

St. Thomas More High School
An Academy Trust in the Diocese of Brentwood (Reg No: 7696989)
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CONTACT

No. 1333 – Friday 11th December 2015



Dear Parents and Pupils

Prizegiving Evening – This evening we are to hold annual Prize Giving with guest speaker, former student, Liam Rand. Students received subject prizes for achievement in subjects across the key stages and we are delighted that many of our Sixth Form students intend to return to collect their A Level certificates. More information and photographs in next week's Contact.

End of Term – A reminder that the school term finishes on Friday 18th December at 1:35pm. ***Please note that Stephenson's buses and the Amber Coaches will be departing from our school at the usual time of 3:30pm.*** If your son travels on these buses he will have brought home a letter to inform us how he will be getting home on this day.



Advent Service, Thursday 17th December, 7pm start – Parents will have received a letter inviting them to our Advent Service which is to be held on Thursday 17th December at 7pm. All students attending should be in school by 6.15pm in full school uniform. We look forward to welcoming parents, governors and friends of the school to share this evening of word and music. Donations of mince pies and stollen cake would be appreciated; these can be taken to reception. Thank you for

your support.

Christmas Dinner and Christmas Jumper Non-Uniform Day – A reminder to parents that the special Christmas Lunch Day is on Wednesday 16th December. The only other option for food that day will be Pasta King. The day will also be a **Christmas Jumper/Accessory Non-Uniform Day** with all proceeds going to the charity we are supporting this year, MIND.



Weekly Prayer



*Lord God,
You sent John to prepare hearts for Jesus,
and you give us Advent to prepare our own hearts to welcome him once again.
May our hearts be free from sin and filled with love and grace.
Amen*

Ten Ten Theatre - We were pleased to welcome Ten Ten Theatre into school on Monday for presentations in relationships education given to Years 8, 9 and 11. Ten Ten Theatre has an underlying Christian ethos rooted in the Catholic tradition. The name 'Ten Ten' is derived from the scripture passage John 10:10, "I have come that you may have life, life to the full." Through all of its work, Ten Ten aims to enable participants to "live life to the full." The students taking part enjoyed and engaged with the performances and the discussion workshop that followed. A range of topics were addressed through excellent theatre.

Advent Service - We look forward to welcoming families and friends of students to our Advent Service next Thursday taking place in the Main Hall at 7pm.

Weekly Mass - Thank you to Father Jeff Woolnough who celebrated Mass on Thursday and to the students of 12P and 13P who attended and prepared the readings.

School Student Council - The full council met again this week for a productive meeting addressing issues of importance proposed through the key stage councils and represented by Form Leaders. On Thursday the Student Council presented an assembly to Years 10-13 and shared the outcomes of their work this term. Thank you to Heads of School Henry Ince and Nina Clarke for leading this assembly.

Year 8 Retreats - Last week the parents of Year 8 students received information about the Walsingham House retreats taking place in January as follows:

- 13th Jan - 8/D
- 14th Jan - 8/P
- 15th Jan- 8/S
- 18th Jan- 8/A
- 20th Jan- 8/G



Thank you to all parents who have completed reply slips and made payments.

Please note the cost of the retreat is £12 per pupil. Please make your payment via the School Gateway. **All payments and reply slips should be received by Monday 14th December.** Thank you for your co-operation in enabling this trip for your sons. If you require a further copy of the letter giving detailed information you can find the letter on your son/daughter's VLE account [By clicking here.](#)

"Open your heart to God's Mercy" - Month 1 Year of Mercy - Our Holy Father has called for a year celebrating the Jubilee Year of Mercy which starts in December, 2015 and ends in November, 2016.

In line with the Holy Father's call to the Great jubilee the Knights of St Columba are embarking on a programme based on the Corporal and Spiritual Acts of Mercy. This will include pilgrimages to the Holy Doors in our Cathedrals and Churches over the year.

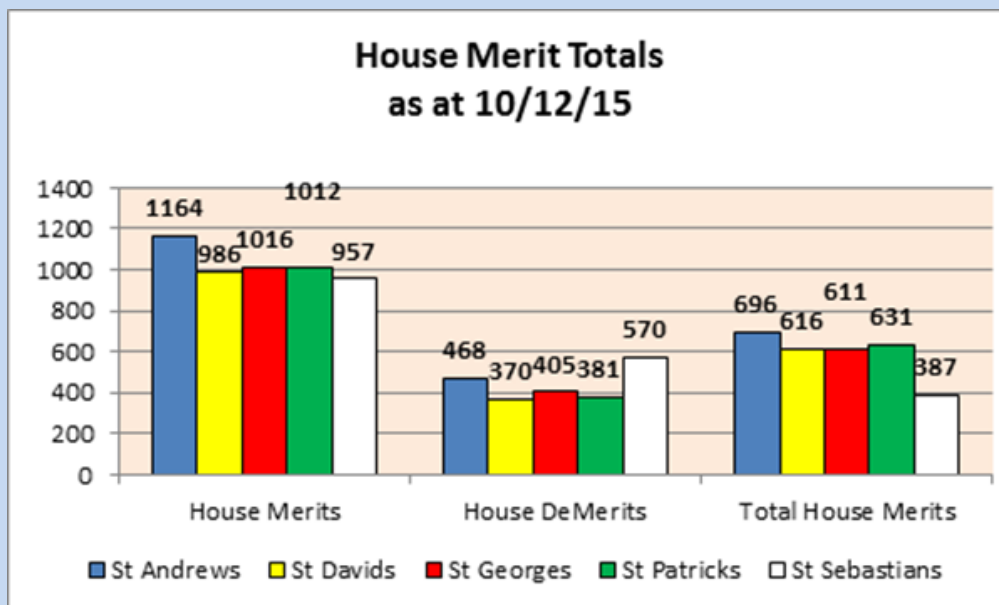
They begin their work of mercy with the call to Feed the Hungry in January 2016.

Feed the Hungry

- At the end of your weekly shop, look at what you have bought and put back an item that might seem the most extravagant and give the value of this item to a suitable charity.
- Make an effort not to throw food away, use what we buy.

Geology Department Visitor - On Wednesday this week the Geology Department was visited by Dr Gawen Jenkins from Leicester University, who presented an enrichment talk to the year 12 and 13 geologists. The talk was on the future for geologists, covering the exciting study and career opportunities that lay ahead for them. He used real life examples of his past students, informing us where they were currently working, from Gold Mines in Australia and Greenland to studying Volcanoes in Mexico. Interestingly, he also said that Geology graduates earned the second highest average graduate starting salary behind medical students. Ryan O'Connell in year 12, said, 'the talk was a very enlightening experience for what I can do with Geology and where it can take me'.

Mr G. Pankhurst, Head of Geography and Geology.



Year 13 Attendance - 155 days of school until exam season starts and Yr13 go on study leave.

To achieve the Sixth Form's target attendance, pupils should have no more than 6 days absence during the whole academic year (until study leave).

ATTENDANCE %	NUMBER OF DAYS ABSENT	NUMBER OF WEEKS ABSENT - approx	NUMBER OF HOURS LOST	IMPACT
96- 100%	6	1	30	Meeting expectations, no cause for concern, best chance of making progress, getting targets and going to uni/work/apprenticeships.
90 – 95.9%	15	2	75	Below expectations, a cause for concern, expect to drop half a grade.
80 – 89.9%	31	6	155	Significantly below expectations, a major cause for concern, expect to drop a minimum of a full grade.
Under 80%	46	9	230	Unacceptable. Exam entry may be pulled, risking place in 6 th Form.

Youth Saint Vincent de Paul (YSVP)- Notice for Parents/Carers of Year 7 & 8 Boys - This Advent St Thomas More YSVP is hoping to help a local family have a better Christmas. Working in partnership with St Vincent de Paul society from St Helen's Parish, each form will aim to collect a few items that will go directly to a local family in need.

I have extended the deadline for donations until **Monday 14th**. On Monday evening the donations will be handed over to the SVP of St Helen's Parish and administered to families in the local area.

Some suggested items that each from (in Year 7 & 8 only) will try to contribute are:

Hot Chocolate, Christmas puddings, mince/fruit pies, Sweets/candy sticks, mini cheddars, pringles/crisps. Box of family biscuits, twiglets, small cheese selections, crackers for cheese, 6 Christmas crackers, toys for children.....

A big thanks to everyone who has contributed so far, more on this next week!

Mr F McCague (YSVP coordinator)

Tommy's impact off to a winning start!! - The team attended Southend Youth market after having their application successfully approved. Ten youth teams took part on the (very cold and windy) 28th of November. We were delighted to come first in the competition meaning the group won £100 on the day, and a photo which should be in the Southend Echo very soon.

As their link teachers myself and Miss A Ryan (and indeed the whole school) are incredibly proud of what the group have achieved so far and we are very excited for the next two terms. I think big things will happen for this group!

Massive congratulations again, Miss D McCague



Spanish Club on Wednesday Lunch with Mrs Terry in MFL2, (1.35-2.05). All KS3 and KS4 students of Spanish are welcome for songs, videos, practice and support in Spanish. ¡Hasta entonces!

Business Drop In Sessions - If you would like any help with homework, topics or exam technique please feel free to drop in to the times below:

Monday	Year 13	A LEVEL	3.30 – 4.30	BS1	Mrs Lindsay
Tuesday	Year 12	A LEVEL	3.30 – 4.30	BS1	Mrs Lindsay
Thursday	Year 11	GCSE	3.30 – 4.30	BS1	Mrs Lindsay
Tuesday	Year 11	GCSE	3.30 – 4.30	BS2	Miss McCague
Tuesday	ALL	BTEC	3.30 – 4.30	BS3	Miss Ryan
Everyday	ALL	BTEC	1.35 – 2.30	BS4	Miss Myhill

Parents' and Staff Association News

WE are looking forward to notifying the winners of our Grand Draw at the Advent Service on Thursday 17th November 2015. Prizes include:

- £150.00 Cash
- Three luxury Christmas hampers
- A family panto ticket to see Cinderella
- £50.00 Piccolo Restaurant (Westcliff) voucher
- £50.00 Scape Interiors (Leigh) voucher

Monies and counterfoils are being accepted at reception until the 17th. We can safely say that you have a far better chance at winning one of these prizes than a national draw! There is still time to enter and support your school. If the

tickets sent out to you via your son have not been found, there are further supplies available at reception. Be sure to include a telephone number on the counterfoils. Many thanks, Your Parent Staff Association.

SPORTS FIXTURES

DATE	FIXTURE	TIME
14/12/2015	Year 8 Basketball v Futures (HOME)	4:00pm
	Year 8 National Cup Football v Emerson Park (AWAY)	12:30pm
	Year 7 National Cup Football v Shenfield (AWAY)	3:00pm
15/12/2015	Year 9 Basketball v Futures (HOME)	4:00pm
	Year 11 Basketball v Futures (AWAY)	4:00pm
16/12/2015	1st XI Football v Colne (HOME)	2:00pm