
St Thomas More Catholic Primary and Nursery School



INFORMATION

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'While the Catholic School is like any other school in the complex variety of events that make up the life of the school, there is one essential difference: it draws its inspiration and strength from the Gospel in which it is rooted.'

The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic

Introduction

St Thomas More is a Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic Primary and Nursery School under the Trusteeship of the Diocese of Westminster. The school is maintained by the Diocese in partnership with the Local Education Authority and serves the parishes of Berkhamsted and Tring with the neighbouring villages.

The school is located on the western side of Berkhamsted and was opened in 1966. The buildings comprise a multipurpose central hall which is used for Holy Mass, Assemblies, P.E., dinners and after school activities.

A recent extension to our main school building has been a new ICT suite and reference library and a new space for cloakrooms outside the Years 5 and 6 classrooms, which was completed in the summer of 2004.

Three Infant and four Junior classrooms open out from the hall, each also having access to paved and grass playing areas. These areas have items of adventure playground equipment within them and in addition to providing a challenging environment physically, the grassed areas and their surrounding hedges provide a good resource area for the study of wildlife habitats. The Nursery is a separate building situated within the site.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION

The Catholic School is an integral part of the Church community. The principal aims of the school in terms of the Religious Education which it provides for the children are:

- ♦ to help the children recognise and appreciate the religious and spiritual dimensions of life;
- ♦ to lead the children to a deepening knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith and other religious traditions and to recognise their significance to our lives;
- ♦ to encourage the children to think about their own lives, foster their faith and respect others as equal members of God's creation.

Given the diversity of the children's religious backgrounds, each will take from the R.E. programme only what s/he can experience and share. Religious Education takes place within the context of the school community which tries to live by and foster the Gospel values.

In addition to a daily Assembly, there is a class Mass, school Mass and celebration of the Liturgy of the Word once every four weeks.

MISSION STATEMENT

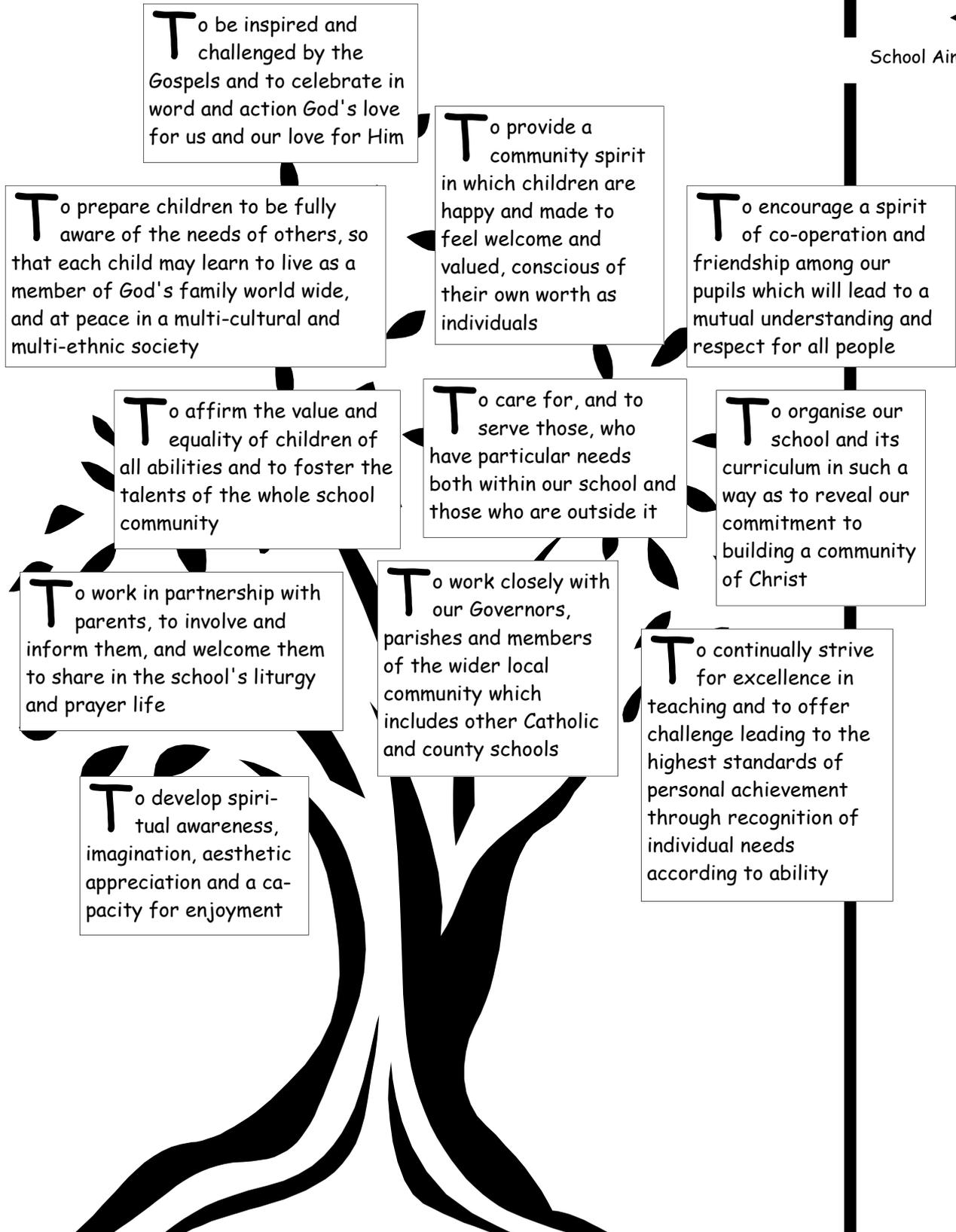
We value each member of the school community as part of God's family.

Together we seek to create a loving environment where everyone will feel secure and happy and fulfil their potential.

*We will provide opportunities for all to grow in God's love through the
Celebration ~ experience ~ living ~telling
of the Gospel message.*

SCHOOL AIMS

The following support our overall aim of communicating Christ to others:





ADMISSIONS POLICY - NURSERY OR RECEPTION

*Please note: Although the Admissions Policies for Nursery and Reception are the same, the application processes are **entirely separate**.*

St. Thomas More School is a Catholic Primary School founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for Catholic children. At a Catholic school, Catholic doctrine and practice permeates every aspect of the school's activity. It is essential that the Catholic character of the school's education is fully supported by all families in the school. Responsibility for the admission of pupils rests with the Board of Governors. The school is conducted by its governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and instrument of government, and seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ.

Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will always be given to Catholic applicants who will be required to provide a reference from a Catholic Priest.

The governors intend to admit up to the school's Published Admission Number of 30 pupils into the Nursery and Reception classes in each school year. The timetable for admissions, including late applications, is in line with the LA Admissions process. Where there are more applications for places than the total of 30 places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority:

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

Should the school be oversubscribed, the following criteria will apply in order of priority:

1. Catholic children looked after.
2. Baptised children who provide evidence (baptismal certificate) from practising Catholic families resident in the parish of Berkhamsted or Tring. "Practising Catholic" means regular family attendance at Sunday mass which is confirmed by the Diocesan Priest's Reference.
3. All other baptised children from practising Catholic families.
4. Baptised Catholic children.
5. Other children looked after.
6. Members of an Eastern Christian Church.
7. Children of another faith/tradition who provide evidence (baptismal certificate and priest's/minister's reference) of regular practice of their faith and whose parents or guardians desire a Catholic education for their child.
8. Any other applicants.

The governing body will give top priority of an application within a category where evidence is provided at the time of application of an exceptional medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met by the school.

The attendance of a sibling at the school at the time of admission will increase priority of an applicant under each category.

For the purposes of this Admissions Policy and the Reference of a Catholic Priest "practising" means regular attendance at Sunday Mass, which also includes the Saturday Vigil Mass which is confirmed by the Diocesan Priest's Reference.

TIE BREAK

In the event of oversubscription in any category, the geographical proximity of the child's home to their respective parish church of Sacred Heart, Berkhamsted, or Corpus Christi, Tring will be taken into account, as measured in a straight line on a map from the front door of the church to the child's home front door. For example, should one place be available and there are two remaining applicants, one from Tring parish and one from Sacred Heart parish and the Tring person lived nearer to their church, they would, in that instance, be offered the place. Home address means that at which the child normally resides for 50% or more of the school week, not an accommodation address. Proof of residence may be required.

In the event of oversubscription in the case of twins, triplets and children from multiple births, the governors will conduct a lottery in the presence of an independent witness to determine who should fill the place.

Admissions
Policy



APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND TIMETABLE

Applications should be made in writing to the School. The Board of Governors will consider applications and allocate places according to the admissions criteria. The headteacher will be pleased to meet with prospective families and show them around the school. This in itself does not form part of the admission procedure.

Applicants must complete the LA application form (Common Application Form, CAF) and are encouraged to complete the school's own application form (referred to as the Supplementary Information Form, SIF). In conjunction with the school SIF applicants will need to complete a Diocesan Priest's Reference form (two parts), to be submitted to their parish priest. You will be required to ask your parish priest to complete and sign Part B of the Priest's Reference form and return it to you. **Please submit the school SIF, the Priest's Reference form (Part B only) and a copy of the child's baptism certificate to the school.** If you do not complete the SIF and return it by the closing date, the governing body will apply their admission arrangements using the information submitted on the Common Application Form only, which may result in your application being given a lower priority and it is very unlikely that your child will get a place at the school. All forms must be submitted by the closing date listed in the County Admissions Handbook. Parents will be advised of the outcome of their applications in writing.

Children whose birthday falls between 1st September and 28th February will be admitted in September, those whose birthday falls between 1st March and 31st August will be admitted in January.

There is no automatic right of admission to the Reception Class for children who have attended the Nursery Class.

APPEALS PROCEDURE

Parents have the right to appeal against refusal of admission by the Governors. The appeal is organised and heard by an independent committee. An appeal should be addressed in the first instance to the Chair of Governors.

WAITING LISTS

Unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out above and not in the order applications are received or added to the list. The list is held open for one year.

PUPILS WITH A STATEMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED

The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational needs is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. This procedure is integral to the making and maintaining of statements by the pupil's home Local Education Authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*.

NOTES (these notes form part of the oversubscription criteria)

"Child looked after" has the same meaning as in section 22 of the Children Act 1989, and means any child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents).

"Catholic" means a member of the Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of baptism in a Catholic Church or a certificate of reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

"Eastern Christian Church" includes Orthodox churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church.

"Sibling" refers to a brother or sister, half-brother or half-sister, adopted brother or sister, step-brother or step-sister or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same family address as the siblings.

To demonstrate an exceptional medical or pastoral need of the child which can be most appropriately met at this school, the governing body will normally require written evidence from an appropriate professional.



Admissions
Policy

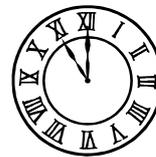


SCHOOL ORGANISATION

There are seven classes within the school which reflect the full range of ability in the 4-11 age range. Each class has its own teacher, though in some cases the teaching task is shared between part-time teachers as opposed to full-time. Each of the Infant classes has an allocation of Classroom assistance and the teachers are further assisted by parent helpers who work under the teachers' direction.

School
Organisation

The School Day



8.55	School Opens
8.55 - 9.15	Registration and Assembly
9.15 - 10.30.....	Work period 1
10.30 - 10.45	Break
10.45 - 12.00	Work period 2 (Infants)
10.45 - 12.15.....	Work period 2 (Juniors)
12.15 - 1.15.....	Lunch time
1.15 - 3.10.....	Work period 3
3.10.....	School ends

Teaching hours during a normal school day, excluding assemblies, registration, morning and lunch breaks, are:

Infants	22 hours 30 minutes
Juniors	23 hours 45 minutes.

Curriculum

The curriculum encompasses all the opportunities for learning within the school. The Governors note the requirements of the National Curriculum and endorse the call that it should be broadly based and related to the Gospels with each child being valued for his/her own self and encouraged to grow in God's love.

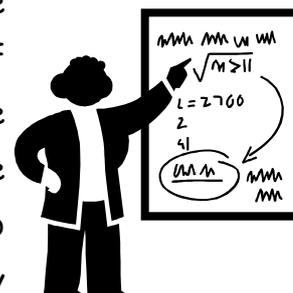


The curriculum clearly relates to the school's Mission Statement and Aims and acknowledges the varied needs and abilities of all pupils. It promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social and physical development of each child and prepares each to live as full members of God's family recognising each other as brothers and sisters in Christ.



The National Curriculum lays down the four core subjects - Mathematics, English Science and ICT, and the six foundation subjects - History, Geography, Technology, Music, Art and P.E., in addition to Religious Education which, in a Catholic school, is an integral part of all learning, providing a context for the whole curriculum.

To support learning we try to create an interesting and stimulating environment within the school, have high expectations of all our pupils and strive for excellence in all our teaching. Teaching in the early years will be more topic based and cross curricular with a gradual introduction of subject teaching. In the junior years topics are centred on individual subjects with a more formal timetable. Teachers use a number of organisational strategies which include whole class, group and individual teaching. For some activities children are grouped according to ability. Assessment is systematically incorporated into teaching strategies. In addition standardised testing is used in the Junior classes, and Years 2 and 6 take part in the Standard Assessment Tasks. Nursery and Reception teachers will carry out a Baseline Assessment in the first few weeks of term.



Information sessions for parents are held regularly to keep parents informed on aspects of School organisation and curriculum development. The school prospectus, policies, National Curriculum

documents, Diocesan and LEA guidelines, minutes of Governor meetings, are all available for parental reference.

Homework

is set from Reception. All children need a Book Bag, and it is expected that this will be taken home each evening with a reading book inside it together with a note book for teachers and parents to use. (See Reading Notes for Parents.) Junior children use a homework diary.

Music tuition



in the cello, guitar and recorder is available from Year 3. This is in addition to the normal music provision made for all children.

Sex Education

is taught as part of a Personal Social & Health Education programme produced in consultation with parents, which itself is planned within the context of Catholic Teaching. There is a cross-curricular aspect to the subject as questions may arise in science, RE or history for example, but teachers will ensure that all discussions have regard to Religious and moral considerations and the value of family life.

At Year Six parents will be given the option to withdraw their child from specific sex education sessions.

Multicultural Education



is part of the school's Religious and Personal Education programme which seeks to encourage all children to respect others as equal members of God's creation.

Special Education Needs

Children entering the school with identified special needs are welcomed as part of the community and, where possible, their needs are met from within the school's resources. Some needs require additional or specialist staffing and at present representations are made to the Local Education Authority to secure the necessary staffing/equipment.

For some children, however, their needs might not be evident until they come to the school, and when these become apparent, discussion with the parents concerned is sought and requests for guidance may then be made to the Local Authority for specialist help.

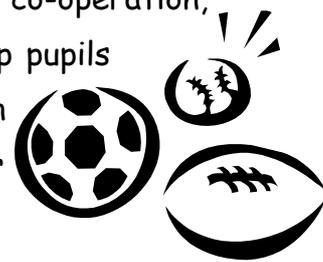
The headteacher and governors monitor and report to parents on the school's provision for SEN. They implement the 'Code of Practice' and Diocesan/LEA procedures to secure the identification of, and provision for, pupils with SEN.

The school also recognises its responsibility in providing for the extension and enrichment of exceptionally able children.

School
Organisation

Sports Aims

St Thomas More includes individual and team sports in the PE curriculum and strives to foster the skills of co-operation, team work and collective responsibility. We help pupils to enjoy their sport and aim for them to have an understanding and appreciation of some major games by the end of Key Stage 2.



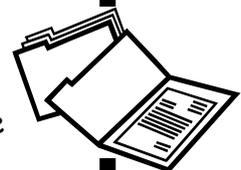
We encourage extra curricular sport, enrol in local leagues and competitions, and work closely with the School Association in providing sport in the after school activities.

Educational Visits

As well as making use of the immediate environment, educational visits may be undertaken by classes during the year to places of interest. (See charging policy)

Reports and Consultations

In the Autumn and Spring terms all parents are invited to make appointments to discuss their children's progress. A written report, explaining pupils achievement through the National Curriculum, will be sent to parents in the Summer term. Parents then are welcome to make an appointment with their child's teacher to discuss the report if they wish to do so.



There is also an Open Day when parents are invited to visit the school to view their children's work.

We aim to work in partnership with parents and regular contact between the home and school is encouraged. The headteacher and teachers are available to meet parents on most days after school.

School Based Complaints Procedure

The school aims to work closely with parents, and we hope that parents who have any concerns or anxieties will in the first instance raise these with the class teacher or the headteacher. We find that nearly all concerns or potential complaints can be resolved happily through discussion.

The governors of the school do have arrangements for considering complaints formally. For general complaints and matters to do with special educational needs they have adopted a procedure which follows lines recommended by the Hertfordshire County Council/ Westminster Diocese. You can obtain a copy of this from the school.

There are, in addition, special arrangements for considering complaints about matters to do with the teaching of the national curriculum and about collective worship in the school. You can obtain a copy of these arrangements also from the school.

Discipline

Fundamental to our approach is the recognition of the child as an expression of God's love; each is valued for his/her own self. Our discipline policy, reflecting our Catholic identity, seeks to promote justice, fairness and reconciliation. At St Thomas More we aim for a calm, quiet working environment and we strive to develop self-discipline among our pupils.

The following code agreed with the children and parents is a response to the Christian values the school embraces.

Code of Conduct

Jesus said "Love one another as I have loved you"

As friends of Jesus, we act with care, courtesy and concern for others at all times. This makes St Thomas More a happy place where children can learn and play without being afraid or worried

1. We always try to understand and respect other people's point of view.
2. We always try to be fair, honest and forgiving.
3. In class we make it as easy as possible for everyone to learn and the teacher to teach. This means we arrive on time with everything we need for lessons, beginning and ending lessons in a courteous and orderly way, listening carefully, following instructions, working hard, helping each other and being quiet and sensible at all times.
4. We move gently and quietly around the school being ready to help by opening doors, standing back to let others pass, and helping to carry things. All with a smile!
5. We always speak politely to everyone, using a low voice.
6. We are silent whenever it's required.
7. We keep the school clean and tidy so that it is a welcoming place we can all be proud of. This means putting litter in the bin, keeping walls, furniture and books clean and unmarked and taking great care of the displays, particularly other people's work and property.
8. We care for all living things in our school - people, animals and plants. We care especially for those who need our help, are hurt, sad or lonely.
9. In the playground we play safely, being kind to others, and trying to work out problems without arguing.
10. If we do upset anyone, we try to say sorry as soon as possible. If others upset us we try to forgive as soon as possible.

We also remember that when we are out of school, St Thomas More's reputation depends on how we behave.

Schools Council

A school council, run by pupils in order to develop citizenship meets fortnightly. Two children from each Junior class represent their peers.

Extra Curricular Activities

In partnership with the School Association the school organises various after-school activities. Further information about these is given to parents in September.

School Association

The School Association works extremely hard to ensure that the school has many necessary resources. They organise social events and support the school in a range of ways.

Charging Policy

When activities occur in school time, for example educational visits to museums and other places of value, parents will be invited to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the activity. Pupils will not be debarred from taking part in an activity because parents cannot or will not make a voluntary contribution, but lack of adequate contributions will lead to the activity being cancelled.

Charges will be made for:

- a) The cost of board and lodging on residential trips unless parents are in receipt of Income Support, Family Credit or Disability Working Allowance.
- b) Individual and group music tuition, instruments, music and music examination fees
- c) Homework books.

School Bus

There is a scheduled school bus for families living in Tring. The longest journey time is 45 minutes with the majority being in the region of 35 minutes. Adult supervision is provided to and from the school.

School Uniform

Girls



- Red sweatshirt/cardigan
- Grey skirt or pinafore dress
- In the Summer the girls may wear a red and white checked dress
- Grey trousers may be worn from November to February
- White shirt
- White socks/red or grey tights
- Tie

Boys



- Red sweatshirt
- Grey shorts/trousers
- White shirt
- Grey socks
- Tie

The children will all require a change of footwear for use inside the building.

The Nursery uniform consists of PE Kit and Tracksuits.

P.E. Kit

All children will require a change of clothes and footwear for Games and P.E.. The kit for both boys and girls consists of a red tee-shirt and white shorts with red trim, and tracksuit. All children will require plimsolls/trainers for outdoor games.

It would be much appreciated if all P.E. kit could be kept in a named shoe bag.

Marking of Clothing

With a common supplier for much of the uniform, you are asked to ensure that your children's clothes are adequately marked with the child's name.



Jewellery

Jewellery should not be worn to school. Children wearing jewellery may be withdrawn from P.E. lessons at the class teacher's discretion.

Absences 2008/9

Authorised Absences: 3.6%
Unauthorised Absences: 0.1%

SCHOOL STAFF

Acting Headteacher Miss I Cerasale

Co-ordinators

Key Stage 1 Mrs J Lee

Key Stage 2 Mrs S Evison

Teachers

Mrs D Angell Mrs C Anderton

Mrs R Simpson Mrs D Howes

Mrs C Wheeler Miss S Lavelle

Mrs S Burchell Mrs A Wright

Mrs S Harris Mrs J O'Donnell

Nursery Nurse Mrs S Wareham

Peripatetic Music

Mrs E Dobson - Cello

Mrs N O'Brien - Recorder

Mrs R Gunaselvam- Guitar

Library & ICT Mrs H Houston

Classroom Assistants

Mrs P Garraway Mrs A Heath

Mrs N Collisson Mrs L Hubbard

Mrs C Kerrigan Mrs D Moore

Mrs S Moring Mrs T Munn

Mrs R Norgate Mrs K Turnbull

Ms T Warr Miss F Galvin

School Office Miss H Jeff

Mrs L Selfe

Mrs P Parker

Caretaker Mrs O Thomas

Head of Kitchen Mrs P Tonge

Mid-day Supervisors

Mrs D Moore Mrs S Kwan

Mrs K Turnbull Mrs A B-Martin

Mrs T Munn

Kitchen

Mrs F Kerr Mrs O Thomas

Cleaner Mr K Thomas

School Staff

SCHOOL GOVERNORS

Chairman Mr G McKenna

Vice Chairman Mrs S Milligan

Miss I Cerasale

Fr J Boland

Canon V Berry

Mr P Fitzgerald

Mr B Kelly

Mrs D Hawkins

Mrs T Apps

Mr C Gray

Mr A Beaumont

Mr B Carvey

Mrs P Garraway

Mrs N Molloy

Mrs D Tippen

Foundation Governor

Parent Governor

Acting Headteacher Governor

Foundation Governor

LEA Governor

LEA Governor

Non Teacher Governor

Parent Governor

Parent Governor

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

2009 KEY STAGE TEST RESULTS

Key Stage 1 Assessment Results

Percentage of Year 2 children achieving Level 2 and above

	SCHOOL	NATIONAL - 2008
Reading	96.7%	84%
Writing	93.3%	80%
Mathematics	93.3%	90%

Test Results

Key Stage 2 Test Results

Percentage of Year 6 children achieving Level 4 and above

- (Level 5 in brackets)

	SCHOOL	NATIONAL - 2008
English	100% (46.2%)	81% (29%)
Mathematics	88.5% (53.8%)	78% (31%)
Science	100% (42.3%)	88% (44%)