

# St Matthew Academy

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

Headteacher: Ms Miranda Baldwin

Head of Primary: Ms Joanna Chick



5<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear Parent/Carers,

I wanted to update you on plans for the end of term. I have sought permission from governors to ask pupils to work from home on the last day of term, Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> July. This will give staff an opportunity to ensure classrooms are returned back to normal after a year of working within the bubble system. As you are aware the last day of the summer term is normally a half day so this new arrangement is likely to have minimal impact on learning. It may however affect your childcare arrangements so if you would like us to supervise your child please contact the Academy on [info@stmatthewacademy.co.uk](mailto:info@stmatthewacademy.co.uk) requesting supervision and giving details of your child (s) name.

I am pleased that staff have been keen to plan a range of enriching and exciting activities for the last few days of term across all phases of the Academy: Friday 16<sup>th</sup>, Monday 19<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> July. Full details will be shared in separate letters for each year group/phase so please look out for them. I am also delighted that after having to postpone the Year 11 prom we have now rearranged this to Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

You will probably have been interested by the many announcements and thoughts coming out of the Department for Education. At the moment, it is very hard to plan for the future so we are currently planning for a range of scenarios. The best plan would be a return to normal school life, so let's hope that the vaccine programme really sorts this out. I attach the DfE 'information' about what happens next which I am sure you will find helpful.

Following my letter last week regarding a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the Academy I am writing today to let you know there have been a couple more cases from a different year group confirmed today. As a result, we have had to send home one class of pupils from the secondary phase. There is no identifiable link between these cases and the case in the primary phase last week,

As ever we must continue to do everything we can to stop transmission. Below is a list of the things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19.

- Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards

## Further Information

Further information is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

If you have any concerns regarding information in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the Academy.

Yours faithfully

**Ms M Baldwin**  
Headteacher

## Latest DfE information

### Summer and autumn testing arrangements

We want to update you on plans for testing over the summer and into the autumn so you have sufficient time to plan ahead of the summer break.

We are confirming that regular asymptomatic rapid testing will stay in place until the end of the summer term. Thank you for all your efforts to encourage students and staff to test themselves twice a week at home – please do continue to do this in these last few weeks of term.

Regular testing will pause in education settings over the summer except for in those that remain open such as summer schools, out of school settings and those that do not operate on a term-time basis. In these cases, only those attending should continue to test regularly. However, testing is still widely available and kits can be collected either from your local pharmacy or ordered online.

Please use the online re-ordering platform to place orders for further test kits after reviewing your stock levels to enable testing over the summer holiday period, if your setting remains open (for example Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) nurseries, Independent Training Providers (ITPs) and Adult Community Learning provider (ACLPs).

The guidance for children in year 6 and below remains the same and we will not be advising them to test. This includes year 6 pupils attending transition days or summer schools over the summer break.

We want to help education settings to be prepared for all scenarios, including testing on return after the summer holidays. We will provide all schools and colleges with refreshed guidance, test kits, and PPE so that you can be ready to stand up on-site Asymptomatic Test Sites (ATS) from the start of the autumn term. We expect to be able to confirm the position alongside announcements on Step 4.

Given the uncertainties about the Covid situation we will face in the autumn, we want to help secondary schools and colleges to be as prepared as possible for all scenarios, including testing on return after the summer holidays, if needed. Schools and colleges may choose to start testing students and pupils no earlier than three days before the start of term, or stagger the return of pupils during the first week of term if they would like to do so. This is voluntary and at the discretion of each school and college.

Test kits for ATS will be delivered from Tuesday 29 June to Friday 23 July. There is no need for you to make separate orders for this. Information on delivery schedules and refreshed guidance is now available on the school and college document sharing platform. If you do not have access to this, please contact the DfE helpline on 0800 046 8687.

## **Confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test after a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test**

LFD tests are most effective when detecting infectious cases of coronavirus. They identify people with a high viral load who are the most likely to spread the virus further. LFDs detect the virus in people without symptoms so each positive case we find is one that would have gone otherwise undetected. These tests are proving to be accurate and reliable and, where used appropriately and in the correct way, they will continue to help us to break chains of the transmission and save lives.

Anyone who tests positive using an LFD test will be asked to take a confirmatory follow-up PCR test. It remains essential that anyone who gets a positive LFD result self-isolates immediately for 10 days, as well as the other members of their household. You must only leave home for your follow-up test. You should arrange your confirmatory PCR immediately. For the fastest result, we suggest you book a PCR test at a test site. You can also book a home test online or call 119 to book a test.

A PCR test will confirm if you have been affected by coronavirus or not, and reduce unnecessary self-isolation by you and your household. If you then receive a negative result from the PCR, and the PCR test was taken within 2 days of the LFD, then you and your contacts will be informed you can cease self-isolating.

Individuals who test negative from their LFD will not need to isolate or take a confirmatory test.