



CONTACT

No. 1738 – Friday 4th September 2026



Welcome back! We hope that you have all enjoyed a safe and restful summer break. As we step into the new school year, we've been excited to see our students return, ready to embrace new challenges and opportunities of the new academic year. We welcome particularly all staff, students and their parents, who are new to the school particularly in Year 7 and 12 and hope that they all settle quickly into life at St Thomas More.

As we come to the end of the first few days of this new school year, we would urge you develop the habit of reading our weekly Contact newsletter, which provides our readers with important information, events, reminders and updates about our school and wider Catholic community in the various sections.

We hope that as a team and family of St Thomas More, we continue to work together in committed partnership to ensure everyone has productive and successful year, and we look forward to working closely with you to support your child's journey.

Parent Reminders and Student Information

Term Dates: Please find the term dates [2026/2027](#)

Calendar for Parents: can be accessed [here](#).

Absence: If your child is unwell and unable to attend, please notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school and selecting attendance or by emailing attendance@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk. If the absence lasts more than one day, please update the school daily. Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. You can request a leave of absence for exceptional circumstances by through MCAS or alternatively email attendance@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk or by collecting a form from Reception. Please keep medical evidence of absence e.g. appointment cards or letters, copies of prescriptions, pharmacy receipts etc in case you need them to provide more details on your child's return to school.



Student Medical Conditions: Please ensure school is made aware of any updates regarding students medical conditions, particularly if they can potentially have an impact on their time in school and require support. Please contact Mrs Walford mwalford@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk if you wish to discuss your case in detail.

Changes to Contact Details: If you move house, change your email address, mobile telephone number or work contact number, etc. **please remember you can make these changes via your child's [MCAS](#) account.**

Mobile Phones in School: From September 2026 we have had to update the school mobile phone policy in line with other schools nationally and in line with recent Government statutory guidance on mobile phones. Under Section 36 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act, state-funded schools in England must operate as mobile phone-free environments by default. The statutory guidance requires phones and smart devices to be prohibited throughout the entire school day—including lessons, breaktimes, lunchtimes, and lesson changeovers.

Pupils have all been informed on these changes which will commence from Monday 7th September 2026.

We please ask for your full support with this and ask you to discuss with them over the weekend, perhaps developing together as a family, similar restrictions for screen time and phone use at home and at the weekend.

We must also ask that you **DO NOT** attempt to message or call their phone during the school day. There will be no exceptions; the rule applies if a phone goes off whilst in the school bag or in the inside blazer pocket.

Students cannot use their phones to contact home under any circumstances. If there is an emergency, then the students can call from the school pastoral office and parents are able to call reception.

I would also ask for your full support understanding that a failure to follow these instructions, or any confrontational response to staff from students who have breached this school rule or once a phone is confiscated, will not be tolerated and may result in further disciplinary action. Failure to hand over the phone on request will result in escalated sanctions.

Please see the policy below, which is in the Student Code of Conduct in their planners and on our website:

'If a student is seen with or using a mobile phone on school premises during the school day, the phone will be confiscated to a secure place in school. On the first offence, the phone will be returned at the end of the school day, and a letter will be sent home. On a second offence, the phone will be returned at the end of the school day, a detention set, and a letter will be sent home. If a student breaks this rule again, the phone will be confiscated to a secure place in school, parents/carers will be informed who then may collect the phone during office hours. Repeated infringements would be seen as a breach of this Student Code of Conduct and further sanctions may follow.'

Considerate Parking: Thank you for your support and understanding when learning our routines for dropping and collecting students at school, this half term is a busy one and extracurricular clubs and trips are numerous thanks to our dedicated staff. Please **do not use school carparks** for dropping off in the morning or picking up at the end of the school day. The closest collection point is behind the fire station. Cars that attempt to drive in at the end of the day cause congestion and are a hazard. Please remember that this exit is also the main pedestrian exit from the school. If using the local area to park, please be considerate to our neighbours and local community. **Please do not 'drive by' to try and drop off or pick up or use surrounding roads** which get congested. Thank you for your co-operation.

After school activities and fixtures: if you are collecting your child from a fixture or activity after school, please do not park in the double bays at the front of the school and block other cars in.

Individual School Photos: take place on Thursday 10th September for Yrs. 7, 9, 11&12 students.

How to be a St Thomas More Student Information Evening (Yr7&8): takes place on Thursday 17th September, parents/carers will receive an email shortly with timings and full information for the evening.

Prayer of the Week

The prayer of St Thomas More – our School prayer

O Lord, give us a mind that is humble, quiet, peaceable, patient and charitable,
and a taste of your Holy Spirit in all our thoughts, words, and deeds.

O Lord, give us a lively faith, a firm hope, a fervent charity, a love of you.

Take from us all lukewarmness in meditation, and all dullness in prayer.

Give us fervour and delight in thinking of you, your grace and your tender compassion toward us.

Give us, good Lord, the grace to work for the things we pray for.

AMEN.

23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time

Matthew 18:15-20

Artwork: *When two or three are gathered in My Name* (1886-1894) by James Tissot



This week we hear from the Gospel according to St Matthew. Students and staff will have heard throughout this week about expectations and how the school will run, and the Gospel this week is part of a longer conversation between Lord Jesus Christ and His disciples (who you could argue are like His students and staff) where He tells them how they are to conduct themselves amongst each other. He gives a message of unity, forgiveness, commitment, and providing mutual support to the community.

Its a great discourse to hear from our Lord for our first week back at school, especially as for some this is their first time at this school all together. The passage this week ends with quite a famous quote from our Lord:

for when two or three are gathered in My Name, there am I among them

its a quote that some of us have probably heard before but because it can be used quite frequently to begin Christian gatherings there is a risk the impact of the statement could lessen. God is present everywhere, all at once. But in the same way that He can be always present but have a special presence in our school Chapel where He is physically present in our Tabernacle, He can be always present and have a special presence when people are specifically gathered in His name. As a Catholic school we can't ignore what this means for us. The existence of this school is in His name, us gathering for work or education here is in His name. This week I want to reflect on what it means to be gathered together at the beginning of this school year in His name. Will His presence influence how we decide to conduct ourselves? Where we put our priorities? Why or why not?

- Max Morris, Lay Chaplain

Chaplaincy News

Welcome! It's fantastic to see all the new and returning faces. Over the next couple of weeks we will have all Chaplaincy related clubs, events, and regular Liturgy will be posted to our notice board just outside the Chapel. Special events will also be advertised here. Looking forward to working with everyone again this year

Talks on Catholic Social Teaching: Caritas Brentwood have organised a number of talks around Catholic Social teaching from Clergy, religious Sisters, and Parishioners who have lived experience in instances of extreme poverty, seeking refuge, and being on the 'outside' of society in a vulnerable state.

The Scheduled talks are as follows:

Environment, Laudato Si' - Saturday, 26th September hosted by Brentwood Cathedral of St Mary & St Helen 9:45am arrivals - 12:30pm departures

Homelessness and the Cost of Living - Saturday, 17th October hosted by St Alban's Church, Elm Park 9:45am arrivals - 12:30pm departures

Refugees and People seeking asylum - Saturday, 14th November hosted by St Anne Line Church, South Woodford 12:45pm arrivals - 3:30pm departures

For full details or to book please visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/caritas-brentwood-events-4458423>

Our Assisi Catholic Trust Family

Schools	Parishes
 Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School and Nursery	Our Lady of Lourdes and St Joesph Msgr Kevin Hale
 St George's Catholic Primary School	St. George and The English Martyrs Fr. Brett
 Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School and Nursery	Sacred Heart of Jesus Fr. Graham
 St Helen's Catholic Primary School	Our Lady Helo of Christians and Saint Helen Fr. Alex
 St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	Our Lady of Canvey and English Martyrs Fr. Eamonn
 Holy Family Catholic Primary School	Holy Family and St Thomas More Fr. Eduard
 Our Lady of Ransom Catholic Primary School	Our Lady of Ransom Fr Paul
 St Teresa's Catholic Primary School	Catholic Church of St. Teresa and the Child Jesus Fr Viktor
 St Thomas More High School	St Peter's Fr. Jeff

COULD YOU BE A FOUNDATION TRUSTEE? [Assisi Catholic Trust](#) is currently seeking a foundation Trustee with experience or confidence in estates management; to support the development of the estates and our flourishing capital strategy covering buildings, digital infrastructure & technology and our asset management plan. If you, or someone you know, have these skills and a heart for supporting Catholic education, we would love to hear from you. Trustees play a vital role in ensuring strong oversight, value for money and long-term planning. If you are a practising Catholic and think you could serve our schools in this way, please contact the school office and speak to Mrs Ackred for an informal discussion.

Vacancies: Information for any vacancies in our Trust schools can be found on our [Assisi Catholic Trust Website](#)

1. St Thomas More High School - Cleaner and Finance Apprentice
2. Holy Family Catholic Primary School - Deputy Headteacher and LSA
3. Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School - Deputy Headteacher
4. St George's Catholic Primary School - Admin Apprentice; and
5. Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School - Admin Assistant

Spotlight on Wellbeing and Keeping Safe

Please don't forget that staff are here for you and your children, and you can get in touch with Mrs Walford via welfare@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk if you need some support. Parental factsheets on various topics are available on our website under the Safeguarding section, [Parent Fact Sheets \(st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk\)](https://st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk)

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

DEVELOPING HEALTHY SLEEP PATTERNS

Quality sleep is paramount for wellbeing as it impacts our cognitive function, emotional balance and overall health. A World Health Organisation study highlighted that 44% of young people reported difficulty sleeping – potentially affecting their mood, concentration and immune system. Our guide offers expert tips for helping children to sleep more healthily.

- 1 MINDFUL TECH USE**
Encourage a balanced approach to screen time. While phones, laptops, tablets and so on can serve as a helpful means of stress relief, it's advisable to minimise their use right before bed. These devices can keep the mind racing long after they're switched off, impacting how easily and how well a person can sleep.
- 2 EFFECTIVE SLEEP PRACTICES**
Offer practical advice on reinforcing certain habits that have a positive influence on sleeping patterns. Children could start keeping a diary which they add to each evening, for example – or they could use up excess energy by exercising during the day.
- 3 HYDRATION HABITS**
Underline the importance of drinking plenty of water throughout the day, while limiting drinks close to bedtime to prevent disruptions during the night: it's a lot harder to switch off if you keep needing to get out of bed for the toilet. Avoiding caffeinated drinks later in the day also allows the body and brain to slow down naturally, without any chemicals firing them back up.
- 4 CONSISTENT BEDTIME SCHEDULE**
Assist children in developing consistent bedtime routines that tell the body it's time to wind down, promoting a more relaxed state. Establish specific activities for young ones right before going to bed – such as brushing their teeth – to set up an association between that action and falling asleep.
- 5 OPTIMAL SLEEP ENVIRONMENT**
Ensure that the bedroom is comfortable, dark and free from distractions, fostering an ideal space for quality rest. The room's temperature should also be suitable for sleeping – that is, not too hot and not too cold – while rooms should be kept as tidy and free of clutter as possible.
- 6 RELAXING EVENING ACTIVITIES**
Recommend activities that have a calming effect on the mind – such as reading or gentle stretching – in the lead up to bedtime, to prepare the mind for a peaceful night's sleep. Doing something quiet, relaxing and low intensity signals to the brain that it's time to rest and makes falling asleep much easier.
- 7 PRIORITISING ADEQUATE SLEEP**
Emphasise the crucial role of sleep in maintaining physical and emotional wellbeing. It's especially important to sustain a healthy sleep pattern during challenging and intensive periods in our lives: during the exam season for children and young people, for instance.
- 8 NUTRITIONAL BALANCE**
Highlight the significance of a healthy, balanced diet – and its role in establishing a more consistent sleep pattern. Try to lean towards preparing meals with plenty of fruit and vegetables, served in reasonable portion sizes: not only is this a lot healthier, but it also reduces the chances of feeling too full to be comfortable in bed.
- 9 PARENTAL SUPPORT**
Parents and carers, of course, are uniquely situated to support their children in establishing and maintaining healthy sleeping habits. Parents can review their own sleep habits (incorporating anything from this list that they don't do already) to model a balanced bedtime routine and reinforce the importance of self-care.
- 10 MILITARY SLEEP METHOD**
Look up "the military sleep method": it's a technique for falling asleep quickly, which incorporates deep breathing exercises. You could encourage children to try it or even use it yourself. While it can take a good deal of practice to perfect, eventually it will start to feel natural – and the results are often extremely impressive!

Meet Our Expert
Minds Ahead design and deliver the UK's only specialist postgraduate mental health qualifications. Winner of the Social Enterprise UK 'One to Watch' award, the charity provides training and support to education organisations and local authorities. This guide has been written by Adam Gillett – a learning and development specialist who is also Associate Vice-Principal for Personal Development at a large secondary school.

#WakeUpWednesday
The National College

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Departmental News



Our [Amazon Wishlist](#)! Friends, family and alumni can donate directly to the school library. We still accept preloved copies from home you may wish to donate, but student and departmental requests for library stock can be found here. The book wish list is chosen and updated by the Library team as texts that benefit the student's reading comprehension, engagement with the curriculum and foster an interest in reading.



Alumnus of the Month: [June 2026](#)



Aspire: online resources for all things careers/universities and apprenticeships, great for those not sure of the opportunities after GCSE's (POST 16) and A levels (POST 18). Click to find out more [The Aspire Guide - Flipbook - Page 1 \(paperturn-view.com\)](#)

Connexions Events: a list of 6th Form and colleges open events for 2025/26 can be found [here](#).

[Webinars & Workshops - Amazing Apprenticeships](#)

[The Telegraph Media Literacy Programme 2026 :: Telegraph Media Group Jobs](#)

Where Next booklet is a useful tool for parent/carers to use to help support theirs and their child's understanding of what careers pathways and next steps they can actively support them taking

CAREERS NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is a collation of all the opportunities we have heard about from employers and universities. Please use the links included to read more information and apply to anything you are interested in. Links are underlined.

Careers Newsletter can be found [here](#).



Sports News

Fixtures

DATE	FIXTURE
Mon 7 Sep	Year 7 Football Trials - A/D/G Year 7 Basketball Trials - P/S/V
Tue 8 Sep	Year 7 Football Trials - P/S/V Year 7 Basketball Trials - A/D/G
Wed 9 Sep	Year 9 Football Trials
Thu 10 Sep	Year 8 Football Trials
Fri 11 Sep	No Fixtures

PE Extracurricular Timetable

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
7.45 - 8.30 am	Sixth Form Gym (IFA) '5 Ball Basketball' Year 9-11 (RHE)	All Years Astro (RDY) All Years Badminton/Volleyball (SB) Year 9-11 Gym (LSH)	Sixth Form Gym (IFA) Yr7-10 Indoor Athletics (AAC) Sports Hall	Yr9-10 Track & Field Fitness Suite (AAC) Darts Club in PE1 (SB) Year 7 &8 Futsal (EK)	Sixth Form Gym (IFA) Yr7-10 MDR - Run Club Green Gate (AAC) Sixth Form Basketball (SB)
1.35 - 2.25pm	Year 7 Basketball (RDY) Year 11 Astro (NSP) Sixth Form Girls Gym (GRO)	Year 10 Astro (TH) Year 10 & 11 Basketball (SB/RHE)	Year 8 Astro (LSH) Year 8 & 9 Basketball (JTB/NSP)	Raket Sports (JH) Year 7 Astro (JTB)	Year 9 Astro (RDY) Sixth Form in Sports Hall (SB)
3.30 - 4.45pm	Year 7 Football Training (JTB) FIXTURES	Year 8 Football Training (LSH) FIXTURES	FIXTURES/MEETINGS	Year 9 Football Training (RDY) FIXTURES	Year 10 Football Training (MH/AH) FIXTURES

