

# St Matthew Academy

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

Headteacher: Ms Miranda Baldwin

Head of Primary: Ms Joanna Chick



11 February 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

## RE: Update letter – Year 9

Firstly, we hope that this letter meets you well. We are sure that you will be as surprised as we are, that we are already half way through the academic year! It has been an eventful half term at the academy with lots to celebrate within Year 9 and the wider community. Ms Ahima and I are proud of the achievement of pupils in Year 9 since the resumption of school and would like to share some of the achievements of the cohort.

### Debate Mate

Debate Mate is a charity that aims to tackle educational disadvantage in some of Britain's most deprived communities. Their programmes increase speaking and listening attainment and improve a range of higher-order thinking skills and non-cognitive abilities such as confidence, teamwork, and leadership. I am pleased to report that a number of pupils in Year 9 have participated in the programme and have successfully negotiated their way through to the quarter finals which will take place on Wednesday 2 March, after winning the 1<sup>st</sup> round of the Urban Debate League. A massive well done to the following pupils: **Adama Bah, Paapa Owusu Dunkor, Daksh Patel, Farishta Mustafa, Bess Huxton, Hawa Fofana, Serena Burgess, Tianana Fogarty, Rapolas Venckus, Gracie Muir, Kaylah Ferriera Pina, David Orekurin.**

### KPMG Mentoring Programme

KPMG mentoring will be in full effect after half term. 30 pupils in Year 9 will be provided with the opportunity to be mentored by industry professionals. This programme will continue for the remainder of the academic year. We cannot wait to report on their experiences when they are afforded the opportunity to visit KPMG HQ in Canary Wharf.

### BBC Young Reporter

BBC Young Reporter is the BBC's journalism and media project supporting young people to develop content creation skills, find out about careers in broadcasting and share their own stories. The BBC came into school for the Young Reporter Share my Story campaign with BBC radio hosts Greg James and Nick Bright. Pupils were very engaged and inspired hearing the stories of the hosts and our very own Layla Akinfolarin shared her very inspiring story. Excellent work Layla!

### Top 10 Achievement points

The pupils below have the most achievements points thus far. Well done!!!!

| Name                        | Number of achievement points |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Mark Koutchedi 9M1          | 131                          |
| Shameemah Tanagidah 9T1     | 120                          |
| Subhan Domach 9T1           | 108                          |
| Cassel Chambers 9T3         | 99                           |
| Bess Huxton 9T1             | 98                           |
| Cassandra Onica 9M2         | 96                           |
| Huray Tesfay 9T3            | 96                           |
| Abigail Bepat 9R1           | 95                           |
| Kemahri Taylor – Bailey 9R2 | 92                           |
| Farishta Mustafa 9M2        | 90                           |

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Successful, confident learners High expectations, outstanding achievements Inclusive, caring, Catholic community Nurturing talent, cultivating ambition Excellence for all

### Ranking season – Rank 1

The cohort has just undertaken its first set of ranking examinations. We are pleased with the attitude and aptitude pupils have demonstrated throughout the ranking process. Most of the cohort were very successful in their first rank with many pupils moving significantly up the rank. Please see below for the ‘top 10 movers’ up the rank since the last rank sat by pupils in Year 8.

| Name                     | Number of places moved in the rank |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Sashawn Garwood 9T1      | 44                                 |
| Kyron – Dean Johnson 9M1 | 38                                 |
| Tayo Martin 9T3          | 36                                 |
| Natalia Otano Reyes 9M1  | 34                                 |
| Kemahri Taylor - Bailey  | 32                                 |
| Elijah Brown             | 31                                 |
| Sana Mirza               | 31                                 |
| Abigail Bepat            | 30                                 |
| Kevin Nana-Ampaw         | 27                                 |
| Jayden Brown Reid        | 27                                 |

### Sporting activities

During the last term a significant number of pupils participated in sporting activities including football and basketball with some success. Although being victorious is the aim, you cannot always win. We are pleased that pupils have represented the Academy in various football and basketball competitions and are engaging in sport with the spirit of competitiveness, humility and self-reflection in the event of a defeat.

### Extra-curricular

More than ever, exercise is important for pupils’ physical and mental wellbeing:

- Physical activity and exercise can be effective treatment strategies for symptoms of both depression and anxiety.
- Each day is a new opportunity to engage in physical activity and exercise that can bring short and long-term benefits for mood, sleep, and physical health.
- Consistency and sustained motivation may be enhanced by peer support, family support, or electronic platforms offering exercise programs.

The Academy is offering a range of extra – curricular activities and we are pleased that pupils in Year 9 have readily engaged in most of them this half term.

We look forward to sharing more achievements from the year group in the near future. In the meantime, stay safe and well.

Yours faithfully,



**Mr R Wanza**  
**Assistant Headteacher**  
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**Ms I Ahima**  
**Director of Learning Year 9**  
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# COVID-19 & schools

08.02.2022

## Dear Parents and Carers

As there have been several recent changes, we are writing to summarise NHS and Department for Education guidance on testing and self-isolation and what you need to know about your child attending school. This information is correct at the time of publication and may, of course, be subject to change in the future. More details can be found in [NHS guidance](#).

## Asymptomatic testing

Regular testing is still very important. All adults and secondary aged children/young people are strongly encouraged to take twice weekly lateral flow device (LFD) tests at home (if they are able) and [report results to NHS](#), including people who have had COVID-19 within the last 90 days and have completed the isolation period. **We are still advising schools to ask all visitors (including parents/carers) to do a LFD test before coming on site, to help protect children and adults in school.**

## When to self-isolate

### Symptoms

If your child has any of the main symptoms of COVID-19 (high temperature; new, continuous cough; loss/change to smell or taste) even if they are mild, they should stay at home and get a PCR test to check if they have COVID-19. **You should tell your school and your child must not attend school while waiting for the results.**

### Contacts

People living with, or who have been in contact with someone with COVID-19, should self-isolate unless they are:

- under 18 years old;
- fully vaccinated –14 days have passed since their final dose of an approved vaccine;
- part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial;
- not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons.

Adults and children (between the ages of five and 18) who are contacts should do LFD tests every day for seven days, if they are able to and [report results to NHS](#). They should follow advice on [how to avoid catching and spreading COVID-19](#) and consider limiting contact with [people who are at higher risk from COVID-19](#).

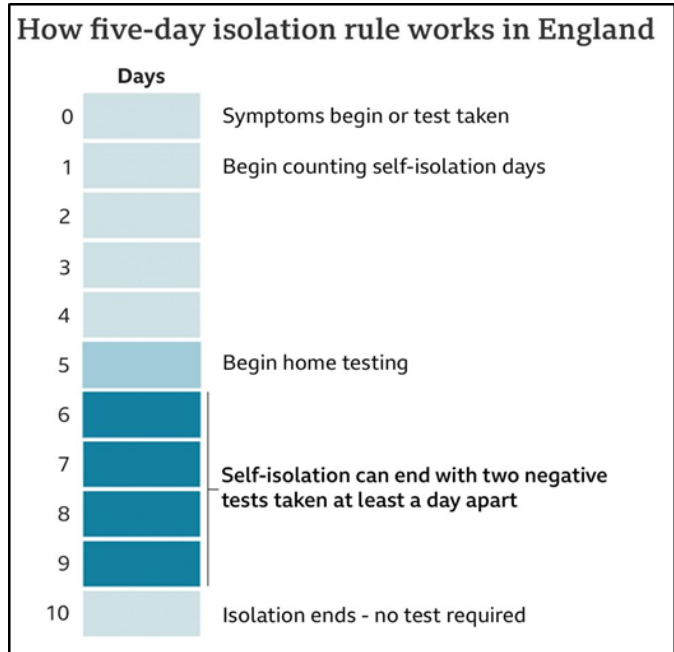
If tests are negative, your child can continue to attend school. If any of the tests are positive, they should self-isolate. If they are unable to test for any reason, please discuss this with the school to consider the best approach to your child attending school.

## Testing positive

For adults and children who test positive (on a PCR or LFD test), the self-isolation period includes the day symptoms started (or the day of the positive test, if you have no symptoms) and the **next 10 full days**. After **five full days (i.e. on day six)** you may be able to stop self-isolating if you do an LFD test on days five and six and:

- both tests are negative
- you did both tests at least 24 hours apart
- you do not have a high temperature

You can stop self-isolating after the 10 days if either you do not have any symptoms or you just have a cough or changes to your sense of smell or taste— these can last for weeks after the infection has gone. If you have a high temperature after the 10 days, or are feeling unwell, keep self-isolating and seek medical advice.



## Returning to school before the end of 10-day self-isolation period

For anyone ending self-isolation on day six, it's important to [take steps to reduce the chance of passing COVID-19 to others](#). Schools have infection control measures in place, including enhanced cleaning, ventilation and regular asymptomatic testing programme for staff (and students in secondary schools) that help to reduce the risk of transmission.

**If your child is ending self-isolation before the end of the 10 days, please contact the school before your child returns so that they can put in place any extra plans, if necessary.**

## Vaccinations

COVID-19 vaccination is now available free to everyone aged 12 years and over, unless they are medically exempt. You can find national and local details of where to get vaccinated [here](#).

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The government recognise that good school attendance and face to face learning are incredibly important for children and young people's education and wellbeing. As always, our schools are doing an amazing job in keeping children and adults in school as safely as possible. There may be times when extra COVID-19 measures are needed if there are high numbers of COVID-19 cases or action taken if there are staff shortages. Your school will inform you of these as early as possible.

Thank you for your cooperation.

**Angela Scattergood**  
Director of Education  
Lewisham Council

**Dr Catherine Mbema**  
Director of Public Health  
Lewisham Council