

Message from the Senior Leadership Team

In this edition of the SMA Newsletter, you will read about all the wonderful things our community and pupils have been up to recently, including the Year 8 school journey to PGL Windmill Hill in East Sussex.

Ms Skelton and I led a group of ninety very excited pupils for a weekend of adventures in the countryside. As ever, the pupils were such wonderful ambassadors for SMA, throwing themselves into every challenge the instructors could organise including archery, air rifle shooting and the giant swing.

The weather was undeniably wet but the pupils' spirits remained undampened! As a team building exercise, this weekend was terrific and the pupils returned to SMA with stories of campfires, team games and hopefully some great memories.

Thank you to all the staff who supported the trip – school journeys do not happen without the teamwork and dedication of everyone involved.

Mr I Gunningham
Senior Assistant Headteacher



Prayer and Reflection

In this coming Sunday's gospel we will hear about the rich man who gave his servants five, two and one talent each. We will hear that whilst the first two doubled their share, the servant with one talent hid his and did nothing with it. To the first two the master replied "Well done good and faithful servant; you have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater."

A talent in biblical times was a unit of money, but the gospel is still relevant to us today, as we can think about it as our natural God given gifts and talents. The messages we can take from this reading is that firstly doubling God's gifts and graces is quite doable, because by their very nature God's gifts to us are meant to grow. Secondly we can reflect on our own life and the gifts we possess, which should be shared more intentionally and purposefully for God's glory. In doing this we are awarded supernatural gifts of wisdom, counsel, knowledge and understanding which we can use for our salvation and the salvation of others. Let us strive for this, so one day we too may hear "Well done good and faithful servant"

Heavenly Father, we pray that we can take time to look deep within ourselves and discover the gifts you have blessed us with. Please help us to direct our lives in a way that best uses our own unique combination of gifts. May our education help us to discover where our strengths and interests lie. May our faith guide us in realizing our gifts. May we always be open to the direction of the Spirit and never forget the love you have for each of us. Amen.



Remembrance Day

Poppy day, or Remembrance Day, is held to remember members of the armed forces who have died in the line of duty, as well as those who have been involved with and affected by war and conflict.

Here at St Matthew Academy we held a number of events to mark the occasion this year. We shared stories of Remembrance and the light bearers led remembrance assemblies.

We also supported the Poppy appeal, by selling merchandise for The Royal British Legion, this was well supported across the school and we would like to extend a big thank you to the pupils, parents and staff who contributed.

SMA held its Remembrance Service in primary and secondary simultaneously where our Catholic pupils remember the souls of the departed. After Mrs Guest's introduction, Monsignor Rthon from St Mary's in Blackheath led our service of remembrance, which was attended by Year 6 and Year 7 classes.

Six pupils volunteered to read poems, including 'In Flanders Field'. Monsignor Rthon, Mr Saunders, a former member of the armed forces laid wreaths alongside Ms Baldwin and our Chair of Governors, Mrs Barber. Mr Charlery and Miss Butterworth played 'The Last Post' to mark the start of our two minute silence followed by the 'Reveille'. The pupils who were unable to join us outside also marked the occasion with poetry, prayer and the 2 minutes of silence in class.

Monsignor Rthon and Ms Baldwin helped us all to reflect on the importance of marking this occasion by reminding us about those who have lost their lives in the First World War and the Second World War, including old boys of St Joseph's and in conflicts which have taken place since.



Primary Gaza Appeal – 17th November 23

All the children had an opportunity to take part in a variety of sporting events including football, bench ball, basketball and obstacle races.

The pupils brought in their donations and were able to wear their own sporting clothes.

A big thank you to the Year 7 Sporting Excellence pupils who came down to help with the different activities.

The Primary Raised **£125.78**



Lantern Parade

Year 4

The children began to get into the Christmas spirit with one of the highlights of our year, preparing for the Greenwich Christmas Lantern Parade.

This year's theme was 'The Nutcracker'. Arty Party came in to the Academy to make lanterns with the children. The workshop was enjoyable and the children had a chance to work with a variety of materials including wire, bamboo and tissue paper. They produced Gingerbread Men and Dancing Lady's lanterns.

The children were then given the opportunity to show these off in the Children's Procession as part of Greenwich Lantern Parade on the Wednesday 15th of November. The children were extremely excited to be taking part and were mesmerised by the different lanterns they saw.

It is a great event to be part of, the parade was led by a Brass band, passing the Cutty Sark and ending in Greenwich Market where we joined in with the countdown to switch the Christmas lights on.

The children are definitely in the Christmas mood after the festivities of Greenwich Lantern Parade!



Secondary News

Geography

Over two mornings in late October the Geography team took all Year 7 pupils on a fieldtrip to Greenwich Park which created much excitement; for most pupils it was their first trip since joining St Matthew Academy. The pupils walked to the park from school and we were fortunate that the weather was kind to us on both days, apart from a light rain shower on one day.



We spent much of the time at the vantage viewing point, next to the Royal Observatory, that offers panoramic views across a large part of central and East London where pupils tried to get a sense of the amazing city they live in. From here we could see such landmarks as the O2, the Shard and the River Thames just beyond the buildings at the bottom of the very steep hill in Greenwich Park that include Queen's House and the Old Royal Naval College. They were asked to sketch the cityscape as well as try to work out the grid references for these landmarks as part of the work they completed. We also learned that the Prime Meridian, which is used to set the time across the globe and splits it between east and west, is located close to where we spent the morning (interestingly, the line also runs right through SMA). We very much hope that the trip will help pupils in their next ranking assessment as they were able to use map and orienteering skills and learn much more about the geography of the area they live in.

It was a fun and enjoyable experience for all; the pupils were well behaved and the staff were happy with the experience of taking Year 7 out on their first of hopefully many trips. We did learn that sadly the deer no longer are in the park, the enclosure was deemed unfit for them (even though there is still a sign pointing towards where it was until recently); they have all been moved to Richmond Park.

Windmill Hill

At the start of November, Year 8 visited PGL, Windmill Hill in East Sussex. In what proved to be one of the wettest weekends of the year, pupils and staff went above and beyond in conquering the elements and enjoying being in the outdoors. Activities included, axe-throwing; Jacob's Ladder; zip-lining and climbing. The staff at Windmill Hill looked after us really well – particularly in the canteen - where there was no shortage of good food to help keep out the cold and rain!



Throughout the weekend, pupils learnt new skills and forged new friendships, which have further strengthened the bond within the Year Group. Ms Skelton and all the staff are very proud of all the children who let their lights shine. Thank you to everyone who took part. We are already looking forward to the next school journey with excitement!



Primary News

Year 1

On Thursday 9th November, Year 1 took a trip to Greenwich Park. This was a part of Geography unit, 'My City Then and Now'. We have been learning about London and how lucky we are to live in the capital city of England!

As a class, we have been trying to spend more time doing fieldwork, to develop the children's curiosity in Geography. Hence, Greenwich Park was the ideal setting for our trip. The park showed them why London has the name the "greenest" city in Europe. They did OS mapping, observational drawing and made a list of physical and human features they found.

The children loved looking at the skyline of London whilst being surrounded by the muddy greenery of the park.

They absolutely loved their day out! The children were fantastic ambassadors for our school. They made all of SMA so proud! The children were so polite to the members of the public saying hello and good morning, to everyone that passed them. It was lovely to see how some of our littlest pupils can make such a big impact on our local community, everyone they spoke to walked past with a gleaming smile. They made such a big impact, even a bumblebee followed us all the way home on one of our pupil's bow, I think even the bee wanted to come with us to school!

As a class, we cannot wait to do another school trip and continue to learn through these great experiences!



Year 2

This academic year has already been filled with exciting adventures, valuable learning experiences, and notable accomplishments.

In the pursuit of historical knowledge, Butterfly class embarked on an enriching journey to the local fire station. This immersive trip was an integral part of our History curriculum, delving into the events of 'The Great Fire of London.' The children were captivated as they learned about the courageous firefighters who played a pivotal role in quenching the flames and safeguarding the city.

The visit to the fire station not only enhanced their understanding of history but also provided a hands-on experience that sparked curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. The Year 2 Butterfly Class returned to school with vivid tales of bravery, understanding the historical significance of firefighting, and a newfound appreciation for the community heroes who protect us every day. Children have then used these experiences within their writing, using new vocabulary to help create their own narratives, based on our first book, Vlad and The Great fire of London.

Geography came to life for Year 2 after half term during their captivating trip to Greenwich, where they explored the breath-taking views along the River Thames and explored tunnels that lead underneath the flowing river. The vibrant discussions and engaging activities enabled them to grasp the geographical features of rivers, understand the importance of water bodies, and appreciate the role of the River Thames in London's rich history.



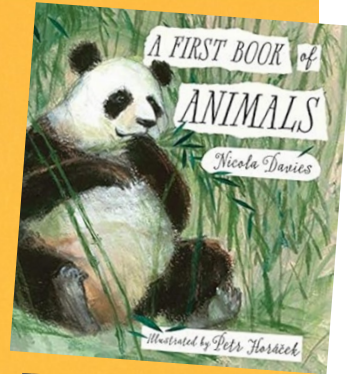


LITERACY CORNER

Book Reviews

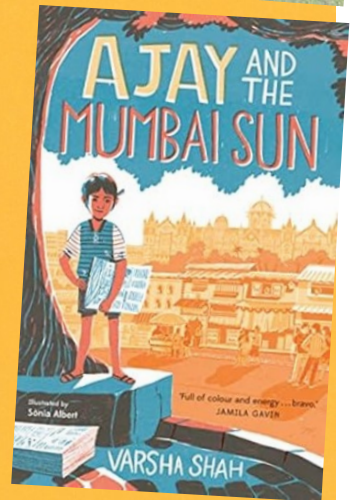
Theo from year 6 read and reviewed 'A first book of animals' by Nicola Davies and illustrated by Petr Horacek.

This is a non-fiction picture book about a series of animals and little summaries and beautiful illustrations about them. My favourite section was about pandas as they are my favourite animal and the colour of their fur is unique. 5 stars!



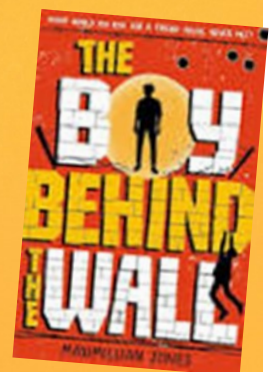
Theo also read and reviewed Ajay and the Mumbai Sun by Varsha Shah.

This book is about a homeless boy Ajay in Mumbai who dreams of becoming a news journalist. He and his friends find an abandoned printing press and create their own newspaper The Mumbai Sun. They hunt down stories and discover lots of bad things and Ajay tries to bring the truth out. Ajay has determination and never gives up. 4 stars.

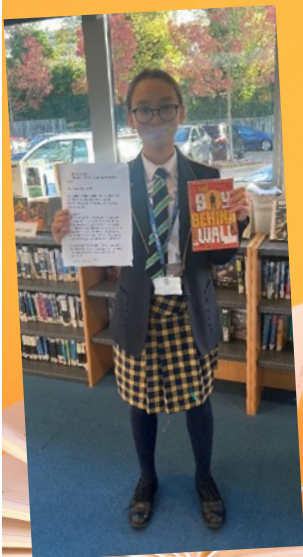


Enkhlen from year 7 reviewed 'The boy behind the wall' by Maximillian Jones.

Harry and Jakob are both young teenagers (13 years old) who live on either side of the divide. Jakob in East Berlin finds a message from Harry in West Berlin and begins a secret friendship. They write letters to keep sharing truths about their lives. However, Jakob plans something bigger and he needs Harry's help. It's time to put their friendship to the test. Just how much are they prepared to risk for each other and for freedom?



I enjoyed the book but I didn't find this book as engaging as others I have read. However, this book is based on true events. My rating is 8 out of 10 for this book.



House Points Update

Week beginning 20/11/23

Total Achievement Points

1st – Teresa: 9970
2nd – Romero: 8378
3rd – Mandela: 8202

Attendance:

1st – Teresa
2nd – Romero
3rd – Mandela

Overall House Points

1st - Teresa: 1846
2nd - Romero: 1678
3rd- Mandela: 1493

After a close four weeks, Romero has successfully reclaimed the second-place position. Teresa has maintained first has place while continuing to widen the gap.

It is the time of the year where pupils are encouraged to cast their vote for the young mayor of Lewisham. SMA has three candidates in the running, Aarav Nair 9M2; Alex Kurtaj 9M1 and Aayush Pathak 10T1. Pupils candidate videos and presentations have been shared with pupils who have voted for their preferred candidate.

Good luck to all candidates and well done for willing to bring changes to Lewisham

As ever thanks to our wonderful pupils leadership team whose help is valued especially at lunch time helping to maintain a calm and orderly lunch.



Going Above and Beyond!

Primary phase

Pupils with the most achievement points during the month of November

Reception - Ladybirds

Mira AMOO-CAMPBELL

Noah IGBOKWE

Zachary HALLPIKE

Year 1 - Dragonfly

Tay'Mari POYSER

Olivia OGBUKU

Amya DAVIS-ROCHESTER

Year 2 - Butterfly

Elissa AMEYAW

Ian FARINTO MARTINEZ

Maya MARGAI

Year 3 - Cheetahs

Amaya WATSON-KHAN

Fatoumata DIALLO DIALLO

Izel ROCHESTER

Year 4 - Tigers

Martin SANCHEZ ORJUELA

Azaria CAMPBELL-JONES

Mila ONOBRAUCHE

Year 5 - Lions

Thiago JACOME ASQUI

David NWABEZE-FRANKLIN

Cyril OIGBOCHIE

Year 6 - Leopards

Bella CODREA

Valentine CHAZA

Helena GIANNONE

Well done to these pupils for all their hard work!

Staff Stars



Mrs Hill

“For all her help with assisting the facilities team.”



Mrs Green

“For being an amazing and helpful colleague, always collaborating and sharing resources!”



Ms Asamoah

“For her commitment and dedication to her pupils.”

Safeguarding our pupils at St Matthew Academy

At St Matthew Academy our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Ms Chick supported by Mr Gunningham (secondary) and Mr Magar (secondary), and our Child Protection Officer is Ms Dryden. Pupils can contact any of our Safeguarding Team during the school day.

Worried about a child?

You can phone or write to MASH about your concerns. Phone immediately if you believe it is urgent.

- Lewisham MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) **020 8314 6660**
- Or call **999** or **101** if you believe a child is in immediate danger
- Childline **0800 11 11** www.childline.org.uk
- NSPCC **0808 800 5000** www.nspcc.org.uk

Term Dates 23/24

Autumn Term Dates

Tuesday 5 September 2023 to Friday 20 October 2023

Half Term: Monday 23 October 2023 to Friday 27 October 2023

Monday 30 October 2023 to Wednesday 20 December 2023

Christmas Holiday: Thursday 21 December to Monday 8 January

Spring Term Dates

Tuesday 9 January 2024 to Friday 9 February 2024

Half Term: Monday 12 February 2024 to Friday 16 February

Monday 19 February 2024 to Thursday 28 March 2024

Easter Holiday: Friday 29 March 2024 to Friday 12 April 2024

Summer Term Dates

Monday 15 April 2024 to Friday 24 May 2024

Half Term: Monday 27 May to Friday 31 May

Monday 3 June 2024 to Tuesday 23 July 2024

If you have any comments, queries or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us.

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