

St Matthew Academy

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

Headteacher: Ms Miranda Baldwin

Head of Primary: Ms Joanna Chick



23 October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

RE: Half Term Letter – Year 10

As we approach half term I would personally like to thank you all for helping to support the staff at St Matthew Academy since our return to school at the start of September.

It has been a challenging yet rewarding term, so far. Pupils have exhibited resilience and a profound understanding of the necessary changes made to the Academy day and its facilities. All pupils should be congratulated for their co-operation.

In September we celebrated the Feast of St Matthew. It was the first time the Academy has streamed a liturgy, live. All of our community joined in the celebration of our patron saint, socially distanced of course. When we return after half term pupils will be contributing to the planning and celebrating of Remembrance Day and our Advent liturgies. As you are aware, so many families around the world are facing uncertain futures because of coronavirus. I am pleased to announce that our first House event – Harvest Collection, has yielded a significant amount of non-perishable foods. The Academy has collected 585 tins, 81 bags of pasta, 48 bags of noodles, 22 bags of rice, 36 packets of biscuits, 10 boxes of cereal and another 128 various items. This means the Academy will be donating 910 items to Lewisham Foodbank. All pupils should be proud of their efforts, in particular the competition winners, Teresa House! I would like to thank the House Leaders Miss Downer, Miss Livingstone and Mr Salih, with the support of Mrs Guest, for organising this event. At harvest time, the sharing of food helps Christians to remember that all gifts come from God. Giving is a way of saying thank you to God in a practical way whilst remembering that He commanded all people to love and care for others. A massive thank you to all pupils in Year 9 for their contributions to a worthy cause.

During Black History Month, we have reflected upon the contributions black people have made to our world history in assemblies, whilst celebrating modern day black excellence during tutor time. The Art department challenged all pupils to design a logo for a t-shirt that in their opinion best encapsulates the importance of learning about, learning from and celebrating Black history. The winning design will be printed and worn by all staff members.

I continue to be impressed by the way, in which pupils have worn their uniform with pride including the wearing of lanyards. Moreover, pupils have demonstrated great commitment to their learning, highlighted in the lessons we have observed and the wonderful class work demonstrated in their exercise books. We again encourage you to commend your child and remind them of the importance of maintaining high standards of effort and behaviour at all times.

Successes

We would like to highlight the following pupils who have made an exceptional start to the school year and have accrued the most achievement points in the year group. Well done to you all.

Name	Achievement Points
Adriana Torres Bonnard	78
Antoan Ognyanov	73
Remy Zaharia	72
Mariana Baron Becerra	69
Sayyid Cissokho	68

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The St Matthew Academy Limited. A company limited by guarantee whose registered office is situated at St Joseph's Vale, Blackheath, London, SE3 0XX

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

GCSE Religious Education

As you are aware, this academic year is also significant, as all pupils in Year 10 will sit their GCSE Religious Education (RE) examination in the summer of 2021. There are no proposed plans to alter the GCSE specification although dates have been revised meaning that examinations have been provisionally scheduled for June 8th, 14th, and 22nd 2021. Therefore, it is crucial that in all RE lessons pupils remain focused, all work including homework is completed to a high standard and revision of content taught is consistently reviewed. I am pleased to share with you that Year 10 have made a fantastic start to their studies in RE and expect pupils to maintain the positive start. In addition, pupils undertaking their GCSE in Photography have made an excellent start in Ms Thurston's Photography class – well done.

New Starters to St Matthew Academy

We have had a number of pupils join the Academy in Year 10 since the resumption. Their attitude and aptitude towards learning has been first class. Pupils have seamlessly become part of the SMA community and are thriving in their new setting, making progress in lessons, forging meaningful friendships and adapting to the 'new school day to day life' in light of Covid. Many pupils were paired with a 'buddy' who have been excellent and an absolute credit to the Academy. Thank you to the following pupils: Jasmine Adonri, Rohanna Munda, Andrei Dascalu and Camilo Betancur for supporting their peers.

Key Dates for Autumn Term

- **Monday, 26th October 2020 – Friday, 30th October 2020** - Half Term
- **Friday 27th November 2020** – Staff INSET Day (Academy closed to all pupils)
- **W/C 7th December 2020** – Catholic Christianity PPE

Important Reminders

- **All pupils are required to be on time each day, arriving no later than 9.20 am for line up**
- **Correct full school uniform is required including the wearing of their lanyard and face covering**
- **Pupils must not wear jewellery of any kind, except for a wristwatch**
- **Social distancing must be observed at all times**
- **Hands should be washed or sanitised regularly**

We are constantly reviewing and improving our procedures and protocols to ensure that all pupils remain safe, healthy and able to make excellent progress academically. As such, pupils are required to wear a face covering in communal areas of the Academy.

NHS <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/>

UNICEF – How teenagers can protect their mental health during COVID-19 <https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/how-teenagers-can-protect-their-mental-health-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

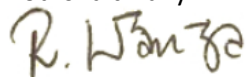
Kooth – A free online counselling and emotional wellbeing support service for young people aged 11 -19. <https://kooth.com/>

Mindfulness (Christianity) <https://calminggrace.com/christian-mindfulness-exercises/>

Please remember that it is really important that you keep the Academy up to date with any issues regarding COVID-19 during the half term. If your child has to isolate or if your child tests positive with COVID, then we must be informed immediately. You can do this via info@stmatthewacademy.co.uk as this account will be monitored throughout the break.

This continues to be a challenging time for us all so we thank you for your continued support at this time. I wish all pupils in Year 10 a deserved restful half term.

Yours faithfully



Mr R Wanza

Assistant Head Teacher Pastoral Lead Years 9 & 10



Ms S Cefai

Director of Learning

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