



## St. Thomas More High School

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

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# CONTACT

No. 1281 – 5<sup>th</sup> September 2014

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 and that they have a very happy and successful career with us.

## Exam Results

### A2 RESULTS

A* - B	33%
A* - C	66%
A* - E	99%

### AS RESULTS

A* - B	30%
A* - C	53%
A* - E	89%



### GCSE RESULTS

5+ A* - C %	73
5+ A* - C % inc. Eng & Maths	58
5+ A* - G %	96
5+ A* - G % inc. Eng & Maths	93
3 Levels of Progress in English	66%
3 Levels of Progress in Maths	82%
4 Levels of Progress in English	27%
4 Levels of Progress in Maths	30%

Many congratulations to all the students on their achievements in the summer exams. 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. I am delighted that a great number of our sixth form students accepted

their places at university and that we again have a full sixth form. The examination board deadline for remarks is the 20<sup>th</sup> September; please see the website for fuller details in the coming weeks.



**Congratulations** - Our warmest congratulations to Mr & Mrs Spillett who welcomed their baby daughter, Esme, to the world during the summer break.

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

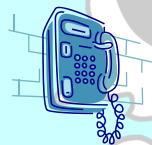
**Leave of Absence Requests** - I would like to remind our readers that Parents whose children are on a school register have a duty to ensure that their children attend regularly and if they fail to do so, they may be prosecuted under the terms of the 1993 Education Act.

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**.

**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.



**Changes to Contact Details** – If you have moved house, changed your email address, mobile telephone number or work contact number, etc., please ask your son or daughter to pass the changes in writing to the Main Office so that we may update our records.

**Parent Pay** – The parents of Years 7 and 12 would have recently received a Parent Pay registration letter. Please ensure that you register this online asap.

**Merit Marks** – Congratulations to St George's House who were the overall winners last year. We start the new academic year with a clean slate – watch this space!

St Andrew's  
0

St David's  
0

St George's  
0

St Patrick's  
0

St Sebastian's  
0



## Weekly Prayer

*Lord God,  
As I start this new term,  
I ask you to be in everything that's going to happen: in every decision,  
in every challenge, in every victory,  
in everything I learn and in everything I struggle with.  
Give me faith, give me perseverance,  
give me love for you and my neighbour.  
Amen.*

**Year 10 RE students** - This week each Year 10 student will receive a new textbook to support the introduction of a new unit of study on the topic of Mark's Gospel. When the students return their books next May we will expect them to be in excellent condition (allowing for natural wear through use). Please note that in the event of loss or damage we will request a contribution from parents towards the replacement of any damaged or lost books.



**School Photos** - Individual school photographs are to take place on 10<sup>th</sup> September for all year groups.

### ABSENCE AND PUNCTUALITY

As you know, at St Thomas More High School we have high standards of attendance and punctuality. To maintain this high standard, we regularly review our procedures to improve the way we monitor pupils' attendance and punctuality so we may identify any concerns and support in making changes.

All pupils and students should be on site by between 8.40 – 8.45am to ensure a good start to the day and prompt arrival in their Form Room for 8.50 registration. From Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September, any pupil in years 7 to 11 arriving at school after 8.50am will enter school by the East Door which is the entrance near the small car park. If they arrive after 9.10am (during period1) they should enter by Main Reception to sign in. If pupils have no valid reason or a note from home, they will be issued a lunch time detention.

If parents know a pupil or student is to be absent on any given day, we ask that you contact school by note, e mail or telephone by **8.30am** at the latest. The Absence Line is available 24hrs a day (01702 344933). Please leave a short message with the reason for absence (just "unwell" is not sufficient). We have a legal responsibility regarding keeping effective registers and the Local Authority Attendance Officer is regularly in school to review the registers with us.

We ask all parents, pupils and students to continue to support good Attendance and Punctuality and offer advice and support if you have any concerns. Please contact the relevant Pupil Support Mentor for your child's year group, Mrs Lewis (Pupil Support Coordinator) or Mrs Goodman (Pupil Support Mentor).

**Nobody said having teenagers was going to be easy, but...!!** Following the success and positive response from other sessions, we are pleased offer again our Stepping Stones programme This is open to parents or any other adult

who cares for pupils and will run for 5 weeks starting on **TUESDAY 16<sup>th</sup> September 9.30 – 11am** . The atmosphere is relaxed and refreshments are provided (free of charge!)

The sessions are a time to reflect on the changes taking place with your children and family and will include sessions on:

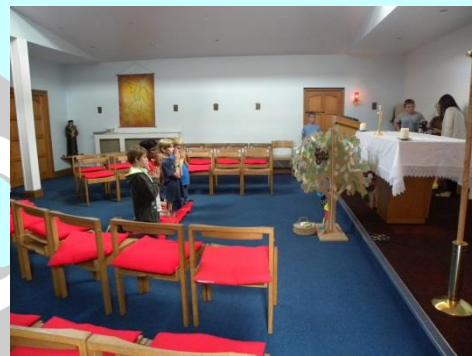
- Travelling the Road to Independence – (Growing up and growing away)
- Avoiding Behaviour Bait and Hooks – (He/She knows how to wind me up)
- Setting Limits and Boundaries – (Everyone else's parent lets them)

Please let me know if you would like to attend. Mrs M Lewis (Pupil Support Coordinator)

### **TRANSITION SUMMER SCHOOL** - Some pupils were invited to take part in



our Year 7 Transition Summer School which took place in the first week of the Summer Break. 22 boys joined us and participated in activities designed to build confidence in making the transition to Secondary school. They



thoroughly enjoyed sessions with Essex Wildlife Trust at Belfairs Woods, Cine Club in school learning the techniques involved in film making, preparing their own breakfast and lunch, becoming

familiar with Lexia and Symphony literacy and numeracy programmes, Quizzes, Reflection time in our chapel and other social aspects of the week.



This was another stage on their Journey to independence and we are very proud of the way the boys developed their organisational and social skills enabling them to build on the experience in Year 7. Well Done!!

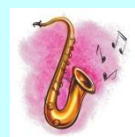


## **Music Department**

**Extra-curricular** - The music department is soon to become a very active place with varying opportunities, information will be given out via form tutors, or come and find Mr Riches for more information Watch this space!



### **Instrumental Lessons**



**Year 7** – All students in year 7 will be receiving a letter detailing the extra-curricular instrumental lessons that the school can offer. If your son is interested please return the slip ASAP or if you have any questions please contact the school office.

**All years** – If your son is interested in starting instrumental lessons please contact the school office. Mr Riches.

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**Farewell** - Our fond farewell to Miss Dibbens, one of our valued science technicians - We would like to wish her all the best as she starts her teacher training course in the coming days. She has been an amazing member of the science staff during her time with us and has supported us all with distinction. We hope that she enjoys her time as she passes on her knowledge and enthusiasm to all the pupils she has the privilege to educate. With best wishes from all of us in the science department. Mr Clunn.

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## **New Menus at Break and Dinner**

I would like to thank everyone who filled in a questionnaire at the end of last term. I have taken the time to read each of them, some were very funny, and some had very good ideas and points that will be taken on board, after all, this is your canteen and we want to give you the food and service you would like. That is not as easy as you would think, as lots of you said that prices were too high, but to get quality food at the prices you would like is not always possible. Also, many of you may not realise that schools are now under very strict government rules of what we can and cannot serve. However, I have worked very hard this summer to come up with new menus that I hope please everyone. I would like to let you know that hot food is now back on the menu at break time in the dining hall AND in the concourse area. We have some new things on offer at this time, such as grab pots of beans, sausage and hash browns and bacon, potato wedges with a range of tasty sauces, and hot dogs. Pizza will be back at break time, and for all of you bacon lovers, bacon will be available too.

At dinner, there will be a better choice for vegetarians, such as goat's cheese and onion tarts, mushroom bake and bean burgers. Also, a better range of vegetable will be available for all. For the main meals, I have introduced chicken fajitas, meatballs, gammon steaks with pineapple rings, Jamaican jerk chicken with rice and peas, delicious BBQ chicken drumsticks, and, for all your Mexican lovers, a whole Mexican day of chilli beef fajitas, vegetable chimchangas, nachos and refried beans, while still keeping the old favourites, like beef lasagne, toad-in-the-hole, cheese burgers and of course, curry.

I would also like to say that all our food is prepared on site from scratch by our kitchen staff from fresh ingredients, so please check out our new menus – we hope to see you soon! Mrs Potton, Catering Manager.

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## **SPORTS NEWS**



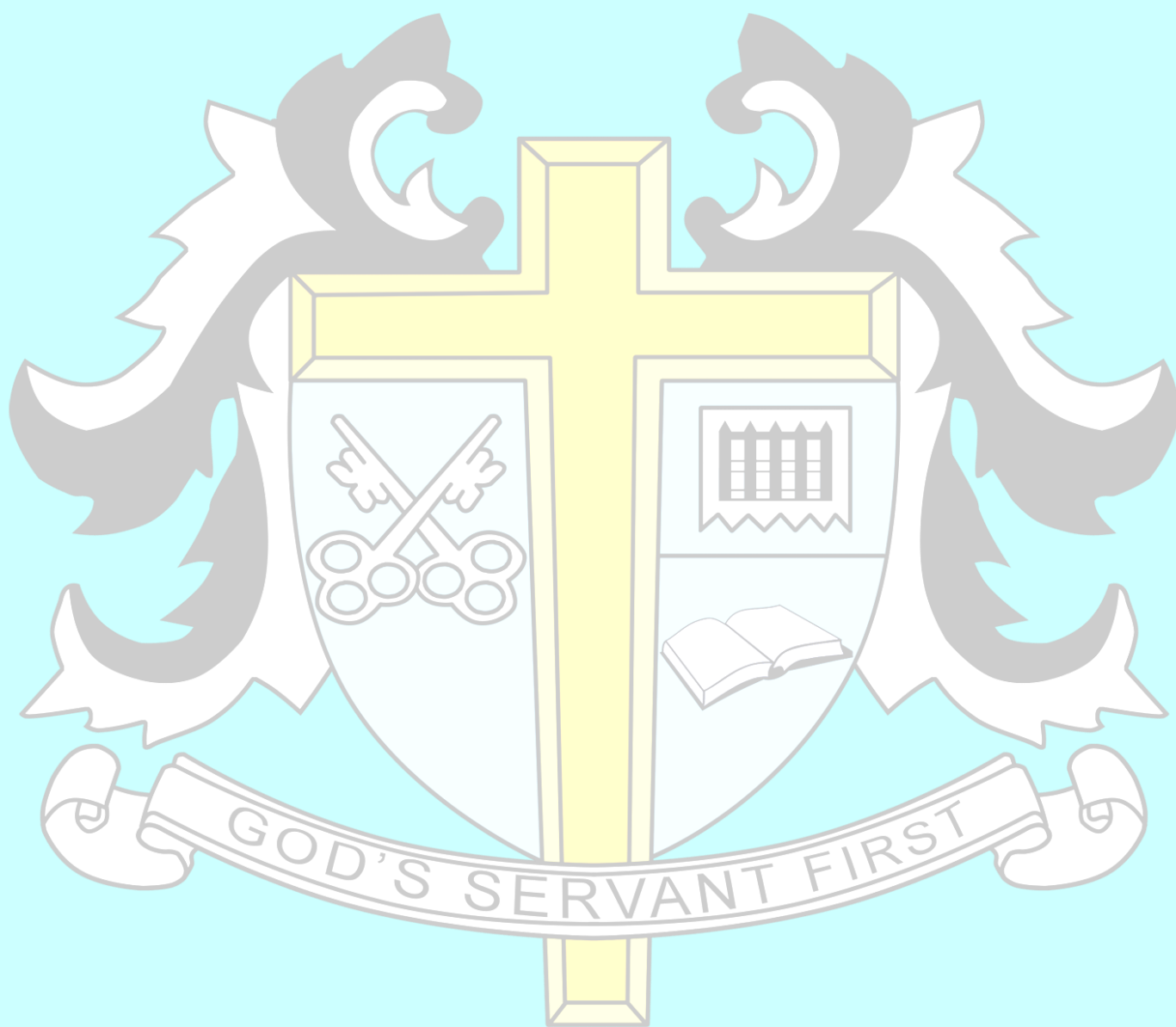
**Judo Club** - STM Judo Club commences on Monday 8 September at 7.00pm in the Sports Hall. All are welcome: first training session FREE for new players. For further information please see Mr Robinson in E5.

***Please also see the Extra Curricular Timetable table at the end of Contact***

## **SPORTING FIXTURES**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Time</b>
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> September	Sixth Form Football trials Year 9 Rugby 7's at New Hall	3.30-5.00pm 12.30pm
Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> September	Year 7 Football Trials (A,D, G surnames A-M) Year 7 Basketball Trials (G surnames N-Z, P, S)	3:30 – 5:00pm 3:30 – 5:00pm

Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> September	Year 7 Football Trials(G surnames N-Z, P, S) Year 7 Basketball Trials (A,D, G surnames A-M) Sixth Form Football practice	3:30 – 5:00pm 3:30 – 5:00pm
Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> September	U14 Essex Cricket Cup final	2pm @ Westcliff



# STM PE DEPARTMENT



## Extra-Curricular Timetable

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Sports hall</b>  <b>7:50-8:30am</b>	Fitness Sixth Form Teams (TH/GL)  (SP and MJ mentor meeting)	Fitness Sixth Form Teams (SP/EJK)  Year 7 and 8 BB (GL)	Year 11 and Sixth form BB (GL)  Cross country (SP)	Year 9 and 10 B/B (NSP & SB)	Departmental meeting
<b>1:30-2:30pm</b>	Cross country (SP)  GCSE Racket sports (SB)	Junior Basketball (GL/SB)	Academy game preparation (EIK/TH)	Senior Basketball (GL)  Year 9 and 10 Rugby (SP and MJ)	Racket sports (NS)  Sixth form rugby (SP)
<b>3:30-5pm</b> <b>AFTER SCHOOL</b> <b>SPORTS HALL</b>	BB sixth form training (GL)	10/11 BB (GL)	Year 8 & 9 BB (SP/SB)	Year 7 B/B (GL)	Badminton Club (SG)
<b>3:30-5pm</b> <b>AFTER SCHOOL</b> <b>(FIELD)</b>	Staff meetings	Year 7 and 8 Football (SB/SH & SP/SG/EK/HS)	Year 9 & 10 football (TK/NS/MJ/EK)	Cross Country (SP/MJ)	Staff football