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

25 November 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: New School Catering Provider – January 2027

I am pleased to inform you that, from the start of the new term in January 2027, we will be welcoming Aspens as our new school catering provider, replacing Derbyshire Catering Services.

Over recent months, I have been involved in the tendering process to appoint a new catering provider. This has been a joint venture between the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust and the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi Academy Trust, with the new catering contract covering approximately 85 schools across both Trusts. Aspens is a well-established company specialising in education catering, with considerable experience in delivering catering services within schools.

We are really looking forward to working with Aspens and developing our catering provision at St Thomas More, ensuring that our pupils have access to a varied, nutritious and appealing range of food throughout the school day.

I am particularly pleased that our existing school catering team will remain in place as part of this transition. They know your children well, have established positive relationships with our pupils and provide an excellent service to our school community. It is therefore pleasing that we will retain their experience and familiarity with our school whilst also benefiting from the opportunities that working with Aspens will bring.

Menus

Attached to this letter are the menus that will be in place for the first three weeks of January, whilst Aspens establishes itself within our school. As you will see, the menus offer a wide variety of choices, including traditional home-cooked meals, dishes inspired by international cuisine, vegetarian options, hot and cold deli selections, jacket potatoes, pasta dishes and daily meal deals.

I would encourage parents and carers to take some time to look through the menus with their children.

Food Allergies and Specific Dietary Requirements

As part of the transition to our new catering provider, it is important that Aspens is made aware of any pupils who have specific dietary requirements.

Also attached to this letter are the following documents:

- **Aspens Allergen Policy** – outlining the company's approach to allergen management, food safety and supporting pupils with food allergies.
- **Alternative Menu Form** – to be completed by parents and carers whose children have food allergies, intolerances, medical dietary requirements or specific dietary needs for religious reasons.

Where applicable, please complete the Alternative Menu Form, including any supporting medical evidence required, and return it to the school **no later than Friday 11th December 2026**. We will then forward the relevant information to Aspens so that appropriate arrangements can be considered and agreed ahead of the new term.

We are excited about this new partnership and the opportunities it brings to further enhance the catering experience for our pupils. I look forward to seeing our existing catering team working alongside Aspens to develop and build upon the service they already provide to our school community.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mr D Redfern
Headteacher