

St Matthew Academy

St Joseph's Vale, Blackheath, London SE3 0XX

Headteacher: Ms Miranda Baldwin

Head of Primary: Ms Joanna Chick



17 December 2021

Dear Parents and Carer

As the calendar year draws to a close, I am writing to you to celebrate another successful term for Year 8. With the holidays upon us, I would like to share with you some good news from our Year Group.

Firstly, I can report that the intervention sessions led by our Teaching Assistants are in full swing and as always, prove to be both useful and fun. The pupils who have been identified as needing extra support in their core subjects enjoy their intervention lessons and at the same time, are making good progress in their core subjects.

This week, we had a reward assembly and it was a delight to watch our pupils celebrating their successes. The assembly included Form Tutor awards, 'zero hero' awards for the pupils who have not received any behaviour points and special awards for three Year 8 pupils who had gone above and beyond in living the Academy ethos. These pupils have proved to be a great example of our Academy motto 'let your light shine' in helping our new pupils navigate the corridors and time tables; being on hand to translate and support in lessons and most importantly, they helped our new starters really feel a part of our Year Group and the St Matthew Academy community. Please keep an eye out on Twitter where we will be sharing photographs of our recent assembly.

I am also proud to tell you that so far this year, an amazing 5950 achievement points have been awarded to Year 8 pupils. This includes four pupils who have each been awarded over 70 achievement points and counting! Well done to all!

This autumn term, Year 8 have been discussing some challenging topics in their PHSE lessons. I am proud to say that topic discussions on issues entitled '*Appreciating Differences;*' '*Feelings*' and '*Think Before You Share*' have been conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect with pupils showing maturity beyond their ages and this is commendable.

Two of our pupils, Vinusha and Salvijus both received commendations for their entries into the Stephen Spender Prize for Poetry Translation, 2021. Both pupils chose a poem in their mother tongues of Tamil and Lithuanian respectively, and translated them into English to enter the competition. There was a high calibre of entries this year, so Vinusha and Salvijus should be very proud of what they have achieved!

Arrangements for the start of the Spring Term - Lateral Flow testing in school

Under the revised guidance for returning to school in January 2022, we are required to carry out a lateral flow test (LFT) for each pupil. Onsite testing for Year 8 will take place on **Wednesday 5 January from 8.45am – 10.15am**. The LFT tests have a rapid turnaround of 20 minutes and are designed to catch any asymptomatic cases that might pose a risk to the reopening of school. After this single test, pupils are expected to test at home twice a week. Please note that with regards to the onsite testing:

- Pupils must arrive to school promptly in full school uniform at the time indicated below
- If pupils are late, they may not be tested.
- Pupils are being invited in by Science classes

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Science class	Teacher	Arrival to school
8.1	Mr Mahendiranathan	8:45am
8.2	Mr Solomon	9:00 am
8.3	Ms Szarszo	9:15 am
8.4	Mr Bradley	9:30 am
8.5	Mrs Wickliffe	9:45 am
8.6	Ms Eduvie	10:00 am
8.7	Mr Vyas	10:15am

Any pupil who tests positive will be required to self-isolate for 10 days and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

All pupils with a negative test will go their lessons as normal.

Consent for testing

Lateral Flow Tests are voluntary but we strongly urge that pupils participate in the programme of regular rapid testing. Pupils without consent are still permitted to attend school on Wednesday 5 January. However, the more pupils engage with it, the more effective our system of controls can be.

If you completed the consent form in September for your child to be tested on site, then you do not need to provide consent again. If this has changed or if you haven't previously completed the consent form, then please complete the form found [here](#) by **Monday 3 January**. Please be aware that for students aged 16 and over, consent (or not) needs to be provided by the student themselves rather than their parents. You can contact the office by emailing info@stmatthewacademy.co.uk with any queries.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your support in ensuring that the SMA uniform is worn so smartly by Year 8 pupils - they wear our uniform with pride. Please double check our recent communication regarding uniform - particularly the rules regarding hair for the new term in January.

So it is time for us all to go and enjoy a well-earned break. Have a wonderful holiday and we all look forward to working with you again in January.

Yours faithfully



Ms K Migon
Director of Learning Year 8