

22<sup>nd</sup> July 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of the academic year, I would like to take a moment to reflect on what has been a truly spectacular year for our school community.

This year, we have undergone two inspections — both Ofsted and our Catholic Schools Inspection (CSI) — and I am delighted that we achieved *Good* across the board in both. These outcomes are a clear reflection of the hard work, commitment, and shared values that underpin everything we do here at school.

We are now eagerly awaiting the results from our Year 11 cohort this summer. This particular year group has been exceptional: mature, resilient, and determined to give their very best. Their dedication to their studies has been outstanding, and we are incredibly proud of them — whatever the results may bring.

A recent report from the Department for Education reinforces something we have long believed: there is a strong and direct link between school attendance and long-term success. Good attendance not only supports academic achievement but is also associated with higher salaries across a person's working life. With this in mind, we continue to set high expectations: pupils must attend school regularly, arrive on time, and be properly equipped for learning. Parental support with this is vital — it truly does make a difference to your child's future.

Another key factor in a child's success is literacy. This year, we have placed a strong focus on reading and literacy across the curriculum. Our efforts are already bearing fruit, with pupils becoming more confident and capable readers — enabling them to access their learning more effectively and achieve more. I am aware that the English Department have sent resources to all parents and carers to help support their child's reading over the summer break. Sustaining the progress made this year is crucial; even for the most confident of readers, if regular reading habits are not maintained, that progress can quickly begin to decline. We encourage all families to make time for reading over the holidays.

Looking ahead to September, I am pleased to confirm that there will be no increase in the cost of a lunchtime meal deal. Derbyshire County Council has decided to maintain current prices for the new academic year.

We are currently in the process of a significant £140,000 upgrade to the school's internet connectivity. This investment is already improving the reliability and efficiency of our IT systems for both staff and pupils. As part of this project, a new phone system is also being installed and will be operational by September. We are well aware of the limitations of our current system and are confident this change will enhance our communication with families.

Since my return in January 2024, my sole focus has been to ensure that our school provides a strong, well-rounded education for every pupil it serves. The positive outcomes from this year's inspections are testament to the dedication, professionalism, and passion of our staff. I am immensely proud of the team we have in place — a team that will continue to drive the school forward.





**St. Thomas More**  
CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

St. Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy, Palace Fields, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 6AF Headteacher: Mr D Redfern

As many of you know, following my accident in October 2022, I have been aware that further surgery would be required. I have delayed this to prioritise the needs of the school, but now feel the time is right to proceed. My operation is scheduled for August, and as a result, I will be absent for a period of time during the Advent Term. However, where possible, I will continue to support the school behind the scenes. During my absence, Mrs Lancett will take operational charge of the school, and as always, she will be supported by our dedicated and highly capable staff team.

In the meantime, I wish you and your families a restful and enjoyable summer break. Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Warmest regards,

Mr D Redfern  
Headteacher



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