

St Matthew Academy

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

Executive Head: Mr Serge Cefai

Head of School: Ms Miranda Baldwin



16 July 2019

Dear Parents and Carer

Last night I had the pleasure of watching the final performance of the Year 6 production of *Oliver*. I was amongst a packed audience of family, friends and staff who all thoroughly enjoyed the acting and singing of our very talented young performers. They delivered with confidence and were a real credit to their teachers who have been working hard with the pupils to ensure a first class show! It was a busy day for year 6 because they also had a leavers assembly and a moving and reflective leavers mass during the afternoon. Tonight is the year 6 disco and the final event of the year before they move up to secondary - and of course at St Matthew, being an all through school, it means most don't have far to go!

Earlier on today we said *bon voyage* to another group of secondary pupils who were lucky enough to be travelling to France. During the May half term over 50 pupils took part in a sports tour to France and this week over 20 pupils will be spending a few days experience French culture, seeing the sights of Paris and of course practising their French speaking. I am delighted that our extensive trips and visits programme has continued to grow at the academy giving all our pupils opportunities to visit and experience new places and activities. We even have two year 10 pupils spending some of their summer holiday in Kenya getting involved in volunteering activities having fund raised over £4000 to be able to take part in this life changing experience.

I am really excited to inform parents and carers that last week our one of secondary debate teams were crowned National Champions 2019! This is an amazing achievement particularly as they beat a number of teams from private schools along the way. As regional London Champions the team were invited to the Houses of Parliament where they had to take on regional champions from across the country. They never lost a round and beat a school from Liverpool in the Grand final hosted at the Mayor of Westminster's office at City Hall. This achievement along with two SMA pupils being crowned the regional Speak Out champions in May really does highlight the strength of talent at the Academy in oracy and public speaking – our new year 7 Media and Communication scholarship pupils will have some fabulous role models to aspire to.

As normal, included with this letter there is the final edition of our SMA newsletter – another bumper copy with so many interesting and eye opening articles. We have made the decision to send it just electronically this term and I do hope that parents will understand why – for most people this is now the preferred method of communication and it will also save money allowing us to spend more of our budget on resources for pupils. However, if you would like a hard copy you can always pick one up in reception.

At this time of year in schools we say goodbye to staff that are moving on. Firstly I'd like to take this opportunity to say thank you and farewell to Ms Francis, Deputy Headteacher. She has worked incredibly hard over the last 3 years ensuring that teaching and learning is consistently good and better at the academy – she will be missed by colleagues and pupils alike. Sadly we will also be saying goodbye to Mr Peel, Assistant Headteacher and Director of Maths. He has gained a well-deserved promotion as Deputy Headteacher in a school closer to home and I would like to say thank you to him for leading the maths team over the last three years and ensuring outcomes at GCSE have improved year on year. Two of our Directors of Learning, Mr Part and Mr Lee have gained promotions at local schools and our Head of Performing Arts, Ms Stewart is relocating.

Tel: 0208 853 6250 Email: info@stmatthewacademy.co.uk Web: www.stmatthewacademy.co.uk

Three members of staff - Ms Warley, Ms Ellis and Ms Nakkeeran, all of whom joined us two years ago as trainee teachers have now successfully completed their courses and will be spending time travelling and teaching overseas. In the primary phase Ms Adebola has made the difficult decision to move on to a school much closer to home and we thank her for her contribution to ensuring the very best outcomes for our upper Key Stage 2 pupils over the last three years. Lastly we will also be saying goodbye Ms Simpson and Mr Nairne who have both worked tirelessly in their roles and I know they will be missed by everyone at the academy. I would also like to express our gratitude to a number of temporary teachers who stepped in to take over vacant posts at the start of the year and have remained committed to the academy for the full year – Ms Provic and Ms Piper. Parents and carers will be pleased to know that despite having a few teaching staff leaving we will start the new academic year in September 2019 fully staffed. Once again I am delighted we have been able to recruit high quality staff eager to join the SMA team on our exciting journey to making the school of choice in the local community.

Important dates for your diary for next year can be found on the Academy website as can the term dates and Inset days. I am really pleased that this year the vast majority of parents have ensured that their children have not been taken out of school during term time and as a result our primary attendance figure has increased once again although it is still below national and our secondary attendance remains above national average. Attendance at parents evenings has also been high again this year so thank you to everyone that has attended events at school to support your child – this really does make a difference. Outlined in the table below are the dates of all parent evenings – please ensure you keep these dates free and further information will be sent to you closer to the date.

Parents' Evening Dates for the Year

Date	Event	Time
Thursday 3 October 2019	Year 7 Form Tutor Evening	4.00pm – 6.30pm
Thursday 10 October 2019	Year 11 Expectations evening	4.00pm – 6.30pm
Thursday 7 November 2019	Year 9 Information Evening	4.00pm – 6.30pm
Thursday 14 November 2019	Year 8 Parents' Evening	4.00pm – 6.30pm
Thursday 28 November 2019	Year 7 Parents' Evening	4.00pm – 6.30pm
Wednesday 4 December 2019 and Thursday 5 December	Primary Parents Evenings	3.40pm - 6.00pm
Thursday 23 January 2020	Year 11 Parents' Evening	4.00pm – 6.30pm
Thursday 6 February 2020	Year 9 Parents' Evening	4.00pm – 6.30pm
Thursday 5 March 2020	Year 10 Parents' Evening	4.00pm – 6.30pm
Tuesday 24 March 2019 And Wednesday 25 March 2019	Primary Parents Evening	3.40pm – 6.00pm
Thursday 26 March 2020	Year 8 Options Evening	4.00pm – 6.30pm
Thursday 21 May 2019	Year 8 Form Tutor Option Evening	4.00pm – 6.30pm
Wednesday 1 July 2019 And Thursday 2 July	Primary Parents Evening	3.40pm – 6.00pm
Thursday 9 July 2020	Year 10 Parents Information evening	4.00pm – 6.30pm

At the end of another successful year when the Academy have sat proudly at the top of the secondary Lewisham League tables for academic progress I am sure parents, carers and pupils will join me in thanking all the staff for their continuing hard work and commitment to ensure all pupils *'let their light shine'* and are the best they can be. **All pupils except our new year 7's return to school on Wednesday 4th September either at 8.37am for secondary line up or 8.50am for primary pupils.** We expect to see all students on time, wearing their full uniform smartly and correctly equipped for learning. **Our cohort of 180 year 7 pupils, which will be the biggest in the history of the academy, start on Tuesday 3rd September enabling them to have a day in school on their own as this will support their transition to 'big school'.**

I look forward to seeing you in the autumn term at one of our calendared events for parents or joining us at a coffee morning in the library. Very best wishes to you and your families for a restful summer break.

Yours sincerely



Ms M Baldwin
Head of School