

Message from the Senior Leadership Team

As we approach the end of this spring term, we are finally seeing signs of spring arriving! After prolonged periods of bitterly cold weather and snow, we have begun to see some sunshine and signs of the natural world coming alive. It's great to see the flowers from the bulbs and the leaves on the trees in our school grounds emerging.

This term has seen our first overseas visit in a long time. A group of year 9 and 10 pupils were fortunate enough to be taken to a Business Live! and Computing Live! event at Disneyland Paris. The pupils were a credit to our Academy. They engaged well in their conferences and thoroughly enjoyed experiencing the rides in the 'Happiest Place on Earth'. During the Easter break, we have for the very first time in the history of SMA a group of pupils going on a skiing trip in Italy. Our pupils have been truly put through their paces in their Ski Fitness sessions to get ready for their time on the slopes! Also back in the SMA calendar towards the end of this term are our Year 7 day retreats to The Friars, Aylesford. Our Chaplaincy Team are very much looking forward to helping our pupils experience a day of reflection, relationship-building and knowing how to truly 'let our lights shine'.

This is also the time that pupils make the final preparations for external assessments next term. Our Year 6 pupils will be taking their SATs, demonstrating all of the fantastic learning that they have done during their time in the primary phase. Our Year 11 pupils are getting ready for their final GCSE examinations, showing determination to achieve their very best at the end of their secondary school journey.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone in our community a very Happy Easter. I hope that we can all enjoy some pleasant weather and time spent with our friends and families before returning for the summer term.

Mr Bradley
Assistant Headteacher

Prayer and Reflection

In last Sunday's Gospel we heard the story of Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman at the well and asking her for a drink of water. Pope Francis during the midday angelus, spoke to pilgrims gathered about this reading, recalling it as one of the most beautiful and fascinating encounters with Jesus. The Pope observed that Jesus' asking for a drink shows how in Him "God made Himself one of us, thirsty like us," sharing our human condition, needs, and suffering. The Lord, who asks for a drink, also tells the Samaritan woman about the drink He can offer, the Holy Spirit's living water "that makes eternal life overflow within us." The Pope explained that, "thirsty for love, Jesus quenches our thirst with love," by meeting us in our daily life, sharing our own thirst, and promising us this living water of eternal life.

Heavenly Father, in the dryness of our lives you offer us living water. We thank you and praise you, O God, that however we may thirst, whatever we may need to satisfy our souls, you offer it freely and abundantly in Christ; So we drink deep of the living water and, as we draw from your wells, we seek to pass the cup to others who, like us, are thirsty for your grace. Amen



Secondary News

National Junior Indoor Rowing Championships 2023

After a long 3 year wait the National Championships returned; held at the Olympic Copper Box Stadium in Stratford. 30 pupils competed representing themselves and SMA against a huge field of pupils corresponding to their age group.

Year 7 Boys followed by Year 8 Boys and Year 8 Girls, then Year 9 Boys - brought us to the break and the Blue Ribbon Event of the Championships – Relays!!

The Blood, Sweat and Tears came out in the Year 8 Boys individual Competition and turned this event into a saga! Boys nervously raised their handlebars in preparation of the start, with 30 pupils rowing in each heat and over 4 different race areas, which would be repeated until all pupils had raced.

The shouts and screams of encouragement and coaching from the crowd were almost deafening and as the heats progressed the winning distance increased and increased & INCREASED! Finally, the turn of Ade Oyeleye who slugged it out neck and neck with one other pupil and miles ahead of others in their heat – 3 minutes of back and forth vying for 1st place and it came down to the last second and... A TIE for 1st place with a total of 902m! Then came the long wait for the last two heats to take place!

A drop to 2nd place, beaten in the penultimate heat with a score of 917m... this meant the final heat was a real nail-biting time and conferring by judges and then EVERYONE just stopping to watch as a standout rower was emerging coming, in with an impossible 936m!! **Who does that!!!**

Over joyed to hold on to achieve joint bronze position and therefore No. 3 spot in the UK and building on from winning the Gold medal at the London Youth Games last summer. **WELL DONE ADE!!**

Relays: are the most hotly contested events and this year did not disappoint. The atmosphere was totally electrifying and the nerves of competitors palpable too. SMA Senior Team: Year 10s + 1 Year 9 to assist (and a man less from the start) making an undermanned team, slogged away for 16 minutes and 19 seconds and achieved a very commendable place in the Top 15th - {against full teams of older Year 11 pupils.}

SMA Superstar Boys Sprint Relay team rowed 2000m achieving an excellent 12th place in their category have already pushed to their maximum in their earlier individual races. And it was great to see a full Year 8 Girls Sprint team competing (1st time for SMA @ NJIRC) - Well Done Girls.

Big applause must also be given to other pupils who performed superbly in the individual categories.

- Kevin Nana-Ampaw (Yr 10 Boys) – Top 30 placement
- Hans Beeckman (Yr 9 Boys) – Top 40 placement
- Alvin Sakole (Yr 8 Boys) – Top 40 placement
- Grace Ba (Yr 8 Girls) – just missing Top 40 placement (41st)
- Appollos (Yr 9 Boys) – just missing Top 50 placement (54th)



Careers Week

Pupils at SMA have been enjoying a week of guest speakers, activities and workshops across Years 7 to 10.

Monday kicked off with Careers in Maths Day, where a number of external professionals gave up their time to attend maths Lessons and show how maths learned at school is used in the Construction Industry. Workshops included: "Quantity Surveying," "Measuring in 3D" and "Money Management" and these gave an insight into possible career pathways within this sector.

SMA pupils also had the pleasure of Jayde Edwards, who works in politics – sharing future changes for young people in politics and her personal journey through her education into her job role today. Pupils had the opportunity to create their own political party to solve key current issues and were given the opportunity to present, running for the prime minister of our Academy. Pupils were completely engaged in the issues proposed and presented beautifully.

Fifty Year 7s were treated to a Hospitality & Nutrition Session with Naomi Szakacs Djondo from the Digestive workshop, her own business that has been developed over 7 years of hard work as a CEO. This session guided pupils into understanding business development and the stages she took when creating a successful business as well as having the pleasure of making their own gnocchi – to varying levels of success!



On our second day of Careers week here at SMA, 'Careers through English' day was a success with groups from Year 7 to Year 10 working with the notable author and poet Toni Kan and his wife Peju Akande. Pupils learned how to write poetry and the basics for creating and writing a novel. Through our English department, all pupils had planned lessons that took them from a court room process and engaged them in debating sessions and learning debating skills. This was a fantastic day, delivered through our dedicated English department.

On Wednesday Year 9 art pupils worked with a visitor from The Courtauld Institute of Art. Pupils were introduced to the work of Edouard Manet, in particular his painting: "A Bar at the Folies-Bergère". Pupils were encouraged to produce a response to the painting and have the opportunity of their work being displayed in Somerset House. Keen pupils are now hoping to visit the university to see how art and maths are interlinked.



Careers Week

Thursday brought 'A day in Science' with a live heart dissection! – definitely not for those who are squeamish. There were some “green” looking faces at points during this presentation; which was also shown via zoom for other science classes to follow. Targeted pupils were able to sit in our conference space to watch the live heart dissection, performed by a reputable heart surgeon, who himself had just finished open heart surgery before attending our Academy. This was a fantastic opportunity for our pupils to not only witness the process but to be fully engaged with a professional dedicated to sharing his professional journey with our young people here. Our Triple Scientists in Year 11 were able to enjoy a session named “On the Road to Becoming a Doctor” – discovering the best pathways for progression into medicine



Our final day brought sessions for RE with Mr Freddy Pambo presenting how his faith is part of the journey in his career in Internet Security with the largest internet marketing company. One key message shared was: “To be a good person in life, in order to be a good person online!”

Year 8 were fully engaged in a panel forum of KPMG personnel who gave a roundup of their individual differing career journeys, top tips to follow for the pupil’s futures and their career choices and pathways. They rounded off with the panel taking part in a challenging Q & A session from the pupils.

Our KPMG Panel Members were made up of some of the mentors we have currently mentoring a cohort of Year 9’s and Year 10 pupils. Asad Qureshi who works within the Climate Risk & Strategy Consulting team. Alison Armstrong who runs Civil Service Learning for Government for KPMG. Rachel Hall – Operational Transformation Consulting for Corporate Organisations, Tatenda Gandhi – ESG Assurance and Lucy Stevenson – People/HR Consulting & ESG.



Our Careers Week would not have been possible without the wide range of visitors that gave up their time to spend it with pupils at the Academy. We would like to say a massive thank you to them all and hope they will visit again soon.

Primary News

Air Quality Workshop

On Thursday 23rd February, the whole of key stage 2 were lucky enough to take part in an air quality workshop. Year 5 children learned about the effects that pollution, particularly idling car engines have on the environment. The workshop was fantastic and the children thoroughly enjoyed it. They were able to share their ideas, create posters and be as creative as possible, while still spreading awareness. At the end of the day the children went outside of the Academy gates where they spoke to members of the public advising them to not idle in their cars and informing them of the negative impact it has on the environment.



Year 2

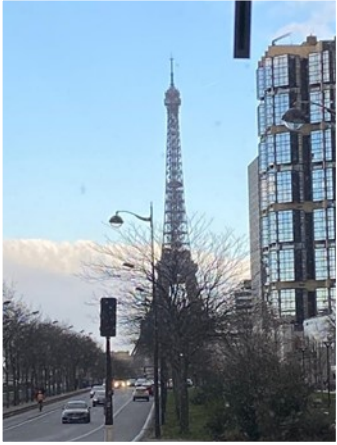
The children have had a busy Spring Term, we started the new year off with a trip to Woodland's Farm to learn more about animals and their needs. When asked what animals they thought they'd see, the children replied with rabbits, horses and crocodiles... suffice to say, there were no crocodiles!

Following this, the children came to school to find a surprise - ten eggs in an incubator. The children got to observe the eggs as they began to hatch which enabled them to learn more about the life cycle of a chicken. The children were thrilled to arrive at school a few mornings later to some brand-new chicks! They got to look after them for a week before they were returned to the Happy Chick Company for rehoming.

Over the last few weeks, the children have shown what incredible progress they have made in the last 6 months by completing a practice assessment week. They used all the skills they have learnt and did fantastically well. Miss Butterworth and Mr Szejewski are extremely proud of the children and can't wait to see the brilliant work they will continue to do in the run up to the end of KS1 assessments!



Disneyland Paris



On Saturday 25th February at 5.30am 40 pupils as well as 4 members of staff met at school to board our coach bound to Disneyland for a joint Business and Computer Science trip for year 9 & 10. We were attending the LIVE event, a workshop where pupils were able to attend lectures and question entrepreneurs and computer scientists to help support their learning in their GCSE options.

We boarded a ferry and by lunch time we were already in France. First stop was the city of lights, Paris - we were fortunate to have Mr Degueurce-Roberge on the trip, a Frenchman who has lived in Paris. Pupils were given a whistle stop tour of the Eiffel Tower, River Seine, Arc de Triomphe to name but a few sights. Pupils were amazed that there was a statue of Liberty in the river Seine. Dinner at Flunch, a restaurant with the locals and onto the Chateau which would be our home for three nights.

The following day we got up early at 6.30am and after a few pain au chocolats for breakfast we made our way for a full day of the magic at Disney. Our first ride everyone boarded was the Pirates of the Caribbean, pupils and staff were able to experience all rides and lots of fun was had. In the evening we made our way to the Disney Village for dinner and then home for a much needed rest. The following day we were back at Disney nice and early to attend the Live events. Pupils asked interesting and varied questions and were eager to learn from the selection of speakers. That afternoon we made our way the second Disney park the Disney Studios where pupils having proven their maturity and sensibility were given some freedom to explore the amusements and rides in their groups. This was followed by a visit to the Disney Village for dinner and this time to buy some souvenirs.

The next morning after breakfast we had to say Au Revoir to the Chateau - our host was extremely impressed by the amazing behaviour of our pupils and this view was replicated by our coach driver, Craig, who commented that he wished ALL his parties were like ours. On route we popped into a supermarket to buy lunch and snacks for the return journey and pupils practised their French - tres bon! Back on the ferry and home for 5pm, tired but happy with a variety of headgear, cuddly toys and mugs in our cases. A truly wonderful trip with a great group of pupils that throughout the four days reflected everything that we strive for at the academy, our caring Catholic community spirit and they let their light shine.



Secondary News

Pupil Voice

So far we have had a fantastic half term, with so many events taking place in the Academy including plenty of pupil voice related activities. Our key focus has been voting, pupil leadership initiatives and running a large debate event for the borough.

Our annual polling station was set up in support of the London Young Mayor 2023 campaigns, with 2 of our year 10 pupils entering themselves as candidates. David and Samuel committed a great deal of time and effort to their application and their campaign but unfortunately they did not come out as winners of the vote. However, it was great to see SMA pupils giving them their full support.

Year 10 pupils have been applying for pupil leadership positions for the next academic year. Voting and interviews will take place after pupils have been selected for the next stage... **Who will be our House Leaders?**

20 Year 10's pupils have been providing support to the primary phase during lunchtimes to help ensure it runs more efficiently and encourages some of our senior pupils to engage and interact with their younger peers. Watch this space for our Lunch Hall monitors which will be introduced after half term. A year 10 pupil commented *"It has been a great start to my experience and have actually enjoyed being out in the playground and have even stayed for a longer period than expected."*

SMA partnered with Oddballs Foundation and English Schools FA, a guest speaker Uzzy joined our year 10 pupils for an assembly to raise awareness for testicular cancer, one pupil commented *"It was really interesting, as I now know how to check myself and if there are potential signs/symptoms."*



History

This term in History Year 7 have been looking at Medieval England and the monarchs from that era starting with the Norman Conquest. As part of their studies they were tasked with building their own models of Motte and Bailey castles that appeared all over England after 1066 as part of the Norman conquest and as you can see from the photo some have gone to great lengths to construct their models. Year 7 are currently preparing for their next ranking assessment and are looking at events such as the murder of Thomas Becket as well as interpretations of King John and life in a medieval village.

Our Year 9 pupils are currently putting together a museum style exhibition on the impact of World War II on women; they have begun to do research on the roles women took on during the war, how they coped with rationing, being creative with fashion and experiences of evacuation. Earlier this year most pupils looked at events of the First World War and wrote a Letter from the Trenches based on what they had learned about them for ordinary soldiers from Britain and across the globe. The pupils learned about the reality of life in the trenches, both physically and psychologically, and about the realities of war. Below is an extract from one pupils:

"Although these were once men like us, all have become the monsters and hideous beasts of Europe and I'm not sure what they are now. It was three days ago we were storming an empty trench on the south side when me two others found a boy aged about 15 years old quivering in a dark wet and gloomy corner of a defeated dug out with barely any meat on his bones. He had no gun, no water, no food dying in the coldest way possible. Our orders were to sweep the trench clean but this was just a boy barely old enough to be here but still there he was. Jonathan, the oldest one of our crew, jumped him to his feet pressing a gun into his temple. I don't want to go to any more detail as just thinking of this moment leaves tears in my eyes so you can imagine what happens next."



Sports News



Year 8 girls netball team played Thomas Tallis Year 9 and won 8-4. Great to see the team being challenged and coming away with a win.



A mixture of our Year 7 A&B netball teams played Ladywell, unfortunately it ended 6-3 to Ladywell, but it was a great opportunity to get some more game play for all the girls.



Year 9 girls netball team played 2 games against Eltham Hill this evening. They managed to take a 9-5 win in the first game and drew the second 7-7.



Year 7 played Harris Academy. The team played amazingly and came away with a 10-0 win! Well done to all the boys for continuing to impress and improve



After a great tournament representing Lewisham, the journey has ended in the 3rd round of the Basketball LYG competition. Well done and onto next year



LITERACY CORNER

Library News

It has been a busy time in the Learning Resource Centre over the last couple of weeks, celebrating World Book Day in the secondary phase and looking forward to our primary celebrations later this month.

Years 7,8,9 and 10 were treated to presentations by the author Sufiya Ahmed, author of *Secrets of the Henna Girl*, *Noor-Un-Nissa*, *Inayat Khan*, *Princess Sophia Duleep Singh* and *Rosie Raja: Churchill's spy* amongst others.

World book week saw the return of our ever popular 'Don't judge a book by it's cover'.

Secondary staff dressed up as some of their favourite book characters



We also promoted International Women's day on the 8th March and British Science Week from 10th-19th March.





BOOK REVIEWS

Primary

Alleyan, Joyce and Deneise from Year 6 reviewed three books in the Isadora Moon series by Harriet Muncaster.

Joyce reviewed 'Isadora Moon goes on holiday'. This book is about a character who is half fairy and half vampire, but when she wins a free holiday for her whole family, there is nothing she wants to do more. This book is suitable for children over the age of 6 who love fantasy stories since this book is about where the unreal meets the real. If you like reading comic books, this book is for you. I gave this book 3 stars.



Deneise reviewed 'Isadora Moon meets the tooth fairy'. Isadora's mum is a fairy and her dad is a vampire. She is special as she is a mix of both of them. Isadora has a wobbly tooth but she isn't sure what to do as fairies leave their teeth for the tooth fairy and vampires frame their fangs. I would recommend this book if you like mythical creatures. I also gave this book three stars.

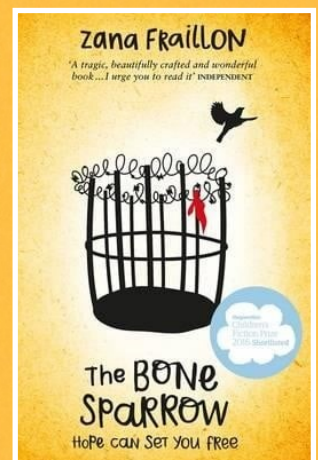


Alleyan reviewed 'Isadora Moon goes to school'. In this book, Isadora has her first day at school. However, she is not sure whether she belongs at fairy school or at vampire school as she is both fairy and vampire. I recommend this book to those in KS2 or above and it is super entertaining and I enjoyed this book when I was younger. Five stars!

Secondary

Liesel from Year 8 reviewed 'The Bone Sparrow' by Zana Fraillon.

'The Bone Sparrow' is a book about a boy who was born and grew up in a refugee camp. One day he meets a girl from outside the fence and they become friends. It is a beautiful story about what life is like inside the camps. Even though a sad theme runs throughout the story, the ending is happy but leaves you to carry it on in your own mind. I gave this book 5 stars!



House Points Update

Week beginning 13/3/2023

Total Achievement Points

1st – **Teresa: 30162**
2nd – **Romero: 26450**
3rd – **Mandela: 25263**

Attendance:

1st – **Mandela**
2nd – **Romero**
3rd – **Teresa**

Overall House Points

1st - **Mandela: 2315**
2nd - **Romero: 2440**
3rd - **Teresa: 2793**

It's official Romero has overtaken Mandela's position and is now in 2nd place. Well done to Romero house!!! Teresa has managed to maintain their lead.

Applications for the Pupil Leadership Team have been handed in and the exciting process has now begun to determine the next house prefects and pupils house leaders. Good luck to all applicants! Be ready, as you will have the chance to be involved and to vote.

We are pleased to announce that the date for the SMA big quiz is the 22nd March 2023 in the drama studio from 3.30pm. Look out for the posters around the academy and join us for an afternoon of fun and laughter. Prizes to be won.

A massive thank you for our form representatives who were involved in planning the quiz.



Going Above and Beyond!

Secondary phase

Pupils with the most achievement points during February

Year 7	Adam EL HARI 7M2 Temani WILKS-HAMID 7M1 Havana WRIGHT 7T3 Mehari TESFAY 7T2 Naomi UHUNAMURE 7T2	Year 8	Michael TRAORE 8M3 Ademide OYELEYE 8M3 Daniel SMAJLI 8R2 Festus CHALLE 8T1 Sienna Rose BENINCASA 8T2
Year 9	Kiara CASE-WALLACE 9R2 Eriane ANGWE-NZE 9M2 Jodelee OWUSU 9R1 Maria NENYCH 9R1 Andrii SHLIAKHTYCHENKO 9R3	Year 10	Nneoma OFFORMEZIE 10T3 Cecilia KARAKI 10R1 Mohamed AWAD 10M1 Jahsean DAVIS-MCCARTHY 10T3 Kemahri TAYLOR-BAILEY 10R2
Year 11	Ilyas LABROUZI 11KDE Nathan GORDON 11KDE Dominion NDEM 11KDE	Lara LOPES TAVARES 11MEN Dragos GROZA 11KDE	

Well done to these pupils for all their hard work!



Parents & Carers

Exploitation, Gangs & Knife Crime Awareness

Anti-knife crime charity, The Ben Kinsella Trust has launched a FREE online course for ALL parents and carers.

Exploitation, Gangs and Knife Crime Awareness sessions are a two-part course delivered over two evening sessions (**March 21st and 28th 7-9pm**)

These sessions are delivered by an ex-Met Officer and come highly recommended.

Please share with your network, any parents and carers, schools or youth provisions. These are a valuable resource and signposting tool in preventing serious youth violence and exploitation. Officers and staff are also welcome to book on.

[Parents & Carers workshops | The Ben Kinsella Trust](#)

Safeguarding our pupils at St Matthew Academy

At St Matthew Academy our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mr Young supported by Mr Gunningham (secondary) and Ms Chick (primary), and our Child Protection Officer is Ms Dryden. Pupils can contact any of our Safeguarding Team during the school day.

Worried about a child?

You can phone or write to MASH about your concerns. Phone immediately if you believe it is urgent.

- Lewisham MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) **020 8314 6660**
- Or call **999** or **101** if you believe a child is in immediate danger
- Childline **0800 11 11** www.childline.org.uk
- NSPCC **0808 800 5000** www.nspcc.org.uk

Term Dates

Spring Term 22/23

Wednesday 4 January 2023 to Friday 10 February 2023

Half Term: Monday 13 February 2023 to Friday 17 February 2023

Monday 20 February 2023 to Friday 31 April 2023

Summer Term 22/23

Monday 17 April 2023 to Friday 26 May 2023

Half Term: Monday 29 May 2023 to Friday 2 June 2023

Monday 5 June 2023 to Friday 21 July 2023

Autumn Term 23/24

Tuesday 5 September 2023 to Friday 20 October 2023

Half Term: Monday 23 October 2023 to Friday 27 October 2023

Monday 30 October 2023 to Wednesday 20 December 2023

If you have any comments, queries or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us.

Tel: 020 8853 6250

Email: info@stmatthewacademy.co.uk