



13th February 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of another busy half term, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on some of the fantastic events and achievements that have taken place, as well as provide some important reminders for the upcoming weeks.

This half term began with significant disruption due to the snow, which unfortunately led to the closure of the school. I fully appreciate how difficult this can be for both parents and staff, and I assure you that such decisions are not taken lightly. Thank you for your understanding and support during this time.

Despite this initial setback, we have enjoyed an action-packed few weeks. Our Year 9 pupils had a brilliant experience at The Briars, and our ski trip to Italy is currently underway, with pupils having a wonderful time on the slopes. We were also privileged to welcome the boy band Absnt Minds, who delivered an important session on mental health, which was both engaging and thought-provoking for our pupils. Our school has also celebrated great sporting and personal achievements, but one of my personal highlights has been witnessing seven of our pupils crowned as Panathlon Champions – a fantastic accomplishment!

With so much happening in school, I encourage you to stay updated by following us on Facebook. Additionally, I am pleased to share that we will soon be launching an Instagram account to reach even more of our school community.

- **Non-Uniform Day – Friday 14th February**

Pupils are invited to wear non-uniform on this day for a £1.00 donation (cash on arrival). Please ensure that appropriate clothing is worn. This remains a normal school day, with timetabled lessons continuing as usual, including PE, so pupils must bring their PE kit as required.

- **Literacy and Reading Progress**

Our literacy and reading programme at St Thomas More continues to thrive, with pupils demonstrating fantastic improvements in both reading ages and attitudes towards reading. It is particularly encouraging to see the enthusiasm among our KS3 pupils. Many have engaged in extracurricular reading projects, and we eagerly anticipate the creativity that will emerge from our next project, 'Poetry By Heart'. Literacy and reading remain embedded in our curriculum, ensuring that all pupils develop the necessary skills to access and engage with their learning effectively.

- **SEND Communication**

A reminder to parents of pupils with SEND that we have a dedicated email address for contacting our SEND team: stmsendteam@stm.srscmat.co.uk. This has been in place since January and, alongside our new SEND Manager, Mrs Light, has significantly improved communication between home and school.

- **Arbor Parent App**

I would like to extend my thanks to the **81% of parents** who have already signed up to the Arbor Parent App. However, this means that nearly a fifth of our families are still not able to access key updates and information. In the future, the school will increasingly rely on this platform for communication, so I encourage all parents and carers to sign up as soon as possible. Support is available through reception or via our website: [Arbor Parent App Guidance](#).





- **VLE App Relaunch – Homework Updates**

Next half term, we will be relaunching our VLE App (Fusion), improving how parents can view homework set for their child. We are always mindful of the amount of homework set, and in our latest parent poll, 80% felt the balance was right, while 13% thought there was too much and 6% too little. We will continue to monitor feedback to ensure that we meet the needs of our pupils and families.

Exciting Staff News

I am delighted to announce the appointment of our new **Chemistry Teacher, Mrs Copestake**. After what has been a challenging period for everyone, we are thrilled to welcome such a highly experienced teacher to the team. She will be joining St Thomas More shortly after the half-term break, and we look forward to her positive impact on our pupils' learning.

INSET Day – Monday 24th February

A reminder that school will be **closed to pupils on Monday 24th February** for an **INSET day**. Pupils should return as normal on **Tuesday 25th February**.

Thank you for your continued support. I wish you and your families a restful half-term break and look forward to welcoming pupils back soon.

Yours sincerely,

Mr D Redfern

Headteacher

