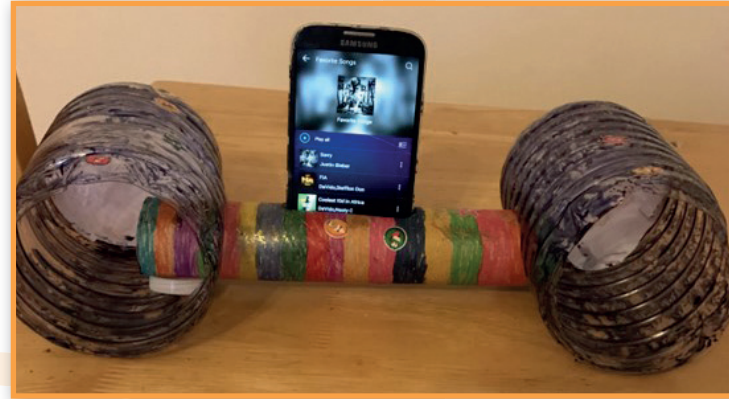
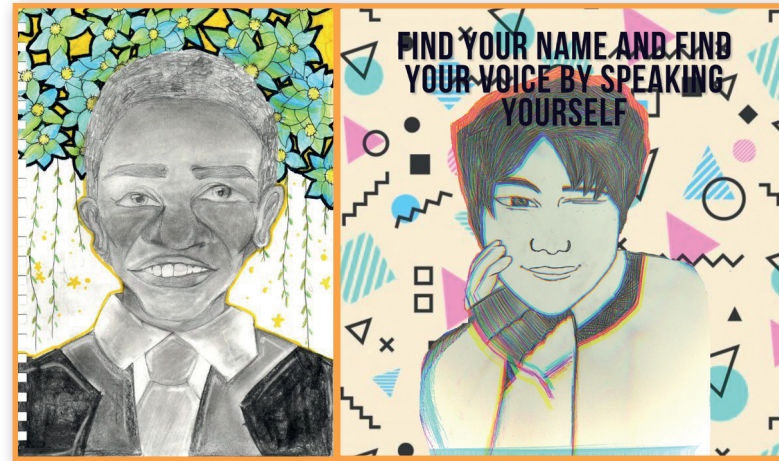


LEARNING AT HOME

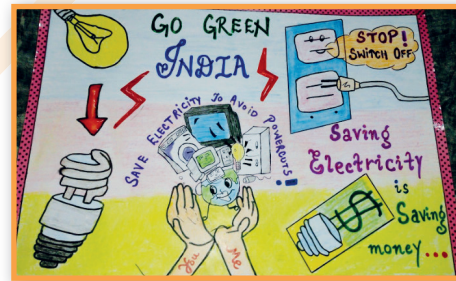
At the core of our offer is a dedication to a traditional education, creative learning experiences and innovative enrichment activities. Our pupils have adapted brilliantly to learning at home, and whilst our online provision cannot replace the zest, vibrancy and richness of every day school life, we remain proud of the outstanding progress our pupils made and levels of engagement. Take a look here for a flavour of our online provision and some of the work that has taken place across the school.



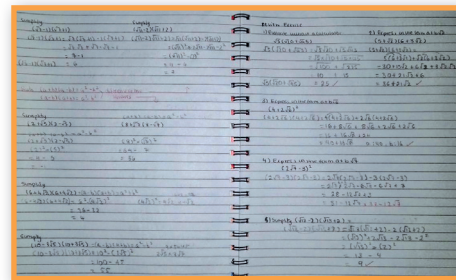
Check out this creative work from Hailya in Year 7, she has been looking into sustainable design – great work!



Pupils have been working on digital portraits with the theme of 'activism' – look at their great work! Well done.



A Year 9 pupil put together this artistic poster to promote saving electricity and going green!



Year 11 pupils have been participating in live maths A-Level lessons, take a look at their work, this pupil praised the videos, finding them helpful and encouraging!



STAYING AT SMA

During lockdown, we have welcomed children of our key workers to school to continue with their education. Across the academy, pupils have participated in outdoor play, Forest School sessions, revision classes, school lessons, artistic activities, making their own face masks and embarking on their daily exercise with walks along the Thames, picnics in Greenwich Park and outdoor PE lessons. Take a look at the fun they have been having over the last few months!

SMA'S GOT LOCKDOWN TALENT!

Congratulations to the winners of our academy talent show! In June, pupils were invited to film their talents via Google Classroom, before SMA staff put together the top 10 performances to share with the rest of our academy community. We were dazzled by a host of music, dancing, acting, comedy, poetry and artistic performances, with our three winners awarded Amazon e-vouchers. We would also like to thank all pupils for their participation, we enjoyed many fantastic performances.



Spotlight on: Transition

Transition is an integral aspect of our pupil experience. We understand that settling into primary school and progressing from primary to secondary school can be a daunting experience, and we also understand how important it is in the life of a child and their family. As such, we have developed a bespoke programme of events to make the transition period as enjoyable as possible, enabling children to meet their new peers and teachers and familiarise themselves in their new environment, long before their first day.

Our entire staff and pupil community is dedicated to supporting the new cohort of pupils as they embark on their new chapter at St Matthew. We take pride in our nurturing culture and inclusive community that encourages every learner to fulfil their potential, let their light shine and enjoy a happy and successful experience whilst discovering their talents and aspirations.

Unprecedented circumstances forced us to review how we implement our secondary transition programme and this year we introduced 1:1 meetings onsite and via zoom to allow pupils and parents to meet with teachers, and staff to identify pupil strengths and passions, enabling them to harness and develop these skills, whilst getting to know every child as an individual. We look forward to welcoming Year 7 in September for their orientation day.



In July, we welcomed families in for 1:1 interviews with their teachers for a slightly different take on Induction Day.



At the end of term, we celebrated pupils in SMA Primary phase and bid them farewell and good luck in the next stage of their education. Pupils have spent time with their older peers and teachers preparing for secondary school, and we look forward to welcoming many of them back in September to secondary phase.



Pupils joining our Early Years Department in September joined us for a 'Hungry Caterpillar' morning last term, where they got to meet their new teachers, peers and experience their new environment. Take a look at them crafting caterpillar masterpieces in our primary kitchens!

"We work closely alongside our feeder primary schools to ensure that our incoming pupils enjoy a transition that is as smooth as possible. From liaising with parents and primary school teachers, to induction days and information evenings, we provide families with pastoral support and guidance, to facilitate the settling in period."
Simbi Wickliffe, Secondary Transition Lead

Two of our Media scholars created a wonderful virtual induction video which you can view on the website.
Check it out!

SMA NEWS

September 2020



Welcome

I am really excited to be able to share this latest edition of SMA news with families and friends of the Academy. Looking back on the successes from the last few months of the 2019/20 academic year reminds us all about the amazing, talented, resilient, confident and hardworking pupils that attend our school. We all missed having our pupils on site every day but with the power of technology and the dedication of the staff at SMA it never seemed they were too far away!

In this issue, you will learn more about our unique transition programmes into reception and year 7. We are incredibly proud of our offer to all new pupils and their families and this year with the partial closure of schools and a national lockdown we had to be even more creative and imaginative than normal. I am confident that we have given all pupils the chance to enjoy an exciting transition and that we are armed with all the information required to ensure that all pupils get off to swift and successful start.

In addition to this, we celebrate the many outstanding successes of our year 11 pupils and take time to share some of our high achievers' plans for the future, alongside a summary of our primary pupils' achievements. In particular, after a strong focus on improving phonics teaching at Key Stage 1 we are incredibly proud of the progress that has been made by our year 1 pupils who are now reaching national expectations despite much lower starting points.

I continue to be immensely proud to be the Headteacher of St Matthew Academy – a truly unique, inclusive, all-through school serving the Catholic and local community of Blackheath, Lewisham and beyond. I hope this newsletter provides an insight into our offer for those thinking about joining us, and that our current families enjoy sharing in our successes. If you want to find out more then please get in touch – our pupils will love showing you around if you wish to visit and senior staff can answer any questions you may have.

Miranda Baldwin, Headteacher



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Celebrating Primary Phase!

EYFS and Early Years Highlights:

This year our EYFS cohort has made excellent progress across all of the Early Learning Goals. Robust teacher assessment shows that our predictions of being securely above the national average were correct and that this is a solid improvement compared to last year. The children and staff worked extremely hard and enjoyed an engaging and enriching curriculum which had a very positive impact on their outcomes.

Year 1 pupils celebrated the fantastic progress they made with their reading and phonics this year. Our predictions of an 16% increase in the number of children passing the phonics screener this year compared to last year was borne out by accurate teacher assessments. This dramatic increase is testament to the dedication of the staff and the support of the parents in developing a love of reading.

Key Stage 2

The percentage of Year 6 pupils achieving the expected standard based on mock SATs results and accurate teacher predictions increased across the board in Reading, Maths and GPS. We are exceptionally proud of all the hard work undertaken by the children and staff and the results are a testament to their care and commitment. Throughout the year we watched our children not only progress academically but grow into confident, successful individuals. They have had the opportunity to take part in many enriching activities i.e. school trips, drama performances, Cultural Day celebrations and sporting events which have all promoted their holistic development. Our children, their families and staff ended the year with a fantastic celebratory picnic and we were able to wish them all the very best of luck for their secondary careers.

"At St Matthew Academy, we are passionate about uncovering pupils' strengths and talents and encouraging them to reach their potential, and our results this year have proven exactly that. Congratulations to each and every one of you for your hard work, dedication and achievements – we are all so very proud of you and wish you the very best of luck on your next adventure to secondary school".

Ms Jo Chick, Head of Primary Phase

All of us at St Matthew Academy would like to say a very special well done to all of our pupils for their tremendous efforts and our inspirational staff who have supported pupils every step of the way. Well done all!



Leah, Greater Depth in all areas



Nishan, Greater Depth in 3 out of 4 areas



Marin, Greater Depth in 3 out of 4 areas

Our Year 11 Success

This year we once again celebrated phenomenal success in our Year 11's GCSE results. Building upon the accomplishments of the last few years, the KS4 results are a true reflection of pupils' hard work and determination in the face of challenging times, and a testament to the high standards of teaching and support of our staff body.

Despite the circumstances, the percentage of pupils achieving top grades and strong subject performances remains impressive; with 74% having attained 9-4 grades including English and Maths and 56% achieving 9-5. Subject highlights include:

- 90% of pupils achieved 9-4 in English Language and 88% in English Literature
- 76% of pupils achieved 9-4 in Mathematics
- 100% of pupils achieved 9-5 in Biology, Chemistry and Physics
- 80% and above of pupils achieved 9-4 in Art, Business Studies, Computer Science, Film Studies, History, Product Design and Textiles.

In addition to exceptional performance across a wide range of subjects, we have seen some outstanding individual performances:



Our highest **ever** achiever Christine celebrates incredible results of 9999999999! As she embarks on her future at Townley Grammar to study Maths, Chemistry, Physics and Biology, we look forward to welcoming her back as a member of our successful alumni.



Christa made the most progress amongst all pupils at SMA, and commented on her results "Staff at SMA have offered me encouragement, support and the resources needed to accomplish my potential, and I would advise all younger pupils to take advantage of the same and always try your best". Christa looks forward to studying BTEC Applied Science at Christ the King.



Our highest male achiever celebrated an outstanding portfolio of results: 9999999988. Crediting the dedication of teachers and the resources that provided support, Jack spoke highly of the quality of teaching and their subject knowledge. He looks forward to attending Harris Westminster in September.

The pupils' inspiring results and drive to succeed embodies our academy promise: to enable pupils to become successful, confident learners; make outstanding achievements through our high standards and cultivate their ambitions to instil excellence for all, in our inclusive Catholic community.

Headteacher Miranda Baldwin remarked, "It is wonderful to see so many happy pupils and parents at the Academy collecting their GCSE results and it is so pleasing for staff to share in their success. Every year we encourage all pupils to work hard and achieve beyond expectation and once again, our pupils have achieved outstanding results enabling them to take up places at 6th forms and colleges of their choice. The governors and I would like to extend our congratulations to our pupils and sincerely thank our talented staff for their hard work and commitment. Well done everyone".

For further information related to our GCSE success, please visit our website for a full statement.

A Different SMA Experience

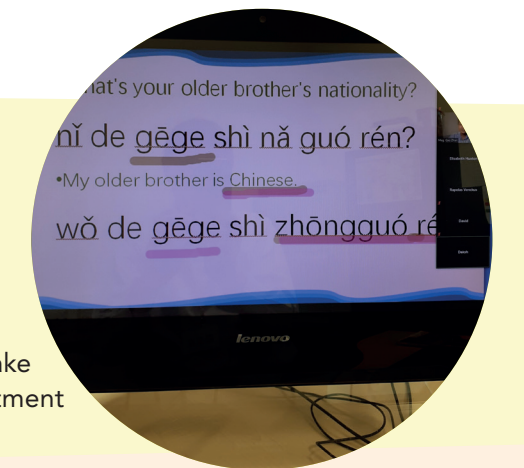


Learning for All

For some of our families, learning at home has not been accessible and at times, a financial hardship. As an inclusive and supportive Catholic community, we took this on-board and our Deputy Head Ms Thurston spearheaded our drive to ensure equal opportunities to access learning. Here is Year 7 pupil Patient, who along with over 35 pupils received a laptop through our academy fundraising campaign to support pupils' home learning.

Supporting Our Catholic Community

The past few months have been an exceptional time in the world; and we placed great emphasis on continuing to support the pastoral and spiritual needs of all members of our community. As such, our home learning timetable incorporated Collective Worship every morning, affording pupils, parents and carers the opportunity to prepare their minds for the day ahead. In addition, our weekly Chaplaincy newsletters included an array of information on how our families could continue to lead a purposeful and active prayer life at home and facilitate opportunities for silent reflection. We also held our first ever live streamed Mass at the end of term!



Languages in Lockdown

Learning a language is an exceptional ability, which for our pupils can enhance their CV's and university applications and develop their social skills amongst many other benefits. Throughout lockdown, our Year 7 Grammar+ pupils have continued with their Mandarin lessons and have continued to make excellent progress, learning new phrases and displaying an excellent commitment to their learning.

Getting Back to School

Prior to the summer holidays commencing, we slowly began a phased return to school for some of our year groups across primary and secondary phase.

Science is a practical subject at St Matthew Academy, and our pupils love to learn through experiments and investigations, such as the hurricane in a bottle investigation taking place here. Following an experiment, pupils write up their method, predictions and results, but getting hands on and putting their theory into practise is almost always the favourite method of learning.



We really believe in engaging all of our pupils with current affairs and issues that are affecting their world. Here, you can see how five of our key worker children made their voices heard as part of the Black Lives Matter movement by taking part in the Shout it Out challenge. They had to think deeply about the importance of self-appreciation and making everyone's voices heard.



Secondary phase pupils got back into their photography lessons by practising and refining their skills in the classroom, whilst our Media Scholars and Year 11 music pupils created a virtual tour of the school for open event season and our next cohort of pupils.



Year 1 pupils have been reading books about under the sea, and to put their learning into practise, they decided to create their own story boxes, using art materials to create an ocean backdrop and sea creatures, linked to their learning. Fantastic work!

