



## **St. Thomas More High School**

*An Academy Trust in the Diocese of Brentwood (Reg No: 7696989)*

**Headteacher: Mrs G. Ackred**

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# **CONTACT**

*No. 1320 – Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2015*

Dear Parents and Pupils,

I hope that you have all enjoyed a safe and happy summer break and are ready for the challenges of a new academic year. We welcome all students and staff who are new to the school and hope that they all settle quickly into life at St Thomas More.

## **Exam Results**

### **A2 RESULTS**

A* - B	40%
A* - C	72.5%
A* - E	99.7%

### **AS RESULTS**

A - B	25%
A - C	52.4%
A - E	91%

### **GCSE RESULTS**

5+ A* - C %	84.7
5+ A* - C % inc. Eng & Maths	67.4
5+ A* - C inc. Eng, Maths & Science	66.7
3 Levels of Progress in English	67.4
3 Levels of Progress in Maths	81.8
4 Levels of Progress in English	28.9
4 Levels of Progress in Maths	37.1

Many congratulations to all the students on their achievements in the summer exams. We are very pleased with the outcomes for our students which greatly improved upon last year's achievements. At GCSE 71.5% of boys achieved an A\* - C grade in English and a fantastic 90.3% achieved an A\* - C grade in Maths. The atmosphere on both results days in August was energetic throughout the morning, with the majority of students collecting their results in person. Pleasingly, the vast majority of the students received due reward for their hard work over the last five years. It was also fantastic that so many staff were able to spend the morning celebrating alongside the delighted and excited pupils. My thanks to all the staff who gave up family time in the holidays to come into school and help with our exams clinics to ensure students of our school were guided and supported in their next steps.

We are very proud of the collective and the individual successes which have been hard fought for and richly earned. We are delighted that so many of our students have chosen to continue their studies with us in our Sixth Form and welcome many new students who all hope to build on their successes. We hope they all draw confidence from their achievements and with a real sense of pride, work hard and enjoy their time at St Thomas More High School.

**Inaugural Assembly** – On Thursday morning we held our Inaugural Assembly and welcomed our new Year 7 and Year 12 students. At this assembly our Head Boy, Head Girl, their Deputies and the House Captains and Leaders all received their badges of office. We look forward to moving the House system forward this academic year and thank you to all those who had already sewn House badges onto blazer pockets in the summer.



Location of badges on school blazers



## Highlight of the Week

**Former Students' Success** – I was delighted to receive an email from the parents of former student, George Gillett, who attained a 1st class BA Honours degree in Medical Sciences Cellular Physiology and Pharmacology at the University of Oxford. He has now begun 3 years of Clinical Medicine training at the University of Oxford attached to the John Radcliffe Hospital. They also wrote: 'As well as wanting to let his teachers know how he's got on, I also wanted to give St Thomas More the opportunity to shout about its success, so that other boys and girls don't feel they need to go to a grammar school to get on'.

I also received a letter from the Head of department at the Royal Holloway University of London informing me that former students, Kyle Hodge and Alex Merenda both received Upper Second Class Honours Degrees in Geoscience and Geology, respectively.

It is always nice to hear of the successes of our former students – congratulations and well done to all of them.

### Weekly Prayer

*Lord God,*

*Today is the first step on a new leg of my journey through life – a new chapter in my journey with you.*

*Be in all things this term, and turn them to your good.*

*Heal what is wrong, perfect what is good, bind up what is broken,  
and help us all to see your love shining through.*

*Amen.*

### **Some reminders concerning school procedures are as follows:**

**Leave of Absence Requests** - I would like to remind our readers that parents whose children are on a school register have a duty to ensure that their children attend regularly and if they fail to do so, they may be prosecuted under the terms of the 1993 Education Act.

As from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment), the amendments make clear that the Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to your child's educational progress. A student who takes 10 days absence will only attain 94.7% attendance in the year. 10 days absence also means the student will miss 50 hours of education. There is no entitlement to parents to take their child out of school during term time; however, you may apply to the school for leave of absence if you believe there are exceptional circumstances.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday taken, the case will be referred to the Child and Family Early Intervention Team who may issue a Penalty Notice for £120 (or £60 if paid within 21 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.

**School Car Park** - I would remind parents that the school car-parks are not to be used by parents for picking up, in their cars, their sons or daughters at the end of the school day. The closest collection point is behind the fire station and I would ask parents to make use of this rather than the school grounds. I regret that we do not have the room in the car parks. Cars that are driven in at the end of the day for this purpose cause congestion and are a hazard. Please remember that this exit is also the main pedestrian exit from the school.



**School Pay Phone** – Could parents please ensure that sons/daughters have some loose change for the pay phone and also remember to write their contact telephone numbers in the School Planner. The Reception phone can be used in **EMERGENCIES ONLY**.

**Mobile Phones** – A reminder of the rules for mobile phones:

*As in previous years, the rules for mobile phones in school remains the same mobile phones should not be brought into school. However, the decision to provide your child with a mobile phone to give parents/cares reassurance that they can contact their child whilst travelling alone on public transport or journeys to and from school, is made on the understanding that the mobile should be **switched off completely** whilst at school, not merely silenced or on divert or vibrate.*

*In order to reduce the risk of theft or loss during the school day, students who carry mobile phones must keep them concealed, not advertise that they have them, and mark them clearly with their name.*

*St Thomas More, the Governing Body and school staff accept no responsibility for replacing mobile phones that are lost, stolen or damaged whilst on the school premises, or on school sponsored functions.*

*St Thomas More, the Governing Body and school staff accept no responsibility for students who lose or have mobile phones stolen whilst travelling to and from school.*

*If a student is seen with, or using a mobile phone on school premises, the phone will be confiscated to a secure place in school and returned at the end of the school day and a letter will be sent home on a first offence. 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. The phone will not be returned to the student. Repeated infringements would be seen as a breach of the Student Behaviour Policy and sanctions may follow.*

*It is understood that parents/carers accept this change of practice unless they contact the school directly to express their non-acceptance.*

A reminder that, during PE practical lessons, valuables, including mobile phones, should be placed in the tray which is made available to students at the start of every lesson. It would also be advisable not to bring an expensive phone into school.

**Lost Property** – Please ensure that all items of clothing and equipment are marked with a full name (not just initials) and take care not to leave belongings behind in classes or the playground, etc. It is expensive and wasteful to replace items when they could easily be returned to their owner.



**Absence Line** – Could parents please ensure that, when calling the Absence Line, they give details of their child's absence, rather than just saying that they won't be in school. Thank you for your support.

**Changes to Contact Details** – If you have moved house, changed your email address, mobile telephone number or work contact number, etc., please remember to email the changes to: [datacollection@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk](mailto:datacollection@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk)

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**School Photographs** – A reminder that the school photographer will be in school on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September.

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**Duke of Edinburgh Gold** - This July saw our D of E Gold group completed their Expedition section. They walked for four days in North Wales. On the first day they walked up Snowdon, which is the tallest mountain in Wales and England. They experienced height gains and views that they have never seen before, since Essex is so flat! The weather provided us with lovely sunshine and only a bit of rain, which is good for North Wales. However our students showed excellent navigation and team working skills meaning that their assessor was really impressed with them all. I would also like to say how impressed I am with all of the students



on the Gold; they really worked well, pushed themselves and improved massively. I am really proud of them especially as they are our first group of students to complete the expedition section for Gold at our school. Ms Statovci



I also received a lovely email from Mark Leather, DofE Gold Award Assessor who wrote *“I had the pleasure of informing two groups of students from your school that they had successfully met the conditions required for the expedition section of the gold award. The groups were well mannered, affable, and excellent ambassadors for both the Award and their school. They were well prepared for the rigours of an expedition in Snowdonia by their teacher, Miss Statovci. I very much hope they will go on to complete the award which, at this level, says so much about a young person's character and capabilities.”* May I add my congratulation to these students and my great thanks to Ms Statovci for the hard work she has put into preparing these students so thoroughly. Mrs Ackred

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**Transition Summer School** – We were very pleased that 22 boys were able to attend Summer School this year. The boys gained skills and confidence through a variety of activities. Each day we enjoyed a buffet breakfast together, then walking to the Chapel for our daily prayers and reflection, before our activities began. It was a delight for staff to watch the progress of all the boys in their successful journey to independence!!



The orienteering training and trip to Belfairs Woods was good fun and very informative whilst the Physical Theatre provided a great opportunity for boys to exhibit skills in sport, dance, acting and team building. Literacy and



Numeracy activities were creative and encouraged even the most reluctant learner to produce a great piece of writing and develop their Numeracy skills. The boys were able to establish some good routines and dispel some of their anxieties about making the transition into Secondary school helping them (and some of their classmates) make a smooth move into St Thomas More High School. We are grateful to the parents of these boys for giving their time in getting boys to and from the school and joining our celebration at the end of the week. Great thanks to Mrs Maxfield, Ms Caten, Mr Corr, Mrs Maxfield and two older pupils who worked the week tirelessly and with good humour, thanks also to those who supplied resources and ideas. Mrs Lewis, Pupil Support Co-ordinator.

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**Youth St Vincent de Paul Success!** On Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> July some of our students took time out of their holidays, to spend the afternoon helping at a Saint Vincent de Paul Strawberry tea party, held at Nazareth House.



The Strawberry tea party was an afternoon of music, food, free raffle and good company. It was especially for those of advancing years or those living on their own.



I would like to thank these young men for their hard

work on the day: Dylan-Gearoid O'Sullivan, Kyle Rogers, Nicolo Burzotta, Xavier Grant, and David Young. The boys were exemplary in their efforts on the day. They interacted with the guests with maturity, enthusiasm and empathy. They were truly a credit to the school. A big thank you must go to

Mrs. Caten for volunteering on the day also.

The day was the first event as part of Youth Saint Vincent de Paul (YSVP) - or 'Mini Vinnies' - and was a total success. The hope is to build on this very positive start in the forthcoming academic year. For anyone interested in volunteering their services to YSVP please come and see me in RE2 every Wednesday at 1.35pm to discuss our next activities.

Mr. F McCague, YSVP co-ordinator.

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**Year 11 Double Award Science GCSE results for summer 2015** - All students who sat their Core science GCSE exams last June will be able to obtain their final result from their respective teachers if they haven't done so already. This is an actual GCSE result and will need to be used to gain entry onto post 16 courses.

Students this year are now starting their Additional science GCSE courses making up the second part of their double award. This year's course content is entirely different to that which students studied in year 10.

Mr Clunn, Head of Science.

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**C2C SmartCard** - I am pleased to announce that C2C are offering discount for St Thomas More High School Students on C2C Rail Service. .

Go to ([www.c2c-online.co.uk/studentsave](http://www.c2c-online.co.uk/studentsave)) and follow the 5 step process to getting the card and discount with links on each step. At the end of each step there is a prompt for the next one so as to make it clear what needs to be done.

These steps are as below:

- 1 - Apply for your card
- 2 - Create an online account with the same address used in the application
- 3 - Collect your card from your school
- 4 - Go to the special web portal to access your discount
- 5 - Buy your ticket\*

\*When purchasing your ticket for the first time you will need to add the Smartcard to the account as a delivery method so we know where to send the ticket to.

More information will be displayed in the school next week. Ms Corr, Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form.



**Board Games Needed** – If you have any board games that you no longer require, please could you kindly donate them to our games club? They can be handed in at reception. Thank you for your support. Ms Rattenbury, SENCo.

**Catering Assistant Required** – We are looking to employ a catering assistant for 20 hours per week. Please email Mrs Newman: [anewman@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk](mailto:anewman@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk) for an application form.

### SPORT FIXTURES

Date	Event	Time
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> September	All year group Football training	3.30-5.00pm
Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> September	Year 7 Football Trials (A, D & G) Year 7 Basketball Trials (P & S)	3.30-5.00pm
Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> September	Year 7 Football Trials (P & S) Year 7 Basketball Trials (A, D & G)	3.30-5.00pm

Date	Event	Time
Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> September	Year 7 a,b,c & d football v Southend (AWAY)	3.45 – 5.30pm
Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> September	Year 10 Football v Southend (HOME)	4pm
Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> September	Year 8, 9 & 11 Football v Southend (HOME)	4pm