

Dear Parents and Carers,

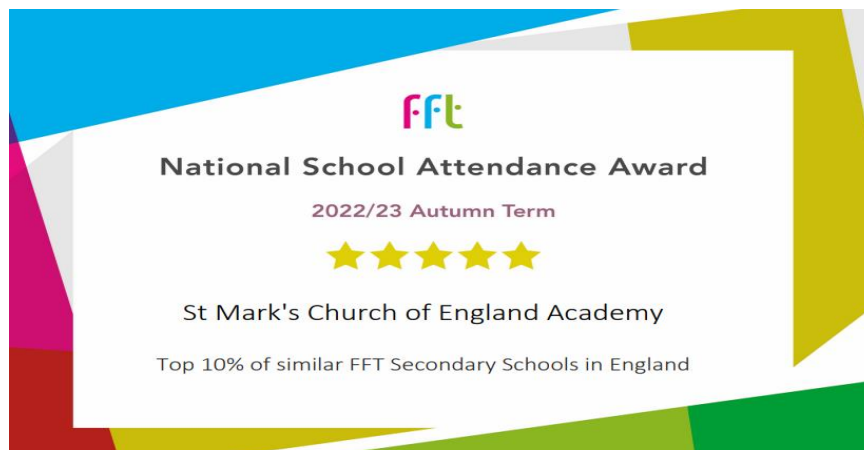
28 March 2023

I trust and pray you and your family are well. As always, I want to extend a huge thank you for working in partnership with the school this term. *You are instrumental in driving our mission and vision of **transformation for all** and I am grateful to work alongside you.*

Easter is a time for Good News as we celebrate the miracle of the resurrection and the hope it brings us all. It is with great excitement that I share with you the many signs of hope within this community through this Easter newsletter.

Below are the stand out moments that I would like to share with you:

1. Celebrating attendance in the top 10% of similar schools nationally



As you are aware, when a child's attendance is above 96%, academic performance increases significantly. With this in mind, we are proud to share a recent award from FFT that celebrates St Mark's attendance strategy.

2. A transformational enrichment day

On Tuesday 14th March, students across the academy were treated to an engaging visit in the name of science week. A further enrichment day has been planned for the summer terms. Please join me in saying a huge thank you to staff and a special thank you to, Ms Bowens who leads on enrichment and careers.

As you know, St Mark's is a school that is dedicated to both academic and character excellence. We provide students with a transformational enrichment and careers offer to allow students to develop their character and cultural capital. Our transformational enrichment offer was commended during our recent Ofsted Inspection and I am so pleased to see so many students attending after school clubs and living life to the full. Please remember to look at our offer via the website (<https://www.stmarksacademy.com/parents/enrichment>) and contact, Ms Bowens on ebowens@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk should you have any questions.

3. Proud to be a Steplab Hub School

In order to drive our vision of transformation for all, we provide our staff with the highest quality professional development offer. Part of this involves every teacher being an instructional coach. I am proud to share the news that St Mark's is now one of 12 schools in the country that is a hub for excellence in instructional coaching and teaching and learning. Please see an image from our recent visit below. On this day, we welcomed 8 colleagues into the academy who wished to see our incredible practice.



4. Exceptional feedback from Ofsted

As you know, St Mark's were inspected by Ofsted on Wednesday 8th and Thursday 9th March. This was an ungraded inspection which differs from a graded inspection, because it does not result in individual graded judgements, but focuses on determining whether the school remains the same grade as at the school's previous graded inspection. It cannot change the overall effectiveness grade of the school. On very rare occasions an Inspection Team will issue an Outcome 2. This is where *'the school was previously judged to be good and it remains so, and there is sufficient evidence of improved performance to suggest that it might have been judged outstanding if it had received a graded inspection instead of an ungraded inspection.'*

As stated previously, I cannot communicate the outcome with you formally until we receive the report 18 days after the inspection, however please rest assured that the Academy has performed exceptionally well in all areas.

Once again, I would like to remind you of your integral role as parents and carers in this unprecedented journey of transformation. The comments below are notes taken by senior leaders during the visit.

Overall:

- Vision Transformation for all comes through really strongly because of a highly ambitious SLT and Middle Leadership Team
- Quality of Teaching is impressive as is the Curriculum knowledge of Middle Leaders
- Pupils and Staff are really proud of their school
- Safeguarding arrangements are exceptionally strong.

Quality of Education:

- Subject leaders have thought carefully about curriculum and reflects school values – broad and diverse, clear ambition e.g. DT and English – leaders have looked beyond the NC
- KS4 – EBacc increasing and teaching is very strong
- Sequencing is clear and logical and systematic – English and MFL examples given. In Maths White Rose is used effectively with clear adaptations to meet pupils’ needs
- Classroom – high degree of consistency and subject knowledge – clear explanations, complex ideas are broken down – modelling supports this. Pupils’ can follow the curriculum and cope with pace of learning Inc. SEN students
- Questioning is interrogative and elaborative – MWB used to check to diagnostically and identify misconceptions
- Regular summative assessment is effective
- Reading plans e.g. star reader, 1:1 phonics, reading and buddy reading allows improvements
- Increasing SEN numbers – effective identification and primary liaison – leaders track and monitor progress and the review stage is prioritised. Teachers use context sheets and training to support pupils with SEND.

Behaviour:

- Pupils’ behaviour has been exemplary – highly positive attitudes to learning – low level disruption is rare – high expectations from teachers underpinned by clear strategies
- Students work well together and take learning seriously
- Pupils value rewards and the range of these
- 100% pupils feel safe.

Personal Development:

- Comprehensive careers programme, PSHE and PD in place – Baker clause met in all areas
- Lifeology teaching is rigorous, as in all subject areas
- Daily coaching covers current affairs, debates and assemblies
- Equality groups, Eco groups, coaching captains – offer great opportunities and students’ value – specific groups have been targeted
- Post 16 readers and mentors and monitors are a positive influence in the school
- Wide range of sports and outings – varied and valued
- Student Surveys 199 and overall very positive.

Staff wellbeing:

- All staff spoke with passion about the values in action and supportive environment
- Staff wellbeing is very well catered for
- Staff are proud, feel listened to, school has reduced data drops – air and share and you said, we did are all very much valued

Free School Meals over the half term

Families in receipt of free school meals will receive a £30 voucher per student to help with food costs over the half term. This is calculated at £15 per week of the holidays.

End of term dismissal – Friday 31 March 2023

Years	Dismissed from	Time	Gate
7, 8 and 9	The end of P3 lessons	11:50am	Main Gate
Year 10	Will go to assembly after break and be dismissed following an Easter revision session led by SLT	12:15pm	Main Gate
Year 11	Dismissed from school following a trip led by Ms Bowen	NA	NA
Year 12/13	Will leave at the end of break	12pm	Main Gate

I would like to pray for the continued success of the whole community and we continue to promote life in all its fullness (John 10). I also wish you a restful Easter break as you take time to be with loved ones and celebrate the Spring.



Hannah Fahey
Principal