session and to reflect upon some of the poetry that he had written. Students showed exceptional maturity and respect as they engaged in the session and were a credit to the school.



Mark was able to translate his experiences into relatable subjects for the students around peer pressure of any form, gang youth violence, drugs, grooming and exploitation, peer choices and influences, knife crime, domestic abuse, the importance of speaking out and accepting support, using poetry to express yourself and about self-care and self-love. Students were empowered that they are the most important person in the world and about making positive choices.

The Ruff & Ruby team are increasing their time in our school to two days a week to offer young people the opportunity to engage in a number of different programmes including their LEX project, life coaching and mentoring

Sixth Form



Y12 mentoring

Our Y12 student have experienced a programme of mentoring to help them to focus their efforts in the forthcoming end of year exams. Some students have worked one to one with the student support team and others in small groups to support and share good practice in tactics to revise. The role of the mentor is to define the targets and

expectations of the mentee and to evaluate the level of knowledge, skill and ability needed to help drive home the need for self-discipline and rigour in their day.

Y11 Taster sessions

Y11 have been enjoying a programme of taster sessions here in the sixth form. As well as introductory lessons for each subject offered at Level 3, the programme included a range of speakers from the world of industry; construction, sport, volunteer sector (Samaritans), British Army command and Engineering (North Staffs Engineering Group). We also had a visit from the Great Minds Tour Bus from Staffordshire University, which gave an interactive experience of university life and study.



Y13 leavers party

We were sad for Y13 to say goodbye, but we managed to end this chapter with a leavers' service, afternoon tea and awards ceremony. We wish them every luck in the future and look forward to meeting them on results day in August.





Sixth Form

St Thomas More Trinity Sixth Form Accepting applications for September 2021!

Trinity Sixth Form offers a unique post-16 experience by working closely together, our three Catholic partner schools – St Thomas More, St John Fisher and St Margaret Ward. This offers you the best of both worlds; the benefits of studying in a small school sixth form where you are known, supported and cared for and the wide curriculum offer you might expect to find in a college or larger sixth form.

All year 11 students are eligible to apply to The Trinity Sixth Form, whether you're a year 11 student in one of the partner schools or you attend a different school and want to be part of this exciting sixth form opportunity.



Five reasons to study at Trinity Sixth Form according to our students:

- 1. Known and loved**
- 2. Belonging to a community**
- 3. Academic rigor**
- 4. Individualised support**
- 5. Study environment**

The Trinity Sixth Form experience really is great preparation for university life, Higher Level Apprenticeships, or the world of work. In addition to the subjects you study, you will experience a range of enrichment opportunities, including university visits, careers advice, work experience and many other exciting and enjoyable activities. More information is available on our website or on the Y11 Sixth Form Open Evening Team. Call us now on 01782 882900

Upcoming Dates

Date	Event
23rd August	Summer School for New Year 7 Intake Sept 21
31st Aug - 3rd Sept	On Site Lateral Flow Testing
2nd & 3rd September	INSET Days-no students in school
6th September	Welcome back all students
16th September	Prospective Parents Open Evening
22nd September	Parent Partnership & Honours Launch Event
28th September	Chaplaincy Commissioning Mass
7th October	Year 11 Parents Evening
14th October	Year 7 Parents Evening

Keep up to date with all the latest events at STM on



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