

St Matthew Academy

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

Headteacher: Ms Miranda Baldwin

Head of Primary: Ms Joanna Chick



16 December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

RE: Year 11 Updates

As we approach the end of the Autumn Term, we would like to update you on some important information regarding Year 11 pupils and the term ahead.

Year 11 Celebrations

Huge congratulations to all pupils for successfully sitting their first round of formal mock examinations. We are extremely proud of all of the pupils for how well they have coped in what is an extremely stressful and high- pressured environment. We look forward to awarding more pupils with gold lanyards to celebrate exam success in January. We would also like to say an extra special well done to the Vocational Sport pupils who have already sat their actual GCSE examination this half term. Mr Salih praised pupils for their resilience and efforts.

Post-16 Applications

We are now in the last week of the Autumn term. By this point all Year 11s should have completed their personal statement and completed all their Post-16 Applications to sixth forms, colleges or apprenticeships. However please note, each provider has different deadlines and application processes, so it is important to check with each individual college or school for the correct dates. It is vital that you speak with your child, and support them to ensure they have completed this process.

Mock Exams

As you know, Y11 pupils have been busy sitting their mock exams in all subjects over the last week and a half. Results of these exams will be available to pupils and parents/carers in the form of a report w/b 17th January. **You will have a chance to discuss these reports with your child's subject teacher at the Y11 Parent's Evening on Thursday 20th January.** More information about Parent's Evening will follow in the new year.

Year 11 GCSEs Next Year

You may have heard in the news that the government have made further changes to how the GCSEs will be conducted for Year 11 this year, to account for disruptions caused by the pandemic. Exam topics will be released before the exams (currently set to be released on the 7th February) allowing students to focus on specific areas of revision. We will update you should any further announcements be made.

Year 11 Sanctions

Year 11 must ensure they comply with the Academy uniform and behaviour policy at all times in school, and when representing the Academy outside of school. Non-compliance with uniform includes no lanyard; incorrect footwear (no trainers or boots); incorrect outerwear (coats must be blue or black) no jewellery or colours/stripes in hair. In the unfortunate case of when a pupil does not comply, we will issue sanctions as a consequence of this behaviour. Pupils who receive 1 x behaviour point will receive a 20-minute detention with their Form Tutor. Pupils who receive 2 x behaviour points will receive a 1 hour DOL detention that same day. Pupils with multiple behaviour points in the week may receive an SLT Friday 2-hour detention, or a Saturday 3-hour detention. Pupils may also be placed on report to Form Tutors, DOL or SLT as part of the escalation process. As you are well aware, being on time to school is of paramount importance, especially in Year 11. We understand that public transport is affected in the current climate so we would urge you to ensure your child leaves plenty of time to get to school in the morning.

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We would like to take this opportunity to remind Year 11 and their parents/carers that pupils' behaviour, attendance and punctuality is a vital part of their sixth form college reference, and as such we would appreciate your support in us applying the Academy's behaviour policy.

End of Term:

Finally, **please be aware that term finishes for Year 11 pupils on Thursday 16th December. Pupils will be dismissed at the end of Period 3 at 12:00.** This is a day earlier than the rest of the academy. Year 11 have been given this time to work from home and complete any outstanding Post-16 applications, and finalise their personal statements. All instructions for this, and any other work set for over the holidays will be posted on Google Classrooms. Please support your child by ensuring they complete all the work set.

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 11 will take place on **Tuesday 4 January from 2.30pm – 3.30pm**. 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 at the time indicated
- Pupils are not required to wear school uniform
- If pupils are late, they may not be tested.
- Pupils will leave immediately after their test
- Pupils with siblings in different year groups can arrive together to be tested.

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 should **return to school on Wednesday 5 January by 8.35am**.

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 <https://forms.gle/VcgFdqWkaMxjfW1x5> 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.

Thank you in advance for your support, and have a very merry Christmas and a happy new year!

Yours faithfully



Ms V Dunne
Associate Assistant Headteacher