

# SMA NEWS

Summer 2019



## Welcome

It is with great pride that I welcome you to the first edition of the St Matthew Academy newsletter of the academic year. I hope that all pupils, families and staff enjoyed a restful summer break and are looking forward to the year ahead, alongside the opportunities, excitement, challenges and celebrations that this will entail.

This edition focuses on our unique St Matthew Experience, highlighting the efforts we make to provide our pupils with a wealth of experiences, opportunities to broaden their mind-set and prospects to enrich their time with us. As we reflect on these, we also take the time to celebrate our pupils developing into independent learners, reaching their potential and playing an active role in our community.

In addition to this, we celebrate the outstanding successes of our GCSE pupils and take the time to share some of our high achievers' plans for the future, whilst also catching up with our alumni and look back at their experience at St Matthew Academy.

As always, our promise of ensuring an outstanding education and teaching and fulfilling the St Matthew Experience remains at the forefront of our offer to pupils. This term we excitedly welcomed Year 6 pupils from across the borough to our academy and we look forward to seeing them again in the near future.

I hope this newsletters provides an insight into our academy for those thinking about joining us, and that our current families enjoy sharing in our successes. Should you wish to find out more, please do not hesitate to get in touch – we welcome visitors to the academy.

**Miranda Baldwin, Head of School**

# THE ST MATTHEW EXPERIENCE



## Faith in Action

Year 3 and 4 pupils visited St Saviours Church in Lewisham to support their RE topic The Christian Family and apply their learning beyond the classroom. During the trip, pupils gained a deeper understanding of their topic and an insight into one of our local churches as they prayed at the statues of Jesus and Mary, toured the church and discussed new vocabulary learnt, including tabernacle and sanctuary light.

Pupils took the opportunity to light a candle for St Matthew, reminding us to let our light shine this academic year and practised their faith in action on their return trip by donating money to those less fortunate than us and collecting flowers for our prayer table.

## Kicking off our Scholarships!

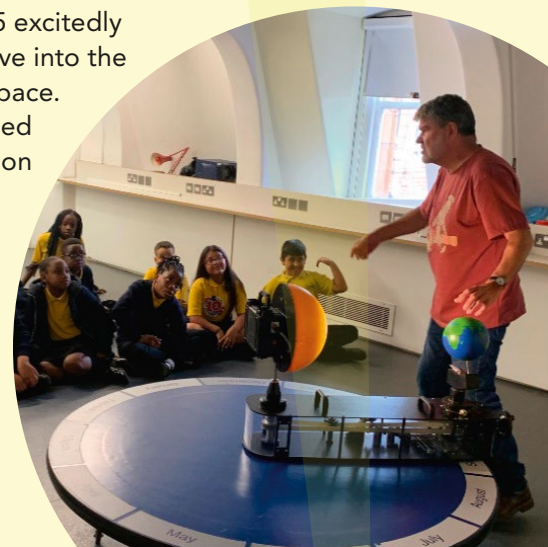
At St Matthew Academy, pupils have the opportunity to join our elite scholarships, and our Sports scholars have already been thrown into action this term as they participated in their stimulating Induction Programme. Scholars have been challenged in both indoor athletics and methods of training, and proven their talents and skills as they have been put through their paces in high intensity work outs.

Our Media and Communication Scholars have been busy engaging in interactive lessons in the SMA TV Studio and look forward to their intensive training this month, which includes Cinematography and Video editing workshops, visiting the Warner Brothers. Studio production company and producing a film for a national competition. If you have what it takes and want to get involved in this innovative opportunity, please express an interest as places are limited.



## Investigating Earth and Space

As part of their Science focus, Year 5 excitedly visited the Royal Observatory to delve into the topic of the Sun, Earth, Moon and Space. It was inspiring to see pupils immersed in their learning: gathering information and making scientific enquiries to inform their investigations and participating in interactive activities. We were blown away by their understanding of concepts including the heliocentric theory and can't wait to see them transfer what they have learnt into the classroom!



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# Future Ready

Working in partnership with Canary Wharf's KPMG branch has provided Year 9 and 10 pupils with an exclusive opportunity to work with professionals in mentoring and employability training, whilst gaining valuable experience and preparation for the world of work. Pupils have benefited greatly from the sessions, receiving training in areas including team work, leadership, presenting, and honing their skills in preparation for entering the career market. We are thrilled with how pupils' aspirations and self-confidence has developed this academic year and look forward to visiting the KPMG offices for the next stage of the SMA Careers Programme.

"I have faith in myself and my ability to succeed at any new task" **Kane.**

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## Bake Off!

Primary and Secondary phase pupils participated in a bake-off style competition, working furiously to bake delicious sweet treats for their house contest and to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support. As part of the Macmillan Coffee Morning, the event allowed our academy community to come together and put our Catholic ethos into practise – whilst letting pupils' fierce competitive edge out to play! Collectively, the academy raised over £360 for the charity and we look forward to repeating the success of the event soon.



## Camp Kenya

For four weeks during the summer, Mollie and Kaila (Year 10) travelled to east Africa with Mr Baines as part of the Camps International Programme. The exciting opportunity involved charitable veterinary work, participating in marine conservation work and building schools and homes for families and children. A fantastic time was had by all, and the experience was made all the more memorable as they trekked mountains, ventured on exotic safaris, sampled delicious mundazis and danced in caves.

"Kenya was absolutely life-changing and I would do it all over again; it taught me to appreciate all that I have and I will always remember the incredible experiences, the skills I gained and the friends I made" **Mollie.**





# OUR SHINING ALUMNI

## Amaka

All the time we have known Amaka, she has embodied our motto of Let Your Light Shine. Having attained an excellent portfolio of GCSE results in 2017 of A\*A\*A\*A\*A\*A\*AAAA, she progressed to St Thomas the Apostle Sixth Form where she gained an impressive 2 A\*s and 1 A!

Whilst at St Matthew Academy, Amaka took advantage of our enriching pupil experience, participating in Debate Mate and working with our team of pupil ambassadors in events throughout the year. Our pupil experience aims to provide learners with the opportunity to develop, grow and learn beyond the classroom, and that is exactly what she did.

Now attending Cambridge University and studying Psychology, Amaka is no doubt looking ahead to a successful career in her chosen field. Not one to shy away from setting goals (and exceeding them), her proudest achievement was receiving a grade 9 in her GCSE English Literature – when her target was a 7!

“St Matthew Academy taught me that I was the key to my own success, and by working hard I was able to achieve what I wanted – and more. Attending St Matthew Academy was a journey; and the lessons I learnt of trying my best and taking up opportunities to let my light shine, I will remember for the rest of my life!”

## Sonia

Class of 2017 graduate Sonia looks back on her time at St Matthew Academy fondly, as she embarks on the next stage of her academic career, at university.

Having achieved outstanding GCSE results of A\*A\*A\*A\*AAAAABB, Sonia progressed to St Thomas the Apostle Sixth Form where she built upon the foundations of success she made at St Matthew Academy.

Crediting her staff and peers for their encouragement, she reflects on the hard work she practised all throughout her time with us and encourages younger pupils to do the same, and that they will see results. As Sonia praises the sense of community at the academy, she looks forward to her next chapter at Kings College University, where she will read Biomedical science.

“All of my teachers at St Matthew were incredibly supportive and helpful all throughout my time at the academy. They continuously offered their time and resources to support my learning and motivated me to raise my ambitions”.

# Achieving Excellence

This year we once again celebrated the phenomenal success and achievements of our GCSE pupils, where many surpassed their own expectations to truly achieve excellence. Pupils attaining top grades remain impressive as they build upon the successes of last year, with 68% achieving 9-4 grades in English and 48% achieving 9-5 in Maths among the many subject highlights.

## Michael

St Joseph's alumni pupil Michael was thrilled to achieve 9988777776 in Spanish, Biology, Maths, Business, Chemistry, English Literature, Geography, Physics, RE and English Language. With plans to attend St Thomas the Apostle Sixth Form to study Business, Psychology and Spanish, Michael praises the hard-working and helpful teachers at the academy:

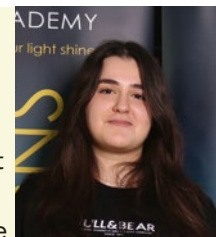
"The teachers have been incredibly supportive; offering their time and resources to help us to succeed. The teachers have built my confidence and I am grateful for all their advice and guidance".



## Fatima

Fatima was delighted to learn that she is St Matthew Academy's highest female achiever in the 2019 GCSE results, having achieved a remarkable portfolio including 9988887776 in Maths, English Literature, Physics, RE, Textiles, English Language, History, Biology, Chemistry and Computer Science. With ambitious plans to attend university to study Economics following her A-Levels at STAC, she commented:

"Every single teacher is dedicated to helping students, and do their best to prepare all students for exams".



## Tomas

Following outstanding results in Biology, History, Spanish, RE, Physics, Maths, English Literature, Chemistry, Drama, Computer Science and English Language 999988888877, SMA's highest achiever Tomas looks forward to attending St Thomas the Apostle Sixth Form in September. Crediting high-quality teaching and well-planned lessons, he spoke highly of his St Matthew Academy experience.

"Teachers are passionate about delivering exciting and engaging lessons and are willing to go above and beyond to offer extra support at every opportunity".



## Brian

Brian celebrated impressive results of 9877777777 in English Literature, Computer Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, English Language, History, Maths, RE and Product Design. These fantastic results are a clear reflection of Brian's hard-work and he praises teachers' motivation and enthusiasm throughout the exam period. Brian is keen to continue his journey of success as he looks forward to attending Beth's Grammar Sixth Form in September.

"I would without doubt recommend St Matthew Academy to anyone, there is no place else like it".



"Congratulations to the class of 2019! All of us at St Matthew Academy are incredibly proud of their well-deserved results, which are a testament to their hard work and commitment to exceeding their potential. We wish all pupils every success in the future and we are sure they will continue on their journey of strong achievement, and look forward to welcoming them back as part of our elite alumni network in the future".

**Miranda Baldwin, Head of School**



We marked the launch of a new partnership with our friends from Skørbæk-Ejdrup Free School in Aalborg as they visited us to experience life at SMA

Year 6 donned their togas and became fully immersed in Ancient Greek life as they explored life in Ancient Greece (and sampled delicious food!)



A brilliant shot of the dance team participating in the Step into Dance performance! Well done to all.



Year 7 loved their first Mandarin lesson with their inspiring teacher – based in Beijing!



Year 7 boys football team took a victory against Forest Hill with a 2-1 win – looking forward to round 2!

We are delighted to have achieved the School Games SILVER Mark Award; an award that recognises commitment to developing competition across the school and community

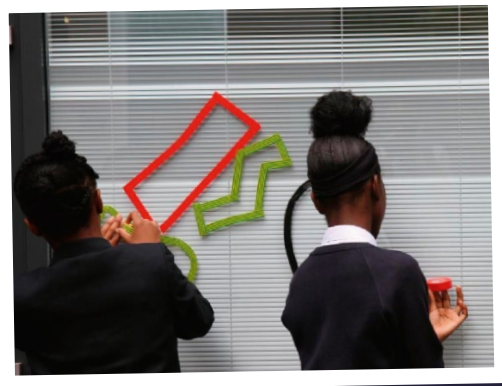


13 pupils from the Mixed SMA Rowing team competed in the London Youth Rowing 'Active Row' East Regatta and placed 1st and 2nd!



The academy celebrated the feast of St Matthew on the 20th September led by pupils and the Chaplaincy team

Pupils worked alongside artist Anne Harild in workshops to create new permanent artwork for the Academy, to reflect our motto: 'Let your Light Shine'



Pupils in Year 5 have made a great start to their Science topic with their solar system projects - they are out of this world!

