

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: Year 11 Updates.

As we approach the end of Half Term 1, we would like to update you on some important information regarding Year 11 pupils and the year ahead.

GCSE Examination Date Changes:

As you may know, the Government has released the changes being made to the GCSE exam window next summer. The GCSE exams have been moved back by three weeks to allow schools additional teaching time with Year 11 pupils. The GCSE exams will now run from 26th May to 2nd July and GCSE Results Day will now be on Friday 27th August. Your child will receive an individualised timetable in due course.

Assessment Changes within Individual Subjects:

To account for the time missed in 2020, exam boards have made several significant changes to individual subjects, including changing the format of the final exam; removing elements of coursework and controlled assessment; reducing modules or units. Your child's subject teacher will clarify any changes made within their subject directly to the pupils.

Mock Exams and Grading:

All Year 11 pupils will be completing a series of mock exams throughout the year. You have had the calendar of these exams in the Parent/Carer Handbook. These exams are run as formally as possible to give the pupils the best possible preparation for the real GCSE exams. The results of these mocks are vital in giving teachers a clear picture of the pupils' progress and attainment. Results of mock exams may vary for pupils depending on the paper or unit they are sitting. It is very possible that a pupil could achieve a grade 6 in English Language Paper 1 and a grade 4 in English Language Paper 2, as the skills and knowledge required, differ from paper to paper. As such, the latest grade a pupil receives may not be representative of their overall grade or performance. Consequently, as was the case with the RE Centre Assessed Grades, the RE teachers used more than just the most recent mock result to award the grade the pupil received. Please note, that teachers will be retaining the mock exam papers to form evidence that may be required at a later date.

October Half Term Intervention:

Unfortunately, we are unable to run the revision sessions that had been provisionally timetable as per the Parent/Carer Handbook. This is due to the school requiring a full deep clean with no pupils on site. The only exception to this, is for GCSE Drama students who have their formal exam after half term. Miss Barallon will be writing to parents of these pupils separately to inform them of the session date and times.

Year 11 Tutor Groups:

After half term, pupils' tutor groups are changing, to reflect the pupils' needs in English and maths, and their progress and effort. Your child may be moving into a new tutor group to ensure they have targeted time to focus on a specific subject or revision strategy. Your child will be informed of their new tutor group and receive updated timetables.

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

Year 11 Celebrations:

Huge congratulations to the following students for achieving outstanding effort grades in all their subjects; these pupils will be awarded with gold lanyards to celebrate their success: Sebastian Whitehead, Joshua Whitehead and Emilija Katakinate. Extra special commendation must go to Sebastian for achieving the most amount of achievement points in the year group this term so far. We also say well done to the following students for making exceptional progress across all subjects in their September Progress Assessments:

- Alisha Aikoroje
- Charley Spaulding
- Jethukulan Prabakaran
- Radu Dragut
- Leon Walters
- Denesh Thavaraja
- Daniel Christopher
- Shemmy Adepoju
- Ricardo Pereira
- Demilade Alabi
- Destiny Odinnuta
- Kofi Osei

This week we have been utilising technology so learners at home can remotely access live lessons taking place in school, with Mr Bradley's science class and Ms Bryan's English class leading the way. Last week we conducted Head of House interviews with 11 students. All were very impressive and demonstrated teamwork and innovation when tasked with creating house team events and an exercise challenging their survival skills!

Face coverings in school

Now that Tier 2 restrictions have been placed on London, schools are being asked to take additional precautionary measures. This means that in the secondary phase, face coverings should be worn by adults (staff and visitors) and pupils (year 7 and above) when moving around indoors, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain. As in the general approach, it will not be necessary to wear face coverings in the classroom, where protective measures already mean the risks are lower, and they may inhibit teaching and learning.

Please ensure your child brings a face covering to school (this should be plain black or dark blue or a disposable one) and a plastic bag to put it in when not being worn. Some individuals are [exempt from wearing face coverings](#). If this is the case for your child please can you contact your child's Director of Learning. Finally, please remember that it is really important that you keep the Academy up to date with any COVID issues during the half term. If your child has to isolate, or if your child is given a positive result after a test, then we need to be informed straight away. You can do this via info@stmatthewacademy.co.uk as this account will be monitored throughout the break.

Thank you in advance for your support, and please do not hesitate to contact either Ms Heywood or Ms Dunne should you have any queries, or would like to request extra work.

Yours faithfully



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