

# St Thomas More's Catholic Primary School Profile

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## St Thomas More's Catholic Primary School

Priory Street  
Colchester, Essex, CO1 2QB  
Telephone: 01206 865722  
<http://www.stthomasmores.co.uk>

Children's Service Authority:	ESSEX
Age range:	4-11
Number of pupils:	215
Head teacher:	Mrs Bridget Harris
Chair of governors:	Mr Simon Fenning

### What have been our successes this year?

We set whole school, class and individual pupil targets which are reviewed termly and shared with parents. As a result standards are continuing to rise throughout the school. Sat's results in both Key Stages were extremely good.

We gained the following awards: Artsmark Award in recognition of our commitment to music, dance, drama and art; Inclusion Quality Mark for our commitment to every child; Investors in People following successful reassessment.

There has been significant improvement to resources and accommodation including: new CCTV security cameras to the front and rear of school; classroom resources; new classroom furniture; new adventure playground on the field; wet weather shelter; new sound system for assembly hall.

We have increased our range of extra curricular activities, enrichment days and visits and we have put on several musical performances. We have termly art days which are enjoyed by all. We have a thriving School Council that has raised money for playground equipment as well as charities.

We have developed ICT to include e-portfolio where each child has their own email account and web-based desktop which they can also use to store and share work. This fits in well with Government targets for learning anytime anywhere.

## What are we trying to improve?

We would like to develop more opportunities for 'hands on' investigational science in the Foundation Class. New resources have been purchased and lesson plans are changing to give our youngest pupils more opportunities to learn through experience and enquiry.

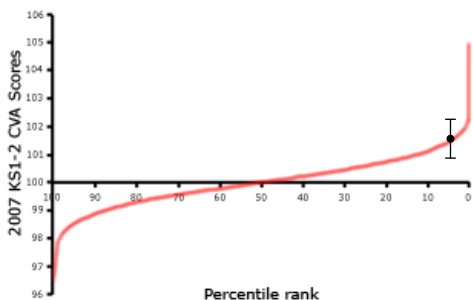
We are working with the children in both Key Stages to improve their writing. Two classes have been involved in The Essex Writing Project which aims to improve writing by using film and dvd as a stimulus. So far the results are promising and the children enjoy their work. Targets have been set to help the children to focus on ways to improve their writing in Key Stage 1 we would like to develop the use of punctuation and connectives in the children's writing and in Key Stage 2 we would like to develop the children's ability to write complex sentences and to use noun and adverbial phrases.

Another main focus this year has been to improve the children's ability in problem solving in maths in both Key Stages. Resources and lessons have been directed this way.

As teaching a modern foreign language will soon be compulsory we are taking part in a French Language pilot scheme. All children in KS2 get 1 hour of French a week as well as the occasional theme day.

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## How much progress do pupils make between age 7 and 11?



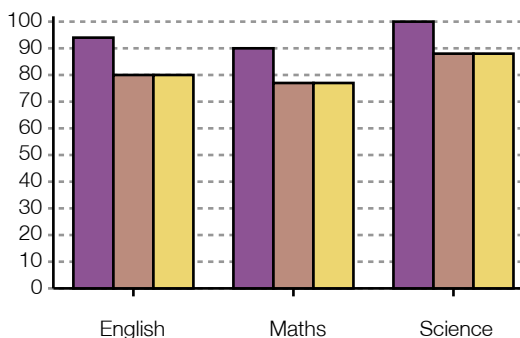
- Our school
- I Confidence interval

The chart shows our school's contextual value added (CVA) score relative to that of other primary schools. CVA is a statistical means of assessing how effective a school is, by measuring pupils' progress using their test and examination results. The confidence interval shows the range within which we can be confident the score (calculated on the results of only one year group) represents the overall effectiveness of a school. The percentile rank shows the percentage of schools with a score equal to or higher than ours.

The chart shows our school lies within the top 5% of schools gaining above average progress from their pupils. The figures are reliable and show that pupils at St. Thomas More's do well. Teaching continues to be very good throughout the school with pupils wanting to perform well in all areas of the curriculum.

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## How well do pupils achieve at age 11?



This chart shows the Key Stage 2 results for 2007. It indicates the percentage of pupils eligible for KS2 tests (usually 11 year olds) who achieved or exceeded the expected level (level 4)

■ Our school ■ Local schools (Local Authority) ■ All schools

Pupils in Year 6 in 2007 achieved excellent results in their SAT's. All pupils achieved the expected level for a Year 6 pupil or higher in Science, and almost all in Maths and English. The number of pupils achieving higher than average results was better than predicted in all 3 subjects.

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## How have our results changed over time?

Pupil performance data from both Key Stages shows that results are on an upward trend over the last 3 years. The standards pupils attain are above the national average. This is evidenced by both the results the pupils achieve and in the value-added indicators. Our 2007 results placed us as one of the top schools in the area.

Ofsted said, 'Pupils achieve well in relation to their ability. Children enter the school with average attainment levels. They achieve well in the Foundation Stage. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 & 2 and by the time they reach the end of Year 2, standards in national tests are above the national average. Pupils continue to make good progress and achieve well in the junior years. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language achieve well'.

## **How are we making sure that every child gets teaching to meet their individual needs?**

All pupils are regularly assessed and relevant next step targets are produced. We set individual targets for all pupils in literacy and numeracy and all pupils are tracked using 'Target Tracker' to ensure appropriate levels of progression. Children not making expected progress are easily identified and intervention programmes can be introduced at the earliest opportunity.

We regularly update our Special Educational Needs Register and our Gifted and Talented Register in order to meet the needs of all children. Individual Education Plans (IEP's) are in place for all children requiring them and these are reviewed regularly. These are shared with pupils and parents to ensure a successful home-school partnership. Gifted and Talented pupils are identified in teachers plans to ensure their needs are met and appropriate extension activities are provided.

Other activities such as links with secondary schools, specialist music lessons and after-school sports clubs provide further opportunities to extend learning.

In November 2006 the school was awarded the Inclusion Quality Mark showing its commitment to high standards for all.

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## **How are we working with parents and the community?**

The school is committed to forming good partnerships with parents. They support our school strongly and participate in its life and work through a committed PTA, participation in our wide range of events and as much appreciated parent helpers.

We communicate with parents through:  
home-school contact books, initial meetings in the autumn, parents' evenings, the school website, the weekly newsletter, letters home, the sharing of targets and performance and assessment data. In addition we are usually available at the end of the day to help with any queries and appointments can be made at short notice if necessary.

We have established good links within the community including:  
St. James the Less and St Helen Church, St Teresa's School Lexden, St. Benedict's College, Thurstable School, Girls' High School, Anglia Ruskin University, The Minorities Art Gallery and The Fire Service.

## **What have pupils told us about the school, and what have we done as a result?**

The vast majority of pupils say they like coming to this school. They say that they learn new things in lessons and have to work hard. Most pupils say that lessons are interesting and fun. They feel able to talk to staff who help them when they are stuck or if they have a concern. Most pupils say that the teachers show them how to improve their work.

Most feel that children are friendly and behave well. A very high number of pupils think that teachers are fair to them and they listen to their ideas.

Many pupils are happy with the school and say that there is nothing they would like to change. Some of the pupils have commented on the poor state of the toilet facilities and we are planning to refurbish these this year. Lots of pupils would like more play equipment for outdoor use and wet plays. We have asked the School Council to survey the children for ideas to spend their money on.

Quite a few children would like longer or more play times and more p.e. unfortunately we are unable to make changes in these areas.

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## **How do we make sure our pupils are healthy, safe and well-supported?**

Our Year 6 pupils attend the Crucial Crew Day in the summer term to learn about drugs awareness & personal safety.

We are working towards the Healthy Schools Award. We have a healthy tuck shop selling fruit, veg, drinks and toast. Lunches are cooked on the premises and follow all DfES guidelines. Children are encouraged to drink water with drinking fountains on all levels, water at lunch and tuck, and water bottles in hot weather.

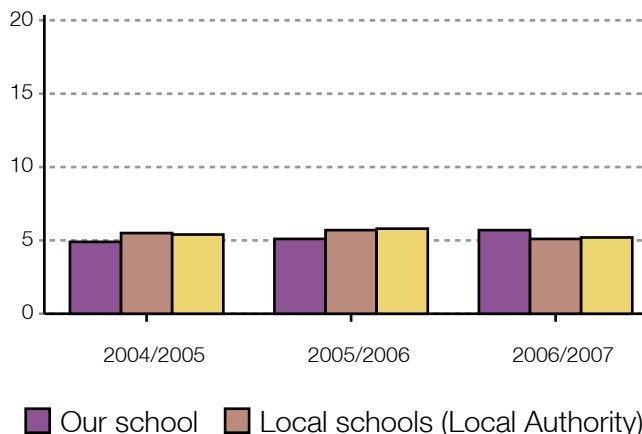
Pupils are offered at least 2hrs PE and have access to a wide variety of physical activities both inside and outside curriculum time. We introduced a 30 minute fitness lesson to all classes to increase stamina. We are part of a local Sports Consortium, working closely with 2 Secondary Schools to receive high quality coaching and sports experiences for our children and Inset for our staff. We have just been awarded the Activemark for sports.

We have improved security of the site and have high levels of supervision in the playgrounds.

The school has a very effective school council which is run by pupils in partnership with adults. All views are listened to and valued. Children feel able to talk to our staff if they have any worries (questionnaire to pupils May 2007).

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## How do our absence rates compare with other schools?



This chart shows the percentage of half days missed through authorised and unauthorised absence by all pupils at the school. Information is given for the school, for schools within the local authority and for all schools.

We try to work with parents to reduce the number of unnecessary absences over the school year and families are discouraged from taking holidays during term time. We operate a first day absence policy where all unexplained absences are followed up immediately. By working closely with parents and the Education Welfare Officer we have managed to keep our absence rate down.

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## What activities and options are available to pupils?

The school provides a rich and varied programme of experiences for all pupils. Enrichment activities e.g. Book Week, Pirate Week and Art Days are planned carefully throughout the school year to add interest to the curriculum. Visits by a wide range of experts are well established, educational and enjoyable. These are arranged to enrich most subjects.

The school organises sporting and cultural events to extend pupils' experiences e.g. singing at the Royal Albert Hall, cross-country competitions and steel band days.

Individual music tuition is available in school. Almost 25% of our pupils are learning to play an instrument.

We offer clubs at lunchtime or after school for the following:

dance, football, tennis, cricket, netball, cross-country, country dance, choir, rugby and drama.

In May 2006 the school was awarded the Artsmark showing its commitment to the wider curriculum.

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## What do our pupils do after leaving this school?

Nearly all pupils leaving St. Thomas More's move onto St. Benedict's College. We have strong links with the school and encourage the pupils to attend at least one curriculum day at the college during their time in Y6 as well as the induction day in the summer term. The Head of Y7 comes to our school to meet with the pupils and the Y6 teacher at the end of their final term in Primary School.

Some of our pupils take the 11+ exams and move onto the selective schools. We have very good links with the Girl's High.

We often see pupils return to the school for work experience placements a few years after leaving us.

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## What have we done in response to Ofsted?

As a result of the very positive Ofsted inspection in June 2005 we included the following in our school development plan:

- 1) Plan for the use of ICT across the curriculum.
    - . We have updated the topic map for the year to include opportunities for ICT
    - . We are continually adding to the equipment list
    - . We are continually providing staff training
    - . We are part of the e-confident schools programme
  - 2) Continue to raise standards in both Key Stages.
    - . We have a continual drive to improve standards throughout the school by target setting for all pupils.
    - . We have a range of intervention programmes for children not meeting expected targets the most recent being the Catch Up programme for reading.
  - 3) Improve the book stock in the school library.
    - . We arranged for a full audit of the non fiction library and have purchased sufficient stock to meet the identified shortage courtesy of funding by the PTA
  - 4) Review the Foundation Stage Curriculum
    - . The curriculum has been adapted to provide the suggested investigational activities e.g. enquiry table
- We are confident that we have addressed the areas for development outlined in the Report.

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## More Information

If you would like more information about school policies, including our policies on special educational needs and disability, admissions, finance, school food and our complaints procedure, please contact us:

By telephone 01206 865722

Our website <http://www.stthomasmores.co.uk>