

Newsletter

April 2025



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Dear Parents/Carers,

We are approaching the end of a very busy Easter term, throughout which I am again proud to say that all of our students have been working incredibly hard. Students in years 11 and 13 are approaching the final push within their journey towards public examinations in the summer term. I have been very impressed by the independence and determination shown by our year 11 and year 13 students and of course, we will continue to support them and keep them in our prayers as they move into the examination period.

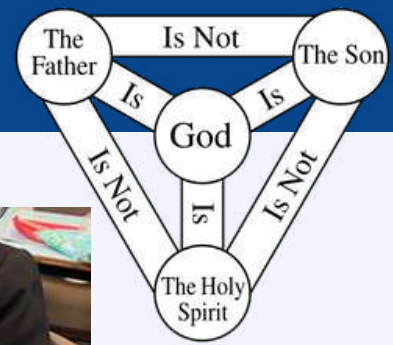
It is wonderful to see so many extra-curricular and enrichment activities taking place within and across the academy, from Geography trips to PSHE sessions, and retreat days to student leadership conferences. These opportunities allow students so much extra learning and development; I am grateful to all our staff who run these activities, some of which are within this newsletter and never fail to seek new ways to engage and support our students beyond their classroom learning.

We continue to improve the facilities within school. Over the last term we have had nearly a million pounds worth of roofing works, students have adapted well to the restrictions around the site although we look forward to the removal of the scaffolding over the Easter holidays.

Finally, we have prepared thoroughly for Easter throughout Lent as demonstrated in this newsletter. The MAC Stations of the Cross event took place on Tuesday 8th April and was a beautiful evening which allowed us to reflect on our mission, and come together as a community.

Following such a busy and eventful term, I would like to wish you and your families a happy and holy Easter, and look forward to welcoming our students back for the summer term.

Mr M Rayner
Headteacher



The Mars Bar Experiment

Our Year 7 students completed 'The Mars Bar Experiment', reflecting how the Trinity cannot be separated. Some tried with all their might to split the chocolate, caramel and nougat from one another – however, just like the Trinity, you cannot separate one element from another! This creative experiment helped our year 7s to understand the nature of God in Catholic Christianity, that God is 3-in-1, one God, united by the Holy Trinity – the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



Welcome to Masterclass:

Improve your essay-skills for A Level Religious Studies with Charlotte Vardy

- This course should take around 4 hours to complete and consists of videos and a booklet full of activities to fill in as you watch and afterwards.
- You will need the booklet open, whether printed out or in .pdf form, to start the course.
- The course is assessed by means of a quiz, which you should only take when you have completed the course. Details for how to access the quiz will be provided at the end of the course.

candle
conferences

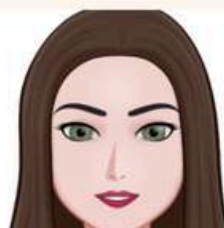
Contents:

- Part 1: What is an essay?
- Part 2: Is there a right way of writing an A Level RS essay?
- Part 3: What is the most effective way to structure an essay in the exam?
- Part 4: Thesis Statements, Links and Conclusions
- Part 5: Crafting body-paragraphs
- Part 6: Introductory paragraphs
- Part 7: Improving the quality of your writing
- Part 8: Aiming High!
- Part 9: Practice makes perfect
- Part 10: Review and plenary

INTRODUCTION

Why are essay-skills important and worth improving in A Level Religious Studies?

- A Level Religious Studies is assessed 100% through examinations... and the examinations ALL ask you to write essays.
- If you decide to study Religious Studies - or indeed any Humanities subject at University - the main mode of assessment is through essays.
- Writing good essays helps you to develop transferable skills that most employers want



A LEVEL MASTERCLASS

IMPROVE YOUR ESSAY-SKILLS FOR A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Year 12 and 13 RS students have been given their own unique log in to access valuable resources through a 4-hour course to support their essay writing techniques. For Year 12 it has been excellent transition from GCSE to A-Level and our Year 13s are fine tuning their essay writing skills in readiness for their A level exams and University! Written and presented by experienced teacher and author Charlotte Vardy, this unique and popular online course answers these questions and aims to support students in improving their essay skills for A level Religious Studies as they move through the course.

Year 7 Catholic Social Teaching Projects

Year 7 students have been engaging with creating projects specific to the 7 Catholic Social Teachings of:

1. Dignity
2. Solidarity
3. Subsidiarity
4. Common good
5. Peace
6. Care for the poor
7. Creation and the environment

This term, students have been focussing on the teaching of Care for the Poor: the teaching that God shows preferential love for the poorest and most vulnerable.

Students have been researching how we as a Catholic community can support the most vulnerable in our society and parish, and put their faith into action.

Here are some past examples of their independent work:



Family Fast Day

Lent Family Fast Day is on Friday 14 March 2025.



CAFOD Family Fast Day was a great success again. It was lovely to see students across the school sitting together and sharing a meal with friends and teachers.

The total raised was **£327** for our CAFOD Lenten Family Fast Day bringing our CAFOD Family Fast Day total (across the two events this academic year) to **£569**

Catholic Agency for Overseas Development **CAFOD**

What do CAFOD do?



Give today to help us reach people who are still in need of help.



Act by making your voice heard through our campaigns



Pray for our brothers and sisters living in poverty



PSHE

The Mizen Foundation



On Wednesday 2nd April, students in years 7 to 10 had the incredible opportunity to hear from the parents of Jimmy Mizen, an inspirational story which teaches about the value of life and the dangers of bullying, alongside the virtues of hope and forgiveness, which Barry and Margaret Mizen so inspirationally share. Student feedback reflected on the important themes of 'faith, hope and forgiveness' where students were inspired by the courage of Margaret and Barry and felt empowered to open their hearts and forgive others. Student voice reflected our school values where one student prayed that God continued to 'give them courage to inspire more young people to do good'.



Ruff & Ruby

Uth City Talk: Students in Key stages 3 and 4 all enjoyed an assembly ran by Ruff and Ruby to introduce them to the new Uth City App which is launching in Stoke-on-Trent to offer a one-stop-shop for young people, offering a wide range of support on topics such as mental health, community cohesion and careers. Students enjoyed watching a performance and hearing all about the new app!

Feedback from Ruff and Ruby was fantastic, praising our students and thanking us for having a "great school!" – we look forward to welcoming the team back soon.



Science

British Science Week – Change and Adapt – Aerodynamics

British Science Week began with Mr. K. Ishfaq, Mr. Z. Ishfaq and Mr. Nixon challenging students to make paper aeroplanes then change and adapt them to fly the furthest. It was most competitive between the teachers!



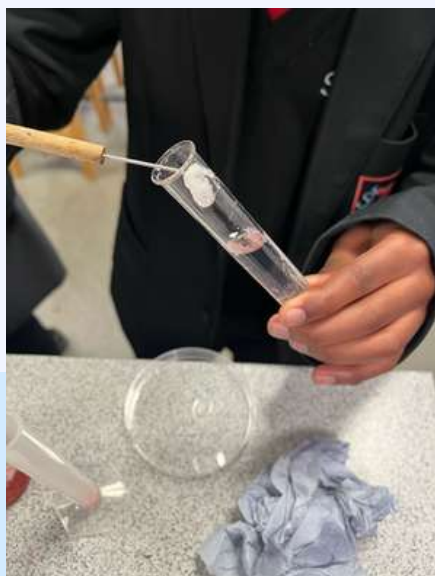
British Science Week – Change and Adapt – Popping good chemistry

The chemistry department looked at rates of reaction and how these can be changed. Students used vitamin C tablets and to produce effervescence and popped the lid off the tubes. Changing the temperature and surface area of the tablets made a big difference.



British Science Week – Change and Adapt – DNA of fruit

Mutations can cause changes to DNA and sometimes these changes can help plants and animals to thrive in different habitats. DNA holds all the instructions to make an organism and it's found in the nucleus of all cells. Students extracted the DNA from strawberries.



British Science Week Poster Competition

Year 7 were invited to participate in the British Science Week poster competition.

They were challenged to help a team of researchers at University College London (UCL) to come up with a new idea or invention to improve the health of the air in our buildings.

We had some wonderful ideas and entries which were narrowed down to the winning 5 entries and six runner up entries. All 11 students received a prize for their entry and the winning 5 entries have been submitted to the national competition



Winning Entries:

Abdul, Ellie-Mai, Jonathan, Jacob, Lyla-Rai

Runners Up:

Aderiyike, Denna, Deona, Evvy, Sophia, Younas



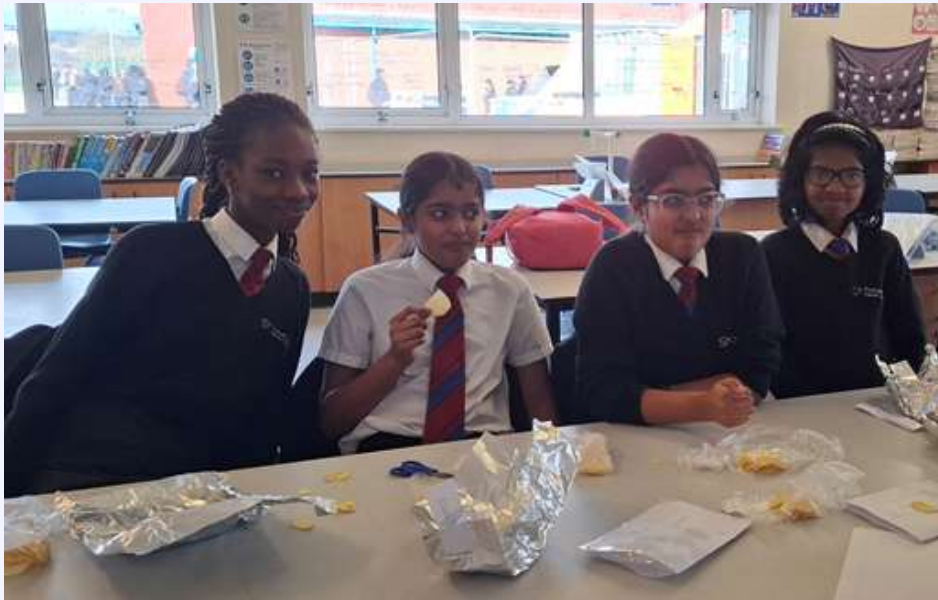
Science

British Science Week – Change and Adapt – Crunchy Crisp Challenge!

Packed lunches often involved lots of unnecessary packaging so in this activity, students investigated different containers for crisps.

Students were answering questions such as: Which containers have kept the crisps the freshest? Would buying a large bag of crisps rather than multipacks and putting portions into these containers reduce single-use packaging in your lunchbox? Are some of the containers more suitable than others? Which one would you choose for a packed lunch and why? Crisps were repackaged in foil, cling film, plastic bags and paper bags and then tested the next day to see which packaged helped the crisps to stay freshest.

Foil won with paper being the worst packaging to use – getting the results proved very popular!



British Science Week – Change and Adapt – DNA of fruit

Mutations can cause changes to DNA and sometimes these changes can help plants and animals to thrive in different habitats. DNA holds all the instructions to make an organism and its found in the nucleus of all cells. Students extracted the DNA from strawberries.



Royal Society of Chemistry Olympiad

The Royal Society of Chemistry Olympiad is a unique opportunity for students to push themselves further and excel in the Chemistry field. The Olympiad is the leading chemistry competition for secondary students across the British Isles. Budding chemists develop critical problem-solving skills, learn to think more creatively and get a chance to test their knowledge in new, real-world situations as they compete to represent the UK at the prestigious International Chemistry Olympiad.

There were 16,216 entries across the UK and three of our students from Year 13 took part.

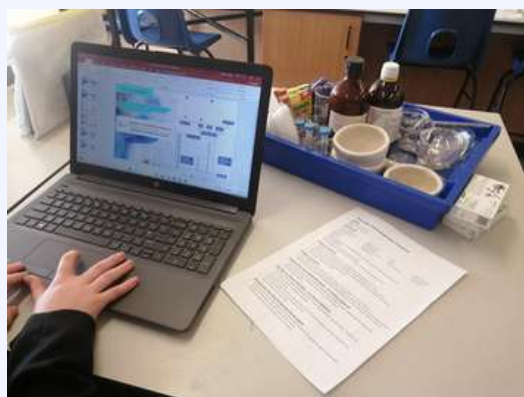
Aaron achieved a certificate of participation while Sam achieved a bronze award, putting him in the top 65 % of entrants. Raman achieved a silver award putting him in the top 33% in the country.

We are incredibly proud of the achievements of all three students in one of the toughest Chemistry challenges.



CREST Club

The CREST after-school clubs have been very busy this term. The Bronzes are finishing off their written projects, the Silvers are making and testing lipstick and washing powder whilst investigating forensic analysis of drugs, and the Gold project is continuing the research on a healthy diet.



Our KS3 Classes have been sharing their thoughts and opinions, with the Science, Innovation and Technology Committee, on the importance of “teaching all pupils essential aspects of the knowledge, methods, processes and uses of science”.

Students were asked for ideas and discussions will be used to help the committee design its future work programme, potentially leading to new Parliamentary investigations and discussions. Student ideas included:

- Provide even more opportunities for real world experiences within the curriculum to make all the content relevant to our lives
- Give more instances of working and learning – not just exam based learning in a classroom.
- Speak to young people to find out what scientific knowledge they have found useful and what they have not found useful and what they would have liked to have learned about that would have helped them if they knew it. They could then design learning to make sure we have more relevant information.

Maths

Within the Maths Department, it has been an exciting spring term, and there have been several key moments for our students. Year 7 and Year 10 have had important data points, Year 11 students have completed their mock exams, and feedback from those has been used to focus their final weeks of study. Year 9 and 10 students have also attempted the UKMT Maths Challenge. We've also had some exciting trips to Keele University and Oxford University, as well as lots of extra-curricular opportunities to develop students' mathematical knowledge further.

Rising Stars

The Maths department have been working closely with Rising Stars students to broaden their understanding of key topics. Students have the opportunity to work in smaller groups during form time focusing on specific skills to strengthen and develop their maths progress.

Sparx Superstars

Here are the Sparx Superstars for each year group this year so far! A huge well done for consistently excelling in home learning – fantastic effort!

Year 7

Yearly Leaderboard This academic year		
1	Fenix Justin (Fenix the Ace-in-the-hole)	56,598 XP
2	Felix Justin (Felix the Hero)	49,431 XP
3	Christian Mhurudzekunze (Christian the Parent)	37,491 XP

Year 8

Yearly Leaderboard This academic year		
1	Natania Biniam (Natania the Benefit)	30,032 XP
2	Lucas Campbell (Lucas the Good egg)	29,974 XP
3	Ai Qi Zhang (Ai Qi the Innocent)	29,682 XP

Year 9

Yearly Leaderboard This academic year		
1	Maria Kapusta (Maria the Confrere)	32,090 XP
2	Ella Samuel (Ella the Proctor)	28,902 XP
3	Warren Manyika (Warren the Excellency)	26,249 XP

Year 10

Yearly Leaderboard This academic year		
1	Miranda Maambirwi (Miranda the Treasure)	20,013 XP
2	Malaika Sharafat (Malaika the Legend)	17,233 XP
3	Merina Manoj (Merina the Composer)	17,059 XP

Year 11

Yearly Leaderboard This academic year		
1	Dannon Santhosh (Dannon the Leading light)	16,230 XP
2	Miryam Taouk (Miryam the Custodian)	15,337 XP
3	Declan Willett (Declan the Wonder)	15,098 XP

Keele University Y11 Visit

Our Year 11 students recently took part in a series of inspiring and productive enrichment days at Keele University, focusing on key GCSE Maths topics. These sessions provided a fantastic opportunity for students to engage in challenging activities that reinforced their understanding and boosted their confidence ahead of the exams.

The days included four intensive workshops, each led by expert educators and tailored to students' abilities. Topics were covered in detail, with problem-solving exercises designed to strengthen their skills and deepen their understanding of complex concepts.

We would like to extend our thanks to Keele University for their continued support, and to our Year 11 students as they prepare for their upcoming GCSE exams.

Maths

Pi Day

Pi day was a success, with students and teachers eagerly participating in Pi themed activities lead by Mr Moore. Students enjoyed solving Pi related puzzles and riddles. The event created a fun and engaging atmosphere.

UKMT Junior Maths Challenge

Students in Year 9 and 10 had the chance to take part in the UK Junior Maths Challenge. This competition promotes logical thinking, accuracy, and mathematical fluency, encouraging students to engage deeply with problems. While the questions are designed to be accessible, they still present a challenge for those with more advanced skills. Towards the end, the difficulty increases, and some questions even deduct marks for incorrect answers, adding an element of risk and extra challenge.

Well done to these Y9 students: **Daniel M** (Bronze), **Isobel S** (Bronze), **Zuzanna S** (Bronze), **Musa H** (Bronze), **Callum B** (Bronze), **Raafe M** (Bronze), **Aryaan M** (Bronze), **Maureen O** (Bronze), **Fatima K**(Bronze), **Haya S** (Bronze).

Well done to these Y10 students: **Adama B** (Silver), **Ruby L** (Bronze), **Emmanuel K** (Bronze), **Nazar A** (Bronze), **Harvey M** (Bronze), **Lewis B** (Bronze), **Spencer G** (Bronze), **Aaminah H** (Bronze).

Oxford University Visit

A group of Year 9 girls recently had the exciting opportunity to visit Oxford University, where they were inspired to continue their journey in mathematics. The day was filled with a variety of activities, including plenary sessions, interactive workshops, and hands-on problem-solving challenges that sparked curiosity and passion for the subject. The girls also had the chance to meet several female role models currently studying maths-based courses, who shared their experiences and offered valuable advice. The trip proved to be a motivating experience, encouraging these students to see the possibilities of pursuing maths at Further Education.

BASICS Form Groups - Year 11

Ensuring that year 11 students engage with BASICS during form time has been a great success.

These form time sessions have helped to strengthen their understanding and boost their confidence in core topics. The positive engagement from students has been commendable with many appreciating the extra support ahead of exams. By tackling key topics and revisiting the Golden Topics, students have been able to enhance their skills and prepare more effectively for their upcoming GCSE examinations.

Arts on Angels

Mother Language Poetry

To celebrate International Mother Tongue Day this term, the Languages Faculty has come together to promote poetry in different languages. Students presented poems in French, Italian, Polish and Russian on Arts and Angels, helping to promote the diversity and range of languages spoken in our school community.



Year 7 & 8 Students Shine with Bedrock Learning!

At St Thomas More Catholic Academy we are proud to champion the power of literacy, and one of the key tools aiding us with this is Bedrock Learning. This digital platform supports students in building their vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension through engaging and personalised learning.

We are thrilled to announce the Top 5 Bedrock Learners in Year 7 and Year 8, based on the number of Bedrock Points earned.

The following students have shown incredible dedication and enthusiasm:

Top Scoring Y7 Bedrock

Name	Class	Points
Abdul-Rafey	7Y2/En	2272
Maisie	7Y3/En	1836
Demi	7Y3/En	1596
Wisdom	7X4/En	1197
Jakob	7Y3/En	1183

Top Scoring Y8 Bedrock

Name	Class	Points
Lilly-Mai	8Y2/En	3343
Alvia	8X2/En	3270
Khadijat	8Y1/En	2719
Emily	8Y2/En	2705
L J Princess	8Y3/En	2588



A Reward for Our Top Bedrock Learners: To celebrate their effort and dedication we are delighted to offer each of the students a free book from our Book Vending Machine!

Come to the school library at break or lunchtime to collect your vending machine token, which you can use to choose a book of your own – a well-earned reward for your commitment to improving your literacy skills.

Well done – **we are so proud of you!**

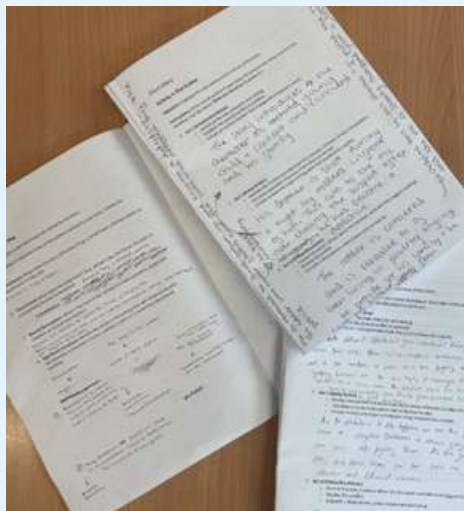
Blood Brothers



There were 50 Year 9 students that had the excellent opportunity to go to see a production of 'Blood Brothers' at the Liverpool Empire Theatre. Students have studied the text as part of their KS3 curriculum and therefore watching a stage adaptation not only enhanced their understanding of the plot, but also helped to bring the plot to life. Students were visibly moved by the performance, describing it as mesmerising and breath taking.

Creative Writing Club

This half term, our KS3 Creative Writing Club members have been diving into exciting weekly activities, working through their activity workbooks to develop their creative writing projects.



Students have the choice to either craft a short story (1000-1200 words) or compile a collection of 8-10 poems. The goal is to complete these workbook activities so that after Easter, we'll be ready to start writing up our stories using the library laptops. It's been a fantastic journey of imagination and creativity, and we can't wait to see the finished pieces come to life!



GCSEPod Success: Outstanding Engagement from Year 9, 10, and 11!

We are delighted to celebrate the fantastic engagement with GCSEPod since January. Our Year 9, Year 10, and Year 11 students have collectively completed an impressive 1,521 assignments on the platform, demonstrating their commitment to independent learning and academic success.

GCSEPod has been an invaluable tool in supporting our students' learning, offering high-quality content that consolidates key knowledge and reinforces classroom teaching.

Year 11 students have been using GCSEPod to strengthen their revision in preparation for their GCSE exams, while Year 10 students have been preparing for their upcoming mock exams at the end of the academic year.

Year 9 students have been building strong foundations as they embark on their GCSE journey. Their dedication to completing these assignments highlights their proactive approach and determination to succeed.

We encourage all students to continue engaging with GCSEPod regularly to enhance their understanding and boost their confidence. Well done to Year 9, 10, and 11 for their outstanding efforts – let's keep up this incredible momentum!

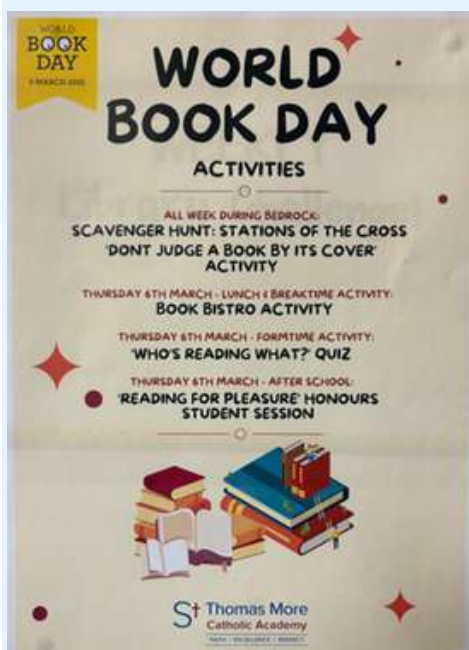
World Book Day

On Thursday 6th March, students celebrated World Book Day by participating in a range of activities from a 'Guess Who Is Reading...' quiz to a scavenger hunt in the library.

Students had the opportunity to pick a mystery book from our 'Don't Judge A Book By Its Cover' selection to read and leave a review for other people to celebrate their love of reading.

All students who participated in the scavenger hunt or completed the quiz were rewarded with a token for our Book Vending Machine!

This was a fantastic celebration of reading within our school community.



English Department Presentation Competition

With its continued focus on excellence, the English Department has successfully launched its own presentation competition, with the aim of rewarding students who take the upmost care in their written work. All students in Key Stage 3 and 4 have the chance to **win a hamper full of stationery, plus a book chosen by themselves from the book vending machine**. There are also runner-up prizes of **Amazon vouchers!**

In order to be nominated for the prize, students need to consistently applied all six of the English Department presentation rules:

- Rule off your previous piece of work
- Underline the date and title
- Use paragraphs
- Use a capital letter for people and places
- Cross mistakes out once with a ruler.
- Do not scribble or deface your book.

This half term's winners are for the Key Stage 3 **first prize is Amina in 7Y2**, and runner-up is **Anaum in 8Y1**. In Key Stage 4, the winner is **Alexsa in 10Y1**, and runner-up is **Huma in 10x1**. The above students show that they are aspiring to be more by taking a great pride in their written work. Well done!

History

KS3 students continue to engage well with their historical learning journey and have particularly enjoyed this half terms topics focusing on (Y7) The Kingdom of Mali, (Y8) The fight for democracy and (Y9) Civil Rights in the USA. Each topic area delves into one of the five key historical skills to ensure that our students are equipped with the necessary tools needed to be a successful young historian.

Year 10 have settled into their study of topic 2: Weimar and Nazi Germany and are getting to grips with the turbulent politics of post WWI Germany. Students will follow the journey of German politics, through the 1920s and 1930s, learning about the rise of Hitler and the experiences of ordinary Germans living under his rule. During this course students will continue to develop their understanding of the historical skills of, explanation, source analysis and historical interpretation.

A reminder that Year 10 revision club runs over lunch time, each red Friday in room 323. So far, we have had a good number of budding historians in attendance, but there is always room for more! This revision is focused on topic 1: Crime and Punishment.

Year 10 students are excited for the upcoming mandatory trip to Nottingham Justice museum, a chance for them to explore the Georgian jail and experience the mock trial of Derek Bentley. This is a great opportunity to bring history to life and support with contextual understanding for GCSE Paper 1. If your child has not yet signed up for this trip, please ensure that you log into Parent Pay to secure their place before 11th April 2025.

More information for this can be found in the parental letter sent out previously and here:

<https://www.nationaljusticemuseum.org.uk/>

Our year 11 students benefitted from their 'History Day' experience, this time was spent guiding our year 11's through their mock papers, focusing on how to achieve top mark answers. This allowed them the time to review and reflect on their most recent mock exams, making improvements where needed.

Year 11 have now finished all of their taught content and are now deep into revision as we approach their GCSE's. Students have been so positive in their approach to in class revision and it has been great to see so many year 11 students attending our Friday after school revision sessions. A reminder that these sessions are planned to meet student needs and we offer two separate revision sessions each Friday. Exam builder revision with Mr Dale in room 323 and GCSE core content revision with Miss Hill in room 322. Both sessions run from 3:20 to 4pm.

Outward Bound



Two groups of students in years 8 and 9 have visited the Outward Bound Centre in Aberdovey, Wales this term for a week filled with activity and adventure. The Outward Bound Trust works with young people to offer them enriching life experiences, build resilience and strengthen their leadership skills to complement their academic curriculum in school. All students who attended these trips were a credit to St Thomas More and tackled every challenge head on, including hiking, gorge scrambling, an overnight expedition and even swimming in the sea in the cold waters of January! We are immensely proud of how our students demonstrated resilience and enthusiasm whilst on these adventures.



**THE
OUTWARD
BOUND TRUST**



Duke of Edinburgh

There were 28 students from Y9-Y13 are completing their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award this year. So far, they have been working on their Skills, Volunteering and Physical sections of their award whilst attending bi-weekly training workshops to learn about first aid and map reading. They have taken part in a Practice and a Training expedition throughout March and April 2025 in readiness for their summer expedition. Our Duke of Edinburgh students have been a credit to St Thomas More and have shown great commitment, independence and creativity to work towards their award.



The Rising Stars Programme

There were 80 students in years 7-10 have taken part in the Rising Stars Programme this year to accelerate their attainment and progress. Rising Stars students attend a weekly curriculum workshop in Maths, English, Science and RE as well as an after-school workshop on Wednesdays which covers revision skills, target setting, attendance, resilience and study skills.

Rising Stars students who showed commitment to the programme were taken on a bowling rewards trip to celebrate their achievement and dedication at the end of the 10 week intervention. Well done!



The Honours Programme

Honours students across the academy are busily working towards their final interview during the first two weeks of June, in readiness for their Graduation at the Celebration Evening in late June. 29 different Honours masterclasses have been offered on Tuesdays throughout the academic year, on a broad range of topics including astrophysics, code breaking, hospitality, Russian, first aid and even shark dissection! There are still 4 masterclasses after the Easter holidays available to attend on Tuesdays 3.20pm-4.20pm, in the Sixth Form Centre.

Honours students have visited Oxford University, Staffordshire University, Keele University and Birmingham University so far this year, as well as some taking part in a 'Careers in Law' Programme. Honours students have had the opportunity to complete their CREST Science and Duke of Edinburgh awards, both of which are nationally recognised qualifications, and have had the opportunity to enter Honours Competitions in PHSE, Computing, the Young Reporter Competition and the 'Steps into the NHS' competition, for which we have had a record number of 17 winning entries which will be entered into the national competition. In addition to this, Honours students are completing their Charter of Opportunities and compiling a Record of Achievement to strengthen post 16 applications. Keep up the hard work Honours students!



Careers

National Enterprise Challenge - Y7 - Air Products and the sustainable town of the Future



Two Entrepreneurial days for year 7 and 8, working in teams of 6 in the hall to create, design, market and pitch a new business idea to win a place in the national final at the Barbican in London on July 8th. The students showed admirable maturity developing the necessary teamwork and leadership skills for this challenging task. A particular well done to the students who pitched to an audience of over 200 and the winners who will accompany me to London.

National Enterprise Challenge Y8 - British Airways – The Future Airline



6th March 2025 Visit to Harper Adams University

Year 10 computer science GCSE group were offered an opportunity to visit the new Careers building at Harper Adams University in Telford – this multi-million-pound venture will be a dedicated hub for digital courses – focusing on future technologies, engineering, business and career development. We spent the day completing workshops in the university on applied Data science, digital business management and coding self-driving vehicles – our students were so impressed we have been invited back to 'test drive' a self-driving range Rover on their full-size test track... more exciting careers events to follow!

Cyber Explorers Cup

Tuesday 1st April

Our Year 8 Computer experts took part in a UK wide hour-long cyber security competition in which they had to take on a crucial mission to help the Cyber Squad secure their cutting-edge headquarters before it opens. Our 3 teams Microsoft, Cisco and CrowdStrike, were fast and furious leading their heat throughout their hour and putting in a fantastic performance showing excellent technical knowledge, teamwork and problem solving under time pressure.

We are on a mission to build the UK's cyber security talent pipeline and to further their learning and interest in cyber security. This exciting initiative is led by His Majesty's Government Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT).

If you would like your child to learn these valuable skills, please use the self-registration link below to register for Cyber Explorers.

<https://www.cyberexplorers.co.uk/register/864987>



Careers



Year 10 Careers in the Creative industry trip to Spode Museum

Our Year 10 Art GCSE students had a Careers in the Creative industry trip to Spode Museum to participate in their school workshop 'Josiah Spode's Perfect Processes'.

Designed to inspire creativity and curiosity through hands-on learning and exploration into Spode's impact on Stoke-on-Trent's ceramics industry, over the course of two creative workshops students uncovered the innovative processes which made Spode a global name in ceramics.

The morning workshop explored how Spode perfected underglaze transfer printing. In the afternoon, learners will discover Spode's clay innovations and compare different types of pottery before creating their own clay birds inspired by the famous willow pattern. There will also be a tour of the old factory site that Spode sits on including a collection of pottery not open to the public. And we heard how careers in this sector continue to evolve and what the future of the ceramics and design industry looks like in Stoke on Trent.

Spode®

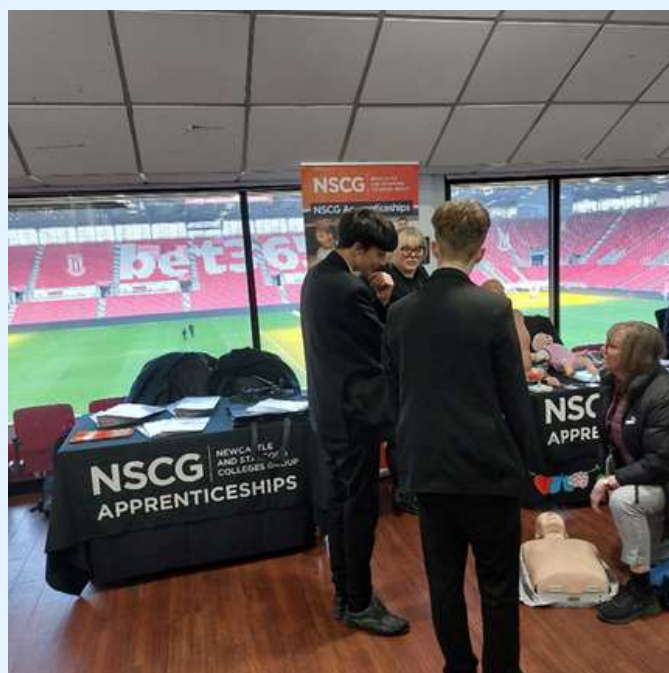


The Big Apprenticeship Expo at Stoke City Football Club

Year 11 Students interested in gaining post 16 apprenticeships were invited to attend this networking Apprenticeships fair where any local employers and apprenticeship providers were gathered to offer, advice, share opportunities and recruit potential employees.

Our students created a CV on Unifrog, and printed them off to give to companies; they researched the companies they knew would be attending and practised interview techniques, including meeting and greeting and practiced introducing themselves to a potential employer.

We recommend all students have a CV on Unifrog in Year 11 ready for all applications



Tittesworth Reservoir Sponsored Walk

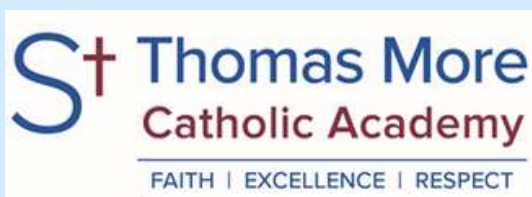
The sponsored walk around Tittesworth Water took place in Glorious Sunshine on Saturday 29th March 2025. Students were introduced to Sir Ian Dudson KCVO CBE who is the Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire. He congratulated them on their efforts to raise funds for Christian Aid: a partnership of people, churches and local organisations committed to ending poverty. A 5-mile walk including Pooh Sticks at the stream and lots of stick throwing for dogs, our students had a fun day in the outdoors.



Year 11 Careers Support

We are coming to the end of the year and the majority of Year 11 students should have now applied to either a college, a training provider or be looking for an apprenticeship. Students should also have had their initial college course discussions and have been offered a conditional place. Currently 97% of our year 11 students have applied for a post 16 option, but there is support for those who may change their minds or have difficulty making a final decision. Mrs Kerr and Mr West will be attending GCSE results day to provide impartial guidance for those who need it. In the meantime, Unifrog provides support in relation to careers and applications. For those students interested in apprenticeships they can visit the National Apprenticeships Service at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact our careers adviser via the email jwest@stmca.org.uk



Year 10 and 12 Work Experience

A reminder to all Year 10 and 12 students that they need to source their work experience and log this on Unifrog as soon as possible. All information needed is on the school website.

<https://www.stmca.org.uk/key-information/career-information-guidance/>

There are support sessions each Monday evening in the LRC for any student who needs further support.

If any of our parents are able to offer a work experience placement please could you let me know at careers@stmca.org.uk and I'll advertise opportunities to our Year 10 and 12 students. Thank you.

We are happy to organise a family careers meeting for you and your child. Please contact the school office if you would like to take up this opportunity and we will be in touch to arrange a suitable time.



Sixth Form

This term has been a very busy, productive and positive time for St Thomas More 6th Form! We had a fantastic time at the Trinity Leadership day where our students experienced some truly inspirational presentations from some key note speakers who gave very personal inspirational accounts of their life stories.

A selection of our Year 12 students received confirmation that they have been accepted onto the Oxford residential programme where they will spend time at Oriel College, discovering more about Oxford's Maths, Philosophy and Economics courses, and life at Oxford. A truly fantastic opportunity for our young people here in 6th form.



It has been an incredibly busy time of year with our students finalising their UCAS applications and receiving high end offers from Oxbridge and Russell Group Universities, as well as students finding placements for excellent high-quality degree apprenticeships. One of our students has successfully secured a paramedic apprenticeship and he gave a fantastic demonstration on skills needed to be a first aid responder to our lower school.

We had a very busy Course Discussions evening where prospective candidates joined us to discuss a whole suite of courses that are available. Don't forget if you still need information about courses and want to secure your place you can contact us here rwhitehouse@stmca.org.uk



Our 6th form David Campbell Soccer School students had an incredible 2 week Football experience in Portugal, packed with unforgettable moments, valuable learning opportunities and memories to last a lifetime!

From competitive fixtures against top Portuguese Teams such as Benfica FC to exclusive stadium tours at Sporting Lisbon FC, this trip was truly one-of-a-kind.



Our Year 13 students have been working incredibly hard, revising for their final exams, and responding to their mock feedback. I have been truly impressed with the commitment and hard work that our students have displayed to ensure they achieve the best outcomes possible. This has included students attending our after school study club in 6th form.

Going to university can be a daunting time, particularly, when it comes to arranging finances. To support our students, we had Higher Horizons come in and give them advice on all things Student Finance, this was excellent for our students as it enabled them to understand the practicalities of making sure they can fund their studies at university.

It won't be long before our Year 12 students start to consider their next pathways, and to support them with this we will be giving them everything they need, including advice navigating UCAS, completing personal statements and applications to university and assisting those students that require early entry.



It is an exciting time of year where our students have been organising their end of year prom, and for this they have been fundraising by cleaning staff cars and selling sunflowers, I have to say they did a fantastic job and managed to wash 15 staff cars!



Mission Team Career Opportunities by Libby Cox

On Friday, Libby Cox, a representative from the Kenelm Youth Trust, delivered an insightful and inspiring speech to the sixth form students of St. Thomas More. The talk focused on the career opportunities available within the Mission Team at Kenelm Youth Trust, an organisation dedicated to supporting young people's spiritual, personal, and social development.

The speech concluded with a call to action, urging students to reflect on the rewarding nature of mission-based careers and to explore how they might contribute to the future of young people through the work of the Kenelm Youth Trust.

The session was well-received, with many students expressing interest in the opportunities available and considering how they could incorporate their passion for helping others into their future career choices.

