



St Thomas More

Catholic Primary School and Nursery



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St Thomas More School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

'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

St Thomas More is a Voluntary Aided Catholic Primary School and Nursery 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; an ICT suite with a comprehensive reference library; and seven classrooms (three Infant and four Junior) opening 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 Assembly, children also experience class Mass, school Mass and celebration of the Liturgy of the Word.



St Thomas More
Catholic Primary School

MISSION STATEMENT

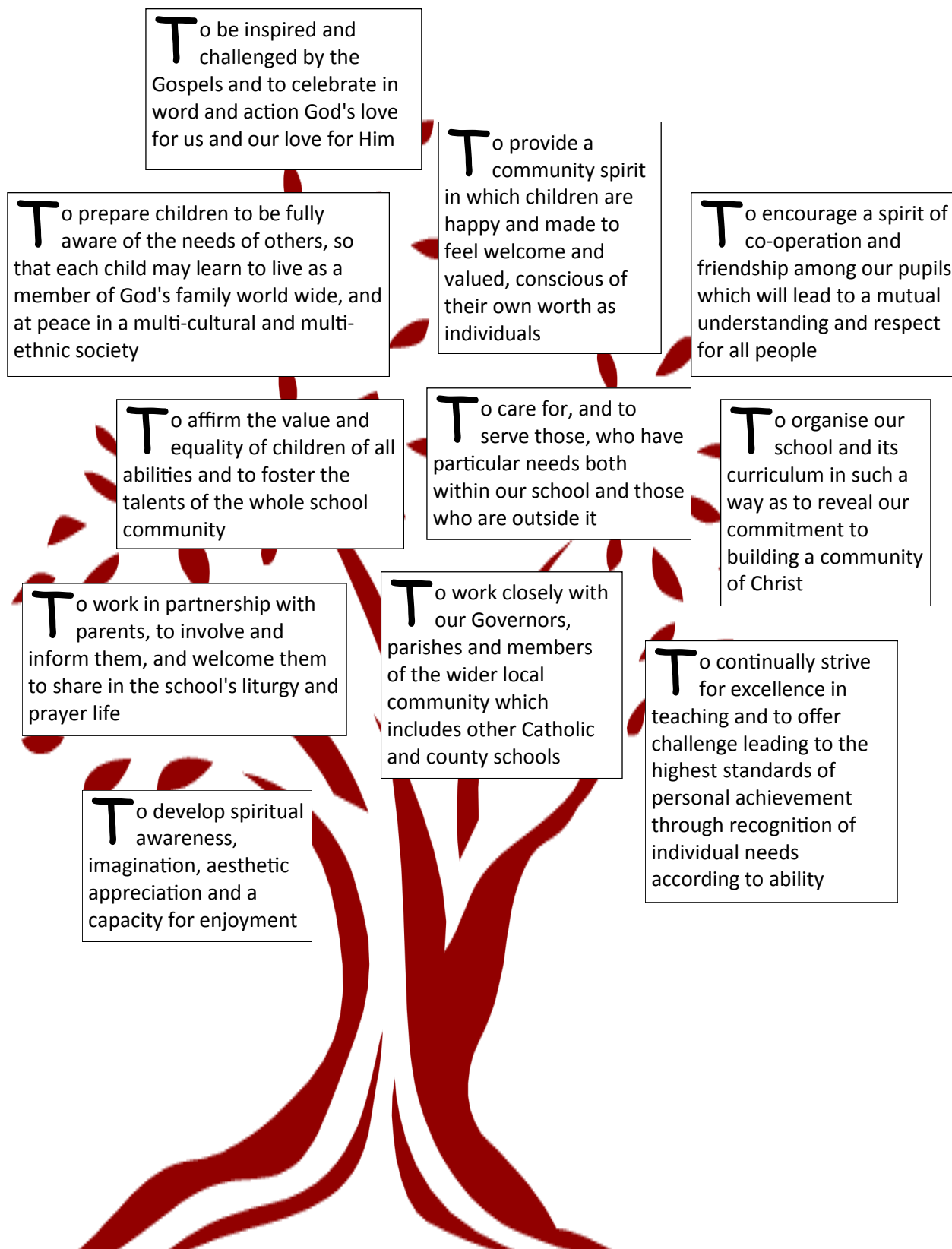
*Learning to love, live and celebrate as we grow in
the knowledge and love of Christ*





SCHOOL AIMS

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



SCHOOL ORGANISATION

There are seven classes within the school and a Nursery, which reflect the full range of ability in the 3-11 age range. Each class has its own teacher, though in some cases the teaching task is shared between part-time

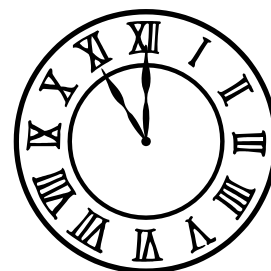
teachers as opposed to full-time. Each of the classes has an allocation of Classroom assistance and the teachers are often further assisted by parent helpers who work under the teachers' direction.

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 computing, and the six foundation subjects - History, Geography, Design 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 Reading Record for teachers and parents to use. (See Reading Notes for Parents.) Junior children also use a homework diary.

Music tuition

in the piano, violin, cello, guitar, recorder and flute is available. 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.

Special Education Needs and Disability

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 SEND. They implement the 'Code of Practice' and Diocesan/LEA procedures to secure the identification of, and provision for, pupils with SEND.

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

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.



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.





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.

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 and that of the next class.

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.

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.



School Council

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

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.

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 or grey socks/red or grey tights
- Tie (Juniors)



Boys

- Red sweatshirt
- Grey shorts/trousers
- White shirt
- Grey socks
- Tie (Juniors)



Shoes

- Black indoor plimsolls
- Black outdoor shoes
- JUNIORS require trainers for outdoor PE activities.

Hair should be kept neat and tidy at all times and there should be no extremes of hairstyles or accessories; these should be red or black bands/ribbons.

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 navy 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.

The **Nursery** uniform consists of PE Kit and Tracksuits.

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.

