



THOMAS BECKET CATHOLIC SCHOOL

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Is it difficult in the first few weeks?**

You may find some differences between your primary and secondary school when you first move; however, you shouldn't worry. You will be taken for a tour of the school during your transition day, and you will quickly learn your way around and meet your new classmates who will help you settle in. Don't forget that everyone in year 7 will be in the same position and you can support one another.

## **Who will look after me?**

We have a large support network and pastoral team to support you during your time at Thomas Becket Catholic School. Your first point of contact will be your form tutor, who you will see every day at the beginning of the day. They will monitor your attendance, progress, and behaviour and address any concerns that you may have.

You will also be able to speak to your Head of Year, Mr Binczyk, who can assist you with any concerns or worries that you may have. Mr Binczyk is further supported by our extended pastoral support team. All Heads of Year and Pastoral Leaders will be able to assist you or point you in the right direction to find the person you wish to speak with.

## **How many students will be in my class?**

Your tutor group will have a maximum of 30 students, with 180 students in Year 7. Your subject classes may vary and usually range between 25-30 students per class. For most of your lessons, apart from Science and Maths, you will be taught in your tutor group so this will provide some continuity.

## What subjects will I study?

At Thomas Becket Catholic School in Year 7 you will have the opportunity to study lots of different subjects in our enriching curriculum and possibly take part in some that you have not experienced at your primary school. Your lessons will include:

- Maths
- Science
- English
- Religious Education
- History
- Geography
- Art, Design Technology, Graphics, Drama and Music
- Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)
- Physical Education (PE)
- Dance
- IT

## How long are lessons?

Lessons are 1 hour long, and you have 5 lessons a day.

Your day will follow the schedule below:

Time	Activity
8.00am - 8.35am	If students arrive in school, then they can go to the canteen for breakfast club.
8.35am	Gates close. Students move to line-up for uniform check.
8.40am	<b>Line-up</b>
8.45am – 9.00am	<b>Tutor Time</b>
9.00am – 10:00am	<b>Lesson 1</b>
10:00am – 11:00am	<b>Lesson 2</b>
11:00am – 11:20am	Break Time
11:20am – 12:20pm	<b>Lesson 3</b>
12:20pm – 1:20pm	<b>Lesson 4</b>
1:20pm – 2:10pm	Lunch Time
2:10pm – 3:10pm	<b>Lesson 5</b>

### **Do we have to change classrooms?**

Yes, you do. You will move around the school to different subject areas as you will have different teachers with different specialisms.

### **What House will I be in?**

As well as your form group (there are six form groups in Year 7) which is named after one of the following Saints:

Catherine of Siena, Don Bosco, Francis of Assisi, John Henry, Oscar Romero, Mother Teresa.

Further to this, you will be in one of our five houses, which are named after the school's core values: Faith, Justice, Compassion, Truth and Respect.

Throughout the year, there will be many house and form competitions that you can win points in, for your house or form group.

### **Will I be able to take part in after school clubs?**

We have an extensive extra-curricular offering at Thomas Becket Catholic School that all students can attend. The clubs run after school from 3:10pm-4:00pm and you can give anything a try. There are some further clubs that run at lunch time, and some of these clubs include: football, netball, dance, art, ICT, and Music. We also run an additional enrichment scheme called Electives every Wednesday during your normal lesson 5. During Electives, you will have the opportunity to try your hand at various activities that you may have never tried before, including trampolining, Duke of Edinburgh Award, cheerleading and many, many more!

### **How will I make new friends?**

You will be able to make new friends easily at Thomas Becket Catholic School. Your tutor will spend time with you on your transition days, introducing you to your new tutor group. We always try to put you in a class with someone from your Primary School. If you are not with your very best friend in your tutor group, you will have lots of opportunities throughout the day to catch up with them, so don't worry. Our Electives programme is also a great way to meet new people and it will allow you to meet people with whom you will share an interest with.

## **Where will I buy my uniform from?**

Your Thomas Becket school uniform can be purchased from a wide range of places, as long as it meets the following standards:

- A black blazer (this should have the school badge on the pocket, which can be purchased from school)
- A jumper (optional – but must be a plain black, woollen V-neck jumper)
- A white shirt, buttoned to the collar
- Thomas Becket school tie (can be purchased from school) – the 'TB' logo must be visible to ensure it is the correct length.
- Black school trousers – plain black suit trousers with pleat/seam along the front. No skinny fit trousers, leggings, or jeans.
- Skirts may be worn but must be pleated and no more than 2cm above the knee. No tube skirts.
- Black polishable school shoes – no boots, plimsolls or trainers are allowed.

You will also need to order Thomas Becket PE kit from the following website link: [insert link]. You can look at samples of PE kit for sizes on your Transition Evening and they are available in Student Services to try as well. PE kit can be ordered to your home address or to school for distribution.

Required PE kit includes:

- Thomas Becket logo PE polo shirt
- Thomas Becket logo PE quarter-zip jumper (optional but advised for cold weather)
- Black shorts or black tracksuit bottoms/sports leggings.
- Sports trainers

Whilst you are awaiting your Thomas Becket PE kit, you should wear plain black clothing in the meantime. You can also wear black baselayer/skins underneath your PE kit for warmth during the winter, but your top layer must be the Thomas Becket PE kit.

## **Can I use a mobile phone?**

We understand that many of you will be commuting to school on your own for the first time and we want you to feel safe. Whilst you are on the school premises, you are not able to use your mobile phone and it must be turned off in your bag. If you need to contact someone during the school day, you will be able to use a phone at Student Services. Parents are also able to get messages to students via Student Services.

If your mobile phone is seen or heard, it will be confiscated, and you will have to collect it from Reception at the end of the day. If this happens on two separate occasions, Parents/Carers will be asked to come and collect it from Reception.

### **What happens if I am late to class?**

In the first few weeks of being at Thomas Becket Catholic School, we will support you so do not worry if you get lost and may be late to a lesson. Teachers understand that our school may be a lot larger than most primary schools and will understand if you are late on the odd occasion. Eventually, if you are late frequently, your form tutor will discuss with you the reasons why and work to support you in arriving on time. If you are late to lesson after the first couple of weeks without reason, you will be placed in our 'Remove Room,' and you will have a detention after-school for being late.

### **How much homework will I get?**

Subject homework is set on a schedule, and you will receive homework either weekly or fortnightly depending on which subject it is. Core subjects (English, Maths, Science and Religious Education) may set weekly homework, whilst other subjects may set fortnightly tasks. Some subjects produce termly booklets and will give you handing in dates. Some homework is set on various online platforms, and you will be given your usernames and passwords at the start of year.

### **What is your behaviour policy?**

At Thomas Becket Catholic School we use a very simple classroom behaviour system. A warning is given as a reminder that you are not following classroom expectations and you need to rectify your behaviour e.g. not engaging in the class activity, talking when the teacher has set quiet study. If you do not correct your behaviour and are issued with an 'X' you will have an after-school detention and the teacher will not allow your behaviour or lack of engagement to continue. If a 'Removal' is issued, you will be placed in the 'Remove Room.' Your parents will be contacted via our behaviour platform, ClassCharts, and after-school consequences given.

### **How long is break and lunchtime?**

Break time is 20 minutes long and lunchtime is 50 minutes long.

### **How do I pay for my lunch?**

We use a Cashless Catering System at Thomas Becket Catholic School. Students will be able to put money onto their accounts via Parent Pay. We will ask for permission for your biometrics to be taken (a fingerprint scan) which will allow you to pay for things at the canteen, without carrying money. Trips and other activities can also be paid for via Parent Pay.

### **What equipment do I need to bring on the first day?**

You need to make sure you turn up fully prepared for a day of learning at school. You will need a pencil case, so make sure you have a black pen, green pen, ruler, rubber, and a scientific calculator as a minimum. You can bring a packed lunch with you if you wish, but your fingerprint scan should be done on your transition days to allow you to have hot meals should you wish. You will not need your PE kit on the first day, if you are timetabled for PE, you will have an introductory lesson.

### **What happens if I am poorly at school?**

Let your class teacher know; if you feel unwell at break or lunch, find any teacher and they will direct you to Student Services. Depending on how poorly you are, we may see if you can last the day or Student Services will contact parents/carers to collect you. You do not need to contact home, we will do it for you.

### **Can I ride my bike to school?**

Yes, you can - we encourage students who cycle to school to please make sure you bring a lock with you to lock your bike up and wear a helmet when riding. If you forget your lock, please speak to Student Services. You must not ride your bike on school property, make sure you get off and walk in from the gates, and walk your bike back out to the gates when leaving.

### **What happens if I am late?**

If you are late and have a valid reason, please bring a note from your Parent/Carer to explain why and sign in at Reception. If you have no reason for being late, you still need to sign in at Reception and your Head of Year or form tutor will speak to you about the reason why. Lateness to school without a valid reason results in an after-school detention.

### **What happens if I need to go on holiday?**

We do not authorise holidays during term time; if it is a special occasion, you will need to speak to Mrs McMahon, our Attendance Officer, who will talk you through the process.

[AMcMahon@tbcs.nor.olicatschools.org](mailto:AMcMahon@tbcs.nor.olicatschools.org)

### **What happens if I have a medical issue I need to discuss?**

Please communicate via the office for any particular medical requests.

### **I get Free School Meals (FSM), will this continue?**

If you are entitled to FSM, this will be transferred across and your entitlement will continue. If you are unsure, please go to the Northamptonshire County Council Website to access the application form.

### **I am worried about moving to secondary school, is there anywhere online that I could look to for support?**

There are a lot of websites available to support you at this time in your education careers. Here are just a few that you might find useful:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/learning-disabilities/our-work/employment-education/moving-on-to-secondary-school> and <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/education-and-learning/secondary-years/preparing-for-the-move-to-secondary-school/>

### **How will I find my way around the school?**

You will have the opportunity to have a tour of the school on your Transition Days and you will receive a map you can use to help navigate around the school. We suggest that you stay in groups of two/three to begin with, so you have support. If you do get lost remember - just ask! There are always teachers in the corridors during lesson change over to point you in the right direction and remember all of our students were Year 7s once - ask a student, they will help you. Your form class will be your class for the majority of your lessons, so you should be able to move together easily.

### **What happens if I get bullied?**

We have a zero-tolerance policy to bullying at Thomas Becket Catholic School and take any reported cases very seriously. You must report any concerns to your form tutor, pastoral team or any other member of staff and we will act accordingly to any cases of bullying.



RESPECT



TRUTH



COMPASSION



JUSTICE



FAITH