



St Thomas More Catholic Primary School
Inspiration, Celebration and Education

Welcome to St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

Foreword: Mrs Katie Turner, Headteacher, says...

It is my pleasure to welcome you to St Thomas More Catholic Primary School.

Nurturing environment

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, we strive to create a nurturing environment grounded in faith, respect, and love for one another. Our mission is to inspire and guide each child to reach their full potential - not only academically but also in faith and character. Our Catholic values shape every part of school life, encouraging our children to grow spiritually, become compassionate citizens, and develop a lifelong love for learning.

Our Mission Statement

As a Catholic school, God is at the heart of all we do. We believe that each person is made in His image, deserving to be treated with respect and dignity.

Showing respect, love and care for everyone and everything, we aim to develop harmony between pupils, parents the school and Parish and grow as a Christian community.

Pupils will share in God's love, whilst receiving a broad and balanced education. We aim to enable each individual to realise their full potential, spiritually, academically, physically, socially and emotionally.

Developing confident, creative and engaged learners

At St Thomas More, we are proud to introduce our new curriculum, 'Faithful Foundations'. It is carefully designed to help children build on what they already know, develop their skills step by step as they move through the school. By making strong links between subjects and weaving in catholic values, the curriculum helps children make sense of their learning and make connections. It is all about building confidence, curiosity, and a love of learning that stays with them for life.

Mental Health Champion Award

We know our mental health and wellbeing is just as important as our physical health. In our school, we learn about how important it is to talk about our feelings and emotions. We know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable, and, at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. Our pastoral care is exceptional, which is why we have been awarded the Mental Health Champion Award and the Healthy School Award by the Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning (GHLL) team. We are also part of the GHLL Young Minds Matter programme.

Dedicated staff

I am also extremely proud of our experienced and dedicated staff, who ensure that all our children are well supported to achieve their true potential and work hard with families to overcome any barriers to learning.

Our dedicated staff are committed to providing nurturing, high quality education, ensuring every child feels valued, supported and inspired to reach their full potential.

Parent partnership

As parents, you play a crucial role in your child's learning journey and we believe that working closely together helps every child thrive and achieve their potential. Hopefully you will see by reading the pupil stories within this prospectus that both you and your child are very important to us!

We champion our close links between school and home and work hard to involve you in every step of your child's educational journey with us.

Get in touch

I am looking forward to meeting each of you and working together to make St Thomas More Catholic Primary School a place of joy, faith and achievement.

If you would like to learn more about our wonderful school, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01242 513339 to arrange a visit. We would be delighted to show you around.



Thomas More Catholic Primary School is a big part of family life for Holli and her daughter Robin

Holli has Robin age 7 in Year 2 and her older brother has just started Year 7 at high school

Following family footsteps

Holli's daughter Robin is following a family tradition. Robin's older brother has recently left Thomas More and her dad's family all attended the school. Holli says, "Robin loves school. She missed her brother initially with him moving on to high school but she's got into her own stride now and is doing brilliantly. St Thomas More is a big part of our family life with lots of family members having been to the school."

Parents and teachers

"I'm a Parent Governor for the school and I'm also a member of the Parents' Committee. As a Parent Governors we act as the voice of the parents. If school have an idea or are looking to change something we're the group they come to for feedback and then quite often ideas are taken to the larger parent community as well," says Holli.

New ideas and initiatives

School has recently implemented Opal Play to enhance play time provision. "School has looked at what could be done to make playtimes more exciting. With Opal play the children will have lots of activities to choose from and not just things like sports, but other activities too. There will be things that encourage the children to move around but also things that offer space for quiet play and relaxing," says Holli.

Local community

"School is part of our local community. Many of the families that come to school are from the local area so you soon get to know everyone. The children bump into each other outside of school and meet up at the park for example, there's always someone there that we know. Whether in school or out of school you feel part of a nice community," says Holli.

Lead with kindness

St Thomas More is a Catholic Primary School and welcomes children and families from all faiths. Holli says, "School weaves Catholic teaching into the everyday lessons and activities at school. The children are taught to lead with kindness and to treat others how they want to be treated. Stories from the Bible are shared but in ways that engage the children and when they visit church and have Collective Worship they're encouraged to ask questions and explore. The children learn about other faiths and their traditions and festivals, everyone is made to feel welcome and part of school life."

Communication

"School are good at keeping parents up to date. They use an app called Class Dojo where they upload photos and updates so you can see what the children have been up to. You can message the teachers through the app and they're always quick to respond," says Holli.

Enjoying school

"Robin is enjoying reading Fantastic Mr. Fox. Her class were reading a chapter a week but they've had to increase it to two as the children were enjoying it so much. They've created artwork from it and are planning on writing their own stories which Robin is looking forward to doing," says Holli.

Exciting events

"This year we're having an end of year show. All the children will be involved and we're taking it outside and building a stage for the children to perform on. They're getting to help choose the songs they'll sing and everyone is looking forward to it," says Holli.

Children say:

Robin says: "I love reading Fantastic Mr. Fox."

School day: settling in

School hours

Our school day runs from 8.45am – 3.15pm.

We have breaks in the morning and afternoon and a break for prayer every day.

Breakfast Club

Our Breakfast Club runs from 8-8.45am

Uniform

Our smart uniform in the school colours of navy blue and yellow gives the children a sense of pride, community and belonging. Please visit www.brigade.uk.com, select the correct school and place your order using the promotional code: BCBLACK19.

Chaplaincy Team

Children have the opportunity to join our Chaplaincy Team, taking on leadership roles in promoting our Catholic Values within the school. These activities include leading prayers, engaging in acts of service such as caring for our school environment and much more.

Food in school

We prepare our school meals in our own kitchens by our team of kitchen staff. Meals are nutritious, carefully balanced and healthy.

Free school meals

Universal Free meals are provided for all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

In KS2 hot meals are available or children can bring a packed lunch. Please speak to the office about how to purchase KS2 hot meals.

Packed lunches

Children are welcome to bring packed lunches. We encourage healthy eating in school, so we ask that fizzy drinks and sweets are not included.

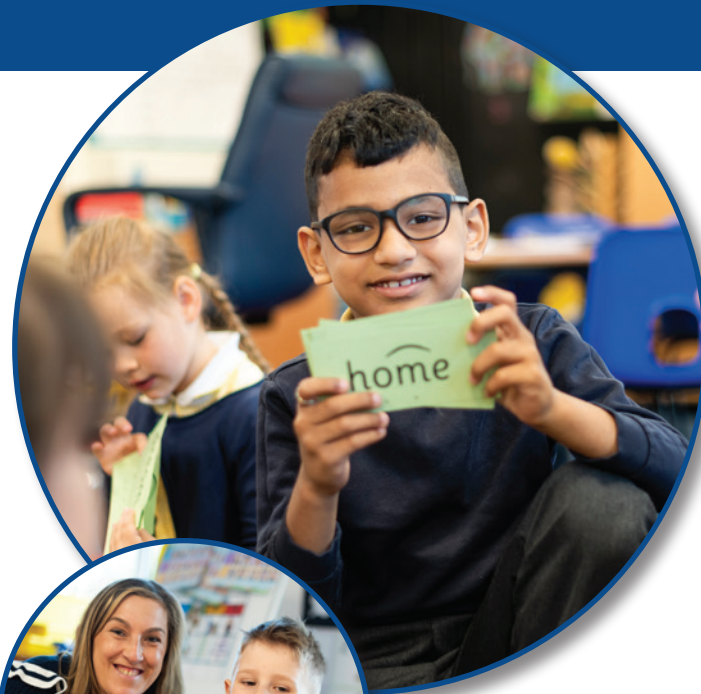
Snacks

Children in Key Stage 1 receive a piece of fruit each day. If your child is in an older year group, you are welcome to send them in with a piece of fruit for morning break. We are also happy to suggest other healthy snacks options you can provide.

Drinks

We recommend that all children bring a drink of water from home every day. The drinks container should be plastic, watertight and easy for them to reseal. Cups and a drinking water tap are also available in classrooms if children have not brought their own bottle.

Children are encouraged to access their drinks throughout the day. Children under five are eligible for free milk at school. Just ask the school office for information.



Kira’s three daughters are at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School and Kira sees how each child is treated as an individual

Kira has Ophelia age 8 in Year 4, Rosalee (Roo) age 7 in Year 2 and Eala age 4 in Reception

Life at school

Kira is a Teaching Assistant in Year 5 at St Thomas More and so gets to see her daughters every day at school. Kira says, “Eala loves school, she’s been desperate to go ever since watching “Matilda”. She’s loving life at school. Roo is doing well with the team that are in Year 2. Ophelia loves to read so she’s often in the playground with a book in her hand.”

Happy atmosphere

“There are always things going on, there’s a lovely energy, a buzz to life at school. Just the other day I was walking through the playground, and I could see children enjoying being out in the garden area, they were playing a game of “making soup”, collecting bits of grass and things and mixing it with water. In the hall children were enjoying a dance lesson and out on the field there were children playing rounders. There’s always activity happening,” says Kira.

Getting out and about

“The children go out to visit local care homes and we go to the Jazz and Literature Festivals. The little ones go to Perry Grove Railway before Christmas to see Santa and there’s a trip to the Science Museum in Bristol. There’s a great mix of trips and visits that we do,” says Kira.

Year 6 celebrations

In Year 6 the children sit their SATS which are nationally set tests for that year group. Kira says, “We celebrate the end of the SATS with the children. They work hard and so we have a pizza party and then they go on their residential trip which is a lovely reward.”

Extra activities

“We have a specialist music teacher that comes into school and regular swimming sessions.

There has been a Cheerleading Coach come in and these extra activities change over time. There are always clubs and activities for the children to try. There’s a Comic Club and Lego Club which are run by staff and some clubs are ran by external coaches. Everything is intended to be accessible and manageable for everyone” says Kira.

Support for children

Kira and her daughter Roo have been supported by school and the SEND team. “Roo is visually impaired and has Autism. Her diagnosis is recent and I understand how parents can feel when going through the process of a diagnosis. From what I’ve read online and heard, it can be a very slow journey and parents can often feel that people aren’t listening. At St Thomas More that is not the case. Teachers and the whole school team are always ready to listen and will act quickly when a child needs extra support. At St Thomas More children are seen as a whole person, their life at home is just as important as their life in school and school is here to support them at every step,” says Kira.

Developing skills

“Roo didn’t enjoy PE lessons and it is important that she develops her physical skills. Rather than PE, she has sessions where she focusses on life skills. She will practice, for example, chopping fruit and being safe in the kitchen. School is always looking for ways to adapt and enrich Roo’s school experience. I often see her with her TP out on the school field enjoying the space and fresh air as they know that’s important to her. School would be impossible for Roo if it wasn’t for the dedication of the team at St Thomas More,” says Kira.

Children say:

Ophelia says: “I love reading.”

Roo says: “I like being outside.”

Eala says: “School is fun.”

Curriculum and enrichment:

“I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.” John 10:10

Knowledge and Skills: ‘Faith Foundations’

Our ‘Faithful Foundations’ Curriculum is rooted in our Catholic Values and is designed to inspire a lifelong love for learning. It weaves together faith, knowledge and skills in a way that helps children make meaningful connections across subjects. By building on what pupils already know and can do, the curriculum encourages inquisitive minds, promotes critical thinking and nurtures a deep sense of curiosity and excitement for learning.

Our curriculum has been carefully designed to:

- Build on prior knowledge and skills.
- Link Catholic Values , helping children to grow in faith and character.
- Encourage curiosity, creativity, and a love of learning through engaging in meaningful topics.
- Develop confident, independent learners who can think critically and ask thoughtful questions.
- Foster connections across subjects so children see how knowledge fits together.
- Support spiritual, academic and personal development of every child.

Music and Art

In Music and Art, children learn through carefully planned blocks of learning that give them time to explore different genres and styles in more depth. This approach allows them to develop their own thoughts and opinions about composition and art expression whilst also helping them to understand and appreciate their open personal style and taste.

P.E. and Sport

At St Thomas More we aim to create a positive relationship with physical activity for life. We focus upon everyone being active,

supporting children to develop the physical literacy, emotional and thinking skills which underpin not just activity and sport but are transferable life skills that support whole school development. We aim to instil a love for being active and being healthy and for each individual to realise their full potential, spiritually, academically, physically, socially and emotionally.

We aim for children at St Thomas More to be educated with the knowledge and skills to lead a more active, healthier lifestyle. Develop supportive, safe and fun environments for every child to be active. Support the development of the whole child through physical activity. Through our membership with MoveMore we are able to run lessons and interventions to help develop: children’s physical development, children’s resilience, positive behaviour, building positive friendships, and to develop their understanding in the following three key areas: mental health & well-being, physical activity and healthy eating and sleeping.

Enrichment

Clubs and activities

Our children have the opportunity to participate in a variety of clubs and activities, during lunchtimes and after school. Our extra-curricular clubs offer something for everyone, ranging from life skills based activities such as first aid club to pupil led choices such as cheerleading and football, reflecting the interests and enthusiasm of our children.

Visits and visitors

We offer a rich programme of visits and visitors that enhances learning beyond the classroom – from local events such as Cheltenham Literature, Jazz and Science festivals to exciting trips to Zoos and museums , as well as inspiring visits from guest authors who are their passion for storytelling and creative writing.

Residential

Year 6 have a residential visit to Morpha Bay for a week in the summer term.



Qaiser’s son Adam is taking every opportunity at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

Qaiser father of Adam in Year 5 age 10

Planning ahead

Qaiser and his wife want Adam to have every opportunity and he is studying for entrance to the Grammar school. Qaiser says, “Adam is doing well. He’s preparing to take the 11+ exam so that he can go to the Grammar school. His older sister has just completed her A ‘Levels and so we want Adam to have every chance to follow the same path.”

Studying hard

“Adam enjoys learning History, Geography and English. He has a tutor once a week. He studies with them for an hour and a half. It is extra support so that he can feel confident in his learning,” says Qaiser.

Educational Opportunities

St Thomas More is working in partnership with Pates Grammar School through ‘Shaping Futures’ program to give local children a taste of Grammar school. “Adam was chosen to be part of a program with the Grammar school. He goes there twice a month after school with other children who have been chosen. They take part in activities and get to experience what life is like at the Grammar school. It is a fantastic opportunity. It would be an expensive activity but the chosen children are enjoying the experience for free, it is giving them access to things they would otherwise not take part in. Adam gets to mix with other students and his mentors and it is all preparing him to go and study at the Grammar school” says Qaiser.

Behaviours for Learning

“Adam always wants to go to school. I’ve never heard him say he doesn’t want to go. From Reception he’s always been happy to be at school.

He’s developing a love for Geography, History and English and we know his hard work is paying off from the feedback from his teachers. His reading level is higher than average, he’s doing very well,” says Qaiser.

Firm Foundations

St Thomas More Catholic Primary is committed to providing all children with key foundational knowledge to enable children the essential building blocks to base all future learning on. Qaiser is from Pakistan and for him, education is everything. Qaiser says, “I want Adam to have a strong base for his education. If you don’t have a strong base you can’t build on it and that’s where he is now, building his strong base. Sometimes it feels like a lot of pressure, but we talk about putting the hard work in now so that he can relax when he’s older.”

Feeling part of the community

“St Thomas More is a good school. There is a culture to treat each other with respect which is important. I’m happy with his teachers. I’m a Muslim and it is a Catholic school and Adam has a strong belief in Allah. Adam takes part in religious education and enjoys learning about Catholic teaching. He has played Jesus in the school play and we do not put any restrictions on him exploring this side of school life. We enjoy taking part in events and activities and as parents we’re made to feel welcome and part of the school community,” says Qaiser.

Children say:

Adam says: “I like being with my friends.”

Getting involved and our ethos and values

Getting involved

Voluntary helpers

We value the contribution of volunteers in school including parents and wider family, parishioners and Governors, and we actively encourage your help during the school day. Volunteers help with a variety of activities which include reading with our children, attending trips, community build days and acting as extra pair of hands in class. We accept all help gratefully.

Friends of St Thomas More School

Our Friends are a team of parents, teachers and governors who run vital fundraising activities for the school. As well as raising funds, they are a great way for parents to get involved with the school and take part in activities such as summer fetes and school proms. All parents are welcome to take part in activities and there is a range of opportunities to suit whatever commitment you can make.

Governors

Governors play an important role in contributing to the running of our school. They are expected to act like a 'critical friend', recognising and celebrating the achievements of the school, whilst pointing out shortcomings, striking an appropriate balance between support and challenge. We are always looking for people to add to the expertise of our Local Governing Committee. If you would like to find out more about the role, please contact clerk@st-thomasmore.gloucs.sch.uk.

Our Ethos and Values

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, we ensure that our Mission Statement is lived out every day. This is also built with our Catholic Ethos and Values. We ensure that our school is building God's kingdom by providing:

- A place where Jesus' actions are lived out every day through asking 'What would Jesus do?'
- Opportunities for children to become independent learners in the whole school environment.
- Equality for all.
- An environment where we have high expectations of all staff and pupils.
- An environment in which behaviour, self-discipline and showing respect for the rights and views of others is everyday practice and consistently kept to a high standard.
- A curriculum which gives every child an opportunity to learn through their own learning style.
- A place where everyone feels valued and respected as members of a community.
- An environment where we celebrate all the individual and collective achievements from children, staff and parents.
- A thriving community, where staff and parents can work together to ensure excellence for each child.



St Thomas More Catholic Primary School
Lewis Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL51 0HZ
Telephone: 01242 513 339
Email: admin@st-thomasmore.gloucs.sch.uk
Website: www.st-thomasmore.gloucs.sch.uk