Report to Parents/Carers detailing priority improvements at STM
DETAILED VERSION
November 2024 – March 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you well. As part of our ongoing commitment to transparency and partnership with families, I'm pleased to share our latest update, following on from the report covering priorities up to October 2024.

In response to your feedback, I've prepared two versions of the report: this longer, more detailed version for those seeking deeper insight, and a shorter summary for those who prefer a quick overview. You're very welcome to read the concise version at your convenience.

This report covers the progress made between **November 2024 and March 2025**. While it is more in-depth, it aims to offer a clear and comprehensive account of the developments across our school during this period.

I'm pleased to confirm that we are now **fully staffed in each curriculum area**. This is a significant achievement given the national challenges in teacher recruitment.

Since the last update, we have also welcomed the **Catholic Schools Inspectorate (CSI)** into school. We were delighted to be judged **'Good' in all areas**, a reflection of the continued hard work of our staff and pupils.

We now await our **Ofsted inspection**, which we expect to take place shortly. This will be carried out under the new 2024 framework, which no longer gives an overall grade but offers detailed feedback across key areas.

We will also be inviting parents to take part in a **whole-school parent survey** before the Easter break, in addition to the feedback already gathered at parents' evenings.

Thank you, as ever, for your ongoing support.

Mr D Redfern
Headteacher

1. Catholic Life, Mission and RE
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4. Supporting Disadvantaged and Special Educational Needs (SEND) Pupils
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6. Quality of Education: Curriculum Development and Middle Leadership Initiatives
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1. Catholic Life, Mission and RE

Summary of STM CSI Inspection

Inspection Outcome: St Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy (STM) was inspected by the Catholic Schools Inspectorate on 20–21 November 2024. The school received a 'Good' (Grade 2) rating overall, reflecting significant improvement since its previous judgement of 'Requires Improvement' in 2019. All three key areas were also graded 'Good':

- Catholic Life and Mission
- Religious Education
- Collective Worship

"Leaders are driving a genuinely authentic Catholic school which is truly appreciated by students and staff, as well as the wider community."
"There is an extremely strong family feel to St Thomas More; this is an inclusive and welcoming community."

Catholic Life and Mission

The school's motto – *"Aspire not to have more, but to be more"* – is central to all aspects of life at STM. Pupils actively engage in retreats, outreach projects, and Feast Day celebrations, which involve fundraising for charities aligned to their year-group Saints. Form noticeboards and classrooms reflect Catholic Social Teaching, reinforced by CPD and curriculum links.

"The school's motto… has transformed the school. All stakeholders live out the school's mission on a daily basis and use it as a tool of inspiration to better themselves."
"Students feel they are cared for and loved… One student says that, 'it feels like home'."

Impact:
- Pupils experience a strong sense of purpose and community.
- Staff and pupils engage actively with Catholic Social Teaching.
- Events such as the Senior Citizens Christmas Party and Briars retreats support moral and spiritual development.

Religious Education (RE)

RE has seen significant development: it is now delivered by full-time, trained staff in a dedicated suite of classrooms. Teaching has been enhanced through CPD and consistent lesson structures, including effective assessment routines.

"Students speak enthusiastically about religious education… they enjoy studying world religions and discussing contemporary issues."
"The subject leader… has worked relentlessly to ensure that students have every opportunity to progress."

Impact:
- Improved consistency, behaviour, and engagement in RE lessons.
- Students feel more secure and confident in their learning.
- Pupil surveys indicate greater enjoyment and value placed on RE.

Collective Worship

Collective Worship is now more inclusive and pupil-led, with Celebrations of the Word, regular prayer routines, and high-quality resources provided by the chaplain. Worship is integrated into daily school life, including during RE lessons and form time.

"When students sing hymns together, they create a vibrant, faith-filled atmosphere… filled with joy and enthusiasm."
"The chapel is at the heart of the school… students thoroughly enjoy a range of spiritual activities."

Impact:
- Student-led worship is increasingly the norm.
- Greater spiritual engagement across all year groups.
- The school community is visibly living out its faith through action and reflection.

Development from October to March

Catholic Life and Mission
- Completed updates to the Catholic School Evaluation Document (CSED).
- Pupils across year groups participated in successful retreats and outreach, centred on the theme "Cornerstones".
- Catholic Social Teaching is visible and embedded in classrooms and curriculum.
- Year groups adopted Saints and partnered with charities, with Feast Day events raising funds and engaging the community.
- Initiatives such as the Senior Citizens Christmas Party, New Testament distribution, and sustainable book pledges reflect a strong Catholic identity and ethos.
- Fundraising events for the Lourdes Pilgrimage
- Local media coverage praised student outreach and fundraising.

Impact:
- Pupils feel more connected to their year group identity through Saints and service.
- Greater visibility and integration of Catholic values in daily school life.
- Improved pupil engagement and leadership in community-focused events.

Religious Education (RE)
- RE department now fully staffed and supported with dedicated rooms and CPD.
- Retraining and mentoring for non-specialist staff in place.
- Improved consistency in assessment and teaching quality.
- Pupil voice indicates more enjoyment and confidence in RE compared to previous years.
- CSI recognised significant improvements, revising RE to 'Good'.

Impact:
- Lessons are calmer, better structured, and more engaging.
- Strong evidence of progress and high expectations across all key stages.
- Pupils value the subject more and feel supported in their learning journey.

Collective Worship
- Pupil-led Celebrations of the Word embedded into school culture.
- Increased prayer opportunities throughout the day and across subjects.
- Chaplain and chaplaincy team visibly present and actively involved.

- Liturgical events, such as Advent services, Remembrance and Ash Wednesday, have high levels of participation and positive feedback.
- Chapel crafts and hymn singing have broadened engagement, especially among KS3.
- Services of the Word at St Anne's and Form Time worship in the Chapel have supported pupils' spiritual development.

Impact:
- More student involvement in worship and spiritual life.
- Consistent routines around prayer and liturgy.
- Positive reception of key services and increased sense of community.

Overall Summary

STM has made **considerable progress**, now proudly judged as **'Good' across all key areas**. The school demonstrates a strong commitment to Catholic values, with an authentic mission lived out by staff and students alike. With improvements in leadership, RE delivery, and collective worship, STM has developed into a loving and inclusive community, one that is visibly rooted in service, spirituality, and social justice.

"The chaplaincy provision provides all staff and students with time and space for their own spiritual growth and development."
"Students are highly motivated in their desire to make a difference to people's lives and the community."

2. Standards and Behaviour

Behaviour and Culture

Key Developments:
- A new **Behaviour Handbook** and **Form Tutor Handbook** launched via training on INSET day for staff.
- Two **clear school rules** introduced for consistency:
    1. *Act in a way that helps you and others to learn successfully.*
    2. *Behave in a way that allows everyone to be safe and happy.*
- Heads of Department play a key role in supporting positive behaviour within their subject areas.

Impact:

- Significant reductions in suspensions, lesson removals, and isolations over three consecutive half terms:
    - **Suspensions:** 33 → 26 → 22
    - **Isolations:** 11 → 6
    - **Removals:** 45 → 26 → 21
- Improved consistency in expectations and a more settled learning environment.
- Positive pupil voice data:

    - **99%** understand and often comply with behaviour expectations.

    - **96%** feel safe in school.

"The best thing about this school is the staff and its teachers." – *Pupil comment*

Uniform, Attendance, and Punctuality

Uniform:
- Revised policy fully implemented. All girls are compliant with new skirts/trousers.
- Non-compliance results in social time sanctions via HOL detentions.

Attendance:
- All pupils receive half-termly letters with attendance data, categories, and interventions.

Punctuality:
- Same-day detention system introduced.
- Noticeable improvement:
    - **Late % reduced from 3.95% to 1.95%**

Safeguarding and Wellbeing

Key Safeguarding Measures:
- Wednesday Snapshots introduced: 5-minute safeguarding sessions addressing bullying, protected characteristics, knife crime and hate crime. Positive and strong feedback from staff and pupils.
- County Lines and Knife Crime workshops delivered by PC Podmore, aligned with contextual safeguarding needs.
- Creation of staff A4 summaries for behaviour and safeguarding guidance.
- Updated safeguarding documentation; safeguarding checks completed by Trust.
- Safeguarding training logged and signed by all staff.

- DSL praised for support of those vulnerable pupils who are in care, or previously been in care.

Pupil Voice Highlights:
- **96%** say the school is friendly.
- **98%** report strong friendships.
- **96%** feel safe.
- **100%** know who to go to with worries.
- **95%** feel positively supported by staff.

Parental Feedback

Year 7 Parents Evening:
- **100%** of parents feel their child is happy.
- **100%** would recommend STM.

"Comments from parents consistently mention staff dedication and positive relationships."

Year 11 Parents Evening:
- **92%** would recommend STM.
- **91%** say their child is happy.

"I love the personal attention my child receives from her teachers."

Year 10 Parents Evening:
- **96.8%** of parents/carers said they would recommend STM
- **91.2%** of parents feel well informed

"The school is very committed to student progress"
"Support from this school is amazing"

Overall Summary

STM continues to make **significant strides in behaviour, safeguarding, and pastoral provision**. The school culture is underpinned by clear expectations, improved routines, and a shared commitment to pupil welfare. Reductions in behaviour incidents, rising attendance, and strong pupil and parent feedback highlight the impact of recent initiatives.

The school is recognised both internally and externally for being **a safe, inclusive, and caring environment**, with CSI inspectors also praising pupils' excellent behaviour and sense of safety.

"Recognition by the CSI about excellent behaviour in school, attitudes towards each other, and how safe pupils feel in school."

3. Character Curriculum - Personal Development: PSHE, RSHE & Careers

Careers and Post-16 Preparation

Key Developments:

- Morrisby's audit continues to track career profiling for pupils across year groups.
- All Year 11 pupils are receiving 1:1 Careers Advisor interviews with Mr Stephen Pacey (external advisor).
- NEET figures below the national average reported for 2024 leavers.
- College and university visits and assemblies for Year 11, with plans for Year 10 in Pentecost Term, with full support for SEND and vulnerable pupils during the post-16 application process.
- Year 11 pupils prepared CVs ahead of Rotary Mock Interviews that took place in March.
- Year 9 visit to The Dome (Buxton & Leek College) included careers and apprenticeship workshops.
- Engagement with local businesses, including Nestlé, Tarmac, and Buxton Army Cadets to enhance careers links.

"Careers fair was an opportunity to develop relationships with professionals and businesses in the local area."

Character Curriculum and Personal Development (PD)

Curriculum Strengths:

- PD is now firmly established as a **dedicated lesson**, recognised and valued by pupils and staff.
- **Learning walks** show strong engagement, structured discussions, and respectful use of PD booklets.
- School Council continues to take initiative, e.g., organising **whole-school charity vote** and delivering the **anti-bullying assembly**.
- **Safeguarding assembly** delivered by Miss Pimblett, with further themes reinforced through weekly **Wednesday Snapshots**.

"The Character Curriculum: PSHE, RSHE and Careers was highly praised by the CSI team during their November 2024 visit."

Pupil Engagement and Wider Opportunities

- Pupils represented STM at the Trust's Pupil Parliament as "Ambassadors of Hope", contributing to shared actions and a new Trust prayer.
- All pupils have attended assemblies on safeguarding and anti-bullying.
- Year 8 pupils took part in litter picking in Buxton as a Feast Day activity, linking community action with Catholic Social Teaching.
- Buxton Army Cadets delivered talks and lunchtime activities to Years 7 and 8, promoting character and leadership development.
- School trips have included: Duke of Edinburgh, Whitehall, Italy (skiing), The Briars residential, FLAME, local attractions such as The Cresent and outdoors (Soloman's Temple), Haddon Hall Nursing Home, climate conferences, Manchester, and an range of sporting fixtures including assessable sports such as the Panathlon.

External Support and CPD

- JBE continues collaboration with **C Bushell (EMCCA)** to drive careers strategy and quality assurance.
- **Compass+ questionnaire** completed to track progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Staff CPD in development to support quality delivery of the PD curriculum and enhance subject-specific careers links.
- School website updated, described by C Bushell (external advisor) as: *"Brilliant – the Character Curriculum on the website is extensive: Careers section is clear and comprehensive."*

Impact
- PD lessons are consistent and purposeful, supporting personal reflection and discussion.
- Pupils are well-informed about careers through events, lessons, and assemblies.
- Safeguarding and anti-bullying awareness has increased across all year groups.
- Positive external validation from CSI and EMCCA affirms the quality of provision.
- Students are beginning to link careers and aspirations with subject learning and personal goals.

Overall Summary

St Thomas More continues to deliver a strong and evolving Personal Development and Careers programme, rooted in its Character Curriculum and enriched through strategic partnerships, pupil voice, and targeted support. Engagement in local and Trust-wide initiatives, dedicated lesson time, and structured careers guidance ensure pupils are well-prepared for life beyond school.

The school has been recognised by both the Catholic Schools Inspectorate and external careers partners for its commitment to holistic education. With NEET figures below the national average for recent leavers and proactive planning for future provision, STM is fostering confident, informed and aspirational young people.

"The PD and Character Curriculum at STM is brilliant – pupils are engaged, supported and prepared for their next steps." – External Feedback

4. Supporting Disadvantaged and Special Educational Needs (SEND) Pupils

SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities)

Key Developments:
- New Year 7 SEND passports completed, pupils added to Edukey, and key information shared with staff.
- SEND adaptations monitored through learning walks, drop-ins, and regular review.
- Updates made to the SEND Register, following Trust audit and DCC requirements.
- Inclusion Framework and action plan completed to ensure support from Derbyshire County Council (DCC).
- EHCP reviews have been scheduled or completed, and all staff now have EHCP one-page overviews.
- Frequent contact with ISAT and Inclusion Emergency Response maintained, despite transitional gaps in LA support.
- Staff received training on ASD and anxiety, wheelchair pushing support, ADHD and more.
- New SEND staffing structure implemented, including appointment of a further HLTA and SEND Manager.
- SENDCO attends network meetings, supervision sessions, and inclusion forums.
- New SEND email to improve direct communications between parents and the SEND team.
- Teaching and Learning 7 Strategy deployed by teachers to support SEND learners

Impact:

- Improved engagement in lessons; fewer pupils in Learning Support.
- Improved attendance for pupils, especially those with SEN K.
- Improved communications between the SEND team and parents/carers.
- Enhanced staff awareness and clarity on pupil needs and adaptations.
- SEND pupils report high confidence in accessing work:
  - **83%** know who to ask for help.
  - **85%** feel the work is appropriately challenging.
  - **94%** say teachers have high expectations of them.

Pupil Premium (PP)

Key Developments:

- Updated PP documentation and policy, aligned with funding allocations and intervention strategy.
- PP students clearly identified on seating plans; CPD includes PP-specific barriers.
- QA processes focus on PP – including work scrutiny and pupil voice.
- Attendance to extra-curricular clubs now tracked via Arbor, showing a positive trend in PP engagement.
- Revision support meetings with Year 11 PP and SEND students conducted by Mrs Lancett and Mrs Scampion.
- Exam preparation packs and wellbeing check-ins provided to PP students.
- Targeted Year 11 Parents' Evening for PP families and mentoring programme in place.
- Teaching and Learning 7 Strategy deployed by teachers to support PP learners

Impact:

- **Improved attendance** for PP students compared to the same period last year.
- Staff better equipped to identify and support PP learners in the classroom.
- Teaching and Learning is focused on the T&7: researched teaching and learning strategies shown to have most impact on learners.

Reading and Literacy

Key Developments:

- Whole school literacy policy launched; two reading lessons per half term per subject.
- NGRT reading assessments carried out for KS3; reading ages shared with staff.
- Extensive CPD on using reading data and being the 'expert reader' in class.
- Lexia, Better Reader, phonics, and Cosy Reads in place and tracked for the weakest readers.
- Library re-opened, student librarians appointed, and multiple literacy events hosted, which pupils have excelled in.

Impact:
- Literacy intervention data (Lexia, phonics) shows positive progress
- Parent feedback from literacy intervention evening praised the session as "the most informative evening they have attended."
- Reading confidence and culture visibly improved across school.
- 12 poems and 32 short stories published and continued reading promoted during tutor time.

Overall Impact (SEND, PP, Literacy):

- Greater shared knowledge of pupils across staff.
- SEND/PP students are more engaged, with personalised support plans in place.
- High levels of confidence among pupils in accessing their learning.
- Improved attendance for some vulnerable pupils.
- Enhanced tracking, accountability, and communication within the SEND and PP systems.

"Children feel confident in accessing work."
"The SEND team has built a strong foundation for communication, identification, and intervention."

Summary

St Thomas More continues to demonstrate a proactive, inclusive, and data-informed approach to supporting SEND, PP, and literacy across the school. With structural reforms, targeted interventions, and strategic leadership, the school is breaking down barriers to learning and ensuring no child is left behind.

Pupil confidence is rising, attendance is improving, and both internal and external stakeholders recognise the strong safeguarding, academic, and personal development framework now in place.

"SEND and PP pupils at STM are known, supported and guided."

5. Ensuring High Standards in Teaching and Learning

Teaching and Learning (T&L7)

Key Developments:

- Implementation of the T&L7 framework as non-negotiable across classrooms, ensuring consistent and high-quality teaching strategies.

    - DIRT (Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time)
    - Adaptive teaching so all pupils can access learning
    - Homework
    - 'No Opt Out' questioning – pupils are directly questioned based on their ability
    - Do It Now activities to aid recall and retrieval of knowledge
    - Reading 3-2-1 to support reading across all subjects
    - Solo Time – pupils become more confident and resilient in their writing, especially for longer tasks. 'I, We, You' modelling to support learners in constructing their answers

Quality Assurance (QA)

Processes and Actions:

- Work scrutiny in Years 7–11 focused on DIRT, feedback, and homework, especially for PP/SEND pupils.
- CPD and intervention targeted towards departments who need more support.
- QA includes: lesson drop-ins, work scrutiny and pupil voice.
- Lesson drop-ins across year groups focused on T&L7.
- Subject-specific marking, moderation and standardisation completed for all assessments.

Well trained staff who receive regular CPD:

- Delivered on rotation (approx. once/month).
  - Topics include: Oracy, Adaptive Teaching, Reading Ages, Homework strategy, and poverty's impact on learning.
- Quality Assurance informs CPD and areas of need

"CPD strengthens middle leadership and supports teaching staff in pedagogy and practice."

Data, Moderation and Cross-School Collaboration

- Assessment used for data drops is planned out in advance by Middle Leaders to ensure consistency of assessment to inform parents of progress (data drops).
- Mock assessments (Yr11) are planned and standardised internally; moderation includes cross-school collaboration for some departments to ensure accuracy.

Impact Summary

- Whole-school consistency improving through clear expectations in T&L7
- Stronger leadership and subject accountability through CPD and QA processes.
- Curriculum conversations between SLT and Middle Leaders, and pupil voice data inform targeted actions within each department.
- Clear insight into departmental needs and targeted support for improvement.
- Improved forward planning for assessments.

Overall Summary

STM continues to embed a culture of high expectations and consistent practice in teaching and learning. With the T&L7 framework now established across classrooms and supported by a robust CPD and QA structure, the school is making real strides in assessment quality, pedagogy, and leadership development.

While strengths in modelling, oracy, and subject engagement are clear, the school also demonstrates transparency in identifying areas of concern and taking action— particularly in homework consistency within some subjects, although the majority of parents say that homework is sufficient (67%). Pupil voice and departmental data inform all decisions, ensuring strategies are both responsive and purposeful.

"There is now a clear expectation across the school. Assessment and teaching practices are aligned, consistent and increasingly impactful."

Quality of Education: Curriculum Development and Middle Leadership Initiatives

<u>Curriculum Leadership and Articulation</u>

<u>Key Developments:</u>

- Curriculum Conversations embedded into line management meetings, giving Heads of Department opportunities to articulate curriculum intent, sequencing, and adaptation.
- Conversations to date have demonstrated strong curriculum leadership across most areas

<u>Curriculum Intent, Sequencing and Knowledge Building</u>

- Curriculum Progression Grids created for all subjects and are currently being quality assured for website publication.
- Reflection and departmental discussion around sequencing and effectiveness to aid curriculum improvement.
- Staff use a structured Teams platform to access curriculum, lesson planning, and assessment files, this stronger in some subjects.
- Knowledge building over time is clearly planned, with examples of complexity increasing across topics. For instance:

<u>Literacy, Reading and Cultural Capital</u>

- All subjects now implement Reading 3-2-1 at least once or twice per half term, depending on contact time.
- Teachers understand that reading tasks may be curriculum-based or extend into enrichment and cultural capital.

"Literacy across the curriculum has developed consistency through shared reading strategies and accessible planning tools, aided by reading age data."

<u>Catholic Social Teaching, British Values and SMSC</u>

- All departments have now identified explicit links between their curriculum and:
  - Catholic Social Teaching (CST)
  - British Values (BV)
  - Protected Characteristics
- Displays and instruction reinforce CST across subjects.

- PD lessons and form time have embedded themes such as democracy and general elections, linking national events to curriculum and pastoral time.
- Staff CPD has ensured all staff are now equipped to confidently define and integrate CST, British Values and Protected Characteristics in lessons.

"Catholic Inspection confirmed that pupils are able to articulate the school's *mission and values, supported by consistent classroom references."*

Curriculum Inclusivity and Adaptive Teaching

- Adaptive Teaching is a non-negotiable element of T&L7.
- Staff make use of data-rich seating plans, identifying key pupil cohorts.
- Strategies shared by the English Department (choral response, dual coding, modelling, etc.) have supported inclusive teaching school-wide.
- Interventions for non-progressing pupils are in place via AIM meetings at KS4, including personalised plans and confidence-building groups for boys and girls.

Curriculum Retrieval and Assessment Integration

- Retrieval and interleaving strategies are embedded through:
  - Do It Now tasks
  - Low-stakes, high-frequency testing
  - Homework assignments reinforcing prior knowledge
- Seneca and mnemonics used selectively to support retention.
- Use of interleaving is growing but remains a development priority in some departments.

Impact

- Curriculum Conversations have become a valuable CPD tool, helping middle leaders reflect, articulate intent, and refine sequencing.
- Shared understanding of adaptive teaching and reading support is improving classroom equity.
- Strong curriculum leadership is now visible in most subjects; confidence in articulation and vision is growing.
- Use of reading strategies and provision of reading ages helps shape lesson planning and pupil support.
- Pedagogical strategies such as dual coding and choral response are embedded following CPD.

- Opportunities for sharing good practice (e.g. Socrative in Computer Science, Whole Class Feedback in History) are growing.

Overall Summary

Curriculum development at St Thomas More has made significant strides, with Middle Leaders now more confident in articulating their curriculum intent, sequencing, and adaptation strategies. Curriculum Conversations are not only enabling clear oversight but are doubling as effective professional development. The inclusion of CST, British Values, and adaptive teaching strategies throughout all subject areas reflects the school's commitment to a rich, inclusive, and values-led education.

Departments are reflective, responsive, and ambitious, with a clear focus on consistency, literacy, and knowledge retention. The continued integration of reading strategies, retrieval practice, and adaptive teaching is shaping a well-rounded and purposeful curriculum experience for all pupils.

7. Enhancing Communication

Website Development and Parent Communication

Key Updates:

- Comprehensive website revision undertaken to reflect recent school developments, e.g. Character Curriculum for PSHE, RSHE and Careers

Parental Engagement:

- STM sent a progress update report to parents/carers summarising key developments between January and October 2024, this bi-annual report details November to March 2025.

- Successful parent and pupil feedback from Year 7, Year 10 and Year 11 parent evenings.

- Arbor App launched:

  - 87% parental uptake so far.
  - Comprehensive user guidance provided to support onboarding.

"CSI acknowledged the strong use of the website to communicate with parents and the community."

Policy and Compliance Updates (September 2024)

A full suite of policies was updated, rewritten, or introduced to reflect current legislation, Trust directives, and the school's evolving priorities. Key changes include:

- Safeguarding suite (including merged Child-on-Child policy) signposting many avenues of support for parents and carers
- Prayer and Liturgy Policy (replacing Collective Worship Policy)
- Behaviour Policy – revised in line with ASPIRE and BeMore ethos
- Homework, Uniform, Mobile Phone, and Careers policies
- GDPR updates to support improved digital communication
- Pupil-friendly Anti-Bullying Policy added

"CSI highlighted the Behaviour, Culture and Safeguarding policies as reflective of the school's Mission and a strength of the school."

Mission, Ethos and Vision

Key Messages Reinforced:

- The ASPIRE and BeMore Mission Statements are now central to policy, practice, and school culture.
- The September INSET and Celebrations of the Word focused on re-establishing the Catholic mission and school ethos with staff and pupils.
- Communication of Catholic identity is embedded throughout the curriculum, handbooks, and liturgical life.

"CSI praised the clarity of mission and ethos across the school."

Internal Communication and Staff Support

Structures and Tools Introduced:

- Middle Leader Handbook – outlines expectations and standards, supports consistency in leadership.
- Form Tutor Handbook – sets clear guidance on pastoral responsibilities.
- Behaviour Support Document – assists all staff in implementing behaviour expectations consistently.

Staff Engagement and CPD:
- Increased frequency of Middle Leader Meetings and compulsory staff CPD sessions.

- CPD now more collaborative and reflective of school-wide priorities, with staff frequently leading sessions.

"Handbooks have improved clarity and communication from SLT to staff."

Parish and Community Engagement

- Headteacher addressed the parish community at St Anne's to provide updates and reinforce the school's direction of travel.
- Ongoing efforts to strengthen school-parish links and promote the Catholic identity of STM.
- Community engagement with businesses and local employers to support charity events and careers delivery.
- Ongoing support and involvement from FOSTM (our PTA) in providing enriching experiences for pupils, such as film nights and the summer fair

Technical and System Developments

- Arbor APP launched to parents, communicating progress, attendance, behaviour, notifications etc.
- VLE (MyLearning) fix completed, with compatibility updates and relaunch planning underway.
- Staff reissued with logins and asked to test class generation and platform functionality. Further staff training through CPD planned for the end of March.

Impact

- Mission and ethos visibly and consistently present in policies, website, and communication – recognised by CSI as a strength.
- Website provides clear and accessible information for stakeholders, praised by CSI and EMCCA.
- Improved communication between leadership and staff through handbooks and calendared CPD.
- Parents feel more informed through structured updates, clear policies, and digital tools such as the Arbor App.
- Enhanced parish-school relationship, reinforcing Catholic identity within the wider community.
- Policy updates ensure full compliance and alignment with current safeguarding, behaviour, and curriculum expectations.

"CSI noted the effective communication, clarity of ethos, and alignment between vision and practice."

Overall Summary

St Thomas More continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to transparent, values-driven communication and strategic leadership. With comprehensive website updates, a full policy refresh, and increased parent and parish engagement, the school is building an inclusive and informed community around its ASPIRE mission and Catholic ethos.

Digital tools like Arbor and MyLearning are enhancing communication and learning, while the introduction of handbooks, structured CPD, and Middle Leader development ensures that all staff are empowered, aligned, and supported.

"The STM website, policies, and internal frameworks reflect a school that knows who it is, where it's going, and how it will get there—with mission, Catholic identity, and clarity at its core."