



## St. Thomas More High School

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1<sup>st</sup> May 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Welcome back to the summer term, albeit without students being in classrooms and the School bustling with the normal sounds of over 1,000 people busy at their work.

Throughout the Easter services, a clear message of 'hope' was relayed across the world and it is in that spirit that we continue to face with courage the new challenges that lie ahead. Please find attached some updated information from [BCYS](#) that I hope you will share with your sons and daughters. I hope it will encourage them to join the various youth events that are being streamed online.

As we start our new term, I hope that you and your families are keeping well. This is an extremely difficult time for us all and I understand that many of you are having to work at home and don't have the resources to allow everyone to access remote learning and certainly not at the same time. Please be realistic about what you can do. You're not expected to become teachers and your children aren't expected to learn as they do in school. This was the message from Gavin Williamson, Education Secretary, when he announced the closure of schools. Simply providing your children with some structure at home will help them to adapt. Decide what is working and what isn't. Ask your children, involve them too. Share the load if there are 2 parents at home and involve extended family members if you can. Split the day into slots and take turns so that you can do your own work. Take care of your own health and wellbeing. This is still very new for us all. There are many articles out there providing tips for families but you really need to try to make it work for you.

This link will take you to a DFE list of online education [resources](#) you might wish to use. It is important to have regular conversations about [staying safe online](#) and to encourage your children to speak to you if they come across something worrying online. The change of routine and staying at home may make this a difficult time for some. Public Health England has published advice on how to [support your children's wellbeing](#) during the coronavirus outbreak. Guidance is also available to help you [look after your own mental health](#). Please do make time for exercise and breaks throughout the day.

We have received several emails from parents with suggestions about using various video conferencing, apps and online platforms to support teaching. Staff are adapting very quickly to trialling a variety of these which may bring new ideas for next academic year. The BBC have also launched its own [education package](#) across TV and online, featuring celebrities and some of the best teachers – helping to keep children learning and supporting parents. Clearly, none of these resources will be a perfect fit and when we do invest in a remote learning package, it will be after careful consideration. We are also mindful of the changing circumstances for many of our families and ask that you please do make contact with us by email so that we can share the burden and help if we can at this difficult time.

### **BANK HOLIDAY 8<sup>th</sup> May School CLOSED**

School will be closed completely for ALL staff and students on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May for the Bank Holiday to commemorate VE Day.

## School Trips and Events

All school trips are on hold at the moment and I will update you as and when we receive further information from the Department of Education and our tour operators.

All events scheduled in the school calendar for the rest of this academic year are postponed as we need to have flexibility in the summer term to respond to the Government if and when they make the decision to reopen schools. One of our priorities will be the induction of our new Year 7 and Year 12 and Prospective Year 7 Open Evening. Students will work with their teachers on their eventual return to school reviewing the work they have completed during lockdown. It is at this point End of Year exams or Transition exams for Year 12 into 13 will be rescheduled.

It is likely life will take some time to return to anywhere near normal as before and following any announcement, we will let you know how St Thomas More plans to reopen once an announcement and guidelines is made. Please bear with us and your continued support and understanding is very much appreciated.

Finally, please keep in your prayers all those working as key workers at this time. They are doing an amazing job and need all the support they can get. Perhaps you can share this prayer with family and friends:

*Holy God,  
we remember all those who are working to keep things going,  
those working in the NHS and those around it helping to keep things working,  
those keeping our streets clean and collecting our rubbish,  
those harvesting, delivering and selling the food in our shops,  
those keeping us secure and our utilities functioning,  
those looking after the children of key workers,  
those helping to care for the elderly and vulnerable,  
clergy of all religions seeking to minister in difficult times...  
Lord of compassion, hope and love,  
Hear our prayer*

Yours sincerely



Mrs G Ackred  
Headteacher

# Chaplaincy News

## May is the Month of Mary.

Please find here some information and links to some of our Parishes which may provide support and spiritual accompaniment in these times for us all.

**How to pray the Rosary** – just click on this link for a full explanation <https://therosary.online/>

Click on how to pray – for a reference guide which will help you with prayers for each day.

**Our Lady of Lourdes, Leigh on Sea** follow the link and click on **podcast**. There you can listen to a message about the Rosary. The Parish will also be praying the Rosary at 6pm every weekday evening in May. This will be streamed through YouTube channel (as Saturday evening/Sunday Mass) - [Link](#)

**St. Peter's, Eastwood** - <https://stpetereastwood.org/> this is the link to the Parish Website.

**Catholic Church of St. Teresa and the Child Jesus, Rochford** - <http://www.rcrochford.org/>

**Our Lady of Canvey and English Martyrs, Canvey** - <http://www.ourladyofcanvey.org/> the programme will generally be, from Monday to Saturday inclusive: 09.30 Rosary followed by 10.00 Holy Mass and 10.30 Rosary. This can be accessed through Fr. Eamonn's personal FB page.

**St. Helen's – Westcliff** - <http://shwos.co.uk/?LMCL=HaRNWM> – Mass is at 7.30 p.m. and then the Rosary is prayed every day - from Monday to Friday at 8:15pm.

**St. George and The English Martyrs, Shoeburyness** - <http://www.saintgeorgeschurch.co.uk/>

**Sacred Heart, Southend**– <http://www.catholicsouthend.org.uk/>

Keep safe and well and be assured you are all in my prayers.

With God's blessings,

Mrs Maxfield Chaplaincy Coordinator



### **Year 11 Fundraising**

In case you hadn't seen the press coverage recently, congratulations to Tom Cozens, Adam Jones and Terence Fane for going through with their pledge to shave off their hair. Tom and his friends are raising money for the Lily Foundation which supports Tom's older brother Harry, who suffers from a mitochondrial disease called MERRF. One of the ways the Lily Foundation supports Harry is funding a weekend away last year in the Lake District. This weekend enabled Young Sufferers to meet and take part in activities that they would not normally be able to participate in, doing things like cycling, using adapted bikes, high rope climbing, horse riding and zip wire. The stay at the Calvert Trust was funded by the foundation. The boys are hoping to raise some money to help towards future events like this. Well done

boys! <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/harry-cozens2>