

## Message from the Senior Leadership Team

We are now in the season of Advent in the liturgical calendar, when we start to prepare for the Christmas period and to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Pupils have explored this theme in assembly and developed their understanding of the importance of using time effectively in preparation for upcoming events. We know that our Year 11 have been using their time effectively in preparing for their upcoming GCSE mock exams. As a year group they have been working incredibly hard in lessons and their attendance has also been fantastic - 5.4% above the national average. We continue to work hard to support them through this period and we ask that you keep them in your prayers.

Across our whole Academy we have lots to celebrate from our Cultural Day in our primary phase that allowed us celebrate all the different backgrounds and heritages that makes SMA such a strong community. More information about this can be found within this newsletter. We have also had success in the sports arena with girls and boys football teams registering wins and basketball teams also winning fixtures. We celebrated Mass with Year 5, 6 and 7 and Father Victor Darlington on the 27<sup>th</sup> November. Further to all this, Year 3 visited the Chislehurst Caves. Some of our primary pupils in Year 4 had a trip to the Greenwich Lantern Parade. Mentors from KPMG and BDO continued to work with our Year 10 and 11 pupils to help prepare them for the world of work and business. Alongside all these enrichment events that are taking place, we continue to work hard daily to deliver quality first lessons to all our pupils.

As we approach the Christmas period, we are aware that this can be a difficult time for some families. We are experienced in helping signpost families to support groups and charities if required so please don't hesitate to get in touch. To end the term we have a busy two weeks left with both Year 10 and 11 sitting important assessments, Nativity performances, carol concerts, rewards celebration events and one of my personal favourite events of the year, Christmas dinner! We hope to see many of you at some of these upcoming events in the run up to the Christmas holidays.

God bless,

Mr A Young – Deputy Headteacher.

## Prayer and Reflection

Last Sunday our Holy Mother Church lit the first purple candle in the Advent wreath which represents Hope. Over the next four weeks we will light two other purple candles which represents Faith and Peace and one pink candle which represents Joy. Advent from the Latin word 'adventus' means "coming" For us Christians it is a stark reminder that Christmas is coming! As we busy ourselves with cleaning, doing the Christmas shopping, decorating our houses and thinking about what we might like to have for our Christmas feast, we should also remember this: Advent is a time of preparation, where we make **ourselves** ready.

As we celebrate the liturgy of Advent each year, the Church opens for us the hope of the Messiah's first coming and enkindles in us the renewed desire for his second coming. In celebrating his birth, death, and resurrection we unite ourselves completely to him. Prayer is a wonderful way to help us do this, as with prayer we cut ourselves away from the worldly distractions and prepare our hearts for Him. Here is a lovely prayer by Sr Bridgetta Rooney of CAFOD that we can say during this advent period:

*Christ, come into our world of darkness*

*Light up our lives with your coming.*

*Fulfil all our longings with the joy of your birth*

*Strengthen our resolve to work for change in our world*

*And to share the hope of your birth that each Advent*

*brings.*

*Amen.*





# Cultural Day: Special Edition

St Matthew Academy came alive for our annual Cultural Day, the corridors were adorned with pupils wearing their native attire and there was a real buzz as everyone was engrossed in discussing each other's outfits and told stories of their native countries and family traditions.

Throughout the day there were a number of activities to participate in. The traditional food tasting went down a treat with dishes shared from around the world, as well as the chance for pupils to make Jamaican patties. All children participated in dance classes focused on traditional dances from around the world and had time during the day to research their ancestors or a country that they had an interest in finding out more about.

To round up the day we held a huge assembly where all classes showcased what they had learnt throughout the day, this consisted of a number of phenomenal performances from our pupils, families and external guests which included Jamaican line dancing, Indian dancing, South African dance, stories and singing.

What a wonderful day and a special multi-cultural school we have!





# Cultural Day: KS1

## Year 1

We started our day 'at the airport' going through security and boarding with our tickets to Ghana. We had to make a pit stop for fuel at none other than Portugal. We met Carlos' parents there, who gave us some yummy Portuguese cake.

We then got back on the flight to Ghana, where we learnt about Kente clothes and made our own Kente collage! Miss Helena and Miss Hodey joined us and we tried some amazing traditional Ghanaian food, Waakye. Whilst this was happening, Miss Hodey taught the children how to make traditional African caps for us to wear to our Cultural Day assembly. The children loved decorating the hats with different lines and geometric shapes as it was similar to what they studied in Art last half term.

To finish off an amazing day, the children got the fantastic opportunity to learn some Indian Dances, which they performed in front of the whole of Primary!

Overall, it was a spectacular day and one the children won't forget anytime soon!



## Year 2

What a fantastic cultural day we had in year 2! The children began the day by learning about Vietnam - where it is located, what food they eat and we even learnt how to say some numbers in Vietnamese. The children wrote descriptive postcards about some of the beautiful locations in Vietnam and made their own Bánh mì (baguette) using marinated tofu and pickled vegetables. They were a little unsure at first - it didn't look like something they would normally eat, with some children adamant that they 'did not like tofu' - but to their surprise, which you can see on their faces, they LOVED it with lots asking for more!

Maddie stated, "This is the best day of my life!" after learning some amazing dance moves from Zephan and Zemirah's mum during their African dancing class. Alan was also over the moon that we got to learn about his family's country saying, "Vietnam is the best place ever!"





# Cultural Day: Key Stage 2

## Year 3

Year 3 had an amazing time taking part in Cultural Day. The day started off with the children finding out a variety of fun facts about their chosen country for the day - Venezuela! They were particularly surprised to find out about Lake Maracaibo in Northern Venezuela has more lightning storms than anywhere else in the world!

We were treated to a cookery lesson delivered by our very own Lorena and her Mum, where they taught us how to make coconut balls from Gran Canaria.

To build up an appetite for lunch the children took part in a fantastic African dancing workshop, which was performed by Jennaya and her Mum. Mila said that she "loved the African dancing because it was a very active activity". In the afternoon the class learnt how to line dance which Sam said "was really fun because dancing is my favourite thing". They are already excited for next year's event!



## Year 4

In the morning, we located Somalia in atlas and researched information about it for our fact files.



We then enjoyed making and sampling some delicious Ghanaian cooking with Helena.

After that, we learnt all about Somali carving (qoris) and had a go with our own carvings. We rounded off the day with an energetic African dance session with Zephan's mum.





# Cultural Day: Key Stage 2

## Year 5

As part of Cultural Day Year 5 focused on the country Nigeria which is located in West Africa. At the start of the day the children found great pleasure in researching the country and making their very own flags and cultural drawings. The children loved the activity and were able to discuss things that they found interesting about the country. The children listened to cultural music from Nigeria and even played a game of musical statues whilst taking in the great Afro-beat sounds.



Continuing with the musical theme the class then took part in an African dance lesson, where they were able to learn some new African dance moves such as the gwara gwara. It was a fantastic opportunity for the children and showcased what talented dancers they are!

Later on we had some parent visitors who told us a Ghanaian story accompanied by a dance. It was lovely to see how much the class embraced the culture whilst having a good time.

We ended the day with a phenomenal whole school assembly where year 5 did a short presentation on Nigeria. It was a wonderful experience and we all thoroughly enjoyed the day.



## Year 6

The children made tasty Jamaican patties and had a wonderful time during their afrobeat dance lesson!







# Literacy Corner



**Anti Bullying Week**  
**14 November to 18 November**

**New books for**  
**the Primary and Secondary Phase**



**Well done to Avika in year 7 our Sora Superstar for October. Avika read 11 books on Sora during October!**



## Book Reviews

**Nana from Year 8 reviewed 'Flight' by Vanessa Harbour for our secondary phase.**

'Flight' is an adventure based during the end of the Second World War. It's about trying to keep the Lippizzaner dancing horses, belonging to the Spanish Riding School, safe from the Nazis who want to kill them. In the first chapter this book is interesting with Major Bauer killing Herr Engel and Jakob's horse, Allegra. The adventure for the safety of the other horses made me wonder what would happen next as they were travelling straight through Nazi territory. It was also nice to see when Kizzy joined their group because I believe she was a well written character. I also loved the description the book contained as it really set a picture in my head at every scene. Overall, I rate this book a 4.5/5 and recommend this to audiences of 9+.



## Primary Phase

Alleyan, Deneise and Joyce from Year 6 reviewed 'The House with Chicken Legs' by Sophie Anderson for KS2.



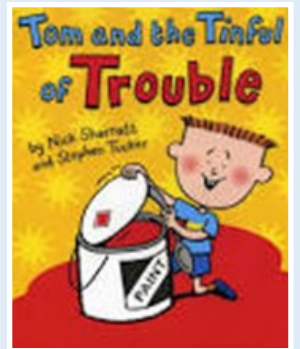
'The House with Chicken Legs' is about a girl called Marinka who lives in a spooky house with chicken legs. Marinka wishes she could stay in one place but her house keeps moving without warning. The only people she meets are dead people but they keep disappearing as well.

I would recommend this book as it is a tiny bit spooky and weird! The book is suitable for those over the age of 8. I give the book 5 stars!



Our three year 6 book reviewers also reviewed three pictures books by Nick Sharratt for EYFS and KS1.

Deneise read and reviewed 'Shark in the Park'. This book is about a boy who keeps thinking that there is a shark in the park. He keeps mistaking other objects for a shark. This book is suitable for those aged 3 and above. I would definitely recommend this book as it is very good to read and it is also funny.



Alleyan read 'Shark in the dark'. This book is about a boy named Timothy and before bed he looks through his telescope and he keeps seeing things in the telescope. He gets very scared until his dad tells him there are no sharks. This book is suitable for children over the age of 4. I recommend this book for KS1 children who might find it fun and entertaining. I gave it 3/5 stars.



Joyce read and reviewed 'Tom and the tinfoil of trouble'. This book is about a boy called Tom who decides to carry out some renovations to his living room. This book is for children who love trouble! I gave this book 5 stars.





# Going Above and Beyond!

## Primary phase

*Pupils with the most achievement points during October & November*

### Reception - Ladybirds

Ezekiel AGHEDO

Galilee VASANTH

Nicolo CAMMARASANA

### Year 1 - Dragonfly

Azziah LYNCH

Rayyaan ZAWAR

Carlos BRITO CASTRO

### Year 2 Bumblebee

Nickairo POYSER

Maisie HAMILTON

Evie SALKELD

### Year 2 - Butterfly

Eline BELBLIDIA

Daniel AGBAROLI CLARKE

Fatoumata DIALLO DIALLO

### Year 3 - Cheetahs

Yasmin GRIFFITH-WILLIAMS

Bailey MILLER

Deborah OMASOMBO

### Year 4 - Tigers

Chike SAUNDERS

Doyinsola FOLASIRE

Chelsea ABEKOUA

### Year 5 - Lions

Valentine CHAZA

Michaela SEKA

Etana LEE

### Year 6 - Leopards

Abigail JACOME ASQUI

Id TAYLOR-BAILEY

Renee GENAS-MCVYTIE

**Well done to these pupils for all their hard work!**



# Staff Stars

Introducing our staff stars nominated by their colleagues...

**Ms Pollydore**



**Ms Laker**



**Ms Skelton**



**Staff Stars**



# REPORT IT!



If you have some information that you feel should be reported, e.g. bullying, or you are feeling low, worrying about something or if you have any safeguarding concerns you can:

## Tell a Teacher



**Mr Young**  
Deputy Headteacher

**Ms Chick**  
Head of Primary



**Ms Laker**  
Child Protection



**Mr Gunningham**  
Assistant Headteacher

Staff at St Matthew Academy are always here to help and listen to pupils, if you ever want to talk to someone or share a concern please don't feel worried about doing so.