



*No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket,
but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all the house.
In the same way, let your light shine before others,
so that they may see your good works
and give glory to your Father in heaven.*

Let your light shine

Mission

Our mission is to provide a positive, inclusive, Catholic environment for learning and growth which promotes excellence and inspires each individual to discover, develop and fulfil their spiritual, intellectual and personal potential and to become lifetime learners.

*You are the light of the world.
A city built on a hill cannot be hidden.
No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket,
but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all the house.
In the same way, let your light shine before others,
so that they may see your good works
and give glory to your Father in heaven.*

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Introduction to St Matthew Academy

Our motto '**Let your light shine**' celebrates the uniqueness of every child who will pass through St Matthew Academy. It is our belief that the best environment to fulfil this vision is an all-through school with Gospel values at its core. That is why St Matthew Academy has been created to cater for all students from Nursery to Year 11. Our detailed Mission and Beliefs Statement is central and fundamental to all that we do at St Matthew's.

Our mission is to provide a positive, inclusive, Catholic environment for learning and growth which promotes excellence and inspires each individual to discover, develop and fulfil their spiritual, intellectual and personal potential and to become lifetime learners.

We will achieve this purpose by ensuring that the following core beliefs inform, direct and inspire all of our practice.

A Catholic Academy

We believe that the catholic faith of students should be developed through the work of an active Chaplaincy team; through prayer and through focus events to develop spirituality and faith growth. The Academy ethos will stress the unique value of each individual and develop in our students respect for other faiths.

Learning

We believe that every member of our community has a right to an ordered learning environment which builds on prior learning; develops independence, creativity and an enquiring mind and fosters intellectual and social self-confidence and self-esteem.

Teaching

We believe that every student has the right to a broad curriculum and to appropriate, stimulating and varied learning strategies which develop and extend all of their skills, abilities and talents and which result in a wide range and high standard of accredited success.

Preparation for Working Life

We believe that all students need opportunities to understand business and enterprise environments based on Christian ethical principles; to experience and develop skills in collaborative and co-operative working and have opportunities to develop leadership skills.

Personal Development

We believe that our Academy should provide a nurturing, caring social environment, based on Christian values, in which the views of all members are heard, valued and respected and in which students are supported in their complete development as young adults.

Citizenship

We believe that our school should develop in its students, an acceptance of their individual and collective responsibilities as members of various local, national and international communities and a strong sense of the importance of working for the common good.

Home-Academy Partnership

We believe that our students' success and happiness in school depends on us working in close partnership with parents, carers and families.





Welcome

Welcome to the vibrant, caring and Christian learning community of St Matthew Academy. The Academy has a magnificent new building. It is bright, light and spacious and has excellent, modern teaching and learning facilities and equipment for students' from the ages of 3-16! The entire Academy is under one roof but the primary phase is housed in its own 'wing' with separate, carefully designed outdoor learning and recreation areas. The Secondary Phase is incorporated in the North and South Buildings.

Students are taught in a stimulating school environment where they use sophisticated information and communications technology to assist in the research and presentation of many aspects of their work. They are encouraged to plan and perform tasks that involve investigating, observing and reporting. Exciting and interesting fieldwork, excursions and enterprise challenges extend their learning beyond the walls of the classroom.



Facilities and Resources

The Academy has a range of specialist resources and facilities which will develop further as the academy grows. They include:

Sports facilities:

Sports Hall; all-weather pitch; 6 tennis courts, netball and basketball courts; 5-a-side pitch, grass training pitch (NB. Only the Sports Hall and tennis/netball areas will be available during most of 2009-10. The remaining facilities are being constructed on the site of the predecessor Boys' school site. The all-weather pitch will be available after Christmas and the grass pitches by the second half of the summer term). The Academy will be making use of off-site sports facilities during the Academic year)

Arts facilities:

Dance Studio, Drama Studio, Music suite with practice rooms, Film studio, sound recording studio, 2D and 3D art rooms with ceramics equipment and kiln room

Technology:

State of the art CAD/CAM equipment and specialist areas for resistant materials,

electronics, systems and control, graphics and design, jewellery making, textile technology, food and nutrition and catering.

ICT:

The Academy is fully wireless networked and hard wired throughout with computer areas throughout the Academy. In addition, all classrooms have electronic whiteboards and digital projectors and all areas will make use of digital and video cameras. Students will also use laptops in classrooms.

Library and Research Centre:

The Academy has a large library and research centre. Permanently staffed by our qualified librarians it has a wide range of books, periodicals, CDs and DVDs, newspapers and magazines. It also has 30 open-access computers.

Reprographics:

The Academy has a Communications Centre to advise and support students in layout, design and production of their work. Each student will have a number of 'printer credits' each term and can access any of the large printers situated on corridors.







Joining the Academy

St Matthew's will be a much larger school than the primary school our Year 7 students have left behind. We are organised in a different way. Your child will have a number of teachers and will encounter a large number of other adults in our technicians, Site Managers, administrative and curriculum support staff. The Academy students are also from a very much larger age range than is usual.

We are aware that this is probably the area which causes most anxiety to new students. The Academy may feel rather large and daunting on first encounter. We tackle this anxiety in a variety of ways through our House and support systems and much of this booklet is devoted to reassuring you as parents and carers that your child is thought of and catered for as an individual in this large and complex organisation.

Enterprise Weeks

For a few days in the final weeks of each term we suspend the normal timetable and curriculum and focus on extended work based on creative, active, collaborative learning to develop enterprise and interpersonal skills. A wide range of cross-curricular activities will be offered. The final week of the summer term is 'Challenge Week'. The emphasis during this week is for students to tackle problem-solving activities in active, collaborative groups, engage in physical activities and/or learn new skills. Students in Year 10 will have their own Careers week during this time.

These 'alternative learning' weeks take a considerable amount of planning and preparation time and complex organisation by the staff. We firmly believe in their great educational value in terms of student self-esteem, self-confidence, enhanced social skills and increased motivation. We ask for your support for these 'active learning' weeks which are serious learning opportunities, not 'fun breaks'. We particularly ask that you do not show your child how little you value their learning by making family holiday arrangements during these weeks. The educational gain from these weeks is real and serious and has a demonstrable benefit in more usual classroom based learning afterwards.



Your Child at the Academy

The House System

When children join The St Matthew Academy, they will be placed into one of 3 Houses. The House system runs vertically through the Academy with students in every year from Reception to Year 11 being placed into one of: **ROMERO (Red)**, **TERESA (Yellow)** and **MANDELA (Green)**, named after Archbishop Oscar Romero, Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Nelson Mandela respectively – figures of the 20th century whose lives demonstrate powerfully the difference ordinary, individual humans can make and are real examples of commitment, dedication, courage and integrity. All 3 of these individuals truly 'let their light shine' and are inspirational role models for our children. This pastoral care structure creates a strong family and community feel and provides considerable opportunity for leadership skills for students as they move through the Academy. Your child will be placed in a single-sex House tutor group with other boys or girls from years 8-11. The older students make the Year 7's feel at home, act as mentors to them and help them to quickly 'find their feet' in the Academy.

The Chaplain

The Chaplains' role is to offer spiritual and emotional support for students in coping with difficulties they encounter in life, whether at the Academy or at home. The Chaplains help students refocus their attention and attitude to themselves and to others through confidential discussion and a sympathetic ear. They encourage and support our children in developing and deepening their spiritual life and plan our special occasions of corporate worship. The Chaplaincy offers a calm and reflective space for students to pray during the day.

Student Behaviour and Discipline

The Academy aims to provide a happy, caring and secure Christian environment where all students and staff relate positively to foster

respect and self-esteem in an atmosphere of good manners and interactive learning. Our approach to managing behaviour places great emphasis on positive encouragement and praise, consistent boundaries, safe and responsible behaviour, trust and co-operation with an insistence on fairness and politeness. We remind and encourage our students to live the Gospel values. We will not tolerate bullying or misbehaviour that obstructs the learning and well-being of the individual concerned or that of others. Children need to be clear about the behaviour that is expected and that certain behaviour is unacceptable. We always try to help children understand the implications of their actions by using a range of strategies to ensure students are aware of the appropriateness of their behaviour and ensure they take responsibility for their own decisions. The Academy Rules that we have are based on common sense and are primarily focused on safety and security. For more detailed information, please read the Academy Behaviour Policies.

Accidents, Illnesses and Medical Problems

Matron

The Academy has a full-time, 'Matron', who is based in the Academy Health Centre. She is able to treat the minor cuts and injuries which happen from time to time. If your child becomes ill in school and needs to go home, Matron will contact you, using the emergency contact number you have given. Matron cannot prescribe medicines but she keeps the children's spare inhalers or prescribed medicines needed during the day. Matron keeps the medical information you give us and is able to support children with chronic conditions. She liaises with the community health team, organising vaccinations and provides health education advice and information. If a child needs emergency sanitary wear, rips their clothing, soaks themselves in a puddle – or generally needs personal emergency help – Matron is there to provide it.

Encouraging Responsibility

From the time students arrive in the St Matthew Academy we encourage and guide them to develop a sense of responsibility for themselves, others and their environment. From Year 3 we also start to give leadership opportunities to students, encouraging them to show initiative, be proactive and represent others. These opportunities will increase as students develop and move up through the Academy.

Student Voice

We take seriously the importance of consulting students regarding their education and provide a variety of opportunities for students to 'have their say'. Through questionnaires, opinion sampling and student news reports, students' views and opinions are gathered and influence the learning environment.

Student Councils

The Student Councils enable students to participate in academy planning and organisation. They provide a more formal forum in which to air opinions – critical or supportive; seek information and explanations and make suggestions. The Councils are age-appropriate so that all ages can participate in this form of active citizenship. General oversight of the Councils is provided by the Heads of House and the Assistant Principals for Enterprise and House.

House Leaders

Students from Year 6 upwards, will have a variety of opportunities to undertake leadership roles and responsibilities across the Academy, e.g as form representative on an Academy Council, Young Librarian, Anti-Bullying Mentor, Sports Leader, Academy Guide etc. Students in Year 6 may be elected as Junior House Prefects and those in Year 11, as Senior House Prefects. Students in Year 11 run the Academy Councils, are elected as Sports Captains and as Head Boy and Head Girl.





Learning and Teaching

Students joining us in Year 7 will be with us for 5 crucial years, passing through a hugely important phase of their education before continuing, well-prepared into further and higher phases of education or training. We are keenly aware that it is up to us to build on the solid foundation of the first 7 years of primary education; providing them with the knowledge, skills, understanding and positive attitudes to learning which will help them become flexible, adaptable and confident lifetime learners.

Our aim is to provide for all our students, whatever their background, abilities, interests and talents, a broad and balanced curriculum which explores the range of human experiences and prepares students for public examinations and also provides them with the learning attitudes and skills to cope with the major changes and challenges in their future working lives.

The Secondary Phase is delivered in two stages:

Key Stage 3 Years 7 and 8

Key stage 4 Years 9, 10 and 11

Although students are usually in learning groups with students from their own year, there are opportunities for students who are particularly gifted or talented in a subject to be accelerated into a learning group with older students. Our three year Key Stage 4 enables us to enter students for examinations as soon as they are ready. Our students can start acquiring GCSE passes from the end of Year 9.

Learning

Helping children learn – academically, socially, spiritually, emotionally and physically – is the real purpose of schools. What your

children learn should respect the past but must also prepare them for a world in which they are going to live.

That's why St Matthew Academy focuses on academic and personal development, and the development of a global awareness. Learning should be active and engaging, and, above all meaningful to children.

Teaching

The purpose of teaching is to help children learn. Teaching should be as enjoyable and rewarding for teachers as much as learning is enjoyable and rewarding for children. We encourage the teaching of cross curricular projects in the Secondary phase to fully realise this goal.

Carefully planned and evaluated lessons encourage staff to create a learning environment which tailors learning to the individual student. Regular assessments inform these plans and provide parents with an accurate gauge of the child's abilities.

Home and Academy Partnership

We value greatly the partnership between Home and School. Parents and teachers together play an important role in educating children and need to support each other in order for children to benefit fully from their education. We welcome parents into the Academy and appreciate offers of help. Parents work alongside staff and children in the primary phase in a variety of roles including student reading, assisting on school excursions and as leaders of Enterprise Challenge activities. We welcome any skills or expertise that parents feel they can offer. The relationship between staff and parents is open and friendly.

The Curriculum

In Key Stage 3, students study all subjects. In Key Stage 4, students continue with a core curriculum then opt for different courses. Although there is choice at KS4 we insist that students keep their education broadly based.

For most subjects in KS3 students will be taught through differentiated learning in mixed ability groups with some broad banding. Further broad banding is introduced at KS4.

All students at KS3 will study:

- English: Language, Literature and Media
- Mathematics
- Science: Physics, Chemistry and Biology (taught in Units)
- Languages: Spanish or French (or English as an additional language)
- Arts: Music, Art, Drama, Dance
- Humanities: History, Geography
- Technology: Textiles, Food and Nutrition, Product Design, Graphics, Systems and Control
- Information and Communications Technology/Business
- Citizenship: Personal, Social and Health Education, Citizenship
- Physical Education
- Enterprise Education
- Religious Education

Key Stage 4

Students will all do the following core subjects:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Physical education
- Religious education
- Citizenship
- Enterprise education

Each faculty will also offer a range of optional GCSE and BTEC courses from which students select according to interest, aptitude or career path. An alternative work-related course is also available for some students.



Enterprise Challenge Programme

We are committed to offering children a very wide variety of learning contexts in order to develop all aspects of each child's abilities, talents and interests. Not all of these can be provided for in the normal timetabled day. The Academy therefore offers a range of extra curricular clubs and activities outside of the timetabled day and during holidays. These will be run by both our teaching staff and a number of coaches or other adults employed specifically for the activities. Each faculty will also offer a number of age-appropriate day or evening visits to places which will enhance subject understanding and widen student learning. In addition, faculties will offer regular clubs and competitions which are subject related.



We have a strong emphasis on Outdoor Education – as essential educational experiences for our urban

children. We run the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme, have our own Beavers, Cubs and Scouts and offer Combined Cadet Force places with our partners at St Dunstan's independent school. We are currently in the process of developing a marching band in collaboration with the Army Cadet Force at Blackheath.

We expect each student to commit to at least three 'Enterprise Challenge' activities each year selected from a list. These are in ten different categories and range from 'Exploring London's Culture' to 'Away from Home' and include the outdoor activities. The child completes the 'Challenge' which is then entered onto their individual on-line CV through a programme called 'Bright Sparks' with their evidence of success. This will in time, produce a comprehensive portfolio and complete record of all the different aspects of learning and individual development your child has achieved.

Business and Enterprise

St Matthew Academy is a specialist Business and Enterprise College. This does not mean that all children have to have special lessons in Business Studies. We will aim to ensure that all students

acquire a basic understanding of the economy and the ethical business world through Citizenship lessons and the normal subject-based curriculum. Enterprise education is an area which we will emphasize for all our children. By this we mean the qualities and skills which all employers now stress as essential in the modern world:- initiative, interpersonal and team membership skills, leadership, ingenuity, adaptability, flexibility of approach and problem-solving strategies.

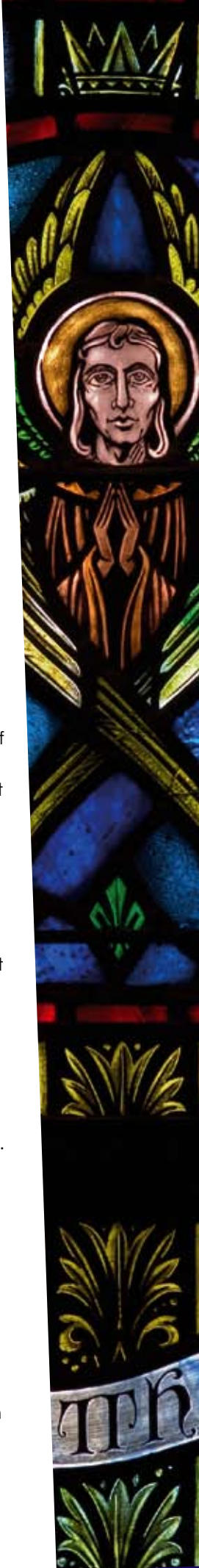
Religious Education

St Matthew Academy is a Roman Catholic School. The Catholic vision of education promotes the dignity and freedom of every person as created in the image and likeness of God. This vision inspires and encourages the beliefs and values which are lived out in the daily life of the Catholic school. Within this vision, religious education is very much a journey of formation involving every member of the school community, together with a pupil's family and parish community. It is in this context that the three elements of religious education, catechesis and evangelization, coexist, providing mutual support and reinforcement.

For all children religious education is a proper subject in its own right in the school's curriculum. It is a rigorous academic discipline, and as such it is to be taught, developed and resourced with the same commitment as any other subject. For those already engaged in the journey of faith religious education will be catechesis, and for some children and young people religious education will be evangelization, the first opportunity to hear the good news of the gospel.

Spiritual Life

The Academy will offer opportunities and support for children to develop their spiritual life. Religious education will teach them not only the tenets of the Roman Catholic religion but also knowledge of the other main world religions, developing a respect for the beliefs of others. Children will also be offered regular opportunities for collective worship, and through the work of the Chaplaincy team, for spiritual reflection and discussion.





Independent Learning

We prefer this description to the more traditional 'homework' as it emphasizes the need for a student to have some learning time independent from the classroom on a daily basis. Independent learning time is important for students to consolidate and reflect upon class work, to practice newly acquired or unfamiliar methods of thinking or working, to develop independent research skills, to develop their own ideas, to learn vocabulary, to revise at their own pace and to learn how to set out and organise their work. Many students prefer to do their independent learning at home. Others find the distractions of a busy family home make it difficult to find somewhere quiet to work. The Academy runs Independent Learning Clubs after the school day for those students to stay and do their independent work before going home. Students will also find their independent work on-line and may work from home or in school on a computer, sending completed work electronically to their teachers.

Inclusion

Where possible through the use of appropriate strategies and support, students with learning difficulties will be working towards the same learning objectives as their peers. From time to time those working well below the level of the whole class may be working towards related objectives chosen from the relevant programme from an earlier year.

Children who are working well above the overall level of their class or group will be engaging with a range of experiences designed to broaden or deepen their learning while working on the same learning objectives as their peers. From time to time they may be accelerating the pace of their learning by working towards objectives from programmes designed for older students.

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For general enquires, reception will guide
you to the best person to assist you



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