



CONTACT

No. 1737 – Thursday 16th July 2026



As we come to the end of the school year which seems to have flown by and this morning, we celebrated together in our end of term Presentations Assembly. It was wonderful to congratulate all the achievements of our staff and students and recognise that true 'Tommy More Spirit'. One of the highlights is the overwhelming amount of money that students and staff have raised for our charities, the end of year total stands at a whopping £9,923.21.

We continue to be hugely grateful to all staff but particularly those that are sadly leaving us this year. Mrs Summers, Mrs McArthur, Mr Evans, Mr Maguire, Mrs Hudson & Mr Maxfield leave us for a mixture of promotions, retirement and new opportunities and new locations. I want to thank all of them for their service, dedication, and commitment to our school community. We wish them every happiness for the future, whether it be moving to a new school or developing a new career path. We ask God to watch over them and bless them wherever they are and assure them of our prayers and wish the best for them in the future. I wish you all a very happy and enjoyable Summer, please keep in your prayers our students receiving examination results this year and we will all look forward to seeing students return in September. Start of Term: Yrs. 7 & 12 return to school on for their induction day on Thursday 3rd September, all students return to school on Friday 4th September (Timetable Week 1). Our school calendar dates are on the website for the next academic year.

Tuesday 1 st September	Wednesday 2 nd September	Thursday 3 rd September	Friday 4 th September
INSET Day - no pupils	INSET Day - no pupils	Year 7 & 12 only	All Students return

Period	Timings
Registration	8.45 – 9.10
P1	9.10 – 10.10
P2	10.10 – 11.10
BREAK	11.10 - 11.30
P3	11.30 – 12.30
P4	12.30 – 1.30
LUNCH	1.30 – 2.30
P5	2.30 – 3.30

Uniform Expectations for September: To ensure your child is prepared for the new school year with the correct full school uniform & PE Kit (as shown/listed below), please can you replace any lost/missing items over the summer break. PE Kit items can be purchased [HERE](#) and links included in the table below to purchase items/school badges.

UNIFORM LIST - ALL ITEMS SHOULD BE CLEARLY NAMED IN INDELIBLE INK		
Outdoor	Overcoat	Sensible outdoor coat/anorak preferably one that will be visible and waterproof. Outdoor coats should not be worn inside classrooms
	Bag	A strong bag for books and school equipment (preferably with two shoulder straps to prevent back strain)
	Shoes	Plain Black shoes (trainers are NOT allowed)
Indoor	Blazer	Regulation black blazer with St Thomas More school badge from school outfitters Black Blazers may be purchased from any outfitter. Badges available only from School outfitters: School Wear Centre or Danielles Shop
	Trousers	Black, NOT jeans, chinos or joggers (optional-simple black belt with no logos)
	Shirt	White (long or short sleeved) must be tucked in
	Tie	St Thomas More tie from school outfitters . Replacements via MCAS
	Socks	Plain black
	Pullover	V neck or cardigan plain black (round neck or sweatshirts, hooded or zipped up tops are NOT allowed and may be confiscated)

ST THOMAS MORE HIGH SCHOOL

PE KIT

FOR ALL STUDENTS

At St Thomas More High School, we believe the right kit helps every student perform with confidence, participate fully and represent our school with pride.

Please ensure your child has the correct PE kit for all lessons.

PE KIT INCLUDES:

- White tempo training shirt
- Black fitted sweatshirt
- Black shorts or tracksuit bottoms
- Black socks
- Appropriate footwear (moulded football boots/astros and trainers)

VIEW OUR FULL PE KIT RANGE
Visit our online store to see our complete collection of PE kit.

SHOP ONLINE:
<https://st-thomas-more-high-school.greindeporteswear.co.uk/kits/football-training-wear/>

BUILT FOR PERFORMANCE
Quality kit designed for active learning

COMFORT & MOVEMENT
Lightweight, breathable and ready for sport

PART OF OUR COMMUNITY
Wear it with pride

CORRECT KIT MATTERS
Helps keep everyone safe and included

READY | RESPECTFUL | SAFE

GOD'S SERVANT FIRST

ST THOMAS MORE HIGH SCHOOL

UNIFORM EXPECTATIONS

SCHOOL BLAZER

SCHOOL TIE

WHITE SHIRT

BLACK TROUSERS

BLACK SOCKS

BLACK SHOES

Free School Meals: [Application for FSM - St Thomas More High School](#)

Due to government changes more families may now be eligible for free school meals. If you think you may be eligible please complete your details on the link above.

COULD YOUR CHILD BE ELIGIBLE FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS?

New government changes from **September 2026** mean more families may now qualify for **Free School Meals**, Even if they haven't been eligible before.

We are asking all families to complete a quick **Free School Meals eligibility check** as you may qualify if you receive universal credit

A SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION COULD PROVIDE:

- Free healthy meals during the school day
- Additional funding to support your child's learning and wellbeing
- Extra support and opportunities within school

Please complete the form before the end of term to ensure eligible pupils can receive meals from the start of the academic year in September 2026

Prayer of the Week

As we start the summer holidays we use the prayer our Lord taught us;

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
AMEN

16th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Matthew 13:24-43

Artwork: Let the Children come to Me (1862) Emile Vernet-Lecomte



This week we hear from the Gospel according to St Matthew. In this passage our Lord Jesus Christ gives us the parables of; the wheat and the weeds, and of the mustard seed. The first describing a patient landowner who allows wheat and weeds to grow side-by-side until the harvest. and the other about tiny seeds and small measures of yeast that quietly and invisibly grow to transform everything around them.

This is a very appropriate Gospel to conclude our school year. We can see the 'good wheat' of the year in our achievements, friendships and the great memories we have made, but inevitably there have been 'weeds' like stress, busy schedules, and fatigue. Some of us might put our own actions in the 'weeds' category - a joke between friends that went too far, an assignment or revision that we put off for too long, or a difficult attitude at some points. Just as we want God to be patient with us, we have been patient with our lives, and as we close this school chapter we can harvest - we can take the good wheat and reap the benefits of the positives of our year and use them throughout the summer holidays. Taking the growth in character and talent, use them to make a positive difference in the lives of those around us, or simply be happy with the amount of goodness we have managed to harvest in our lives. But we also have to address the weeds. Not dwell on them, not make them define us, instead we get rid of the weeds, and look to produce less of them next year.

Even the most beautiful field or farm has some weeds, noticing the weeds doesn't suddenly make it an ugly landscape or a useless farm. Just like we all have some things we can improve on, and that fact doesn't reduce our value as people.

So over the summer be joyful for the great accomplishments you've achieved, and reflect on the past year, get rid of any hang-ups you have on things that have gone wrong - remove them and be ready to start new in September. Have a blessed summer holiday.

- Max Morris, Lay Chaplain

Chaplaincy News

A massive Thank you! We would like to thank everyone who has been involved in the running or organisation of Masses, Chaplaincy related events, daily prayers, charity events, and clubs. It has been an incredible year with more events, more prayer, and more money raised. I could not list every individual who has helped, there have been so many! But please know that all your work is greatly appreciated. Have a fruitful and prayerful summer!

Chaplain's charity haircut: Thank you to everyone who has supported the sponsored haircut so far. **we have reached our £1000 target.** Exact amount is not known as donations from Sacred Heart of Jesus and St John Fisher parishes are still being counted. The sponsored period will end today (16/07/2026). Thank you to everyone who donated and supported this fundraising event!

Catholic Citizenship Award Success: We are delighted to share the wonderful news that **Brandon and Andrea** were presented with their **Catholic Citizenship Awards** at a special ceremony held at **Brentwood Cathedral** on **Friday 10th July**. These awards recognise individuals who demonstrate outstanding commitment to the values of the Gospel through their actions and character. Brandon and Andrea were recognised for their **resilience, unwavering support for others, and remarkable courage during times of difficulty**. They are truly deserving recipients, and we are incredibly proud of all they have achieved. Our sincere thanks go to **Mr Carey** and **Mr Cockell** for accompanying Brandon and Andrea to the awards ceremony and supporting them on this special occasion. Congratulations to Brandon and Andrea on this well-deserved recognition. They are wonderful ambassadors for our school community, living out our mission and values each day. Mrs Lindsay



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.

Foundation Governor Vacancy – Sacred Heart Primary School: Are you passionate about Catholic education and making a positive difference in the lives of children? We are seeking a committed and enthusiastic **Foundation Governor** to join the Governing Board of our school. Appointed by the Diocese, Foundation Governors play a vital role in supporting the school's Catholic mission, providing strategic leadership, and helping to ensure the best possible outcomes for all pupils. No previous governance experience is required – training and support will be provided. We welcome applications from practising Catholics who can bring their skills, experience, and commitment to serving our school community. If you would like to contribute to the future of Catholic education and make a real impact, we would love to hear from you. For more information, please speak with Father Graham or contact the school office 01702 414200 or office@sacredheart.southend.sch.uk

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

Parent Reminders and Student Information

Staying safe around water:

[Strategy | National Water Safety Forum](#)

[Child drowning prevention: Water safety for kids](#)

[Water Safety and Drowning First Aid | British Red Cross](#)

[Respect the Water – National Drowning Prevention Campaign](#)

[Everything you need to know if you're heading to the beach with your family.](#)

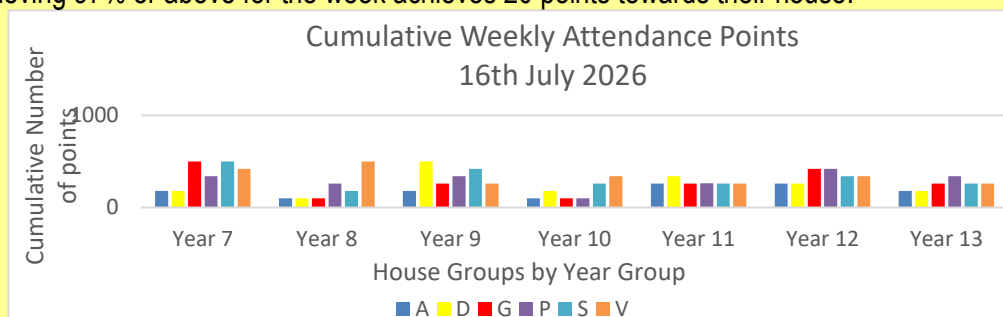


Term Dates: Please find the term dates [2026/2027](#)

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 school gateway 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.

House Attendance Points: The form with the highest attendance in the year group gets 100 points each week and every form achieving 97% or above for the week achieves 20 points towards their house.



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.**

Parking Reminder: Despite persistent reminders, parents are still parking dangerously by the red gate exit at the end of each day. This is extremely dangerous as students, particularly those on cycles must swerve to get around illegally parked vehicles. We have contacted the Local Authority, and if it continues, we have been asked to record number plates of offending vehicles to pass on to the traffic department. Could you please co-operate for the safety of our students.

Big Future Survey - Children's Commissioner: Dame Rachel de Souza, Children's Commissioner:

In the five years since my first survey of England's children, the landscape of childhood has changed rapidly. Mental health referrals have increased by around half a million, more children are spending long periods of time online, and a growing number require additional support at school. How the government responds to those changes will shape what it's like to grow up in England for years to come. Listening once is never enough. This will be my third and final major survey of children. Speaking to children, asking them what they want, and acting on it, has been the approach I want to be the hallmark of my time as Children's Commissioner. There is a growing sense – in Westminster, in the media, and

our wider national mood – that something is going wrong with childhood. Older generations believe the young are worse off than they were, and this belief is starting to trickle down the age range: childhood is not what it once was. This is unsurprising, in some ways. This generation of children is on the brink of adulthood, having witnessed huge change: from the impact of the pandemic, to rising crime in their communities, to the new dominance of AI and tech. These are things that are shaping children's lives now – not just things to worry about in the future. Childhood is changing – but we are struggling to express how, why, or exactly how we feel about it. We are finding it even harder to respond. And throughout all this change, decision makers are failing to listen to them. When their schools closed, they were not consulted. We reopened pubs before we reopened schools. When they told us about the dangerous things they were seeing online, we were too slow to act. More children spend more time online than ever, seeing worse content. They have told us how to make their homes and communities safer – yet one million still live in destitution, after years of consistently rising child poverty. But we know how to improve things. When we listen to children about the new and emerging challenges in their lives: the things that worry them, the things they love, the ways they have fun, and the changes they want for a better future. Please encourage your young people to take part in the survey <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/TheBigFuture/>

There is also a link on the Teams page for their year group as an assignment. Thank you so much for your continued support. Mrs Lindsay

Great British Summer Savings Scheme: From 25 June to 1 September 2026, the Government is temporarily cutting VAT from 20% to 5% on children's meals in restaurants, children and family tickets to cinemas, theatres, concerts and exhibitions, and admission to a wide range of attractions. Combined with free bus travel during August for children aged 5 to 15 in England, families and young people will be able to enjoy experiences that make summer special, including visits to the kinds of cultural and educational attractions that enrich children's lives outside the classroom. As part of this campaign, the **attraction finder** website which allows families to type in their postcode and find participating venues near them to make the most of summer savings has been launched. To use the attraction finder, please visit <https://summersavings.gov.uk>.

C2C Summer Family Offer: Adults can travel from London to Southend-on-Sea with £15 return fares when booked at least one day in advance for off-peak travel between 21 July and 31 August. Children travel for just £2, and under-fives travel free. [You can find all the details here.](#)

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 \(st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk\)](#)



Resources for children

SHOUT to 85258. Shout provides free, 24/7 text support for young people across the UK experiencing a mental health crisis.

Young Minds www.youngminds.org.uk Information and advice for young people on mental health. Call to parents helpline: 08088025544 (Monday – Friday 09.30am – 4pm).

Kooth, anonymous, online counselling for children and young people.

The Mix www.themix.org.uk Freephone 08088084994. Mental health advice and support for anyone under 25.

NHS 111 To get urgent mental health advice from the NHS, call 111 and select the mental health option. NHS 111 can support anyone who is feeling unsafe, distressed or worried about their mental health. They can also give information and advice about what to do if you're worried about someone else. If you would rather get help online, you can use [111 online](#).

Papyrus Phone: 0300 102 2470; Text: 88247; Email pat@papyrus-uk.org Confidential advice and support if you're struggling with suicidal thoughts, and information about how to make a safety plan.

Samaritans offer a safe place for you to talk any time you like, in your own way – about whatever's getting to you. Call free any time, from any phone, on 116 123.

Apps for young people

Calm Harm - Support to manage or resist the urges to self-harm.

Clear Fear - To help young people to manage symptoms of anxiety.

Move Mood - Support for young people to manage low mood and depression.

Worth Warrior - For young people to help manage low self-worth and poor body image.

Combined Minds - For family and friends to provide mental health support.

SET CAMHS [Southend, Essex and Thurrock \(SET\) CAMHS | NELFT NHS Foundation Trust](#)

Resources for parents

MindEd for Families - MindEd was created by experts and parents together to provide safe and reliable advice about young people's mental health.

YoungMinds | Mental Health Charity For Children And Young People | YoungMinds Young Minds offer services to parents and carers who are concerned about their child's mental health through telephone, email and webchat

Samaritans - Tel: 116123

Anna Freud Centre of Excellence for Children and Families - The Anna Freud Centre is a mental health charity for children and families.

NHS 111 To get urgent mental health advice from the NHS, call 111 and select the mental health option. NHS 111 can support anyone who is feeling unsafe, distressed or worried about their mental health. They can also give information and advice about what to do if you're worried about someone else. If you would rather get help online, you can use [111 online](#).

Video Resources to support your neurodivergent child - Essex Short Breaks Video resources for supporting your neurodiverse child, developed with Essex County Council

Supporting your neurodivergent child booklet [Supporting Your Neurodiverse Child](#)

Essex Family forum – parent carer forum for parents with children with additional needs up to age of 25 [Home | Essex Family Forum](#)

SET CAMHS Instagram [Essex CAMHS \(@set_camhs_nhs\) • Instagram photos and videos](#) CHECK LINK OR ADD QR?

Virtual workshops for MHST schools/parents/young people via Eventbrite [NELFT Essex MHST Events - 30 Upcoming Activities and Tickets | Eventbrite](#)

Please remember there is also the opportunity to join the many parents/carers who have gained the National College Parents' Certificate in Online Safety which will give you further insights into how to navigate the online world with your son/daughter.

Please use the following link and select Parent/Carer as your role:

<https://nationalcollege.com/enrol/st-thomas-more-high-school>

The course, presented by Myleene Klass can be completed in your own time, in a total of under 45 minutes. Please select the link that is appropriate to your son/daughter's age:

<https://nationalcollege.com/courses/os-for-parents-carers-of-children-aged-11-14>

<https://nationalcollege.com/courses/os-for-parents-carers-of-children-aged-14-18>

St Thomas More Achieves Healthy Learning, Healthy Lives Accreditation for a Further Three Years: We are delighted to share the fantastic news that **St Thomas More High School has successfully renewed its Healthy Learning, Healthy Lives Accreditation for a further three years.** This prestigious accreditation recognises our ongoing commitment to promoting the health, wellbeing and personal development of every member of our school community. It reflects the work that takes place every day to ensure our pupils are supported not only academically, but also physically, emotionally and socially. The Healthy Learning, Healthy Lives framework celebrates schools that provide a whole-school approach to wellbeing. At St Thomas More, this includes:



- A broad and engaging Personal Development and RSHE curriculum that equips pupils with the knowledge and skills to make informed, healthy choices.
- Opportunities for physical activity through PE, extracurricular clubs, inter-school competitions and Trust sporting events.
- Strong pastoral care and safeguarding systems that ensure pupils feel safe, supported and listened to.
- Promotion of positive mental health and emotional wellbeing through targeted support, wellbeing initiatives and partnerships with external agencies.
- Encouraging healthy eating and informed lifestyle choices through education and our school catering provision.
- Providing opportunities for leadership, volunteering and community engagement, helping pupils to develop confidence, resilience and a sense of social responsibility.

The reaccreditation is the result of the dedication and hard work of our staff, pupils, governors, parents and wider community, all of whom play an important role in creating a school environment where young people can flourish. We are particularly proud that the accreditation recognises the way wellbeing is embedded throughout school life rather than being viewed as a standalone initiative. Our Catholic ethos encourages us to nurture the whole person, ensuring that every pupil is valued, supported and inspired to achieve their full potential. We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the accreditation process and to the many wellbeing initiatives that take place throughout the year. Achieving this award for another three years is an important milestone, but we remain committed to continually developing and enhancing our provision so that every pupil has the opportunity to lead a healthy, happy and successful life. We look forward to building on this success and continuing to place the health and wellbeing of our pupils at the heart of everything we do. Mrs Lindsay

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. If students have overdue library books, you should have received an overdue notice and may be charged an overdue fee per book via Gateway. To have the overdue notice removed, students can return the book, pay the fee, or replace the missing book with a new copy.

Junior Librarian end of year meeting:



We hope you enjoy our fifth edition of More News. Thank you to all of the writers, content creators, illustrators, and featured staff who have given up their time to create our wonderful school newspaper. If you would like to be involved in future editions, please contact Mrs Lewis. Wishing you and your families a wonderful summer break. Mrs Lewis

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

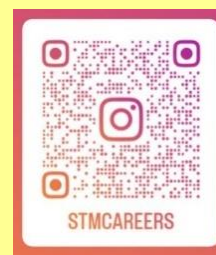
Aspire: online resources for all things careers/universities and apprenticeships, great for those not sure of the opportunities after GCSE's (POST 16) and A levels (POST 18). Click to find out more [The Aspire Guide - Flipbook - Page 1 \(paperturn-view.com\)](#)



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](#).

Year 10 Explore Their Post-16 Options: On **Thursday 9th July**, our Year 10 students took part in a dedicated **Post-16 Options Morning**, designed to help them begin thinking about the exciting opportunities available after Year 11. The morning began with an overview of the different pathways students can choose from after GCSEs, including sixth forms, colleges, apprenticeships and vocational courses. Students also heard from our **Director of Sixth Form Ms Corr**, who shared information about the many opportunities available at **St Thomas More Sixth Form**, including our broad curriculum, enrichment opportunities and the entry requirements for joining us in Year 12. Students then had the opportunity to hear from a range of our Heads of Department, who showcased the exciting A Level and Level 3 courses available at St Thomas More. Subjects included **Religious Education/Philosophy, Geography, History, Politics, Sport, Sociology, Film Studies, Media Studies, English Literature and English Language**, giving students a real insight into what studying these subjects at a higher level involves. We encourage all parents and carers to explore our **new and improved school website**, where you will find a wealth of information about the different post-16 pathways, our Sixth Form provision and guidance to support your young person as they begin planning for their future. As students move into Year 11, it is important to remember that **applications for sixth forms and colleges typically open from the beginning of October**. Throughout the autumn term there will also be numerous **open evenings and open events**, providing an excellent opportunity for families to visit providers, speak to staff and students, and find out more about the courses on offer. If you would like impartial advice or have any questions about post-16 education, the **Southend Careers Service** offers a drop-in service at **The Forum, Southend**, every **Friday**, where advisers are available to provide guidance and support. Planning early helps students make informed decisions, and we look forward to supporting our Year 10 students throughout the next year as they prepare for the exciting transition to Post-16 education. If you have any questions at all about the career paths which are available arrange to speak to our Careers Co-ordinator Mrs Bradley or Careers Leader Mrs Lindsay for more information. Mrs Lindsay



Crossing the river - Brain teaser

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vTWfsUZSCXo>

Maths Problem of the Week: link to a Youtube video problem included. It can be stopped after 39 seconds and then the solution is given.

Answer to last week's problem: 6 cm.

Japan

Today I pass the time reading
a favorite haiku,
saying the few words over and over.

It feels like eating
the same small, perfect grape
again and again.

I walk through the house reciting it
and leave its letters falling
through the air of every room.

I stand by the big silence of the piano and say it.
I say it in front of a painting of the sea.
I tap out its rhythm on an empty shelf.

I listen to myself saying it,
then I say it without listening,
then I hear it without saying it.

And when the dog looks up at me,
I kneel down on the floor
and whisper it into each of his long white ears.

It's the one about the one-ton temple bell
with the moth sleeping on its surface,

and every time I say it, I feel the excruciating
pressure of the moth
on the surface of the iron bell.

When I say it at the window,
the bell is the world
and I am the moth resting there.

When I say it at the mirror,
I am the heavy bell
and the moth is life with its papery wings.

And later, when I say it to you in the dark,
you are the bell,
and I am the tongue of the bell, ringing you,

and the moth has flown
from its line
and moves like a hinge in the air above our bed.

By [Billy Collins](#)
[japan](#)

