

St Matthew Academy

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

Headteacher: Ms Miranda Baldwin

Head of Primary: Ms Joanna Chick



24 August 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

RE: Start of Academic Year for Year 10.

We are really looking forward to welcoming our Year 10 cohort to start another successful academic year at SMA. The return to school is a more complicated process this year as the Government have advised that all pupils should receive 2 lateral flow tests, 3 to 5 days apart, on their return to school in the autumn term. In line with this expectation we want to share our finalised plans with you. To accommodate this requirement, we will need pupils to attend SMA for an on-site test prior to their official start date Mon 6th September.

1st Test – Wednesday 1st September between 2pm and 2:50pm

Pupils are asked to attend SMA on Wednesday 1st September between 2pm and 2:50pm for their first test.

- On this date pupil are not required to attend the Academy in their school uniform.
- Once the test is complete pupils will be free to leave the site.
- It is vital that pupils arrive during this time slot to ensure the process runs smoothly

How can my child take part in the on-site testing?

Consent from a parent or legal guardian is required for each child to take part in the on-site Covid testing programme. This was given in March 2021 when your child was tested at school following the school closures. This consent is still valid.

What if my child tests positive?

We will contact any parent / Carer directly if a pupil has a positive test. Parents / Carers will need to contact NHS Track and Trace with this information and arrange for a PCR test, the individual will need to isolate in line with most recent Government guidance.

How the on-site tests work

Pupils taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of the nose and throat. Results (which take around half an hour from testing).

2nd Test

On completion of this on site test pupils will be given a home test kit. This test will need to be completed on Sunday 5th September in the evening before returning to the Academy for the official start date on Monday 6th September. If your child tests positive, then they will have to isolate in line with the most up to date Government guidance and contact NHS track and trace to arrange a PCR test. We ask that you inform us on Monday morning as a priority.

Should we continue to test at home?

Yes – pupils should test twice weekly at home until the end of September when the government will be reviewing this requirement. Your child will be given a testing kit at school and information about how to record test results and how to order additional testing kits from the Academy.

Monday 6th September

All year 10 pupils along with the rest of the Academy will return to school as per normal school day. Pupils should be on site for 8:37am in full school uniform and with all the equipment needed to be ready to learn. If your child did not get tested on Wednesday 1st September we will endeavour to ensure they undertake an on-site lateral flow test before attending lessons.

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Schools COVID-19 operational guidance

You will be aware that schools have been taking actions to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus since the pandemic began in March 2020. The guidance has been updated in line with the national relaxation of measures across the country and consequently we have updated our risk assessment and this will be shared with parents and carers when we return. In summary the control measures that will be in place in September 2021 are:

- Ensuring good hygiene for everyone
- Maintaining appropriate cleaning regimes
- Keeping occupied spaces well ventilated
- Following public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases

We recognise this is not the preferred way in which we would like to start the new term for our new pupils but we do have to follow the Government guidance in order to ensure a safe and successful start to the term. I would like to thank you in advance for your support with this process and we look forward to welcoming everyone back.

Yours faithfully



Ms M Baldwin
Headteacher



Mr A Young
Deputy Headteacher